# High Halstow Parish Council

50 Pepys Way • Strood • Rochester • Kent • ME2 3LL
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MINUTES

**Parish Council Meeting**
**Wednesday 13th January 2021**
**Virtual Meeting ~ 7.30 pm**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Attendees: | Cllr G. Crozer (Chairman) | Cllr C. Watson (Vice-Chair) |
| | Cllr L. Atkinson | Cllr R. Collins |
| | Cllr M. Stone | Cllr T. Munday |
| | Cllr G. Jerreat | Cllr M. Buckland |
| | Cllr C. MacFarlane | Ward Cllr R. Sands |
| | Mrs J. Allen (Clerk) | |

Members of the public: One (1)

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm

The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer. opened the meeting and thanked both the members of the Parish Council and the one (1) Parishioner present for attending.

**1. Apologies for absence**
HHPC1030:13.01.21 None.

**2. To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**
HHPC1031:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to declare an interest, in his capacity as treasurer for The Friends of St Margaret's Church.

HHPC1032:13.01.21 Cllr T. Munday also spoke to declare a personal interest, owing to his position as the Chairman of the High Halstow Cricket Club and being the joint director of Mail Master Ltd.

**3. Minutes of the last meeting**
**a). To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9th December 2020.**
HHPC1033:13.01.21 The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 9th December 2020, were submitted by the Clerk. It was proposed by Cllr L. Atkinson to approve the minutes as a correct record. This proposal was seconded by the Vice-Chair Cllr C. Watson and unanimously agreed.

**4. Matters arising from the minutes (not otherwise on the agenda)**
HHPC1034:13.01.21 None.

**5. Planning**
**a). Applications**
HHPC1035:13.01.21 The members discussed the five (5) new planning applications that had been received since the last meeting, where it was noted that one (1) of the applications had already been discussed at the last meeting:

- **MC/20/3289 – The Paddock (Adjacent Sandhurst Farm)**
  Cllr R. Collins spoke to express his concerns about the restricted access to the Paddock on a potentially dangerous road. He felt that the introduction of the proposed new mobile homes would generate more traffic.
  He acknowledged that there had been comments of objection by neighbours submitted on the Medway Council planning portal but recommended that the members submit an objection based on concerns of extra traffic joining and leaving a dangerous stretch of Sharnal Street.

- **MC/20/3130 – St Margaret's Church**
  Cllr R. Collins spoke to remind the members that he had already declared an interest in relation to this planning application, please see reference HHPC1031:13.01.21 .

  He advised that this application related to the theft of the lead from the church roof over 7 years ago, where an extension to request permission to continue with the use of felt covering should have been sought after 5 years.

  The members collectively discussed the application where it was proposed by Cllr M. Stone not to submit an objection, this proposal was seconded by Cllr T. Munday and agreed. The remaining 8 Councillors voted in favour whilst Cllr R. Collins abstained.

- **MC/20/3209 – 25 Cardigan Close**
  Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that having reviewed this application online, that he recommended the members did not submit an objection.

- **MC/20/3122 – Kemaman Forge Lane High Halstow**
  Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise the members that this application was discussed at the last meeting.

- **MC/20/3046 – 24 Goodwood Close**
  Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that having looked at this application online he noted that Medway Council were already in receipt of comments from neighbouring properties, surrounding the height of the roof. He was concerned in accepting yet another bungalow being converted but a precedent had already been made in the Close, however he could see no valid reason to submit an objection.

**b). Decisions**
HHPC1036:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to confirm receipt of one (1) new planning decision that had been agreed since the last meeting, subject to conditions:

- **MC/20/2302 – Orchard Bungalow**

**c). Appeals and other matters**
HHPC1037:13.01.21 None.

**d). Redrow Development (Heronden Grange)**
HHPC1038:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that Redrow were in their final phase of building at Heronden Grange and accordingly he understood that they would be completing all the new accesses around the development in due course.

**e). Neighbourhood Plan**
HHPC1039:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins also spoke to confirm that following receipt of the members' draft plan, Medway Council had written a 4-5 page response in reply.

He reported that prior to the meeting he and the Neighbourhood Planning Committee had met with Medway Council and Redrow, where they had received a presentation on the HIF Bid, the potential new road layouts and the proposed new railway station.

He closed his report in advising that a further presentation on the HIF bid had been organised for Monday 25th January 2021 by Future Hoo, details of which had been sent to all the Parish Council members by email.

**f). Local Plan**

HHPC1040:13.01.21 The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer, spoke to confirm that he understood the Local Plan and the HIF bid would take place hand in hand and that the consultations for the Local Plan would begin in Spring this year with a view of passing the details onto the inspectors at the end of 2021. He reported that he had heard of other Local Plans being declined and he asked the members to remain openminded.

Cllr G. Crozer closed his report in advising that he had overheard the proposed new railway station at Sharnal Street had been moved closer to the Kingsnorth Industrial Estate and that trains would only run to London. He reminded the members of the Future Hoo consultation on Monday 25th January, where he was thought that the meeting would last approximately 90 minutes.

**g). Section 106 monies**

HHPC1041:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that he had no report.

**6. Finance**

**a). Bank Balances**

HHPC1042:13.01.21 The Councillors carefully reviewed the bank balances provided, where the figures were deemed as acceptable.

**b). BACS payments made since the last meeting**

HHPC1043:13.01.21 The Councillors carefully reviewed the BACS payments made since the last meeting, where it was unanimously agreed that these payments were acceptable.

Cllr R. Collins also spoke to advise that a Finance Committee meeting had taken place on Monday 11th January, where the committee had discussed various points for a formal decision by the Parish Council. He raised each item in turn, where an in-depth discussion took place:

**i). Rise in allotment rate charges**

HHPC1044:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins reported that an increase in the allotment rate charges had been discussed, where the committee had approved an increment of £5 for a full plot and £2.50 for half.

A discussion took place where it was thought that the new charges were still good value.

The new allotment rate charges of £30 per full plot/£15 for a half were proposed by Cllr R. Collins, seconded by Cllr T. Munday and unanimously agreed.

**ii). Discounted rates for High Halstow Times Adverts**

HHPC1045:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that a 10% discount for advertisers paying via standing order had been considered.

A discussion ensued where it was thought that an incentive to persuade advertisers to pay in advance was a good idea. Where recommendations to review the advertising rates next year was also suggested.

Cllr R. Collins proposed that a 10% discount rate be applied to advertisers paying by standing order, this proposal was seconded by Cllr G. Jerreat and agreed with eight (8) Councillors voting in favour and one (1) against.

Cllr. Collins reported that the Clerk was to be commended in her tenacity to get previous advert invoices paid

**iii). Clerks home working allowance**

HHPC1046:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that upon recommendation from KALC it was understood that the Clerk should be paid a £6 per week homeworking allowance, which he recommended be backdated to April 2020.
He spoke of an alternative incentive where costs would be calculated based on the percentage of space the Parish Council office took up within her home, however it was understood that these costs could be VAT chargeable.

The members discussed both programs in greater detail where it was proposed by Cllr R. Collins to accept the first homeworking allowance of £6 per week. This proposal was seconded by Cllr M. Stone and unanimously agreed.

**iv). Barclays Mobile Banking Application**

HHPC1047:13.01.21 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to request permisson to download the Barclays Mobile Banking Application onto her phone, so she could pay in cheques electronically during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each Councillor in turn was asked for his or her opinon where it was identified that the difficulties in accessing the nearerst branch during the pandemic outweighted any small potential security risk.

It was proposed by Cllr R. Collins to grant the Clerk permission, which was seconded by the Vice-Chairman Cllr C. Watson and unanimously agreed.

**c). Accounts for Payment**

HHPC1048:13.01.21 Cllr G. Crozer, read aloud the proposed payments, as per shown below. These payments were accepted, having been proposed by Cllr L. Atkinson, seconded by the Vice Chair Cllr C. Watson and unanimously agreed.

| Payee | Reference | Payment Method | Amount | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mr M. Rowe | - | STANDING ORDER | £70.00 | Hire of Garages |
| Nexus Data Systems | - | PAID VIA BACS | £170.00 | Email hosting package INV: 93815 |
| Hotel Chocolat | - | PAID BY CARD | £26.90 | Thank you gift |
| St Friends of St Margaret's Church | - | PAID VIA BACS | £35.00 | Christmas Cards for HHPC Contacts |
| Wilkos | - | PAID BY CARD | £36.48 | 4 x books of 12 First Class stamps (postage for Christmas Cards) |
| Smart Print Services | - | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £691.50 | High Halstow Times December 2020 INV: 103530 |
| BLM Ltd | - | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £1,865.00 | Grounds Maintenance December 2020 INV: 9768 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stoke Parish Council | HHPC233:11.12.19 | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £21.56 | 50% contribution towards the Telephone & Broadband communications package |
| Recruitment Warehouse | - | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £90.00 | Disposal of refuse from litter pick on 12/12/2020 INV: 1105 |
| HMRC | - | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £409.87 | December Tax & NI for JB, JG & JA |
| J Gallivan | - | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £649.04 | December 2020 Wages |
| J. Balciunas | - | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £733.99 | December 2020 Wages |
| J Allen | - | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £695.01 | December 2020 Wages |
| Smart Pension | - | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £39.96 | December 20 Employee Pension Contributions (deducted at source) |
| Smart Pension | - | TO BE PAID BY BACS | £23.98 | December 20 Employer Pension Contributions |
| **TOTAL** | | | **£5,558.29** | |

**7. Grant Applications**

HHPC1049:13.01.21 None.

**8. Management of Land and Property**

**a). Recreation Ground**

HHPC1050:13.01.21 The Vice-Chair Cllr C. Watson spoke to advise that she had no report.

**b). Play Parks**

HHPC1051:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins reported that the non-essential repairs to the half pipe did not take place last month as he had hoped and that he was now chasing the contractors for an alternative date.

**c). Allotments**

HHPC1052:13.01.21 Cllr L. Atkinson spoke to confirm that one of the tenants had tendered his resignation and that she would be placing an advert in the February edition of the High Halstow Times to promote the vacant plot.

**d). Forge Common**

HHPC1053:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to inform the members that he had contacted the ground maintenance contractors to order some bark chippings for the entrance to Forge Common, to aid with the muddy ground. He advised that he understood most tree surgeons were not working owing to the pandemic, however the contractors were doing their best to source the materials required.

Ward Cllr R. Sands spoke in response to suggest that Cllr R. Collins contact Medway Norse, as he believed that they had ample supplies of chippings.

**e). Village Grounds Maintenance**

HHPC1054:13.01.21 The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer, spoke to advise that he had noted an error on the interactive grounds maintenance map, surrounding an area of land close of the High Halstow boundary at Ropers Lane. It was agreed that the contractors would monitor the area and if the grassland was not cut by Medway Council then they would make provisions to do this.

Cllr R. Collins also spoke to confirm that Medway Norse were now managing the cutting of the trees close to the Christmas Lane Veterinary Surgery.

**f). Notice Boards**

HHPC1055:13.01.21 Cllr M. Stone spoke to advise that she had been working alongside Cllr L. Atkinson surrounding the sighting of the proposed new notice board for the Village Hall car park and its associated costings.

Cllr M. Stone also thanked Cllr R. Collins for his email with the details of another potential site.

**9. Highways & Transport**

**a). Public Rights of Way**

HHPC1056:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to request the Clerk, write to the owner of the horse field adjacent to the Recreation Ground, to raise concerns that the three broken fence panels were overhanging the RS44 footpath. It was identified that these panels needed to be repaired or replaced as soon as possible, where he confirmed that he had emailed the Clerk the details of the proprietor already.

Cllr G. Crozer also spoke to advise that owing to the recent lockdown, that he had noted the footpaths were being used more frequently. Accordingly, he made a recommendation that the Parish Council look into the condition of the footpaths as soon as they were able.

**b). Street Cleaning**

HHPC1057:13.01.21 It was agreed that the situation with the Street Cleaners working during the COVID-19 outbreak, would be discussed in closed session.

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, also highlighted a post she had seen on social media, posted by Street Cleaner Mr J. Balciunas, concerning a large amount of animal waste being deposited in the waste bin on The Street, next to the bus stop. It was agreed that the members would monitor the situation.

**c). Tree Wardens Report**

HHPC1058:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that he had no report.

**d). Bus Shelters**

HHPC1059:13.01.21 The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer spoke to refer the members to an email he had sent prior to the meeting, regarding a complaint he had received surrounding the lack of room for a mobility scooter to pass by the new bus stop at Britannia Road.

It was recognised that the road work equipment was cluttering the pathway and that once the works had been completed that there should be sufficient room.

**e). Dog Bins**

HHPC1060:13.01.21 The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer, spoke to advise that he understood the new dog bins, located at Wybournes Lane & Sharnal Street, had been installed. He asked the Clerk to keep a look out for the invoice, which had accidently been sent to the wrong address.

**10. Internal Committee Updates**

**a). High Halstow Road Reps Committee**

HHPC1061:13.01.21 Cllr M. Stone spoke to refer the members to a report she had prepared and circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to Index A.

The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer, also spoke to enquire if the Road Reps Committee needed a budget for the financial year 2021/2022. Cllr M. Stone spoke in response to thank the Chairman for his consideration and to advise that she thought she still had enough funds, alongside her ample supplies of PPE. She did however ask the members to consider making a donation to wHoo Cares, where it was agreed that she would submit further information on the activities they carried out.

**b). High Halstow Environmental Group**

HHPC1062:13.01.21 Cllr M. Stone spoke to ask the members to refer to a copy of her report she had prepared and circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to Index B.

She also directed the members to watch the tour of a recycling centre, which she thought looked interesting.

Cllr M. Stone closed her report in asking the members to consider setting up a new policy, allowing the children of High Halstow Primary Academy to plant a row of trees at Forge Common. She advised that she understood the Academy's application to the Woodlands Trust had not progressed as expected because of the pandemic and school closures.

The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer, also spoke to confirm that the Environmental Group had been awarded a budget of £1,500 for the next financial year.

**c). GDPR & Policy Working Party**

HHPC1063:13.01.21 Cllr G. Crozer and Cllr L. Atkinson spoke to advise that they were yet to set up a working party meeting, owing to the recent Christmas festivities.

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen also spoke to request the members considered finalising an Emergency Finance Policy, sharing her concerns at the members lack of access to their online bank account if she was to fall ill.

A discussion ensued, where the following motions, having been discussed at the recent Finance Committee Meeting, were put forward:

- Cllr R. Collins to hold the members' cheque book
- Cllr B. Williams be removed as a signatory
- Cllr T. Munday be set up as a new signatory
- Cllr T. Munday to have access to the members' online bank account, but without a debit card at his request
- Cllr T. Munday have access to the members accounting software
- Cllr C. Watson to remain as a signatory

The Chairman Cllr G. Crozer spoke to propose that the members adopted all the new motions as listed above which in turn would form the new emergency Finance Policy, this proposal was seconded by Cllr C. MacFarlane & unanimously agreed.

**11. External Committee Updates**

**a). KALC**

HHPC1064:13.01.21 Cllr L. Atkinson spoke to advise that there had been no other meetings since her last report.

**b). Rural Liaison**

HHPC1065:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to report that there had been no further Rural Liaison meetings.

**c). High Halstow Primary Academy**

HHPC1066:13.01.21 The Vice-Chair, Cllr C. Watson, spoke to advise that owing to the COVID-19 pandemic there had been no further meetings of the High Halstow Primary Academy School Council.

**d). Friends of St Margaret's**

HHPC1067:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that, apart from the submission of the new planning application concerning the church roof, that he had nothing else to report.

**12. Communications**

**a). High Halstow Times**

HHPC1068:13.01.21 Cllr M. Stone spoke to address her concerns over the distribution of the High Halstow Times during a period of National lockdown. She advised that she was happy to speak to the volunteer distributors to check if they were still happy to assist.

Councillors Tim Munday, Marc Buckland & George Crozer put themselves forward to aid with its distribution if Cllr M. Stone found she was short on volunteers.

**b). Website**

HHPC1069:13.01.21 Cllr T. Munday spoke to advise that having spoken to the website providers, he understood there was no facility to have a blog on the members' webpage. He recommended that further consideration be given for a blog via another provider, with a link to connect the two, which could be chargeable.

He closed his report to thank the Councillors for attending his most recent Mail Master training session, where he acknowledged that not everyone had been able to attend. He offered additional courses if further guidance was required at the individual's request.

Cllr L. Atkinson also spoke to request that the Clerk, Mrs J Allen, has access to the back end of the members' webpage in order to upload correspondence.

**c). Reintroduction of Face to Face meetings**

HHPC1070:13.01.21 The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer spoke to acknowledge that owing to the COVID-19 pandemic that Face to Face meetings were still prohibited. He asked the Clerk to ensure this item remained on the agenda for when face to face meetings were allowed to take place.

**13. Police Matters**

**a). Neighbourhood Watch**

HHPC1071:13.01.21 The Vice-Chair Cllr C. Watson spoke to advise that she had no report.

**14. Halls**

**a). Recreation (Village) Hall**

HHPC1072:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that he had no report.

**b). Memorial Hall**

HHPC1073:13.01.21 Cllr R. Collins spoke to advise that he had no report.

**15. Village Reports**

**a). Relief in Need**

HHPC1074:13.01.21 The Chairman Cllr G. Crozer, invited Ms C. Peek to speak.

Ms C. Peek spoke to confirm that she had emailed her report to the members a few days prior to the meeting. Please refer to Index C.

The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer also spoke to enquire in regards to Mr S. Bailey's term of office. Ms C. Peek responded to acknowledge that the Trustees could not make any decisions concerning this point until their next face to face meeting, which was currently on hold owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**16. Consultations**

**a). Towards Plastic Free Medway**

HHPC1075.13.01.21 Cllr M. Stone spoke to advise that she had been contacted by a group called 'Towards Plastic Free Medway', asking for permission to give a short 15 minutes talk about their efforts and objectives.

A discussion ensued where the members agreed to a 15 minutes presentation, prior to their next monthly Parish Council meeting, due to take place in February.

**17. Correspondence**

HHPC1076:13.01.21 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to advise that she had received an email from a concerned member of the public, highlighting the need for litter picking signs during the volunteer events.

The members discussed this matter in full, where it was acknowledged that this point had previously been suggested but that nothing had been agreed.

Cllr G. Crozer volunteered to investigate the associated costs of litter picking signs and report back to the members with his findings in due course.

**18. Reports & Circulars**

HHPC1077:13.01.21 None.

**19. Disclosure of any other business**

HHPC1078:13:01.21 Ward Cllr R. Sands spoke to update the members on the current situation with the COVID-19 vaccine, where he advised he understood that the surgery at Halling had been elected as the Medway distribution centre.

HHPC1079:13:01.21 Cllr C. MacFarlane spoke to advise that she had received notification that a contractor had been measuring the plot at St Margaret's Court where she wondered if the members would soon be in receipt of a new planning application.

HHPC1080:13:01.21 Cllr T. Munday spoke to advise that the Cricket Club had surpassed their 125th Anniversary. He hoped that once the COVID-19 pandemic had ended that the Cricket Club could arrange for a delayed celebration to mark this event, that should have been celebrated in 2020.

HHPC1081:13:01.21 Cllr L. Atkinson also spoke to remind the Clerk to purchase the latest edition of the Arnold Baker Council Administration handbook as part of her CILCA training.

**Public Session**

With permission from the Chairman Ms C. Peek, who was sat in the public gallery, spoke. She thanked the members for both her Christmas Card and for the use of the Village Hall car park on Christmas Day.

She confirmed that wHoo Cares used the car park for approximately 75 minutes where they were able to distribute 30 meal and gift boxes to the volunteer drivers.

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**21. Date of next meeting**

HHPC1082:13.01.21 The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer, spoke to confirm that the next Parish Council meeting would be held on Wednesday 10th February 2021 at 7.30pm via a virtual forum.

**22. Section 100A**

HHPC1083:13.01.21 The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer, read out loud the statement listed on the agenda in relation to Section 100A(4).

It was proposed by the Chairman Cllr G. Crozer, that the public be excluded from the next item, which was seconded by Cllr L. Atkinson, and unanimously agreed.

**The one member of the public and Ward Cllr R. Sands left at 8.46pm.**

**23. Personnel**

**a). To discuss the current COVID-19 pandemic situation concerning the Street Cleaners**

HHPC1084:13.01.21 Cllr G. Jerreat spoke to advise that following the announcement of a National lockdown that he had asked Mr J. Balciunas to stand down, although he was aware from conversations with him that he was still keen to work.

Each member was asked for his or her opinion, where they unanimously agreed that if Mr J. Balciunas was happy to work and he adhered to the COVID-19 regulations that he could do so, although it was recognised that Mr J. Gallivan was still shielding.

It was proposed by the Chairman Cllr G. Crozer, seconded by Cllr T. Munday and unanimously agreed to invite Mr J. Balciunas back to work.

Accordingly, the Clerk, Mrs J. Allen was instructed to write to him to advise him of the members' decision, to remind him of the COVID-19 regulations and to check he had enough PPE equipment.

HHPC1085:13.01.21 The members also collectively discussed the introduction of an agenda item for Christmas gratuities in November, where it was agreed that the Parish Council needed to be more organised.

HHPC1086:13.01.21 Following the topic of Christmas gratuities the Clerk was asked to make a payment of £105.00 to Cllr M. Stone, who had kindly organised the Clerk's Christmas present from the members of the Parish Council.

HHPC1087:13.01.21 Finally, Cllr L. Atkinson spoke to enquire in regards when the Precept figures would be discussed, having confirmed receipt of the figures from Medway Council earlier that week.

Mrs J. Allen spoke in response to advise that the figures had arrived too late to be included in the members' meeting packs, however she would organise a separate extraordinary meeting to discuss the 2021/2022 Precept.

**24. Close of meeting**

HHPC1088:13.01.21 The Chairman, Cllr G. Crozer, closed the meeting at 8.59pm and thanked everyone for attending.

**The next Parish Council meeting will be held on:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Wednesday 10th February 2021** | **7.30pm** | **Virtual Forum** |

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## INDEXES

**Index A**

**High Halstow Road Reps Committee**
**REF: HHPC1061:13.01.21**

As my role in regard to volunteering in High Halstow now involves our High Halstow Road Reps, MARR and working with wHoo Cares I will be proposing that this report becomes the Community Support Report.

wHoo Cares continues with its excellent work. I have been asked to submit an article for possible inclusion in the February High Halstow Times. It will be left to the editor to decide if a Christmas wHoo Cares report is suitable in a February edition of the newsletter. Photos have also been forwarded and the article is below for Parish Councillor's information. I think the article demonstrate heart-warming community spirit and that the time of year is not particularly important.

I am aware of 10 shops that have been completed for 2 local residents. Four for a resident from Cliffe and six for a High Halstow resident.
Support has also been given to a resident in Allhallows who needed support regarding a repair to his hearing aid. Another gentleman in All Hallows was supported to do a first online shop. A volunteer was ready to proceed with the shop but supporting self-reliance seemed a good result for all. Similarly, a gentleman from Hoo was encouraged to speak to the necessary agencies to arrange support for himself and his disabled wife post an operation scheduled for later this month.

I am very grateful to the continued support of volunteers in High Halstow and beyond but aware that ever changing circumstances which has included volunteers or their families suffering from the COVID-19 virus has further reduced availability. It is clearly important to help people to help themselves when possible.

On Christmas day Mr Alan Kelly and his family supported a self-isolating elderly resident by delivering a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings and a traditional Christmas pudding with cream. I was struck by how this was a positive experience for recipient and volunteer.

Just before Christmas I was able to support Stoke Primary school and One Big Family. My car was loaded with smallish boxes full of Christmas goodies supplied by the families of children at Stoke school. I then delivered he boxes to One Big Family in Chatham to be distributed to identified families in Medway. Additionally, 2 food parcels supplied by One Big Family were delivered to a gentleman in Wainscott and to a family in Lower Stoke. Both parcels were gratefully received and no doubt brought some Christmas cheer.

**wHoo Cares about Christmas**

wHoo Cares joined forces with Medway Sunlight Rotary Club and The Salvation Army at Christmas to deliver a Christmas Day lunch to residents who were on their own.

Due to current restrictions wHoo Cares wasn't able to host their usual sit-down Christmas Day meal, which is traditionally held in High Halstow. Christine, Manager at wHoo Cares understood that this year, more than ever, people were in need of some Christmas Day cheer so was delighted to join forces to deliver a full Christmas Day lunch and all the trimmings. With help from a wonderful team of volunteers, 30 lunches were delivered by wHoo Cares on 25th December, together with a gift bag full of treats and small gifts.

Pauline, receptionist as wHoo Cares made each recipient a Christmas placemat and coaster to add something special to the meal and Hoo Riverside Diner provided the Christmas Cake. Christmas Crackers were also included so that everyone had a paper hat and a little joke too!

One resident who received the lunch said "It made a difficult day so much better", whilst another thanked the volunteers for thinking of others and said the dinner was quite delicious.

As always, the community came together to help wHoo Cares deliver this Christmas cheer. It wouldn't have been possible to achieve this without the support of the people and organisations that kindly donated.

wHoo Cares would like to thank the following organisations and people for their kind donations: - Hoo St Werburgh Parish Council, National Grid - LNG Grain, HSBC – South East Team, Hoo Riverside Diner, Local Facebook group – Ho Ho Hoo, The Spar- Hoo, and a local resident who also kindly donated.

Michelle, Community Development Officer at wHoo Cares said that it was heart-warming that volunteers from the community gave up their time on Christmas Day to make a difference to others and extends a big thank you to them from everyone at wHoo Cares.

**Index B**

**High Halstow Environmental Group**
**REF: HHPC1062:13.01.21**

Since the last meeting on the 16th November some members have meet informally and agreed actions and developments are noted below.

- Marilyn will select questions from those sent by Chris and then forward to Viv Parker and Vicky Emrit (Medway Climate Change Officer) (both were recommended by Thelma West of Towards Plastic Free Medway)
- For Interest search Waste and Recycling Destinations on the Medway Council Home Page
- For Interest ...Here ia a link to a Virtual Tour of a Souhwark Veolia Material Recycling Facility (MRF) https://www.veolia.co.uk/london/wonderdaysouthwarkiwmf. If you follow this link, you will find lots of fascinating information about what happens to our recycling. There are also fabulous videos and insights into how the MRF operates here: https://www.veolia.co.uk/southwark/iwmf/videos.
- Marilyn wil forward the link to HHPC and to the WI and share the link in the HH Times
- Chris P will further investigate Terracycle possibilities by contacting a Terracycle collector who lives in Strood and further investigate the Terracycle website.
- Chris and Marilyn will liaise re above and find out more about Terracycle in preparation for identifying ways forward and a future article for HH Times to include an explanation of the company.
- At January Parish council meeting Marilyn will propose that Thelma West form Plastic Free Medway gives a short talk (15 mins) at the beginning of February 2021 Parish Council Meeting
- Marilyn will contact Christina Lamb from Intra Arts re waste items that she collects for projects and recycling
- After information from Ray it was agreed that January Parish Council meeting will be asked to approve a plan to allow the primary school to plant trees on Forge common. Ray suggested asking "Community Facilities" for Funding. High Halstow Primary to be contacted when appropriate.

- Marilyn will write something for the next HH Times. It will include a brief statement about "Why we need to recycle" with something from Medway Council about how best residents can manage their household recycling
- Marilyn will give notification of the next HH E group meeting and a request for a volunteer to set up an Environment Quiz night (might need to think about the title ???)
- Marilyn will speak to contacts passed on by Thelma West and ask for advice about setting up a FB "Eco Hub"
- In the future a FB blog could develop online discussion

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**Relief in Need**

**REF: HHPC1074:13.01.21**

It is one year since the Trustees met face to face but the charity's work continues successfully; all advice and guidance from the Charity Commission is being followed.

There are seven Trustees:

- The Rector
- Two Church Wardens
- Two Nominative Trustees, chosen by the Parish Council (four year term of office)
- Two Co-optative Trustees, chosen by the Trustees (five year term of office)

Our names and contact details are published in the High Halstow Times with a brief history of the charity and the following statement: "*Requests for financial assistance can be made at any time of the year, in writing, email or in person to any one of the Trustees. A resident can apply on behalf of someone else in the village but their permission must be obtained first of all. All requests are dealt with in the strictest confidence. If you are not sure about a request and think it may be rejected, do not be afraid to speak to any of the Trustees. These funds are there for villagers who need help.*"

Here are some statistics about the Baby Grants.
Since 1st March 2019 the Relief In Need charity has been offering Baby Grants and these have proved very successful. You will have seen them advertised in the HHT. They were trialled initially as the trustees had no idea how popular they might be.
As at end of December 2020 (i.e. 22 months after first offering Baby Grants) 12 grants have been given to residents of HH. Within the first four months there were 5 grants given, and then there was a period of 7 months with no applications at all, then there were three grants given in one week in March 2020, with a fairly steady stream of applications since then.