

MINUTES OF BEAN ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**held on Monday 13th April 2026 at 7 pm
at the Bean Village Hall, Bean**

Councillors present: Cllr. K Turner-Burgin (Chair)
Cllr. K Clarke
Cllr. D Hammock
Cllr. A Munday
Cllr. J Turner-Burgin
Cllr. Mrs SA Weeks
Cllr. Mrs TD Williams

There were no members of the public present.

1) **Apologies**

There were no apologies received.

2) **Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 14th April 2025**

The Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 14th April 2025 were confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

3) **Accounting and Governance Statements**

The Accounting and Governance Statements of Bean Parish Council for the year ending 31st March 2025 together with the Income and Expenditure account was presented.

It was noted that these accounts had been examined and approved by the Council's internal auditor and that the Annual Return was reviewed by the Parish Council's external auditor under the Audit Commission Act 1998 and a Certificate awarded.

4) **Matters Arising from the Financial Statement**

There were no questions

5) **Chairman's Report**

Firstly, may I extend my thanks and gratitude for all the hard work from each and every councillor over the last twelve months.

Bean Village Hall

We have received confirmation from Royal Mail that the name of the hall is now officially confirmed as Bean Village Hall. The Bean Together groups have been meeting monthly and appears to be gaining some momentum with Making Miracles who support parents who have lost their babies along with Healthy Living also joining. The hall also hosted the Mature Driver's Course with a good attendance which was well received and informative as well as interactive.

Damage was noted to the suspended ceiling when trying to readjust a window blind. This may have been caused by a ball or bouncy castle, but we have no evidence of this or when the damage occurred due to it being well disguised but necessitated the closure of the hall for one day to carry out the repairs.

Cracks in the exterior wall at the rear of the hall which looked as though it could be subsidence have been investigated. The hall has been surveyed, and it is thought not to be due to subsidence. The cracks will be infilled and closely monitored.

Recreation Ground

Repairs have been carried out to the fencing adjacent to the footpath which had been damaged by vandalism as well as the fencing between the recreation ground and allotments and removal of shrubbery in the corner between the allotments and 1 Annie's Cottage.

Repairs have also been carried out to the artificial turf wooden surrounds by goal mouths

All the equipment continues to be checked on an annual basis and any repairs/maintenance carried out immediately. The double air walker was found to be faulty and was therefore removed and replaced.

Damage to one of the toddler swings occurred after a teenager became entrapped and Kent Fire and Rescue had to cut apart the swing in order to release them. Council decided that given the age of the swings that both swings and chains would be replaced.

Beacon Woods

The missing bollards on the verging have been replaced, and the scrub and overhanging trees have been cut back. In addition to this all the external fencing on Southfleet Road from 1 Beanhill Cottages to the vehicular entrance and then from the entrance to the end of the boundary have been shored up and repaired. To ensure transparency a separate account with Unity Trust has been opened for all income and expenditure to do with Beacon Woods including the carparking fees. Following a request from a visitor to Beacon Wood Country Park, the Council considered the introduction of an Annual Parking Permit and determined that an Annual Parking Permit would not be introduced at the present time. The matter may be reviewed in the future should visitor numbers, usage patterns, or the financial position of the Country Park change.

The Trim Trail soft chip has been topped up and a fence around the picnic area will be installed later this year.

On the 13th December 2025 Dartford Orienteering Klubb (DFOK) held a very successful event at the Woods with over 100 competitors and are keen to use the space again.

Following a successful grant application to DBC the following works have been carried out.

Improvements to hardstanding pathways and steps, existing pathways have been resurfaced and widened to allow smoother and safer travel. The steps have been rebuilt to ensure they are stable and user-friendly, including handrails added to support visitors as they use stepped areas.

A new drainage system has been created to manage water flow effectively and prevent flooding on the lower woodland track, which is often affected during heavy rains.

The dipping platform has been completely rebuilt to ensure safety and accessibility, especially for children visiting the lake area, and a new boardwalk with non-slip surfaces and safety railings now connects the platform to the woodland track to improve the overall accessibility.

Allotments

The allotments have had the removal of overhanging branches from an oak tree adjacent to plots 15 and 16 successfully completed, allowing for more light to enter the area thereby making these plots more functional.

Footpaths

Emergency tree work on DR 22 between the High Street and Drudgeon Way was carried out following some branches brought down by high winds and blocking the footpath, the cost of which has been reimbursed by KCC.

DR22 on 2 separate occasions had the dumping of general/ domestic waste. This was reported to DBC who arranged for its removal and investigated. An address was found in the rubbish and the residents contacted.

Highways

The council invited Speedwatch to a meeting to ascertain what was required to set up a scheme in the village to try and address the speeding through the village but only 4 people in the village volunteered so the scheme could not proceed.

Following the vandalism of the gate in Sandy Lane which prevents access to the underpass, it has been repaired and a new combination padlock is in place.

Having requested that the white 'keep clear' signs are repainted on Bean roundabout the response back was that these markings were not considered 'safety-critical', in accordance with Council's instructions the clerk escalated the matter to the Highway Manager (Dartford & Gravesham) who has raised the issue with the Asset Manager and we are currently awaiting a response.

Planning

Following the contentious planning application to change the use of a barn and land on Drudgeon Farm to 5 dwellings, this was refused on appeal to the planning inspectorate thereby protecting the green open space.

Remembrance Day

The council again this year erected poppies along the high street and other locations around the village, additional poppies were purchased to help place them in more areas and the purchase of 'Tommy Souldier' which will be used for the recreation ground fencing.

The service was well attended by residents, and the school attended with their inclusion ambassadors and each child delivered a part of a reading. Tracey Adams attended with the standard of the air training corps based in Gravesend. We were also joined by Jim Dickson MP, who gave a reading at the service.

Police

The council received a visit from PC Swan who stayed for the entire meeting while Cllr Williams was keen and put herself forward and now sits on the local Independent Advisory Group (IAG) as the parish representative.

Santa's Visit

Santa visited the village on the 22nd December and used the Black Horse public house carpark with thanks to the landlady; Santa was well received with a good number visiting.

I would like to thank the Clerk for her continued support, advice and hard work that she provides to this council.

Keith Turner-Burgin
Chair of Bean Parish Council

6) Questions on the Chair's Report

There were no questions.

7) **Vote of thanks**

The Chair was thanked for his detailed report.

Cllr. Munday, seconded by Cllr. Weeks proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr Turner-Burgin for his report and the motion was carried unanimously.

8) **Comments or questions to the Parish Council from members of the public**

There were no questions.

9) **Community Reports**

Bean Residents' Association

This report covers the 12 months April 2025 to March 2026

1. In 2025/26 we held 11 Meetings in the Village Hall; [No meeting Bank Holiday 5th May]. There were 106 items of outgoing Correspondence compared with 113 last year. The top recipients were Meeting Invitees (46%), Bean Parish Council (16%), DBC (12%), KCC (10%) and EDC (7%),.

Main Issue was still loss of Pharmacy at Bean because Delmergate Pharmacy, in Garden City, is just within 1 mile of Bean (as crow flies), but 4 miles by road.

We blamed EDC who say it is NHS rules. Watling St junction opening delayed.

Meetings and other Correspondence included: -

2. a) A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet Junction Complaints. Safety Audit report delay.

b) Vision Homes insecure Site Hoarding in Beacon Drive. repaired after intervention of Cllr Hammock and visit by Samantha Neale of DBC.

c) Monthly Litter Picking Volunteers, co-ordinated by Jim Conway, collected 125 full bags in 12 months for DBC to collect. Bean RA paid £125.79 for Insurance of Litter Picking Volunteers.

3. 479 bus service introduced. Well used off-peak. Peak complaints continue, but KCC say it was only intended for off-peak use, not for journeys to school or work.

4. Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpeople have not complied with condition to return Bean farmland to pre-occupation condition. DBC Enforcement chasing.

5. Ebbsfleet Garden City; Questions put to every EDC Board Meeting. Still no on-site GP for 5,280 homes completed [18th March 2026] (about 12,670 residents).

6. Bean Triangle; EDC discontinued enforcement action on storage container development without planning applications. It remains unapproved.

7. The Ship, Green St Green; work nearing completion, but traffic hazards on skew junction not addressed. Are Darenth Parish Council still minded to stop use of their link road?

8. Lower Thames Crossing; Inspectorate approval and finance agreed. Exhibition at Bluewater 31 March 2026 showing preliminary works this year.

9. Bean 20mph zone; KCC said self-enforcing, but volunteer speed checks started

10 Visibility splay at Royal Oak Mews not provided. Unresolved since Aug-2021.

This is only a selection of our activity on behalf of Residents and Businesses.
We thank the Committee, Residents and Parish Council for their assistance.

Russell Joyce, Chairman, Bean Residents Association

Bean Allotment Association

Last summer was very dry and hot and as a consequence we used a lot more water than usual. This together with the price increases meant our water bill was just under £500. The committee decided we needed to raise the rent to cover this and with the approval of the Parish Council we increased the rent by 50p per rod as from 1 October 2025. The situation will be kept under review this year. At the end of September several plots became available and we welcomed four new tenants who have yet to start work on their plots. Hopefully they will have started to prepare their plots for planting before the independent inspection due on 25 April. At present we have 28 plot holders and two people on the waiting list.

We have again managed to acquire a large quantity of wood chip in order to maintain the top path and to level off some of the paths between the plots. We also have the woodchip from the tree surgeon who recently trimmed back some of the trees overhanging plots 13-16 and would like to thank the Parish Council and Clerk for arranging this.

Jim Conway
Chairman.

10) Any other business

None

There being no further business the Chairman declared the Parish Meeting closed at 7.15 pm

Chairman

Date