

CENTRE PIECE FOR MAY KEYS MAGAZINE

In spite of thinking a few days ago that Spring had really begun members battled their way to the Parish Council Meeting held on 12 April through torrential rain and high winds. This was the meeting at which all the financial matters were reported for the previous accounting year of 2022/23.

Accounts for 2022/23 were approved as were the official returns to be sent to the external auditors, this year Mazars. These will all be available for residents to view on the Council's website early in June.

Local Elections 4 May 2023: The Council received the news that six of the current members have been re-elected in an uncontested election to the next Parish Council starting on 10 May, 2023. As there were only six nominations this will mean the Council will need to co-opt five more members. If you are interested in improving the facilities within the Village do please let me know and I can give you further details.

Don't forget you need **ID to vote on 4th May 2023**, passport or photo driving license to name two ways. Your voting cards give a full list and if you do not possess these the Borough Council can supply you with a suitable document.

The end of this Parish Council's term of office: The chair thanked all members for their work during the life of this Council and also thanked those resigning after a number of years. Those not standing this time include David Haugh the Council's current vice-chair who has, for a number of years, been a very active member, as well as Tony Fullbrook who has other commitments, Caspar Mackay and Mike Woodham due to pressure of work.



The sad sight of the diseased ash tree trunks before they were transported away.

West Wood: It was a very busy agenda as in addition to financial matter there were many decisions needed on matters relating to the Council's Open Space and highways issues. As I am sure many children have tried out the new play equipment in West Wood, you will be pleased to know that the Installation Safety Report found only two minor faults to address, one being completed already and the other involves the replacement of one of the panels.

The problems associated with the removal of the diseased ash trees are starting to be addressed. Most of the brash will be chipped and used to build up the footpaths within the woodland during the course of the summer and the



The cycle track before the need to remove the diseased ash trees – soon to be restored for another generation of cyclists.

replanting will be undertaken by Hildenborough Conservation Group in the Autumn. This will give the Council time to find a solution to the water which has appeared opposite the Medical Centre, and get repairs to the cycle track undertaken so this can be used once again.

Accessible footpath in West Wood: Another consideration is being given to providing an accessible to all footpath within the woodland and this is currently being investigated. Hopefully there will be more news on this in the coming months.

Flood Warden Scheme: We continue to need two more volunteers for the flood warden scheme which was called upon to help recently during heavy rain when some drains became blocked. A number of sandbags from our store saved the day together with the Environment Agency who arrived promptly to unblock the offending drain. Another area in Elm Grove continues to give cause for concern as little official action has been taken to unblock this drain. The Parish Council continues to pursue this. The Council would like to thank the wardens who volunteered to help during this latest flood alert.

Highways matters: The other items which took some time to discuss were highways related matters. There have been requests for dropped kerbs to aid those who use wheelchairs/pushchair move safely around the village. We are to submit a list of these to KCC to see if these can be installed.

Safety for bus passengers: Another suggestion is that at the bus stop next to One Stop could be built out to aid passengers trying to alight from or catch buses in safety. Please let us know your views on this, it will be discussed fully at the May Annual Parish Council Meeting.

The Highway Improvement Plan was again under discussion as residents continue to be very concerned about vehicles mounting the footway at the Leigh Road/Tonbridge Road junction. You may remember that the Parish Council's request to have railings installed was refused by KCC witnessed them please get in touch to let us know so that we can judge how often this happens to add to the evidence base.

Don't forget if you have any concerns or ideas you can call me on 01732 832367 or via email on clerk@hildenboroughpc.org.uk and I will be pleased to help, point you in the right direction or note your ideas. This will be my penultimate Centre Piece as I will be retiring at the end of May. Next time look out for an introduction to the new Hildenborough Parish Council Clerk.

Pam Gow