

NEWSLETTER

BIDBOROUGH

PARISH

COUNCIL

SPRING  
2024

Shell  
Seat

3 - SEAT  
SWING

Flat  
Seats

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UNIT

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RAMP

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# WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

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It's been 9 months since the new council was voted in at the May 2023 elections and we have been overwhelmed by the support and positivity that we have received from the community.

Coming in on the back of months of tension and infighting, it has been so refreshing to have a council that listens and considers matters in an open and transparent way. That's not to say that we agree on all matters! There is healthy debate on a variety of topics and the newer members of the council have benefitted enormously from having older members, who have previously served, come back on the council passing on their considerable expertise.

Personally, I have found the proactive nature and 'can do' attitude of my fellow councillors a breath of fresh air. And there has certainly been plenty to get on with!

Each councillor has volunteered or been nominated for a specific role or responsibility so that work is shared evenly:

**Amanda** has taken on the mantle of school liaison – as we believe the school is a vital part of our community and we would like to forge greater ties with the governors, staff and pupils.

**Pete's** passion for cricket and nature has been well utilised in his role as Bidborough Sports Association rep and Birch Wood liaison.

**Stephen's** experience in the city and common sense approach to matters has made him a real asset as far as finance and governance is concerned.

**David's** experience on the risk side has been invaluable in assessing the areas that the Council should focus on and will really come to the fore as we review all aspects of the council's responsibilities in the coming year.

Having preciously been Chair of the Council, **Quentin's** knowledge of local matters and visibility within the community have been vital to the new council hitting the road running and I, personally, am very grateful for his guidance and support.

**Sandra's** eye for detail and business experience makes her perfect for compliance, governance and contracts. She is also driven to get the play park build completed for the community.

As for me, well I see my roles as a facilitator and to co-ordinate activities across the council to ensure we are all pulling in the same direction.

I am also very grateful to our clerk, **Neil**, who had a baptism of fire when he joined us in 2022. We have kept him very busy over the last few months but hopefully he will be able to take a breather when we move into the new financial year – knowing that trust matters are broadly sorted, we are on top of our governance (finally) and that the play park is soon to be in place.

I would also like to say thank you to parishioners who continue to come to council meetings, email and ask us questions in person. Sometimes your questions are hard to answer – and difficult to hear if they are critical - but I know that this is what we need if we are to represent the whole community.

Some cricket club members continue to hold us to account on matters relating to the recreation ground – and so they should as it is a very important part of the community – and we will strive to improve our game both here and in all aspects of council business.

In the meantime, I am looking forward to the Summer when our younger residents will hopefully be enjoying the newly refurbished Play Park in the sunshine!

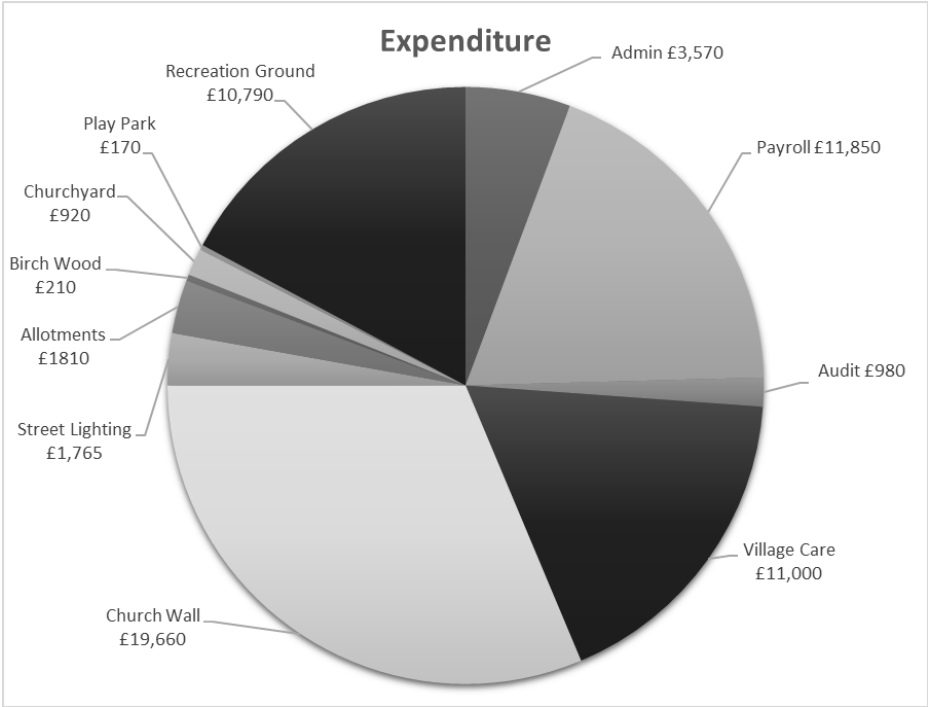
*Karen Vidler  
Chair  
Bidborough Parish Council*

# Parish Council

## Accounts — 2023/2024 to 31 December 2023

Income to the parish for the first 9 months of the year ending 31 December 2023 came to just over £62,520. VAT refunds from HMRC contributed £12,670 to the pot plus our precept income of £49,000 with the balance coming from newsletter advertising, allotment rents and burial fees.

Expenditure for the same period came to £62,750 as detailed below:



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 the Recreation Ground include a final legal bill of £2,240 from Brachers for advice relating to the trust and the establishment of the Committee of Management. On the staffing side, this amount includes money paid to HMRC as well as clerking costs.

Looking forward to 2024/25, at the meeting in November 2023, the Council decided not to increase the precept, other than inflationary increases, despite the need to recoup funds following the expenditure on legal fees incurred by the previous council.

Ultimately, the cost incurred for the work pursued by the four previous councillors (who are no longer in office) has cost the parish £34,280 to date which was paid for from funds set aside for church wall repairs. These reserves now need to be rebuilt so that we have a fund in place for ongoing maintenance and future repairs. If Mrs Thorne's expenses claim of £9,000 is paid then the total bill for legals will be £43,280.

### **MRS THORNE'S EXPENSES CLAIM**

We are restricted in what we can say about Mrs Thorne's expenses claim, as she has threatened legal action if they are not paid. However, we understand that Mrs Thorne has advised various parishioners and members of the cricket club that the Council are simply refusing to pay. ***This is not true.***

If you were the owner of a business and were told 'I've taken some advice, I'm not prepared to let you see it in full, but want you to pay me £9,000 for it as I can assure you that it's relevant to us'. Would you pay for it? Well the council believes that until we see the full advice we cannot pay as we do not know if it is based on the Council's agenda. Mrs Thorne has provided some information but certain pertinent items are missing. We have therefore requested a Letter of Authority from Mrs Thorne to obtain these items direct from the solicitors. To date, this consent has not been received.

If we pay this expense without undertaking due diligence, we are opening the doors to any councillor going off, doing their own thing *without the permission of the council* and then expecting to be



reimbursed for their costs. Council rules require *all* expenditure (including those incurred by the Chair) to be approved *in advance* by the full council. So the matter is still ongoing. If no consent is received from Mrs Thorne then a decision will be made on the incomplete information that we do have.

## SUMMER'S STEPS

It is with regret that the Council have made the decision to shut the Summers' Steps which lead into Birch Wood St Lawrence Avenue.

Although the wood is held in trust by the Council for the parish, there are a few areas within the woods that are privately owned. This includes where the steps are located. The steps were put in place by a local family to give easy access to the woods from their property. They soon became a regular access point for those living on the Southborough side of the parish but, not being owned by the Council, they have not been maintained and are now quite dangerous to use.

Despite not owning them, our insurers tell us that should someone use this entrance and hurt themselves the Council could be held responsible as the *only* reason for using them is to access a Council owned asset (Birch Wood). In our increasingly litigious world, the council feel that it is unwise to expose the parish to possible legal action and will therefore be closing the entrance in the next few weeks. Our apologies for any inconvenience this causes.

The logo for J.T. Moon Painting and Decorating features a blue circular design. A thick blue arc curves over the top, with a small red brushstroke at its right end. Below this arc, the text "J.T. MOON" is written in a large, bold, blue serif font. Underneath "J.T. MOON", the words "PAINTING AND DECORATING" are written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font, following the curve of the bottom of the circle. Two thin blue lines extend from the left and right sides of the circle, pointing towards the text "PAINTING AND DECORATING".

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## BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE - HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Our thanks go to Cllr Quentin Stevens for spearheading the current initiative. As you will all be aware we have been reviewing the HIP for the village. This is an ongoing process which takes time to consider and to get implemented. There is also the cost to the Parish. However, we are hopeful that some of the cost can be met by grants from Kent County Councillors.

The main items currently included and being discussed in the HIP are:

1/ Require 30mph be imposed for the entire length of the B2176 - from the A26 junction to the village sign to the west of the village. This would do away with the current split speed of 40/30mph.

*Kent Highways have agreed to change some of the 30mph roundels to a larger size in the hope that speeds will be reduced. However, on further investigation they cannot agree to the whole of the Ridge becoming a 30mph zone. They have promised to re-visit the matter in 6 months time. The changes to the Roundels will be included in the Kent Highways budget so there will be no cost to the parish.*

2/ Require different colour road surface and/or rumble strips so vehicles are alerted to the speed restriction. This in turn will slow vehicles down.

*Kent Highways have responded advising that different colour road surfaces are no longer used due to ongoing maintenance costs and contractors digging up the road and not replacing them. Also, as the Ridge is a B-road rumble strips are not possible.*

3) Ideally we would like some sort of crossing point close to the village shop and pub to allow the safe transit of children and pedestrians.

*Kent Highways have advised that there is no suitable location to install any type of crossing or island due to the lack of pavement or narrowness of the pavement. However, Kent Highways Engineers are going to see if there is anything else that can be done.*



4) Require yellow lines for 10 meters down each side of the road from the following junctions: top of High Street, bottom of Rectory Drive, top of Glebelands.

*This is because there are parking issues at school drop off and pick up times; concern over where vehicles park, the use of pavements and the positioning of vehicles on junctions which obscure vision to pedestrians especially children and parents with pushchairs.*

*However, the council is aware that this may just be moving the problem somewhere else and we need to discuss this further with residents before any action is taken.*

5) Yellow zig-zags in Spring Lane outside the Old School House lay-by to stop parking during school hours of 08:00 to 16:00 Monday to Friday.

*This a particular narrow part of the road and large vehicles including emergency services could find it difficult to pass if vehicles are parked.*

6) Add Yellow zig zags or double yellow lines to stop parking in the area as you face the village shop (Bidborough Stores) on the corner of 14 Bidborough Ridge TN3 OXD.

*There is an existing white dog bone for the Sub Station but anyone coming out from Gate Farm Cottages has their vision obscured by parked vehicles both on the pavement and the road. Also this will to allow access to the electricity Sub Station.*

The HIP is a live document which is updated on a regularly basis and sent to our contact at Kent Highways.

We would like to assure residents that we will keep you advised of the progress and would be happy to receive your comments and views before any implementation of works is carried out.



## WASTE BINS

We are the proud recipients of three new waste bins in the parish – strategically placed for dog walkers (and others) to use. Many thanks to Cllr Pete Eames for his diligence in getting this implemented.

## POT HOLES

Please note that the responsibilities for pot holes lies with Kent County Council (KCC) . If you see a pot hole or feel that a road surface requires some attention this should be reported to KCC on <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/roads/potholes>. Please do keep reporting them to the Council as we will also lodge an issue on behalf of the parish.

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by telephone or email**

# Community

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## Bidborough Village Hall

CHARITABLE INCORPORATED  
ORGANISATION

Bidborough Hall Trustees have unanimously agreed that this year will be a year of improving our cash reserves after a period of improvements carried out in the hall.

We are now having to face a significant increase in electricity costs having been protected by a 4 year fixed deal which came to an end in October.

As a consequence, we are limiting our expenditure to general maintenance and ensuring the hall and gardens are kept in the best condition possible for all to enjoy.

Parking can be an issue at the hall particularly when we have large events which may result in cars parking on Bidborough Ridge. Local residents often raise this issue with us.

Please be considerate when parking by not parking on the pavement or across residents drives. Thank you.



Graham Parsons  
Chairman & Trustee  
[www.bidboroughvillagehall.com](http://www.bidboroughvillagehall.com)

*For bookings please contact  
Deenah Wheeler on 01892 520967*

# Our Tunbridge Wells Borough Councillor

## Paul Curry

Election season is coming soon. We usually vote for one councillor seat every three years, but as the boundaries have changed this year, every Councillor seat is up for re-election, including mine.

I like seeing people represent their local area in local government. I feel that things start to get a little murky when larger parties stand candidates in areas they don't live anywhere near, or when they oblige their councillors to vote in a certain direction which doesn't work for their constituents. That, to me, isn't what local politics should be – so, to be true to my word, as the boundary has changed to one which doesn't catch the village of Speldhurst where I live, I won't be standing in Bidborough's elections in May.

Learning how local government operates by being part of it as an independent councillor is an eye-opening experience, and I'd absolutely encourage you to get involved. You get to see just how much of what local government provides is devolved to wider government.

You become very good at knowing which department or person would be best to handle an enquiry from a resident, which can be surprisingly effective for getting matters resolved. Residents have such a wide range of enquiries – and you'll quickly learn much more detail about the history of your area, too. It's very fulfilling being able to help your neighbours and being an important part of small and big decisions that affect your ward and the borough as a whole. You might even buy a shopping centre.



It has been a pleasure to serve the residents of Bidborough, and I hope those of you who have been in touch with me have been pleased with the help I could offer. Even though I won't be in your area any more, I'm still very happy to help - so do get in touch if you think I can help you navigate local government!

[paul@twalliance.org](mailto:paul@twalliance.org)

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(Kiran & Reshma Masrani)



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# Bidborough Sports Association

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## Charity Number 287245

Trustees: Colin Barber & David Musker

The Association is a registered charity formed in 1980. The object of the Association is the promotion of community participation in healthy recreation in particular by the provision of facilities for the playing of sports in the Parish of Bidborough. The Association has a lease from the Bidborough Parish Council on an area of land that is occupied by the sports pavilion, bowls pavilion, bowls green and tennis court.

The management committee consists of an elected Chairman and Treasurer (David Musker and Colin Barber respectively acting as Trustees) and an elected Secretary (Linda Paterson), and appointed President, Vice-presidents, Pavilion Custodian and 100 Club Administrator plus two nominated representatives of the sports clubs (currently bowls, cricket, stoolball and tennis) and two nominated representatives of Bidborough Parish Council.

Membership is open to all members of the constituent clubs and to any person living within the Parish of Bidborough.

The Association began by raising about £80,000 in grants, donations and fundraising proceeds to build a new pavilion and a tennis court and to improve the facilities for bowls and cricket. It also promoted participation in sport by encouraging junior coaching schemes and coordinating the activities of the constituent clubs. In the early years much effort went into raising funds through village fairs, 'It's a Knockout' competitions, darts evenings, dances, raffles race nights and appeals.

When the building of the new pavilion was completed it was agreed that it should be named The Cruickshank Pavilion, in recognition of Herbert Cruickshank's generous financial support for the fund-raising campaign.

In 2017 the Association began fundraising for a refurbished

pavilion raising over £70,000 from members. The actual refurbishment of the pavilion is yet to be carried out. Currently the Association is responsible for the maintenance of the pavilion, insurance of the facilities and payment of cleaning, water, electricity and council tax bills.

The Association costs are primarily financed by the contributions made by the constituent clubs, partly based on the number of active members and partly on the use made of the facilities. In addition, the Bidborough Sports Association 100 Club raises in excess of £1,500pa which has been running since 1980.

January 2024

*NOTE: If you would like join the 100 Club, the enclosed flyer provides further details.*

*"No job too big or too small"*



**Ryan King**

**M: 07917 414261**

**E: ryanking.13@btinternet.com**



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# Bidborough Service Station - 70th Birthday!

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**Bidborough Service Station turns 70 this year!** What a milestone in business to achieve for our quaint little village garage and filling station.

Bidborough Service Station started life as "Bidborough Filling Station" back in August 1954 established by Jack and Nancy Tippey. The workshop was added in 1956 after the Suez crisis caused a shortage in fuel (starting the introduction of coupons). Jack, realising that the filling station needed to make money, added the servicing and repair of vehicles to compliment the selling of fuel and it really hasn't undergone much change since.

Barry Booker bought the site in 1971 when Jack retired. As well as fixing cars Barry was also known by the villagers as the "Bee man" as he kept hives on the flat roof of his kitchen and sold his honey in the shop. At this time we should also mention a special lady, Deenah Wheeler, who worked for Bidborough Service Station for a total to 36 years, as a petrol attendant controlling everything to do with the forecourt and its day to day running, keeping it clean, tidy and organised which is especially hard when you have mechanics running around with oily shoes!

In December 1997 Richard and Bea Johnson bought Bidborough Service Station, this was Richards first venture into running his own mechanical business, after he helped run his fathers garage, Brian Johnson Auto Engineers (Chaucer LTD) in Dunton Green. When the garage in Bidborough came up for sale they discussed and took the

plunge and bought it, stopping the planned development of the site into houses, today his eldest daughter Ella is now the new manager and is looking forward to keeping Bidborough Service Station and its history going for many more years.



*2006's "The Hare & Hounds" & Petrol Station, Bidborough, Kent.*

We are a completely Independent filling station, currently we sell PACE fuel products and have opted to only sell E5 super unleaded, this is a premium product because of the higher octane level and lower ethanol content giving you a better performance from the engine and enhancing more miles to the gallon.

Petrol cars that aren't designed to take the "cheap" E10 fuel run the risk of unnecessary repair bills to the fuelling system of the car, lawn mowers especially benefit from the E5 "super" unleaded because of the corrosive nature of the high ethanol content, we currently sell E5 cheaper than other fuel stations in the local area.

Our diesel is the "normal" diesel, we try to stay competitive and sometimes we are a few pence more as we don't get through the quantities like the larger filling stations, but I hope the fact we try and keep the petrol station attended and the friendly service justifies the few extra pence.

In our workshop we are able to repair and diagnose classic and modern mechanical vehicles but do not look after 100% electric vehicles.

Our current offer is to service your vehicles on a regular basis. With this we are also able to offer re-gassing air conditioning, diagnostics on the engine management system, tyre replacement and repair, servicing, classic car repairs and repairs in general.

We can even cater for those little jobs like a light going out, the little noises and squeaks that get on your nerves when your doing your weekly shopping or going on that long trip and unsure if it's safe to drive. We are always happy to have a quick look to give you peace of mind and our mechanics with over 20 years experience are here to help.

Thank you to all residents that have continued to support us ever since we started in 1997, and to new residents 'Welcome to Bidborough!' we look forward to getting to know you.

*Richard, Ella and the team at Bidborough Service Station*

# Play Park Refurbishment - Phase 1

## GROUNDWORKS

Well, what an exciting month for the play park refurbishment!

Following a site meeting with contractors on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024, we were advised that there were timings issues with the groundworks. As we are working to a strict timeline in order not to interfere with summer sports, this was *not* good news. Thankfully, and with the agreement of our main contractor, we were able to call on the services of Excel Build & Fence who kindly agreed to step in and cover the groundworks.



*Goodbye roundabout!*

This was a double win as there were already a couple of issues that had been flagged in relation to (i) the levels within the play park and (ii) the foundations underneath the surfacing. Excel agreed to deal with the groundworks covered in the original tender - on the budget agreed with the main contractor - and undertake the additional work identified. This also allows us to broadly keep on track for a completion date of mid April 2024 - weather permitting.

Our thanks go to Excel for stepping into the breach and to Michael, Toby, Mark, Taylor and Tom who have braved the wet weather and done an excellent job to date.

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We also thank the residents of Spring Lane, the High Street and surrounding roads for their patience and understanding during this time. Originally the groundworks were due to start on 11 March 2024 but were expediated to fit in with Excel's other commitments. We therefore only had a couple of days to finalise all the prep work for the build and get notices out to residents - so it was all a bit rushed!

Having said that, on doing our walk around delivering notices, all the residents we met were so pleased that something was at last being done and the feedback so far has been nothing but positive!



*The team from Excel*



*Laying the new path support*

Once the groundworks are complete there will be a lull for a couple of weeks while we wait for the play equipment to arrive from Kompan's factory. The fencing posts will then be put in followed by the equipment, the surfacing and then the fencing itself.

The Friends of Bidborough are intending to have an opening celebration which has provisionally been earmarked for Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April.

The date (and time) will be confirmed nearer the time but we hope that lots of you will come and help us celebrate what has been a very collaborative project.

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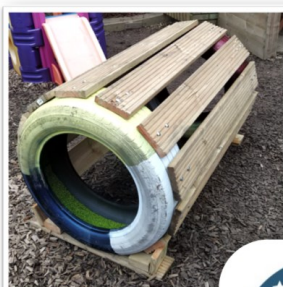
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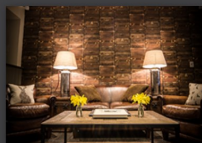




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# Play Park Refurbishment - Phase 2

## INSTALLATION

There will then be a lull in works as we wait for the equipment to arrive. Our play equipment contractor, Kompan, have confirmed that set up should commence in the first week of April and – if the weather is favourable - all the equipment should be in place by the middle of April 2024. The final design for the park is detailed opposite. Please note that it is an artists impression so there may be some minor changes still to make.

## Last Plea for donations!

There are a few items we would love to pay for but don't yet have the money in the bank. These include a new picnic table (benches are already included), a sail to provide shade for those hot summer days, padding for the outside of the fencing and some additional signage. **If you are able to make a donation, no matter how small, we would be so incredibly grateful.** Friends of Bidborough have a GoFundMe page set up to receive donations and, as a registered charity, they can augment any contribution you make by applying for gift aid. It can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-refurbish-bidboroughs-play-park>. We are very grateful to all those people who have donated so far either directly or by attending fund raising events. It is through your generosity that this project has been able to happen. Thank you so much.

## Do you shop at Tesco?

The Friends of Bidborough have applied for a grant but they NEED YOUR VOTES. **From 1st April 2024**, the following stores will be including the Play Park as one of their chosen charities. You can't vote online - it has to be in person. So please, if you're in one of the following Tescos, ***get your token from the cashier and pop it in the Friends of Bidborough Play Park slot.***

3304 Grosvenor Road - TN1 2AH

5102 Paddock Wood Express - TN12 6EL

3007 Pembury - TN2 4NE

**3246 Southborough Express - TN4 0PX**

6885 Tunbridge Wells Exp - TN4 9TU



# Architectural Office

## Michael Dillon

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# Friends of Bidborough Play Park

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## Burns Night Ceilidh

Thank you to everyone who organised, helped at, donated to and attended the recent Burns Night Ceilidh at Bidborough Village Hall on 29th January.

Our particular thanks goes to Karen Vidler and Elizabeth Kent for helping to organise the event and to Elizabeth Lash and Amanda Harris who ran the bar on the night.

We raised just over £1,400 for the new play park equipment at this event, which means that we are very near to our fundraising target!



**Save the Date!**

**Saturday pm 20th April**

**\* Play Park Opening Celebration \***

**As this event is wether dependent, full details to be posted on notice boards, Council website and social media nearer the time.**

# Community

## Birch Wood Association

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Over the winter we have been working to ensure paths stay clear of unsafe trees and fallen branches, and completed regular litter picking.



In December we had a work party with Kent High Weald Project which restored the large glade, and freed some surrounding trees of competition from regenerated growth. By the time this newsletter is published we will also have had a work party on February 28<sup>th</sup> which should result in the small glade also being cleared. This will enable visitors to enjoy the benches and better visibility that results from the clearance. We then plan to check how the growth in the glades develops so we can implement a regular maintenance schedule so that the glades remain useable and enjoyable open spaces.

### THE TROUBLE WITH TISSUES

We have noticed an increase in the number of tissues that are dropped in the woods. I am sure that it is a common belief that these quickly rot away. However, this is often not true and there are other concerns. Firstly they present an eyesore to other wood users. Many places from the Lake District to the Scottish Highlands are already blighted in popular areas, and we would not like the Birch Wood to become the same.

Wherever possible dropped tissues are cleared by volunteers, and this is an unpleasant and unhygienic job when the usage of them is unknown. However, beyond that, very many tissues are not environmentally friendly. In order to achieve the necessary whiteness and strength they are treated with bleaches and other chemicals, and as they rot they leach these chemicals into the soil, destroying its suitability for supporting the trees and other plants of the wood. Although they may seem to disappear from view, the worst offending tissues are still in the leaf litter and soil for up to 4 years. So please take your tissues home and dispose of them safely and hygienically there.

The **Birch Wood Association** is run by a small but very dedicated and enthusiastic group of volunteers who rely on subscriptions and a small grant from the Parish Council to finance their very valuable work.

If you would like to support this very worthwhile cause please become a member (or renew your membership) for only **£10 per household per year**. If you are happy for us to hold your data please email [birchwoodassociationbidborough@gmail.com](mailto: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. The Association also has a Facebook page. It is simplest to search for 'Birch Wood Association'; we welcome any observations, photos or comments on our woods.



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## Nature Notes - Spring 2024

Walkers in the woods at dusk may be lucky enough to see bats flying any time from March. This is normally the time they emerge from their winter torpor. Technically this is not hibernation.

They can also be seen in many surrounding gardens. The lake, with many small insects flying above, is an excellent food source for them. Similarly in our gardens bats will be tempted by the insects too.

The most insects will usually be found where no pesticides, herbicides and other poisons are used. The less chemicals used, the better the wildlife potential. Very clean and tidy gardens generally offer the worst habitat options.

The wood also offers bats good roost potential in veteran trees, and the species that are known to occur locally, and therefore most likely to be in the wood are Bechstein's, noctule, brown long eared and soprano pipistrelle.

Contrary to myth bats are not blind. Some don't echolocate at all, and some can see ultraviolet light. British bats don't drink blood (only 3 vampire species in Latin America), cannot get tangled in your hair, and don't all carry rabies. Only 0.1% of free flying bats do. In fact very many residents will never notice bats even though they are present.

All bats and bat roosts are legally protected, and contravening the regulations is a criminal offence. The reason is that bats are an endangered species.

In the UK, bat populations have declined considerably over the last century.



Bats are still under threat from building and development work that affects roosts, loss of habitat, the severing of commuting routes by roads and threats in the home including cat attacks, flypaper and some chemical treatments of building materials.

All the exterior lighting we have on our houses is damaging to the availability of habitat for bats since they prefer the dark. It is also helpful to keep cats inside for half an hour before dark, until an hour afterwards since this is the high-risk time for cat attack. Bats are Chiroptera which means "hand wing" and their wings actually include a thumb and 4 fingers just like a human hand. The wings are the forelimbs.

The smallest bat in the world is the Kitti's Hog Nosed which weighs only about 2g with a wingspan up to 13cm. Bats have tiny sharp teeth that can bite through fruit skin and possess very long tongues and one-way valves in the arteries so they can hang upside down without the blood rushing to their heads.

The Noctule is the UK's largest at blackbird size and will fly early in the evening and in the open. The pipistrelles are widespread. Bechstein's are much rarer with only about 21000 in the whole UK, and they will most likely stay high in the canopy. The brown long eared bat also feeds above the wood, but will roost in undisturbed roof space in buildings, holes and crevices in trees, and in bat boxes.

You can install bat boxes on your house or [trees](#) and they are simply made with untreated wood.

Details are widely available on the Bat Conservation Trust and RSPB websites.

<https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/bat-boxes>

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/nature-on-your-doorstep/garden-activities/build-a-bat-box/>

Martin Derham



# The History of the Village of Bidborough

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We would love everyone to take part in producing a book on the History of Bidborough from the past to the present day.

This can be any topic from how Birch Wood came to be, the Recreation Ground and sports clubs, how the village hall was built, social groups, the start of the school, the church, farming, characters who you knew and played a part in the community, the war years. In fact the list is endless!

We would like this to be typed and sent to the following:  
David White email: [dnwhite@talk21.com](mailto:dnwhite@talk21.com)

There is no limit on the quantity of text or the subject matter.  
Perhaps you have some historical photos which could be used.

The idea is when the book is ready it will be professionally printed and sold and the profits would be used to support village projects. It's now over to you to start thinking and writing and to preserve the history of Bidborough.

Ideally we would like to put a time line on this so we have something to aim for. Therefore we would like to see a finished book ready to print by January 2025. Thank you.

Quentin Stevens & David White

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Sadly, no one has yet volunteered to take on Neighbourhood Watch.

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. Neil can be contacted on [clerk@bidboroughpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@bidboroughpc.org.uk).



# Repair Café—Trinity Theatre TUNBRIDGE WELLS

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Have you got broken household items? A toaster that doesn't work, clothes that need repairing, some jewellery that needs fixing...? Bring them along to the Repair Café's team of volunteer experts at Trinity Theatre, have a cup of tea, some cake and get them repaired.

## What is a repair café?

It is a volunteer-led community event where people with repair skills help mend items that no longer work. The Repair Café team do this at no charge but if you would like to make a voluntary donation we welcome these as that helps cover costs and any surplus money goes to charity.

## What do we repair?

We have repair stations that cover a wide range including household and gardening electrical items, mechanical, jewellery, textiles / clothing, small furniture / wood, IT / Computers, knife sharpening and miscellaneous. If it can't be fixed we will advise you of your options. If it needs a spare part, you can get this and then bring it along at another date and we can fit that for you.

## Do I need to book?

The Tunbridge Wells Repair Café runs on a first come first served basis, you can simply turn up at Trinity Theatre or you can save time by pre registering your repair at <https://www.repairmanager.co.uk/PreRegistrationEmail/?cafe=1>. Doors open at **9.45am** and we start repairs at 10am and we close at 1pm on the dates shown below. The last repair is accepted at **12.30pm** or when we reach capacity for a particular repair station, whichever is sooner. If there is a wait time we should be able to give you a rough idea of how long. Importantly, you can't leave your item and come back and collect it, you need to be with the repairer as they repair it.

## Can I bring lots of things in to be fixed?

Unfortunately not, it is one item per person at a time. You can then go back in the queue afterwards if you have another item.

Any other questions? Please contact Chris via [twellsrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:twellsrepaircafe@gmail.com)  
We hope to see you soon!

Dates:

**Saturday 27 April 2024**

**Saturday 22 June 2024**

**Saturday 25 May 2024**

**Saturday 28 September 2024**

## St. Lawrence & St. Peter's Church

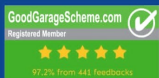
### CAMEO Lunch (Come And Meet Each Other Lunch)

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 on **Friday 5th April 12.30pm–2.30pm**. Please contact Anne Hinds on 01892 528372 if you would like to attend.

## 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. Play, chat, art and craft, refreshments, singing and story-time. We ask for a £3 contribution per family per week. If you would like to come along, please contact Amanda at [amandakate.harris@btinternet.com](mailto:amandakate.harris@btinternet.com) or 01892 528797.



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# Clubs & Societies

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## Bidborough Bowls Club

Alan Robinson – 01892 542852

Our 2024 season begins with a home match on Saturday 27 April.

Roll-up sessions will continue throughout the season on Mondays at 5pm offering coaching sessions for beginners and an Umbrella league competition where points are awarded both for winning and for regular attendance. The sessions are a good place for newcomers to start. Just come along if you'd like to try the game. We will also hold an open day on Bank Holiday Monday, 27 May, a further opportunity for newcomers to come and try the game.

Friendly matches against local clubs run from April to mid September. Match days are weekend afternoons and Wednesday afternoons or evenings.

We will also compete in the Tunbridge Wells mixed triples league, which runs from May to August on Thursday evenings. We had a good season in 2023, retaining our place in Division 2.

Club singles and pairs competitions are run through the season and finals day this year is Saturday 24 August.

In May we will be holding our Plant Sale with Cakes and Goodies Stall in the usual place outside the Kentish Hare, Saturday 9am start, date to be confirmed. Please look out for further details nearer the time. *For more information, please contact Alan on the number above.*

### BIDBOROUGH SCHOOL PTA

The following events will be held over the next few months for the benefit of the school and to which all members of the community are welcome:

**SPRING FAIR** Friday 17 May from 3.15pm

**MUGA Fun Day** Saturday 8 June

**AFTER SPORTS DAY** Wednesday 17 July

*For further information please email the PTA on [bidboroughpta@gmail.com](mailto:bidboroughpta@gmail.com)*

# Clubs & Societies

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## **Bidborough Tennis Club**

*Chris Hollyoaks—c.hollyoak@btinternet.com (Chair)*

*Dominic Cole—domfcole@outlook.com (Membership Secretary)*

I have had almost 2 memorable years in post as the Chairperson of Bidborough Tennis Club (BTC).

If any current or potential members have any questions about BTC then please feel free to contact me on the email address above – I, or any member of the committee, would be happy to help. Bidborough Tennis Club (BTC) is always keen to welcome new members and, in particular, actively supports the encouragement of its younger members to develop their skills. Furthermore, the BTC always welcomes new people to volunteer as either a Committee member or to assist the Committee with the running of our club/ court – for further details, and to apply, please contact either Chris Hollyoak or Dominic Cole.

You may be aware that every year BTC subsidises a Summer coaching week, specifically targeted at our younger members, together with a local professional coach. Adam Carrick has recently taken over the responsibility and coordination of the junior coaching and is looking to run sessions not only in the summer holidays but also in the other school holidays. Many of you may well know Adam from his association with the Bidborough Primary School. Please feel free to reach out to either Adam or me if you would like further details.

Last Summer, Dom and I ran a successful 'strawberries and cream' stall at the Bidborough School Summer fete which coincided with the Wimbledon ladies single semifinal – what fortunate timing! If a similar event is run this year, we will of course be happy to support it again.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact the Club Committee if you have any comments or discover problems with the court. Keep playing Tennis and enjoy our fantastic facilities.

*Chris Hollyoak*

## 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.



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](mailto:chris.morganmh@gmail.com)

## **Bidborough Ladies**

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

We continue to meet on the fourth Friday of the month at 2.30pm in the Village Hall, the meetings are regularly attended by 30 ladies. We normally have a speaker, followed by a cuppa and a chance catch up.

In September we heard from Bob Ogley, a speaker well known to many of us, he gave an interesting talk about his life as a journalist in Sevenoaks.

The speaker in October was Monica Price a Health and Well-being Expert, business leaders and writer who broadcasts on Sky News, GB news and TalkTV. In an entertaining presentation she gave us some very useful advice on diet and lifestyle

In November we heard from Anne Goldstein whose talk was entitled "A Home of Smiles" - celebrating Tunbridge Wells history of welcoming Basque and Jewish refugees 1937 -1950. It was very interesting and moving to learn how traumatised Basque children and then Jewish refugee girls were welcomed to the town, supported by the local community and housed in The Beacon.

We did not have a meeting as such in December but 30 of us ate at The Kentish Hare for a Christmas lunch together. We all had a very enjoyable time, we were made very welcome, the staff looked after us very well and the food was delicious. A really nice experience at our local restaurant.

The new year began for us with a well attended meeting in January when we had 2 speakers. Sarah Smith, who lives in Bidborough, worked for Cook for 2 years and she came to tell us about their RAW Talent programme which enables people with barriers to gain meaningful employment. John Daynes then told us his life story; an ex offender who had been in and out of prison, his life was turned round after he was accepted into the programme. It was a moving and inspiring talk and very good to know how a local company like



Cook is doing so much to help people get their lives back on track.

We have a varied and interesting programme planned for the next few months including, in March, a visit from the local chocolate company Temper Temper, hopefully there will be samples to try and even things to purchase just in time for Easter!

As ever we would stress that meetings are open to all, there may well be topics that are of particular interest to husbands, partners, sons and they are always very welcome.

If you would like any more information about our meetings or you have any ideas for future speakers please contact Anne Holford on the telephone number or email address given above.

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## **Bidborough Gardening Association**

Glenys McDonald – 01892 524738

[gmcdmbe@btinternet.com](mailto:gmcdmbe@btinternet.com) / [www.bidboroughgardening.co.uk](http://www.bidboroughgardening.co.uk)

### **SPRING PROGRAMME**

**Saturday 6th April - SPRING SHOW**

2.30pm - Village Hall

All welcome, afternoon teas, raffles and prize giving

**Friday 17th May 7.30pm** in the Village Hall

Nick Bailey (Gardeners World) '365 Days of Colour'. This will be a  
ticketed event. Tickets available from [gmcdmbe@btinternet.com](mailto:gmcdmbe@btinternet.com)

### **Outing**

To Hollymount, High Hurstwood

*For more details please contact Glenys on the email/number above*  
Members and non-members welcome. Annual subscription £5pp.

## **Bidborough Friends of the Hospice in the Weald**

Firstly a big thank you to everyone who has attended events, helped at them or donated to this local very worthy charity. Last year the Bidborough Group raised a total of **£5867.64** for which the Hospice is truly thankful. The Hospice has to raise £8 million each year to keep all its services running and it is not part of the NHS. 90p of every £1 raised for The Hospice is spent directly on patient care so every penny really does count.

*Our planned events for 2024 are :*

**June 23rd** Open Gardens in the village for The Hospice.

**June 30th** NGS Open Gardens in the village ( funds from sale of plants and pre loved books go to The Hospice).

**August 22nd** Bridge Tea Afternoon.

**November 9th** Christmas Fayre in The Village Hall.

For more information please contact Marilyn Hayward 01892 536217, Carole Marks 01892 542233 or Pauline Hardwick 01732 508536.

## **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.

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!

## Time To Get Walking Again!

With Summer just around the corner it's time to get out and walk in the beautiful English countryside, but where to find new and interesting walks?

Walking in Kent <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/kent> has loads of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more.

Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group, all the information is there in one place.

John Harris (who maintains the website) said 'There is so much walking information on the web but it is difficult to find. Walking in Kent (part of the Walking in England website) has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you'.

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles+ long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

So home or away, check out the websites and get walking!

[www.walkinginengland.co.uk](https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk) / [john@walkinginengland.co.uk](mailto:john@walkinginengland.co.uk)



**We will be lighting our Beacon on**

**6th June 2024 at 9.15pm**

**as part of the nationwide Beacon  
lighting to celebrate the**

**80th Anniversary  
of D-Day**

**At 6.30pm on the same day  
all churches are being invited  
to do a nationwide bell ringing**

# VILLAGE DIARY

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## 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)

# WHO'S WHO

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## 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

Harry Allen  
07523 005178  
Harry.Allen@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

Paul Curry  
Paul.Curry@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

Matthew Sankey  
Matthew.Sankey@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

## ***Newsletter***

*This edition was put together by Cllr Karen Vidler and she apologies for any errors or omissions and formatting issues! The next edition - Autumn 2024 - is likely to be distributed in Sept/Oct 2024. Anything you would like included (articles, letters, adverts), should be submitted to karen@bidboroughpc.org.uk by **20th September 2024***

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# WHO'S WHO

---



**Amanda Collins**

*amanda@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

Responsibilities: Village Care, School Liaison,



**Pete Eames**

*pete@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

Responsibilities: Bidborough Sports Association, Birch Wood



**Stephen Hinds**

*stephen@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

Responsibilities: Finance, Allotments, ANRG CoM\*



**David Marriott**

*davidm@bidborough.org.uk*

**Deputy Chair of Trustees**

Responsibilities: Finance, Risk Assessments, ANRG CoM\*



**Quentin Stephens**

*quentin@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

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



**Sandra Summers**

*sandra@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

**Deputy Chair**

**Chair of Trustees**

Responsibilities: 20 is Plenty, Highways, Website, Finance, ANRG CoM\*



**Karen Vidler**

*karen@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

**Chair**

Responsibilities: Bidborough Sports Association, Newsletter, Website, 20 is Plenty, Highways

*\* Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground Committee of Management*





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