

CENTRE PIECE FOR APRIL 2024 KEYS MAGAZINE

Annual Parish Meeting

It was great to see representatives from many local groups promoting their activities at this year's Annual Parish Meeting that took place on Thursday 14th March. In addition to St. John's Church, the Gardening Society, Conservation Group, History Society, Hildenborough Road Race and SpeedWatch, newcomers this year were the Tonbridge U3A and Tonbridge Bridge Club, both of whom welcome new members from Hildenborough. The Parish Council were also pleased to welcome County Councillor Harry Rayner and Borough Councillor, Mark Rhodes.

The team from the Environment Agency (EA) had a display, showing residents the progress being made on the Leigh Embankment and Hildenborough Expansion Scheme, which will be entering the next phase of construction, to build the 1.5m high bund to raise the level of the reservoir, this summer.

Vice-Chair, Cllr Karen Dobson chaired the meeting, giving an update on some activities of the Parish Council over the year, followed by a brief update on planning. Cllr Ioannis Sklavenitis as Chair of Open Spaces, updated the meeting on various projects completed and expressed thanks to Hildenborough Conservation Group for all their hard work looking after West Wood. He also thanked the Community Payback team for painting the fence around the perimeter of the playground in the Recreation Ground, the residents of Mount Pleasant for helping to water the trees on the Village Green, the volunteers who carry out the monthly Litter Pick and the Parish Council's Maintenance Contractor, Andy Baker, for all his work to keep tidy and maintain Hildenborough's beautiful Open Spaces. His final report was an overview of Finance.

Ian Nunn, Area Operations Manager for the EA and also Project Sponsor for the Scheme, was the keynote speaker at the meeting. Ian gave a clear and interesting presentation to explain how the flood alleviation works will affect the community, emphasising that they do not want to be a nuisance and will work hard to ensure there is a minimum impact on the residents of Hildenborough. The EA will publicise any upcoming traffic management schemes which the Parish Council will share via our Facebook page and Centre Piece articles. If you have any questions about the works, or would like to join the electronic distribution list for future updates from the EA, please e-mail the project team at LEHES@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Highways

As many residents will already have noticed, the bollards in front of The Flying Dutchmen have now been installed to prevent dangerous undertaking at the junction with Leigh Road. The wigwags (flashing warning lights) in Riding Lane have also been installed, ready to be programmed to operate during school drop-off and pick-up times. Thank you to Kent County Council for implementing both measures to improve road safety for the residents of Hildenborough.

In addition to the above, the Parish Council will be investigating further traffic calming measures that may be introduced in certain "hot spots" in the village. In the meantime, Kent County Council have provided the Parish Council with a "30mph Toolkit" consisting of bin stickers, posters and a PVC banner to raise awareness of the 30mph speed limit. Once placed on a rubbish/recycling bin, the bin stickers are a simple but effective way to remind motorists of the speed limit if you live in a road affected by speeding motorists. Stickers will be available to pick up from the Parish Councillor attending the Farmers' Market on the second Tuesday of the month, and arrangements will be made

to distribute the stickers to local outlets in Hildenborough where they can be picked up. You can also email the Clerk to arrange to collect one.

Five sets of dropped kerbs are due to be installed in the Brookmead area of Hildenborough by this summer.

Open Spaces

One of the issues raised at the Annual Parish Meeting was the problem of flooding on the Village Green which, during prolonged periods of heavy rain, encroaches upon properties bordering the Green. the Parish Council planted three willow trees on the Village Green a couple of years ago, a species of tree known for being very “thirsty”, but it will take a while for the trees make a difference. Cllr Sklavenitis assured the residents that the Parish Council are going to be looking into the matter again to see what further measures could be taken to resolve the problem.

Please e-mail me at clerk@hildenboroughpc.org.uk or call me on 07818 329029 if there are any issues or any feedback you would like to draw to the attention of the Parish Council, or speak to the Parish Councillor who will be attending the Farmers’ Market on Tuesday, 9th April.

Julia Church

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