

Minutes of the annual parish council meeting of Bilsington Parish Council held at Bilsington Village Hall on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 7:00pm.

Present: Councillors; S Hudson (Chair) M Bilham, L Lawson and R Thompson.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

Also present: Cllr L Harman (ABC), P New (Neighbourhood Watch) and 1 resident.

1155. **To elect the Chair of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2025 / 2026 and to receive the Chair's declaration of acceptance of office.**

**Resolved:** there being no further nominations to elect Councillor S Hudson as Chair for the municipal year 2025 / 2026, declaration of acceptance of office completed.

1156. **To elect the Vice-Chair of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2025 / 2026 and to receive the Vice-Chair's declaration of acceptance of office.**

**Resolved:** there being no further nominations to elect Councillor L Lawson as Vice-Chair for the municipal year 2025 / 2026, declaration of acceptance of office completed.

1157. **Apologies for absence:**

There were no apologies for absence.

1158. **Declarations of interest:**

Councillor L Lawson with regard to minute 1172 planning application relating to land to the south of Bilsington Priory as owner.

1159. **Neighbourhood Watch:**

Report attached.

1160. **Kent County Councillor's Report:**

The Councillor was invited to attend the meeting but did not reply or submit a report.

1161. **Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:**

Councillor Harman reported that at the Annual Meeting of the Borough Council the Ashford Independent/ Green alliance continues for the next year.

In terms of Solar developments the Stonestreet Green hearings finished on 19<sup>th</sup> May with the Inspector's recommendation to the Secretary of State by 18<sup>th</sup> August. The EDF application on Church Lane appeal hearing has concluded and the decision is awaited.

The Shepway Solar consultation is seeking local opinion before an application is submitted.

Work on the next iteration of the Ashford Local Plan continues with Officers aiming to have the first draft ready to place before Cabinet and Full Council in July ahead of

the first public consultation in August, there will be no indication as to where and numbers for development is proposed.

A resident has been in touch regarding the lack of parking for Cosway Cottages asking for facilities to be made available.

Previous communication with Kent Highways ruled out the use of the verge on Bonnington Road as being too narrow to be safe, it was agreed that Kent Highways to be contacted to see if opinion has changed,

**1162. Public Participation:**

There were no public submissions.

**1163. Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025 were submitted, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**1164. Annual Risk Assessment:**

**Report BPC/25/01** brings to the Parish Council the risk assessment undertaken as an assessment of its activities and assets to ensure that it has the necessary audit procedure in place and has adequate insurance cover in place.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note report BPC/25/01**
- 2. To receive and endorse the Annual Risk Assessment.**

**1165. Asset Register:**

**Report BPC/25/02** details the Parish Council's assets as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note Report BPC/25/02**
- 2. To receive and note the Asset Register as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.**
- 3. To authorise the Clerk to securely dispose of the old laptop and the printer/scanner.**

**1166. Report of the Independent Internal Auditor:**

**Report BPC/25/03** encloses the report of the Independent Internal Auditor who has been asked to complete Section 4 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note Report BPC/25/03**
- 2. To receive and endorse the report of the Independent Internal Auditor.**

**1167. Statement on Internal Control for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 – Annual Governance Statement:**

**Report BPC/25/04** details the statement on internal control to support the Annual Governance Statement required as part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note Report BPC/25/04**
- 2. To approve and endorse the Statement on Internal Control for the year ended 31 March 2025**
- 3. To authorise the Chair of the Parish Council to sign the Statement of Internal Control for the year ended 31 March 2025**
- 4. To respond “yes” in boxes 1 to 8 of the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 of the Annual Return subject to the adoption of Report BPC/25/04 which relates specifically to Box 6**
- 5. To authorise the Chair of the Parish Council to sign the Annual Governance Statement**

**1168. Statement of accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

**Report BPC/25/05** attaches the Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2024 / 2025

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note Report BPC/25/05**
- 2. To approve and endorse the Statement of Accounts at Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2025**
- 3. To authorise the Chair of the Parish Council to sign the accounts contained within the Annual Return for 2024/2025**

**1169. Certificate of Exemption from External Audit:**

**Report BPC/25/06** sets out the criteria to enable the Parish Council to certify itself exempt from a limited assurance review.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note Report BPC/25/06**
- 2. To receive and authorise the Chair and the Responsible Financial Officer to sign the Certificate of Exemption.**

**1170. Standing Orders:**

**Report BPC/25/07** brings to the Parish Council a revised set of Standing Orders derived from the model produced by the National Association of Local Councils.

**Resolved:**

1. To receive and note report **BPC/25/07**
2. To receive and adopt the revised Standing Orders.

**1171. Financial Regulations:**

**Report BPC/25/08** brings to the Parish Council a revised set of Financial Regulations derived from the model produced by the National Association of Local Councils.

**Resolved:**

1. To receive and note Report **BPC/25/08**
2. To receive and adopt the revised Financial Regulations.

**Councillor Lawson left the meeting.**

**1172. Planning Matters:**

**Planning application PA/2025/0879 – Agricultural land to the south of Bilsington Priory** – change of use of agricultural land to natural burial ground to include a car parking area.

**Resolved:** whilst the Parish Council has no objection to the change of use of agricultural land to natural burial ground it is concerned that the estimated vehicle movements are understated.

There would appear to be an assumption that the number of weddings at the Priory will remain at the same level as the last few years, however, the weddings business has recently been leased to an outside company who have made a substantial investment and will be looking to boost the number held each year, therefore there is the potential to hold up to 100 weddings/events during the year. It is noticeable that no mention is made of the afternoon teas, events and camping that take place at the Priory each generating its own traffic flow.

It is noted that Kent Highways in their submission make reference to low background traffic flow on Priory Road this is the only reference to the road conditions. The crossroads at Aldington Frith end has very poor visibility for traffic leaving Priory Road whilst there are road markings to advise drivers coming from Aldington and towards Aldington the road is subject to national speed limit.

On the subject of the car parking area whilst there would appear to be sufficient capacity has any contingency plan been put in place if numbers exceed capacity as Priory Road is unsuitable for roadside parking.

**Councillor Lawson returned to the meeting.**

**1173. Finance:**

Schedule of payments:

Staff costs April	£507.21
H J Hoad	£50.00
M Bilham	£12.99
Unity Trust Bank	£500.00

The Parish Council is asked to authorise the Parish Clerk to open accounts with Unity Trust as Administrator with two councillors to authorise all transaction. The purpose of moving the banking arrangements away from Lloyds Bank is that account charges have been introduced on the account on all cheques issued, internet banking is not available where dual authorisation is required.

**Resolved :**

- 1. To authorise the payments in the schedule of payments**
- 2. To authorise the Clerk to proceed with the opening of accounts with Unity Trust Bank with the Clerk to act as administrator and two councillors to act as signatories and to authorise online payments. All current councillors to be signatories.**
- 3. To request Lloyds Bank to transfer the balance of the instant access account together with accrued interest to the current account.**
- 4. To request Unity Trust Bank to effect the transfer of the current account from Lloyds Bank**

**1174. Village Hall:**

The Parish Council is asked to nominate one of its members to the Village Hall Committee and to report back to the Parish Council.

**Resolved: to nominate Councillor Bilham to represent the Parish Council at Bilsington Village Hall meetings.**

**1175. Highways:**

The design and current estimate for the installation of the village gateways has been received from Kent Highways for the four gateways the estimate is £9,516.28. a request has been made to ascertain the cost of prioritising the B2067 and if any funding is available to offset the costs.

**1176. Other items for information:**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:15pm

Action Points:

1. Parish Clerk to contact the Beat Officer to ascertain which meetings he would be attending.
2. Parish Clerk to follow up with the Police and Crime Commissioner dependent on response from the Beat Officer.
3. Parish Clerk to contact the Kent County Councillor with the meeting dates.
4. Parish Clerk to submit the Certificate of Exemption to the External Auditor
5. Parish Clerk to put in place arrangements for public to access the accounts
6. Parish Clerk to update the website with the revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
7. Parish Clerk to arrange for the secure disposal of the old laptop and printer/scanner,
8. Parish Clerk to submit response to the planning application.
9. Parish Clerk to organise the opening of accounts with Unity Trust Bank
10. Parish Clerk to contact Kent Highways regarding the village gateways to prioritise the B2067 Priory Road end and Ashford Road. To request a review of potential parking on the verge of Bonnington Road

## REPORT TO BILSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MAY 2025

My work is constant and by now council will be aware of the risks that rural areas are vulnerable to.

Thefts from cars, vans, sheds, garages, barns, stables, outbuildings alongside warnings of bogus callers and rogue traders. Internet shopping parcel thefts remain a constant crime trend especially as delivery vehicles are followed.

I would like to share with council the other side of my work which all links into my overall strategy for keeping Bilsington safe.

- 1 Continued update to council via reports and discussions.
- 2 Alerts into the community as required. Facebook for general, email if urgent and nearby.
- 3 Writing in magazines and newsletters.
- 4 Continuing to grow NHW membership.

Another important part of the overall strategy is communication and working relationships with key other players.

### THE ASHFORD DISTRICT M.P.S

I have met and set up working relationships with both MPs that cover the Ashford District. Katie Lam and Sojan Joseph.



Both MPs are completely committed to working with me for the benefit of everyone in the community.

Next is to ensure that following the KCC elections that the Councillor for the respective areas I cover and I have a strong working relationship going forwards.

Bilsington is part of **Ashford Rural South** and councillor **Bill Bartlett** is someone I have known and worked with for many years in other areas.  
Importantly to build working relationships with your new councillor and KCC Councillors that border your area.

Kent faces a busy couple of years. I am a lone voice now because I feel devolution could be measure in weeks away rather than the 2 years I regularly hear mentioned.

A void of uncertainty is a gap criminals will drive through.

High on my list is to take intelligence and information and anticipate risks. They may not be in Bilsington today, but could they be “clouds on the horizon”

An example would be information that rural car parks and rural locations are used for drug drops/handover/deals.

This risks the health of misguided persons in the village and may bring the type of unwanted person or criminal into the area,

Drug dealers attract other drug dealers, and those persons CAN bring a level of violence into an area too.





The next matter to report to you on is the ongoing battle to get police officers to attend council meetings. The police miss out on so much by not networking in and working with you as elected members of your communities.

The launch of the Policing model for Kent in June 2023, saw neighbourhood policing as the bedrock of the new police model.

Since that date the attendance of officers across the district has been appalling. The odd area has had the odd visit but fell well short of expectations.

I have pursued a long battle with acrimonious and very frank discussions at times.

I have met with the Police and Crime Commissioner several times and made numerous reports. Many councils have backed that work with submissions and letters to the police and the PCC. Bilsington being one of those councils which as part of Saxon shore has been badly let down.

The PCC was clear that he had agreement with Kent Police for an officer to attend council meetings **“AT LEAST ONCE A QUARTER”**

After several lively correspondences in recent days the following has emerged.

Dear Peter      **RE: Beat Police Officers attending council meetings**

Thank you for your email.

Please be advised that the Commissioner met with KALC and the Assistant Chief Constable Nigel Brookes earlier last week and the principle of regular attendance was confirmed again.

He has raised concerns about attendance in Ashford District with the Commander for the area very recently too.

He is taking this matter seriously and hopes the situation improves.

Yours sincerely, Mrs Haleemah Muddasar

Casework officer

Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner,

Kent Police, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 9BZ

Office telephone: 01622 677055

Email: [contactyourpcc@kent.police.uk](mailto:contactyourpcc@kent.police.uk)

Website: [www.kent-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk)

X: @PCCKent

I will comment on the recent scams all of which target a much younger person.

- 1 OASIS CONCERTS, bogus tickets and hotel scams
2. Fat Jab/Tablets to target younger persons especially young vulnerable females.

Other matters I am working on is rural crime especially animals/horses and the ongoing plague of catapults which has seen me secure almost 25000 signatures.

1 of 6

# Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

## Ticket Fraud

Buying tickets online this summer?

Across the UK, over 9,800 people reported being a victim of ticket fraud last year, with losses of £9.7M.

Stay safe whilst securing your tickets for summer events this year.

Paying with a credit card can increase your chances of recovering your money if you are affected by fraud.

Best advice is to Only buy tickets from the venue's box office, official promoter or agent, or a well-known ticketing website.

You can find out more about how to protect yourself from these types of scams by going to - [Ticket fraud](#) | [Action Fraud](#)

If you think that you may have been a victim of this or any other type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040.

### Preventing fraud

Together, let's stop scammers.



**Remember, ABC:**

-  **never Assume**
-  **never Believe**
-  **always Confirm**

Find out more:  
[actionfraud.police.uk/ticketfraud](http://actionfraud.police.uk/ticketfraud)



## In 2024, £9.7M was lost to ticket fraud.

Follow our top tips to protect yourself against ticket fraud.

- Buy safely ● Payment ● Account security

**STOP! THINK FRAUD**  
actionfraud.police.uk

**ActionFraud**  
0300 123 2040

**STOP! THINK FRAUD**  
actionfraud.police.uk

For further information about Fraud, visit our website at [Advice about fraud](#) | [Kent Police](#)

You will also find valuable information from the Home Office at [Stop! Think Fraud - How to stay safe from scams](#)



#### CONSUMER NEWS

# Scammers make £2million selling fake Oasis tickets

By Lucy Evans, Money Reporter

OASIS fans have been swindled out of more than £2million by fake ticket sellers, Lloyds Banking Group said yesterday.

More than 1,000 of its customers have fallen for the trick, losing hundreds of pounds each. One lost £1,700.

Real tickets sold out within hours after the band announced its reunion tour, which begins this summer. Around 5,000 UK fans are believed to have been scammed in total, many via social media ads. Liz Ziegler, from Lloyds, said: 'Buying directly from reputable, authorised retailers is the only way to guarantee you're paying for a genuine ticket.'

She said fake sellers often ask for payment via bank transfer.

# Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

## Weight loss Pill Scam Email

A scam email impersonating Mail Online promotes a 'miracle weight loss pill.'

The email also says that the product scored a deal on TV show Dragon's Den.

The email asks you to click on a link to purchase the item, however, it is a scam and takes you to a realistic looking website under the control of the criminals, where they will steal your personal and financial data.

If you get an email like this or any other suspicious looking emails, you can report these by forwarding to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

For more information on Phishing go to - [Phishing: Spot and report scam emails, texts, websites and... - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

If you think that you may have been a victim of this or any other type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040.

## Preventing fraud

Together,  
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Kent  
County  
Council  
TRADING  
STANDARDS

For further information about Fraud, visit our website at [Advice about fraud | Kent Police](#)

You will also find valuable information from the Home Office at [Stop! Think Fraud - How to stay safe from scams](#)

This is an especially worrying scam as it will target young vulnerable women under incredible social media pressure and facebook pressures about appearances and weight.

I will comment on my work with CATAPULTS across the district.



## RURAL CRIME AND ANIMAL SAFETY





# 10mph

Slow down to a maximum of 10mph.



# Be patient

I won't sound my horn or rev my engine.



# Pass wide

Pass the horse wide and slow (if safe to do so), at least a 2 metres if possible



These recent campaigns have also appeared on both national and local TV stations.

## LAMBING SEASON

PLEASE WALK YOUR DOG RESPONSIBLY

Keep to footpaths

Keep dogs on leads



SHEEO WORRYING and ATTACKS ON LIVESTOCK

## Protecting livestock – know the law

'Worrying' livestock is a crime under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953.

If you are on agricultural land and a dog you own or are in charge of **attacks** or **chases** livestock in a way that may cause **injury**, **suffering** or **loss**, you could be **prosecuted**, **fined** and **ordered to pay compensation**.

Under the Animals Act 1971, a person acting to **protect livestock** may be able to **kill** or **injure a dog**, without incurring any criminal or civil liability, if he or she believes it is worrying livestock.



**Please keep your dog on a lead.**

If you see a dog worrying livestock, please call the police on **999**.



**Kent  
Police**

**Protecting and serving  
the people of Kent**





## Rural roads are not racetracks

Whatever road you drive on, remember who you share the road with. Always drive at a safe speed for the road conditions and never exceed speed limits.



## Speak up to stop rural crime.

Criminal gangs exploit our local wildlife, environment and communities. Your voice can make a difference.



Have information on rural crime?  
You can speak up and remain  
100% anonymous. Always.

[crimestoppers-uk.org](https://crimestoppers-uk.org)

**CrimeStoppers.**

**0800 555111**

100% anonymous. Always.

As always thank you all for your support and backing.

I look forward towards the summer crime prevention I will run, and then the rest of a busy 2025.

**Thank you**

**Peter**

**Peter New  
Community**