

# MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting held at Dunton Green Pavilion on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7.00pm

## 01. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting and reiterated that the APM is not a Parish Council meeting, but it is a legally required meeting providing an opportunity to share news from local organisations and hear updates from councillors.

## 02. PRESENT / APOLOGIES

Present: Cllr. Freda England (Chairman of Dunton Green Parish Council), Tracy Godden (Clerk to Dunton Green Parish Council), Wendy Jackson (Parish Council staff), Cllr. Kim Bayley (SDC), Cllr. Graham Clack (SDC) and sixteen members of the public (including 4 Parish Councillors, Age UK volunteers, DGPC volunteers).

Apologies (accepted): PC Wilson and PC Watson (Kent Police)

## 03. MINUTES OF 2024 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The minutes of the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were approved as a true record. Proposed – Graham Hersey, Seconded – Patricia Turner and Agreed.

## 04. MATTERS ARISING

None.

## 05. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

A report summarising the activities of the Parish Council had been received and was noted {attached}.

The Chairman referred to the success of the Christmas lighting in 2024 and there was unwavering support and hanks from the assembly. It was noted that the proceeds of a collection had been donated to the Education in Full charity (see Item 10 below). The Chairman spoke about how planning is a critical area in which the Parish Council continues to be involved:

- There is still the threat of more housing across the District and in Dunton Green
- DGPC is waiting on the new SDC Local Plan and the impact of the Government's new housing targets
- DGPC will do its best to resist further larger scale development in the village but ultimately will do its best to ensure that the village benefits from any development that is approved
- The McCarthy Stone development at the southern end of the village has progressed over the last twelve months and units are now available (although it was noted that at c.£550,000, they are not particularly affordable) and that some of the marketing is typically idyllic (referencing the 'views of the Darent river' which is not much more than a stream in Dunton Green)

Dunton Green remains a thriving village, supporting three pubs, three halls, other hospitality venues, and local retail.

## 06. NICK CHARD, KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR

No report received.

## 07. KIM BAYLEY & GRAHAM CLACK, SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

A report submitted by the councillors was noted (attached). Cllr. Bayley highlighted key areas of note:

- Getting the Local Plan approved is a priority with the pressure of more housing. The Local Plan helps to detail the criteria for what is and is not wanted in terms of housing in the District.
- Kerbside collections of glass and food waste must be introduced from March 2026 and SDC is looking at how to do this. This follows on from the introduction of the green recycling bags.
- Devolution will be happening and SDC will be no longer in the next three years. SDC wants to ensure that assets remain available for Sevenoaks and there will be discussions around what parish councils might take on.

The Clerk clarified that with Kent not being part of the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) there will still be Local Government Reorganisation but that this will happen without the funding that was linked to the DPP. It was agreed that there is still a good deal to be confirmed in regard to this process.

Cllr. Clack (SDC) arrives.

The Chairman commented that a move to a unitary model will impact local democracy because there will be significantly fewer local government (district and county) representatives. This will strengthen the position of Town and Parish Councils which form the first tier of local government (and will continue under devolution

## 08. KENT POLICE

No report received. However, it was noted that there are now two Beat Officers for the 'beat' that includes Dunton Green, PCs Wilson and Watson. Unfortunately, due to shifts and court commitments, neither of the officers was able to attend the AGM. The assembly was asked to submit any questions that there might be to the Clerk so that they may be forwarded to the Officers for a response to be provided.

## 09. DUNTON GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

A report from the Executive Headteacher (Ben Hulme) had been received and was noted {attached}.

## 10. OTHER REPORTS, IF ANY

A report had been received (and was noted) from Education in Full, a charity set up to ensure equality of opportunities at Dunton Green Primary School for all students. It was also noted that proceeds of the collection at the Parish Council's Annual Fireworks event had been donated to the charity (c.£740), trustees and supporters of which had ably assisted the Parish Council at that event.

## 11. CONSIDERATION OF ANY RESOLUTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

None

The meeting closed at 7.18pm.

Ahead of the Parish Reception refreshments, there was a talk by Bob Ogley, retired journalist, and local historian. The talk was about Bob's childhood recollections of growing up in Sevenoaks during World War Two. The talk was very warmly received and there was a short question and answer session after the main talk.

A slideshow of Dunton Green photographs was shown whilst the assembly enjoyed the Parish Reception.

### POST MEETING NOTE:

After the conclusion of the formal part of the evening, there is a tradition of formally recognising a member of the community for their contribution to Dunton Green. This involves the presentation of a KALC Community Award. Unfortunately, this year's recipient was unable to attend the meeting so the presentation will be made at another time. For the record, the 2025 the award is given to Judy Collins, who is currently the Chair of the Education in Full charity and who has a long history of community work in the village. The award commendation is as follows: 'Honouring Judy's continued commitment to Dunton Green, from Faithworks to the Education in Full charity. Her dedication to the children and families of our community is very much appreciated.'

# Dunton Green Parish Council Annual Report 2024/25



The Parish Council continues to have Cllr. Freda England as Chairman, supported by Cllr. Paul Lockey as Vice Chairman, and eight other parish councillors. We still have one vacancy.

Our District councillors come to our Parish council meetings and between them have attended five of the eleven full council meetings in the last year (down from 10/11 the previous year when there were elections). Our Kent County Councillor, Nick Chard, has attended no meetings in the last year (down from one meeting the year before). There will be KCC elections in 2025, but Cllr. Chard is not standing for re-election.

Our festive lighting project came to fruition in December 2024 and the scheme on the village green was very well received, with residents saying that it gave a real boost at the end of a challenging year for many. We are hoping to expand (although in a different way) the festive decorations to other areas of the village for Christmas 2025.

Once again, we continue to provide one of our most popular services, the freighter bulk refuse collection service although the frequency is a bit more ad hoc now than we would like. This is dictated by SDC, who we work with to ensure any fly tipping is removed as soon as possible. This, and graffiti removal, is becoming more difficult to manage with less flexibility from our principal authority who are getting stricter on what they will clear (depending on what land is affected). If only there wasn't waste and graffiti to clear in the first place!

We have moved to a gov.uk domain which provides the Parish Council and residents better protection and the assurance that communications are secure. This has affected our email addresses and website – all are now duntongreen-pc.gov.uk.

As you may be aware, Kent County and Medway Councils had hoped to be included in the Devolution Priority Programme which the Government has set up to shake up local government with moves to unitary authorities and a mayoral structure. Kent was not included in this first wave but that does not mean that things are standing still. There will still be local government reorganisation which will ultimately see the abolition of district, borough, and county councils. The role of Town and Parish Councils will become clearer as things progress, but their crucial role as the first tier of local government is likely to become even more important as unitary authorities provide much less 'local' representation.

Planning remains a key area in which the Parish Council continues to be a statutory consultee. However, with SDC not having a Local Plan and the Government wanting to see 'Grey Belt' areas assigned, there is significant leeway for developers to push applications. We have recently seen a change of use application for the old Technical Treatments Ltd site in Rye Lane, which would see the site morphed to become a site for, amongst other things, a café, soft play provision, hotdesking and a 250-seat auditorium. The Parish Council has objected to the application, largely because of the woefully inadequate parking provision suggested (less than 35 spaces) which could have a devastating impact on local roads. The application has been withdrawn but we anticipate that it will be resubmitted at some stage. The Parish Council is also very aware that baseline sites identified in Dunton Green during the last consultation phase of the Local Plan are very likely to be included in any future plan and that, in the best interests of the village's future, DGPC will need to be involved in the early stages of any developer and planning negotiations.

Meanwhile, the McCarthy Stone development on the old Vauxhall site at the southern end of the village has come on apace over the last year. Whilst not yet complete, the scaffolding has come down and the sales team is in full swing. It is likely that the apartments will be being occupied before the end of the year.

The Parish Council is working with KCC to establish whether we can get 20mph lights in the proximity of the school, to slow traffic. In order to do this, there will be a speed survey. We will also be meeting with KCC to discuss redoing the red tarmac sections on our roads and installation of a new noticeboard on KCC land at the southern end of the village. We hope to make significant progress on all of these items in the coming months, using some of our Community Infrastructure Levy funds to finance these projects.

## Financial Update (for the previous year)

Summary 2023/24 Financial Year Annual Return signed off by the External Auditor (Mazars LLP):

	£	£
Brought forward		117,495
ADD		
Annual Precept		139,500
Total other receipts		156,116
SUBTRACT		
Staff costs	54,744	
Total other costs	145,726	
Balances carried forward		212,641

## Grants and donations to village organisations

Financial support has been provided in the 2024/25 fiscal year to various charitable organisations that provide services to residents of the village. DGPC also continues to allow some organisations to use our facilities free of charge to enable vital services to be delivered to our community.

<b>DONATIONS</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
Citizens Advice in North & West Kent	£500.00
West Kent Mediation	£150.00
Kent Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance Trust	£200.00
RBL Poppy Appeal	£100.00
Kent Community Domestic Abuse Programme	£200.00
Sevenoaks Samaritans	£250.00
West Kent Mind	£150.00
Victim Support	£100.00
Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group	£500.00
Holding On Letting Go	£100.00
Sevenoaks CFR	£400.00
Dunton Green Primary School PTA	£0.00
Sevenoaks Larder	£250.00
Age UK Lunch Club (direct to volunteers)	£500.00
Baby Umbrella Charity	£300.00
We Are Beams Charity	£500.00
Kent Beekeepers Assoc (Asian Hornet Action)	£150.00
<b>TOTAL DONATIONS</b>	<b>£4,350.00</b>

<b>GRANTS</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
Age UK - specifically for Dunton Green Pop In	£1,000.00
Sevenoaks Wildlife Trust (in response to arson)	£1,000.00
Dunton Green Primary School PTA (IT project)	£1,000.00
<b>TOTAL GRANTS</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>

Grants differ from donations in that donations tend to be much more general and flexible than grants. A donation can be used to support a nonprofit's programmes, services, or operating expenses. It is less common for a donation to have restrictions as to how the funds can be used.

It would be remiss not to thank all our Parish Councillors, volunteers, and hirers for helping us make Dunton Green a better community. This is also an opportunity to thank our staff. Tracy is the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer for the Parish Council, overseeing our projects and ensuring that the Parish Council is well organised. Wendy (Bookings & Facilities Assistant) handles all of the bookings for the Pavilion and outside spaces, whilst managing our facilities. Their support is invaluable.

Cllr Freda England  
Chairman Dunton Green Parish Council

NICK CHARD

Kent County Councillor

No report submitted ahead of the  
Annual Parish Meeting 2025

## **Report of the District Councillors: Kim Bayley & Graham Clack**

**March 2025**

### **Introduction**

Both your Councillors have attended Full and other Council meetings during the year, as well as a number of meetings with Council departments and constituents on a variety of issues. We have also between us attended a number of Parish Council meetings during the year.

### **Development and Planning**

Both your Councillors have reviewed and taken appropriate action on a number of applications within the district. Your Councillors have also continued to feed in resident concerns to the Local Plan as well as the proposed East West Cycle route.

### **Roads**

Discussions continue with KCC around the issues in Chipstead Lane and we remain frustrated by the lack of action on this. We are also pushing for improvements to crossings in the parishes.

### **Net Zero**

SDC continues to work on a number of initiatives to improve carbon emissions in the district. Riverhead London Road remains the most polluted zone in the district but is still below Government mandated levels.

### **Waste collections**

SDC withdrew black sacks from April and replaced clear sacks with a bag for life from late 2024. SDC is also undertaking a review of waste collection methods going forward and has conducted a customer feedback exercise in early 2025. Due to Government legislation, the council from 1 April 2026 must collect food waste separately weekly, as well as glass at least fortnightly. To comply with this legislation, a new fleet of

vehicles will need to be purchased, and changes will inevitably be needed to some aspects of our existing waste service. Also on the horizon will be the need to amalgamate our waste service with three other authorities.

### **KCC Elections and Devolution**

Kent & Medway will not be part of the Government's first wave of the fast track devolution programme. SDC will be required to submit a proposal by November 2025 and in the meantime KCC elections will go ahead in May 2025.

The new Unitary authority is likely therefore to be implemented in April 2028 although it is possible a Mayoral election may take place in May 2027. SDC is awaiting further information in this regard.

### **Council Tax and Finances**

As many of you may know, Sevenoaks District Council now receives no additional funding from central Government and is self-sufficient.

The Council had to find considerable savings in 2024/5 but continues to operate a balanced 10-year budget. Due to changes in Government rules, SDC can no longer invest in many property assets to generate a return but its existing investment strategy has sought to maximise the investment returns on savings and borrowings, for the benefit of residents.

Keeping the increase to a below inflation 2.99% was exceptionally tough because part way through the budget process it became apparent that the Government was to provide less than half the help promised to cover the increase which will be caused by the rise in employers National Insurance Contribution – meaning an extra £233,000 had to be found to balance the budget.

### **Cllr. Kim Bayley**

Kim sits on 3 Committees at SDC as well as being Deputy Portfolio Holder for Cleaner & Greener (encompassing waste collections, parks, air quality, environmental, parking etc). In addition to Cleaner & Greener, she sits on the Finance Committee, with a particular focus on ensuring that the District Council can continue to deliver the

current levels of services with a vastly reduced budget and the Development Management Committee (planning). As Deputy Portfolio Holder, she also has regular updates with the cabinet member for Cleaner & Greener and the heads of Direct Services. During the year the Cleaner & Greener Committee continued its work to reduce the costs of waste collection and improve our recycling credentials as well as develop a net zero plan for Sevenoaks.

### **Cllr Graham Clack**

Graham is a member of three committees; Housing and Health, Cleaner and Greener, and Licensing – being the Chairman of the latter. The primary function of the Licensing Committee relates to premises that sell alcohol. This includes granting new licences, and varying existing ones, as well as setting policy. The Committee also oversees gambling (in our district this almost exclusively relates to betting shops) late night refreshment (establishments that sell hot food and drink after 11pm) and the taxi trade. There are other functions such as the licensing of scrap metal, tables and chair licences for the highway, animal licensing.

Health and Housing is an advisory committee that considers Housing Strategy & Policy, Housing Standards, Housing Needs, Homelessness, Empty Homes, Gypsy and Traveller, DFG, Health, Energy Efficiency, Fuel Poverty, HERO, Wellbeing.

Cleaner and Greener is also an advisory committee that deals with Direct Services, Street Cleansing, Waste & Recycling, CCTV, Environmental Health, Green Spaces, Parking, Pest Control, Licensing, Facilities Management, Emergency Planning, Air Quality, Delivery Partner Assurance, Wellbeing.

### **Finally**

We do of course remain available to discuss any local issues with residents and members. Please do contact us by email - [cllr.bayley@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.bayley@sevenoaks.gov.uk) or [cllr.clack@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.clack@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

**Kim Bayley**  
**Graham Clack**  
**March 2024**

KENT POLICE

No report submitted ahead of the  
Annual Parish Meeting 2025

# Dunton Green Primary School: A Year in Review

*Report to the Parish Council*

## Introduction

Over the past 12 months, Dunton Green Primary School has experienced significant growth and development, reinforcing its commitment to providing exceptional education and fostering a nurturing environment for its pupils. This report outlines the school's achievements, including the recent Ofsted inspection, enhanced opportunities for students, infrastructure improvements, fundraising efforts by Team DG, strategic initiatives to position the school as a leading educational institution in the area, and the invaluable contributions of our pupils, staff, volunteers, and governors. Additionally, we are excited to announce our formal integration into the Compass Federation, effective 1st April 2025.

## Ofsted Inspection: Outstanding Leadership and Management

In March 2024, Dunton Green Primary School underwent a comprehensive Ofsted inspection. The school was awarded a 'Good' rating overall, with particular commendation for the effectiveness of leadership and management. The inspectors noted:

*'Pupils see their school as a beacon of friendship. They are proud of their school and see it as at the heart of their local community. Pupils feel that the school is changing for the better, though told inspectors that they have always felt safe and secure here. This acknowledgement underscores the dedication and strategic vision of our leadership team in driving the school's continuous improvement.'*

## Enhanced Opportunities for Pupils

Recognising the importance of holistic development, the school has expanded the range of extracurricular activities and learning experiences:

- **Educational Workshops:** Pupils have participated in a variety of hands-on workshops designed to enrich their learning experience.
- **Forest School Programme:** This programme emphasises outdoor learning, environmental awareness, and practical skills for all year groups with our Forest School teacher Mr Manning.
- **Science Enrichment:** Pupils have engaged in hands-on scientific workshops, fostering curiosity and discovery.

These initiatives have enriched our curriculum and provided pupils with diverse learning opportunities beyond the traditional classroom setting.

## Infrastructure Development: New ICT Suite

A significant milestone this year was the inauguration of our state-of-the-art Information and Communication Technology (ICT) suite. This facility enhances digital literacy among pupils, equipping them with essential skills for the modern world. The project was made possible through the generous support of the parish council, which partially funded the initiative. We

extend our heartfelt gratitude for this contribution, which has had a profound impact on our educational offerings.

### **Fundraising Efforts by Team DG**

Team DG, our dedicated parent-teacher association, has been instrumental in fundraising efforts to support various school projects. Through events such as bake sales, quiz nights, and fun runs, they have fostered community spirit and raised essential funds. Their unwavering commitment has enabled the school to:

- Purchase new library resources.
- Upgrade playground equipment.
- Subsidise educational trips for pupils.

The collaboration between Team DG and the school community exemplifies the power of collective effort in enhancing the educational experience.

### **Strategic Initiatives: Positioning as the Preferred Local School**

To establish Dunton Green Primary School as the premier choice in the local area, we have embarked on several strategic initiatives:

- **School Aesthetics:** Plans are underway to revitalise the school's exterior, including landscaping, new signage, and façade improvements, to create a welcoming and visually appealing environment.
- **Community Engagement:** We are hoping to increase our presence at local events and strengthen partnerships with community organisations to raise the school's profile and showcase our achievements.
- **Marketing and Outreach:** A targeted marketing campaign, including open days and information sessions, has been launched to attract prospective families and highlight the unique offerings of our school.

These efforts aim to enhance the school's kerb appeal and reinforce its reputation as a centre of educational excellence.

### **Celebrating Our School Community**

The success of Dunton Green Primary School is a testament to the collective efforts of our vibrant community:

- **Pupils:** Our students consistently demonstrate enthusiasm, resilience, and a passion for learning. Their achievements, both academic and extracurricular, are a source of immense pride.
- **Staff:** Our educators and support staff are dedicated professionals who go above and beyond to create a supportive and stimulating learning environment. Their commitment to continuous improvement ensures that our pupils receive high-quality education.
- **Volunteers and Governors:** The unwavering support from our volunteers and the strategic guidance of our governors have been pivotal in steering the school towards its goals. Their contributions are invaluable and deeply appreciated.

## **Joining the Compass Federation**

We are delighted to announce that, effective 1st April 2025, Dunton Green Primary School will formally join the Compass Federation. This collaboration aims to:

- Share best practices and resources among member schools.
- Provide professional development opportunities for staff.
- Enhance educational outcomes through collaborative initiatives.

We are confident that this partnership will further strengthen our school's capacity to deliver exceptional education and enrich the experiences of our pupils.

## **Conclusion**

The past year has been transformative for Dunton Green Primary School. Through strategic leadership, community collaboration, and a steadfast commitment to our pupils, we have achieved significant milestones. As we look to the future, we remain dedicated to fostering an environment where every child can thrive and to solidifying our position as the preferred choice for families in the local area.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the parish council for its continued support and look forward to our ongoing partnership in nurturing the next generation.

*Ben Hulme*

*Date: March 2025*

## **EIF REPORT FOR THE DUNTON GREEN ANNUL PARISH MEETING 2025**

Dunton Green Education in Full Foundation (EiF) is a local charity established 4 years ago to ensure children at the local Primary School can fully participate in the opportunities open to them there. Approximately one third of the children at the school are in receipt of Pupil Premium, that is their families are on welfare benefits, so even having the correct uniform, let alone the money for extra activities and events can be challenging.

The money to provide grants for such children was money raised at a local barn dance and silent auction organised by a number of Dunton Green organisations together. EiF trustees have been particularly grateful to the Parish Council since then for enabling them to collect money at the annual Fireworks Display to maintain grant funds, and thank you to local residents for your donations.

Since it started EiF has made grants of approximately £500 a year to local children which has enabled them to take part in sport and drama activities which have made a real difference to their confidence and self-esteem. Grants this year are also enabling 2 children to go on the summer residential trip who otherwise would have missed this opportunity to have learning time away with their classmates.

Watch out in the Village Magazine as EiF plans to launch its website soon. In the meantime, do contact us at [info@eifdg.org.uk](mailto:info@eifdg.org.uk) if you would like more information. We welcome anyone interested in being a trustee and your donations will always go to help local children.

Judy Collins, EiF Chair

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