

Aylesford Parish Council

Annual Meeting of the Parish

Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 May 2025 held in the Aylesford Football Club Pavilion, Aylesford

Present: Councillors Ms Dorrington (Chair), Balcombe, Mrs Birkbeck, Craig, Mrs Eves, Fuller, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Ludlow, Mrs Ogun, Rillie, Sharp, Shelley, Smith and Sullivan.

In Attendance: Mrs Randall (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillors Chapman and Ms Oyewusi.

Apologies also received from Borough Councillors Dalton, Davis, Keers, McDermott and Williams and County Councillor Kennedy.

1. Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council 2024/25

It was **Agreed** to accept the report of the Chairman of the Parish Council 2024/25 (Appendix A)

2. Reports of the Chairmen of the Committees 2024/25

It was **Agreed** to accept the reports of the Chairmen of the Planning Committee (Appendix B) and the Environmental Services Committee (Appendix C) and to note that the report of the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee was included within the Chairman of the Council's report in item 1.

3. Reports of the Representatives on Outside Bodies 2024/25

It was **Agreed** to accept the reports of the Council Representatives on the Tunbury Hall Committee (Appendix D), the Blue Bell Hill Village Hall (Appendix E), United Charities of the Ancient Parish of Burham (Appendix F) and the Aylesford Village Community Centre (Appendix G).

4. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

5. Duration of Meeting

8.09pm to 8.11pm.

Chairman's Report 2024/25 including Policy & Resources

It gives me great pleasure to present this year's Report and to reflect on the achievements we have made together as a Parish Council.

Investing in Community Facilities

A significant accomplishment this year has been securing a minimum of **£400,000 in developer contributions (\$106 funding)** which will provide modern changing room facilities and additional car parking on Forstal Recreation Ground. This is a major step forward for improving local sports and leisure amenities for all ages.

Additionally, we have secured a further **£40,000 in developer contributions** for future enhancements across the Parish. These funds will be allocated to improving play areas and open spaces ensuring we continue to provide quality recreational opportunities for everyone.

Looking ahead, our Clerk will endeavour to secure further developer contributions from ongoing housing schemes, such as those in Hermitage Lane. Plans are already being shaped for how these funds could be used to make additional improvements.

A Festive Success!

The **Christmas Market** was a huge success, drawing an estimated **3,000 visitors**. It provides an opportunity for stall holders to display their wares and for our residents to mingle and soak up the atmosphere. **£2,150.00** was raised and donated to local organisations:

- St Peter's PTFA – £500
- Over 60's Afternoon Tea Bluebell Hill – £500
- Aylesford Dementia Café – £500
- Aylesford Youth Choir – £500
- Aylesford Community Youth Choir – £150

These donations support the amazing work being done across our community and we are proud to be part of that.

Encouraging Resident Participation

We continue to encourage the local community group for the **Bushey Wood** development, initiated by Borough Councillor Dave Davis and supported by Parish Cllrs Aaron Ludlow and Iain Craig. A Parish Council-funded leaflet was delivered to all homes in the area, and meetings arranged to foster community involvement and open discussion on amenities that could help to improve village life.

Aylesford Station Adoption

The Parish Council continues to support this initiative and will apply for grants with a view to making improvements to the station for the benefit of users.

Working Together for a Safer Community

I'm pleased to report the continuing strong relationship between the Parish Council and **PC David Warner**, our local Police Officer. PC Warner visits the Parish Office weekly to catch up with the Clerk and discuss issues affecting our Parish, allowing us to work closely in maintaining safety and addressing concerns promptly.

Finally

I would like to thank all Councillors, our Clerk and staff for their continued hard work, support, and dedication to our community. Particular thanks to Tom for representing the Council in, the Climate Change Forum, KALC meetings, the Parish Partnership Panel and Aylesford Station Adoption Group. Last but not least thanks to my Vice Chairman, John who is always there for helpful guidance.

It has been a privilege and honour serving the Parish Council as Chairman over the last three years and I will be standing down at our Annual General Meeting in May 2025.

Allan Sullivan
Chairman

7th May 2025

Planning Committee Annual Report for 2024/25

The planning committee met 19 times and considered 185 Applications of which the Parish Council Objected to 12.

TMBC Permitted 136 and Refused 5 with 32 still to be processed at TMBC (waiting decision).

As seems to be the norm most Applications are for tree pruning and the odd felling of dead or dying trees.

The Bushy Wood Application is still at Outline Stage, but Council Members have attended meetings with a group of local Eccles Residents to try and establish a way forward in collaboration with the Developers to see what amenities can be put into the plans when a full Application is submitted to council.

I would like to thank my Vice Chair Tim Sharp and of course all Ward Councillors for their time, effort and dedication in all Planning areas at this time.

Councillor Barry Smith (Chair of Planning)

Environmental Services Annual Report for 2024/25

This past year, we've continued our efforts to ensure that every part of our Parish remains a clean, safe, and welcoming place for everyone to enjoy—whether you're playing sport, walking the dog, enjoying the children's play areas, or simply relaxing outdoors.

Our **allotments** remain popular and well-used, and I am pleased to share that our staff have worked hard this year to speed up allocations and reduce waiting times. There are still plots available in Eccles, and a small waiting list continues for Aylesford.

I am pleased to report that our Parish Clerk has successfully secured over **£400,000 in S106 funding** that will go towards a proposed new changing room block by the 3G pitch at Forstal Recreation Ground, further supporting our growing sports and leisure offerings. An additional **£40,000** in S106 funding has also been secured for future enhancements across the Parish, focusing on play areas, open spaces, and outdoor sport.

At the end of 2024/25 the Parish installed new **Outdoor Gym Equipment** on Forstal Recreation Ground. The cost was **£41,728.16** and was funded using **S106 funds**. The old equipment had been in place for 15 years and was at the end of its life.

The **Cemetery** has now reached full capacity for new coffin/ashes burials. However, we will continue to accommodate second or subsequent burials in existing graves and interments of ashes, ensuring a respectful and dignified service for families.

The **Christmas Market** has become a much-loved annual tradition, and 2024's event was another great success! Thanks to the tireless work of the Market Committee, the event raised **£5,673.69**, with **£2,150.00** donated to support various local good causes.

While I am saddened to see the newly planted trees at Tunbury Recreation Ground affected by repeated vandalism, we remain committed to enhancing and protecting our green spaces for future generations.

I am pleased to share that the rear car park behind the Parish Office has had an upgrade. It is now tarmacked, clearly white-lined and had drainage installed so it is now accessible all year round.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize the dedication and hard work of our **Maintenance Supervisor, Lee Randall**. He works tirelessly to ensure all our sites are well-kept and looking their best. We are grateful for his continued efforts in maintaining our parks and open spaces to such a high standard.

I would like to thank my Vice Chair, Susan Dorrington, our dedicated fellow Councillors, and especially to our Clerk, Melanie Randall, and Admin Assistant, Claire Goodayle, for everything they do behind the scenes to make our Parish such a lovely place.

Looking ahead to 2025/26, the Clerk will continue working hard to secure funding, especially S106 and Grants to help fund some new play equipment at The Hollow, Aylesford, and Tunbury Recreation Ground. These upgrades will help ensure that our play areas remain vibrant, fun, and inclusive for all children and families to enjoy for years to come.

Thank you to all residents for your continued support and pride in our community.

Joyce Gadd
Chair of Environmental Services

Report on Tunbury Village Hall 2024

During the Hall financial year October 1st 2023 to September 30th 2024: Outgoings were £19,045.65 and income £20,846.59. This compares with the previous year when Outgoings were £16,588.31 and income, £15,430.13. The increased outgoings are presumed to relate to inflation. The increased income came from increased casual hire for birthday parties and Sunday morning Christian religious activities.

Most users treat the Hall as if it were their own, but the hall is not hired out for anything that involves teenagers coming of age or teenage birthday parties because of past damage and anti-social behaviour. The combined sum of £7,245 for birthdays and religious activities exceeded the second largest contributor, Catkins Pre School which paid £6,448.27. Bluebell School of Dance paid £2,960.99. The other regular users are Badminton, Medway Amateur Radio and Transmitting, Model Car Racing and Short Mat Bowls.

The BT broadband line has been maintained for the CCTV system. The hall pays for its own rubbish collection. Energy costs have increased with the ending of caps. Scottish Power never read the meters so keep making increasing estimates.
I therefore make my own readings and phone them in.

The official report for the Charities Commission has been submitted online and acknowledged.

Dr Thomas R Shelley,

Treasurer

May 6th, 2024

Annual report for APC from Blue Bell Hill Village Hall 2024/2025

We have had another busy year improving and maintaining the hall for the benefit of our hirers. We finally managed to find a permanent solution to the intermittent problem that we have had with the toilets and drains for many years.

We have had further remedial work to the gullies in the front car park which will hopefully be a permanent repair and replaced the light above the sign on the front of the hall. These works mean that the front of the building looks much smarter.

Following consultation with other village halls, the committee took the decision to remove all waste bins and ask hirers to remove their rubbish from the premises. Most hirers have been doing this for a while now, so the committee felt that the bin emptying fees were a waste of money. So far the hirers have all been very understanding of the decision and are co-operating.

Sadly, after 52 years, the pre-school closed permanently due to low government funding. The hall committee was very sorry to see them go. However, our bookings secretary was able to fill most of their slots with other regular hirers, so the hall calendar is still very busy.

We have also had a change of bookings secretary. Our new one has settled in very well and is taking lots of bookings where she can.

We have had a good amount of occasional hirers and continue to receive lots of compliments on what a beautiful, well kept hall it is.

United Charities of the Ancient Parish of Burham

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

This report is prepared in accordance with the requirements specified in Page 2 of Issue 6 of Charity Commission News Spring 1997.

1. Full Name and Registered Charity Number

United Charities of the Ancient Parish of Burham No. L5 233519 A/3

Formerly known as Burham United Charities.

The Trustees are also responsible for the George Day for School Treat Charity - No. 307537.

2. Main Address

The address of the Secretary, Betty Young is: 17 Bell Crescent
Burham
Rochester
Kent ME1 3SZ

3. Object of the Charity

The duty of the Trustees is to apply the income of the Charity in relieving either generally, or individually, persons resident in the Ancient Parish of Burham who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress. The Ancient Parish of Burham includes that part of Bluebell Hill which was in the Civil Parish of Burham prior to 1988. With respect to the George Day for School Treat Charity, the duty of the Trustees is to apply the income received towards the Annual School Treat for the children of Burham at Christmas or midsummer.

4. Names of Trustees

David Young, Chairman (Nominated by Burham P.C.)

Roger Kiralfy, Treasurer (Co-opted)

Barry Smith (Nominated by Aylesford P.C.)

Margaret Older (Co-opted)

Jill Emptage (Co-opted)

Jill Pannell (Co-opted)

Jack Owen (Co-opted)

The Secretary, Betty Young, is a paid employee, who is not a Trustee.

5. Activities during the Year

The amount of the winter fuel grant this year was increased to a level of £500 per household for all eligible applications to assist with the increased energy costs. Qualifying income levels were unchanged at £300 (single) and £400 (couple). In total, 9 Winter Fuel grants were made in 2 instalments of £300 at the end of December 2024 and £200 at the end of February 2025, a total of £4500 was given out. The George Day fund grant was not claimed by Burham Primary School. There was 1 other grant totaling £200 that was paid out during this year to Burham residents in financial need.

Betty Young continued as Secretary to the Charity, and the Trustees thanked her for the good work. The 2024 AGM in May, the October and the December meetings were held in Burham Village Hall Committee Room.

**Report on the activities of the Aylesford Village Community Centre
from April 2024 to April 2025**

The centre had again a successful year with a busy program, regular hirers, bookings for functions and parties and improvements to the centre but we also saw an increase in outgoings due to repairs, updates on Health and Safety risk assessments and fire risk assessments as well as increased utility and cleaning costs.

From May 2024 the AFC has been renting the locker rooms at the centre.

Two trustees retired.

More tidying-up of the centre was done and the up-to-date calendar for maintenance, repairs and improvement projects is being used.

The trustees' meetings are being held every other month with every other meeting a face-to-face meeting at the centre.

In October the trustees held a successful AGM at the centre.

Our third coffee morning for Macmillan organised by some trustees and Alex Birtwistle was very successful and another one for this year is planned.

In December the whole centre was given over to the Aylesford Christmas Market which was again very successful. Unfortunately, there was not enough money left from donations and income from the market so the centre did not receive a donation this year.

Between Christmas and New Year some trustees together with the caretaker managed to clean the chairs in the centre.

The job share between two caretakers is working well.

In the autumn, the decorating of the whole centre through Community Payback Scheme was finalised and the work was almost finished in April 2025, the team will come back in the summer to finish off a few outstanding jobs.

We are also planning a fundraising evening with live music entertainment in the summer.