[**March 2020 Minutes**](https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/march-2020-minutes/)

Minutes of the meeting of Hollingbourne Parish Council held on Monday 9th March 2020, commencing at 7.30 pm.

**Present:**          Cllr A Ward (Chairman), Cllr Dr S Bauer, Cllr D Ardley, Cllr A Marshall, Cllr C O’Meara and Cllr C Gooding

**Attendance**:   Cllr P Garten (Maidstone BC), four members of the public and Mrs V Smith –Parish Clerk.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr S Hulme (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs S Prendergast (KCC) and PCSO Matthew Adlington – work commitments.

1. **Declarations and Requests**

Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests – none; Declaration of Interest in items on the Agenda – The Hollingbourne Parish Council will not comment on 20/500318/FULL, 20/500295/FULL or , 20/500296/LBC planning applications made for The Windmill PH, as they have a declaration of interest in the Village Hall, which is owned by the planning applicant; Requests for Dispensations – none

1. **Approval of minutes of last meeting (circulated prior to meeting)**

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on 10th February 2020 are a true and accurate record of the meeting,

1. **Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda) –**none to report.

1. **Police Report**
2. The Parish Council recognise that lots of the crimes reported in the Hollingbourne area emanate from the Roadchef Services, M20, Junction 8. The Clerk has written to the Manager there to ask firstly, if they are aware of all of the crime incidents, or whether the victims report the crime to the Police only, and secondly, if they are aware of the crimes, what preventative measures are they putting in place to cut crime.  The Clerk will report back when a response has been received.  **Action: The Clerk**
3. The report for the Hollingbourne and neighbouring Hucking area taken from [www.e-watch.co](http://www.e-watch.co/), since the 16th February 2020 advised that there were five crime reports:
* On Wednesday 4th of March between 8:00am and 4:45pm in Ashford Road. Somebody stole a silver Renault Trafic, HX63\*\*\*, from the road. The van had broken down.
* Between 9:00pm on Thursday 5th of March and 3:45am on Friday 6th of March in M20 Junction 8. Somebody cut the curtains of a truck parked at the service station. They searched but didn’t take anything.
1. The Police UK web site [https://www.police.uk/kent/50/crime/2019-09/+OqXKoY/](https://www.police.uk/kent/50/crime/2019-09/%2BOqXKoY/) have January and February 2020 figures. In these two months fourteen crime reports and two anti-social behaviour reports were made at the Maidstone Services, M20:  Shoplifting (1 x crime report) – includes theft from shops or stalls – investigation complete, no suspect identified.  Other theft (6 x crime reports) – includes theft by an employee, blackmail and making off without payment – 3 x crime reports are currently under investigation, 2 x crime reports investigation complete with no suspect, 1 x crime report is currently being investigated by the Police.  The offender has been put in contact with those affected to repair the harm done and find a positive way forward.  Vehicle crime (5 x crime reports) – includes theft from or of a vehicle or interference with a vehicle – 5 x crime reports investigation complete, no suspect identified. Criminal damage and arson (1 x crime report) – Includes damage to buildings and vehicles and deliberate damage by fire – investigation complete with no suspect.  Theft from the person (1 x crime report) – includes crimes that involve theft directly from the victim (including handbag, wallet, cash, mobile phones) but without the use or threat of physical force – investigation complete with no suspect.  Anti-social behaviour (2 x reports) – no information is provided.
2. The Police UK website gave information of eight crime reports and two cases of anti-social behaviour in the Hollingbourne village for the months of January and February 2020. These were Violence or sexual offences (5 x crime reports) – Includes offences against the person such as common assaults, Grievous Bodily Harm and sexual offences: 1 x on or near Athelstan Green, 1 x on or near Claygate, 1 x on or near Culpeper Close, 1 x on or near the sports / recreation ground and  1 x on or near the Hollingbourne Railway Station.  Vehicle crime (1 x crime report) – includes theft from or of a vehicle or interference with a vehicle – on or near Hasteds.  Burglary (2 x crime reports) – includes offences where a person enters a house or other building with the intention of stealing – on or near the Hollingbourne Hill.  Anti-social behaviour reports (2 x reports) 1 x on or near Athelstan Green and 1 x on or near the sports / recreation ground.
3. The Parish Council would like to urge villagers to contact the **Crimestoppers** on **0800 555 111** if they have information relating to crimes, or other concerns that they would like to anonymously supply to the Police. **Crimestoppers** is a charity which the Police use frequently.  If you own a smart phone, the ‘app’ <https://countryeye.co.uk/> is also a very convenient way of reporting matters and concerns to the police and the Parish Council would urge you to use this service.

1. **Chairman’s Report –**(The Village Hall)
2. The new owners of the Village Hall, Mr & Mrs Balfour-Lynn appear to express well intentioned proposals for the community continuing to use the building, and rental is free of charge for residents. From August 2020 the Parish Council will cease to have an interest in the site.  Cllr Ward asked about the length of the landlord’s tenancy but does not have any further information.   With this in mind the Parish Council may need to develop a long-term plan with regards to providing a community hub within the village, but for the interim period the residents are happy and secure in using the Village Hall.
3. Formal notices have been received by the Parish Council from the landowner’s solicitors. The Section 25 notice advises that the Landlord is not prepared to renew the tenancy for the Parish Council after August 2020.  The Section 40 form is a formality for the Parish Council to sign and complete to this effect.  Cllr Ward did not recommend seeking a new lease, as the legal process would be expensive, not guaranteed to bring the favoured result and the age of the property and length of the tenancy would also not be in the Parish Council’s favour.  The new landlord of the hall wants to refurbish the building which would involve expense and time.  From August 2020, the landlord will grant any previous bookings made for the hall, however, the hirers will not be able to provide their own catering.  It is understood that most of the existing hirers of the Village Hall will remain using the hall, but the Harrietsham Pre-School and the Bowls Club have been asked to vacate.  The Parish Council believes that the reason for the Bowls Club requirement to re-locate is because of the lifting gear for the stage, which allows the hall to lengthen for the bowling, is no longer to be used.  The new landlord is responsible for all of the health and safety risks within the hall.
4. Cllr Gooding asked whether the Parish Council has any assets that could be sold to raise funds to improve the Cardwell Pavilion, but unfortunately, they do not. It would be interesting to find out from South Eastern Railways who owns the building near the Hollingbourne Railway Station and whether this could be used by the community.  Cllr Garten emphasized that through previous experience in meeting with Mr and Mrs Balfour-Lynn, they are honest people with good ethics.  The changes taking place with regards to the Village Hall have to be looked upon as positive news, and a protection to the land around the Village Hall from being over developed with houses.
5. The Parish Council has received a letter today from a local farmer regarding a wall that has been built outside a house along the Pilgrim’s Way, which is allegedly obstructing the transportation of large agricultural vehicles travelling along the road. Cllr Ardley will investigate the matter with the KCC Highways department.

1. **Clerk’s Report –**
2. With regards to the Parish Website and the need for it to be compliant with Website Accessibility Initiative WCAG2.1, the Clerk has contacted the company who is going to update the Parish Council website and the work is due to start on the 31st March 2020. The website company will also assist the Clerk in fine-tuning the GDPR requirements for the Parish Council.  **Action:  The Clerk**
3. The Parish Council would advise all residents to take all of the Governments advice with regards to protecting oneself during the Corona (COVID-19) pandemic. The village shop ‘Woods of Hollingbourne’ working alongside with the Hollingbourne WI are running a community group assisting the vulnerable people in the village with food, etc.  Please contact the Clerk on pchollingbourne@gmail.com , or leave your details with Julie and Martin at the shop if you need assistance or would like to volunteer in helping.  Please see the link <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/coronavirus-help-for-villagers/> , https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/safeguarding-in-the-coronavirus-crisis/

and <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/woods-of-hollingbourne-opening-times-update/> .

1. The Maidstone BC have advised the Clerk that the Hollingbourne Parish Councillors will need to re-apply for their positions within the Council in March 2020. The Clerk has subsequently passed the information onto the Parish Councillors.   **Action:  The Clerk / Parish Councillors**

1. **Defibrillators – Cllr A Marshall**
2. Cllr Marshall has checked the defibrillator machines in the village and they are good for action.  The local fire-station carries out free of charge CPR and defibrillator training for all residents.  Details of the dates of these events will be placed on the Parish Website so that groups of people can be in attendance.  However, the current COVID-19 crisis has delayed these activities at present.  Please be assured that the defibrillator machines guide the person operating the device through all of the necessary steps, both audibly and in text script.  Please always advise the Clerk on 07856 180003, via pchollingbourne@gmail.com, or talk to one of the Parish Councillors, if the defibrillator has been used.  **Action:  The Clerk / Cllr Marshall**

1. **County Councillor’s Report –**Cllr Mrs S Prendergast
2. Cllr Mrs S Prendergast did not have a specific report for this month’s Parish Meeting. However, she is always ready and willing to help out with matters pertaining to the village if it is within the KCC’s capability.  The Clerk and/or Parish Councillors can ask her for assistance when it is required.

1. **Borough Councillor’s Report**– Cllr Patrik Garten
2. Cllr Garten wanted to apologise for inadvertently upsetting some of the Lenham Heath residents by referring to them as ‘nimbys’ in his recent newsletter. As a response to this matter, a lady living in the locality had sent individual letters to all of the Maidstone BC Directors including the Leader of the Council.  Cllr Garten would normally support and respect Mrs Helen Whately MP in all areas of her work.  However, with regards to the excessive amount of housing Central Government is demanding to have built around the Maidstone BC, her lack of support in querying the amounts necessary is astonishing.  The Maidstone BC and Mrs Helen Grant MP are very concerned that the housing numbers asked for are unsustainable and infrastructure is simply not in place for so many more potential residents. The county of Kent, ‘The Garden of England’ will soon disappear if the landowners have their way in building all over it.  Under the present Central Government requirements, even if the builders stop building the dwellings because they are not able to sell them, Maidstone BC is still legally obligated to fulfil the prescribed annual housing supply numbers.
3. Cllr Garten encourages all to read his report on the Parish website, link <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/patrik-garten-mbc-councillor-for-north-downs-ward-recent-newsletter-march-2020/> .  Cllr Garten’s newsletter is always timely, relevant to the local residents and worth reading.

1. **Call for Sites and Maidstone BC Local Plan updates –**Cllr C O’Meara / Cllr P Garten
2. Cllr Garten reported that members of all parties within the Maidstone BC would like to push for an early sifting through of the Call for Sites proposals, of which there are a lot in the Maidstone area. However, Officers have said that this is not feasible, as every proposal has to be given its own merit.  It is not foreseen that any decisions will be made this side of December 2020.

1. **Planning Committee Report –**Cllr O’Meara
2. **20/500420/FULL– Swiss Lodge, Pilgrim’s Way, Hollingbourne**

**Proposal:**  Demolition of existing garage and construction of new garage / workshop (resubmission: 19/503966/FULL).  **Decision: DO WISH TO OBJECT (DNWTO)**

1. **20/500494/FULL – The Oast House, Pilgrim’s Way, Hollingbourne**

**Proposal:**Minor material amendment to 18/506075/FULL (proposed single storey rear extension with roof lights / roof lantern and internal alterations, conversion of basement with connecting single storey side extension.  Alterations to fenestration along South East elevation.  Landscape enhancement throughout the site with the planting of native species trees and hedgerows.  (Revision to 18/501600/FULL) to allow alterations to approved layout.  **Decision: (DNWTO)**

1. **20/500443/FULL – Pilgrim’s Garth, Pilgrim’s Way, Hollingbourne**

**Proposal**:  Single storey side and rear extension (amendment to application 19/505275/FULL).

**Decision:  DO NOT WISH TO OBJECT (DNWTO)**

1. **20/500318/FULL– The Windmill PH, 32 Eyhorne Street,** **Hollingbourne**

**Proposal:**Stationing of accommodation pods (to include a bedroom and bathroom facilities) for use for overnight stays for visitors to the public house, with associated access paths and landscaping.

**Decision:  PLEASE SEE ITEM 2.**

1. **20/500295/FULL & 20/500296/LBC– The Windmill PH, 32 Eyhorne Street,** **Hollingbourne**

**Proposal:**Demolition of rear timber structure, erection of new external stair to 1st floor entrance door, and change of use of 1st floor to five letting rooms for visitors, including associated works.

**Decision:  PLEASE SEE ITEM 2.**

1. **UPDATE: 19/505743/FULL – Woodside, Firs Lane, Hollingbourne**

**Proposal:**  Erection of 1 x four-bedroom detached dwelling and 1 x three-bedroom detached chalet dwelling; and **UPDATE:  19/505748/FULL – Woodside, Firs Lane, Hollingbourne**

**Proposal:**  Erection of detached dwelling together with link extension to double garage and carport with studio/storage above and associated works.

Both of these planning applications have been refused by the Maidstone BC, although the Parish Council voted ‘Do not wish to object’ against 19/505748/FULL.

1. **UPDATE: 19/505680/FULL – Eastfield Barn, Broad Street Hill, Hucking**

**Proposal:** Change of use of land and conversion of existing barn to equine clinic and associated development including erection of stable block, trot-up, menage, paddock areas and associated parking areas, hardstanding and fencing.

Cllr Garten advised that the planning application, had been **permitted** when it was discussed at the Planning Committee meeting.  The Hucking community had been very much divided on their opinions of the planning application.

1. **UPDATE: 19/502469/FULL – Pilgrims Retreat, Hogbarn Lane, Harrietsham**

**Proposal:**Retrospective application (in part) for the change of use of land from a mixed use of holiday units (180 caravans) and residential (18 caravans) to a residential park home site (for full-time residential occupation) comprising the stationing of 248 caravans, including engineering works to create terracing, hardstanding, retaining walls, and the extension of the site along the south eastern boundary…

Cllr Garten advised that the site had been operational for approximately twenty years, but some of the caravans had been sold to people (e.g. £180,000) with the understanding that they are permanent residential caravans rather than holiday homes.  Cllr Ward said that this is a similar problem found at various caravan sites.  The Maidstone BC are in a tricky situation because if they serve enforcement notices on the residents who have brought these caravans, they will make them homeless.  If they do not tackle the problem, the caravan site owner will get away with the matter and so restrictions have been put on the owners of the site.  Please see the link    <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/maidstone/news/enforcement-orders-on-caravan-park-avoided-for-now-222855/> and similar Kent Online reports.

1. **Environmental / Parks Committee Report (Availability of trees for the village) –**
2. The Parish Council are going to install a new notice-board near the Church Approach to facilitate the residents at the upper end of the village. The notice-board design will be similar to that situated near the school and it will need to stand on posts, with a contractor arranged to install it.  **Action:  The Clerk**
3. Cllr Marshall was very happy to announce that the Go Green Go Wild grant scheme had awarded the Parish Council £1,300(all the money requested). The Parish Council thanked Cllr Marshall for her hard work in this matter.  The money granted will help to improve the Millennium Green and Cllr Marshall has approached ‘Sheds and Shelters’ within the village for prices for a duck house and a picnic bench.  The money will also be used in purchasing safety signage for the pond when it has been re-established.
4. There is a Village Spring Clean arranged for the **28th March 2020**, and Cllr Marshall has registered the event with the Great British Spring Clean Initiative, which means that it will be advertised to other keen volunteers outside of the village. The Maidstone BC is short of litter-picking equipment for the event, due to similar events taking place and so it was proposed that the Parish Council purchase their own litter-pick sticks.  Cllr Marshall will investigate the best deal for this purchase and liaise with the Clerk.  **UPDATE:**  The Village Spring Clean was cancelled on this occasion due to the COVID-19 crisis, the event will be rearranged for a later date in 2020.
5. Cllr Ward is investigating the price of additional play equipment for the park, as they have received S106 money from the Fernham Homes development, which has been specifically designated by the Maidstone BC to be used on the play equipment. Cllr Ward will find out if the play equipment can be obtained for different age-groups, e.g. teenagers, rather than just for younger children.
6. The WI thanked the Parish Council for the use of the Cardwell Pavilion and the Lance Memorial field in running the Pancake Race events on the 25th February. Albeit the sudden and dramatic rainfall during the races, the sun soon came out and everybody had a good time.  Cllr Mrs Shellina Prendergast gave her kind support to the event and Cllr Garten won a rosette for his sporting efforts.
7. The Parish Clerk will write to the owners of the land between the Station Approach and the school to see if they could cut back their hedge a little further to widen the pathway for pedestrians. Cllr D Ardley will also contact the Maidstone BC with regards to their contractors pruning hedges and in the process avoiding the disturbance of nesting birds and their young.
8. **Finance Report –**
9. There is £28,085.95 in the Parish Council’s combined bank accounts as of the 2nd March 2020, and the cheques raised by the Clerk were agreed upon and signed.
10. The Parish Council has requested a precept payment of £26,844.05 for the 2020/2021 financial year, and this has been agreed upon by the Maidstone BC.
11. The Clerk is still in the process of opening up an additional bank account for the Parish Council.
12. **Highways and Infrastructure Committee Report**–
13. Cllr Ardley has had a response from KCC Highways regarding the Parish Council’s Highways Improvement Plan. This would include the installation of (a) ‘dragon’s teeth’ road markings and possible rumble strips at the Ashford Road crossing and entrance to the village; (b) works would also include in the Upper Street area, a gateway type of construction at the entrance to the village coming down from Hollingbourne Hill. The speed signs would be moved up the hill, placed nearer to the last property on the left-hand of the hill when entering the village, to provide a longer distance for road users to slow down when approaching the village.  A traffic regulation order would be needed to carry out this work, which would cost approximately £3,000; (c) virtual speed humps being installed outside of the school – physical speed humps would cause problems for residents with noise, air pollution due to slowing cars, etc.  Additionally, a variable speed limit of 20mph outside of the school could be installed.
14. The KCC Highways are in the process of working out the final costings for the aforementioned works and Cllr Ardley will report back with their findings as soon as they are available. As reported at the February Parish Meeting, Cllr Mrs S Prendergast, KCC, will be able to help out financially with some of the work in the Upper Street area, if the Parish Council are in agreement with KCC Highways.  The ideas of a different colour tarmac on the road, or a lolly-pop person outside of the school were also mentioned by the Parish Councillors at the March Parish Meeting, but these ideas were not mentioned at the meeting with the KCC Highways.
15. The Speedwatch initiative is being constantly pursued by the Clerk and Cllr Ardley for the villagers of Hollingbourne to set up their own volunteer group, but as of yet we do have any response from the Police. The Parish Council need to be advised by the Police as to the correct equipment to purchase, the information on which would be valid in the eyes of the law to bring speeding road-users to justice.  Local Parish Councils also favour the visual speed signs, which ‘flash’ up the actual speed of the road user.  Generally, drivers breaking the speed limit then slow down out of respect for the laws of the land.

1. **Fête Sub-Committee Report –**Cllr D Ardley
2. The next Fete meeting will be on Monday 20th April 2020 commencing at 8.00 pm in The Dirty Habit PH. Cllr Ardley reported that the fete program has been fixed bar the Steampunk entry as they will be in attendance but will not be performing.  The posters for the event have been printed and are ready for distribution.   Prices are being sought to purchase two ‘heavy-duty’ gazeboes to house the ‘bar’, etc, at the fete.  Cllr Ardley and Cllr Ward proposed that Cllr Ardley go ahead and order the gazeboes, and the suggestion was seconded by Cllr C O’Meara. **Action:** **Cllr Ardley**

**Date of next meeting: Monday 6th April 2020, 7.30 pm**