

CENTRE PIECE FOR MARCH 2024 KEYS MAGAZINE

Preparations are under way for this year's Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 14 March in the Village Hall, Riding Lane when residents will be updated on the work undertaken by the Parish Council over the course of the last twelve months. There will be a number of representatives from local organisations present at the event, including Hildenborough Speedwatch, Hildenborough Conservation Group, Hildenborough Guides, St. John's Church, Hildenborough Gardeners' Society and Tonbridge U3A. These organisations will be alongside representatives from the Environment Agency who will be hosting their drop-in session from 6.30pm in order to answer questions about the Leigh Embankment and Hildenborough Expansion Scheme. The Area Operations Manager at the Environment Agency, Ian Nunn, will be speaking about the project and taking questions from audience during the meeting. If you would like to promote your organisation at the event, please contact the clerk as soon as possible to book a table. Refreshments will be served from 7pm when there will be the opportunity to view the stalls before the commencement of the meeting at 7.30pm.

On Wednesday 14th February, the Parish Council were delighted to welcome a new councillor onto the council, Hildenborough resident Martyn Wills, who will be serving on the council's Open Spaces Group and Planning Committee. This means that the Parish Council now has its full complement of 11 parish councillors, all volunteers, working hard to help look after the village on behalf of its residents.

We are very grateful to the Chair of the Village Hall Committee, David Haugh, for looking after the maintenance of the five defibrillators installed in Hildenborough by the Parish Council. He recently replaced the batteries in the defibrillators at St. John's Church Centre, Tonbridge Road and the Village Hall, Riding Lane, ensuring they will be in good working order should they be needed in the event of an emergency. The three other defibrillators are located at the Oast Theatre, London Road, the Pavilion in the Recreation Ground, Riding Lane and Hilden Park Accountants, Hilden Park Road..

Highways

We have progress to report regarding the installation of bollards on the pavement in front of the Flying Dutchman. Kent Highways passed the job to their contractors on 19th January for completion within 90 days. At the time of writing the installation of the wigwag traffic warning signs in Riding Lane is due to take place any day now, so hopefully they will be in operation by the time you are reading this article.

Residents in the Brookmead area of Hildenborough will be pleased to hear that the Parish Council have agreed to instruct Kent County Council to install dropped kerbs in five locations that are currently very difficult to navigate with a wheelchair or buggy. Further updates will be shared via this article once KCC have given an indication as to when the work will take place.

Open Spaces

Plans are being drawn up to install a new picnic area in West Wood, on the other side of the service road close to the playground which will hopefully be ready for use later this summer. The picnic area will be wheelchair friendly, with a wheelchair-access picnic table. The council are also looking at different options for planters to install at the picnic area to provide an attractive area similar to the picnic area at the Village Green.

You may have noticed tree surgeons at West Wood recently, carrying out the dead-wooding recommended by tree inspectors to ensure none of the trees pose a safety risk. Unfortunately ash

die-back is still present in the wood so the council will be taking professional advice regarding the management of the diseased trees.

On a more positive note, the planting of the new trees to replace diseased ash trees has been completed by Hildenborough Conservation Society along with pupils from years 2, 1 and reception from Hildenborough Primary School, bringing the total of new trees planted by the Conservation Society with help from the scouts and school children to 47.

To report any concerns you believe the Parish Council may be able to assist with, please e-mail me at clerk@hildenboroughpc.org.uk or call me on 07818 329029. A member of the Parish Council will be attending the Farmers' Market on Tuesday 12 March when they will be happy to discuss any issues of concern that the Parish Council may be able to assist with.

Julia Church

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