

NEWSLETTER

**BIDBOROUGH**

**PARISH**

**COUNCIL**

SPRING  
2026





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# WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

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## Spring At Last!

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Parish Council Newsletter. I expect, like me, you have got fed up with the continuous rain we've had over the last few months. However, as I write the sun is shining overhead, the sky is blue and the blossoms on the trees are finally in bloom. We live in a beautiful parish and are blessed to have nature so close. We are in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; with the vista of the North Downs from Bidborough Ridge, Brookhurst Field with its plethora of plant and insect life and of course the Birch Wood.

This woodland is one of the jewels of our lovely parish. An ancient woodland with sunny glades and secret paths, a lake where (if you are really lucky) you may see a heron or two gliding overhead and trees that are teeming with life. The wood is held in trust by the Council and responsibility for managing it is delegated to the Birch Wood Association. This small but very dedicated group ensure that this valuable natural habitat is maintained for the benefit of parishioners.

But this costs money. The Council give a grant each year to the Association but a valuable source of income are the membership subscriptions to the Association - £10 per year PER HOUSEHOLD (*not* per person) is the current rate. For a 3 person household this is less than a cup of coffee each.

So if you are able to, please think about joining. Full details are given further on in the magazine.

In terms of general upkeep within the parish, the Council have a program of activity that is undertaken each month but should you notice anything that needs particular attention please do report it to our clerk, Neil, on [clerk@bidboroughpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@bidboroughpc.org.uk).

*Karen Vidler, Chair, Bidborough Parish Council*

# PARISH COUNCIL

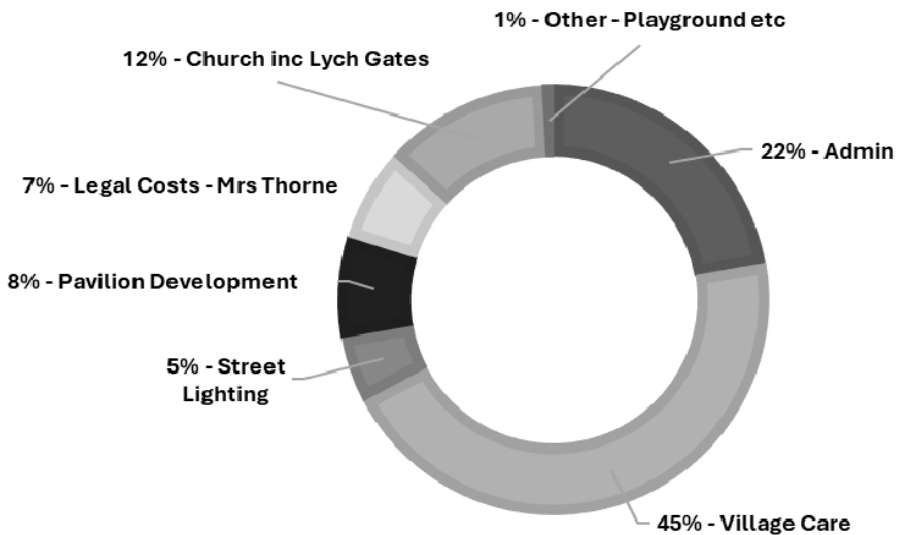
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## Accounts - 2025/2026 - To 28 February 2026

Income to the parish for the year to 28 February 2026 amounted to a little under **£89,260**; £76,970 from the precept, £10,290 from VAT refunds and the balance from interest earned and sundry items (newsletter advertising, allotment rents, burial fees etc).

Expenditure for the year to the end of February 2026 is running at just under **£95,500** with costs broadly spread as detailed below:

### EXPENDITURE 04/25 - 02/26



A couple of points to note:

1/ Outside of the Birch Wood, we have had quite a lot of work done on trees this financial year – particularly taking down dangerous trees and branches which are often reported by parishioners – for which we are very grateful. Often these reports need speedy attention to ensure the safety of parishioners and we are very grateful to Treework for their prompt attention to matters when issues arise.

2/ The costs relating to the legal case that former Chair Mrs Thorne brought against the Council are exceptional and should not recur.

3/ The work being done on the Church lych gates is quite extensive and we anticipate that we may need to outlay significant funds on this over the next financial year. Coupled with the monitoring of movement in the wall behind the houses in the High Street, concerns relating to the stability of older grave monuments and monitoring/removal of sapling growth in the churchyard, the council will need to consider carefully how it will meet costs relating to the church going forward.

## **Council Website—[www.bidboroughpc.org.uk](http://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. Please take a look.

## **Crime Prevention**

The enclosed flyer gives details of two local initiatives to combat crime; Neighbourhood Watch and Speedwatch.



Our new Community Police Officer PC Danny Barnes attended the February meeting and summarised the current work he is doing in the Bidborough/Southborough area. He is looking to increase both car and foot patrols in Bidborough and is working with the Council in relation to speeding within the parish. He is hoping to arrange a local surgery in Bidborough to address any local concerns.

Danny and Kent Police are responders in the event of a crime – but much of their work is involved in prevention; from the free bike marking event which took place last year, to women’s self defence, from how to deal with nuisance callers to how to stay safe online.

So please join the Bidborough Neighbourhood Watch scheme and keep Bidborough a safe community. For further details please contact our Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator **Dominic Cole** – [dominic.cole@me.com](mailto:dominic.cole@me.com) / 07711 058716

## **Former Chair's Expenses Claim**

In 2025, the former Chair, Mrs Thorne, took the Council to court to reclaim an amount she claimed she was owed in expenses.

Initially the Council and Claimant went to arbitration to try and get the matter resolved but without success. The case therefore proceeded to court and the case was heard at Wandsworth County Court on 24th March 2026. The result was that the judge dismissed Mrs Thorne's claim.

For transparency, in February 2026, the Council made an ex-gratia offer of c£6,600 to settle this matter. We had not changed our views on the expenses claim but knew it would cost the parish more to go to court – but the offer was rejected. In total, the fees incurred in relation to the court case will be around £19,800. We did ask the judge to award costs to us but were turned down.

We believe this is now the end of the matter and hope that we can now all move forward. When it is available, the Council will publish the judge's ruling on the Council website.

## **Bidborough Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)**

### **Update Spring 2026 - *from Cllr Quentin Stevens***

1) We now have confirmation that the two Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) will be replaced with mains connected units which can operate at night. These new units will be paid for with the PR2 fine money allocated to the Parish Council.

The location will be the same as the current ones but they will show drivers their speed and if they go over the speed limit it will flash SLOW DOWN. We hope these new improved signs will help to reduce speed along the B2176 Bidborough Ridge.

The work will fall into the April 2026/2027 financial year and at this time we have not been advised of an actual date yet.

We are still awaiting an up date from Kent Highways on the following items:

- a) Revision of the signage on the B2176 east to west of the village.
- b) The Wrap around Yellow Lines curb protection by the village shop and electric sub station.
- c) The Yellow Zig Zags waiting restrictions by the old school house to operate during school times.
- d) The 10 meter Double Yellow Lines at junction with High Street and Bidborough Ridge.

These items were outlined in the previous magazine. Our Parish Clerk has been in contact with Kent Highways on this matter. We presume that they are probably working on all the other PR2 projects first from all of the 14 parishes in the Borough.

Andrew Strong a resident who lives on Bidborough Ridge has started a campaign to get the whole of the B2176 through the village to be 30MPH. This campaign will complement what the Parish Council are trying to achieve regarding reducing speed. The petition will gather signatures from residents which will then be sent to Mike Martin MP for Tunbridge Wells, Kent Highways and relevant councillors at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Lastly, we have received requests from residents who live east of the village on the B2176 to install signage to alert drivers of concealed driveways. There have been some near misses when cars are driving out of these driveways especially when vehicles come off the A26. We have requested guidance from Kent Highways regarding this matter so we can advise residents.

**BIDBOROUGH GARDENING ASSOCIATION  
SPRING SHOW**

SATURDAY 11TH APRIL 2026  
2.30pm at Bidborough Village Hall

Afternoon teas, raffles and view the show

## **Water Supply Failure in Tunbridge Wells**

On 8th April, Kent County Council are holding an enquiry on the water supply failure in the Tunbridge Wells area.

Initially only District and Borough Council's were invited to give input to this enquiry but our local Kent County Councillor, John Moreland, is pushing for parish council's to be included. As one of the key parishes affected, and with a water distribution point within the village, John believes it is important that local views in Bidborough are taken into account in respect of any strategies that are put in place to ensure this type of thing does not recur in the future.

Regardless of whether we are able to attend in person, the outcome of this enquiry will be communicated in due course.



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## Devolution Of Council Services



In March 2026, the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) which represents all the parish and town councils in the Tunbridge Wells Borough submitted a response to the consultation on the possible structure of the new unitary authority which will be responsible for delivering services to all households and businesses in Kent from April 2028 onwards. The response was specifically non-political as the majority of member councils are not affiliated to a specific political group - thus the response was based on the perceived needs of local communities rather than on the agendas of national political parties.

KALC strongly believe that a three-unitary council model is the best solution for local government in Kent. The key points considered in coming to this conclusion were:

- this option aligns most closely to the Government criteria for unitary councils;
- of all the multi unitary options the three-council option has the lowest costs, highest savings and shortest payback periods;
- it preserved the well-established West Kent, East Kent and North Kent identities;
- there are real possibilities for aligning local authority geographies with those of Health, Police and Fire and this offers both the strongest potential for service redesign and for an enhanced focus on prevention;
- it does not require any alteration of Parish or Town Council boundaries;

KALC strongly promoted the view that Parish and Town Councils are embedded in their communities and therefore must be included as equal partners within any structure. Whilst recognizing the benefits of the drive for more effective local governance KALC did flag their concern about the financial cost of implementation.

Government will now consider the responses and likely announce the chosen plan in Summer/Autumn 2026.

# COMMUNITY

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**Bidborough Village Hall** [www.bidboroughvillagehall.com](http://www.bidboroughvillagehall.com)  
CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

Bidborough is very fortunate to have a village hall that many local clubs and societies use, along with children's and family parties most weekends. There is a wedding reception also booked for later this year. We must not forget Bidborough Village Nursery who are in the hall weekdays.



All this activity provides the hall with a good income which allows the hall Trustees to maintain the hall to a high standard and make improvements when needed. It is worth pointing out that in addition to income from hiring the hall, the Charity does benefit from donations from time to time. However, we do not receive any financial support either from TWBC or Bidborough Parish Council. Looking into the future, we hope that the local community and the wider community continue to support the hall for future generations.

I must give a big thankyou to Rainbows who planted crocuses in the front hall lawn last year which provided a colourful addition to the lawn. Tulip bulbs have also been planted in tubs by the main hall entrance.

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

Full details on what the hall can provide are on the website: [bidboroughvillagehall.com](http://bidboroughvillagehall.com).

Graham Parsons  
Chairman & Trustee, Bidborough Village Hall CIO

# CHURCH COMMUNITY

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## St Lawrence, Bidborough & St Peter, Southborough

Greetings from St. Lawrence Church!

We are very happy to be your parish church, carrying on the 1,100+ year practice of worshipping the Lord God every Sunday here in Bidborough.

At St. Lawrence, we celebrate Holy Communion from the traditional Book of Common Prayer at 8.00 am on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month. Our weekly services are at 11.00 and 18.30 every Sunday (with Communion on the 1st Sunday). **Everyone is welcome at any of our services.**

In addition to our Sunday services, St. Lawrence offers a free Community Cafe every Tuesday from 10.00-12.00 and a Mahjong Club on the first Monday of each month from 14.00-16.00. Please come and join us!

You are also welcome to stop in to St. Lawrence at any time for personal prayer, quiet reflection or just to admire our beautiful church building. The doors are unlocked every day during daylight hours.

Finally, if you have walked through the churchyard lately, you may have noticed that we have planted out thousands of new snowdrops and daffodils. These were donated by someone in our village in honour of our link with the community of Kibaigwa in Tanzania.

Jesus Christ is truly risen!

Revd Ti Chase  
Rector of St. Lawrence,  
Bidborough and St. Peter,  
Southborough





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## **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 members of our community. A two-course lunch including refreshments is provided for a small charge.

The date of forthcoming lunches are **Friday April 10th** and **Friday 12th June** from **12.30- 2.30pm**. If you would like to join us, please contact Anne. Thank you.

*“No job too big or too small”*



**Ryan King**

**M: 07917 414261**

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

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# SCHOOL COMMUNITY

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**Bidborough CoE Primary School** *https://  
www.bidborough.kent.sch.uk  
headteacher@bidborough.kent.sch.uk*



## **Building Progress**

Those of you who walk or drive in Spring Lane may well have noticed the gradual evolution of our new classrooms, from a footprint in the ground to a new building that now has walls and a roof. We are all very excited about reaching the anticipated completion date in May and being able to use the two new rooms at last.

We are eternally grateful to our parents who have exhibited great patience during the occasional unexpected interruptions to school routine and also our staff who have sometimes had to circumvent their plans for the day in order to accommodate the requirements of the construction work. We are also indebted to those of you within the Bidborough Community who might sometimes have been affected by the work taking place and hope that you are reassured by the end date being in sight.

As noted in the last newsletter, we hope to be able to showcase the new provision for you once the classrooms are completed and kitted out.

## **Governing Body News and Vacancies**

We value the links we have with the village and St. Lawrence Church and would like to develop and strengthen these further. With this in mind we have appointed an Associate Governor, with a specific remit to explore and develop our local community relationships.

We also have a vacancy for a governor on our governing body which we hope you might be able to help us with. We are seeking individuals who have a genuine interest in education, and who will join our Learning and Teaching Committee in addition to other general governor responsibilities. In the autumn, we will also be

looking for someone with an interest and skills in finance and/or human resources, to cover a further vacancy. If you feel this latter option is for you then please feel free to volunteer now as we can shuffle roles around when the time comes.



Full training and support is available for both roles, so if you are interested, please don't be put off before enquiring further!

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

Unfortunately, at the current time we cannot accept any more applicants from individuals who are also parents at the school. This is because, we have to maintain a balance between governors who are parents and those who are not, and we have reached equilibrium.

If you would like to learn more about the expectations of governorship at Bidborough CEP School and what is involved, please email Emma Leitch or Katherine Cullen, Co-Chairs of Governors, at [chair@bidborough.kent.sch.uk](mailto:chair@bidborough.kent.sch.uk)

## BIDBOROUGH SPORTS ASSOCIATION

Many thanks for making the Bidborough Sports Association Brain of Bidborough quiz night on Saturday 7th March 2026 such an enjoyable and successful evening.

With entry money, raffle tickets purchased and profit on the well stocked bar, the final total raised has come to £1,525.61 after all expenses.

Colin Barber  
Treasurer, Bidborough Sports Association

## BIDBOROUGH SCHOOL — PTA News



With the completion of the new classrooms coming ever closer, our attention is turning to how we adapt and re-imagine the outdoor space by the MUGA.

Working closely with the school, we are excited for our fundraising focus for the foreseeable future to be the following school elements:

- Exploring ways to support the re-introduction of a Forest School.
- Providing another outdoor classroom to enable further educational opportunities in the fresh air.
- Expanding the OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) offering, which could include a bank slide, extension to the trim trail, a building/construction zone or sand pit/water play and substantial storage unit.

We have set ourselves an ambitious target of £20,000! If you are passionate about outdoor learning and like the sound of these exciting developments for our children we have a number of ways you can help us.

Donate to our collective pot: donate any amount to our collection pot, every little helps:

<https://pay.collectiv.com/bidborough-school-pta-55207>

Help Our Village School - Your Gift Could Go Twice as Far!

Many local employers in the UK offer matched giving schemes. This means if you donate to the school PTA, your company may match your gift, doubling its impact at no extra cost to you! If you're not sure whether your employer takes part, your HR, CSR or payroll teams can help. Every match helps provide resources, activities, and experiences for our children.

To find out more, please email [bidboroughPTA@gmail.com](mailto:bidboroughPTA@gmail.com)

## Easyfundraising

Another easy way to support us in our fundraising efforts is to join Easyfundraising and nominate our school.



When you shop online with participating retailers, they'll donate part of what you spend to your chosen cause. Whether you shop on your phone, laptop or tablet, you can earn free cashback donations for your cause. It's easy to set up, just follow these three simple steps:

1. Download our free app on iOS or Android. Choose a retailer, shop as normal, and your cause gets a free donation
2. Add our browser extension and get a handy pop-up whenever a retailer is offering a donation - just click to activate.
3. Log in, pick your retailer, shop, and raise a free donation when you checkout

Please visit <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/create-an-account/>

## **Nourish Community Food Bank**

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

Long-life Milks	Chilli/Sweet & Sour Sauce
Washing Powder Tablets	Baked beans
Pasta	Tinned Spaghetti
Cereal	Spreads - Jam, Peanut Butter, Marmite
Tea & Coffee	Biscuits
Tinned Pulses	Tinned Fruit
Rice Pudding	Soup
Toiletries	Noodles
Tinned Potatoes	Tinned Fish
Dog/Cat Food	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*



## BIDBOROUGH FRIENDS GROUP OF HOSPICE IN THE WEALD

Please find listed below our events planned for the coming year at present.

As always, a big thank you for all the support you give us each year.

A warm welcome awaits you this year.

- Sunday 21st June 2026. ...Bidborough Open Gardens. Four beautiful gardens to wander around. Homemade refreshments available. Combined entry, £10 adults/ children free .
- Sunday 28th June 2026.....NGS Open Gardens Bidborough, with sales of plants, books etc going to The Hospice in The Weald. Details as above.
- Thursday 27th August 2026.....Bridge Tea ( play Bridge and have a lovely Homemade Afternoon Tea). A few tables remaining.
- Saturday 14th November 2026....Bidborough Festive Fayre in aid of Hospice in The Weald. 10am- 2pm Village Hall. Free entry. Many varied stalls,

For any further information please contact Carole Marks 01892 542233 or Marilyn Hayward 01892 536217

The logo for Excel Build & Fence Limited, featuring the word "EXCEL" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters "E" and "L" have red rectangular accents above them.

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# Sports & Community Pavilion—UPDATE

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Following the two public consultations in 2025, at the end of the summer we had the sad news that the Bowls Club had decided to disband due to falling numbers. The development committee therefore had to rein back plans to take into account this change in circumstance.

Bidborough Sports Association held a meeting in December 2025 to discuss possible uses for the former Bowls Club site. Although many suggestions were put forward, without volunteers to run the activity/club most were non-starters. It is therefore felt that a space that people can use without supervision, such as a boule pitch, is probably the most likely way forward. Maintenance of the ground will need to be undertaken and will be agreed between the BSA and the parish council.

Sadly, in the last month we have also been advised that the stoolball club have decided to make Leigh their permanent home and therefore will no longer play or be affiliated to Bidborough Sports Association.

Bearing in mind the above points, the pavilion architect, Michael Dillon, relooked at the current pavilion plans and has made some minor tweaks to better utilise the existing space – see the next page for details. The changes include moving the pavilion slightly further away from the boundary with Birchwood Avenue to provide better storage facilities and easier access to the proposed balcony lift, which will now be moved towards the back of the building. The effect of this is that the changing rooms can now be accessed directly from the ground which is something that the ECB are very keen on. There may also be revisions to the proposed disabled access to the pavilion to better use the former bowls club area.

We welcome parishioners views on these proposed amendments. Please email [karen@bidboroughpc.org.uk](mailto:karen@bidboroughpc.org.uk) to comment or post to 91 Bidborough Ridge by **Friday 1st May 2026**.

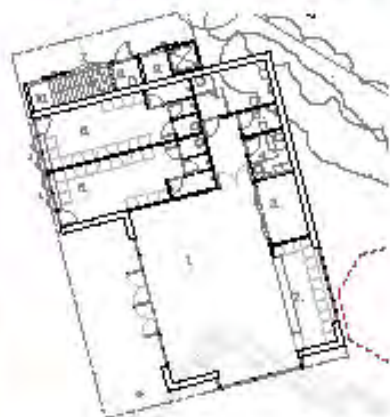
# AOMD

Architectural Office Michael Dillon

## Bidborough Sports and Community Pavilion *Updated Proposal*

*We have made some small design changes since the last public consultation:*

1. In line with ECB guidance the first floor is now fully accessible by lift, with secure entry and relocated stairs on the north side.
2. Pavilion moved 4.5m south to improve access, ease construction, and increase distance from neighbouring properties.
3. Layout has been simplified: changing rooms open onto the pitch, to toilets enlarged, and storage upgraded to a dedicated walk-in cupboard.



1. Club room
2. Bar
3. Storage
4. Ambulant WC and shower
5. WC
6. Changing room
7. External Store
8. External WC (Optional)
9. Lift (with external lock)
10. Staircase (with external lock)

## Bidborough Dramatic Society Spring Production

APRIL 15th, 16th and 17th  
7.30pm at BIDBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL

We are giving you two for the price of one this time: *'Lock Down in Little Grimley'* and *'Murder on a Budget'* both by David Tristram.

In the first play we see the Little Grimley Players trying to produce a play during the easing of Lockdown, with mixed success. In *'Murder on a Budget'*, a cash-strapped ensemble put on a 'whodunnit' equally unsuccessfully.

Tickets are £15, and the Box Office is now open.  
Do see the website <https://bidboroughdrama.org>

Looking forward to welcoming a great audience!

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# Community

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## **Birch Wood Association**

Martin Derham, Chair, Birch Wood Association

Over the course of the winter a committed group of volunteers have been working in the wood on Monday mornings. We have been working to improve the wood for everybody's enjoyment while supporting biodiversity through improvement of the wood environment. We do everything from felling or pollarding smaller trees, glade clearance, dead hedge building, keeping the drains flowing to regular litter picking. We are now winding down activity for the breeding and nesting season and so work through to about mid-May will be quieter and more limited. We then take a summer break and will start again at some point in October.

We welcome anybody who would like to help with this work, although insurance requirements say they must be older than 16. Tools are provided and there is no expectation that you will be there every time and all the time. We recognise people have demands from everyday life! Good quality boots, gloves and old clothing are recommended. Please contact me if you would like to join our group by emailing me at: [admiralhardinge@btinternet.com](mailto:admiralhardinge@btinternet.com)

Thank you to those of our loyal supporters who have supported us already for 2026. if you haven't yet managed to do so 2026 subs are now due. See details on the next page.



## **BIRCH WOOD ASSOCIATION—SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Birch Wood Association is funded by support from both the Parish Council and by individual donations. The Parish Council typically cover the major work parties with Kent High Weald Partnership, major management requirements with contractors such as dealing with ash dieback, and any other large scale costs, or where the work is beyond the capabilities of the volunteers.

From our own funds we try to cover other costs. We need to buy consumables for the chainsaws whose use is kindly donated, although we may need to buy our own chainsaw in the future. We buy, replace and repair tools to enable the volunteer work to go ahead, and we would like to do more to replace the dormouse, bat and bird boxes in the wood. Most of those still in place have been there for many years and are rotting away whilst many have simply disintegrated with age.

If you would like to support our work we ask £10 per household. We prefer bank transfer but if you would prefer to pay by cheque or cash this is also possible. If you would like to support us in this way please contact me either through email at [admiralhardinge@btinternet.com](mailto:admiralhardinge@btinternet.com) or by calling Martin on 01892 537050.

### **Bidborough Ladies**

Jane Hebditch on 01892 539401

We continue to meet on the 4th Friday of the month at 2.30 pm at Bidborough Village Hall.

Our meetings are relaxed, informal and friendly . We normally have a speaker followed by time for chat and a cuppa .

Our meetings are open to all, we are always happy to welcome new members and visitors.

Yearly membership is £10 plus £2 per meeting or £3 as a visitor.

## RAMBLING FOR WELL BEING

[www.ramblers.org.uk](http://www.ramblers.org.uk) / 01892 554411

The Tunbridge Wells branch of the Rambling Association are promoting sociable walking groups to promote wellness and help people to get more active. There are weekly walks in several of the parks in Royal Tunbridge Wells as well as walks in more rural areas.

Walkers enjoy the benefits of friendly leaders, good company, fresh air and stunning scenery. Most groups also take the opportunity to stop for refreshments after the walk. All walks are over easy ground and taken at a steady pace to suit everyone. They range from 10 minutes to 90 minutes in and start and finish at the same place each week. So get your walking boots on and enjoy the beautiful countryside where we live.

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## NATURE NOTES

### What is happening in Birch Wood

With the coming of Spring we will be winding down our activities in Birch Wood during the nesting season. This allows the birds and other creatures to raise their young with minimal disturbance. Adverse environments lead to failed breeding through such behaviours as eggs not hatching or nest abandonment. The birds are currently feeding to build strength prior to the breeding process so for a few weeks we will continue with only a quiet small electric chainsaw and hand tool work.

Over the last months the felling of trees affected by ash dieback has been completed leading to a lot of wood lying on the ground. We have only felled trees in dangerous condition which threatened paths or boundaries. There are many more ash left in the heart of the wood. The danger with diseased ash trees is that they can shed limbs and collapse without warning. We encourage everybody to stay on the main paths which are regularly checked to identify anything that has become unsafe. However, it should be said that woods are inherently more dangerous than streets or open ground, especially in high winds. Particularly when combined with wet conditions or being in full leaf trees and branches can fall. Therefore we do what we can to support the enjoyment of this wonderful asset on your doorstep.

The positive news is that research is now showing that more ash trees are surviving than expected. About a third do not become infected, and another third will recover to some extent and survive. This is why we are leaving the trees in the heart of the wood away from the paths.

I hope you are also noticing that some views around the lake and in other areas have opened up. We have been thinning both holly and silver birch to achieve this. The main holly area is on the south eastern side of the lake. Woods need some holly to act as a food source for birds, although there are very many other food sources

already within the wood. However it is very invasive, and its dense foliage creates areas of darkness within the woods where nothing else will grow. By thinning we also open up more light reaching the woodland floor so more plants will grow and spread.

The silver birch is more to the north east near the small glade. These trees have very shallow roots so some become unstable which we remove. These trees grow very fast. Many were planted after the 1987 great storm whilst others have self-seeded. As a result we have areas of very similarly aged trees that are now too close together to grow healthily. This is bad both for the aesthetic appearance of the wood, and more importantly it does not support biodiversity. Ultimately the aim is to have mixed age and species of trees with some developing into full grown standards whilst others are removed over time to create the necessary space. That is what we are doing.

Once we have felled the trees we are left with logs and piles of brash. We try to leave these where they are felled. The brash we make into dead hedges. The leaves will fall to the bottom and the wood itself will gradually rot away, and this creates a great environment for mammals and insects to nest underneath. Similarly with the logs we create piles to leave them to rot away slowly over time. On the logs there will be many insects that act as bird food and the piles create a dark dry environment, again good for mammals, reptiles and insects, so in this way biodiversity is supported.

The UK has very poor stocks of dead wood. We maintain a policy wherever possible of leaving fallen dead wood or standing dead wood. Dead wood acts as an excellent home for fungi, the larvae of beetles and many other insects, and as a larder for birds and home for other animals. The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries globally, with species studied declining by an average of 19% since



1970 and nearly one in six species (16%) threatened with extinction. The State of Nature 2023 Report highlights widespread declines in invertebrates, plants, and birds, driven by habitat loss, pollution, and climate change. Therefore within Birch Wood we do what we can to support a biodiverse environment through our activities. Dead wood is hugely important.

Part of the efforts for greater biodiversity include encouraging other trees within the wood such as beech, yew, sweet chestnut and cherry and all too often these have silver birch growing too close or fallen branches across them, limiting their growth and health. For this reason we are trying to halo trees which means leaving a sufficient clear space around them for healthy growth and also removing branches through or over them.

Everything that happens in the wood is done for a reason. Nature isn't tidy, it is wild and self-willed, but it needs sympathetic management to have the maximum benefit. Otherwise Birch Wood would deteriorate with swathes of holly and cherry laurel, vast quantities of unhealthy and overcrowded silver birch, some of the marvellous trees in the wood would begin to struggle as a result and the flora and fauna would become increasingly depleted.

I hope you will enjoy the wood this summer.



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# Clubs & Societies

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## Bidborough Cricket Club

Well, the sun is starting to make an appearance, we have passed the spring equinox, so it must be close to the cricket season. And 2026 looks to hold some exciting times for BCC.

### Senior Men's Cricket

Looking back quickly our 1sts and 3rds won their league and were promoted last season, the 2<sup>nd</sup>s maintained their status quo. Which means the Bidborough 1<sup>st</sup> X1 is back in the KCVL premier division. Like all crickets clubs new members are always welcome and if you are thinking of donning the whites please contact our Club captain Ant Bouffe on [anthonybouffe@gmail.com](mailto:anthonybouffe@gmail.com) or 07968 159818.

### Ladies Cricket

We are very excited to announce we are looking to establish a ladies cricket side at Bidborough CC, we are obviously looking to build this from scratch so the first step is some ladies players. The idea is we would start in a soft ball league and build from there. If any ladies of any age and /or ability are interested in playing cricket, please contact us on [enquiries@bidboroughcricketclub.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bidboroughcricketclub.org.uk) or [enquiries@bidboroughcricket.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bidboroughcricket.org.uk).

We are happy to organise friendlies only in the first season but depending on the interest, we might manage to get into a league this season if the take up is really good.

### Juniors

We still have our 3 junior sides, u11s, u13s and u15s competing in the local junior leagues, we are always happy to add to our junior numbers so if you have any queries please do not hesitate to email Eli Clarkson or Sue Steptowe on [bidboroughccjuniors@gmail.com](mailto:bidboroughccjuniors@gmail.com). We have mid-week training and matches for the u11s and mid-week training and Sunday matches for the u13s and u15s.

### Dynamo's and All Stars

The booking for both these programs are open on the ECB website

<https://ecb.clubspark.uk/Dynamos/Search>. This was a great success last year, for what can be great Friday evening entertainment for players and parents alike. The cricket club members will be providing a barbeque when the weather is favourable to add to this experience.

## Social Events

Our annual golf day is always fun, and the date will be advertised on our various social media platforms when it is confirmed.

We also have the annual Race night at the Bidborough Hall which is booked for the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, so please get this in your diaries now.

If you would like to contact the cricket club in any regard please feel free to contact us on, on [enquiries@bidboroughcricketclub.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bidboroughcricketclub.org.uk) or [enquiries@bidboroughcricket.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bidboroughcricket.org.uk)

Yours in Cricket  
Rodger Poulson (Chairman Bidborough Cricket Club)



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# Clubs & Societies

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## **Bidborough Tennis Club**

Bidborough Tennis Club has experienced a mix of fortunes during the last 12 months.

From a committee membership perspective our Chairman, Chris Hollyoak, accepted a job opportunity overseas in October (2025) and therefore stepped down from his role as Chairman. We were sad to see him leave us and would like to thank him for his leadership during the last 3 ½ years.

In early 2025, we also welcomed a new Junior Coaching coordinator, Val Hawksfield, who successfully promoted and ran our Junior Coaching in 2025. Unfortunately, later in the year, Val had to stand down for personal reasons. Again, the Committee would like to thank Val for her contribution to the Club and sincerely wish her the very best in the future.

However, we are delighted to welcome a new Committee member, Peter Gregory, who will take charge of the Junior Coaching in 2026.

This year's Junior Coaching will take place during the week of Monday 3rd August [2026]. From a membership perspective, we did experience a (small) reduction in household membership from 95 to 83 families year on year however our number of members only reduced slightly from 206 to 196 people - clearly some large families joined the Club which is good news as this does support our desire to encourage younger people to take up the sport and enjoy the facilities within the village.

The club remains both buoyant and popular being well supported by local residents, for which we are very grateful.

During 2025, we continued to subsidise the Junior Coaching although the number of participants attending the classes was down year on year. The Committee firmly believe that the provision of Junior Coaching remains a priority for the Club and will continue

to subsidise the cost of the coaching this year. Please encourage our Junior members to participate in the coaching as it is both conveniently located for them and will remain competitively priced. It does also encourage young people to participate and enjoy the sport.

In 2026, we will also make the Junior Coaching available to non-members although their coaching fees will not be subsidised by the Club.

Our regular annual Tennis Court cleaning was carried out in September with an additional treatment applied specifically for moss reduction - the Committee believes this to be one of our most essential responsibilities as it enables our members to enjoy safely using the court all year round.

Please remember that we do keep an accident/incident report book so if any member has any issues with the condition of the court, or were to suffer an incident, then please inform the Committee and we can react accordingly.

During the year, we also replaced some broken paving stones on the stepped approach to the court and had the glass/perspex replaced within our noticeboard.

The Committee would like to express its sincere gratitude to Les Hawksfield for his assistance with the replacement of the noticeboard perspex. Furthermore, we will be undertaking an additional inspection of the court in early Spring to see if any minor repairs are required. In general, though, the court does remain in excellent condition.

For our membership renewal process last year, we introduced an electronic membership form to both reduce costs and any environmental impact (use of paper, printing etc). Some of the feedback regarding the electronic form was that it seemed very cumbersome, so we have significantly improved it for this year's renewal. As a result of using an electronic form, we have had to make a small change to our Club rules, and the new rules will be

sent out to all members prior to this year's renewal process - please do read and understand the new rules.

During 2025, Bidborough Tennis Club has played an active part in the restoration/rebuilding of the village pavilion through regular attendance at the Committee of Management meetings and by supporting the Bidborough Bonanza with a strawberry and prosecco stall. We were able to contribute £150 towards the restoration of the pavilion with the monies raised from our stall.

Do keep playing tennis and enjoy our lovely court.

*Bidborough Tennis Club Committee March 2026*

## **BIDBOROUGH GARDENING ASSOCIATION**

CALLING ALL GARDENERS!

Bidborough Gardening Association is celebrating its **78th Year**  
We are affiliated to the RHS; Member of the Rose Society;  
The Daffodil Society; The Sweet Pea Society and Kent Federation of Horticultural Societies.

Membership is £5 a year - New Members Welcome  
Spring, Summer, Autumn Shows  
Seven meetings at the Village Hall  
Open Gardens, evening and summer outings

Membership Secretary: Bob Carter [carters2005@sky.com](mailto:carters2005@sky.com)  
Secretary: Glenys McDonald [gmcdmbe@btinternet.com](mailto:gmcdmbe@btinternet.com)

### **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!



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For more details, please contact me on:

07817 246129 or [chris.morganmh@gmail.com](mailto:chris.morganmh@gmail.com)

# Further Afield

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We are very lucky to live in an area where there is so much going on. Detailed below is just a snippet of some of the activities you can look forward to over the next few months:

## **Penshurst Place Market**

9.30am–12 noon

On the first Saturday of every month. Over 25 stallholders selling fresh local produce and delicacies from further afield.

## **Penshurst Point-To-Point**

12th April 2026 – [www.penshurstraces.co.uk](http://www.penshurstraces.co.uk)

Horse/pony racing, dog show, fun fair

## **Tunbridge Wells Literary Festival**

1st May to 10th May – [www.twlf.co.uk](http://www.twlf.co.uk)

## **The Festival Theatre at Hever Castle**

2nd May to 30th August

Google *Festival Theatre at Hever Castle* for more information

## **Tn90s Festival Tonbridge**

Saturday 23rd May – <https://Tn90sfestival.co.uk>

## **Tonbridge Food & Drink Festival**

30th May to 31st May—at Tonbridge Castle

<https://www.tonbridgecastle.org/>

## **Tunbridge Wells Fringe Festival**

30th May to 14th June – [www.twfringe.com](http://www.twfringe.com)

## **Tonbridge Rotary Classic Car Show**

1st July - at Tonbridge Castle – <https://www.tonbridgecastle.org/>

## **Glorious Gardens Weekend**

12th June – 14th June at Penshurst Place

<https://www.penshurstplace.com/>

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

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# VILLAGE DIARY

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## 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

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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**

Mark Ellis

*mark.ellis@tunbridgewells.gov.uk*

Brendon Le Page

*brendon.lepage@tunbridgewells.gov.uk*

## **KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

John Moreland

*john.moreland@kent.gov.uk*

Mark Ellis

*As above or mark.ellis@kent.gov.uk*

## ***Newsletter***

*This edition was put together by Cllr Karen Vidler and she apologises for any errors or omissions and formatting issues! The next edition - Autumn 2026 - is likely to be distributed in October 2026. Anything you would like included (articles, adverts), should be submitted to karen@bidboroughpc.org.uk by 18th September 2026.*

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# WHO'S WHO

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**Dominic Cole**

*dominic@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

Responsibilities: School Liaison, Neighbourhood Watch



**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 Stevens**

*quentin@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

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



**Sandra Summers**

*sandra@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

**Deputy Chair**

**Chair of Trustees \*\***

Responsibilities: Highways, Website, Finance



**Karen Vidler**

*karen@bidboroughpc.org.uk*

**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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