

Centre Piece for November Keys Magazine

The sudden drop in temperature has been a shock to the system and a reminder that winter is around the corner. However, this hasn't dampened the excitement over the construction of the new Activity Zone. We have all been anxiously watching it gradually develop over the past two weeks. Currently the fitness equipment is in place (see picture below), the zip wire only requires some branches on overhanging trees to be cut back and the wire installed, the basket swing needs the swing to be hung and the cone climber fitted in place. There is just one hold-up on the Atona multi-play unit which was despatched without six vital brackets. These are currently in Sweden! We hope they will be with us within a week.

By the time you read this the whole Activity Zone should be open to all. There is to be an official opening on 31 October to which all those who have sponsored or helped us to develop the area will be invited and any interested residents. Dame Kelly Holmes has kindly agreed to open the Activity Zone. Following the opening there is to be a demonstration of the fitness equipment by a local fitness trainer.



We do have one problem with the old equipment which is to be retained, that of the roundabout. I am sure many of you will have noticed it has become a seat rather than a roundabout as a result of water getting into the bearing which as a result have become corroded and now refuse to move. We thought new bearings would be the answer but when an expert looked at it they discovered the reason why we have had so many problems with it since its installation. Apparently it had been installed incorrectly as no provision had been made for drainage and consequently water has been collecting underneath it. The Parish Council now have to decide how to respond to this – will they have the roundabout reset and drainage channels constructed or will they replace it? It is a difficult decision as both options are likely to be very expensive.

One piece of good news is that the Conservation Officer from KCC has been to inspect the War Memorial and has agreed that it is in need of renovation. It needs to be cleaned and repaired in places. Hopefully it will not take long to sort out the detail as we have already obtained one quotation to be considered. The Parish Council has also put it forward for listing by Heritage England and this is currently under consideration which could result in it being protected.

The War Memorial, will of course, be the centre for the Remembrance Day service on 13 November. The Parish Council has replanted the borders in preparation. The only problem at the moment is finding enough volunteers to man the road closures. If you are willing to help do contact George Gorham who is arranging this.

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council has now gone out to consultation on aspects of the new Local Plan. The Parish Council will be responding to this after their next meeting on 16 November. If you have any comments please let the Parish Council know in order that they can be considered along with members' own views. You can find a copy of the report and associated papers on the Borough Council website at www.tmbc.gov.uk and follow the link to Public Consultation: Local Plan – The Way Forward.

There always seem to be many issues regarding highways and this month was no exception. The Parish Council had contacted Kent Highways regarding the road surface around the Brookmead area, in particular Woodview Crescent. After inspection by the Highways Steward it was declared to be safe and not in need of emergency repairs. The Area Manager has made representation to the budget holder for some action to be taken in 2017/18 as all the funds for 2016/17 have already been allocated. Since the budget is to be much reduced in the coming year we feel it will be in the balance whether or not it is included.

The Parish Council was pleased to hear that 5 volunteers have come forward to man the Speedwatch scheme which sets out to monitor the speed of travelling vehicles noting those who are exceeding the limit and passing information on to the police. However the scheme cannot be set up without more volunteers coming forward so if you are able to help please let me know via the contact details below. I think everyone is concerned about the volume of traffic now using the local roads as some drivers do not show much consideration for pedestrians, cyclist or horse riders. There is a group of residents getting together to raise awareness of road safety.

One of our members has been busy for some time going through the old minute books of the Parish Council and has compiled an interesting volume of stories about the village between 1894 and 1958. It makes very interesting reading and, when published by the Parish Council early next year, will contain over 50 old photographs to bring back memories of yesteryear in this area. Early in the New Year you will find a leaflet in Keys for those who would like to subscribe to this new publication – so do look out for it. The leaflet will give you details of the publication and a form to complete to subscribe and be listed in the book as a subscriber.

Don't forget to contact me if you have a query, an offer of help or just a good idea or you may wish to talk to representatives from the Parish Council at the Farmers' Market on 8 November between 10 and 11 am. My contact details are: by email clerk@hildenboroughpc.kentparishes.gov.uk or phone 01732832367 or write to the Parish Council address.