



BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
Matfield Pavilion, The Green, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7JU
Tel: 01892 723586 www.brenchleyandmatfield-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 1st DECEMBER 2025 AT 7PM AT MATFIELD PAVILION

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

In attendance: Cllr Mark Munday (Kent County Council (KCC)), 2 members of the public

1. To accept apologies for absence

The Council accepted apologies from Cllr Dewdney who was away on holiday.

2. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting of 3rd November 2025 were approved as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4. To adjourn to allow public participation.

Residents spoke briefly against planning application 25/01269/FULL.

5. Borough and County Councillors

Cllr Munday advised that the KCC budget is delayed until mid-January with clarity on any impact on service provision after that. The project for a three-way traffic control on Maidstone Road/Badsell Road in Paddock Wood would be out to tender late January.

6. Chair's Announcements

- Initial steps have been taken to invite the Duchess of Edinburgh to open Jack Verrall Memorial Gardens next spring/summer
- Annual Parish Assembly 2026 – plans being drafted for the event in mid-late April 2026
- Non-Voting Member for planning committee – appeal to residents being progressed

7. Local Government Re-Organisation

The Chair and the Clerk had attended the Parish Chairs meeting of 12th November and the preferred options for the unitary splits have now been sent to government. The Council noted some of the points:

- Shadow Council Elections May 2027 (and then May 2032)
- Vesting day - when TWBC/KCC cease and Unitaries come into place 1 April 2028
- West Kent Unitary (3a and 4b) would cover 567k residents with payback around 6y for 1a and 11y for 4b (averages)
- 3a and 4b would have an electorate of 411k with 84 Cllrs in a ratio of 1:4900 (the lowest of the 3 Unitaries in 3a)

8. Traffic

1. Highways Improvement Plan – outcome of meeting with KCC and further addition

Cllr Churchill, Cllr Akenhead and the Clerk met with Emma Richmond of KCC to review progress on the HIP, a number of items have been completed and an updated version will be circulated on receipt from KCC. There are two new items added, as previously agreed, and one of the

previously considered items, the double yellow lines on Brenchley Road at the Standings Cross junction, has been re-added to extend the lines given the problems with vehicles parking near the crossroads. Furthermore, due to the apparent difficulties in safely crossing the Blind Lane junction a request made for “hatching” on either side of the junction (adding to item 6 on the HIP).

It was noted that the consideration of extending the 30mph on Maidstone Road would be better delayed until the impacts of the Clarendon Development could be used to underpin evidence that an extension is needed.

The Council reviewed the proposal, which had been on the HIP in 2021, to add a 30mph speed limit through Petteridge. An Automated Traffic Count had been carried out at that time however the PC had not pursued this to a conclusion given the likely costs.

It was agreed that this item would be re-added to the HIP with updated wording.

Action Clerk

During the HIP meeting queries were raised concerning potential delivery of the school crossing project, regarding the requirement for the Parish Council to add it to their HIP. Emma Richmond (KCC) was given the new scheme diagram and would advise if it was likely to fit sufficient criteria so that this could be fed back to the working party.

9. Planning

1. Planning Applications

Per the Council’s s.101 Scheme of Delegation, any applications that cannot be extended to the 12th January meeting will be drafted and circulated by email and submitted by the Clerk on confirmation from the Planning Committee.

25/02431/FULL 7 Porters Wood, Petteridge Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7LR Single-storey rear extension; proposed entrance canopy; alterations to external fenestration & installation of rooflight; installation of ASHP; demolition & replacement of outbuilding; increased rear patio & driveway alterations RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE The new parking arrangement is welcome, in view of the parking stress in the area (Policy AM3, paragraph 6.137 and figure 31 of the Neighbourhood Development Plan). However, BMPC recommends a condition to protect the roots of the mature yew tree by the entrance to the driveway during construction. BMPC requests that an informative be added recommending a blackout blind on the rooflight, to conserve the dark skies of the High Weald National Landscape in compliance with NDP Policy LE8 Dark Skies and the HWNL Dark Skies Planning Advice Note.
25/02527/FULL Foxwood House, Foxhole Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7ES Variation of Condition 2 of Planning Permission 24/01562/FULL - Addition of timber canopy, addition of front porch, removal of external chimney stack, relocation of oil tank, internal alterations & changes to fenestration RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE
25/02538/FULL Little Cowden Farm, Fairmans Lane, Brenchley, Kent, TN12 7AD Variation of Condition 2 of Planning Permission 21/03395/FULL - (Addition of 3 no. garages) RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE However, as the condition concerning materials for 21/03395/FULL has already been discharged under 24/02286/SUB, BMPC recommends a condition concerning materials for the garages.
25/02565/FULL August Pitts Farm, Churn Lane, Horsmonden, Kent, TN12 8HW (Retrospective) Change of use from agriculture to B8 on three buildings RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE

HGVs associated with this site have frequently been using Blind Lane and Windmill Hill in Brenchley, ignoring the signs stating those roads are unsuitable for HGVs and causing difficulties at Pixot Hill crossroads. The Parish Council notes and supports the comments from KCC Highways concerning the lack of a Transport Strategy. To comply with Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy BE4 Agricultural diversification and Policy ED5 of the emerging Local Plan, the Transport Strategy should include information on the proposed routing of HGVs, which must not include use of roads signed as unsuitable for HGVs, together with the measures that will be taken to ensure maximum adherence to the routes. The Parish Council also notes the concern about noise expressed by Environmental Health.
25/01269/FULL Land To The Rear Of August Pitts Farm, Churn Lane, Horsmonden, TN12 8HW Change of use of the land for the stationing of 1 mobile home, 1 day room and 1 touring caravan for Gypsy / Traveller accommodation. Associated hard and soft landscaping (Part retrospective) RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE The Parish Council deplores the retrospective applications which have been a feature of development at this site. BMPC notes that the new planting that was required by conditions 2 and 11 of the original permission for equestrian use, that was granted on 5 January 2023 under 22/01965/FULL, has not taken place, although the barn, access track, paddocks etc. have been constructed and in use for a considerable time now. Therefore there can be little confidence that any plans for vegetation that might shield the proposed mobile home from view, or indeed mitigate the previous development, will actually materialise. The site is in an unsustainable position where all journeys by residents will be made by vehicle. The proposal is for a 3-bedroom mobile home which includes a sitting, dining and kitchen area and a bathroom, together with a separate day room consisting of a sitting and dining area with a kitchen and a bathroom. BMPC questions the need for the day room, given that the proposed large mobile home will contain the same facilities. It seems likely that the proposed day room is designed to enable someone to live on site in the touring caravan, thus doubling the number of proposed residences.
25/02630/LBC 6 Whitethorn Cottages, Brenchley Road, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7PR Listed Building Consent -Repairs to timber-framed roof structure, roof tiles & internal plaster RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE The Parish Council would like to express its appreciation of the clear and comprehensive heritage statement supplied with this application.
25/02681/FULL 10 Porters Wood, Petteridge Lane, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7LR Demolition of existing single storey extension; Proposed two storey side extension; Extension of driveway RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: NEUTRAL The proposal will add a new bedroom to this 2-bedroom cottage. To comply with Policy AM3 of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, a 3-bedroom house should have 2 parking spaces. While the application form contains some information about the proposed driveway and parking area changes, no plan of these has been provided. This area of Petteridge is identified in paragraph 6.137 and figure 31 of the Neighbourhood Development Plan as an area of parking stress. If a driveway is widened, with a consequent widening of the dropped kerb, this further limits the area available for public on-street parking, and it is essential that this should not happen here. The Parish Council is therefore unable to form a view as to whether to support the application (which otherwise would be acceptable) until a plan of the proposed changes to the parking and driveway is provided.
25/02698/FULL Little Tawdsen, Spout Lane, Brenchley, Kent, TN12 7AS Proposed single storey rear extension RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE The Parish Council is unable to support this application as presented because the proposed design of the extension, which includes a large roof lantern combined with extensive fenestration, will neither conserve nor enhance the dark skies in this rural part of the High Weald National Landscape (HWNL). This conflicts with Objective DS1 of the High Weald AONB Management Plan, policies LE1 and LE8 of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, EN19 of the

emerging Local Plan, and the HWNL Dark Skies Planning Advice Note. A redesign taking account of the Advice Note is required.

2. Planning Enforcement

TWBC now provide a “confidential” quarterly report in respect of open enforcement cases within the Parish area. The information provided is limited, as enforcement processes remain a confidential process, and further details could compromise an open and ongoing investigation. Members of the public can report suspected planning breaches individually

1. Matters previously reported – to note

The concerns raised with reference to Bassetts Farm had been raised with the Environment Agency and KCC and the Clerk was asked to chase for a written update.

Action Clerk

2. Apparent recent planning breaches – to consider

The Council briefly noted some potential planning breaches and members of the Planning Committee would keep these under review.

3. Proposals for the play area, parking and s.106 for the Clarendon Development in Matfield – to note outcome of meeting with Developer

The Chair outlined the content of conversations between Cllrs and Clarendon and, separately, with Matfield Village Hall. A remote meeting had been held with the Council’s solicitor, Oliver Bussell of CooperBurnett, to discuss some of the wording of the Lease and s.106.

It was agreed that the Planning Committee would review the proposed amendments to the Lease and s.106 documentation, as prepared by our solicitor, and respond to him so that this could be returned to Clarendon as soon as possible. The final documentation could therefore be presented to the Council at the January meeting.

10. Interim Internal Audit – to note report

The Council noted the Interim Internal Audit Report carried out on 5th November. The detail will be reviewed by the Finance Committee at their next meeting in the Spring however some actions have already been progressed.

11. Finance Committee

1. Minutes – to approve

The Committee members present approved the minutes of the meeting of 18th November 2025 and these were duly signed by the Chair of the Council.

2. Recommendations

RESOLVED to adopt the Finance and Governance Risk Register as amended

RESOLVED that the Allotment Fees and Pavilion license and hire fees remain unchanged for the 2026-27 financial year

RESOLVED to approve the net budget for 2026-27 of £173,182 and precept requirement of £149,000

The Council noted that this represented a 2.4% increase however the tax base had been received and that this reduced the increase to 0.6%.

12. Policy and Management Committee

1. Minutes – to approve

The Committee members present approved the minutes of the meeting of 18th November 2025 and these were duly signed by the Chair of the Committee.

2. Recommendations

RESOLVED to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Policy and Management Committee as amended
RESOLVED to adopt the Health and Safety Policy as amended
RESOLVED to adopt the Policy on Meetings with Developers as amended
RESOLVED to adopt the Publication Scheme as amended
RESOLVED to re-adopt the Data Protection and Document Retention Policy unamended
RESOLVED to re-adopt the Social Media Policy unamended
RESOLVED to adopt Dignity at Work Policy as amended
RESOLVED to adopt the Memorials, Plaques, Benches and Trees Policy as amended
RESOLVED to adopt the Tree Policy as amended
RESOLVED to adopt the Website Accessibility Statement as amended
RESOLVED to re-adopt the Website Privacy Notice unamended
RESOLVED to adopt the IT Policy as presented
RESOLVED to adopt the Risk Management Policy including Risk Assessment Schedule as amended
RESOLVED to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee with additional text

The Council noted the newly drafted Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and agreed that further amendments would be considered for adoption.

Action Clerk

13. Clerk's Report with works list

- The limes have been pollarded and the Xmas lights are up along the pond
- The bus stop at Marchants has some damage and quotes are being obtained for repairs
- The raised pathway at Holly Bank has been cleared by KCC with work on the kerb being assessed
- KCC have told the contractor to repair the verge at the chicken sheds by the Halfway House
- Photos have been taken of the Green where the verges have been damaged, to be taken up with South East Water
- KCC have delivered five 25kg bags of grit which are behind the Pavilion for emergencies and for on the path leading to the Pavilion. KCC Grit bins are being filled
- The grit bin by Brenchley Toilets belongs to TWBC and they are filling it
- Fire Alarm test at the Pavilion was completed 18th November
- Door locks have been repaired at Matfield Toilets
- The allotment hedge has been cut down to 1.2m and the IBC water tanks have been installed
- Replacement SID bracket is being purchased – KCC still have not returned the one they removed.

14. RFO's Report with budget monitoring

1. Accounts payable

3646	HMRC	Tax and NI Nov 25	£860.88	£860.88
3647	C. Brooks	Nov 25 mileage	£63.90	Salary Balance £114.64
3648	Waste Way	Oct 25 bin collections	Porters Wood/Brenchley Rec	£76.80
3649	ILG (Richard Groves)	Quarterly Pond Maintenance	3 of 4	£600.00
3650	ILG (Richard Groves)	Quarterly Pond Maintenance	4 of 4	£600.00
3651	A Castro-Edwards	Matfield Pavilion	1.5 hours Cleaning	£25.50
3652	Capel Groundcare	Playground Inspection	Monthly premium Nov 25	£288.00
3653	Capel Groundcare	SIDs Monthly contract	Nov 25	£182.22
3654	Capel Groundcare	Nov Premium Allotment Hedge	(Autumn 25)	£53.53
3655	Capel Groundcare	Grounds Maintenance : Allotment Hedge	(Final)	£1,918.15
3656	Microshade	Software support	Oct 25	£223.12
3657	Grovehurst Plumbing	Repair Leak	Matfield Toilets	£80.00
3658	Mulberry LA	Interim Internal Audit		£295.50
3659	Roundabout	Annual Advertising	1/2 page colour 2026	£320.00
3660	NPC Tree Surgery	Annual Pollarding of Limes	Matfield Pond Nov 25	£780.00

3661	Cloudnext	Domain Hosting (Jan-Dec 26, Annual in advance)	£60.00
3662	Cloudnext	Website Hosting (Jan-Dec 26, Annual in advance)	£179.98
3677	Gardenproud	JVMG Waste Collection Oct & Nov	£450.00
3678	Pimms Tree Farm	2x 8ft Christmas Trees	£150.00
3679	Gareth Till	Work at Matfield Toilets	£660.00
3680	Garden Barber	IBC water tanks at allotments (grant applied for)	£850.00

Payments by Credit Card Oct expenditure (total) DD £88.69

3663	KALC	Website Accessibility training Clerk £12.00	
	Tesco	Supplies for Matfield Pavilion £10.69	
	The WorkPlace Depot	Mirrors (allotment access) £63.00	
	Lloyds Bank	Monthly Fee £3.00	

Interim Payments made

3664	CCLA	Transfer to CCLA	£50,000.00
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Standing Orders and Direct Debits For Information

3665	SO C. Brooks	Salary Nov 25	£2,119.82
3666	SO Sarah Castro-Edwards	Salary Nov 25	£721.04
3667	DD Smart Pension	Oct 25 Pension Payment	£1,017.09
3668	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity Oct 25	£146.44
3669	DD EDF Energy	Electricity Brenchley Toilets Oct 25	£20.59
3670	DD EDF Energy	Electricity Matfield Toilets	£72.69
3671	DD Smart Pension	Oct 25 Pension admin fee	£26.40
3672	SO Churchill Group	Nov 25 Toilet Cleaning services	£927.65
3673	DD SSE	Streetlight electricity Oct 25	£89.59
3675	DD First Com Tec Works	Monthly Phone and Broadband Service Dec 25	£197.70
3676	Unity Bank	Monthly Service Charge Nov 25	£11.00

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

15. Meetings attended and reports by Councillors

Cllr Buttery had attended the KALC Chairs' meeting and KALC AGM with Cllr Dewdney

16. Date of next meeting: Monday 12th January 2026, 7pm, Matfield Pavilion