

**Bredgar Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the meeting**  
**Held on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025 at 7.30pm**  
**At Bredgar Village Hall**

**Present:** Chair Cllr. Brian Clarke; Vice Chair Cllr. Nigel Osmer;  
Cllr. Mike Day; Cllr. Stephen Parfitt and Cllr. David Priestley.

**Clerk:** Teresa Hudson

**Members of the Public:** Two members of the public were present.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Penny Twaites, Cllr. Hilary Whitnell and PC Richard Divers.

**2. Declaration of Members' Personal and Prejudicial Interest**

There were no interests to declare.

**3. Declaration of any intention to record or film the PC meeting by any member of the Council or member of the public.**

There were no intentions to record or film the meeting by anyone present.

**4. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Minutes of the previous PC meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025 were read and formally approved by the Parish Council. They are now available on the Parish website. Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. D. Priestley, all councillors agreed.

The Minutes were signed by the Chair at the end of the meeting.

**Matters arising**

SBC responded to the residents in Gore Road regarding driving across the pavement to reach their drive. A solution was offered; the PC has closed the case. Two new stiles have been installed on public footpaths near Primrose Lane.

**5. Representation from Members of the Public**

One member of the public offered a comment on the future of the Post Office in the discussion with Councillors.

**6. Police/ NHW Report**

PC Divers sent a report by email prior to the meeting which was circulated to councillors. The Chair read out the newsletter and a copy is filed with these Minutes.

Regular police contact sessions are held at Bredgar Tearoom where members of the public are encouraged to report any concerns to the police.

Parking is an ongoing issue in the village. Some owners of cars parked on pavements or at junctions have received a letter of advice from PC Divers.

Anyone receiving a fraudulent phone call from scammers is advised to hang up immediately.

A land rover has been left on the path by the Church; it has apparently broken down.

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A bollard has been damaged in The Street by a lorry, Cllr. Osmer is to report it on the portal.

Nuisance quad bikers have been curtailed by a resident from Bexon Lane obtaining a noise abatement order.

A threat was made to the owner of livestock at Swanton Street which caused the owner of the sheep to fear attack.

In June, an attempt was made to steal the lead from the Church roof. It is thought the same perpetrator was active in other local Churches.

**7. Authorisation Of Accounts**

**PAYMENTS**

30/04/25	Lloyds	Service Charge	6.00
01/05/25	EDF	Pond Electricity	69.53
01/05/25	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	200.00
06/05/25	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	225.00
06/05/25	R. Clack	Weedkiller	44.99
06/05/25	Amazon	Dog Waste Bin	140.00
06/05/25	Lloyds	Fee	3.00
14/05/25	Zurich	Insurance	500.00
12/05/25	Adrian Martin	Pond Work	180.00
31/05/25	UT	Service Charge	6.00
02/06/25	EDF	Pond Electricity	54.62
02/06/25	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	200.00
04/06/25	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	150.00
05/06/25	T. Hudson	Honorarium	463.83
10/06/25	Lloyds	Fee	3.00
23/06/25	CPRE	Subscriptions	36.00
30/06/25	UT	Service Charge	6.00
01/07/25	EDF	Pond Electricity	54.62
01/07/25	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	200.00
03/07/25	Ask a Gardener	Village Maintenance	150.00
29/05/25	Cllr. Clark	Auditor Gift	16.50
09/06/25	Mutts Butts	Dog waster Bags	76.02
17/06/25	Memorial Bench	Amazon	699.99
10/07/25	Lloyds Corp Card	Fee	3.00
11/07/25	ICO	Data Prot	47.00
12/07/25	Maypole Bells	Bench Installation	175.00
15/07/25	Playsafety	Rec Grd Inspection	100.80

**RECEIPTS**

25/04/25	SBC	Precept	6357.00
06/05/25	KCC	Grass Cutting Purchase Order	299.80

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<b>25/06/25</b>	<b>Bredgar Cricket C</b>	<b>Rec Grd Rent</b>	<b>50.00</b>
<b>01/07/25</b>	<b>Matthews</b>	<b>Burial Plot Purchase</b>	<b>200.00</b>

There were no questions from councillors. Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. S. Parfitt. All councillors agreed.

**8. Financial Matters**

**Financial Review**

The Financial Review was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting by the clerk. Councillors discussed the options for the money in the savings account which currently stands at £30430.24. Cllr. Priestley asked how much was acceptable to have in reserve, the clerk replied that we informed the audit office that some of the reserves will be spent on new play equipment when the cricket club has built the new pavilion. The Chair said some reserves will be spent on the general expenses as the precept does not cover all outgoings.

Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. S. Parfitt. All councillors agreed.

**9. Post Office Update**

Cllr. Osmer gave an update on the village Sub Post Office. The Parish Council wrote to Post Office Ltd, POL, by email asking if POL were prepared to offer any assistance with funds to keep Bredgar Post Office open when the current lease expires in March 2027, or if necessary, with finding an alternative site. POL replied with a generic response but offered no help.

If costs rose, and no other financial assistance was forthcoming, the precept may have to rise to keep the post office. This would result in higher council tax for residents.

Cllr Osmer circulated a draft letter and proposed sending it to all residents to inform them about the concerns for the future of Bredgar post office and asking for their opinions. In addition, councillors supported a suggestion from a member of the public that a short questionnaire could help the Parish Council in future decision making about their support for the village Post Office.

Cllrs, Osmer, Clarke, Parfitt, the Clerk and a member of the public are to decide the content and distribution of the questionnaire.

Proposed by Cllr. Osmer, seconded by Cllr. Parfitt. All councillors agreed.

**10. Planning Matters**

**Highsted Park**

Cllr. Twaites supplied a written update on the Highsted Park inquiry, read out by the Chair. The Highsted Park planning inquiry which started on 11 March is now in recess and returns on 2 October for a further 12 hearing days before closing (hopefully) on 31 October.

The Inspector will then prepare her report for Angela Rayner. The matters still to be dealt with are planning, Section 106 conditions and the parties' closing submissions. These are all vital parts of the Inquiry, and the Five Parishes Group continue to play a significant role. The Group raised the issues of viability and

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affordability at the very start of the Inquiry and these took centre stage during the last few hearing days in July.

The figures are hotly debated but there seems no doubt that, despite their claim that they can fund the development entirely by themselves, the applicants would be unable to do so and that the development would be underfunded by possibly up to £150 million, with insufficient cashflow at the start of the project to build the two relief roads and a motorway junction, which have to be in place before a single house can be built and sold.

To help the Five Parishes Group raise more funds for their legal representation at the now extended Inquiry, Chair, Cllr. Clarke is planning a 15-mile sponsored walk around the 5Parishes area on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September. Other local residents are also taking part. A shorter walk around Rodmersham is also planned for those not wanting to walk 15 miles. Notification will be in the next Parish magazine with a leaflet also being delivered to residents inviting anyone who wants to raise funds to take part.

Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Day. All councillors agreed.

**Bredgar House**

A planning application has been received for repairs to Bredgar House. Councillors remarked on the potentially high costs involved as SBC are insisting on the 15 windows being repaired and not replaced.

**Yew Tree Farm**

A planning application has been received for improvements to Yew Tree Farm. These improvements are welcomed by councillors as they are keen to support local initiatives and attractions.

**Spurvyns**

The new owners of Spurvyns have submitted a planning application for significant alterations to the property. Cllr. Twaites has yet to submit the Bredgar PC response.

**The Lodge**

An appeal has been submitted. Bredgar PC stands by its previous comments.

**11. Village Matters**

**Recreation Ground Annual Inspection**

The annual recreation ground inspection report has been received.

There are several recommendations for repairs. Cllr. Parfitt is to consult a local handyman to quote for the work.

**Recreation Ground Grass Cutting**

The cricket club have cancelled their grass cutting contract for the outfield.

Councillors agreed to continue using the contractor for the play area and to find out more about the cricket club's new arrangements.

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**Asset Register – Local Government Reorganisation**

Local Government is changing. Kent councils (county and borough) have been instructed by central government to provide their plans for LGR into Unitary Councils. These need to be submitted by 28th November 2025 with a business case (to save money and deliver better services). Each unitary council to cover approximately 500k population, although that can deviate if there are good reasons. The business case is likely to include the following aspects: geography, cost saving / how to fund, legal and community engagement. The change impacts about 14 county and borough councils.

It is likely that the new Unitary Councils will be formed by merging 3 or 4 borough councils but there is no agreement on best groupings. Parish Councils do not need to change but there are opportunities to do more or take on some assets should they wish to consider stepping up. Some parts of the borough are now considering having Town or Parish Councils now to ensure they have that local representation in future. Devolution and the introduction of Mayors is not part of LGR.

Councillors discussed LGR and agreed to monitor the process and how to engage with it, but not to seek any new responsibilities from it.

**Archive of Paperwork**

The PC was informed some time ago of 7 boxes of parish council paperwork from previous years was stored at The Warren. Mr. Best asked the PC if they wanted to keep it. Since then, it has been stored at Cllr. Priestley's home and sorted through by councillors. They have now decided that it ought to be preserved and sent to the Archives at Maidstone.

Proposed by Cllr. Priestley, seconded by Cllr. Clarke. All councillors agreed.

**12. Reports from Councillors**

**Cllr. H. Whitnell**

By email: Cllr. Whitnell expressed her pleasure at the installation of the two new stiles off Primrose Lane.

**Cllr. M. Day**

Cllr. Day informed the meeting that he was considering resigning due to ill health. The Chair said he had served the PC well and would be missed.

**Cllr. N. Osmer**

Cllr. Osmer will confer with the Chair on a date to organize the leaflet drop.

**Cllr. S. Parfitt**

A litter pick has been scheduled for Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October. The usual arrangements will be in place with volunteers welcome.

A yew tree has been felled in the Churchyard as it was diseased.

The repair to the pond decking has been completed.

The list of parishioners receiving the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter has increased and now includes Yew Tree Farm.

It has been noted locally that Ford Fiestas seem vulnerable to theft.

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A resident of Bexon Lane was advised of the Green Lanes Movement following incidents with users of quad bikes.

There have been at least 4 incidents of fly-tipping since the last meeting. The clear up rate has deteriorated.

There remains no prospect of buses for Bredgar due to lack of funding.

**Cllr. D. Priestley**

The new bench in Jubilee Gardens has been installed.

Several suggestions were made for using the bequest from the late Marie Evans: perhaps a plaque or a replacement tree for the Churchyard.

Cllr. Priestley proposed an extra day's work on the pond in late October, including along the roadside; the gardener now charges £220 per day. All councillors agreed.

The work on the pond cassons allocated to Hubble Aquacare has not proceeded yet due to the company being unavailable. Cllr. Priestley has tried several methods of contacting the company but has been unable to. He intends to visit the company site to ascertain whether they are able to carry out the work, if not, an alternative company will be sourced.

**Cllr. B. Clarke**

Cllr. Clarke proposed moving forward with the pond LED lighting project.

The pond pumps are on for 24 hours a day, councillors discussed whether this was necessary.

Remembrance Sunday is on 9<sup>th</sup> November. The usual arrangements will apply.

**13. Community Assets**

Designating a local amenity as a Community Asset safeguards the first option to purchase should an owner decide to sell.

Councillors agreed to revisit Community Assets on a three-monthly basis.

**14. Any Other Business**

The clerk informed the meeting that a dead owl was recovered from the Farmshop drive on 13<sup>th</sup> August. The staff informed a local organization who were going to collect. There were no visible injuries, the shop will be informed of a cause of death if it could be established.

The meeting ended at 10.10 pm.

**15. Date of the next meeting**

**The next PC meeting will be on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025.**