

### Traveller incursion

On the evening of Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April travellers broke onto the Elm Tree Football grounds, home to Paddock Wood FC and owned by Paddock Wood Town Council. They gained access by removing the padlocks and forcing down the security bollards which the Council has installed on the site to try to prevent such break ins.

Assisted by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Community Safety Unit notice was served on them by the Town Council on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April advising them that they did not have permission to be on site and asking them to leave.

The Clerk and Estates Manager also attended on Saturday evening as the alarm in the Pavilion had been triggered. There was no apparent damage and one of the travellers advised that the children had been kicking a ball against the building.

The travellers were instructed to leave by Kent Police on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April and left that evening. Whilst on site the travellers damaged fencing which had been put up by the Football Club, gained access to the pavilion damaging the alarms & doors and were seen using air rifles and driving quad bikes on site. Three gates which were waiting to be installed and were stored inside the pavilion were reported as stolen by the Football Club. This was reported to the police and registered as a crime. There was a large amount of green waste from where the travellers had carried out garden clearance work and tree surgery locally. Domestic and human waste was also left on the field.

Town Council Estates Staff, supported by some residents, spent Wednesday clearing the waste and ensuring the site was safe and ready for the club to be able to use the main pitch on the Easter Weekend. They also repaired the fire damage to the Junior pitch. The Council engaged the services of a sanitation company to clear the human waste and disinfect the contaminated areas. The club were able to play all their senior matches on Easter Weekend.

Repairs to the pavilion, fencing and gates will be carried out as soon as is possible.

A smaller group of travellers returned on the evening Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April and smashed fencing to gain access to the green space adjoining Paddock Wood Cemetery. The Town Council, again assisted by the Community Safety Unit served notice to leave on Good Friday. The travellers left on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April, leaving behind domestic and human waste along with green waste from their gardening work.

Council Estates Staff cleared the area and made it safe and secure for residents to use again.

Estimated costs are as follows

ELM TREE	
Skip Hire	£400
Contractor to remove excess waste	£1000
Sanitise Field	£300
Repairs to doors	£289
Repairs to Alarm	TBA
Replacement Bollards	£1,000
Repairs to fence & gates	£2000
TOTAL	£4989

CEMETERY	
Skip Hire	£400
Sanitise Field	£300
Repairs to fencing	£840
TOTAL	£1,540

The clean up costs can be re-charged to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council as part of the scheme which the council pays into each year.

An insurance claim for the damage to the fencing, alarm and doors will be made as this is deemed to be malicious damage to property for which the council is covered.

Going forward the options for securing the sites are as follows:

Elm Tree site – the current bollards have been damaged, at least once is beyond repair. The football club have asked that the Council consider installing the higher security bollards and have identified ones with internal locks rather than padlocks which cost £460 each see below.



The council could also consider having a concrete block stored alongside the pavilion which could be lifted into place by a local contractor when travellers are known to be

in the area. However, this would block access to the field for the duration and would require having someone available to install it quickly.

Cemetery site – this is the second time there has been an incursion onto the cemetery field. The travellers have destroyed the fence in the same location on each occasion. The Estates Manager has sourced concrete blocks which could be placed along the inside of the fence line (see attached)

The blocks are 1.4m long, if a gap of 1.6m is left between them (council vehicle is 2m wide) 21 blocks would be required to cover the 65m fence line with a space left at the ends. Also, this would allow for tree planting up to 6 trees and then in autumn mixed hedge to hide the blocks could be planted to hide the blocks. The fence is over 20 years old and will inevitably need replacing in the not-too-distant future. It could be removed once the hedge has become established. This would also fit with the Council's aspiration to plant more trees and hedging.

Costs

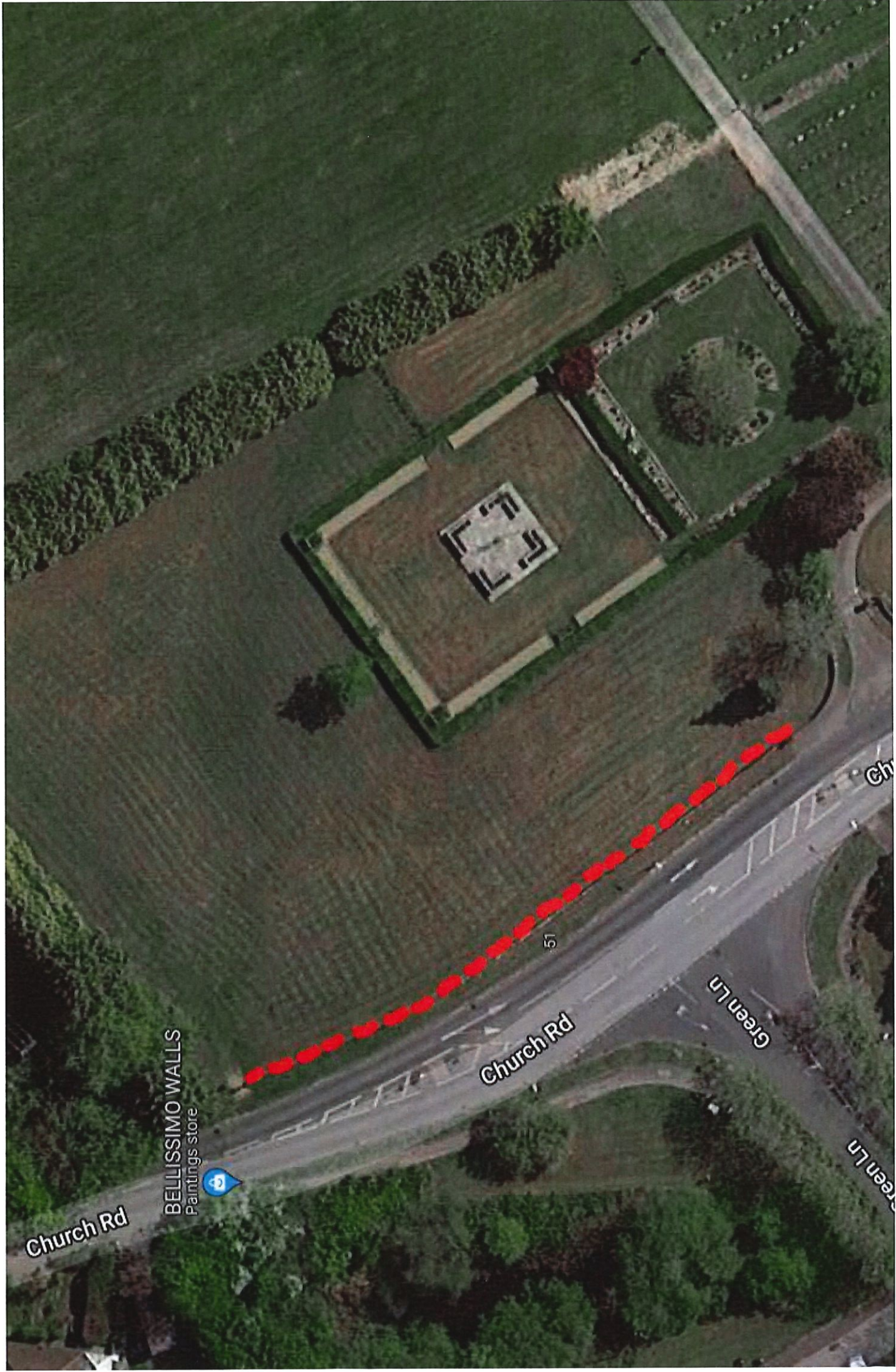
21 blocks @ £76 ea	£1365
Delivery	£250
Total	£1615

Members views on the above option are sought.

NICHOLA REAY  
Clerk to the Council



FS91



Church Rd

BELLISSIMO WALLS  
Paintings store

Church Rd

Green Ln

Green Ln

Ch

51



FS9



ES96

**Nichola Reay**

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**From:** Ben Wiseman <ben.wiseman@radiofibre.com>  
**Sent:** 26 April 2022 13:22  
**To:** Nichola Reay  
**Subject:** Helping connect local communities

Dear Sir or Madame,

I wanted to talk with the town council about helping families in the surrounding area who are still struggling with less than 2Mbps of broadband. People cannot work from home, children cannot do their homework and yet a couple of miles away there is a surplus of fibre.

We are a small engineering firm who have specialised in helping remote moorland farms. The UK Gov are keen for companies like ours to help the small hamlets in Kent who are not big enough to attract major Comms companies. We have technology to buy commercial fibre in Paddock Wood and send it with 1Gbps radio links (1ft diameter radios) a few miles to areas that fibre will not reach for a few years. The local planning departments we have engaged with have been very keen to see us succeed, with our discrete 20ft telegraph pole installations, as they do not spoil the countryside and can be removed easily once fibre is brought to an area.

We are currently in discussions with the Castle Hill Cricket Club to act as a relay station. Given their location on the top of a prominent hill, they would be able to help us provide fast broadband to half a dozen or more hamlets in the surrounding area still struggling with slow internet.

What we would be asking from Paddock Wood Council is to allow us to use the Green Lane Sports Hall as a source of fibre to then send up to Castle Hill where it can be supplied to the surrounding hamlets.

Our target communities are small hamlets of 5 to ten houses, so I am afraid that our work does not attract huge wayleaves. However, what we can offer is free Wi-Fi to the Sports Hall or provide an equivalent cash donation to the club as well as covering the cost of electricity our devices use in exchange for setting up a couple of small 1ft radios and an enclosure onto the Sports Hall.

We do not want any rights to the land, we are there as guests and simply ask for six months' notice to find a new location should the committee ever decide they did not want us on site.

We design community solutions for remote hamlets to give modern comms to families until fibre arrives at their doors. We hope you will be as enthusiastic as we are to help local families and hamlets finally gain access to modern internet speeds despite their isolated location.