

CENTRE PIECE FOR JUNE 2023 KEYS MAGAZINE

During the past 17 years it has been my privilege to serve the Parish Council as their clerk and on Wednesday 10 May 2023 we said our fond farewells. It was with mixed feelings that I am leaving, primarily as the support and help given to me over the years by members of the Council could not have been better. At the meeting both of us said our thank yous to each other.

I am sure you all know how hard the Council works on the community's behalf in improving and providing facilities as well as ensuring that the other tiers of local government cover their responsibilities as effectively as possible and at this Annual Parish Council Meeting it was no exception but before they could take any actions the new (following the recent election) Council had to make their declarations of acceptance of office.

Several members remain on the Council, (Margaret Coles who was re-elected as chair, Karen Dobson elected as vice chair, Andrew McNeil, Colmar Lewis, Ioannis Sklavenitis and Lucy Gabriel) and at the meeting three more members were co-opted. They are Sandy Thomas who was a very active and helpful member on the previous Council, Nick Harrowing and Cathy Wynne both of whom we know will be great assets to the Council. However, there continue to be 2 vacancies. If you feel you could spare a few hours a month to work as a member of the Council please do get in touch. The Council's new clerk is Julia Church. She was welcomed to the Council at the meeting and I am sure she will be very happy to give you more information and answer any questions you may have.

The Annual Parish Meeting is also the time when membership of the committees and groups is agreed and if you are interested in who has taken on what do look at our website www.hildenboroughpc.org.uk under List of Members and you will see what they have opted to do.

This month there is a series of very important thank yous to make:

- (1) Retiring members of the Parish Council:** a very big thank you to: David Haugh who was not only vice chair but also chair of Open Space Group which oversees the management of the Council land and property, Tony Fullbrook, Caspar Mackay and Mike Woodhams all of whom contributed much to the work of the Council.
- (2) Litter Picking Group:** The Council would like to thank Emily Simons for all her hard work organising the littering picking group and also to all the volunteers and everyone who attends the litter pick each month. It is amazing to note that 108 sacks of litter have been collected to date this year. A further thank you goes to the Duke of Edinburgh volunteers for their consistent support. Congratulations to them all on completing their trek during May. The final thank you is to the kind volunteer who has donated some litter picking equipment for the group.
- (3) Hildenborough Road Race:** The Council would also like to thank and congratulate the organisers of the very successful Hildenborough Road Race. There has been lots of positive feedback and lots of great compliments following the event.
- (4) Coronation Tea Party:** The coronation of King Charles III was celebrated in style despite the threat of rain, resulting in it being relocated to the Village Hall. The organisers, particular



Some of the 108 bags collected to date.

Karen Dobson and Janet Richardson who were the initiators of the whole event, worked tirelessly to provide an afternoon of fun and frivolity for all ages. It was a great success and the Council would like to express their grateful thanks to all who helped make this such a special day.

Highways matters: At the meeting on Wednesday 10 May a local resident attended regarding the problems at the junction of Tonbridge Road and Leigh Road, of right turning vehicles blocking the path of through traffic who then mount the footway resulting in some pedestrians having to jump out of the way. The Council had been investigating this problem as reported in earlier Centre Piece's and through pursuing this problem yet again have achieved some measure of success. KCC has agreed that bollards maybe the answer. They are not allowed, because of the width of the footpath, to erect railings similar to those on the other corners of the junction but are confident that regulations will allow one or two bollards. The Parish Council will support this way forward and are awaiting the final decision from KCC.

West Wood: Finally the Council may have reached a decision regarding the removal of the brush left on site following the felling of the diseased ash trees. They considered three quotations for this project at the meeting and in the end decided on one of the quotations which provided the best solution, leaving the area, they hope, in a suitable state for the new trees to be planted in the Autumn.

The cycle track, as you probably know, continues to be out of action. The Council is hopeful that this may be resolved or even back in use by the time you read this but it is all dependent on the contractor being able to fit this work into their busy schedule. It would certainly be great to get this back in action once again for all the keen young cyclist to enjoy.



The pump cycle track on the day it was opened in 2012. The Council is getting it restored following the damage during the tree felling earlier this year.

As ever if you want to contact the Parish Council with any ideas or questions you may have, please use the usual email address clerk@hildenboroughpc.org.uk as Julia will be taking this over from the end of May. The telephone number will change so do not use the current one. The new number will be found on the website and on our notice boards as well as on outgoing emails. As usual a member will be present at the Farmers' Market on the second Tuesday of the month, 13 June this coming month.

With grateful thanks for all your support and help over the years and wishing everyone a good summer.

Pam Gow.