

Minutes

MEETING of Bentley Parish Council

Monday 8th June 2026 at Bentley Memorial Hall at 7:30pm

Present:	Cllr John Fuller (Chairman) Cllr John Goodyear Cllr Chris Mace Cllr Dominique Lucas Cllr Gordon Tillett Cllr Stephen Whowell
In attendance:	Ms Emma Wadey (Clerk) Dist. Cllr David Ashcroft Jade Bower (Bentley Green Community Group) x 3 members of the public

Ref.	Comments
06/26/01	Apologies for absence. Apologies received from Cllr Lockey (work).
06/26/02	Minutes approved from the AGM meeting held on Monday 11th May 2026. The Minutes from the AGM on Monday 11 th May 2026 were formally agreed and signed by the Chairman.
06/26/03	Declarations of interest from Members. Cllr Goodyear declared an interest on item 06/26/07 b).
06/26/04	Public Section. No comments made.
06/26/05	The Bentley Green Community Group (BGCG) [Jade Bower] The decision to write a letter of confirmation to BGCG's bank that they are a branch of Bentley Parish Council was RATIFIED. Councillors considered the irrigation proposal to support young trees planted and agreed <i>in principle</i> . Jade confirmed it would be a temporary structure and in place for 2-4 years then removed or repurposed. It will be situated on the southern edge of the field. There is an opportunity for an educational sign to also be installed. There will be no hard standing but situated on a wooden platform. A tree warden will be visiting the site to carry out a survey. Cllr Fuller confirmed that renovating an existing pond does not attract planning consent. Cllrs Lockey and Turner are working on the lease/licence. It was agreed to review the document before the next meeting.
06/26/06	Trees on School Lane It was agreed to proceed with removing the ash stem, dead wood and crown raise the remaining tree in School Lane. It was agreed for Cllr Goodyear to clarify which cherry tree Jason wishes to trim back at Fox Hall.
06/26/07 a)	Tree, Planning & Development Applications: Site: Land at junction of Froyle Rd and Main Rd, Bentley, Farnham

Signed by Chairman..... dated 13th June 2026

Proposal: Application for the use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes, and dayrooms and hardstanding ancillary to that use

Ref no: EHDC-26-0440-FUL

Comments:

Bentley Parish Council object to planning application EHDC-26-0440-FUL on the land at junction of Froyle Road and Main Road, Bentley.

We would like to draw attention to the following points:

Restrictive covenant - An existing register, number SH30592 states that there is a restrictive covenant on the land. This information was taken from a Land Charge Class D(ii) dated 14th August 1997 ref. No. 35280. States "Not to use the Property other than for agricultural, equine, horticultural use".

Grampian condition – We would suggest that a Grampian condition is imposed so that all matters relating to site management, water & waste management and all points of objection are satisfactorily managed and met before any future application is again assessed.

We object for the following substantive reasons:

1. Previous application - The applicant made a previous application (ref: 51579), which was granted subject to the land being used to graze 1 or 2 horses;
2. Planning policies - The application is contrary to a number of planning policies;
3. Existing Traveller site - Bentley already has a traveller site and there is no proven need for another;
4. Unsafe access - Access would be unsafe and problematic.

1. Previous application:

The application (EHDC-26-0440-FUL) is in violation of previously agreed terms.

EHDC refused two previous applications associated with this plot of land. An important reason for refusal was stated as *"the unjustified encroachment of development into the countryside, which by virtue of its siting and size would be harmful to the character and appearance of the rural area and local landscape"* and that it would be *"at odds with the open rural character of the site which is adjacent to the Bentley Conservation Area and within the setting of a number of listed buildings"*.

The approval for the field access move (ref. 51579/002) was granted by EHDC based on the field being used for the grazing of *"traditional agricultural working horses and ponies"*.

2. Planning policies:

The application (EHDC-26-0440-FUL) is in violation of the following planning policies:

2.1 The Bentley Neighbourhood Plan (2025):

Policy BEN1 Spatial Plan - The site lies outside the Bentley Settlement Boundary (BSB). Policy BEN1 only supports development outside the BSB where a *"genuine and proven need"* for a countryside location is demonstrated, or where the proposal meets Policy CP14 and the EHDC SPD on Housing Outside Settlement Boundaries on the basis of proven local housing need. Neither test is met.

Policy BEN2 Development Principles - The proposal does not fulfil many of the stated criteria e.g. iv. it has an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the locality and the adjacent Conservation Area, v. it is harmful to the setting of designated Grade II listed buildings and vi. it does not minimise traffic generation or connect safely to the rural lane, bridleway and footpath network.

Policy BEN3 Design – The proposed development would not protect the established character and appearance of the village and would be in contradiction of key policy statements e.g. *"iv. the features of the new dwellings should reflect the characteristics of neighbouring properties"*.

Policy BEN12 Sustainable Drainage and Wastewater - The application fails to meet any of the Neighbourhood Plan policy statements.

We are very concerned that there does not seem to be a sustainable water and waste management plan. In particular, we are concerned that there will be a lot of run-off water generated by the concrete paving proposed to support the permanent block, car parking and the siting of static caravans and the implications for the nearby chalk stream.

2.2 East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (2014):

Policy CP19 - The field is located outside the Bentley Settlement Policy Boundary and is in the countryside; with development permitted in the countryside only where there is a *"genuine and proven need"* for a countryside location, such as farming, forestry or other rural enterprise. The applicant has demonstrated no such need.

Policy CP20 - The application would cause significant and demonstrable harm to the rural landscape character of this area, given that this policy requires the conservation and enhancement of the rural landscape and the protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows. A recent finding by the Planning Inspectorate stated that the field itself positively contributes to the rural character of Bentley. The proposed introduction of caravans, dayrooms and hardstanding would directly erode this character.

Policy CP29 - The proposed stationing of caravans for residential purposes, and dayrooms and hardstanding ancillary to that use would not respect the character, identity and context of the character of this site and the established settlement pattern of Bentley.

Policy CP30 - The site immediately adjoins the Bentley Conservation Area along its eastern boundary, and a number of Grade II listed buildings are located to the east and this policy requires the setting of those heritage assets to be conserved and require great weight to be given to their conservation; something the Planning Inspector stated about the field "*is part of the positive setting in which the heritage assets in this part of the village, and their historic significance, can be appreciated*". It is contested that the proposed caravan site with a brick-built dayroom does not complement or respect the character of these heritage assets and no public benefits have been advanced that could outweigh the identified harm to the significance of these designated heritage assets.

3. Existing Traveller site:

The applicant has not demonstrated that there is an unmet need for further traveller pitches in Bentley that would justify development at this specific location.

New traveller pitches have recently been granted permission in Bentley at the existing site by the A31 (Paddocks, Vickery Lane). That site, originally approved for 8 pitches in approximately 2009, has expanded substantially and is understood to now comprise approximately 30 pitches covering approximately one hectare, including permanent brick buildings.

It seems unreasonable that the village of Bentley (population approximately 1,400) should be considered an appropriate location for a second traveller site. The village already has a 30:504 proportion of traveller pitches to permanent dwellings; the latter figure based on the 2021 census.

The National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024) requires pitch need to be assessed and we consider this proposal fails all of the necessary tests.

No information has been provided in this application explaining why further pitches are required in Bentley specifically, or demonstrating that the identified need in the East Hampshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2024) cannot be met at more suitable and sustainable locations.

4. Unsafe access:

The site sits at the junction of Froyle Road and Main Road, on a stretch where traffic regularly travels at speed, and where sight lines are restricted by trees, hedging and other vegetation. Multiple residential pitches would generate a level of vehicle movements wholly different to the occasional agricultural access previously contemplated.

The visibility splays conditioned in the 2023 gate approval (134 m by 2.4 m west and 156 m by 2.4 m east, vegetation between 0.6 m and 2.0 m above the carriageway kept permanently clear) were designed and conditioned for low-intensity agricultural use only. They have not been reassessed against the household, school-run, delivery, service and emergency traffic that permanent residential occupation will generate.

It is also noted that this stretch of road is a known accident location, with vehicles regularly leaving the carriageway and entering the field, particularly from the A31 slip road; something that the applicant has highlighted in numerous posts on social media. Residential occupation of a site subject to such impacts would give rise to unacceptable safety risks for any occupiers.

The proposal is contrary to the highway safety objectives of the NPPF (December 2024), which states at paragraph 115 that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. We submit that the intensification of use at this junction without adequate visibility assessment constitutes an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

It is for all the above reasons that Bentley parish Council objects to this application.

b)

Site: GRAFTON COTTAGE Main Road, Bentley, Farnham, Hampshire, GU10 5HY

Proposal: To install a downstairs toilet and small wash basin in part of the existing dining room area.

Ref no: EHDC-26-0445-LBC

Comments: Bentley Parish Council have considered the application at Grafton Cottage to install a downstairs toilet and small wash basin in part of the existing dining room area and are supportive of this change. Our planning officer has visited the site and considers the proposed alteration to be well thought through, in keeping with the existing building and in line with policies in our Neighbourhood Plan (2025).

c) **The following comments were RATIFIED (submitted outside of meeting):**

Site: Coldrey Farm House, Froyle Rd, Lower Froyle, Alton, Hants. GU34 4ND

Proposal: Variation to approved layout ref. EHDC-26-0030-LBC whereby a double-height space is proposed for the toilet facilities adjacent to the entrance lobby. This would overcome a problem of inadequate floor-to-floor height without the need for additional excavation.

Ref: EHDC-26-0417-LBC

Comments: Bentley Parish Council have reviewed the application for a variation to the previously approved listed building consent (EHDC-26-0030-LBC) and are supportive of this change.

06/26/08 **Report from Dist. Cllr David Ashcroft of EHDC:**

The Government are intervening with planning on a larger scale. The National Scheme of Delegation [ensuring consistency across local authorities] goes to the cabinet on 25th to stream line the process. It was suggested introducing a Grampian Condition on some applications.

06/26/09 **Report from the Chairman of Bentley Parish Council:**

Nothing to report.

The Pavilion guttering has been repaired.

06/26/10 **Report from the Clerk of Bentley Parish Council:**

This has been a busy month: there have been many residents getting in contact regarding planning application EHDC-26-0440-FUL.

The Clerk thanked Dist. Cllr David Ashcroft for agreeing to give BGCG £1000 towards their noticeboard.

A gas engineer will be inspecting the boiler in the Pavilion to renew the gas certificate on 18th June.

There will be another litter pick on 29th June, the Clerk has arranged with EHDC to collect the litter at the Pavilion.

Cllr Mace to look into whether there is a TPO on the oak tree at the western end of the village.

Jade for forward tree surveyor details.

Clarification between the Scouts and Bentley Archers is needed regarding the fete and Scouts' weekend commitments and with cricket fixtures. It was stated that after notice of dates is given at the beginning of the year, these weekends are to be honoured and ring fenced, regardless of sporting fixtures.

06/26/11 **Reports from Officers:**

Recreation Ground Officer: Cllr Whowell

There are not many people on the Recreation Ground at the moment, but they are using the nets.

Cllr Fuller agreed to clear ditch on the Rec at the end of July/beginning of August.

Footpath Officer: Cllr Turner

Not present.

Drainage Officer: Cllr Tillett

Clear drains at the end of the summer.

06/26/12 **Financial and General Purposes Committee:**

a) The Minutes from the Finance Committee meeting held on Thursday 28th May 2026 were formally agreed and signed by the Chairman. Actions:

Clerk to find out how much to set aside for election costs.

Clerk to find out tree survey cost.

We are managing the Bentley Archer's costs, but in 2027-28 they'll manage their own finances and run through their own bank account.

Clerk to dig out latest pond report and give an update for the next meeting to prepare for any likely works.

Clerk to contact Joe to resubmit tree planning application for the trees around the pond.

b) **Annual CIL Report 2025-26**

Annual CIL Report 2025-26 was approved by members.

c) **External Audit**

- d) **Conflict of Interest with BDO LLP**
Confirmation was given that there is no conflict of interest between BDO LLP and council members and the form was signed.
- e) **Annual Governance Statement 2025/26.**
Chairman read out Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26, (p. 4 points 1-9) to the Council, the Chairman & Clerk both signed and dated where approval is given.
- f) **Accounting Statements 2025/26.**
Chairman & Clerk both signed and dated where approval is given. (p.5 Section 2)
- g) **AGAR Internal Auditor Report 2025/6.**
Councillors read the internal auditor's report stating that the Council's accounts met all the necessary requirements).
'We are pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures currently in place are appropriate and effective. While this report may include recommendations for improvement, these should not be viewed as indicators of significant deficiencies. Rather, they are intended to support the continued development of what is, in our view, a well-managed and robust governance framework.'
- h) **Review and agree the effectiveness of the internal audit 2025/26.**
The effectiveness of the internal audit was agreed to be effective
- i) **Confirmation of dates of the period for exercise of public rights.**
The confirmation of dates of the period of exercise of public rights was approved as:
Wed 10th June – Tues 21st July 2026
- j) The following documents to 31st May 2026 were approved and signed by the Chairman:
A1 – Cost centre report
A2 – Bank reconciliations: Community, Commercial IA accounts
A3 – noted and approved by the Council. (Incorporated in document)
A4 - Clerk salary (June) & expenses record (May)

Community Account:

- Opening Balance 1st May: £69,138.38
- Income for May: £4,688.38 (EHDC BACSC CIL re-imbursement)
- Outgoings for May: £10,149.97
- Closing balance 31st May: £63,676.79

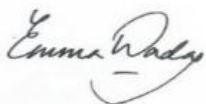
Commercial Instant Access Account:

- Opening balance 1st May: £22,311.84
- Income for May: £9.86 (interest)
- Outgoings for May: £2000.00 (Transfer to Community AC)
- Closing balance 31st May: £22,211.70

High Interest Account:

- Opening balance 1st May: £50,531.62
- Closing balance 31st May: £50,644.61

The meeting closed at: 8.55pm. The next scheduled Parish Council meeting will be held on Mon 13th July 2026 at 7.30pm at Bentley Memorial Hall.



Emma Wadey
Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

Signed by Chairmandated 13th July 2026

Payments authorised at the meeting held on:

Mon 8th June 2026

Payments authorised						
Nom. code	For	Invoice No	Item/purpose	VAT £	Amount £	Method of Payment
4000	Staff salaries		Salaries (June)	0	2310.74	BACS 24
4050	Staff expenses		Expenses/mileage	0	145.38	BACS 25
4200			Home office allowance & mileage		50.79	
4210			BT-Internet		42.35	
			Printer ink cartridges		52.24	
4030	HMRC		Tax & NI	0	890.23	BACS 26
4040	Scottish Widows		Pension	0	214.49	DD
4040	Scottish Widows		Pension (not taken from previous month)	0	214.49	BACS 27
4171	Tesco		Mobile phone	0	28.99	DD
4171	Tesco phone insurance		Phone insurance	0	10.00	DD
4610	GTF Fencing	1012	Gate on Rec (Previous invoice underpayment)	19.00	114.00	BACS 20b
4610	Robin Welland-Jones		Rec gate repair	0	24.00	BACS 28
4660	St. Mary's, Bentley PCC	BPC-01-26	Annual graveyard maintenance	0	2500.00	BACS 29
4440	East Hants Arborists Ltd	0074	Remove willow tree limb over pond	60.00	360.00	BACS 30
4410	Premier Grounds	3550	Grass cutting	133.00	798.00	BACS 31
4430			Grass cutting - Other areas	60.00	360.00	
4400			Strimming	44.00	264.00	
			Grass cutting - Rec	29.00	174.00	
4200	Microshade	26050046 4140	IT Services	17.98	107.88	BACS 32
4120	Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd	2114	Professional services for internal audit for 2025-26	48.75	292.50	BACS 33
Total				£278.73	£7796.21	