

**PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN**

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026, 7pm,  
Quinlan Centre Benenden Hospital**

Present	Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Ham, Lewis, McMillan, Taylor, Thomas. Cllr Dawlings. C Levett, Clerk. 1 parishioner.	
Item		Action Responsibility
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Cllr Grant, Neville, Palmer, Russell.	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	No declarations of interest.	
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2026 were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.	
4. REPORTS BY COUNTY/BOROUGH COUNCILLORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full reports circulated.</li> <li>• Appendix A.</li> </ul>	
5. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS	Cllr Thomas attended Parish Chairs meeting on 24 <sup>th</sup> March.	
6. PLANNING	<p>a. <u>Applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26/00563/FULL Millers Meadow, Cranbrook Road. Single storey rear/side extension. Demolition of existing front walkway cover and store. Replacement front porch roof, changes to fenestration and the introduction of tile hanging. Construction of an ancillary building.</li> <li>❖ Previous consent under 22/03288/FULL for single storey rear extension, alterations to front porch, external materials and fenestration. BPC supported.</li> <li>❖ Ancillary building to contain garage, gym and study.</li> <li>❖ Materials: Walls: red brick to match existing and tile hanging to the front elevation. Windows: white UPVC windows to match existing and black sliding doors.</li> <li>❖ Proposed floor plans show the garage to be 1.5 storey, 2 car spaces within; gym to rear on ground floor; upper floor accessed by external stairs to accommodate home office and storage.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application with a request for lighting conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26/00711/FULL Bramley Dial Cranbrook Road. Proposed single storey rear extensions, front porch, pergola and rear terrace; conversion of existing garage/store to a habitable room; alterations to fenestration.</li> </ul> <p>As a neighbour to the property Cllr Thomas took no part in the discussion and decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ SITE HISTORY: 94/00810/FULL Two-story extension; 94/00811/FULL Stable block and manege; 96/01643/FULL Tractor shed and apple store; 07/02471/FULL Two storey front extension to house, alterations and link to garage; 16/06977/FULL loft conversion to provide new master bedroom suite comprising bedroom, ensuite bathroom and sitting area, other internal and external alterations; 17/00221/FULL Construction of outdoor riding arena (20m x 20m) for private use; 17/02013/NMAMD Non-material amendment in relation to 16/06977/FULL — Widen two existing and one new small dormer windows, amend feature window to rear elevation to a Hal-hipped roof and revisions to internal layouts at first and loft level to introduce a fully compliant staircase in place of existing narrow stair. All approved.</li> <li>❖ COMMENTS: Minor single storey extensions to rear of garage and front entrance lobby link to garage. Conversion of garage and rear store to accommodate: ‘dog lobby’ and coats; utility room; games room; gym.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26/00791/FULL Ramsden Farm, Dingle den. Retrospective: alterations to fenestration &amp; rooflights; addition of flues; erection of wall; installation of sewage treatment plant; conversion of outbuilding to art studio/gym; landscape alterations; Non-retrospective - construction of swimming pool</li> <li>❖ Retrospective changes are alterations to original consent under 19/03025/FULL.</li> <li>❖ BPC supported in principle demolition of agricultural buildings to a single dwelling and construction of smaller single-storey build as a 5-bed dwelling, but raised concerns about the PRow, gardens, access and parking arrangements which were not taken on board.</li> <li>❖ The retrospective changes (i.e. as built) are:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Installation of 2no log burners and associated flues on the western elevation;</li> <li>2. Reduction in overall number of rooflights from 17 to 5, and relocation of 1no rooflight;</li> <li>3. Erection of additional wall along north elevation of garage to partially enclose the space;</li> <li>4. Relocation of 1no window along eastern boundary from utility to bedroom, as well as</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	

Chairman..... Date.....

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*These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting, but a summary of discussion and decisions taken at the meeting.*

	<p>alterations to and removal of shutters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Retrospective works to the wider site: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Installation of treatment plant to south of dwelling. Screened by mature trees and planting.</li> <li>2. Conversion of existing outbuilding to gym/studio space.</li> </ol> </li> <li>❖ New works: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New garage door on east elevation to enclose existing car barn.</li> <li>2. Natural swimming pool to east of main dwelling, alongside converted outbuilding.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26/00777/LBC Feoffee Cottages, Walkhurst Road. Conversion of an existing building comprising 6no flats into 4no cottages; demolitions of internal partition walls; addition of porch &amp; 2no staircases; alterations to the external fenestration; associated landscaping</li> <li>❖ D&amp;A Statement Info: Grade II Listed. Originally constructed as a workhouse, subdivided into 4 separate dwellings, subdivided again into 6 flats (5 x 1-bed &amp; 1 x 2-bed) for use as social / affordable houses for Benenden. Proposal to convert back to 4 cottages: 2 x 1-bed, 1 x 2-bed, 1 x 3-bed. Pre-app advice sought under 25/02525/PAMEET and scheme revised as a result of meetings with planning officer and conservation officer.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application subject to the works being satisfactory to the Conservation Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25/01076/SUB Benenden Hospital, Goddards Green Road - Submission of details in relation to condition 27 (boundary treatment details) of 23/03274/FULL</li> <li>❖ Original submission of details April 2025. BPC sought clarification on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Height of proposed brick walls.</li> <li>○ Height of brick walls and height of the finished closeboarded fencing on top.</li> <li>○ Height of brick walls and height of finished post and rail fencing on top.</li> <li>○ BPC also raised concerns and requested a different form of boundary treatment for properties to east of Garland Terrace overlooking wildlife site/open space, and overlooking adjoining field. The visual impact of the close boarded solid fencing when viewed from the south would give a negative urbanising impact on rural nature of this part of the site.</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ Amendments and more detail received following comments from Landscape &amp; Biodiversity Officer &amp; BPC. However, the alternative form of boundary treatments, requested by BPC has not been addressed and remain at 1.8m high close boarded fencing.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed the following response: BPC notes that the alternative form of fencing to the 1.8m high closeboarded, requested on 18 June 2025, has not been addressed in these amendments. Plots 25 to 30 inclusive all back onto the open meadows within the site. BPC requests post and rail with stock wire fencing on these boundaries to lessen the impact on the landscape. Closeboarded fencing has a solid and harsh appearance and ruins the rural aspect of the location. Whilst BPC appreciates that its use is preferred between dwellings for privacy, the BNDP does refer to the avoidance of solid fencing under Policy BD4 b) 'Plot boundaries should be designed to complement the surrounding countryside, using, for example, native hedging with mesh, or stock fencing; solid fencing should be avoided.' Boundary Treatment Plan 1/3 drawing no. 086.1 C1 shows that the proposed fencing around the children's play area is of 1200mm high Cleft Chestnut post and rail (stock wire where required). BPC suggests that this is an inappropriate form of fencing for a play area. The playgrounds in Benenden and Iden Green are enclosed with picket-style fencing. This stops children from climbing on the fence and using it as play equipment. It's also safer and prevents domestic and wild animals from entering and soiling the area.</p> <p>b. <u>Other Planning Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26/00550/TNOT56 Existing Base Station Land at Beacon Farm, Rolvenden Road, Benenden TN17 4BU — Telecommunications Consultation: Installation of a generator; alterations to perimeter fence; new AMF panel; replacement battery blocks and ancillary development.</li> <li>❖ SITE CONSTRAINTS: 9 in total.</li> <li>❖ SITE HISTORY: 93/00520/FULL Erection of PCN equipment comprising 15 metre pole mast; and equipment cabinets. APPROVED. 96/00829/FULL Aerial tower complete with six antennae, 4 dish antennae. 1 radio equipment cabin and ancillary development. WITHDRAWN by applicant. 14/506023/TNOT56 Telecommunication Notification: Proposed equipment upgrade at existing electronic communications site. NO OBJECTION. 23/00098/TWORK Telecommunication Notification: Removal and replacement of 3no antennas, installation of 2no new equipment racks and associated ancillary works. NO OBJECTION.</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: There are a few Listed Buildings in the locality.</li> <li>❖ GENERAL COMMENTS: The 15m high mast has been present since the early 1990s and equipment upgrades have taken place in 2014 and 2023. There is no change to the mast in this application. The compound will be extended to accommodate the new generator.</li> </ul> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to object to the application on the grounds of insufficient information regarding the use of the diesel generator in an ‘emergency situation’; the circumstances of use being undefined, noise levels are not noted and the hours of use are not indicated. This location in the HWNL is rural in nature and any introduced noise will be obvious in the otherwise quiet environment. The extension of the compound to accommodate the generator will also cause the undesirable removal of hedgerow. BPC supports the comments made by Lambert &amp; Foster on 23 March as to whether the proposed works actually constitute permitted development, and requests a FULL application to ensure that all details are available for consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospital Development</li> <li>❖ Esquire Developments invited the Parish Council to visit the site, and all members attended on 13<sup>th</sup> April.</li> </ul>																																																																					
7. HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS & TRANSPORT	<p><u>a. HIP/Rural Parish Grant</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TWBC has confirmed that a grant of £3,400 has been approved and BPC can commission the highways work as set out in the grant application.</li> <li>• The Clerk has contacted KCC Highways to organise this.</li> <li>• Cllr Beveridge circulated the agreed proposals, as set out in Appendix B.</li> </ul> <p><u>b. Walkhurst Road</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numerous complaints have been received about the condition of Walkhurst Road. There are many potholes and the verge has been destroyed in many places. A complaint has also been received about parking in Rothermere Close</li> <li>• Cllr Grant had spoken to the Canham Homes site manager and established that Canham Homes have completed the off-site works which they were obliged to do, and there is an arrangement for the building contractors to park at Benenden Village Hall.</li> <li>• The current poor state of Walkhurst Road is a result of New Pond Road closures with a huge increase in traffic, including large lorries, using Walkhurst Road.</li> <li>• The road is due to be closed on 23<sup>rd</sup> April to enable urgent carriageway repairs to be carried out by Highways.</li> <li>• The road is also due to be closed 1<sup>st</sup> June to 20<sup>th</sup> July for SGN works.</li> <li>• BPC will monitor.</li> </ul>																																																																					
8. RESOURCING/ FINANCE	<p><u>a. Monthly Finance</u></p> <p>TRANSACTIONS FROM 1st March 2026</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Brought Forward Current Account</td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">5352.62</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brought Forward Savings Account</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">77881.15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brought forward</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>83233.77</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Income</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Payee</td> <td>Reference</td> <td>Amount</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Unity Trust Bank</td> <td>Interest</td> <td style="text-align: right;">406.01</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>TOTAL</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>406.01</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">Expenditure</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Supplier</td> <td>Reference</td> <td>Amount</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>HugoFox</td> <td>Website</td> <td style="text-align: right;">23.99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>HugoFox</td> <td>Emails</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20.99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>Nest</td> <td>Pension</td> <td style="text-align: right;">120.87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DD</td> <td>Nest</td> <td>Pension</td> <td style="text-align: right;">120.87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FEE</td> <td>Unity Trust Bank</td> <td>Monthly Charge</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Employee</td> <td>Staffing Costs</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1205.79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>o2</td> <td>Telephone</td> <td style="text-align: right;">13.68</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>F&amp;C Cleaning Services</td> <td>Public Toilet Cleaning</td> <td style="text-align: right;">747.76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS</td> <td>Benenden Village Hall</td> <td>Lighting Grant</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4320.00</td> </tr> </table>	Brought Forward Current Account		5352.62	Brought Forward Savings Account		77881.15	Brought forward		<b>83233.77</b>	Income				Payee	Reference	Amount		Unity Trust Bank	Interest	406.01	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>406.01</b>	Expenditure					Supplier	Reference	Amount	DD	HugoFox	Website	23.99	DD	HugoFox	Emails	20.99	DD	Nest	Pension	120.87	DD	Nest	Pension	120.87	FEE	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Charge	7.00	BACS	Employee	Staffing Costs	1205.79	BACS	o2	Telephone	13.68	BACS	F&C Cleaning Services	Public Toilet Cleaning	747.76	BACS	Benenden Village Hall	Lighting Grant	4320.00	
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BACS	DAVSS	Grant	100.00
BACS	AH Builders	Bench Installation	180.00
	Advanced Tree		
BACS	Solutions	IG Recreation Ground	1020.00
BACS	HMRC	Q4 Employer Contributions	666.61
BACS	Benenden's Shop	Grant	3570.00
BACS	edf	Public Toilet	311.83
BACS	TP Jones	Payroll Q4	63.40
BACS	Benenden's Shop	Village Tidy	153.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>12645.79</b>
Balance			<b>70993.99</b>
Current account bank statement 119 31st March 2026			7706.83
Savings account bank statement 023 31st March 2026			63287.16
Reconciled			<b>70993.99</b>
Approved April 2026 Payments			
DD	HugoFox	Website	23.99
DD	HugoFox	Emails	20.99
DD	Nest	Pension	120.87
FEE	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Charge	7.00
BACS	Employee	Staffing Costs	1206.79
BACS	o2	Telephone	15.68
BACS	F&C Cleaning Services	Public Toilet Cleaning	766.34
BACS	FA Bartlett Tree Expert	Tree Work	726.00
BACS	KALC	Annual Subscription	1079.70
BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	975.99
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>4943.35</b>
All invoices listed have been examined, verified and certified by the RFO			
<b><u>b. Resourcing Committee Report</u></b>			
<b>i. Year-end</b>			
Draft statement of accounts to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026 circulated and published on website.			
o Gross total income: £68,916			
o Gross total expenditure: £66,661			
o Opening balance: £68,739			
o Closing balance: £70,994, of which the following amounts are ringfenced - £6,750 wildflower meadow; £6,300 Benenden playground; £605 tree work. General Reserves total £57,339.			
<b>ii. Audit</b>			
o The Clerk has completed the Bank Reconciliation, Earmarked Reserves, AGAR Reconciliation and Significant Variances forms and the AGAR Section 2 Accounting Statements, which have been noted by the Resourcing Committee.			
o Internal Audit takes place 8 <sup>th</sup> May.			
o Annual Governance and Accountability Return to be approved at BPC meeting 18 <sup>th</sup> May.			
<b>iii. Digital and Data Compliance</b>			
o Assertion 10 of the AGAR requires BPC to have in place arrangements for effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review, complying with legislation WCAG 2.2 AA, the Transparency Code and GDPR.			
o There are 2 new requirements relating to email management and IT Policy.			
o Email management: Every council must have an email account hosted on an authority-owned domain. All Benenden Parish Councillors are provided with a benendenparishcouncil.gov.uk email address through HugoFox. Some parish councillors receive spam emails purporting to be from Nicola Thomas. The Clerk to follow up with HugoFox.			
o IT Policy: BPC has an existing IT Policy.			
o Previous requirements: All websites must meet the Web Content Accessibility guidelines 2.2 AA (WCAG 2.2 AA). In order to be compliant with WCAG 2.2 AA you must publish an Accessibility			

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	<p>Statement. HugoFox websites are designed to meet all reporting requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Transparency Code for Parish Councils requires all smaller authorities to publish the following information on their websites: Minutes, agendas and papers of formal meetings; All items of expenditure above £100; End of year accounts; Annual governance statement; Internal audit report; List of Councillor or member responsibilities; Details of public land and building assets.</li> <li>○ All smaller councils must follow both the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection act (DPA) 2018. BPC Privacy Policy is published on the website.</li> </ul> <p>iv. Asset Register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated to include Clerk’s phone.</li> </ul> <p>v. Pension re-declaration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Every 3 years BPC is legally required to complete a re-declaration of compliance.</li> <li>○ Cllr Thomas completed this on 14<sup>th</sup> April.</li> </ul> <p>vi. Grant Applications/Financial Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Benenden Community Shop</li> <li>❖ Of the £7,770 given in grants to Benenden’s 2025/26 the following has been spent: Laptop for the Post Office area - £270.82; Display Fridge in the Café - £2610.00; Convection Oven in the Café - £1239.88; Griddle for Café - £147.43; Hot Water boiler in the Café - £150; New Menu Board Café area - £178.12; Fridge Gas Cannister - £255.35; Condenser Fan - £353.10. Sub Total £5,204.70. Remaining funds: £1,500 for Chiller Installation; £1,500 towards the cost of redecoration for the shop and post office area.</li> <li>○ Benenden Village Hall</li> <li>❖ Grant of £3,420. The replacement of lighting throughout the whole hall has been completed.</li> <li>○ Benenden Village Trust</li> <li>❖ Letter of thanks for BPC support from BVT circulated.</li> <li>❖ A date for the work on Benenden playground resurfacing is to be confirmed. The Trust sought 3 quotes for this work and the contract was awarded to Everyday Play.</li> </ul>	
9. ENVIRONMENT & MAINTENANCE	<p><u>a. Maintenance of Village Assets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Phil Robins, who carried out the refurbishment of the telephone kiosk by the Village Hall, has offered to carry out the repairs to the broken glass pane.</li> <li>● Cllr Ham had contacted Weald Handyman and had hoped to meet with him to look at the ivy growth on the bus stop but unfortunately this has not happened.</li> <li>● Cllr Ham and the Clerk to follow up.</li> </ul> <p><u>b. Litter Bins</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● During the summer litter bins around the recreation grounds overflow and the contents scattered by animals and birds.</li> <li>● BVT had requested larger and covered bins from TWBC, or if BVT provided these asked if the contractors would still empty them.</li> <li>● The Clerk met with TWBC Street Scene Monitoring Officer who advised that TW cannot provide bigger or lidded bins and any further conversation on the matter would have to wait until the new waste contract is in place.</li> <li>● TW has had issues with the contractor not emptying the bins as regularly as should have been, so this may have been part of the issue in the past.</li> <li>● The Clerk is to be provided with the schedule of when the bins should be emptied and will try to monitor if this takes place.</li> <li>● TW suggested that the bin next to the telephone box be moved on to the recreation ground, which may ease the issue when the bin next to the playground becomes too full.</li> <li>● This is not a very satisfactory outcome and Cllr Dawlings will raise again with TWBC.</li> <li>● TW will arrange for the litter bin to be moved away from the playground entrance at Iden Green and repositioned to the southeast corner of the top car park.</li> </ul>	<p>DH/CL</p> <p>TD</p>
10. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS/ COMMUNITY	<p><u>a. Annual Assembly</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Annual Village Assembly takes place on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2pm, at Benenden Village Hall.</li> </ul>	
11. CORRESPONDENCE /PARISHIONER QUESTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Intermittent Low Water Pressure</li> <li>○ A parishioner contacted BPC regarding intermittent, very low or no water pressure since summer 2025 advising that South East Water is investigating as it is thought that the problem may be caused by the construction works at Benenden Hospital. The parishioner had also</li> </ul>	

	<p>contacted TW Planning and the developers to ensure that they are aware of the problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cllr Russell advised that the same problem was encountered in Marden following housing development works and Helen Grant MP helped to resolve the issue and eventually a new water main was installed. Cllr Russell will contact the resident and suggest that they also contact Katie Lam MP.</li> <li>○ Cllr Dawlings explained that SE Water has a legal obligation to supply water and as part of TW Local Plan an assurance would have been given that water could be supplied for all agreed housing developments, and TWBC is reluctant to challenge this at the moment.</li> <li>○ Following the recent water interruptions across the borough and county SE Water advised the House of Commons that it may in fact not be in a position to meet its obligations.</li> <li>○ The water supply for the hospital development is covered by the Water Act 1989 which sets out that water providers are legally obligated to ensure adequate water supply to all new dwellings, and it would need to be established that, once completed, the development is having an impact on the water supply.</li> <li>○ The water supply/pressure on Goddards Green Road has been intermittent since before the development build started.</li> <li>○ BPC agreed to monitor the situation once the houses are built and occupied.</li> </ul>	
12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Date of Next Meeting: Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> May, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion	
	The meeting closed at 8pm.	