



Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish Council

Madginford Hall, Egremont Road, Bearsted on Tuesday 6th October 2026 at 7.15pm

Present:

Cllr Jodie Pottage (Chair)
Cllr Carolyn Smith (Vice Chair)
Cllr Richard Ash MBE
Cllr Frank Jagger

Also, in attendance was the Clerk Joanne Upton and two members of the public.

Reports from members of the public

The members of the public thanked the office staff for putting up posters about litter and reported that The Spot-Less Lane Project had been invited to MBC awards afternoon for litter pickers, where they won an award and the founder of the project won litter picker of the year. The project will be looking at running community clean up events through the year, modelling what they have done here in other areas. They are working with MBC who are supplying the equipment. One member of the public reported he had collected 411 bags of litter since 1st November 2025, within a 2-mile radius of ME15.

1. Declarations of intention to record

The Clerk declared the meeting would be recorded for minuting purposes.

2. To Elect a Chairperson

Cllr Pottage proposed to accept Cllr Ash onto the Committee, to be ratified at Full Council, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.

Cllr Ash proposed Cllr Pottage, with no other nominations, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.

3. To Elect a Vice Chair

Cllr Pottage proposed Cllr Smith, with no other nominations, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

4. Apologies and Absences

Apologies were received and duly noted for Cllr's Huseyin and Spooner.

5. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

Cllr Smith declared she had been lobbied about item 16, the Coal Yard.

6. Signing of the minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 5th May 2026 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

7. Clerks Report

The Clerk had nothing to report.

8. Church Landway/Church Car Park (Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s57(1)(a) and LGA 1972s126)

Cllr Jagger advised that one of the two bins in the Church Lane car park was removed about a year ago and now the bin is always overflowing. The Clerk advised that she contacted MBC via the report a problem system, but the only response was that the bin was emptied, no response on the request to replace the second bin. It will be requested again.

9. General Maintenance (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10 and Highways Act 1980 s96)**a) Play Areas:**

- i. **BWT:** The Clerk explained that the wooden equipment needs replacing. BPC have spent over £12,000 on repairs in the last two years, and current repair quotes are over £7000 and this doesn't cover all repairs. The wooden equipment will continue to rot as it is soft wood and suffering with trimmer and water damage. The grass matting for safety cannot be easily repaired as new soil and grass will be worn away under use. The surrounding fence is rotting and has been deliberately damaged twice in the last couple of months. There are two quotes for replacing the multi-play unit and trim trail with new equipment, a new fence and wet pour safety surfacing which not only provides safety but helps to protect the equipment from damage and makes the play area useable all year round. The Clerk advised that both designs currently quoted can be scaled back for cost savings. Cllr Jagger asked if the overall cost of the project is proportionate to the number of people who will benefit from using it. Cllr Pottage proposed to recommend to Full Council to replace rather than repair equipment, if Full Council approve then the Clerk is to arrange for three quotes from play companies that manufacture and install their own products. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.
- ii. **The Green:** Cllr Pottage proposed to give delegated authority to the Clerk to arrange 3 quotes and proceed with the urgent repairs, ground subsidence, entrance matting, swing shackles and chain. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
- b) **Retaining wall opposite train station:** The Clerk advised the sleepers are rotting, but two Landscaping specialists have confirmed there is no immediate danger, and the work could be done in the next couple of years. This item will be deferred whilst we are waiting for quotes.
- c) **Retaining wall on the Green:** The Clerk advised that many of the posts are now loose and rotting, both Landscaping Specialists advised this is more urgent to repair. Upright sleepers, concreted in with protective paint and membrane to rear, tanking system to stop water reaching the wood will extend the lifespan. It was agreed to defer this item until the quotes are received. Both fall within the conservation area so may limit the options available and planning permission may be required.

10. Bearsted Green (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)

- a) **The Pond:** The Clerk advised that KCC will be clearing the tunnels from the road to the pond so road run off will fill into the pond and installing a filter system. The works will take place from 16th to 30th November 2026. Cllr Jagger requested to see the spec for the filter system.
- b) **Footpath behind Smarts Cottages:** Warings quote to clear weeds £255+VAT. Cllr Pottage proposed to approve the cost, this was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.
- c) **Replace dead tree on the Green:** Cllr Jagger advised this tree was planted by the Cricket club; the Clerk will contact them about replacing or removing the tree.

11. Allotments (Small Holding and Allotment Act 1908 ss23,25)

- a) **Allotment Plot Deposit:** Cllr Smith proposed to increase the deposit amount to £160, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
- b) **Plot Clearance:** Cllr Ash proposed to accept the quote from Warings at £260+VAT to clear a plot at the Church Lane site, this was seconded by Cllr Pottage and resolved with all in favour.

12. Open Spaces (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)

Meadow Bank: The Clerk advised that the work to clear vegetation for vehicle access is ongoing and the second circular path needs finishing. Cllr Pottage proposed to accept the cost of £640+VAT for two workdays in December. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

13. Defibrillator at Madginford

Cllr Pottage proposed to approve purchasing a lockable climate control box to install at Madginford for the replacement defib to a maximum cost of £460+VAT plus additional costs for an electrician to install it. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

14. Memorial Bench Policy

Cllr Ash proposed to adopt the policy with no changes, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.

15. Asset Transfers

Cllr Pottage proposed we ask Full Council if BPC wants to ask MBC about transferring ownership of the Rosemary Road open space and the land outside of St Peters Church, Button Lane with the view to protecting it from development. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

16. Coal Yard

A request was received from a resident who is investigating the possibility of purchasing and developing the land by the train station known as the coal yard, into a community/eco hub and enquired if the Parish Council would be interested in contributing financially (referencing a news article from years ago when the PC announced there was funding available for this project) and moving its office into the hub. The Committee acknowledged that the work involved in regenerating this site with listed buildings would be substantial and BPC funds have now been allocated to other projects. The Parish Council pays rent via a lease with KCC and would therefore not be able to move premises. This will be discussed at Full Council before responding to the resident.

17. Future Agenda Items

Play Areas
Standing items.
Budget.

18. Date of next meeting, 8th December 2026

There being no further business to transact, the meeting ended at 20:50 hrs.

Signed..... Date.....