

Centre Piece for June Keys Magazine

Annual Parish Council Meeting: It was the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 11 May 2022 at which a chair is elected for the following year and all members decide which committees they will serve or represent the Council on official bodies. The draft minutes on our website www.hildenboroughpc.org.uk/ which will give all the details but suffice to say Margaret Coles remains chair of the Council for a further year as does David Haugh as vice chair.

Co-option of new members: It was a very productive and successful meeting this month. The Council was very lucky to have a choice of residents, even if it was very difficult to decide who as all seemed to be well suited, to fill the two vacancies. After deliberation they decided to co-opt Lucy Gabriel and Caspar Mackay, and they were both invited to join the meeting at that point.

Leigh Flood Barrier expansion: The good news is the Environment Agency is now undertaking work on the Expansion of the Leigh Flood Barrier, the not so good news is that they will need to close some of the very popular footpaths around the area. There is a notice, including a map, showing dates when these will be closed on the Parish Council website. We continue to await news on the development of the Hildenborough embankment.

Resurfacing the Ball Court: This month the Council took many important decisions regarding improvements to their leisure facilities. The ball court is to be resurfaced with drainage included which it is hoped will leave it playable following wet weather. The back boards and goals are also to be replaced as well as the games markings repainted. The new surface should be a big improvement on the previous tarmac.

Lighting Rings Hill railway bridge: Also agreed was, following investigation into its feasibility, lighting for the railway bridge in Rings Hill so that pedestrians leaving or arriving at the station will be able to see their way over the bridge after sunset or before sunrise. There have been many requests for this to happen in the past so the Council is now very pleased to announce that two lighting columns are to be installed either end of the bridge which they are assured will light the way to make it safer for pedestrians on the footway opposite.

Car park lighting: Talking of lighting, yet another decision was taken to provide low lighting for the car park in the Recreation Ground. There had, as with the lighting of the Railway Bridge in Rings Hill, been many requests for this. The area is, currently, very dark after sunset and many felt insecure from the safety point of view of falls or becoming a victim to crime. Generally speaking the area is very safe with very few reports of anti-social behaviour.



Queen's Platinum

Jubilee: The Council was very keen to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and have planted a tree to celebrate the occasion on the Village Green. This tree has a very long name, and for those interested it is, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* Goldrush tree, or for the sake of ease Goldrush Tree. They are now organizing a plaque to be installed on the nearby planter (the tree is obviously too small to have a similar plaque to those in the Recreation Ground).

Ash dieback: One big problem to be tackled by the Council is that of ash dieback, particularly in West Wood. The Council know, from planning applications, that they are not alone in this area as several residents have had their own ash trees affected and consequently felled. They are to have a survey undertaken of all of West Wood and of those in Recreation Ground to develop a plan to deal with the problem. It is going to be exceedingly expensive to have the trees felled which is the only solution for those which are infected, particularly as when they die they become brittle and consequently more likely than other trees to lose limbs.

Meet members at the Farmers' Market: Two members attended the Farmers' Market this month and were pleased to meet with local residents. There were a few problems noted and dealt with. The biggest problem seemed to be the condition of one particular footpath, that from Tonbridge Road to Stocks Green Road, across the road and up to Leigh Road. There are numerous humps in

the section to Leigh Road and problems with falling fencing on the section to Tonbridge Road. These have all been reported and the County Council and a response is awaited.

Visibility exiting the Recreation Ground: Another safety measure was agreed at the meeting which I am sure many of you will be able to sympathize with if you take your car into the Recreation Ground car park. The visibility on exiting now that the leaves are fully developed within the hedge makes visibility difficult. The Council has agreed to have the hedge cut down and back to half its current size either side of the exit. A landscape expert believes this will be a great improvement.

Don't forget if you have any queries, concerns or ideas which the Council can help with do make contact, either at the Farmers' Market on the second Tuesday of the month (next time 14 June) or ring on 01732 832367 (do leave a message if I am unable to answer and I will get back to you as soon as possible) or email me on clerk@hildenboroughpc.org.uk

Pam Gow