

BERDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on **Monday 8 July 2024** at 8.00pm

Present: Duncan Murdoch, Harry Wadsworth, Debbie Thomson, Diane Holt, Kathleen Merino.
From 8.50pm Janice Loughlin and Ray Gooding.

Public: John Walker

321.0	Apologies: Antonia Bolcas (holiday), Kerry Calder (unwell)
321.1	Declarations of interest: None
321.2	Approve minutes of Berden Parish Council from Monday 20 May 2024: Proposed by Diane, signed by Duncan
321.3	Mailchimp <ul style="list-style-type: none">• John Walker joined the meeting to discuss the situation with the village Mailchimp which currently has two administrators (John and Debbie). Two admins are allowed free of charge, an extra admin is £10 per month. It had been suggested that other village groups such as the Church could be added as an additional administrator as the Church generates a lot of messages. Making more use of Facebook for these communications was suggested, but there were reservations about control over the content.• Debbie suggested that the Church could have its own Mailchimp account. An invitation to sign up can be sent out from the existing account.• John to speak to Natalie Trapmore.
321.4	Solar/Battery Units <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Berden Hall – Duncan reported that Protect the Pelhams had put in its final comments on this proposal to the Inspector, and that the decision of the Planning Inspector had been delayed until after the General Election. We should hear soon.• Pelham Springs – likely to be waiting for the decision on Berden Hall• Crabbs Green – there are still noise issues.• Greens Farm – Duncan met the developers at the end of May but has seen no further action or information.• East End BESS – There was a consultation in Furneux Pelham, as noise could be an issue here.• Diane brought a notification of a new application for the north of Bishops Stortford.• It was suggested that decisions on the above had been stalled until after the General Election and it is expected that responses and decisions will now be made.
321.5	Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neighbourhood Plan Uttlesford has queried our interest in creating a bespoke Neighbourhood Plan for Berden re solar farms when they are included in the new Local Plan. Duncan responded that we want the plan to include noise, screening and construction access.

321.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathleen asked if this was worth pursuing if applications are now likely to be approved. • Bonnetting Lane A new planning appeal has come through for one house with improved visibility onto the lane. Duncan will re-issue our objection from last time. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diane has circulated the 1Q End budget. • Payments to ratify: Insurance Bank charges x 2 Grass cutting x 2 80th Anniversary D-Day signs Clerk's salary Clerk's tax These were approved. • It was agreed that £800 for village donations should be included in the budget. • Diane asked Debbie to look out for our EALC subscription invoice. • Diane also asked what the Parish Council could still contribute to the storage shed and Harry suggested external paint which was agreed. • Diane was concerned that John and Harry have not been formally thanked for their work on this project and Debbie will write an update on this in the next Parish magazine. • Kathleen asked if some money could be put aside for VE Day 80-year celebrations on 8 May 2025. A flagpole for the Village Hall was suggested along with lighting the beacon and a special Social Club event. John Walker will investigate. <p>Just Giving fund: I love Berden This page closes at the end of July.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duncan asked that we produce a formal proposal for funds for 2 x recycled plastic tables for the Playground, one circular, as large as possible and paving slabs for it to stand on, plus another table to fit in the existing space available on the right-hand side. • Kathleen will draft the proposal.
321.7	<p>Highways</p> <p>Community Speedwatch and Traffic and Speeding Steering group Both to be discussed when Kerry is present at next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ray reported that there are currently locations where the roads are being dug up to replace old cast-iron gas pipes. • He also explained a new scheme whereby areas in Uttlesford will be offered one week, on a repeating rota, where potholes, blocked drains, footpaths will be fixed (after a triage process). Ray asked to be informed of anything in Berden to be included in this.

321.8	Footpaths and grounds maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harry reported that he has kept on top of the grass at the Village Hall, Playground and Simon's Field and he will be cutting the hedges in the next two to three weeks. The footpaths were completed on 17 June using the same system as last year i.e. hiring specialist cutting equipment.
321.9	Grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently none to apply for.
321.10	Emergency Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antonia had a meeting with Harry, John and Kathleen to go through the existing Plan. Many corrections/amendments were made, and Antonia is preparing a new draft.
321.11	Neighbourhood Watch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be discussed on Antonia's return.
321.12	Playground <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RoSPA report was received on 20 May. To be discussed on Antonia's return.
321.13	Defibrillators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These were reported as working during June 2024. A request to purchase a defibrillator on behalf of Little London Community (who will reimburse) was agreed. Debbie to reply and to recommend that when choosing a location to be sure it can be heated.
321.14	Council Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of 9 and 13 Gawlers Janice has been liaising with Jean Gillard re number 13, Uttlesford has ordered a skip to remove the rubbish. Number 9 to be discussed on Antonia's return.
321.15	Salt Bag Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are still good quantities of salt in the village so no more needs to be ordered this year.
321.16	Parish emails and laptop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debbie reported on the suggestion that the Parish move to a .gov.uk domain. This is recommended but not mandatory and has cost implications as well as a requirement for the whole Council to use .gov.uk email addresses. This was not something that Councillors currently wish to do. Laptop. Barry from Easykey has moved the Parish Clerk emails from Thunderbird to Outlook. He identified that the laptop is slow, due to having a traditional hard drive rather than a solid state drive, but that otherwise is fine. Diane reported that it is only two years old and Debbie agreed to monitor its performance over the coming months.

321.17	<p>Annual Parish meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duncan has been asked why we did not hold an Annual Parish meeting this May. Although it is still not mandatory following restrictions introduced during Covid, it was agreed that one should be scheduled for a Friday night in May next year. • Debbie to produce schedule of meeting dates for 2025,
321.18	<p>Cllr Loughlin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duncan thanked Janice for formally opening the new storage shed in June. • Janice reported that the Local Plan is to be published on 12 July. This will be followed by an extraordinary meeting on 30 July. If the Plan is approved, it will go to the Secretary of State. • Janice reported that an independent inquiry is being set up to investigate the delay in sending out postal votes,
321.19	<p>Cllr Gooding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ray reported on the ongoing issue of electricity pylons running through Dedham Vale on the route down to Thurrock. • He also reported that there is pressure to franchise the bus services. This will not happen unless we have devolved government. • Kathleen asked if anyone on the Parish Council could attend the virtual Summer Transport meeting on Friday 26 July. Nobody was free, Debbie to ask Kerry. Post meeting note: Kerry unable to attend due to work. <p>There were no further comments and the meeting ended at 10.10pm.</p> <p>Next meeting to be held on Monday 9 September 2024</p>