

Alkham Parish Council

MINUTES of MEETING on 3rd September 2018

7.00pm PRIOR TO THE START OF THE MAIN MEETING: PLANNING

1.1 To table planning applications received for consideration

- 1.1.1 DOV/18/00824 - Agricultural Units 2, 3 & 4, Chilton Farm, Alkham Valley Road, Alkham, CT15 7DR
Change of use of three agricultural buildings to holiday lets, landscaping, creating of hardstanding for parking, erection of a single storey amenity building (existing agricultural building to be demolished) *APC No object. Comment to DDC planning to review the drainage of surface water via the main drains which run past the property.*
- 1.1.2 DOV/18/00808 17 Newlyns Meadow, Alkham, CT15 7QJ
Erection of a two storey and single storey rear extension. *APC no objection*

1.2 To table planning applications dealt with since last meeting

- 1.2.1 DOV/18/00560 2 Wolverton Cottages, Alkham Valley Road, Alkham
Erection of a first floor rear extension –APC no objection

1.3 To table decisions by the Planning Authority since the last meeting

- 1.3.1 DOV/18/00560 2 Wolverton Cottages, Alkham Valley Road, Alkham
Erection of a first floor rear extension – permission granted

Main Meeting:

- Venue:**
Alkham Village Hall at 7:30pm
- Present:**
Parish Councillors: Neil Burrows, Martin Hibbert, Ruth Marczin-Bundy, Anthony Barrier, Den Barnard, Geoff Hillier, Dave Beaney
Clerk: Irene Bowie
Members of Public: 35
District Councillors: Pauline Beresford
County Councillor: Geoff Lymer
- Apologies and absences:**
Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.
There were none
- To Receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:**
To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers. To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

There were none

5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

To consider the minutes and if in order sign as a true record

5.1 Minutes of Annual Parish Council Meeting 14th May 2018

5.2 Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 2nd July 2018

The minutes of the meetings were circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting for them to be reviewed. Cllr Barrier proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true account of the meeting and this was seconded by Cllr Hibbert. **Resolved:** Councillors agreed that minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by Cllr Burrows.

6. Matters arising from the minutes (not included in other agenda items)

There were none

7. Noticeboard Refurbishment

The repairs have been completed. The Chairman thanked John Prince for the excellent work on the noticeboard. One comment from a parishioner that the noticeboard looks wonderful.

8. Play Area Fencing

The Chairman reported that the fencing around the play area was complete.

The Clerk reported that there have been mixed reviews. However more favourable reviews were received than unfavourable ones.

Cllr Hillier reported that some residents had difficulty opening the gate and requested if a spring loaded mechanism could be used. It was agreed that if the gate would be lowered by 6 inches to see if that improved access to the latch. Cllr Bundy reported that there had been positive comments but asked if it would be possible to replace the wiring with something more aesthetic. Cllr Burrows explained that the wiring was in place to stop small children leaving the green. He also explained that it was difficult to 'tension' soft wiring. Cllr Hibbert stated that he thought it was a good fence with appropriate wiring.

9. Overnight parking outside Village Hall (Appendix A)

Cllr Hibbert gave his report. A discussion followed regarding reports of noise and nuisance from those who park overnight. It was agreed that evidence of this should be gathered/reported to enable further discussion.

Cllrs discussed the unauthorised placement of a sign regarding overnight camping on the parish Council Noticeboard.

10. Correspondence:

10.1 To table items of late correspondence

10.1.1 Email from a resident regarding racist and inappropriate comments at the Parish Plan Open day

10.1.2 Email from a resident regarding the fencing at the Play Area

Cllrs agreed to discuss these emails when they had more time to review them fully

10.2 Items circulated for information

10.2.1 Kent PCC Newsletter

10.2.2 Cllrs Commission Roundtable Event

10.2.3 NALC CEO Bulletin (10/8/18)

10.2.4 NALC Annual Conference 2018

All items noted.

10.3 Items acted on

10.3.1 KCC Right of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

Agreed that Cllrs would complete as individuals

10.4 Items for discussion

10.4.1 Community Resilience workshop Noted

10.4.2 Community Led Housing Training Cllr Bundy to attend

10.4.3 Resident's email 17th August 2018

Comments re the parish plan. Cllr Hibbert stated that the content of the email was most helpful and would be considered with all other comments regarding the Parish Plan

10.4.4 Resident's email 8th August 2018

A resident asked "What discussion has Alkham Parish Council had with KCC Highways to keep Alkham Valley Road flowing and contain vehicle pollution in the event of a no deal Brexit" Cllr Hibbert commented that the PC is not always privy to discussion at KCC or DDC and asked that our District and Borough Cllrs acted on our behalf regarding this matter, but to keep the Parish Council informed of any plans that may affect the Village. Cllr Lymer confirmed that he would update the Parish Council as matters progressed.

11. Reports:

11.1 Kent County Councillor

Cllr Lymer

Cllr Lymer reported that a Loneliness and Social Isolation Select Committee had been formed to put into context social isolation and loneliness, and to identify the groups of people who are particularly affected by social isolation and/or loneliness in Kent.

Cllr Hillier remind Cllrs and members of the public that the VHMC host a 'Tea and Chat' afternoon on the last Thursday of the month in the Village Hall. Free tea and biscuits are available and it is an opportunity to meet and chat to other residents.

11.2 District Councillor

Cllr Beresford

Cllr Beresford report on parking problems on the green in Dover. Cllr Hibbert asked if Cllr Beresford would share with the Parish Council as to any solutions they may reach to stop overnight parking in the car park. Cllr Beresford agreed that she would do so.

Cllr Beresford gave an update regarding Kearsney Abbey. Details can be found at : www.kearsneyparks.co.uk/events

11.3 DDC Local Plan Stakeholder Workshop Update

Cllr Bundy

Cllr Bundy gave a presentation from the workshop. Cllr Bundy suggested that residents visit the DDC website Planning Policies and Regeneration for further information

11.4 Byways Update

Cllr Barrier

No update available

11.5 Parish Plan Update

Cllr Hibbert
Cllr Barnard

Cllr Hibbert reported the event was well attended approx. 150 people. The atmosphere was excellent with many residents taking the opportunity to chat and engage with both the organisers and other attendees. Representatives from the Marquis were present with questionnaires. There were 18 subject displays and 800 comments in total. Speed watch brought their own display and are looking for volunteers. Cllr Hibbert thanked the sponsors who provided prizes and also the steering group for all their hard work and commitment. He also thanked the members of the public who came along and supported the event.

Cllr Hibbert stated that the next steps were to review and analyse the comments. However, he suggested that any racist or inappropriate comments should be discarded and not taken into account. He expressed dismay that this had happened and that in future the PC would put up a sign that this would be unacceptable. All Cllrs agreed.

Cllr Hibbert recommended further community engagement when the results had been reviewed and potentially a meeting for Ewell Minnis residents.

The Chairman thank Cllr Hibbert for his report and the steering committee for their excellent work.

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| 11.6 | Drainage Update Appendix A
Cllr Hibbert gave his report. Cllr Hillier requested that Meggett Lane Culvert was added to the 'drainage list' He explained that the culvert sump needs reduced in height to prevent flooding. Cllr Barnard asked for volunteers to check the drains when it rains. He asked for a list of volunteers to be drawn up. | Cllr Hibbert |
| 11.7 | TAG update
Cllr Hillier suggested that a budget should be agreed to reformat the TAG report to enable circulation to the relevant authorities. Cllr Hillier to obtain quotes, if necessary, to reformat the report. It was agreed that a working group of Cllrs would be set up to take the report forward. Resolved: To be discussed at the November meeting | Cllr Hillier |

12. Public Participation and Comment

Meetings of the Parish Council are not public meetings, but members of the public have a statutory right to attend meetings of the council as observers. They have no legal right to speak unless the Parish Council Chairman authorises them to do so. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting itself.

A member of the public, representing the gypsy and traveller community expressed their concern and disappointment at the level of discrimination and racism expressed at the Open Day towards their community. The gypsy family have been part of the Alkham community since the early 1900s and have attended the old Alkham village school and the local village schools in more current times. He stated that the gypsy community have lived in the parish for longer than many residents. He requested a joint meeting with the Alkham Valley Society and the Parish Council to try and build bridges and strengthen the community.

Another member of the Gypsy and traveller community asked why their children do not have a bus stop or bus shelter for school runs? Cllr Burrows said that this would be looked into. A resident asked about the provision of a playing field for children in Ewell Minnis. Cllr Beresford will look at this.

A member of the public explained that the gypsy and traveller community also have drainage problems but that these are not included on the PC's list of drainage works. Cllr Hibbert explained that he had not been notified of these problems and would add them to the list.

A member of the public said it was a small minority of people who had written racist comments and it didn't reflect the views of the majority of residents in Alkham.

Cllr Lymer suggested that renaming the Parish Council as Alkham and Ewell Minnis Parish Council may be the first step in rebuilding the community.

The issue of the Parish Council position of the byways was raised by a member of the public. He was concerned that if 4x4 were permitted back during the winter that all of the work that had been done to repair the damaged byways would be undone. A discussion followed and it was agreed that the preference of the Parish Council would be seasonal Traffic Restriction Orders (TRO's).

A resident thanked the Parish Council for the excellent fence around the play area that has made it much safer for children using the play equipment.

A resident asked Cllr Lymer what plans DDC had made regarding traffic on the Alkham Valley road in the event of a no deal Brexit. Cllr Lymer responded that with regards Brexit plans are in place regarding HGV's and container storage.

13. Finances:

13.1	Update of accounts for 2018/19 including payments received The Clerk explained that the budget figures would be available at the November meeting.			
13.2	Accounts paid to be ratified			
13.2.1	Noticeboard Repair	J Prince	Year Total £ 507.00	£ 507.00
13.2.2	Fencing Play Area	DB Works	Year Total £ 4488.76	£4,488.76
13.3	Accounts for payment			
13.3.1	Parish Plan Open Day		Year Total £ 284.86	£ 231.29
13.3.2	Grass Cutting			£ 46.89
13.3.3	Administration Expenses	included in 13.4.1		£ 0.00
13.3.4	Janice Lambert	Clerks Final Salary and expenses		£ 262.87
13.3.5	Harmer and Sons	June/July	Year Total £614.40	£ 297.60
13.4	Payments to be discussed for approval and payment			
13.4.1	Clerks salary and expenses	July & August 2018.		£1,025.16
			Year Total £ 2113.11	

**All payments proposed by Cllr Hibbert, seconded by Cllr Barrier.
Resolved: Payments presented at this meeting to be paid and ratified. Cllr Beaney abstained.**

14. Parish Council Laptop, Software and Printer

The Clerk presented Cllr's costed options for a parish council laptop, printer and software to be funded via the Transparency Fund. This was proposed by Cllr Beaney seconded by Cllr Bundy and agreed by all. **Resolved: Clerk to purchase a laptop, printer and software with a budget of £600**

15. Policy Review

- 15.1 Standing Orders
- 15.2 GDPR
- 15.3 Risk Assessment and Register
- 15.4 Communication Policy
- 15.5 Code of Conduct
- 15.6 Parish Council Powers and Duties
- 15.7 Freedom of Information
- 15.8 Complaints

The Clerk had circulated the policy documents prior to the meeting. Cllr Hibbert proposed that these policies were accepted, seconded by Cllr Barrier and agreed by all. **Resolved: To accept the policies**

16. Agenda Items for Next meeting

Parish defibrillator/redundant telephone box. Salt Bins. Traffic activated sign opposite Valley Cottages. Bus shelter at the junction of Wolverton Hill with Alkham Valley Road. Dropped Kerbs.

17. Dates of Future Meetings

5th November, 7th January 2019, 4th March 2019

The meeting closed at 9:33pm

Date Added	Action Description	For Action By	Date Completed
11/09/17	Creation of Community Led Plan	Cllr Barnard Cllr Hibbert	
04/12/17	Liaise with Cllr Barnard regarding silt build up in culverts (connected with action raised 11/09/17)	Cllr Hibbert	
02/07/18	Follow up Andrew Hutchinson re Alkham byways and possible funding	The Clerk	
03/09/18	Parish Council to establish if a change of name is possible	The Clerk	

Meeting Actions

Appendices:

Appendix A

9. Overnight Camper Vans – Football Field Village Green Parking Area

Background

On 20th July, it was brought to our attention by a parishioner about the disgusting state of the above area. On inspection it was found that the area was badly soiled by human faeces, extending up through the scrubland onto the trail up to the gate. This created an immediate health hazard needing rectifying soonest given that the area is used by the general public and children.

The matter was reported to DDC on their website, using the dog fouling heading as there is no specific one for humans! A report was also recorded under the environmental crime category heading. I am pleased to report that the matter was swiftly dealt with and rectified by Paul Jaconelli, Waste Services Officer, DDC, and his team. Paul telephoned me seeking details, he then inspected the area, and his team were on site cleaning up the fouling under his direction on 24th July. He hoped that this was just a one off occurrence but stated that if there were any more issues to please let them know - thus establishing a useful service contact. He also informed me that the suggestion of signage was being dealt with by the Environmental Health Department as a separate complaint.

It would seem to me, that the causation of the problem is probably down to the increased usage of this parking area by the smaller type of camper van that do not necessarily have onboard chemical toilet facilities. Although we cannot definitely lay blame on this type of traffic we are certainly aware that the Alkham parking site is on the internet, and there has been a marked increase of activity over the last few months.

It would appear that although this traffic is seasonal, it presents council with various challenges on how best to manage the overall situation, going forward.

Managed Solutions – Discussion

Firstly, one of the primary challenges is the fact that the land on which the campervans currently overnight is not owned by the council, and therefore limits council's action options.

Secondly, the problem will not go away.

Given these points, it would seem to me that council must now look at the challenges objectively, take into account positive and negative viewpoints, with a view to deliver a workable solution that will help address the various challenges.

Options ranged in no particular order for discussion:

- Is it a problem?
- Can we legally ban the overnight parking although it is not our land?
- Do our powers provide a solution, via byelaws?
- Can we put up advisory signage on the VH parking area?
- If we can legally ban this activity who will enforce it? Who will regularly inspect and report?
- Would any additional fencing/barriers stop the problem?
- Do we just live with the problem, and just call out the waste services when the fouling gets too much?
- Do other councils have similar problems? How have they managed them?
- Can we see this traffic as an opportunity, and advertise local services and tourism?

- Seek funding for provision of a single, multi use, toilet facility on the village car park, or attached to the VH? This facility would also be available to users of the VG and parishioners and developing tourism/ walkers.

This range of options is not exhaustive.

- ✚ Please note that the provision of a public convenience facility is currently being explored (with all its pro's and con's) by Parish and KKC councillors, and it is hoped an update will be provided at the scheduled meeting.

MFH

August 2018

11.6 Drainage Update – August 2018

- Alkham still has 7 faults awaiting inspection and repair. Enquiry still ongoing in regard to historical Hopton Manor/ Lockeringe Lane problems plus the clearing of the roadway culvert. Fault report 354585. Still under investigation.
- The re-discovered drain adjacent to Pimlico Vineyard gate is scheduled for cleaning, but the work is still yet to be completed. In the interim, subsequent heavy rainfall has resulted in the drain being covered again by silt and debris! Fault report 360567. Scheduled to be cleaned.
- Slip Lane/Hogbrook Lane/Village Hall Sump. All the relevant drains and culverts have been cleaned, but the sump remains uncleared. Fault reports associated with this work indicate that the work has been completed but that is not the case. Fault reports 354585/353046 apply.
- I have complained direct to Highways front of office about the uncompleted work, and have raised all of the issues under a separate chase fault report 376176. At the same time I have made reference to the content of their apology letter in which they stated they expected to be dealing with Alkham reported problems in July 2018. So far they have only delivered partially on one fault! I have also taken the opportunity to remind them of the content of their KALC Kent rural parish drainage update reports which highlight flood hotspots. Both Alkham Valley and Hogbrook are listed, with a note that these identified hotspots, following assessment, should be subject to a six monthly maintenance programme.
- Both Lockeringe Lane and Slip Lane have been reported to DDC for sweeping (as directed and advised by Highways) under their fault process, and are waiting processing. Ref: 204207/204208. **Update** – DDC have contacted me and following inspection have advised that their machines are unable to deal with the debris, and have referred the matter back to KCC Highways for resolution. KCC Highways have contacted me and advised that they will have the area inspected and cleared. Awaiting outcome.
- Culvert at the bottom of Short Lane. The brick wall was damaged nearly two years ago and a temporary replacement, consisting of sandbags filled with sand/concrete, was erected. This replacement is now unsafe, the bags severely eroded and now a HS concern. This fault was reported over a year and has now been reported again with an H/S flag. Fault report 379032 (23/08/2018). The fault is currently under investigation.
- Drains at bottom of Wolverton Hill (3), covered by debris and blocked. Fault report 379509. The fault is currently under investigation.

Reduced Flooding Project

In mid-July the Alkham Flood Warden team was approached by Annie Thurgarland, Watercourse Officer, Kent Stour Countryside Partnership, wanting to discuss some possible solutions to help to resolve the flooding situations in Alkham.

Annie is working with the KCC Natural Flood Management Team on a project to help improve the flooding in Alkham. Basically she has been tasked to look at possible preventative measures that could be put in place to reduce the flood water flow.

Having been shown around the various key flood points, taking notes and photographs and completing initial discussions with the Flood Warden and Pimlico landowner; Annie now has a better overview of Alkham problems as a project starting point. From this first point, she will contact the Alkham Flood Warden with initial project updates and any proposals for discussion, going forward.

Update: Annie has contacted me with an initial proposal to improve flooding on the Village Green. This proposal has been circulated to council for comments and discussion.

MFH August 2018