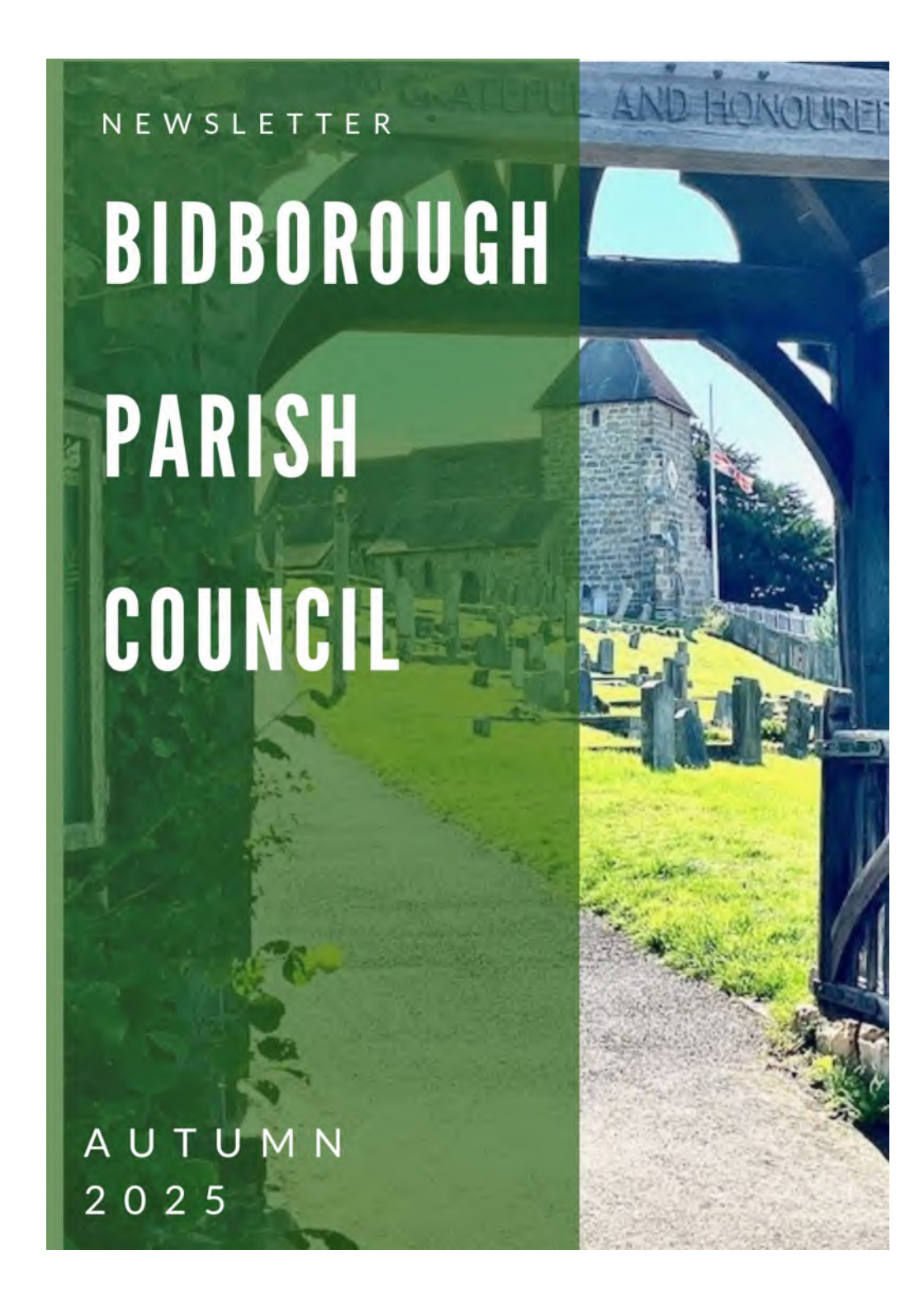




NEWSLETTER

BIDBOROUGH

PARISH

COUNCIL

AUTUMN
2025



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WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Another Busy Six Months for the Council!

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Parish Council Newsletter. Since the Spring issue, the Council has been hard at work addressing a wide range of parish matters.

One initiative I was particularly pleased to see was Kent Highways finally carrying out repairs to Gate Farm Road. These works aim to prevent the flooding (and subsequent road closure) we've come to expect each winter. With the past few months being unusually dry, only time will tell if the improvements will hold up once the rain returns.

As the chill of autumn mornings reminds us that winter is on its way, it already feels like a long time since the village came together for the Bidborough Bonanza. That beautifully warm and sunny day was not only a great day out, but also a fantastic fundraiser for the new pavilion. You can read more about it later in the Newsletter, but I want to say how heartening it was to see so many members of the community there to support the initiative – including those who have expressed concerns about the build. A huge thank you to everyone who came along and showed that Bidborough still has a brilliant community spirit.

However, on a more sombre note, I was very saddened to hear that the Bowls Club have had to make the painful decision to close. Playing and supporting numbers have just not been high enough to make the club viable hence this difficult decision was reached. Our thanks go to all those involved with the club over the years. The sight of the ladies and gentlemen in white and the gently sound of wood-on-wood will be much missed in the summer months. But with every door that closes an opportunity presents itself, so Bidborough Sports Association are keen to hear from the community regarding potential alternative uses for the site. See the request inside.

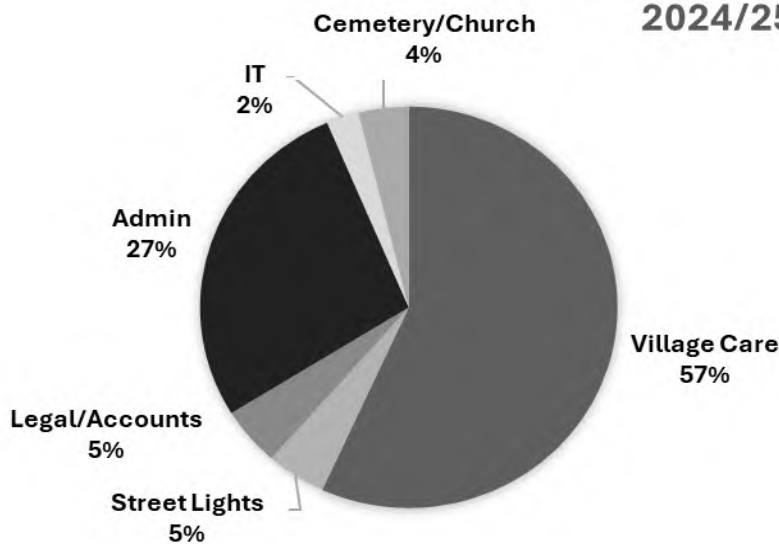
Karen Vidler, Chair, Bidborough Parish Council

Parish Council

Accounts - 2024/2025 - Full Year

Income to the parish for the full year amounted to a little under **£178,000**; £71,970 from the precept, £35,720 from VAT refunds, £60,000 from Friends of Bidborough and the balance from interest earned and sundry items (newsletter advertising, allotment rents, burial fees etc). Expenditure for the full year came to just under **£163,000** with the largest item being for Kompan, the play park equipment provider (cf£93,800). Other expenditure is detailed below (excluding the play park cost).

EXPENDITURE 2024/25



For the current financial year (1st April 2025 to 30th September 2025), income amounted to **£77,640**; £76,970 from the precept plus a small amount of interest. On the expenditure side, expenses came to **£61,310** as detailed below:

Village Care – £25,550
Admin – £13,015
Legal/Accounts–£5,740

Street Lights – £3,230
Pavilion Development - £7,385
Cemetery/Church—£6,390

We have significant work pending on the Church Lych Gates which will probably spill into the 2026/27 financial year. The Council have just appointed specialist architects to oversee this work and are currently looking at the resources available to meet these costs.

Council Website—www.bidboroughpc.org.uk

Minutes for all Council meetings are available on the Council website along with information on the workings of the Council, finances, policies and so forth. The website also now has a dedicated community area in order to promote the facilities and many clubs and societies that are based in the parish – who are always on the lookout for new members. Please take a look.

Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) is the largest voluntary crime prevention organisation in the country; in Kent alone, there are over 4000 schemes and NHW has been successfully operating here since 1991 and is recognised as a successful crime-fighting initiative.



For any people unfamiliar with the scheme, NHW is a partnership of like-minded people who come together to prevent crime, reduce the fear of crime and increase community cohesion. It involves the Police, the Community Safety departments of local authorities and other voluntary organisations. But, above all and perhaps most important, it is a good way for local individuals and families to make their neighbourhoods better places in which to live.

The scheme stresses that it is important that the Police and the local community work in partnership to prevent and detect crime. Its aim is to help communities protect themselves and their homes, reduce the fear of crime and improve their local environment. Essentially it is about neighbours looking out for one another. In the current age

of doorbell cameras and internet-based security systems, it is easy to believe that Neighbourhood Watch is now irrelevant and a scheme that was important in the past. However, many local and national schemes have grown into more community focused groups rather than the narrower view of crime prevention.



For example, some schemes involve activities such as care for the elderly, litter picking and community care. We, in Bidborough, can build our local scheme into something that best reflects the needs of the residents however it will also include advice and guidance on how to reduce and avoid crime.

The success of any scheme depends on the time and effort put in by local people and their willingness to get involved. The benefits include residents getting to know each other, making their communities better places to live and helping to protect each other, particularly the more vulnerable in our village. Its success and effectiveness are therefore dependent on having as many people as possible signing up to, and actively participating in, our local scheme.

NHW schemes can therefore:

- Reduce crime and the opportunities for crime
- Help and reassure those who live in fear of crime
- Encourage neighbourliness and closer communities
- Help improve the local environment

Please also note that some insurance companies offer discounts on their home insurance contents premiums if you belong to an active NHW scheme.

If you have any questions about Neighbourhood Watch, and what is involved in being part of a local scheme, please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Dominic Cole – dominic.cole@me.com / 07711 058716

Bidborough Highway Improvement Plan

UPDATE - October 2025 by Cllr Quentin Stevens

A meeting took place in September with Ryan Shiel and Emma Richmond from Kent Highways and I think we are at last making progress.

A summary is as follows in the order we will probably proceed with our Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) projects.

1) The two Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) units will be replaced with hopefully mains connected units which can operate at night. These units cost around 9-10K each so the grant money (PR2) we will be applying for from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council should cover this.

Kent Highways said that although the engineers did check the current units they weren't confident that they work at night hence they need replacing.

2) All the signage on the B2176 east to west of the village is being revised this year, and probably in the next couple of months, so that addition signage and road markings can be added. This should increase the awareness of reducing speed.

To get the whole stretch of the B2176 from east to west of the village to be 30 MPH would be difficult at this time.

3) a) The wrap-around yellow lines curb protection by the village shop and electric sub station.

b) The yellow zig zags waiting restrictions by the old school house to operate during school times.

c) The 10 meter double yellow lines at the junction of the High Street and Bidborough Ridge.

These will be lumped together under one Traffic Regulation Order

(TRO) and once the consultation takes place with Kent Highways we can decide to either do them all or remove items which have met opposition. This will undoubtedly be the DYL at the top of the High Street. However, Kent Highways pointed out they are only enforcing what the Highway Code states.

Item 3(a) we consider to be a high priority for implementing.

Bidborough Parish Council has until the end of December 2025 to submit our application for the PR2 monies which we are on track to complete ahead of the deadline.

Kent Highways has to get their costing done by the end of October 2025. Unfortunately the actual work won't get done until the start of the 2026 financial year. Kent Highways will be keeping us informed of the progress, especially Items 2 and 3.



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SADDLE UP, BIDBOROUGH!



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BIDBOROUGH CRICKET CLUB

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BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL

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**ALL PROCEEDS TO CLUB
& PAVILION FUND**

TO BOOK OR ASK QUESTIONS:

CHRISWALLY84@GOOGLEMAIL.COM



Community

Bidborough Village Hall www.bidboroughvillagehall.com
CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

This summer saw two major issues that affected the hall.

The first issue concerned the main hall entrance door. Unfortunately, the locking mechanism jammed which prevented the closure of the door. To make it secure a chain and pad lock had to be fitted until we could get it repaired. This meant the hall entrance on the patio had to be used. Getting the lock repaired required specialist contractors at significant expense but eventually all was fixed after many weeks of waiting. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

The second issue concerned the disabled lift which provides access to the small hall and disabled toilet facilities. This lift was installed when the hall extension was carried out and has had many years of service but abruptly failed to work in June. As the lift is old and is no longer serviceable, the only option Trustees had was to replace it.

Commercial lifts are very expensive, and Trustees faced the scenario of a significant proportion of the funds built up over many years being used to pay for a new lift.

For all
bookings
contact
Booking
Deenah
on
520967.

Graham

&



hall
please
our
Secretary
Wheeler
01892

Parsons,
Chairman
Trustee

Fortunately, and this is where the hall Charity is very lucky, Trustees and others came to the rescue which means the new lift is fully funded from donations and is scheduled to be installed 20-21st October. Sincere thanks to all those that kindly donated towards the new lift.

I am pleased to report that hall bookings remain strong which is very encouraging with children and family parties filling most weekends.

For all hall bookings please contact our Booking Secretary Deenah Wheeler on 01892 520967.

Graham Parsons, Chairman & Trustee

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St Lawrence, Bidborough & St Peter's, Southborough

Remembrance Sunday

10.45am - gathering at St Lawrence Lychgate

11.00am - two minutes silence and reveille

Christmas Connections

Friday, 5th December @ 7.30pm at Bidborough Village Hall

Carols, crafts and mulled wine.

Tickets £10.00 each

Please do join us and bring a friend.

For further details contact Shirin on 01892 510924

Forest Church Nativity

Sunday, 21st December @ 11am

At Four Winds Farm

Quiet Christmas (a reflective service)

Sunday, 21st December @ 6.30pm

At St Lawrence Church

Christmas Eve - Wednesday, 24th December

Christingle at St Peter's Church @ 3pm

Outdoor Carols at St Lawrence Church @ 5pm

Carols by Candlelight at St Lawrence Church @ 7pm

Midnight Communion at St Lawrence Church @ 11.15pm

Christmas Day—Thursday, 25th December

Book of Common Prayer service at St Peter's Church @ 8am

All age Holy Communion at St Peter's Church @ 9.30am

All age Holy Communion at St Lawrence Church @ 11am

St Lawrence Tots and Co

Amanda Harris-07979 221644/ amandakate.harris@btinternet.com

We are always delighted to welcome families old and new to our stay and play group, which meets at Bidborough Village Hall on Friday mornings during term time.

A group for babies up to pre-schoolers and their parents/carers, our sessions consist of play, craft, refreshments, chat, story-time and singing and a chance for both children and adults to meet new friends.

We ask for a donation of £3 per family per session to cover the cost of hall hire, refreshments and other resources.

Do come and join us! If you would like further information about the group, please contact Amanda.



St. Lawrence & St. Peter's Church

CAMEO Lunch (Come And Meet Each Other Lunch)

Anne Hinds 01892 528372

St Lawrence Church hosts CAMEO lunches every other month in the **Village Hall** for the more senior members of our community. A two course lunch including refreshments is provided and the next lunch is our Christmas lunch and is on:

Friday 12th December 12.30-2.30pm.

A small charge is made to cover costs and is payable by cash on the door. If you would like to join us, please contact Anne.

Kent County Councillor

John Moreland

To the Residents of Bidborough

It is a privilege to be writing to you for the first time as your Kent County Councillor. It has been a busy time since the election in May. Many of the gears at KCC had come to a halt for one reason or the other but do now seem to be moving again.

Improvements to the Roads

Through KCC's own admission, Bidborough's roads had fallen off KCC's radar and requests that had been made for improvements were not being considered.

That has now changed. I am working closely with Bidborough Parish Council and KCC to ensure the Parish Council's requests for road improvements are responded to and agreed work is carried out.

Various works being considered include:

- Introduction of double yellow lines at the junctions on the High Street by the Kentish Hare, Rectory Drive and Glebelands;
- Installation of 'School Keep Clear' markings outside the old school house lay-by at the top of Spring Lane;
- Replacing the old vehicle activated speed sign with a new one on Bidborough Ridge.

Tree Planting on Darnley Drive

A resident reached out to me about trees planted by my predecessor on Darnley Drive, St Lawrence and Bounds Oak Way and how well they had been received. They asked if it would be possible to have more. I am delighted to report that after a few months engaging with KCC, further trees will be planted on Darnley Drive in the next



tree planting season (November to March), adding further greenery to the picturesque village.

Road Closures

Although the bane of all of us who use them, road closures are vital for ensuring the road surfaces and/or vital utility networks are maintained. Sometimes the road closures are pre-planned and sometimes they come as an emergency.

I endeavour to provide as much notice as possible of a road closure by posting on the Bidborough Community Facebook page, so please watch out for my posts there.

Bidborough Ridge Social Housing

The sale of the flats on Bidborough Ridge is causing understandable concern about a change to the demographic of Bidborough and the impact on local services.

I have asked the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide a drop-in advice session hosted by the Parish Council so affected citizens may be made aware of their legal rights. Please watch this space.

Get In Touch

If you would like to reach out about any issue in the community or wider Kent county please feel free to do so. My email address is John.Moreland@kent.gov.uk.

Best Wishes, John

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Devolution Of Council Services



In December 2024 the Government set out its vision for a simpler local government structure incorporating more local accountability.

At present we have a 3-tier structure with Kent County Council (KCC) sitting at the top (responsible for the big ticket items such as education, healthcare, highways, transport etc). Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in the middle (responsible for overarching services such as refuse collection, planning and so forth) and then Bidborough Parish Council who deal with matters at a local level.

Going forward, the Government's vision was that counties including KCC and its 14 borough/district Councils would be divided into Unitary Authorities each servicing approximately 500,000 residents. The initial thoughts were that Kent would be split into 3 or 4 Unitary Councils and that Tunbridge Wells would merge with Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and Maidstone to become a 'West Kent' Unitary Authority.

Services provided to Bidborough residents would be received directly from this designated unitary authority– with Bidborough Parish Council similarly reporting into this body. In this way it is hoped that considerable cost savings will be achieved and that services can be targeted on a more local basis.

The government gave Councils until 10 January 2025 to apply to be fast-tracked into the devolution programme – sadly Kent was not one of the 6 regions chosen for this. The County Council were therefore charged with preparing interim plans for local government reorganisation with final proposals to be submitted in November 2025.

Interim proposals were submitted in March 2025 which suggested a 3 or 4 unitary council split of the county.

Following the local government elections in May 2025, the Reform party took over control of KCC from the Conservatives. The draft proposal for Kent has now been released for submission to Government and, surprisingly, unlike the Government's envisaged smaller more accountable unitary authorities KCC are proposing merging with Medway (who are already a unitary authority) and becoming one 'super council' representing just under 2 million residents. It would then establish 3 area assemblies who would take on the administration of the north, south and west areas of Kent – essentially retaining the existing 3 tier structure.

As this proposal is a significant change from the interim submission made in March 2025, we will have to wait and see what will happen. At the end of the day the final decision rests with ministers. Both KCC and TWBC will be releasing regular updates regarding proposals which can be accessed via their respective websites.

A vertical advertisement for Airport Car Services. The top section features a logo with a winged figure holding a caduceus, with the text 'AIRPORT CAR SERVICES' and the phone number '(01892) 731 221' below it. The middle section shows a black and white photograph of a chauffeur in a tuxedo opening the door of a dark luxury car. The bottom section contains the text 'Book online', the website 'www.airport-car-services.co.uk', the email 'bookings@twacs.co.uk', and the slogan '“Arrive in style with ACS Chauffeurs”' in italics.


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(01892) 731 221



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*“Arrive in style with
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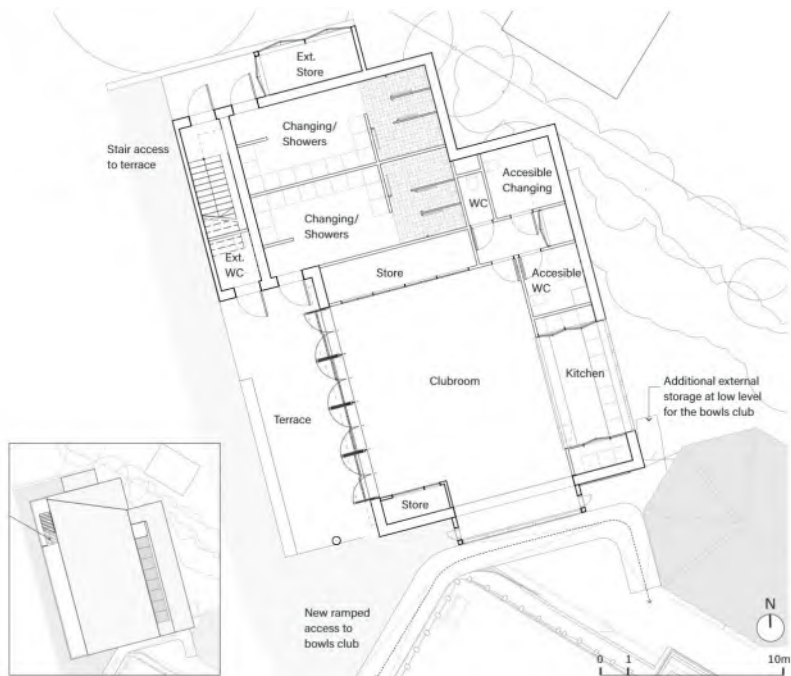
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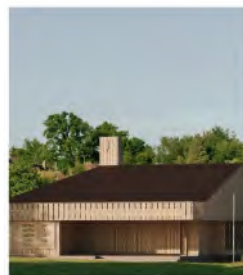
Sports & Community Pavilion—UPDATE

Two public consultations took place on 20th May 2025 and 20th July 2025. Feedback from these have shaped the development of the application and the plans are now near to final form – however the impact of the closure of the bowls club needs to be assessed to see if it will impact on any aspect of the build. The submission of any planning application will be deferred until this has been considered.



View of the proposed pavilion from the South

<i>'Why is a bluetooth speaker being provided?'</i>	This is a fairly standard feature of a modern pavilion but we are aware that its use may be abused by pavilion users. We are therefore removing this from the plans. There will also be a general restriction on music being played post 7pm. This will be put in the Terms of Use.
<i>'We are concerned that there will be lots of late night gatherings, parties etc'</i>	The main social venue for parishioners will continue to be the Village Hall. With the use by the sports clubs over the summer months there will be limited opportunity for social hire. Operating hours will broadly be daylight hours for the sports clubs. We may consider restricting operating hours to, say, 7pm for any outside booking.
<i>'What sort of activities will be taking place in the pavilion?'</i>	Outside cricket, tennis, bowls and stoolball, suggestions have been along the lines of yoga, pilates, perhaps a café once a week, use by the school for 'breakout' sessions and so forth. The type of activity hosted will be closely controlled by the pavilion committee and the booking secretary will be charged with 'carving out' any activity that could be hosted by the village hall. In this way we hope to support both venues in the village.
<i>'Why is there a bar in the main room?'</i>	It isn't a 'bar'. It is the serving counter for the kitchen.
<i>'What about light pollution?'</i>	The path to the pavilion will not be lit and there is no floodlighting being provided. As this will be mainly a 'summer-use' venue light pollution should not impact of neighbouring properties.
<i>'Will the pavilion be used in the winter?'</i>	We have been told that the fabric of the building will benefit from being aired/heated over the winter months thus it will be open in the winter. <i>However</i>, with no parking provided and the boggy nature of the recreation ground we do not envisage much use.
<i>'How will this impact on the village hall?'</i>	We will work with the village hall trustees to ensure both venues are supported. The types of activities envisaged in the pavilion should not impact on village hall hire.
<i>'Why is the internal space so large?'</i>	Currently the sports clubs have to hold their meetings in other venues as the pavilion cannot accommodate them. The enlarged space will allow the pavilion to be used for this purpose.
<i>'Why does the pavilion need a balcony?'</i>	The cricket club will be the majority user of the pavilion and this was overwhelmingly the one feature that players asked for. It provides visual interest to the design and a great vantage point for watching sport. However, it will be reduced in size from the initial design in order to respect the privacy of residents of Spring Lane.
<i>'How will the new pavilion impact on parking?'</i>	As we see the pavilion broadly being used in the same way as the old pavilion we do not think that there will be a significant change to the current provisions. All users will be asked to adhere to the same parking policy used by the school. <i>NOTE: Over the next few months the Recreation Ground Committee of Management will be looking more generally at parking in the rec in conjunction with Health & Safety assessments.</i>
<i>Does the design conform to ECB guidance?</i>	The plans have been sent to the ECB for their feedback. Their comments will be incorporated.



View of the proposed pavilion with covered seating station



View of the proposed pavilion from the rear in the bowls club



Bidborough CoE Primary School

*<https://www.bidborough.kent.sch.uk>
headteacher@bidborough.kent.sch.uk*



Building Developments

As we start the new school year we have some exciting developments to report. As some of you will have noticed, a number of significant building work and refurbishment projects have been taking place at school during the summer break which will result in improved facilities for all children and will include expanding our library and enhancing intervention opportunities for our children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Some of the work planned to have been completed by the start of the new school year fell behind schedule and wasn't completed until the last day before children were due to return. However, tireless work by Mrs Burton and the whole staff team - AKA 'The Dream Team' who were willing to tackle with gusto the lifting, carrying and moving of classroom equipment and redecoration of refurbished areas, enabled the school to be open ready for the return of our lovely children. We owe a big thank you to a dedicated group of AXA Health volunteers who helped with the move at both the start and end of the summer holiday as part of their community outreach work, and also to Adam Carrick for his oversight of some of the works undertaken, which involved disrupting his family holiday on more than one occasion (sorry Adam!)

One aspect of our works not yet completed has been the demolition and rebuild of our Year 3 and 4 classrooms. Much negotiation during the last few years by Mrs Burton and governors past and present, culminated in recognition by the Local Authority that these structures were no longer fit for purpose in educating young children. Subsequent close partnership working between school and the LA resulted in an agreement to demolish and replace these.

However, unforeseen delays which prevented the work commencing

during the summer holiday meant that children were in situ during the demolition phase, and will continue to be as construction commences and is completed. Contrary to our concerns that this might cause some anxiety and disruption for them, the majority have been thrilled to have their very own 'Bob the Builders' on site and have been very excited about seeing the mighty building machines in action! This has been an experience that most school children don't get and no doubt it will have inspired and continue to inspire a whole generation of future engineers and construction specialists. Look out, Parents!

We would like to thank all of you, our Bidborough community, for your tolerance and forbearance during the building works, and to apologise if this has inconvenienced anyone. Once everything is completed we plan to hold an open morning so that we can showcase our new facilities to those of you who are interested.

OPAL

Another exciting development has been the introduction of OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) led by our Head of School Mrs Fowler. OPAL is a national programme and is being adopted by several schools in the area. At the heart of it is a commitment to facilitate new opportunities for independent outdoor play and freedom for children to discover and create using their environment and its surroundings with minimal adult intervention, something that many of the older members of our community will remember as commonplace before the electronic revolution. We will be rolling out the programme in full once the building work has finished and we have the entire site back to develop, but so far we have already introduced a range of new opportunities, for example a mud kitchen, a construction area, and bank sliding.

There are already very high levels of engagement in the new activities by our children, including those who typically might have chosen something more sedentary instead but are now 'mucking in' (literally) and taking advantage of creative play.

We are collecting a range of equipment and items to 'stock' the activities. Most of these are household/garden items of one sort or

another and as we develop the programme post-building work we might well appeal for donations of unwanted items.

Governing Body Vacancies

Finally, we continue to have two vacancies on our governing body which we are struggling to fill. For this round of recruitment we particularly want individuals who have a genuine interest in education, and who will join our Learning and Teaching Committee in addition to their other general governor responsibilities and who will be willing and able to chair this committee following shadowing and training.

The people we are hoping will join us will also have the abilities needed to interpret, analyse, evaluate, question and articulate on a range of data relating to pupil progress and other school outcomes.

There is a time commitment, mostly in the evening but also on some occasions during the school day but the pay-off is that you will become a member of an extraordinarily effective, friendly and dedicated team.

Unfortunately, at the current time we cannot accept any applicants from individuals who are also parents at the school. This because we have an equitable decision-making balance at the moment between parents and non-parents and cannot bias this.

If you would like to learn more about the expectations of governorship at Bidborough CEP School please email Emma Leitch or Katherine Cullen, Co-Chairs of Governors, at chair@bidborough.kent.sch.uk

COMMUNITY CAFÉ – TUESDAY MORNINGS

The café in the South Aisle of St Lawrence Church continues to run weekly on Tuesday mornings from 10am - 12noon.

All are welcome for coffee, cake and good company!

Bidborough Dramatic Society

The ABC of Christmas

on 26th, 27th and 28th November at 7.30pm

We invite you to join us for evening of fun, music and comedy with a fish and chip/ burger and chip supper. There will be a bar to loosen your vocal cords for some audience participation and a good time will be had by all, young and old. We are dedicating the performances to the memory of Anne Holford who was a member for many years and whose talent on stage will be remembered by so many.

Tickets, priced £17 for non-members and £15 for members can be booked online via www.bidboroughdrama.org.uk or by phone (01892 512879). We do hope to see you there and very much appreciate

Nourish Community Food Bank

Kiran and Reshma at the Village Shop operate a collection point for Nourish. The following items are urgently needed:

Long-life Milks

Washing Powder Tablets

Pasta

Cereal

Tea & Coffee

Tinned Pulses

Rice Pudding

Toiletries

Tinned Potatoes

Dog/Cat Food

Chilli/Sweet & Sour Sauce

Baked beans

Tinned Spaghetti

Spreads – Jam, Peanut Butter, Marmite

Biscuits

Tinned Fruit

Soup

Noodles

Tinned Fish

Household/Cleaning Products

By buying items for the Food Bank at the village stores you are supporting our village shop as well as the wider community locally.



Bidborough Bonanza

Community and connection are really what life's all about. And that feeling was palpable at the Bidborough Bonanza held on Saturday 6th September.

Planning started early in 2025 with Katy and Sarah (Friends of Bidborough), Karen and Sandra (Parish Council) and Rodger and Wally (Cricket Club) coming together to plan the day's activities.



The stage is set for a day of fun!

From the hugely popular Dog Show to the 'It's A Knockout' competition, from vintage vehicles (thank you Ella and Richard, Bidborough Service Station) to the helter skelter, there really was something there for everyone.



Everyone loves a Helter Skelter!



Vintage goodies for sale from Twintage



'It's A Knockout' in full flow

And the community showed up - with around 500/600 attendees over the course of the day and into the evening. But, as with all events, the Bonanza could not have happened without the numerous volunteers and clubs/societies who give up their time and energy to support - baking, collecting, delivering, running errands, manning stalls, putting up bunting, setting up, clearing away, pulling pints and serving burgers. Without you there would be no event so many many thanks to all.



The amazing Kazzamataz introduces Reverend Ti

The event raised around £9,000 for the pavilion build which is absolutely fantastic and a great start to the fund raising journey.



Who's winning? The crowd wait with bated breath...

Community

Birch Wood Association

Martin Derham, Chair, Birch Wood Association

The commencement of autumn is also the time for work to start again in Birch Wood. Nesting birds will have fledged and left and the trees are starting to lose their leaves.

We have restarted our work parties on Monday morning. It would be great to see some new volunteers prepared to help us for 1 or 2 hours. We meet on the dam by the lake at 10am unless the weather is adverse or risky - and usually finish by 12pm. If you would like to be added to the WhatsApp volunteer list please let me know so we can keep you informed of work party plans. Email me at admiralhardinge@btinternet.com



We will also be holding a 2 day work party with Kent High Weald Partnership on 3rd and 4th December when we will be concentrating on further thinning of silver birch and holly.

Over the summer we have still suffered a number of fallen trees. Trees in leaf are more vulnerable to days of high wind. After each period of storm or high wind we endeavour to check all paths, and we have managed to keep these clear.

Please take into account when walking that in high wind woods are not the ideal place to be. Even healthy trees can lose branches, and the fall of these can be silent

or any noise can be hidden by the sound of the wind. On windy days please think about taking a different route.

If you would like to support the work of the Birch Wood Association and

become a member the cost is ONLY £10 per household per year, and this money goes towards funding tools, projects and any training we need. It helps us to work to continue maintaining the wood for everyone's benefit.



To join please contact us through Facebook or email us on birchwoodassociationbidborough@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.



The greatest card game in the world!

Are you interested in learning to play bridge?

Would you like to polish up your game?

I am Chris Morgan, an experienced bridge teacher and player. Many people in the Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells area have enjoyed my classes, and private teaching, over the last ten years. I aim to create a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, and enable people to enjoy themselves as well as learn more about this great game.

For more details, please contact me on:

07817 246129 or chris.morganmh@gmail.com

NATURE NOTES

Autumn 2025

Walking through Birch Wood on a late September day can be glorious with autumn sunshine, trees turning to golds and reds, and dragonflies dancing above the water of the lake. But listen and it can sound like there are very heavy drops of rain falling all around. It seems like an incongruously noisy environment.

What you are hearing are the trees shedding their leaves and their fruits and seeds. This year both acorns from the oaks, and the nuts from the beeches and chestnuts seem plentiful. You may have noticed the outstanding crop of blackberries this year throughout the local area. This is despite the dry weather this summer which normally limits the growth of fruits, nuts and vegetables. So what is happening?

The combined produce of nuts and fruits is known as mast. Plentiful years are therefore known as mast years. This tends to happen every 5-10 years. So why do some years produce far more mast than others? Weather obviously plays a part, where the right combination of temperature and rainfall in Spring has a positive effect.



To take oak as an example, oak trees produce the same number of flowers each year, so the critical factor is how many of those flowers go on to produce acorns. When spring is warm and dry, pollination of the flowers is very successful and this results in a large crop of acorns. However, the scientists say that the causality is not yet fully understood and there is more work to do.

Another question is what causes trees right across the country and the continent to produce mast years at the same time, given that the trees are spread across an extensive geographical area, and again this factor is not yet understood.

One theory is that mast years help to maintain the species.

In a mast year the quantity of mast exceeds the capability of creatures such as squirrels, jays, mice and badgers to eat or store it. Therefore there is a higher chance of some of the mast crop germinating into new saplings, which guarantees some of the crop will survive and become new trees. In years of less mast then they are in effect keeping the populations of these animals in check, so overall there is a natural balance between the needs of the trees and plants, and the needs of the animals.



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WalkTonbridge.co.uk

As well as offering countless benefits for both body and mind, one of the greatest rewards of walking is the chance to connect with your local environment.

The fabulous **WalkTonbridge** website hosted by James Pavlou offers numerous routes in our local vicinity taking in amazing architecture, stunning views, lakes, notable houses, beautiful woodlands – with the odd pub or two on various routes for a spot of sustenance.

Walk 13 is of particular interest as it is a circular walk that can be done from and back to Bidborough.

So if you're trying to get in your 10,000 steps a day take a look at the website for inspiration.

Happy walking!



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Clubs & Societies

Bidborough Bowls Club - Final Report - Autumn 2025

As many in the parish will already know, the Bowls Club is disbanding after some sixty years, the inaugural meeting of the Club having been held in 1965. The primary reason for the Club folding is the fall off in the number of playing members in the last few years. Thirteen playing members attended an extraordinary general meeting held on Wednesday 8 October to decide the future of the club. The Committee recommended discontinuing. A vote was taken and eight voted in support of the Committee's recommendation. The process of winding up the Club has begun and all assets will in due course be given over to the Bidborough Sports Association.

Over the past season we managed to play most of our friendly matches, aiming to field at least nine players for a three triples match. On a number of occasions we borrowed a player or two from the opposing club to help our numbers. For one match we were able to field twelve for a four triples contest. We did however have several players unfit for a significant part of the season. We played three friendlies against the Speldhurst Club just across the way.

A number of Monday roll up sessions were lost to rain. Attendance on Mondays was disappointing overall, often dropping to one or two and rarely exceeding half a dozen. However enough matches were played and enjoyed to decide the Umbrella League, which was won by John Grimes on 22 points followed by Barbara Ide (20 points) and Bill Liddall (16 points).

Our competitions were just viable with first rounds sometimes leading straight to the semi final.

The Kynaston Singles was won by Bill Liddall, runner-up Pete Eames.

The Leggatt Pairs was won by John Grimes and Colin Barber.

The Tilley Trophy singles was won by Pete Eames.

The Philpott Trophy singles was won by Barbara ide.

In the Tunbridge Wells Triples League we had a good start to the season often beating strong opposition away. Sadly we faded later on, losing too often at home. We finished in bottom place in Division Two.

Looking to the future, contact has already been made with our neighbouring club at Speldhurst and it is likely that many if not all will continue to play there. It's a friendly club with close links to Bidborough going back to the Bidborough Club's beginnings when Speldhurst provided much support including the use of their green. At one of the evening fixtures we played there this past season, they served air fried chips with our post-match drinks, which impressed us all.

Alan Robinson

ACTION REQUIRED

Following the sad news that the Bidborough Bowls Club has decided to disband, **what would you like to see happen to the area of the recreation ground currently covered by the bowls green and the bowls pavilion?**

Bidborough Sports Association (BSA) are seeking resident's ideas on how this space should be used going forward and are open to any suggestions.

Please send your thoughts to the Chair, David Musker at dmusker@hotmail.com.

A meeting to discuss this will be held on Wednesday **3rd December at 7.30pm** in the **Small Hall** where you can put your ideas forward.

Please do attend if you can as we do not want to lose such a valuable parish amenity.

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.

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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Sat: 7.30 am - 2.00pm | Sun: 7.30 am - 1 pm

We do not close for lunch

Tel. 01892 531016

VILLAGE DIARY

Weekly

Mon	6.00-7.15pm	Brownies *	Village Hall
Tues	10.00-12.00pm	South Aisle Café	St Lawrence Chur.
Tues	5.00-6.15pm	Rainbows *	Village Hall
Wed	5:00-7:30pm	Junior Badminton	Village Hall
Wed & Thu	8:00-10.00pm	Badminton	Village Hall
Fri	9:30-11.15am	Tots & Co*	Village Hall

Monthly

First Monday	6.00-8.00pm	Chess Club	Small Village Hall
First Monday	2.00-4.00pm	Mahjong Club	St Lawrence Chur.
3rd Fri	7.30pm	Gardening Association	Village Hall
4th Fri	2.30pm	Bidborough Ladies	Village Hall
4th Friday		Youth Group*	St Lawrence Chur.
Last Mon	7:00pm	Parish Council	Small Village Hall

* term time only

WHO'S WHO

WHOLE COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

Planning

Governance

Charities

Insurance

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL & COUNCIL CORRESPONDANCE

Neil Harris

clerk@bidboroughpc.org.uk

CO-OPTED

Martin Derham

Birch Wood Association

VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS

Deenah Wheeler

01892 520967

BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Newsletter

*This edition was put together by Cllr
Karen Vidler and she apologises for any
errors or omissions and formatting
issues!*

*The next edition - Spring 2026 - is likely
to be distributed in April 2026.*

*Anything you would like included
(articles, adverts), should be submitted
to karen@bidboroughpc.org.uk by
13th March 2026.*

WHO'S WHO



Dominic Cole

dominic@bidboroughpc.org.uk

Responsibilities: School Liaison, Neighbourhood Watch



Pete Eames

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Responsibilities: Bidborough Sports Association, Birch Wood



Stephen Hinds

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Responsibilities: Finance, Allotments, ANRG CoM*



David Marriott

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Deputy Chair of Trustees **

Responsibilities: Finance, Risk Assessments, ANRG CoM*



Quentin Stevens

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Responsibilities: Cemetery, Allotments, Birch Wood, Village Care, Village Hall Rep, Facebook, Highways, ANRG CoM*



Sandra Summers

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Deputy Chair

Chair of Trustees **

Responsibilities: Highways, Website, Finance, ANRG CoM*



Karen Vidler

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Chair

Responsibilities: Bidborough Sports Association, Newsletter, Website, Highways, Pavilion Development Group

** Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground – Committee of Management*

*** The Council as Trustees of the Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground*



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