

**Minutes of the Sevington with Finberry Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting
on 3rd April 2023 at the Chamber of Commerce at 7pm**

In attendance: Peter New, Neighbourhood Watch
 Paul Bartlett, Ashford Borough Councillor (Sevington Ward)
 Dawnie Nilsson, Ashford Borough Councillor (Highfield Ward)
 Rick Martin, Chairman of the Sevington with Finberry Parish Council
 Cllrs Bartram, Hughes, Lemon, Townsend and Whybrow plus 1 member of
 the public
 Tracey Block, Clerk to the Parish Council

1.	Welcome
	The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2.	Report from Peter New
	<p>Dear All</p> <p>May I thank clerk for this invitation to your meeting and I intend to set out my report as both an introduction to myself and then an introduction to how I work. Some of you will know of me, some of you are meeting me for the first time. I think that in this first meeting with you, it is important to give you a very clear picture of how I work and importantly how I think. I am not a police officer; I do not want to be a police officer. I want to bring a different skill set to this important work. I want to think outside the box, and I have challenged the police and NHW on areas where they must be better. This on occasions has led to a bumpy ride but you as councillors would know better than most the road of progress is not always smooth. Trying to help the police improve is like trying to turn a super tanker swimming with the anchor chain between your teeth.</p> <p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>My name is Peter New I work as a volunteer with the Kent Police in Community Neighbourhood Watch. I have worked with NHW for approximately 5 years and with Kent Police for over 4 years. I am fully security checked, vetted and badgd. My background is the Fire Service and when I retired after 35 years, I was Assistant Chief Officer Head of Operations for the whole of the Kent Fire Brigade. That grounding and background gave me much of the experience I bring to bear with my work now.</p> <p>NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH</p> <p>You may know NHW has been running since the early 80s however I decided to bring a completely different approach from the traditional way it had worked. My view was that within the Ashford district across both the urban and rural areas if anyone wanted to enrol with me as a NHW member then I would enlist them and that was one more pair of eyes and ears helping to keep the community safe, one more person/family I could warn about crime and help to keep them and their property safe and hopefully crime free.</p> <p>If from Kent Police information I can inform residents of crimes committed and issue crime prevention advice and guidance I could help to keep Ashford residents across the district both.....</p> <p>CRIME FREE but as important FREE FROM THE FEAR OF BEING A VICTIM OF CRIME</p> <p>Whilst at the same time help operational colleagues by providing help with investigations and intelligence collection.</p> <p>I set up my data base and I use Facebook groups.</p>

I rarely discuss numbers but as I am meeting you for the first time tonight, I have thousands of email members, hundreds of telephone contact members and I write on Facebook groups to a potential readership of 1.5 million readers.

I work with many councils, and I have working partnerships with like minded NHW groups across Kent.

I write in magazines and newsletters. I contribute to council newsletters and any other form of publication made available to me.

Some council websites carry my contact details and carry monthly articles.

My whole working life in the fire service up to and including the very top ranks, every avenue was explored to get information into the community to keep them safe.

I have a very strong programme of public engagement and seek as many avenues as possible and venues to deliver a very strong crime prevention programme.

A very high priority for myself is to ensure the old age pensioner with only a landline telephone is not abandoned as the police push a programme of.....

“Report online”. “Use live chat” “we informed you on Twitter”

I use a combination of communications to try to reach every part of the community.

I have taken NHW into areas they had never considered and piloted several ground breaking schemes.

I will give several examples.....

I have launched OPERATION HORIZON which enrolls new residents on new developments into NHW by working early with developers and sales teams on developments.

If you visited the new build sites tonight of Chilmington, Hinx Hill, Conningbrook Lakes, Sellindge to name 4 you will find every household is in NHW. It helps to build communities and community cohesion as well as keeping residents safe and secure.

I challenge councils and developers who build roads on developments fit for 1950 not 2030. Areas with no or poor street lighting with dark horrible corners and alleyways ...a criminal's dream!

I have launched OPERATION EVEREST which is Nepalese families in East Kent in an alerting system as those persons are often targeted for criminal actions due to their culture.

I have just launched OPERATION GUARDIAN ANGEL which is designed to help keep the elderly and vulnerable who still enjoy independent living, often alone, as safe and secure and crime free as is possible.

Example, an elderly relative lives in Aldington and a younger family member lives on Finberry. I enrol the Finberry resident into NHW. I visit and badge up the elderly relative in Aldington but link in the Finberry relative email.

That way the Finberry family are as safe as possible, but they are also aware of crimes and concerns in Aldington and can alert their relative on visits and by phone on how to stay safe. This is essential for persons with dementia.

I am very proactive in the work on VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS following the tragic deaths of high-profile cases like Sarah Everard and my police colleague Julia James except I add ALL VIOLENCE AGAINST ANYONE

So, councillors into 2023.

The Kent Police have carried out a review and will launch a new policing model sometime mid 2023, I believe June was the anticipated date.

There has been a loss of community PCSO posts and Ashford has been badly hit by officers leaving and transferring into both Kent and The Met. Police forces. Sadly, some left for other careers.

There has been a change in both Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable.

There has been a change in Command of Ashford District with the loss of the highly respected CH INSP Nick Sparkes.

That for me was a mandate for me to set out how I will work in 2023 and my programme is set out for your tonight. (3 rd April 2023)

What policing looks like in Kent and Ashford will follow but I have set out very clearly how I will work. I will expand as I speak and take question and answers as you wish.

I do not for one moment anticipate that 2023 will in anyway slow down on crime challenges from what we faced in 2022, in fact I expect an increase.

Most of my report tonight is my personal 10-point action plan to tackle crime in 2023. That is my planned statement about how I will work. This report is a scene setter for 2023. The police are undergoing a review, communities, especially rural areas, are unsettled by the loss of PCSOs and criminals will come harder than ever across a range of crimes and scams to strike into communities.

We cannot and will not wait for those police announcements our work will commence and we will listen to the police presentation of their 2023 plans and ongoing years when they are ready.

NHW working together, looking at crime trends and crimes in the wider district we can keep communities and surrounding areas as crime free as possible and the residents free from being a victim of crime.

Equally as important to keep residents especially the vulnerable and elderly free from the fear of being a victim of crime also.

Never ever has there been a mandate to be organised and responsive to crime activity, but every step of the way have the most proactive crime prevention plans and strategies we can.

It will allow us to set out to other partners and the police 'this is all we are doing in the locality and the community'. I think residents are very clear about how close we are working together, and the support councils and individual councillors give me.

Thank you for all your support.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH PLAN for 2023

This year my own personal 10 point approach which will be:

1. To target PREVENTABLE and AVOIDABLE crimes
2. To carry out proactive CRIME PREVENTION
3. If crimes occur:
 - a. Try to prevent further crimes in the direct area.
 - b. Support and assist operational colleagues to make appeals/collect evidence, especially any form of CCTV.
 - c. Promulgate lessons from those investigations.
 - d. Go again into the community with crime prevention from lessons learnt.
4. To look and act quickly where crime trends occur in the wider Kent areas.
5. To target ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR/CRIMINAL DAMAGE/RURAL CRIME and FLY TIPPING
6. To target DRUG ACTIVITIES that drive so much other crime.
7. To try to stay ahead of the SCAMS/BOGUS CALLERS EVENTS
8. To continue to build a strong NHW MEMBERSHIP across the District
9. To work closely with local Councils/other NHW areas
10. ENSURE ALL CRIMES are reported and crime numbers obtained so that the progress can be followed up on and the police can be held to account on lack of perceived response/shortfall in performance and then raise concerns in the

correct manner to try to improve.

1. PREVENTABLE and AVOIDABLE CRIMES

Exactly what they say they are. If we are careful and we keep our properties and vehicles as secure as we can. If we can ensure we leave absolutely nothing on show in a vehicle we can reduce the risk of being a victim of crime.

Importantly, if the police do not reduce demand on their resources by the prevention of avoidable and preventable crimes they will continue to be overloaded and unable to meet public expectations.

2. CRIME PREVENTION

Again, working with Neighbourhood Watch to put as much crime prevention out into the community via all methods available. Especially council newsletters and magazines delivered door to door that will reach the members of the community who are not online.

Ensuring our vulnerable and especially the elderly, are not missed with the police drive to report and communicate everything online.

3. IF CRIMES OCCUR

As soon as possible send out alerts and crime reports to try to prevent further crimes in the area.

To assist operational colleagues in ensuring any evidence is not lost to the investigating officers. This is especially the case with the public posting on media outlets like Facebook ensuring vital CCTV evidence is not lost.

Of all the many faults of the police, they are not clairvoyant they must be informed.

Promulgate any lessons learnt from a crime investigations and reports as soon as possible.

Then to go into the community again with new crime prevention from the outcomes of crimes.

4. CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

It does not have to happen in a local community if we can learn from incidents further afield in the County and issue crime prevention warnings.

5. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR /RURAL CRIME

6. CRIMINAL DAMAGE /FLY TIPPING

These crimes are often very closely linked, and cause upset and distress in communities.

Many residents suffer in silence, the need to report every and each incident must be part of the 2023 NHW Plan.

7. SCAMS and BOGUS CALLER CRIMES

There is a SCAM for anything and everything and always a risk of BOGUS CALLERS

These crimes will look to target our most vulnerable in the community, many of which will not be on the internet or mobile phones and thereby miss many of the alerts that are poured out into the community.

These crimes can come from 3, 30, 300 or 3000 miles away.

They can come from landline phones, mobile phones, computers, tablets, laptops, letters and even face to face on the doorsteps.

These criminals rely on us acting quickly and in haste, AND in a hurry with no time to think.

We must take our time and check. If in doubt, do nothing!

It worries me that some old age pensioners when scammed are so embarrassed that they do not tell even their family. Some never ever recover their confidence!!

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH MEMBERSHIP

I will look to increase and build my NHW Membership.

Crime alerts will be posted on as many Facebook Groups throughout Kent and Local Communities.

Targeted emails will be sent to NHW members in areas where there have been crimes or crime prevention is to be issued.

If we can get every property into NHW, we can help prevent crime.

Our work together must be:

TO KEEP RESIDENTS CRIME FREE and KEEP RESIDENTS FREE FROM THE FEAR OF BEING A VICTIM OF CRIME.

9. WORKING WITH COUNCILS

In 2022 I enjoyed support from Parish Councils and Community Councils, and I look to build on that and develop still further those partnerships

10. REPORTING OF ALL CRIMES

Not ranting and swearing on Facebook posts, not waiting to attend a council meeting months later and reporting.

2 ways to report:

- Picking up the phone and calling the police 101 (if the crime is occurring 999)
- Reporting online, or via 'live chat' online.

Posting on Facebook is not reporting, nor is telling a NHW representative. Yes, we may offer help and guidance on how to proceed but the police must receive the reports.

e.g., If you look out your bedroom window at two o'clock in the morning and see someone trying all car doors and car boots CALL 999, crime in progress!!

Do not make decisions "the police are too busy" or "the police won't come". Make the call and Force Control will make the decisions and prioritise responses. Remember by chance a passing patrol may just be at the end of your road.

I am fully aware that rural areas feel that little bit extra exposed, so even more reason to make that call straight away. I cannot understand that all my years in the fire service people never ever hesitated to call the fire brigade but there seems a reluctance to make the call to the Police. We must never ever forget that many residents only have a landline to report so that means 101 for non-urgent and 999 for urgent/crimes in progress. To the elderly and the vulnerable in the community forget 101 and make a 999 call immediately. Force Control are there to help.

Once a crime is reported and a crime number issued:

We have an idea of the range and extent of the crimes

We may have a trend building

We have a crime number to add further information to

We have a crime number to follow up progress on

The real important issue is you will have a number where if you feel you did not get the correct response from the police and or outcomes you have a crime number to go back to them with and seek an explanation.

Again, not ranting and searing on Facebook but a polite and reasonable request made as per the published procedure for complaints.

To challenge ourselves, and that's all of us, to try and improve and be better.

Quite simply to try and be better because we will need to be better in 2023.

RISK ASSESSMENT

	<p>These are 'risk areas', this is where 'you could' be vulnerable to crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Property secure at all times - Garages, sheds, barns, stables, outbuildings, and any form of external storage - Isolated village halls and sports clubhouses and changing rooms - Vehicles if you leave items on show when parked - Vans/Lorries carrying tools/equipment and supplies especially parked overnight. - Internet shopping parcels stolen from doorsteps; vans now followed - Theft of number plates for other crimes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thefts of number plates for drive off fuel thefts - Theft of domestic heating oil from external storage tanks - Catalytic Converter thefts <p>Care when selling and purchasing items where a buyer says they will come to your house with cash.... they sometimes grab and have a car with a second persons with the engine running.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dog thefts/Horse thefts and thefts from horse establishments. - Theft of fuel from vehicles. - Theft on farms and of farm machinery - Thefts on building sites/developments of construction items and then from properties finished and ready for occupation, items like the white goods etc. The above list gives headings of crimes which occur on a regular basis. My thoughts are to warn and prepare not scare and frighten. Please consider joining Neighbourhood Watch if you are not a member. It is free. Just read and stay safe. <p>Contact me: peternew1@aol.com Remember "CRIME CANNOT FLOURISH IN COMMUNITIES THAT CARE AND WHO ARE ALERT AND VIGILANT" Thank you for your support Peter Peter New 91725 Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch I will always carry my Police I.D. when working on Neighbourhood Watch.</p> <p><i>Cllr Bartlett explained that there would be a listening event at the Civic Centre on 24/4. Cllr Nilsson asked if Street WhatsApp groups are a good idea? Peter explained that nothing is a bad idea and would help all of the residents communicate.</i></p>
3.	Report from Clair Bell
	Had sent apologies
4.	Report from Steve Campkin
	Had sent apologies
5.	Report from Paul Bartlett
	<p>Highways England and Mott Macdonald are still finalising M20 signage to the IBF.</p> <p>A2070 BELLAMY GUERNER SCHEME I reported the misspelling of "Newtown" to National Highways. This was not their finest hour...week...months...or year. Given the project was approved in 2002, you would think someone would have checked the basics in the intervening period. They had time to get this right.</p>

FM Conway's reply to Highways was "Do not expect the sign to be replaced shortly however, as it takes a few weeks to order and re install, but rest assured it is in hand."

I contacted stakeholders about why there have been (and are still) long delays on completing the new traffic lights at the former Orbital Roundabout. Reports are that there were no penalties for FM Conway for delays due to the fact that the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) was given the power to suspend the Traffic Regulation Order that permitted the work. The reason for the KRF's TRO suspensions were to allow traffic to flow freely on the A2070 when Operation Brock was in force. I fail to see the link between traffic on M20 and A2070 but at least we know why.

Once the Bellamy Gurner Scheme is complete, National Highways will undertake a snagging process so any issues should be reported to Cllr Bartlett who will bring these up.

BRIDLEWAY AE667A (WATERBROOK ALDI)

I have supported the proposed diversion of bridleway AE667A such that it crosses the entrance to the Aldi on the following grounds:

- Overall use of the bridleway is low, primarily due to the requirement to traverse the A20 after the route crosses the M20. I feel the route is not strategic and the consideration of how it should be used should reflect this fact.
- The Bellamy Guerner Scheme is scheduled to complete in April 2023 and once it is fully open, the development that it supports including the Aldi Store, should be brought forward at pace to ensure the benefits of the scheme are realised. A public enquiry over the bridleway diversion
- would delay the Aldi and may put the store opening at risk.
- Local residents will benefit from the Aldi opening as we have no meaningful stores easily accessible by foot or cycle. It is expected to trigger a local store on Finberry, creating a sense of place on Finberry.
- Diverting the bridleway so it runs alongside Waterbrook Ave would potentially allow only savvy and well-behaved horses to use the bridleway.
- The bridleway already passes the entry to the (as yet undeveloped) Amazon warehouse. This would have the same issues of traffic movements across the bridleway. So, it is established that there will be acceptable traffic movements across the bridleway, and I doubt the Aldi traffic movements will be no more than at Amazon.

Following meetings I had with CCE and correspondence with ABC and KCC officers, KCC have withdrawn their objection as have the British Horse Society. There no further delays to the development proceeding (in respect to the PROW issue anyway). The KCC response was as follows:

"We (KCC) are withdrawing our objection on this basis. It's a very disappointing outcome, which in reality goes back to an extremely poor decision by Ashford Borough Council at the planning stage, with very little regard to National or their own planning policy:

NPPF-

Section 8 – Promoting Safe and Healthy communities. This includes comments on providing easy pedestrian and cycle connections, clear and legible routes, and enabling healthy lifestyles through, among other elements, layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

Section 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport. This section states that planning policies should, among other transport needs, provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans). Within this context, applications for development should give first priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and create places that are safe, secure and attractive

	<p>– which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles We are satisfied that the Church Commissioners have now finally demonstrated that no other alternative route is feasible for this site. We note that had they undertaken this work in the first place we would not have been left with no option but to object and unnecessary delays for the development to commence could have been avoided. We look forward to working with the developers to secure the safest design possible of the order route. In particular to minimise the very real risk at the vehicular and pedestrian access points into the Aldi site.”</p> <p>A local store will open on Finberry within the new homes section. This was held up due to Stodmarsh but the Church Commissioners are taking some farmland out of use to provide a biodiversity gain so that they are not restricted by the Stodmarsh issues.</p> <p>The new bus link is dependent on the bus gate enforcement and this will take at least another 12 months. Cllr Bartlett has asked Stagecoach to extend the G-line to Finberry. They have not yet replied.</p> <p>A sign has been requested to tell lorries when the lorry[ark AT Waterbrook is full. The plans for Waterbrook appear to have less houses and more green space.</p> <p>Future issues: Community centre on Finberry Footpaths on Finberry Management representative on the HML board Captains Wood Management Group Mulberry Homes at Waterbrook New Vicar for Sevington Church IBF announcing a new trade model which is due to be published on 23/4.</p> <p><i>The member of public asked Cllr Bartlett why the hedgerow was removed as part of the Bellamy Gurner Scheme. The scheme was designed in 2002, so much has changed since, if they were designing now, it would not have happened in this way. Cllr Bartlett will check in the snagging stage as to why the hedge was removed.</i></p>
6.	<p>Report from Dawnie Nilsson</p>
	<p>Thank you for your support and feedback over the past 12 months, I feel honoured to have been your ABC councillor. In the past 12 months I have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported potholes in Church Road a number of times. • Worked with Aspire to get the goal posts on the recreation ground renovated and moved to allow the ground to recover and to make football safe for residents. • We planted a tree and lit the beacon to celebrate the Queen’s jubilee. (I spent a lovely afternoon with local residents having a picnic) • As part of the Wombles of Willesborough I have organised and did a litter pick. • Paid for and installed a No Parking sign in the turning space at the bottom of Church Road • Listened to residents concerns regarding the proposed HMO, I reported my concerns to the planning officer on 8 th February requesting that it be brought to the planning committee if it was not dismissed at this stage, I also visited the property and voiced my concerns.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with residents at my surgery at the Well on the first Saturday of each month. • Reported overhanging branches in Church Road. • Worked with my husband to clear the path behind the Old Mill of slippery leaves. • I have spoken to many residents and reacted to feedback. 																																		
7.	Financial report																																		
	<table data-bbox="284 461 798 1137"> <tr> <td>Precept</td> <td>15000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grant</td> <td>87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>VAT Reclaim from 2021-22</td> <td>643</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Receipts</td> <td>15730</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Salary</td> <td>6233.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC</td> <td>1516.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>KALC</td> <td>537.36</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Insurance</td> <td>338.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Room Hire</td> <td>660.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Audit</td> <td>300.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rock salt</td> <td>164.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenses</td> <td>287.60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Working from home allowance</td> <td>180.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Payments</td> <td>10217.16</td> </tr> </table> <p data-bbox="261 1173 1382 1240">The Parish Council raised a Precept of £15,000. Other income came from a grant towards the rock salt, thanks to Paul, and a VAT reclaim of £643.</p> <p data-bbox="261 1281 1398 1348">Salaries totalled £7750.00, Room Hire cost £660.00, the Audit cost £300, Other payments were for insurance and KALC membership and expenses.</p> <p data-bbox="261 1388 1426 1491">The year opened with £13886.50 in the bank and closed with £19,399. The Parish Council has assets that valued £2944, these assets are in Sevington North: a notice board, 2 x dog waste bins, a kiosk with defib. and a beacon.</p>	Precept	15000	Grant	87	VAT Reclaim from 2021-22	643	 		Receipts	15730	 		Salary	6233.00	HMRC	1516.80	KALC	537.36	Insurance	338.40	Room Hire	660.00	Audit	300.00	Rock salt	164.00	Expenses	287.60	Working from home allowance	180.00	 		Payments	10217.16
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8.	Parish Council Chairman's Report																																		
	<p data-bbox="261 1570 488 1603">Chairman's Report</p> <p data-bbox="261 1626 1423 1693">2022-23 was our third year in operation as a parish council, after dividing from Mersham to form Sevington with Finberry Parish Council in 2020.</p> <p data-bbox="261 1733 1410 1836">After the challenges of the Covid pandemic and navigating virtual meetings on Zoom, it's been great to be fully back in the swing of running meetings in person again and I had the privilege of being chair again over the past year.</p> <p data-bbox="261 1877 1430 1980">As ever, I want to start by thanking each of our parish councillors for their hard work and support over the past year, along with our ward Councillors Dawnie Nilsson and Paul Bartlett – Paul of course has a dual role of also serving as a parish councillor with us.</p>																																		

I also wanted to give huge thanks to our clerk Tracey Block, whose patience, organisation and knowledge are a huge asset not only to our Parish Council but also the numerous other local parish councils she serves with equal dedication and skill.

Many key issues, both within the Parish and further afield, have received attention during the course of the past year. These are fully documented in the Parish Council's meetings' Minutes, which can be found on the Sevington with Finberry Parish Council website.

I'll now run through a few key highlights.

In last year's chairman's report I referenced the work which was carried out to install a defibrillator in a decommissioned phone box in the Highfield Ward. The defibrillator has now officially opened and is available for use, offering a vital community resource which has been proven to save lives.

We again pass on our thanks to Cllr Nilsson for honouring the late Cllr White's promise of funding for the defibrillator and to Lang Contractors, who refurbished the decommissioned phone box after it was vandalised prior to the installation.

On the subject of community resources, at a much smaller scale, we purchased a modest quantity of salt for each of our parish wards during the severe January cold snap. If you were able to make it down Church Road you may have been fortunate enough to see Cllr Bartlett himself, spade in hand, attempting to clear the snow and ice alongside his neighbours.

Looming large, as it has done over our Parish since opening in 2020, the Sevington IBF and adjacent Waterbrook IBFs have continued to be a focus for parishioners, particularly for Cllrs Hughes and Bartlett, who live close to the site.

There are a range of issues still to be resolved around the site – adequate signage, dealing with lorries mistakenly turning down Church Road, overnight noise and damage to trees to name a few. Perhaps the biggest issue at the moment is how difficult the DfT have been to communicate with over these problems, but the parish council will continue to persevere in pushing for resolutions for residents.

In other planning matters, we have considered over 20 planning applications over the past year, both within and adjacent to our parish boundary. I will mention a couple now.

Firstly, one application of particular interest to many parishioners, demonstrated by the sheer volume of comments on the planning portal, is that of PA/2023/0153.

For those unable to memorise the codes of planning applications, this is the proposed change of use of buildings from an old persons' retirement care home comprising 47 bedrooms (Use Class C2) to a HMO comprising 47 bedrooms.

Although not opposed to HMOs in principle as a parish council, we felt this not a suitable site for 47 dwellings in terms of local parking and amenities, therefore we registered our opposition to the application and eagerly await the planning decision.

In other planning matters, we were disappointed by the recent decision to extinguish Public Footpaths AE639 (PART), AE338 and AE337A Sevington, following Cllr Bartlett's representations at the public enquiry.

	<p>Away from planning matters, one final initiative I'll cover is that of our recent advertisements encouraging people to stand as parish councillors in next month's elections, including a recent newsletter delivered to every home in the parish.</p> <p>As a relatively new parish council, we recognise that not everyone is aware of our work or even, indeed, our existence and role in local democracy, particularly influxes of residents to newly built homes.</p> <p>Therefore, we wanted to underline the great opportunity that next month's local election offers for local people to get involved and stand as councillors. If you're listening to or reading this and thinking you'd like to get involved, you don't have long as the deadline for submission of nominations closes at 4pm tomorrow, April 4th.</p> <p>On this note, I will close by reminding members of the public that they are, as always, warmly invited to attend Parish Council meetings.</p> <p>At present our options are limited for a venue which is easily accessible from all corners of the Parish, so we intend to continue holding our monthly meetings here at the Kent Chamber of Commerce, with a view that we could consider Sevington Church as an option during the warmer summer months.</p> <p>Members of the public are also invited to share their views with the Parish Council on any matters of concern, including formal agenda items, through emailing the Clerk, Tracey.</p> <p>All the necessary contact details and relevant information can be found on our website and on noticeboards in Sevington North and Finberry. Thank you!</p>
9.	<p>Questions from the audience</p>
	<p><i>Cllr Lemon asked for the name of the new vicar. She is Revd Teena Twelves.</i></p> <p><i>The member of the public asked whether the Parish Council has considered spending money on a traffic report due to the number of vehicles using Waterbrook and the effect that will have on Finberry with a link road. Cllr Bartlett explained that the current S106 agreement means the link from Waterbrook to Finberry is bus only. Any change to that would require a new planning application.</i></p>