THURNHAM PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

Heritage Award Presented to Bearsted and Thurnham Society

At the July meeting of Thurnham Parish Council, the Heritage Award was presented to the Bearsted and Thurnham Society in recognition of its longstanding commitment to protecting the heritage, countryside and character of the local area.

Former Parish Councillor John Horne presented the award to the Societies Secretary Chris Buckingham and spoke about its history and significance, paying tribute to the Society's dedicated volunteers and the important work they continue to undertake on behalf of the community.

The Parish Council congratulates the Bearsted and Thurnham Society on this well-deserved recognition and thanks everyone involved for their continued commitment to preserving the unique character of Thurnham.



ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

Welcome to the 2025/26 Annual Report and Community Newsletter from Thurnham Parish Council.

Parish Councils are the first tier of local government and exist to represent the interests of the local community. Thurnham Parish Council is made up of elected councillors who volunteer their time to work on behalf of residents and help protect and improve the parish.

The Council works closely with Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council and other organisations on a wide range of local matters including:

- Planning applications and development proposals
- Highways and road safety concerns
- Environmental and countryside issues
- Community governance and local representation
- Resident communication and engagement
- Supporting and protecting the character of the parish

Throughout the year the Parish Council has continued working hard to represent residents on important local matters affecting both Thurnham East and Thurnham West.

This newsletter provides an overview of some of the work undertaken by the Parish Council during the past year, including planning matters, the Community Governance Review, highway concerns and ongoing projects within the parish.

The Parish Council would like to thank residents for their continued support, engagement and involvement within the community.

Contact Details
Clerk to Thurnham Parish Council
Email: clerk@thurnhamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Website: www.thurnhamparishcouncil.gov.uk
Scan the QR code for the website

Community Governance Review

One of the most significant matters affecting the parish during the past year was the Community Governance Review undertaken by Maidstone Borough Council relating to Thurnham West.

Throughout the review process the Parish Council worked extensively to ensure the views of residents were fully represented and heard.

This involved:

- Correspondence with Maidstone Borough Council officers and councillors
- Preparation of detailed written submissions and briefing papers
- Ongoing resident communication and updates
- The delivery of information leaflets across the parish
- A resident survey undertaken through Google Forms

The resident survey received in excess of 110 responses with overwhelming support from residents wishing to remain within Thurnham Parish.

The Parish Council would like to thank all residents for their support throughout the consultation process.

Following the review process, the Council is pleased that Thurnham remains together to continue serving all residents within the parish.

Parish Council Meetings

Thurnham Parish Council generally meets monthly, usually on the third Monday of each month, at the Tudor Park Marriott Hotel.

Residents are always welcome to attend meetings and raise local matters or concerns affecting the parish.

Meeting dates, agendas and minutes are published on the Parish Council website.

Highways and Infrastructure

Throughout the year the Parish Council has continued working with Kent County Council Highways and Bearsted Parish Council regarding ongoing highway and road safety concerns within the parish.

Particular focus has been given to rural lanes including Caring Lane, Water Lane and Pilgrims Way, where residents have raised concerns regarding:

Excessive vehicle speeds
Increased traffic volumes
Damage to verges and road edges
Safety for walkers, cyclists and horse riders

The Parish Council has continued supporting residents through the Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) process and discussions regarding improved signage, traffic management and rural road safety measures across the area.

Planning and Development

Planning matters continue to form an important part of the Parish Council's work.

Throughout the year the Council considered and commented on a number of planning applications affecting the parish and surrounding area, several of which attracted significant public interest and attendance at Parish Council meetings.

One of the principal applications considered related to land at Caring Lane along the boundary between Thurnham and Leeds. Residents raised concerns regarding increased traffic, highway safety, pressure on local infrastructure and the impact of further development within the rural area. Following discussion, the Parish Council submitted a formal objection to Maidstone Borough Council.

Following revised plans and further consultation, the Parish Council raised no objection in principle to the amended scheme subject to appropriate safeguards relating to drainage, lighting and traffic mitigation measures.

The Parish Council continues to carefully monitor planning applications affecting the parish and remains committed to protecting the rural character and identity of the local area.

Parish Council Vacancy

The Parish Council currently has a councillor vacancy and would welcome interest from residents wishing to become more involved in supporting the local community.

No previous experience is necessary and the role provides an opportunity to help shape the future of the parish and represent local residents.

Anyone interested is encouraged to contact the Parish Clerk for further information.

Contact Details

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