

Minutes of a meeting of Bilsington Parish Council held at Bilsington Village Hall on Thursday 29th September 2022 at 6.30pm.

Present: Councillors: S Hudson (Chairman), M Bilham, L Lawson and R Thompson.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

Also present: P New (Neighbourhood Watch)

908. **Apologies for absence:**

Cllr S Carrington and Cllr D Robey (KCC)

909. **Declarations of interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

910. **Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 30th June 2022 were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

911. **Public Participation:**

There were no members of the public present.

912. **Kent County Councillor's Report:**

- The effect of soaring energy costs on KCC budgets continues to bite, in common with many other organisations. How this will all pan out remains to be seen, but it is likely to make things difficult as this year progresses and much more difficult next year. How the recent government announcement on the Energy Cap will affect this is still unclear.
- The Kent & Medway Business Fund Small Business Boost was launched on Thursday 8th September at Dartford Football Club. This is a scheme for loans to businesses of between £26k & £99k, and will be a companion to the existing larger loan scheme, which offers loans of between £100k & £500k. I will be running the SBB. The money comes from funds originally allocated by the government twelve years ago, after the Banking Crisis, when the banks were not lending to SMEs. Kent has successfully lent and then re-lent this money, as the loans have been repaid, and our scheme is one of the most successful in the UK.
- The situation with bus services remains difficult, exacerbated recently by a strike by Arriva. In reality, the existing delivery model is broken, and we really need to start with a blank piece of paper to design a new one - a difficult task.
- The KCC Full Council Meeting, due on 15th September, was postponed, due to the Queen's death, along with a number of other meetings. A meeting to allow KCC Members to pay tributes to the Queen was held instead, and a number of Members spoke about their personal memories of the Queen in a moving and eloquent way.
- I am not sure where we are with your various drainage issues, but if anything is still a problem, please let me know.

913. **Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:**

Nothing to report.

914. **Neighbourhood Watch:**

See attached.

915. **Planning:**

PA/2022/2016 – Hamilton Farm, Stone Cross Road – The continued change of use of part of holding by up to 13 touring caravans. Associated access, landscaping and amenity building. The erection of an extension to existing building used for purposes ancillary to airstrip (retrospective).

Resolved: whilst the Parish Council has no objection to the extension to the existing building but it is unaware of any applications for change of use for the stationing of up to 13 caravans. It has been noted that the site is listed as a certified location for up to 5 caravans. The Parish Council believes this limit should be complied with.

PA/2022/2023 – Pear Tree Farm, Newchurch Road – internal alterations including removing a wall between the existing kitchen and larder, relocating the door from the kitchen to the dining room and replacing a window.

Resolved: The Parish Council supports the application.

PA/2022/2017 – Mill House, Marsh Road, Ruckinge – Proposed replacement dwelling and detached garage Re-submission of previous scheme Ref: 21/00773/AS).

Resolved: The Parish Council offers no objection to the application.

NOT/2022/2161 – Bridge Farm, Bilsington – Prior notification for the change of use of agricultural building and land within its curtilage to a dwelling house and associated operational development.

Resolved: The Parish Council offers no objection to the application.

PA/2022/2112 – Hans Farm, Kitsbridge Lane, Ruckinge – Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a replacement dwelling with associated parking, garden land, landscaping and ecological enhancements (revised scheme to 21/01566/AS)

Resolved: The Parish Council has no objection to the application subject to the conditions of planning permission 21/01566/AS being applied.

Y19/0257/FH – Land bounded by; the M20 and Channel Tunnel Railway Link (CTRL) to the North; the A20/Stone Street and Sandling Park to the East; Harringe Lane to the West, and; Aldington Road to the South – amended outline planning application, with all matters reserved, for a comprehensive residential-led mixed use development comprising:

- Up to 8,500 residential homes including market and affordable homes; age restricted homes, assisted living homes, extra care facilities, care homes, sheltered housing and care villages;

- The demolition of identified existing buildings;
- A range of community uses including primary and secondary schools, health centres and nursery facilities;
- Retail and related uses;
- Leisure facilities;
- Business and commercial uses;
- Open space and public realm;
- Burial ground, sustainable urban drainage systems;
- Utility and energy facilities and infrastructure;
- Waste and waste water infrastructure and management facilities;
- Vehicular bridge links;
- Undercroft, surface and multi-storey car parking;
- Creation of new vehicular and pedestrian accesses into the site, and creation of a new vehicular, pedestrian and cycle network within the site;
- Improvements to the existing highway and local road network;
- Lighting;
- Engineering works, infrastructure and associated facilities;
- Together with interim works or temporary structures required by the development and other associated works including temporary meanwhile uses.

Resolved: Bilsington Parish Council objects to the application on the following grounds:

- **No consideration has been given to traffic flows on the B2067 beyond Otterpool Lane it has been identified in the Parish that when there are issues on either the M20 or A20 the volume of traffic increases beyond the capacity of the road which is single track immediately past the White Horse Public house. It has been evidenced that Satnav users are frequently routed onto the B2067 rather than the A20 or M20 as this is the quicker route to follow. It is noted that other routes have been projected to have increased traffic levels in excess of 15%.**
- **The Parish Council is concerned that the provision of school places will not be available when the first properties are occupied necessitating parents having to resort to cars to take children to school in neighbouring districts, secondary pupils from neighbouring Aldington are already placed at Homewood in Tenterden necessitating a dedicated bus service which uses the inadequate B2067 through the parish of Bilsington.**
- **The Parish Council is concerned that the water demands of the new development will place significant strain on already under pressure resources given the hose pipe ban introduced this summer which is to stay in place until 2023 at the earliest.**
- **What provision has been made for energy? The application mentions facilities and infrastructure is this the installation of heat pumps and**

solar panels to every property to reduce the apparent need for huge solar farms in the neighbouring district to the application site.

916. Finance:

Schedule of payments:

Staff costs June	£371.01
Staff costs July	£311.40
Staff costs August	£329.66
Clerk's expenses	£56.00
Information Commissioners Office	£40.00
Bilsington Village Hall	£68.25

Resolved: to authorise the payments listed.

917. Village Hall:

The first batch of tea towels were well received and have sold out a further batch is being ordered. Grants are currently being sought for further works to the hall.

Arranged events include a psychic evening and a quiz night.

918. Civility and Respect:

Report BPC/22/07 reports on a review of the standards of behaviour in public life which has been conducted over a number of years.

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report BPC/22/07**
- 2. To receive and adopt the updated dignity at work policy**
- 3. To agree to the Parish Council signing up to the Civility and Respect pledge.**

919. Other items for information:

Arrangements for the defibrillator training session are still to be made. This will be followed up.

920. Exclusion of the Public:

Resolved that under the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.

921. Parish Clerk:

Resolved to amend the Parish Clerk's pay scale to Spinal Column Point 19.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9pm.

REPORT TO BILSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL 29th SEPTEMBER 2022.

I trust councillors had the chance of a break from business during August and enjoyed the good weather. Criminals, crime, and community matters were still front and centre of my work during that period. I am also aware that you will have had the additional commitments surrounding the sad passing of her majesty Queen Elizabeth in September.

I will give a verbal report on the PCSO position for BILSINGTON and changes to ASHFORD POLICE.

I will report that much of my community work involved promoting messages and fire safety guidance due to the very hot weather and drought conditions raising the fire risk for the area.

My fire service background gives me considerable experience in this field and constant guidance was issued. Although temperatures returned to more normal levels the fire risk remained high and vigilance and care was needed to ensure fire did not damage the countryside and incur losses to farmers.

The term 'wildfire' has been overused by the media however the speed of travel of fires during this hot dry spell cannot be overstated.

I also visited Aldington Fire Station where I had a tour of the appliance and then a meeting with the crew. I had the opportunity to discuss firefighting tactics which we used in the Brigade during the very hot summer of 1976. The drought in 1976 started earlier but the temperatures never reached the very high levels of this year.

During the meeting I have agreed to help promote recruitment for on call fire fighters in Aldington. It is essential that enough recruits join the service to ensure the appliance is crewed and available for the locality and surrounding villages. Operations this year has seen appliances deployed a long way from their stations and Aldington is no exception. When I retired from the Brigade, I was Head of Operations for the whole of Kent and I had 66 fire stations under my command. Sadly, that number has been reduced so ensuring the ones we have are crewed is essential. This station is important for BILSINGTON.



ALDINGTON CREW with myself on recent visit.

CRIME

The normal crime risks remain the same. Matters to be alert and vigilant for are

Properties kept secure; vehicles secure with nothing on show especially last park at night. Garages, sheds, barns, stables, outbuildings, and any form of external storage can be targets and indeed have been across Kent.

As always, our strategy must be what can we learn from other communities to keep Bilsington residents safe and secure. To keep Bilsington residents crime free and free from the fear of being a victim of crime also.

Other crime risk areas remain the same. **Thefts of fuel both vehicle and domestic heating oil. Thefts of number plates to again be used for fuel thefts at pumps.**

Internet shopping off doorsteps and the added risk of the delivery vehicles now being trailed and followed by criminals mean that even the rural areas may suffer this type of crime. A parcel left on a doorstep in Bilsington may have been safe a year ago. We may have “got away with it” a year ago, the risk has changed now.

In Ashford District a complete van was taken whilst the driver was engaged making a delivery to a property.

The type of crime that I have warned about constantly to all areas have been the theft of tools/equipment from Garages, sheds, barns, outbuildings, and any form of external storage.

Sadly, thieves struck in rural areas recently and you will have seen my work in trying to assist operational colleagues and as important to ensure the community is warned and alerted to the fact criminals are active in the area.

My work also involves support to the victims of crime.

In the annex to this report are the issues that I believe we must risk assess as to where **BILSINGTON COULD BE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE**, and I have set out examples and campaigns to try to combat these issues.

1. BREAK INS TO SHEDS, BARNs, STABLES and like buildings
2. BOGUS CALLERS/ROGUE TRADERS
3. SCAMS but especially linked to THE ENERGY COST CONCERNS
4. FLY TIPPOING ON BILSINGTON/RUCKINGE BORDERS

EXAMPLES OF THE CRIMES SET OUT ABOVE

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE OF A RECENT INCIDENT IN NEARBY ALDINGTON

News

www.kentonline.co.uk

To advertise: 01634 227817



CCTV showed masked burglars creeping around a mobile home at Bonnington Farm in Aldington; right, Tess Wilde and Mark Homewood run the farm but now say they are living in fear

Burglars creep around farm

Terrifying CCTV footage captured masked burglars creeping around a kitchen after breaking into a mobile home.

The thieves stole a 100-year-old machete after smashing their way inside the property at Bonnington Farm in Aldington, near Ashford.

Owners Mark Homewood and Tess Wilde are now living in fear of being targeted again by criminals, following the second raid on their home in a year.

The couple have been trying to start their own small farm, like Mr Homewood's grandparents had.

"We were hoping to continue passing it down the generations," he said.

"Unfortunately the fear of crime is beginning to take a toll on us."

The burglars caused thousands of pounds' worth of damage and stole Mr Homewood's grandfather's century-old

machete.

"The machete was of great sentimental value," he said.

"My grandparents used to own orchards and it was well-used by them pruning the apple trees."

The thieves broke into the farm in the early hours of Wednesday, August 17 and Mr Homewood says they left nothing untouched.

CCTV shows them arriving at 3.25am, managing to break a Kryptonite D-lock on the gate

and driving their pick-up onto the field.

They then smash through the front door of the mobile home, which is currently used for storage.

"Thankfully we were not inside," said Mr Homewood.

"They went through the whole place, opened every draw. From what we can tell they didn't steal much more than a pot of hibiscus and a machete.

"We have been left with thou-

sands of pounds' worth of damage to clear up."

The farm, which has 14 alpacas as well as four baby alpacas, was also broken into last year.

Mr Homewood said: "The last time we were targeted by a criminal was August 26 last year when they cut through the fence and left it wide open.

"Fortunately, none of the alpacas escaped."

Police continue to make inquiries into the burglary.

RURAL CRIME.

The work we are doing in this parish alongside neighbouring parishes will need to be at its very best in the remainder of this year and into next. As a recession bites alongside energy costs, we will need to be alert and vigilant.



Aldington and Bonnington Village Community Group

Peter New · 5 d ·

Dear Readers

Firstly thank you to the Admins for cutting me a bit of slack in reposting a previous residents post but I wanted my appeal all together in case other posts are put on whilst I was writing.

The crime below is exactly the sort of crime we face especially in rural areas.

This was in Roman Road opposite the school, and anyone with information or by chance any form of CCTV/Camera Doorbell/or by total luck DASHCAM footage then please contact the police.

The victim has also given me a couple of pictures of the bikes taken.

CRIME NUMBER IS 30-0218

Garages, Sheds, Barns, Stables and any form of Outbuildings or External Storage are vulnerable to these sorts of criminals.

Please try to ensure buildings are as secure as possible. It is absolutely essential that all crimes especially these types and indeed attempts and failed crimes are reported so we can track the extent of the problem Remember you may be lucky a neighbour may not be!! I am in touch with the Chair person of your Council Linda Harman and further appeals/posts will follow as officers investigate.

Please remain alert and vigilant and anything suspicious use 999 immediately this is the clearest possible indication criminals are active in the area and in our rural locations we need to be extra alert.

Thank you all for your assistance

Peter

Peter New(peternew1@aol.com)

Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch

Crime ref is 30-0218

We are apparently waiting on crime scene investigators..

They broke into the caravan, and 2 sheds and attempted the garage.. but the bikes were the only thing taken we believe..

👍 Like 💬 Comment

Hi all.. wanted to make you all aware we had a visit last night.. (in the houses opposite the school) they have broken into a caravan and stolen 2 little girls bikes that were lent to them for the weekend..

They have tried multiple locations to get into our garage but have failed.. some people really are the worse!



Protect your property

Given the opportunity, thieves will target **sheds** and **garages** for items such as high-value power tools and bikes.

Take measures to protect your valuables and reduce this risk of theft.



- Keep garages or sheds locked when not in use
- Consider fitting security alarms and external lights where possible
- Security mark valuable items and keep receipts somewhere safe
- Lock away tools or equipment that could be stolen or used to break in to your property
- Dispose of packaging carefully – wrapping and boxes can advertise rich pickings for criminals

An area of great concern is 'SCAMS' and sadly in the Ashford District 2 pensioner households were hit by 2 very elaborate scams totalling £10k.

One especially concerning involved the impersonating of Police Officers.

Another area that I am working on as we meet is criminals will look to exploit the fears of 'energy costs' especially in the homes of vulnerable people.

Bogus callers will arrive on doorsteps in pairs well dressed and with badges and lanyards and ask to inspect the insulation in lofts to see if the occupier qualifies for free upgrades in insulation. One criminal will enter the loft and call up the resident to answer a few questions and it is at that moment that the second criminal who is doing the paperwork on the ground floor will strike taking handbags, phones, and anything cash wise in the home.

We know that sadly many pensioners worried sick about fuel costs will invite people in without a moment's thought. I will give a verbal report on my work to hand to try and combat this.

I will be introducing a further enhancement to try to protect vulnerable members of the community. 2 very important campaign posters are below for your attention.

#ScamAlert ! A Kent resident has received a scam text message claiming that the victim is eligible for a discounted energy bill under the Energy Bills Support Scheme with a link that takes the victim to a realistic looking government webpage.

🚫 The website is fake & this is a scam! The discounted energy bill will be done automatically.

Received a suspicious message? Remember to:

- ✓ Not click on any links
- ✓ Send suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk & texts to 7726
- ✓ Block the number or email address

For more info about how the Energy Bills Support Scheme discount works, visit: <https://bit.ly/3C5uTfV>

#ConnectedCommunities



ALERT



DISCOUNTED ENERGY



TEXT MESSAGE SCAM





Public Protection - Kent

2 d ·

[#ScamAlert](#) ⚠ Residents in Kent have received scam telephone calls, making false claims that they are from "the Council" working on behalf of the Conservation Office. When questioned and asked for more details the scammer gets defensive and rude. The scammer went on to ask the resident about loft insulation in her house. At which point the woman hung up.

This is a SCAM ! Do not give any personal or financial details - end the call.

Report scams to [Citizens Advice](#) Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133. If you need done work to your home, contact Trading Standards Checked on 03000 41 64 38.

Please warn friends and family!

[#ConnectedCommunities](#) [#ScamAware](#)



ALERT



**KENT RESIDENTS
TARGETED BY LOFT
INSULATION SCAM**

Kent Fraud Alert System



Update On Courier Fraudsters active in Kent

Further to our our previous alerts on this, we have seen further Courier Fraud type offences in the East of the County but in the last couple of days we have seen a movement to the West of the county in particular in **Sittingbourne** and the surrounding areas. There have also been reports of attempted offences in **Maidstone, Borough Green, Cranbrook, Dartford** and **Sissinghurst**.

The fraudsters are still stating they are are Police Officers and quite often from Police Stations in London. They are giving various stories but often will say that they have arrested/have person(s) in custody and will claim that they were in possession of copies of the victims Bank Cards. It's a **SCAM**.

Remember the Police will never call and ask you to withdraw cash to be collected by a courier. Neither will they ask you to hand over your Bank Cards as part of an investigation.

Remember the ABC of Fraud awareness and **NEVER ASSUME** or **BELIEVE** a call is genuine and always **CONFIRM** by ringing a trusted number (see our leaflet opposite).

If you think that you may have been a victim of this type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately which you can do by calling 159 and call us on 101.

Have you been asked to withdraw cash by the police?



This is a scam.

The police or your bank will **never**:

- ask for your bank details or PIN
- ask you to transfer or withdraw and handover sums of money
- send a courier to collect your bank cards, cash or PIN

If you are unsure about a call or visitor you have received:

- Don't give out any personal or financial information.
- Hang up or close your front door to check the caller's identity.
- If they phoned you, wait 10 minutes before you use the phone again (or use a different telephone) in case they stay on the line.
- Contact their company yourself or dial 101 for the police – do not call a number they have provided.
- Report suspicious activity straight away.



Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report
Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact
In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**
If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service **18000**.
Or text us on 999 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service,
www.kent.police.uk   



Kent Police

Contacting Kent Police

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In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**
If deaf or speech impaired, text 'police' and your message to **60066**
www.kent.police.uk   

Beware of suspicious callers

Most people who call at your home are genuine.

But sometimes people may turn up unannounced and try to:

- Trick their way into your home to steal valuables or money
- Sell you services or items you do not want or need
- Carry out unnecessary repairs to your home at inflated prices.



If concerned about someone calling at your home, **don't open your door.**

You can also:

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Never leave your door unattended
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you.



**Kent
Police**




Contacting Kent Police

Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report

Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact

In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**

If deaf or speech impaired, text '**police**' and your message to **60066**

www.kent.police.uk   



Fly Tipping has become a serious problem in nearby RUCKINGE but also encroaching onto BILSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL land. I am sure you will have followed my work in the media to try to combat this troubling spike in a crime that blights local communities.

May I close by thanking council for their continued support which will be essential in the battle against crime as we move into the latter third of 2022 and the changing risks as autumn and winter approaches

THANK YOU

Peter

91725 Police Volunteer Peter New & Community Neighbourhood Watch

