

BEARSTED PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON TUESDAY 12 MAY 2026

BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT BY CLLR DENIS SPOONER

There are some updates on important issues.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

We still await the decisions by MHCLG on how the existing 14 local councils in Kent and Medway will be transformed into 3, 4 or 5 new unitary councils. I still feel that MHCLG's intention to have elections to these new councils in May 2027 and for them to become fully operational by May 2028 is hopelessly optimistic but, we can only wait and see what happens.

In the meantime, at its meeting on 29 April, MBC resolved to create a new town council for those parts of the Maidstone urban area that do not have an existing parish council. MBC will cease to exist in May 2028 and will be absorbed into a new unitary council. The new Maidstone Town Council will function as a parish council with similar powers to all the existing parish councils within the Borough. The creation of the Maidstone Town Council should not have any direct implications for Bearsted PC or any of its residents.

MBC'S 5 YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY (5YHLS)

This continues to be of serious concern. Speculative planning applications for housing development in various locations around the borough continue to be submitted but, so far, only the two that I reported on last month have come to the MBC Planning Committee for determination. It is still not known when planning application 25/505209 for 16 homes in Firs Lane, just off Ashford Road in Hollingbourne will be determined.

MBC – NEW LOCAL PLAN (NLP) AND ‘CALL FOR SITES’

Progress on these hugely controversial and complex issues seems to be moving at a snail's pace. In my view, MBC must crack on with the NLP and the 'call for sites' as a matter of urgency so that when MBC is abolished, all the work that it has so far done on them will have reached such an advanced stage that it cannot be ignored by the newly created Unitary Council and must be taken on board in work that it will have to do in eventually producing a new Unitary Local Plan.

It is very likely that MBC will join with Tonbridge and Malling BC, Sevenoaks DC and Tunbridge Wells BC to form a new West Kent Unitary Council. These three councils contain vast tracts of Metropolitan Green Belt and National

Landscape (previously known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and my fear is that the new Unitary Councillors for these areas may try to ‘dump’ much of their own areas’ housing requirements into the former MBC area which has far less such strongly protected land.

MEETINGS ATTENDED

8 April: I attended a briefing for Borough Councillors on the new legislation on ‘renters’ rights’ which has just come into force. It has important implications for all people who rent their homes.

14 April: I attended an online Ward Cluster Meeting attended by borough and parish councillors, MBC Officers and Kent Police.

20 April: I attended an online Planning Training Session provided by MBC Officers dealing with planning enforcement. This training on TEAMS is free to all borough and parish councillors.

23 April: I attended a meeting of the MBC Planning Committee. There were no items on the agenda that were of direct relevance to Bearsted.

29 April: I attended a full meeting of MBC which considered a number of borough-wide issues as well as agreeing to create a new Maidstone Town Council as described above. It also agreed to accept the recommendation of a report by the Independent Remuneration Panel that all MBC councillors’ allowances be increased by 6.5%. I voted against the increase.

Borough Councillor Denis Spooner

Bearsted and Downswood Ward

Bearsted Parish Council Meeting – 12th May 2026

Borough Councillor's Report – Cllr Val Springett

The publicity for local elections was causing some confusion amongst residents who have been concerned about not receiving a poll card. However, there were no elections in the borough this year, as the council now has 'all out' elections every four years. The next local elections are expected in May 2027, but this may be affected by the Local Government reorganisation, which is still to be finalised. It is possible that next year will see elections for councillors on the new Unitary council, and it may be that the term of existing councillors is extended to run alongside the new unitary council during its first year. Time will tell!

The results of the first consultation on the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling show people DPD is expected to be brought to the Planning and Healthier Stronger Communities Policy Advisory Committee in June. I have been pressing officers to undertake a briefing for councillors ahead of this meeting, but so far, I am meeting resistance. Whilst there are no proposed sites in Bearsted, there is one in Water Lane Thurnham, which has caused some concerns amongst residents, and I have been unable to find out if this site is being taken forward to the next stage. It would seem that not enough sites have come forward to meet our assessed need for pitches, and I am concerned officers might be intending to accept all sites that were submitted, rather than filtering out those not considered suitable. I have asked again for a briefing for councillors and await a response.

The next update to the Local Plan is about to start and Denis has explained this in detail in his report. He has also covered the decision to create a new Town Council, which is also part of the reorganisation of local government I mentioned earlier in this report.

I am not aware of any contentious new planning applications in Bearsted this month.

**Community Warden Report: for 12th May 2026– FROM SALLY WILLIAMS KCC
COMMUNITY WARDEN - BEARSTED**

Days worked since last Parish Meeting – 14th April 26= _____ Due to Absence

Events/Taskings	Number of occasions	Comment
Social welfare visits	19	<p>Ongoing welfare visits to residents, New referrals recd from Social Care, AGE UK and Bearsted Frailty Team at Yoeman Lane Surgery and public referrals/issues.</p> <p>New referrals recd from members of public – GP Surgery – Social Services and most are existing residents needing support and advice. Ongoing</p> <p>2 x Safeguarding concerns raised – one is rough sleeper in her car with dog and the other a vulnerable resident keeps being targeted by rogue traders. Both ongoing.</p>
Antisocial Issues	1	<p>Footage recd from a member of public on Bearsted Green 260426 – recorded an off road motorbike racing across Bearsted Green – Passed this to BPC.</p>
Neighbour Disputes	1	<p>Issues with over growth Hillbrow and PROW onto Ware Street - ongoing</p>

Community Groups	4 2	Attended Madginford Library Coffee Mornings, interaction in total: 48 Attended Holy Cross Church Coffee Mornings, total interaction:17

Any Other Comments:

I was aware of 3 men door knocking in Bramley Crescent Bearsted whilst I was doing visits in the road, after observing them – they started cutting down trees I engaged with them, they become very frustrated at my presence as I did speak to the resident who didn't agree to the work – I called the police and they turned up straight away – spoke to the 3 men, who were then told to leave Bramley Crescent.

I stayed whilst the police were questioning the men – as lots of residents were coming over with concerns about the police presence in the road – I reassured them all, but I staying in the area. I also gave out valuable advice to the resident affected and left my contact information with them. No money exchanged hands at all.

I went back to resident the next day – reassurance and and left a doorstep sticker.

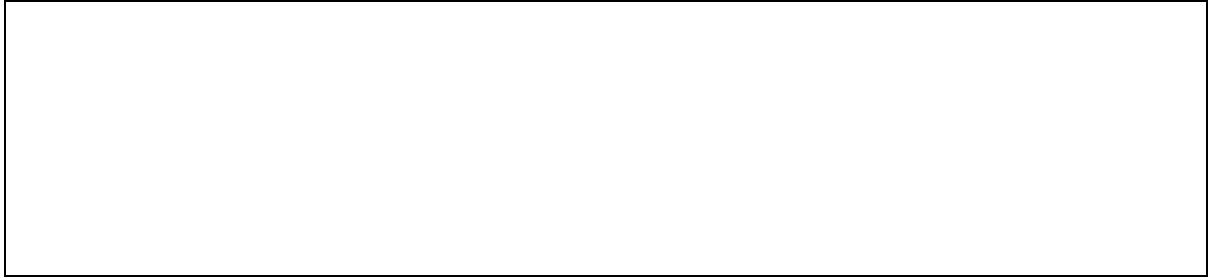
I raised a concern to Madginford School as I saw young child of school age on his scooter outside the school – no uniform – I did engage with the child then I informed the school – as he obviously was not at school and no parents were around.

Lots of Visible Presence throughout Bearsted

Ongoing welfare visits completed –new referrals recd from public and Adult Social care and Bearsted Medical Practice and Age UK. Safeguarding referrals completed.

Attended Madginford Library coffee morning where Invicta Court Residential home came to the meeting and chatted to the residents about the home.

Issues with Ice Cream Van Parking around Roseacre and Thurnham Schools in the afternoons.



Warden:Sally Williams..... Date ...7th May 2026



Expenditure Transactions - Payment Approval List

For payments to be made in May 2026, following approval

Bacs Payments to be made

Transaction Number	Invoice Number/Ref	Payment ref (if already paid)	Ledger Date	Gross	Heading	Transaction Details
FUTURE	5803 M School Donation		31/03/2026	£500.00	180	Madginford Primary School - Grant - agreed contribution towards costs
	21996		01/04/2026	£72.00	115/4	RMX Cloud Ltd - Leased laptops x 3
	22008		01/04/2026	£34.38	115/4	RMX Cloud Ltd - Licences for laptops x 3
	MEM258499-1		09/04/2026	£253.00	130/4	SLCC - SLCC membership for JU
	Utility rechg		15/04/2026	£116.04	150/8	Madginford Hall - 10% utility charges 01.11 - 31.03.26
	AB exps		15/04/2026	£52.00	235/2/3	Amy Bush - 3 x keys allotment gate
	CCOTG donation		15/04/2026	£504.00	180	Classic Cars on the Green - Donation re toilets for Car Show event
	8B refund		20/04/2026	£50.00	235/2/2	[REDACTED] - Return key and plot deposit
	330122		22/04/2026	£8,500.00	351/1	Compaid Trust - Annual grant to provide bus 2026/2027
	28		24/04/2026	£42.00	115/12	[REDACTED] Cleaning of office
	1265198		27/04/2026	£740.93	740/6	Gala Tent - Pop up gazebos for Fireworks Event
	44		28/04/2026	£345.00	155/5	Jonco IT and Security Ltd - Pre meet review policy docs, calls, conclusion documents
	2026126		29/04/2026	£1,080.00	911	Evans & Langford - Interim no 2 Prof Fees re Car Park Drainage
	9000254079		29/04/2026	£4,179.01	350/7	Kent County Council - 20.04 Shared SID scheme
	54E refund		30/04/2026	£100.00	235/1/1	[REDACTED] - 54E returned deposit
	111		30/04/2026	£295.55	100/8	[REDACTED] - Finance support April
	0007		01/05/2026	£95.00	210/3	LRH Property Maintenance - Take out signs, fill holes, refit posts
	01.05.26		01/05/2026	£15.00	115/12	Ian's Window Cleaning - 01.05 clean of windows and cobwebs
	01052026BPC		01/05/2026	£63.00	115/14	Madginford Hall - Hire of hall for April
	INV 4482		02/05/2026	£314.64	115/13	BWP Creative Limited - Website hosting 01.06 - 31.05.27

£17,351.55

Direct Debits

Transaction Number	Invoice Number/Ref	Payment ref (if already paid)	Ledger Date	Gross	Heading	Transaction Details
FUTURE	1798942		01/04/2026	£66.34	410/2	Valda Energy - Metered lighting 24.03-23.04
FUTURE	SBS1350600		08/04/2026	£4.03	255/3	Spitfire Network Services - Monthly charges (CCTV)
FUTURE	10009664645		09/04/2026	£6.58	220/2	Castle Water - March water usage - Pond
FUTURE	PS-S26-25998		10/04/2026	£6.00	115/10	Payroo Ltd - Payroo charges Mar-Apr
FUTURE	10009753630		13/04/2026	£6.58	235/1/2	Castle Water - The St allotments - March 2026
FUTURE	M146 5N		20/04/2026	£101.70	115/2	British Telecom - BT charges April
FUTURE	246701		21/04/2026	£128.87	115/4	Managed Technology - Mono and colour printer ink usage
FUTURE	18937662		24/04/2026	£72.98	400/1	Valda Energy - Unmetered street lighting 24.03.26-23.04.26

£393.08

Lloyds Corporate Card Transactions - payable by Direct Debit

Transaction Number	Invoice Number/Ref	Payment ref (if already paid)	Ledger Date	Gross	Heading	Transaction Details
FUTURE	Lebara Card		03/04/2026	£5.95	115/7	Lloyds Card - Lebara - Charges for office mobile
FUTURE	Adobe 1		07/04/2026	£19.97	115/4	Lloyds Card - Adobe - 07.04 - 06.05 adobe charges
FUTURE	Adobe 2		20/04/2026	£24.26	115/4	Lloyds Card - Adobe - 20.04 -19.05 adobe charges
FUTURE	Camp Monitor		20/04/2026	£11.03	730/2	Lloyds Bank - Campaign monitor April
FUTURE	Card Chgs		05/05/2026	£3.00	115/17	Lloyds Bank - Card charges

£64.21

Payroll Costs

Transaction Number	Invoice Number/Ref	Payment ref (if already paid)	Ledger Date	Gross	Heading	Transaction Details
Staff Payments	Payroll		25/05/2026	£2,490.72	Salaries	May payroll
HMRC - usual pay	Payroll		25/05/2026	£826.48	Salaries	May payroll
NEST	Payroll		25/05/2026	£182.16	Salaries	May payroll

£3,499.36

TOTAL:

£21,308.20

check to pdf

£0.00

Agrees to pdf reports

Sales Refunds

Transaction Number	Invoice Number/Ref	Ledger Date	Gross	Heading	Transaction Details

£0.00

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS - As reviewed and agreed at the finance meeting on the 7th May 26

Bank	Acc. Type	Term	Ends	Interest Paid	Interest Rate	Balance
Unity	Current	n/a	n/a			£62,679.18
Unity - Instant Access	Instant Access Saver	n/a	n/a	Quarterly	2.10%	£99.21
Unity - Fixed Rate	Fixed Rater Saver	24 month	02/07/2026	Jul-26	5.00%	£85,000.00
Cambridge & Counties	Fixed Rater Saver	60 months	31/10/2029	Annually in Oct	4.40%	£52,206.03
Hampshire	Fixed Rater Saver	12 months	19/09/2026	Annually in September	4.22%	£83,630.04
Redwood Bank	95 day Notice Acc	n/a	n/a	Annually	3.50%	£109,971.78
Buckinghamshire BS	Instant Access Saver	n/a	30/10/2026	Annually in Dec	2.55%	£86,741.85
Redwood Bank	35 day Notice Acc	n/a	n/a	Annually in Apr	3.80%	£50,000.00

TOTAL

£530,328.09

Interest rate 3.25% from 30/5/26