

## **Centre Piece for June Keys Magazine**

What a beautifully warm and sunny Bank Holiday we have all been able to enjoy! The sunshine brought smiles to many faces and it was great to see families out and about enjoying the many events, including the Hildenborough Road Race.

This week, on 9 May, the Parish Council held its Annual Meeting when the chairman, vice chairman and committee members are all elected or selected. We were very fortunate to retain the same chairman as last year, Claire Sheldon and vice chairman, Margaret Coles. In fact no one wanted to change committee and consequently all remains the same for the last year of this Parish Council.

The Parish Council works very hard to support the community on many matters which concern residents by providing facilities, liaising with the Borough Council and Kent County Council on services provided by them and representing the views of residents on many matters of concern to the community. It was therefore somewhat disturbing to learn during the Annual Meeting that certainly some residents do not realise that the Parish Council is able to represent the views of the community on matters of concern, for instance on planning matters. In order to do this they do need everyone to let them know their views when consultations from the Borough Council, County Council and government are published. These are always discussed at Parish Council meetings, for instance recently there has been a consultation on Parliamentary boundaries from the Boundary Commission and Kent County Council has sought the Parish Council's views on the condition of roads and footways. So if you do have views, comments or objections on proposals such as these please do make contact. Formal consultations from these bodies is usually published in the press, on notice boards, outside premises concerned for planning applications, news programmes and social media.

To express views, comments or objections personally to you or the community in general do please get in touch with us through the usual channels – phone, email, letter or at the Farmers' Market on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month.

This month, rather later than usual due to bringing the Council meeting forward to the second Wednesday of the month, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2017/18 was ratified by the Council. This includes agreement to governance statements and the year-end financial statement. Further financial matters included the adoption of the revised Standing Orders and amendments to the Financial Regulations.

The Council was also able to consider quotations for the extension to West Wood play area and the replacement roundabout in the Recreation Ground. They were able to confirm acceptance of a quotation to replace the roundabout but due to two of the quotations not including one of the chosen pieces of equipment in West Wood decided to hold this pending more information. It is still hoped to get the extension in place during the Summer.

Several residents have contacted the Council regarding the proposal for a footway along Stocks Green Road. All have so far been in favour with one or two excellent suggestions. The letters to residents in Stocks Green Road should be with you before you read this for your response to the proposal. The closing date for this is 12 June as a decision will be made at the Parish Council Meeting on 13 June whether to include this in the Development Plan for the future. There needs to be a significant number of local residents who would use the footway for plans to be drawn up and funding sought.

One decision which was made was to agree to spend £1,270 on the painting of 30mph roundels on the B245 between Foxbush and the boundary with Tonbridge. It is to be hoped that vehicle drivers will notice these and adhere to the speed limit.

Recently a local resident alerted us to a mature oak tree in West Wood which had started to lean. Immediately our caretaker and a tree surgeon took a look at this tree. It did have late leaf burst but there were not visible signs of disease. However, the Parish Council take the safety of residents or visitors to West Wood very seriously indeed and has requested a further more detailed examination of the tree by the company which undertakes the Council's tree survey.

The question of the confirmation of the re-routing of a footpath around Hawden Farm was raised by the chairman of the Ramblers Association for this area at this month's meeting. Prior to this three local residents had contacted us to object to this confirmation. The Council had responded to the original consultation late last year and having received no comments from local residents asked around its members their family and friends for their views, some of whom knew or were keen walkers, but received no objection to this diversion which had been in place during renovations to the Farm House. In response, the chairman and other members are to visit the area to investigate the diversion on behalf of the Council.

Part of the meeting was taken up with consideration and approval of a number of items concerning the new legislation, General Data Protection Review. No doubt you will already have been contacted by numerous organisations regarding consent to hold your contact details and their privacy notices. The Council approved a number of documents which will be available on our website by the time you read this.

There were recent flooding incidents in response to which the Emergency Flood Plan came into operation. There were two incidents following very heavy rain, one in Riding Lane and the other, due to blocked culverts, in Stocks Green Road. We have to thank two of our members for responding to this emergency, helping with sandbags etc., in one case, it was too late to stop the invasive water. The Council is meeting with Kent Highways Engineers to press for more investigation into the flooding issues suffered by residents in Stocks Green Road. Following earlier complaints, some work has already been undertaken in this area. However, it does not seem that it is totally adequate.

One last thing – a plea for help. The Council will be planting bulbs around the village green in the Autumn – is anyone able to help with this? If so please contact me.

Don't forget, do contact us with ideas, queries or just to find out who can help, on the usual phone number 01732 832367 (do leave a message if I am not able to answer at that time and I will get back to you as soon as possible), by email [clerk@hildenboroughpc.kentparishes.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hildenboroughpc.kentparishes.gov.uk) or letter to the usual address. Two members will be at the Farmers' Market on Tuesday 12 June if you have any queries as well bus timetables and the new train timetables will be available, together with the Parish Council publications.

*Pam Gow*