

## **Centre Piece for March Keys Magazine**

At last everything seems to be getting back to something like 'normal' and even the spring flowers are starting to appear. Let us hope the COVID infection rates start to fall from their current very high level. The Parish Council held their meeting as usual in February, after the January break, which resulted in quite a lengthy agenda.

**Financial matters** were high on the agenda with members agreeing the Council's account balances and payments as well as making provision for some important payments in March. The insurance cover for 2022/23 needed to be agreed and several adjustments were made this year which has resulted in a slightly smaller premium than last year. The grounds maintenance contracts were also agreed, the Council choosing to stay with their current contractors. A new accounting system for the Council was also approved for the start of the new financial year in April which will enable budgets to be monitored and compared much more closely.

**West Wood Service Road** – look out during March for the resurfacing of the Service Road. The Council will need to close this for the short time it will take to get the work completed – so please bear with us and use the footway along the B245.

**The Annual Parish Meeting** is to be held in the Jim England Hall at 7.30pm on **Wednesday 9 March, 2022**. The Council hope that as many residents as possible will be able to come along to hear what they have achieved during the past year, ask questions or put forward ideas. We also have a local speaker who is to give a short talk which we believe will be of interest to everyone. The meeting should conclude by 9pm. This Council is inviting, as usual, any club or organization to have a table to show residents who attend what they have to offer. Please either email or phone me to book a table. Look out for our posters, on our website [www.hildenboroughpc.org.uk/](http://www.hildenboroughpc.org.uk/), or social media to find reminders of times and further details of what is on offer – there will be refreshments before hand.

**Vote for Hildenborough Litter Picking Group** – Don't forget if you are shopping in Tesco in Sevenoaks to vote for our Litter Picking Group so they can obtain more equipment to help keep the village neat and tidy. The group with the highest number of votes receives £1,500!

**Highways improvements – Enhanced Belisha beacons:** The excellent news is that, finally, after petitions by students from Sackville and lobbying by the Parish Council on behalf of residents, KCC has finally approved the replacement of the belisha beacons on the zebra crossing near the junction with Riding Lane/Tonbridge Road. The Parish Council is to fund these enhanced, and consequently more visible, beacons as they felt that the improvements to the safety of pedestrians with the enhanced beacons on the crossing near the Medical Centre had been a great success.

**Speeding vehicles:** There continues to be many vehicles speeding along the B245 as recorded by SpeedWatch and reported by residents suffering from the effects of this, not least their safety, noise and exhaust fumes. It is very difficult to know the best way to address this as speed checks by the police seems to be a very scarce commodity. The Council will look to include replacement interactive signage in their Highways Improvement Plan when it is reviewed at the end of the summer.

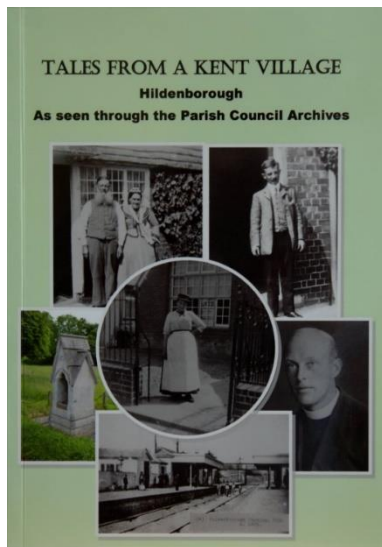
Other highways matters under consideration are improvements to Riding Lane, the Shipbourne end, where vehicles make a habit of ending up in the stream, parking on footways also continues to be a real problem as do vehicles driving along the footway to avoid a wait when others are turning right.

This was highlighted by residents attending the Parish Council Meeting this month. Representation has been made for a 20mph speed limit outside of Hildenborough Church of England Primary School.

**Village Hall improvements:** The Council together with the Management Committee who run the village hall is looking into providing some acoustic boards to improve the enjoyment of those attending meetings with clarity of sound. The Parish Council is also going to have to provide its own access to broadband to enable them to view plans from the Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council's portal as well, in the long term, it is hoped to be able to invite residents to attend Parish Council meetings from the comfort of their own homes via Zoom or similar.



**Queen's Platinum Jubilee:** to celebrate plans are in hand to plant a tree on the Village Green as a small contribution to the Queen's Green Canopy, to take part in the beacon lighting across the country, and there is talk of some street parties (permission must be obtained from KCC for road closures if you want to organize one).



One of your Councillors will be at the Farmers' Market on 8 March to listen to your comments, ideas or queries and will also have copies of our publication, *Tales from a 'Kent Village, Hildenborough as seen through the Parish Council Archives'* so don't forget to look out for them. You can, of course, contact me with any queries etc. on 01732 832367 or via our **new email** address of [clerk@hildenboroughpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@hildenboroughpc.org.uk)