

NEWSLETTER

BIDBOROUGH

PARISH

COUNCIL



AUTUMN
2023



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Meet The Team—Your New Council

Following the elections in May 2023, five new villagers have taken up their role as councillors for Bidborough Parish – with two existing councillors continuing.

The new cohort includes some familiar faces as well as some ‘first timers’.

The new councillors are:



Amanda Collins

Amanda grew up in Bidborough and her son currently attends Bidborough Primary School. She is keen to focus on facilities for the younger members of our community and for greater liaison between the school and the council.



Pete Eames

Pete is an ‘old hand’ at dealing with council matters having previously served as a general councillor and as Chair. Having had a break from the fray, he has stood again with the hope that, going forward, council matters can be dealt with through ‘good humour and friendship’.



Stephen Hinds

Stephen has lived in the village for 34 years after a long career in the City. He is very experienced with contracts, finance and management and hopes to be able to provide positive input into the ongoing running of the council.



David Marriott

An engineer by trade, David and his family have been part of the Bidborough community for over 30 years. As a new councillor, his particular focus will be governance and risk management. David is also the Vice Chair of the Trustees.



Quentin Stevens

Quentin's knowledge of the village and council matters will be invaluable going forward. He has lived in Bidborough for over 30 years and has continued his involvement with the council on a co-opted basis, managing the closed churchyard and the Council's social media presence.

The continuing members of the council are:



Sandra Summers

Sandra is the Vice Chair of the Council and Chair of the Trustees. She has been a councillor for 4 years and has championed the refurbishment of the play park and improvements to road safety.



Karen Vidler

Karen became a councillor in 2021 and is the Chair of the Council. She has been part of the community since 2003 and has stood with Sandra in the fight to get the play park refurbished. Her aim is for the Council to fulfil its purpose and serve the whole community.

Neil Harris

Neil is clerk to the council and is the glue that binds us together. Although not a resident, he has lived and breathed Bidborough for the last year or so, assisting in any way he can.

Neil is the primary contact should you have any issues in the village and can be contacted on clerk@bidboroughpc.org.uk.

OUTGOING COUNCILLORS

Mr Shepherdson, Mr Hawksfield, Mrs Thorne and Mr Moore chose not to stand for re-election in May 2023.

These outgoing councillors have all served for a number of years and supported their specific passions with enthusiasm, spending hours of energy and time serving within the community. For this, we give

them out thanks.

Mr Johnson also chose not to restand for Council this year having served the community for over a decade.

Over the last 2 years Mr Johnson sat through many council meetings supporting the minority councillors in the pursuit of transparency and common sense. He has now earned himself a well earned rest from local politics and we wish him all the best in his retirement.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Sadly, we are still looking for someone to take this on.

If you can spare a few hours per month to take on this worthwhile initiative please contact the Parish Clerk who will provide you with all the relevant information.



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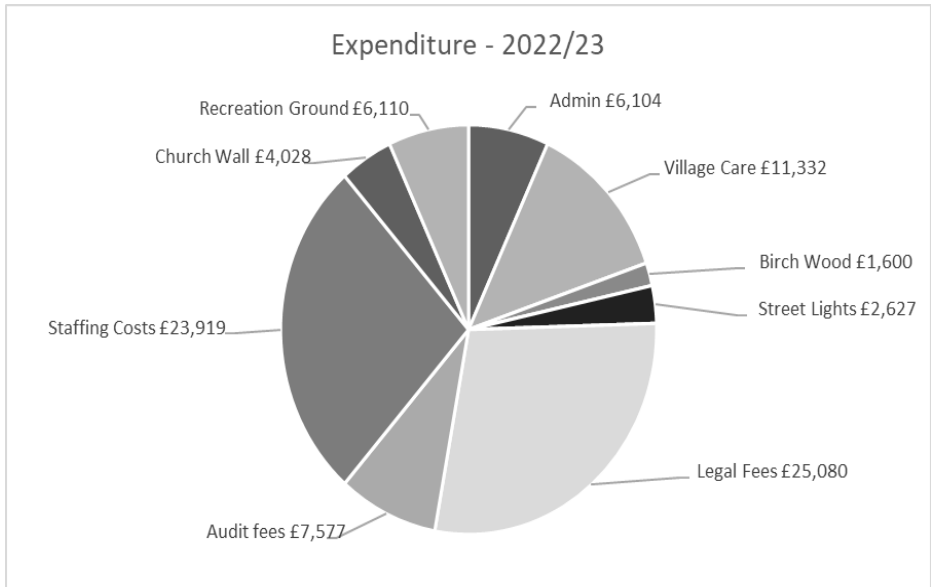
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Parish Council

Accounts — 2022/2023

Income to the parish for the year ending 31 March 2023 came to just over £72,061 mainly derived from our precept income and a small amount from newsletter advertising, allotment rents and burial fees. Expenditure for the same period is given below.



Costs incurred total just over £88,380 but this includes VAT of around £7,680 which the Council can reclaim so the net expenditure last financial year was c£80,700. Expenditure includes expected items relating to general maintenance and upkeep around the village; grass cutting, hedge trimming, repairs, tree work and so forth. The costs credited to Recreation Ground include the repairs to the entrance of the recreation ground.

Looking more closely at the audit, legal and staffing fees:

On the audit side this can be split between usual costs, which came to £1,360 and extraordinary costs of £6,217 which relate to challenges made to the 2021/22 Annual Governance and Audit

Return (AGAR). For the legal costs these are split between the employment dispute with the former clerk Mrs Divall (£20,280) and advice on the Recreation Ground Trust (£4,800). There are further fees covering advice on the Trust but these fall into the current 2023/24 year.

On the staffing side £10,963 relates to amounts owed to Mrs Divall and to HMRC. With the balance covering locum clerk costs and employment expense for our current clerk (£12,956). Outside inflationary increases, the Council decided not to increase the precept despite the significant additional costs incurred this year. Monies previously set aside for other village projects have been utilised to cover these and the Council will need to have a period of consolidation to build up reserves again over the next few years.

GOVERNANCE

The clerk has now undertaken his report on the recreation ground – and this can be viewed on the Parish Council website together with the legal advice received from the Council's solicitors.

The employment issue pursued by the retiring councillors in relation to the former clerk has also been settled.

The only outstanding issue is in respect of expenses incurred by the former Chair, Mrs Thorne. The Council is awaiting further information from Mrs Thorne so they could consider the request for payment. The matter is therefore deferred until such time as the requested information is provided.

MRS THORNE'S PERSONAL STATEMENT

In May, Mrs Thorne felt compelled to issue a personal note regarding the stance she had taken as (former) Chair in relation to the employment dispute with the former clerk and this was hand delivered to every house in the parish.

As the new council are determined to look forward, they took the decision not to respond to the statement. However, the Council's silence on this is not an endorsement of Mrs Thorne's statement and does not represent the Council's view.

NEW COUNCIL' S WORK

The new Council have been kept busy since their first meeting in May 2023. Detailed below are just some of the issues currently being dealt with:

Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground Trust

Significant work has been done on this in the last 3 months, including:

- reforming the Committee of Management (CoM),
- amending the trust deed so that the Bowls Club are now part of the CoM,
- writing draft Terms of Reference for the CoM to provide a framework for their structure,
- establishing various policies in relation to the operation of the Trust.

Further details regarding the work of the trust are given later on in the magazine.

Summers' Steps

This relates to the entrance to Birch Wood near the junction of St Lawrence Avenue and Darnley Drive. These steps are steep and old and there are concerns regarding the safety of using this entrance into the wood.

On assessing what work was needed to make this safer it was discovered that the land where the steps are situated is not owned by the Parish Council. As such, we are not able to make repairs without the consent of the landowner—and this is where it gets complicated.

It turns out that the local land owner is now in a nursing home and not available to discuss matters of business. Her nearest relative lives in Australia and has now been contacted in the hope of getting the steps repaired.

In the meantime please, **please take care if you use this entrance to the wood – using this access will be at your own risk.**

Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

Road safety is a continual discussion for the Council. Any improvements have to be agreed with Kent County Council (KCC) and Highways. KCC have now provided the Council with a 'menu' of options that *may* be available if the parish fulfils the various criteria laid out by KCC. The HIP was discussed at the September Council meeting and KCC visited the parish on 26 September and provided guidance as to what can and what cannot be undertaken. The Council will be discussing this again at the October meeting.

Speedwatch

As part of road safety we have an amazing Speedwatch group which monitors car speeds through the village and provide statistics to support road safety improvements. The group is currently manned by 3 wonderful volunteers; Lorraine Webb, John Lovett, and Matthew Wilson. Our thanks go to them and the work they do.

Following recent appeals, 3 new potential members have stepped forward and we do hope that others will join this very worthwhile initiative. If you feel able to offer a few hours each month with this, then please contact the Clerk who will let you have all the necessary details. Full training is given.

Risk Assessments

The Council's financial and governance robustness have been under the microscope over the last couple of years – but we are responsible for so much more. We are currently undertaking and updating risk assessments for other areas of Council responsibility and will report on these over the coming months.

Village Care

The village lengthsmen is responsible for the 'maintenance' of the village and requires a multitude of skills as their duties can include anything from minor repairs to mowing and strimming. At the beginning of the summer our lengthsmen, Ashdown Garden Services, gave notice. We thank them for their many years serving the village and wish them all the best going forward.

Happily, the company who have previously done work for us in the

cemetery, MDH Horticultural Contractors, have agreed to take over this role. We are very pleased to be working with them and look forward to a fruitful partnership in the coming years.

Bonfires

The recent dry weather may present an ideal opportunity for you to burn your garden waste but please be aware that having a bonfire is a prosecutable statutory nuisance if it occurs regularly and prevents someone enjoying their garden or opening windows. In fact, a large fire that produces lots of smoke, or is left to burn for a long period, may also be considered a statutory nuisance, even if it is a one-off.

So remember, an ideal burning opportunity for you may also be the exact time when your neighbours are out in their gardens enjoying the sun and they won't welcome doing this under a cloud of smoke.

Church Wall

Repairs to the church wall have now been completed.

At present the new stone looks shockingly bright but we are assured that having been treated with a substance that accelerates the growth of lichens and the look of weathering the repairs should blend in fairly soon.

Dog Waste Bins

Enquiries have been made regarding sourcing additional dog waste bins for the parish – and to our surprise Tunbridge Wells Borough Council have agreed to this so 3 new bins will soon be sited in the parish; 2 at entrances/exits from Birch Wood and 1 at the bottom of Brookhurst Field (the bomb crater field).

NASTY RUMOURS

Sadly, we are still hearing of nasty rumours in respect of the former clerk, Mrs Divall:

It has been suggested that the area in Birch Wood recently fenced

off by a householder was parish land and that Mrs Divall was involved in some jiggery pokery that enabled the householder to acquire the land.

This is complete rubbish. The land has never been the property of the Council and the current owner of the land has decided to fence it off (having previously only marked it with posts) - which they have every right to do.

That money has somehow 'gone missing' from Council funds. Mrs Divall was not, and never has been, a signatory to the Council's bank accounts and therefore it is impossible for her to have withdrawn any funds without the authority of the Council. Suggestions of money going missing are completely without foundation.

REMEMBER that something oft repeated does NOT make it true!

REVIEW OF THE **ARTHUR NICHOLSON RECREATION GROUND**

The long awaited report on the Recreation Ground (Rec) was presented to the village at a well attended meeting on 13th February.

The clerk presented his report and then the meeting was opened to the floor for questions.

By way of background, the Rec is registered as a charitable trust with the Parish Council acting as Trustees. The trust asset is the land that makes up the Rec and any income generated from it - and the beneficiaries of the trust are the villagers.

A summary of the report and recommendations is given below. A copy of the advice provided by the Council's solicitors can be found on the Parish Council website.

Future Management

The roles of the Parish Council and the Trust as Trustees of the Rec must be kept separate. This means clear guidelines must be drawn up separating the roles and responsibilities for each body - which should include a clear distinction between decision making for the two bodies.

Any Conflicts of Interest must be identified and a process put in place to ensure independent decision making for the charity when those conflicts arise.

A separate bank account should be set up for the trust.

Trustee meetings should be held separately from Parish Council meetings.

The Committee of Management (CoM) detailed in the original gift of the land should be reinstated - comprising representatives of the sports clubs and parish council. Terms of reference for this body are required which will then need to be approved by the trustees.

The trustees have the authority to deviate from the original terms of the trust but will require Charity Commission consent to do this.

Leases

The lease originally granted to the Bidborough Sports Association (BSA) in the 1980s is valid, as are the subsequent leases granted in 2002 and 2017.

The BSA are responsible for the upkeep of the land leased to them. The leased land may be developed (for example the existing pavilion can be replaced) but this would require approval from the Parish Council as landlord and Trustee.

Finance/ Future Play Park

The Rec does not produce an income but incurs expense for such things as grass cutting, tree work, fencing etc. These expenses will fall on the Parish Council.

For any capital projects, such as the play park development, the

Council can either provide a grant to the Trustees or, with Trustee consent, pay for the items themselves.

In the open session a number of queries were raised:

Question: The Parish Council are only custodian trustees not managing trustees – they should leave the management of the Rec to the CoM. NOTE: A custodian trustee holds the legal title only to a trust asset (i.e. the Rec) but has no say in the ongoing management of the ground which would fall to another body – in this case it is suggested that this is the CoM.

Response: The legal advice provided does not support this view. The trustees have certain management responsibilities and ultimate responsibility for the Rec lies with them. However, the CoM has an important role to play in day-to-day decision making.

Why is this important? The planning application made in 2020 bypassed the full Parish Council.

Retaining the ultimate management of the Rec in the trustee's hands ensures that the ground is maintained for all and will prevent any single group dictating the use of the Rec in the future.

Question: The Charity Commission told the Parish Council to reinstate the CoM. Why has this not been done?

Response: The delay in re-establishing the CoM was because there was some question as to whether the CoM is really needed as it had previously 'withered on the vine'. In addition, the original trust deed does not reflect the current users of the Rec. Following advice from solicitors and guidance from the Charity Commission the CoM has now been reinstated and the trust deed has been amended to allow the bowls club to become part of the CoM.

Why is this important: The sports clubs should be represented in managing the Rec but they should reflect the current users. Now the position of the trustees has been established the terms of reference for the CoM can be defined.

Question: On what basis are the later leases deemed valid?

Response: This is being looked into as there seems to be a question mark over this - the clerk will report back to the Council in due course.

Question: *Can the actual legal report received from the solicitors be released to the parish?*

Response: Yes. This has now been published on the Parish Council's website.

Question: *Can the CoM be wound up?*

Response: There would have to be a very good case for this course of action and is likely to require Charity Commission consent. This is not a course of action that is being sought.

Question: *Who can appoint /remove the trustees?*

Response: This right lies with the Charity Commission.

NEXT STEPS

Following this meeting, the following steps have been taken:

- The Trust has identified its role and responsibilities, including identifying Conflicts of Interest.
- A Conflicts of Interest policy has been established along with various other policies—which are available on the Council website.
- Terms of Reference for the Trustees have been agreed.
- An agreement in principle has been made as to how funding will work. The detail will be agreed once the CoM is up and running.
- A bank account for the trust is being set up.
- Each sports club have nominated a representative for the CoM. They are:
 - Cricket Club – David Shepherdson
 - Bowls Club – Alan Robinson
 - Tennis Club – Stephen Hebditch
 - Stoolball Club – Kerry Thorne
- Terms of Reference have been drafted for the CoM.
- A date for the first CoM meeting is in the process of being agreed.

Community

Bidborough Village Hall

CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

We are very fortunate that the village hall continues to be well supported by clubs, societies, parties, TOTS and nursery who all contribute to the successful running of the hall.

We do however have opportunities during the day and evenings to hire out the small hall which is a self contained area with its own facilities. Details on this hall can be found on our web site. (web address below)



Although we raised our hire charges in September 2022, the hall Trustees are facing a dilemma as our long term fixed price energy contract expires. We are hoping that energy prices will continue to fall and our exposure to higher prices will be minimal, but we cannot rule out having to further increase our hire charges, something we will try to avoid.

Hall hirers from outside the village often comment on what a superb position the hall has with its wonderful views and gardens front and rear. However the gardens are in need of improvement as they are looking tired and overgrown in some areas. We have therefore enlisted the expertise of local ladies at Lavender's Blue Gardens to get both gardens into better shape and to make them more manageable in the future.

After many years as Treasurer and Trustee of Bidborough Village Hall, Mark Weavis stepped down from the role of Treasurer at the end of August. I must thank Mark for his dedication and support over the years which Trustees have benefited from. I am pleased to report that Stephen Hebditch has kindly agreed to take on the responsibilities of Treasurer for which I personally thank him most sincerely for.

Graham Parsons – Chairman & Trustee
www.bidboroughvillagehall.com

For bookings please contact Deenah Wheeler on 01892 520967

Our Kent County Councillor

James McInroy

As your Kent County Council member for Tunbridge Wells West, I am involved in a variety of issues in Bidborough, mainly although not exclusively, involving Highways.



Road safety is an important issue and concerns were expressed to me by a number of residents about what could be done to reduce speeds.

The two main initiatives that I have managed to implement, with funding from my KCC Member Grant, are for the extension of the 30 mph speed limit along Penshurst Road and for the installation of the Bidborough 20 mph Speed Zone. Both of these initiatives took a few years to implement, following agreement with KCC and consultation with Bidborough residents.

There is a surprising amount of bureaucracy and cost involved with speed reduction schemes, in addition to the physical signage installed. KCC was of great assistance to me with these schemes, in addition to the schemes installed in Culverden and Rusthall.

Kent Police are not often seen in Bidborough and I know that volunteers are always welcome to join the Kent Community Speedwatch team, which greatly assists in bringing awareness to safer driving.

Tree planting is a passion of mine, as trees are aesthetically pleasing and so beneficial to the environment. I have managed to install trees in several roads across my Division, most recently in St Lawrence Avenue. Sometimes I manage to obtain funding directly from KCC, as with St Lawrence Avenue. Otherwise, the funding has to result from a collaboration between residents and myself, with my KCC Grant funding 50% of the scheme and the balance being paid for by residents.

Inclement weather, especially heavy rain and sub-zero temperatures, does create issues on the highways. KCC receives thousands of requests each month to repair potholes, repair footways and clear drains.

The best way to have these problems dealt with quickly, along with many other faults and issues, is to report them on the KCC Highways system, which provides a job number for tracking purposes. You can use this link - <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>.

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CAKE DONATIONS NEEDED

Can you help?

We need lots of cakes, fairy cakes, cookies, flapjacks etc for the 8th October.

If you can help please email: friendsofbidborough@gmail.com

Community

Church of St Lawrence, Bidborough and Church of St Peter, Southborough

www.towerandsteeple.org



St Lawrence church is open every day for you to enjoy this sacred space where generations of Bidborough folk have found comfort, solace, strength and inspiration for over a thousand years.

We meet every Sunday at 11.00am and 6.30pm to worship God and have fellowship together, and you are always welcome to join us. On the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays in the month we offer groups for children, which meet during our morning services in the school. On the 3rd Sunday of the month we hold Forest Church at 3.00pm – a short time of worship in church either at St Lawrence or St Peter in Southborough, followed by activities for all ages outside in God's good creation.

Our Tots&Co parent-toddler group meets every Friday morning during term-time in the village hall.

Having had the building re-ordered a couple of years ago we now run a Community Café every Tuesday between 9.30am -11.30am to which all are welcome—a place for coffee, cake, conversation and companionship.

Our parish includes St Peter's on Southborough Common, so our website takes its name from these two iconic buildings –

towerandsteeple.org You can find details of all that goes on at **towerandsteeple.org** or simply point your smartphone camera at the QR symbol or contact our Rector, Stephen Hills on 01892 528081 or towerandsteeple@gmail.com



Did you know...you are all welcome to join us

St Lawrence -

Autumn 2023

Special events and services



Remembrance

The 'There But Not There' display of Perspex figures that remember the 12 young men from our village who died in the two World Wars will be displayed in church for the first two weeks of November with our Act of Remembrance taking place as usual at 10.50am at the north lych-gate on Sunday 12th November

Christmas

Details are not quite finalised at the time of this magazine going out to print, so do check at towerandsteeple.org, but look out for:

Sunday 17th December

Forest Church Nativity at Four Winds Farm 11.00am

Christmas Eve - 24th Dec



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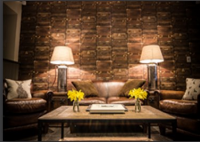
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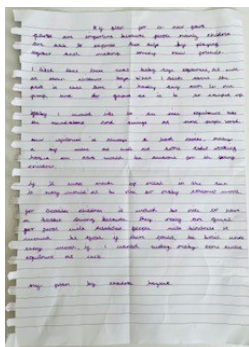
Play Park Competition

The children at Bidborough School are very excited at the prospect of getting their play park back. At the suggestion of parishioner Peter Read, a competition was organised at the school and the children were asked for suggestions for what they would like in the new play park.

Over 40 entries were received and the Parish Council would like to thank all the children who entered for their imaginative, colourful and innovative designs. It certainly gave the Council food for thought! Mr Reed was asked if he would judge the competition and 6 winners were chosen (along with 6 Highly Commended entries) and presented with certificates– each winner also receiving a £10 book token kindly donated by Mr Reed.

The winning entries are given below.

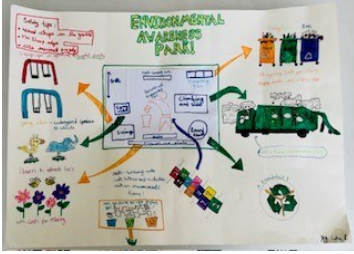
Thomas Edwards–Year 1
Fantastically imaginative and space themed – including black hole spinner, shooting star hammock and moon seesaw.



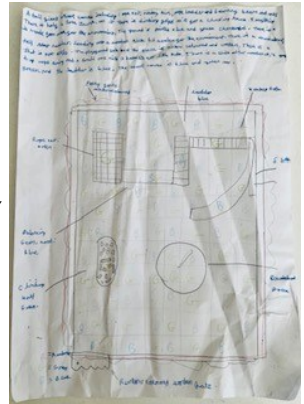
Charlotte Haylock
Year 3 - *A beautifully crafted, well structured, thoughtful essay on the play park.*

Zoya Bobowska – Year 1
A 3D model of all of Zoya's favourite play items. Very original and beautifully made.

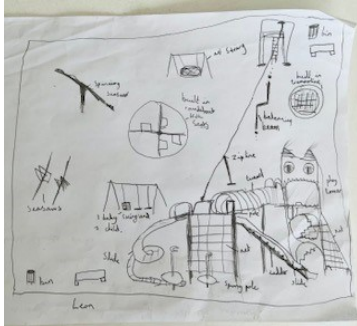




Luke Rasmussen
Year 4
An eco-friendly design –we loved the detail here and in particular the dust cart climbing tower'

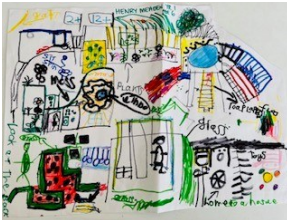


Leon Charles
Year 5
The monster play tower was the jewel in this imaginative design.



Ellie Palin–Year 5
An environmentally friendly design. Sympathetic to its location, including materials to use and safety features

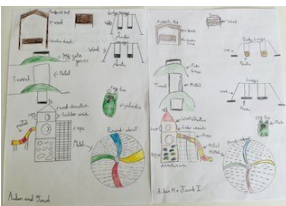
HIGHLY COMMENDED



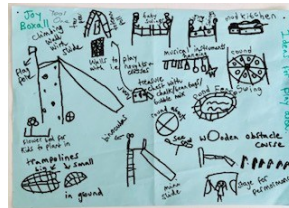
Henry Meaden
Year 1



Charlotte-Meaden
Year 1



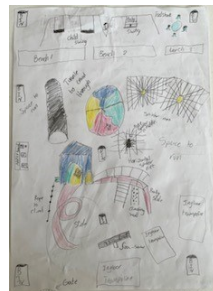
Aidan Marshall & Jacob Ingle
Year 5



Joy Boxtel
Year 1



Alice Thompson & Ivy Clarke
Powerpoint Presentation
Year 4



Freya Sharp & Eva Davies
Year 5

Architectural Office Michael Dillon



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Friends of Bidborough Play Park

Katie Haylock & Sarah Carrick
friendsofbidborough@gmail.com



Friends of Bidborough ended 2022 on a high!

In November we held a successful wine tasting event which sold 100 tickets in just a few days! It was a fabulous evening and we were delighted to announce on the night that we had received a grant from the National Lottery. A huge thank you to everyone who attended, who helped before and on the evening and in particular, Dominic and Deborah Cole who were instrumental in the organisation. A special thank you should also go to Flying Fish Properties who kindly sponsored the event.

Kick starting the new year, Karen Vidler organised a quiz evening to raise money for the new play park. It was the perfect start to the year and great to see so many from the village. A huge thank you to everyone who was involved on the night and to the fabulous quiz master, Clare Markey.

With the National Lottery grant, Friends of Bidborough have now raised a little under £45,000 plus pledges of £11,000 bringing the grand total to just under **£51,000**. Amazing!

Looking forward, we have the **Scarecrow Trail** which takes place around the village over the weekend of **6th/8th October** and a **Ceilidh** organised for **Saturday 27th January 2024** – adverts for which are in this magazine.

However, not surprisingly, prices have risen since we originally looked at them and so our final fundraising push begins.

If you would love to see the new play park installed as soon as possible, please consider donating to our fundraising page below:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-refurbish-bidboroughs-play-park>



Community

Birch Wood Association

Birch Wood is an area of broadleaved woodland of about 17 acres with a long history. It used to be part of the Great Bounds estate dating back to early Middle Ages.



The Birch Wood Association is a purely voluntary body which aims to preserve the wood in its natural state and for public enjoyment, to protect the flora and fauna of the area maintaining the woodland in accordance with normal best practice, and to maintain the lake. The Association relies on subscriptions and voluntary labour from its members and funding from the Parish Council.

Since the last Parish Newsletter we have lost Peter Riley. Peter had just stood down as Hon. Secretary, and passed away in late December. Peter was a cornerstone of the Association, on the committee and was our Secretary for an amazing 44 years. Besides so much administrative work he played a major part in the recovery from the Great Storm of 1987, and had expert knowledge and skills that contributed so greatly to the conservation of the Birch Wood and lake. He is greatly missed.

New Officers have been appointed to the Association, Martin Derham was confirmed as Chair, Rod Hillen Hon Secretary and Ros. Smith is our new Hon. Treasurer. We had our 50th AGM on the 4th September and thanks to all who attended. We are completely revamping our membership and subscription records which were a little out of date. Starting from scratch allows us to accord with current rules and regulations. We are reviewing the method of collecting subscriptions with a view to simplifying the process. The subscription per household is likely to be £10 per annum.

If you would like to become a member (or refresh your membership if you were a member in the past) and are happy for us to hold your data please email birchwoodassociationbidborough@gmail.com

with your name and address or talk to one of the committee members. Your details will be held purely for Association purposes.

We have a Facebook page. It is simplest to search for 'Birch Wood Association'; we welcome any observations, photos or comments on our woods.

Our next working party with the Kent High Weald Partnership, is scheduled for **Thursday 30th November**. We would love to see you there to help maintain the wood. All tools are provided but gardening gloves are a good idea. We usually meet by the lake at **10am**. Further and better particulars will be on our Facebook page / notice boards / event planners monthly news.

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Ryan King

M: 07917 414261

E: ryanking.13@btinternet.com

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Nature Notes - Autumn 2023

The arrival of October and November begins a quiet time for much wildlife. Many of our mammals, reptiles and birds will have spent the last months preparing, and now some will be entering hibernation, whilst others will have cached a food supply for the barren winter.



Hibernation is thought to be triggered by the shorter days. Mammals will reduce their metabolic rate, their heart rate and reduce their body temperature to close to ambient. This reduces their need for food.

Dormice will tightly weave themselves a nest at ground level. This may be in thick undergrowth or hedges, on old coppice stools, in log piles or in moss. It needs to be cool, stable and moist. They will have increased their body weight to between 15 and 18 grams. It is very unusual to see this, but they will roll up with their tail curled over their belly and face. From time to time they make wake and move.

A consequence of the reduced demands on their body is that they can be long lived, often to 5 or 6 years old.

Other small mammals such as mice and voles do not hibernate. Mice will try to move inside and find a dry and warm location, only venturing out if food supplies become short. Voles moult and build up a dense layer of fur for winter. Moles also remain active underground.

However, bats do hibernate and may well remain in this state as late as May. They hibernate in buildings, bat boxes and underground when suitable caves are available. As with dormice they may occasionally awake and move. The critical food source they need is flying insects, which are not available through the winter.

Reptiles are commonly said to hibernate, but many scientists differentiate and say they brumate.

This is because unlike mammals they cannot regulate their own body temperature, so it is the reduction in ambient temperature that causes them to overwinter in an inactive state. Normally they will find a place to hide away, such as a log pile, although some frogs can bury themselves in the mud at the bottom of a pond.

In the late 18th Century there was some belief that swallows also hibernate.

Gilbert White discusses it a number of times in his writings, and was always cautious. The doubt was caused by the lateness of some swallows appearance in the countryside, although he was aware of migration. It wasn't until the 19th Century that this theory was debunked.



The need for wildlife to survive brings into focus how important the natural harvest of berries and nuts are. These are primary food resources for hibernating animals, as well as those who remain active but have to be prepared.

Food Bank

Kiran and Reshma operate a collection point for Nourish Community Bank and all donations are welcome. The following items are desperately needed:

<i>Chilli sauce /</i>	<i>Sweet & Sour sauce</i>	<i>Pasta sauce</i>
<i>Rice</i>	<i>Spaghetti hoops</i>	<i>Baked Beans</i>
<i>Coffee</i>	<i>Meat meals</i>	<i>Toothpaste</i>
<i>Tinned pies</i>	<i>Cup-a-soup</i>	<i>Tinned soup</i>
<i>Curry sauce</i>	<i>Tinned fish</i>	<i>Tinned potatoes</i>
<i>Small salt & pepper</i>	<i>Cereal (500g boxes or smaller)</i>	

By buying items for the Food Bank at the shop you are supporting our village shop as well as the wider community in Tunbridge Wells.

St. Lawrence & St. Peter's Church

CAMEO Lunch (Come And Meet Each Other Lunch)

When: 20th October and 15th December–12.30pm to 2.30pm
Where: Bidborough Village Hall

All senior members of our community are welcome. Please contact Anne Hinds on 01892 528372 if you are interested in attending.

TOTS AND CO BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL

This group for parents/carers and little ones (babies up to pre-school) runs on Friday mornings from 9.30am to 11am during school term times.

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Clubs & Societies

Bidborough Bowls Club

Alan Robinson – 01892 542852

At the time of writing we have completed our playing season and we closed our green and pavilion for the winter on Tuesday 19 September.

Following a wet April our season finally got under way on 1 May with our Monday evening roll up. These have continued throughout the season and we have welcomed several newcomers over the weeks having their first try at bowls. Alongside a tuition rink, we play club matches in our Umbrella league (one point to each player for rolling up and two points each to those on the winning sides; one point to each player in the event of a tie).

We have enjoyed a full programme of friendly matches against other clubs, played on Wednesdays and weekends throughout the summer. Sadly our fixtures no longer include Riverside Tonbridge, who have ceased playing.

We have had a few matches lost to the weather. Considerable reliance was placed on weather radar during unsettled spells to make late calls. On a Saturday in July, despite heavy rain throughout the morning, we set off for our match at Pembury to be rewarded by bright sunshine breaking through ten minutes before our match start. (Last season, the same faith for the same match was not rewarded, sunshine only arriving an hour after we had returned home.)

One or two other matches, including our last match at home to Frant, were cancelled because the opposing team could not raise enough players. With only eighteen playing members ourselves this year we have nonetheless managed to field sufficient players on most occasions: at least nine, enabling play on three rinks, and sometimes twelve across four rinks.

Thanks to our fixtures secretary Judy Liddall for maintaining a full programme for us. Thanks to the monthly captains for organising the teams month by month through the season: Bill Liddall, Colin

Barber, Alan Robinson, Julie Watkins, Pete Eames.

Thanks to Chris Mortimore for maintaining the green in such good condition throughout, despite the extremes of weather we have encountered this past spring and summer. The green has played well.

We participate in the Tunbridge Wells Mixed Triples on Thursday evenings in the high summer. Bidborough were newly promoted this season into Division Two. We had some good results, particularly in the first half of the season, and managed to retain our place in Division Two going into next season. Our club competitions culminated in finals day on August BH Saturday:

Club Singles Champion (Kynaston Trophy). Bill Liddall.

Runner up: Judy Liddall

Club Pairs Champions (Leggatt Trophy). Julie Watkins and John Grimes. Runners up: Pete Eames and Chris Barber

Tilley Trophy (Singles) won by Colin Barber.

Runner up: Julie Watkins

Philpott Plate (Singles) won by Dave Allen.

Runner up: Chris Mortimore.

Congratulations to all. Our annual lunch and prize giving takes place this year at the Kentish Hare on Wednesday 18 October.

Club funding derives in part from membership fees and match fees but we also rely heavily on the proceeds from our plant sale held in May and our quiz, which this past year took place in early March. Both were very well supported. Our thanks to all from Bidborough and around who participated in the quiz and came along to buy at the plant sale. Your support is very much appreciated.

Looking forward to 2024, we have:

- Our AGM scheduled for 7.30pm 15 February in the Small Village Hall
- Our Quiz Night 7pm for 7.30pm 9 March in the Village Hall and
- Our pre-season Wine and Cheese Evening at 7pm on 12 April, kindly hosted by Barbara Ide.

For more information please contact Alan on the number above.

Badminton Club

Mike Harris – 07595 838051 / m.harris.276@btinternet.com

CALLING ALL ASPIRING BADMINTON PLAYERS - ADULTS & JUNIORS

Bidborough Badminton Club is a friendly and sociable village Club with a little bit of competitive spirit for those who want it. Some (but not much) previous experience is required. We meet every Wednesday or Thursday evening from 8 pm in the Village Hall. The club membership is currently healthy but we always have space available for new members, especially juniors following the recent "off to university" exit.

So if you child/grandchild is 11+ and would like to try a new sport or gain skill and experience if they play already then do get in touch. The junior section is professionally coached on Wednesdays from 6 pm. All fees are very reasonable. Please do come along and give us a try. Contact Mike for more information

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Bidborough Dramatic Society

Liz Pretty - lizpretty@uwclub.net / 07881294371

Bidborough Dramatic Society enjoyed a wonderfully successful post-Covid comeback with a couple of "CABARET" evenings in November 2022 and followed that up with another immensely successful production of "Steel Magnolias" last April.

For November 2023 we have decided to stage another 'CABARET' event to include Drama with a Murder Mystery play; lots of Music, audience participationPLUS - a delicious Fish and Chip supper! So make sure you put these dates in your diaries - **Thursday and Friday 23rd and 24th November** - all at the usual place Bidborough Village. Hall. Booking details not quite available at time of going to press but look out for the posters around the village nearer the time.

In the meantime, if you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Liz – details given above.

Bidborough Gardening Association

Glenys McDonald – 01892 524738

gmcdmbe@btinternet.com / www.bidboroughgardening.co.uk

AUTUMN PROGRAMME

Friday 20th October 7.30 in the Village Hall

Dr Richard Claxton 'Gardening and Health - a GP's Perspective'
Competition - A Vase of Autumn Colour

Friday 17th November 7.30 in the Village Hall

Annual General Meeting followed by:
Alison Marsden 'Gardens are Good for You'
Competition - A jar of homemade preserves.

Friday 1st December - BGA Christmas Party

All welcome - interesting talks; raffle; refreshment and an opportunity to chat.

Further details please contact Glenys McDonald (Secretary)

Bidborough Stoolball Club

Kerry Thorne

kerrythorne@ymail.com

Bidborough stoolball club play in the West Kent Ladies league. The club has been in existence for ninety years and has provided a sporting diversion for many ladies and girls in the village. That is still very much the case today with a strong foundation of teenagers coming through, several of them daughters of the senior players.

Match nights are Monday and Wednesday and like cricket is played on a home and away basis, home being the Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground and the furthest we travel is to Ashurst! Unfortunately, over the last couple of years and in part due to COVID, several teams have disbanded or amalgamated which has reduced the pool of teams.

This sadly is also the case in the Surrey and Sussex leagues, but all counties have responded by restructuring. One of the main differences now is the change from an under 21 to under 25 squad and a more open approach to selection based on availability and team management rather than just statistics!

The last few seasons have not really seen us challenging for the top spots but like a lot of other clubs this is due to transition. Injury and work commitments meant that we lost a couple of senior players, but as mentioned earlier we have a very good group of youngsters who are propping the club up!

West Kent Stoolball recently introduced an eight aside format of the game which carries on after the league games have finished in July. They are also very keen to continue promoting a small mixed league which sees a healthy split of six to five male and female players. This is something else that the club may well consider moving forward.

One very constant in the stoolball club is our secretary and scorer, Jenny Keates. Jenny has not been as visible this year as she usually is, but we have been well assisted by Della Oatley and look forward

to seeing both again next season.

I asked Jenny if she could think of a few items for this article and she began in 1972!

Miss Dunlop was our chairman and Molly Faircloth retired as the scorer. 1981 saw fund raising for the new pavilion and a new boundary rope!



1991 saw Karen Bassett, Yolanda Tanzi and Emma Hickmott selected for Kent under 21's and Jenny celebrated her 20th season as captain.

2017 saw the passing of Eddie Keates who had been a stalwart of the Stoolball and cricket club.

This report would not be complete without also mentioning the sad passing this year of Bill Hickmott our umpire and Jill Buckland who played for us as well as being secretary of the Bidborough Sports Association and our club chairman while also representing just about every other club and association in the village! Both are fondly remembered, and sadly missed.

The club has had much success over the last ten years including a continued presence in the Kent squads and we will continue to build upon this into the 2024 season.

As always, the stoolball club would like to extend their thanks to Doug Moore and the cricket club for the provision and maintenance of the wicket and outfield, and the support at most home games from members of the cricket club junior section!

We start our very informal training sessions at the end of March and matches begin in early May. We always welcome new players of any age so if you like the idea why not come along to a practice session and give it a go! Please contact Kerry Thorne: kerrythorne@ymail.com

Bidborough Ladies

Anne Holford – 01892 520970 / a.c.holford@gmail.com

We continue to meet on the 4th Friday of the month at 2.30pm in the Village Hall, the meetings are regularly attended by at least 30 ladies. We normally have a speaker followed by a cuppa and a time to catch up and get to know people.

In the autumn we enjoyed some interesting talks about women keeping beautiful in WW2, Tonbridge worthies (well known past and present residents of Tonbridge) and how sloe gin and chocolates are made which did involve some tasting! Unfortunately our planned Christmas meal in December had to be cancelled due to the snow, which was disappointing but we rebooked for April when over 30 members enjoyed lunch at the Little Brown Jug.

The New Year began with a very interesting talk about Medical Detection Dogs and in February we learned about reflexology from local resident Sophie Playford.

In March we had a very entertaining talk by Christopher Bull about Dickens in Kent which was full of ideas about places to visit. At our meeting in April, Delia Taylor gave us a beautifully illustrated insight into Victorian street life. We had to change our meeting date in May due to the funeral of our friend and member Jill Buckland, but Delia kindly returned to give us a wonderful talk about the swinging 60s which brought back many memories for us all.

In June our speaker was Arthur O'Hara, a ghostwriter of life stories, memoirs and autobiographies. His talk was entitled 'You Don't Have To Be Famous To Write Your Memoirs'.

Our July meeting was our AGM and, after some brief formal business, we enjoyed a social time and afternoon tea and were entertained by David Ward playing on his piano accordion.

We have a full programme for the next year with an interesting range of speakers including talks on local history, health and well-being and chocolate tasting! We try to offer a wide range of

topics and are always open to suggestions and ideas. We have also planned, as requested by members, the occasional meeting without a speaker when ladies can enjoy a social time with tea and cake.

We would stress that meetings are open to all and there may well be topics that are of particular interest to husbands, partners, sons, daughters etc who are always very welcome. For further information about our meetings please call Ann on the number above.



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Bidborough Friends of the Hospice in the Weald



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The Hospice has to raise £8 million a year, just to provide in house and community care and support, to patients, their families free of charge. So far this year the Bidborough Group has raised £3000, for which we are very grateful. Every penny really does count!

Any inquiries please contact Marilyn Hayward 01892 536217, Carol Marks 01892 542233, or Pauline Hardwick 01732 508536



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For more details, please contact me on:

07817 246129 or chris.morganmh@gmail.com

VILLAGE DIARY

Held in the Village Hall:

Weekly

Mon		Brownies
Tues		Rainbows
Wed	5:00 - 7:30 pm	Junior Badminton
Wed & Thu	8:00 pm	Badminton
Fri	9:30 - 12:00 noon	Tots & Co (term time only)

Monthly

4th Fri	2.30 pm	Bidborough Ladies
3rd Fri	7.30 pm	Gardening Association
Last Mon	7:00 pm	Parish Council (Small Hall)

Newsletter

*This edition was put together by Cllr Karen Vidler and she apologies for any errors or omissions and formatting issues! The next edition - Spring 2024- is likely to be distributed in March 2024. Anything you would like included (articles, letters, adverts), should be submitted to karen@bidboroughpc.org.uk by **29th February 2024***

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BSA

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ARNG CoM

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Vice Chair of Trustees

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Allotments / Birchwood

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