

BREDHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting
Held at Blacksmiths Barn on
Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 7.07 pm



Present: Cllr Vanessa Jones (Chair), Cllr Sue Harwood, Cllr Richard Collins, Cllr Claire Sharp, Cllr Toby Rowe and Cllr Ian Hopson after item 226/25.
 Melanie Fooks – Clerk & RFO
 Public – 6

222/25 Election of Chair, including Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Vanessa Jones was elected as Chair and unanimously agreed by all Cllrs. Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

223/25 Election of Vice-Chair, including Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Greg Davis was elected as Vice-Chair and unanimously agreed by all Cllrs. Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

224/25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies **accepted** from Borough Cllr Stephen Thompson. Apologies were not received from County Councillor Spencer Dixon or PC Ben Cox.

225/25 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Jones declared an interest in item 243 as she is a Bredhurst Village Hall Trustee.

226/25 Co-option of Parish Councillor

Of the two applicants it was agreed by Cllrs to co-opt Ian Hopson to join Bredhurst Parish Council. Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

227/25 Motion to exclude the press and public from the meeting for all items in the Closed Session.

Motion **agreed** by all Cllrs. Proposed Cllr Sharp, seconded Cllr Collins.

228/25 Minutes of the 9th April 2025 Parish Council Meeting and Closed Session.

The minutes were **agreed** by Cllrs and signed by the Chair.

229/25 Matters Arising (for information only)

Action Points from 09-04-25

Action Points	Actions	Clerk or Cllr	Completed or Agenda Item on 14/05/25
AP1	Circulate the updated Co-option policy and procedure	Clerk	Completed
AP2	Instruct Southern Fencing to carry out the repair	Clerk	Completed
AP3	Obtain further quotes for cleaning play equipment	Clerk	In progress
AP4	Instruct Lucanus Services to carry out VTA	Clerk	Completed
AP5	Obtain quote to extend paved area for salt bin at the Barn	Clerk	In progress

Public Open Session

230/25 Review of Committees and Representatives

The Personnel Committee was appointed and consists of Cllrs Jones, Davis, Rowe and Collins. The Personnel Committee's Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation was reviewed with no changes.

231/25 Review of BPC Representatives to Outside Bodies

Kent Association of Local Councils – 2 representatives: Cllrs Claire Sharp and Ian Hopson.
 Lidsing Stakeholder Group – 1 representative: Cllr Sue Harwood (Cllr Jones attends in her MBC capacity).

232/25 Annual Review of Policies and Procedures

The following policies were reviewed and adopted:

Standing Orders	Debit Card Use Policy
Financial Regulations	Delegation of Powers - Planning
Risk Management Policy and Register (in progress deferred to June)	Equality and Diversity Policy
CCTV Policy	Financial Transaction Policy
Community Field Policy	Publication Scheme
Compliments, Complaints & Comments Policy	

The Clerk will produce a calendar for further policies to be reviewed throughout the year.

AP1: Clerk to create calendar and assess policies for review.

233/25 Meeting Schedule

Cllrs received and noted the schedule of meetings for the year ahead.

234/25 Police

The crime reports for March & April were **received** and **noted**.

235/25 Kent County Council Elections Update

Cllrs were informed that Cllr Spencer Dixon now represents Maidstone Rural North.

236/25 Community Playing Field

- a. Cllrs **received** and **noted** the Clerk's visual inspection report for both play areas.
 Low risk issues will continue to be monitored. Caps to be purchased and replaced as necessary.
 - 3 x stepping logs have sections missing.
 - 1 x timber on springboard is cracking.
 - Replace several caps missing from Junior Multiplay and wooden equipment.**AP2: Clerk to monitor wooden equipment and order caps from suppliers.**
- b. Cllrs **received** and **noted** the update regarding the safety surfacing within the fenced play area. A report and quote were received from the company who repaired the safety surface in Autumn 2022. The Clerk confirmed that Safeplay have assessed this as low risk and to monitor. Their next inspection is in July and the ROSPA annual inspection is in July/August. Cllrs unanimously **agreed** not to carry out the repairs now, but to monitor the surface.
AP3: Clerk to monitor the safety surface weekly and await quarterly and annual inspections.
- c. Cllrs **ratified** the Clerk's decision after consulting with Cllrs out of meeting to purchase 3 new playground signs at a cost of £275.00. Cllr Sharp proposed, seconded by Cllr Jones with all in favour.
- d. Cllr Claire Sharp and the Clerk attended a playground inspection course on Monday 12th May which was presented by David Yearly, Head of ROSPA. They found it very informative and will carry out weekly visual inspections of the playing field and play areas starting w/c 26th May 2025.
AP4: Clerk to devise a weekly inspection rota and record sheet.
- e. Cllrs **agreed** a 'No Mow May' policy to be drafted in support of a national campaign not to cut grass during the month of May to help provide more nectar for pollinating insects. The playing field will be mown in the centre with wider borders left uncut. The policy will be brought back to the June meeting for adoption. Once adopted the grounds maintenance contractor will be notified.
AP5: Clerk to draft policy.

237/25 Blacksmiths Barn

The Clerk confirmed the replacement blinds could not be fitted as the track is damaged. Cllrs unanimously **agreed** to a replacement track at a cost of £106.08. A date for fitting to be agreed.

238/25 Village Maintenance

- a. Cllrs noted that, due to the dry weather, it has not been possible to re-turf the area outside Green Court. The area has been rotovated and turf will now be laid in due course.
- b. Two areas within the village have been identified for weeding by hand:

- Around the allotments/allotment noticeboard.
- The pavement in front of the raised bed in Hurstwood Road.

As the grounds maintenance contract does not include weed control, Cllr Jones proposed, seconded by Cllr Sharp with all in favour to ask the Barn's gardener to carry out the work.

AP6: Clerk to instruct the gardener to carry out the weeding.

239/25 Planning

- a. Lidsing Garden Development / Strategic Sites SPD Stakeholder Steering Group update. Cllr Jones reported that at the last meeting proposals regarding green spaces were discussed. All stakeholders agreed they were too small and fragmented. The next meeting is on 12th June at the Barn.

AP7: Clerk to book date in Blacksmith Barn diary.

- b. [25/501584/SUB](#) - 3 Blind Lane Bredhurst Kent ME7 3JR. Submission of details pursuant to conditions 10 - Hard and soft landscaping, 11 - Tree protection, 14 - SUDs scheme and 15 - Surface water drainage, Subject to [20/504153/FULL](#). **Noted.**
- c. [25/501746/BGP](#) – Land on the east side of Dunn Street, Bredhurst ME7 3LX. Submission of Biodiversity Gain Plan in relation to application [24/504778/FULL](#). **Noted.**
- d. Other planning matters.

240/25 Finance

- a. Financial statement and bank reconciliation for P/E 30th April 2025 was **agreed** by all Cllrs and signed by the Chair.
- b. All payments made out of and at meeting were **agreed** by Cllrs. Cllrs Davis and Harwood were nominated to authorise forthcoming payments.

Payments made out of meeting.

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
08	EDF Energy – Blacksmith Barn (Nov 24-Mar 25)	1584.19	79.21	1663.40	RC/CS
09	Nest Pension (Clerk's Pension Mar/Apr)				RC/CS
10	M Fooks Office and Barn Expenses	89.51	17.56	107.07	RC/CS
11	Rachel Ford – Gardening March 25 (8 Hours)	220.00		220.00	RC/CS
12	TEEC Ltd INV 5288 1yr renewal of org.uk domain	7.00	1.40	8.40	RC/CS
13	BCTec Ltd INV30141 Initial set up/migration of Microsoft 365	137.50	27.50	165.00	RC/CS
14	Safeplay – Quarterly Playground Inspection (Apr)	56.00	11.20	67.20	RC/CS
15	Bytes Software - Last old Microsoft Subscription	9.64	1.93	11.57	RC/CS
16	ICO Annual Subscription	47.00		47.00	RC/CS
17	OneCom Ltd Inv. 7544302 Barn Internet	38.69	7.74	46.43	RC/CS
18	M Fooks (April Salary + Office Rent)				RC/CS
19	HMRC Contribution (April)				RC/CS
20	UTB Monthly Service Charge	6.00		6.00	RC/CS
21	Southern Water (DD) Barn Water	33.82		33.82	RC/CS
22	Every Little Nook (March) Invoice 0100	64.00		64.00	RC/CS
23	Every Little Nook (April) Invoice 0101	48.00		48.00	RC/CS
24	BCTec Ltd Inv30140 March Tech support	55.00	11.00	66.00	RC/CS

25	BCTec Ltd Inv30169 Microsoft Subscription April	28.20	5.64	33.84	RC/CS
26	Rachel Ford - Gardening April 25 (8 hours)	220.00		220.00	RC/CS
27	Southern Fencing. Community Field Gates Repair	66.67	13.33	80.00	RC/CS

* VAT to be reclaimed.

Payments for authorising at meeting.

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
28	Laura Bartley – Hire Deposit Ref 119-24/25	100.00		100.00	SH/GD
29	Cllr Sharp. Inspection Course Expenses. 6.4 miles	27.63		27.63	SH/GD
30	Westbury Signs – 3 x Playground/ Field Signs	275.00	55.00	330.00	SH/GD

* VAT to be reclaimed.

- c. **Noted** receipts and payments for the period 01/04/2025 - 30/04/2025.
- d. Cllrs **noted** the signatories on the UTB Account had been updated to include Cllr Toby Rowe and deletion of Dan Fifield and Lee Gooda.
- e. Cllrs **noted** the Lloyds Corporate Multipay card had been received and activated and would be used for all future Parish Council expenses. The Clerk confirmed that monthly reconciliations will be carried out and will appear on monthly agendas. The Clerk confirmed a Policy had been written for the use of debit cards, and this had also been added to the Financial Transaction policy.
- f. Cllrs **noted** the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payment of £185.64 had been received for [21/506626/FULL](#) - Stables At Stud Farm, Dunn Street Road. Cllr Jones proposed, seconded by Cllr Sharp with all in favour for this to be used for the purchase of the playground signs.
- g. The Clerk informed Cllrs that she was preparing the end of year accounts to present to the internal auditors (KCC) on 23rd May. The audited accounts will be presented to Cllrs at June's meeting.
- h. Cllr Jones proposed, seconded by Cllr Sharp to give delegated authority to the Clerk to authorise the insurance policy renewal once the Asset Register has been updated and circulated to Cllrs.

AP8: Clerk to send updated Asset Register to insurers and circulate revised insurance premium to Cllrs.

241/25 Reports from Parish, Borough, and County Councillors (if present)

Written report from Cllr Thompson was circulated.

242/25 Correspondence

Cllrs **received** and **noted** the following correspondence:

- NALC'S Chief Executive Bulletin April Bulletin
- A request from a resident for the police to carry out further speed checks in the village. PC Ben Cox sent a written response to the Clerk and explained the Kent Police position on 20mph areas is to support Community Speedwatch (CSW) groups. These groups allow residents to actively participate in making their area safer without relying on routine police enforcement, in line with Department for Transport guidance that 20mph areas should be largely self-enforcing. A January 2025 District Report by the Kent Police CSW Manager highlights widespread inactivity of CSW groups across Maidstone, with notable exceptions such as Kingswood (242 sessions) and Staplehurst (over 100 sessions resulting in 2,500 letters). In cases of repeated speeding, the Police deliver fourth-observation letters in person, as occurred 53 times in Staplehurst. Although Bredhurst has not had a fatal collision since 2003, the creation of a local CSW group is recommended. Support, including equipment and guidance, is available from the Kent Community Speedwatch team.

Cllrs unanimously **agreed** to circulate a flyer to residents to encourage volunteers to come forward and set up a speed watch group for monitoring traffic through the Village.

AP9: Clerk to produce flyer. Circulate to Cllrs for approval then to residents once approved.

243/25 Closed Session

Personnel matters – Details minuted separately.

Future management of Bredhurst Village Hall – Details minuted separately.

Enforcement - Details minuted separately.

244/25 Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 9.02 pm with no further business to discuss.

245/25 Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 11th June 2025 at 7.00pm.

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