



BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Matfield Pavilion, The Green, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7JU

Tel: 01892 723586 Web: www.brenchleyandmatfield-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES of a meeting of Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council held on Monday 12th January 2026 at 7pm at Matfield Pavilion, The Green, Matfield, TN12 7JU

Present: Councillors J. Buttery (Chair), E. Akenhead, C. Anderson, C. Churchill, A. Dewdney, N. Race, J. Reynolds, A. Stout, N. Thompson, C. Brooks (Clerk)

In attendance: Cllr Mark Munday (Kent County Council (KCC)) part, Cllr Thomas Mobbs and Cllr David Knight (Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC)) part, 2 members of the public

1. To accept apologies for absence

None

2. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting of 1st December 2025 were approved as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair

3. To note Declarations of Interest

Cllr Dewdney declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 25/02964 and did not participate in nor vote on the matter.

4. To adjourn to allow public participation

None.

5. Borough and County Councillors' Announcements

Cllr Munday was asked to forward responses requested on the possible acquisition of the Brenchley Oak triangle land from KCC and the progress on Bassetts Farm enforcement.

There was a short exchange concerning the Badsell Road/Maidstone Road/Mascalls Court Road junction scheme in Paddock Wood.

Cllr Mobbs advised that briefing notes from the TWBC Local Government Re-Organisation Meeting will be forwarded.

6. Chair's Announcements

- The invitation to HRH Duchess of Edinburgh to open the JVMG has been declined, other avenues are being explored.

7. Planning

1. Local Plan – to note adoption of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan 2020-2038

The Council noted the adoption of the Plan and that this would be relevant to recommendations on planning applications.

2. Planning Comments – to confirm submissions made under delegated powers

Due to TWBC deadline, the Council noted comments submitted over Christmas.

• 25/02186/FULL, 24 Standings Close, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7JB

(Part-retrospective) Partial conversion of garage into living space & alterations to external fenestration

Refuse

The proposal means that one parking space will be lost in the garage, but the house will retain two parking spaces to the front and notionally have 3 parking spaces for the 5-bedroom house, as required by Policy AM3 of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. However, Appendix 8 of KCC's adopted Parking Standards (2025) states that a one car garage should have internal dimensions of 7m x 3.6m. The plan for this application shows the remaining garage as being 3m wide, with the door from the living room opening into it. The garage should not therefore count as a parking space.

If the remaining garage were to be increased in size by moving the proposed partition and the door from the living area opens inwards to the living area, then the PC would be minded to approve.

- **25/02759/FULL Maycotts, The Green, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7JU**

Erection of a pergola & water feature with associated hard landscaping

Approve

Subject to any comments the Conservation Officer may have.

- **25/02752/FULL 1 Mays Cottages, Crook Road, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7BP**

Single-storey rear extension

Refuse

Although the proposed extension is similar in size to the previously approved application made in 2022, that approval by BMPC and TWBC was before the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was made or the High Weald National Landscape dark skies advice note issued. The proposed roof lantern and full-length glazing to the rear elevation conflict with Policy LE8 of the NDP and with the advice note and the light from them on this ridge-top High Weald site will be visible from afar. However, if TWBC is minded to approve the application then the Parish Council would request an informative on blinds for the roof lantern and full length glazing to the rear elevation.

- **25/02740/FULL 8 Pixot Hill, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7BD**

Single storey rear & side extension

Approve

The Parish Council would request an informative on blinds for the full length glazing.

- **25/02551/OUT Land To The North West Of, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent**

Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except access) for up to 770 dwellings, 3no. Gypsy/Traveller pitches, a local centre (up to 700 sqm of Class E (a) to (f) inclusive, uses), a primary school, safeguarded land for a secondary school, outdoor sports provision, public open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

Neutral

The Parish Council recognises that this site is allocated for this development in the recently adopted Local Plan. However, the Parish Council remains to be convinced that there will not be severe traffic impacts within the parish of Brenchley and Matfield, particularly as there appears as yet to be no phasing and implementation plan as required by Local Plan Policy STR SS1.11. Nor is there a Monitor and Manage framework with timing and trigger points for highway mitigation measures as required by Policy STR SS1.12. Presumably these requirements will be among the Reserved Matters, since, although an Environmental Impact Assessment and Transport Assessment have been submitted, this is an outline application with all matters except access reserved.

If, as appears likely, some of the construction on this site coincides with the roadworks for the Badsell Roundabout, Colts Hill Bypass and Pembury Road Improvements, much or all of the site's construction traffic heading to the A21, together with traffic from residents of the site heading to the A21, will route via the Badsell Road, through the staggered crossroads near Mascalls School and along the B2160 through Matfield. The effect of this at Matfield Crossroads and Kippings Cross is likely to be severe. The Transport Assessment as it stands fails to comply with the Policy because it only considers the baseline traffic (2024) and the predicted traffic in 2038, without considering traffic impacts in intervening years when there will be roadworks on the A228 and A264. Nor do there appear to be any proposals to monitor the traffic in the intervening years to establish

whether the proposed mitigation measures are having the predicted effect of substantially reducing the vehicular traffic from this site that will pass through Brenchley and Matfield parish. The proposed monitoring merely by means of residents' surveys is not adequate; regular traffic surveys at Matfield crossroads (Standings Cross/The Poet) and Kippings Cross should be required. Given the distance of this site from Mascalls secondary school, it is likely that many parents of secondary school children will choose to drop their children at Mascalls and then head through Matfield to the A21 rather than using the A228. Parking space at Mascalls school is already insufficient, with vehicles parking on roadside verges at the start and end of the school day, so parking at the school will need to be increased to accommodate the traffic from this development. The Parish Council is also concerned that the increased water pressure that has been required to meet demand from the current developments that have recently been, or are being, built has led to multiple pipe bursts resulting in Matfield residents having their water cut off and suffering a series of prolonged road closures on the B2160. As well as disrupting school buses for children in our parish and emergency service routes, the road closures have resulted in a great deal of traffic diverting onto unsuitable rural lanes in Brenchley and Matfield. The Parish Council seeks assurance that this new development will not be served by the water supply that comes through Matfield. The Parish Council requests that it is consulted about the phasing and implementation plan, the Monitor and Manage Framework and the Construction and Environmental Management Plan when they come forward.

• **25/02797/FULL and 25/02798/LBC Crittenden House, Crittenden Road, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7EN**

Main House: rear dormer and rear ground floor extension; Annex: Bay window extension

Refuse

While the roof and window repairs appear necessary and suitable, there must be some doubt whether the proposed extensions, taken with the previous extensions and outbuildings that have been permitted, conform with Policy H11 Residential Extensions, Alterations, Outbuildings, and Annexes of the recently adopted Local Plan. No volume calculations have been provided to demonstrate compliance with this policy.

The part of the Annex that is described as garage and is proposed to become residential accommodation was originally permitted under 07/01974/FUL as a store for garden implements and tractor. The important garden at Crittenden House is listed in the Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens and will clearly need an implement store for its maintenance, so this development should not be permitted without information on where the displaced garden implements will be kept, since building further outbuildings on this site is unlikely to be permissible. Policy EN19 of the recently adopted Local Plan states "All development within, or affecting the setting of, the High Weald National Landscape shall seek to conserve and enhance its landscape and scenic beauty, having particular regard to the impacts on its character components, as set out in the High Weald AONB Management Plan". The HWAONB Management Plan identifies dark skies as an important character component of the HWNL and Crittenden House is in the setting of the HWNL. The very extensive fenestration in the proposed extension to the house, especially the glazed area reaching to the apex on the western elevation, does not comply with the advice concerning light spill from interiors on page 16 of the HWNL planning technical advice note, or with Policy LE8 of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

If, however, TWBC is minded to approve the applications, the Parish Council recommends a condition that use of the Annex will remain ancillary to that of the house, and an informative recommending blackout blinds on all the new glazing in both buildings.

• **25/02910/FULL, 8 Oakfield Road Matfield Tonbridge TN12 7LB**

Two storey rear extension

Approve

3. Planning Applications

• **25/02962/FULL Stocks Hill, Brenchley Road, Matfield, Kent**

Demolition of the single-storey rear extensions & erection of a part two-storey part single-storey rear extension; roof extension & new link roof; garage conversion; alterations to external fenestration & wall finishes; installation of 3no. rooflights, roof lantern & vaulted glazed ceiling
Application withdrawn

• **25/01127/FULL Marle Place Farm , Marle Place Road, Brenchley, Kent, TN12 7HS**

Proposed sand-school

RESOLVED to recommend APPROVE

However, noting that the drainage information provided contains no detail concerning where the sand school drainage will run off to or where any soakaway that may be required will be located, and also noting the comments from KCC Public Rights of Way, to comply with Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Policy D8 Surface water management, approval should be subject to a condition concerning surface water drainage.

The menage as shown on the plans will be very visible from the public footpath, which will damage views of the High Weald National Landscape. While the planning statement says “the proposal includes the planting of a mixed English hedgerow along the current fence line which will reduce any visibility as it matures”, this is not shown on any of the plans. To comply with the Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies LE1 Conserving and enhancing the AONB and LE7 Trees and hedges, and in accordance with the comments from KCC Public Rights of Way, a native species hedgerow should be planted to screen the sand school from the public footpath, far enough away from the footpath that as it grows it will not interfere with the footpath. Therefore approval should be subject to a condition requiring a landscape plan to include a native species hedgerow between the sand school and the public footpath.

Although the planning statement says that no external lighting is proposed, this may not be the case for any future owners. To comply with Local Plan Policies EN8 and EN19, with NDP Policies LE1 and LE8 Dark skies, together with the High Weald National Landscape technical advice note on dark skies, a condition concerning outdoor lighting should be imposed.

• **25/02964/NMAMD The Spinney Hatmill Lane Brenchley Tonbridge Kent**

Non-Material Amendment in relation to 25/00702/FULL - (Addition of a triangle shaped section of glazing above the existing rectangle window on the rear elevation first floor)

RESOLVED to recommend REFUSE

This is not a non-material amendment. The Parish Council’s support for 25/00702/FULL was given on the basis that the amount of glazing had been reduced somewhat compared with the plans that had originally been submitted, and that the Juliet balcony had been removed. Now that permission has been granted, this application proposes to reinstate those items. The increased fenestration in the proposal would conflict with the High Weald National Landscape technical advice on dark skies and hence with policy EN19 of the Local Plan, as well as with Neighbourhood Development Plan policies D1 High Weald AONB and design standards, LE1 Conserving and enhancing the AONB and LE8 Dark skies.

Juliet balconies are not characteristic of rural dwellings in the High Weald National Landscape in Brenchley and Matfield parish and the proposal therefore conflicts with NDP Policy D2 architectural style.

4. Right of Way at the Wheelwright Arms, Matfield – to note Planning Inspectorate decision and to consider correspondence from landowner regarding diversion

The Council noted with considerable satisfaction that the Appeal lodged by the Parish Council has been granted by the Planning Inspectorate which will result in a permanent pedestrian Right Of Way at the Wheelwrights.

The order is subject to a six-week advertising period where anybody can object however Mr Cramp, the owner of the property, has made an approach to the Council with a proposal that if the PC supports a diversion to the route of the PROW he would instal a pavement per KCC’s criteria, at his

own expense. The Council discussed the option offered for ownership of that land to then be transferred to the Parish Council but did not wish to do so.

RESOLVED to support the diversion of the Public Right of Way at the Wheelwright Arms to adjacent to Maidstone Road

5. Proposals for the play area, parking and s.106 for the Clarendon Development – to consider

Following review by the Planning Committee of the Council's solicitor's comments the Council considered the terms of the Lease and details of the proposals for the S.106 which relate to the installation of a playground and parking spaces. It was noted that the schedule of condition would be agreed at the point when the Lease is signed, after the playground has been constructed and is ready for handover.

The Parish Council agreed in principle to the terms the documents as presented and a resolution for signature would be sought when final documents had been provided.

6. Planning decisions – to note outcomes for 2025

The Council noted that TWBC made decisions contrary to the PC's recommendations in 20 of the 87 decisions (a further 16 recommendations have not yet been decided) which is the highest proportion of decisions that go against the PC's view. A small number of contrary decisions did however acknowledge and address the PC's comments noting the NDP policies listed.

8. Traffic

1. School Crossing - update

Cllr Reynolds advised that the Tenax Trust had agreed to fund the traffic surveys and the Road Safety Audit and this is being progressed by the Working Party, via the School. KCC had requested some information on the project from the Working Party and a response from KCC on whether the scheme is sufficiently compliant to warrant further exploration is awaited.

2. Rural Parish Grant – to consider application

The Council noted that costings have still not been received from KCC for the proposed projects and therefore an application for the grant cannot be made at this point.

Cllr Munday acknowledged that all parishes were awaiting these figures and that an extension to the deadline, which is 30th January, had already been suggested.

9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy – to consider revision

The Council considered the amended Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and agreed that this would be reviewed regularly rather than annually.

RESOLVED to adopt the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy as amended

10. Budget 2026-27 – to confirm

Following confirmation of the Tax Base by TWBC, the Parish Council confirmed the Precept for 2026-27 will be £149,000, the Band D equivalent will be £93.21 (£92.69 in 2025-26) and the approved net Budget of £173,182. This represented a 2.4% increase however the tax base had been received and that this reduced the increase to 0.6%.

The budget and precept having been approved by the Council at its December 2025 meeting the Clerk had informed TWBC of these figures. A simplified version of the budget listed by cost centre would be published on the website and social media

Action Clerk

11. Clerk's Report with works list

- Brenchley Noticeboard replacement options are being compiled

- This Agenda, and the subsequent Minutes, are now in an accessible format to comply with requirements for these documents on our website
- Request for a covered bus shelter at the stop by MVH is being looked into
- Repairs to play equipment at Porters and Brenchley Rec have been completed (s.106 drawdown)
- Refurbishment of the Market Heath/Petteridge Lane bus stop has been completed (50% grant funding approved)
- Cooksfield – there has been significant work to clear the land by the new owner, and the TPO on the beech tree has been rescinded as it is diseased
- Some consideration and quotes being sought for French drain for Matfield Green due to pooling water by the roadside
- A route map for Cinderhill has been installed by KHWP
- Contact has again been made with several HGV companies asking them not to use Petteridge Lane, including an international company
- The Council's Facebook page now has 835 followers, an increase of about 75 during the last year

12. RFO's Report with budget monitoring

1. Accounts payable

Accounts payable				
3681	HMRC	Tax and NI Dec 25	£816.68	£816.68
3682	C. Brooks	Dec 25 mileage	£52.20	Salary Balance £45.85
3683	Waste Way	Nov 25 bin collect	Porters Wood/Brenchley Rec	£76.80
3684	Invicta Weed Control	Additional Payment to cover missing VAT		£30.00
3685	Westcotec	SID Bracket		£71.40
3686	A Castro-Edwards	Matfield Pavilion 1.5 hours Cleaning		£25.50
3687	Capel Groundcare	Playground Inspection Monthly premium	Dec 25	£288.00
3688	Capel Groundcare	SIDs Monthly contract	Dec 25	£182.22
3689	Capel Groundcare (IR)	Playground Repairs	Porters Wood	£798.06
3690	SLCC	CiLCA Training Clerk		£495.00
3691	Microshade	Software support	Dec 25	£216.94
3692	Chris Manwaring	Reimburse for Christmas Insurance		£114.80
3693	KALC	Training LGR Procurement	S. Castro-Edwards	£72.00
3694	Chris Manwaring	Reimburse for Xmas Lights electricity	Brenchley	£100.00
3695	Wasteway	Dec 25 bin collect at	Porters Wood/Brenchley Rec	£76.80

Payments by Credit Card Nov expenditure (total) DD

3697	Lights4Fun	5 sets of 5m Christmas Lights	£100.00
	Just Helping	Charity donation for Christmas Tree collection	£50.00
	Lloyds Bank	Monthly Fee	£3.00

Interim Payments made

3698	GMT Property Maint Ltd	Bus Shelter Repair (IR Grant applied for)	£1,325.36
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Standing Orders and Direct Debits For Information

3699	SO C. Brooks	Salary Dec 25	£2,119.82
3700	SO Sarah Castro-Edwards	Salary Dec 25	£721.04
3701	DD Smart Pension	Dec 25 Pension Payment	£857.70
3702	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity Nov 25	£146.44
3703	DD EDF Energy	Electricity Brenchley Toilets Nov 25	£25.94
3704	DD EDF Energy	Electricity Matfield Toilets	£72.69
3705	DD Smart Pension	Nov 25 Pension admin fee	£26.40
3706	SO Churchill Group	Dec 25 Toilet Cleaning services	£927.65
3707	DD SSE	Streetlight electricity Nov 25	£97.36
3708	DD Everflow	Water Charges 22/01 - 21/02	£407.41
3709	DD First Com Tec Works	Monthly Phone and Broadband Service Jan 26	£197.73
3710	Unity Bank	Monthly Service Charge Dec 25	£10.50

The RFO having circulated invoices for scrutiny the accounts were approved for payment and would be authorised by Cllr Dewdney and Cllr Churchill.

13. Meetings attended and reports by Councillors

Cllr Churchill had attended a meeting of the Police Independent Advisory Group and this particular meeting focussed mainly on the policing of urban areas .

14. Date of next meeting: Monday 2nd February 2026, 7pm, Matfield Pavilion