

CENTRE PIECE FOR JULY 2024 KEYS MAGAZINE

It is always interesting for our Parish Councillors to hear the concerns of local residents when they meet them during the course of their activities in the village or at their monthly surgery at the Farmers' Market. The most common concerns tend to be around overgrown vegetation on the highways or speeding traffic, issues that affect most communities nowadays. However, on a more positive note, Hildenborough also has its beautiful open spaces, low crime rate and many great local amenities.

West Wood

The pump cycle track in West Wood is a popular open air amenity for local youngsters, and one of the Parish Council's landscape contractors makes regular visits to keep the brambles under control and check for any other hazards such as fallen branches and damage to its surface. Our maintenance contractor recently repaired a broken fence at the track, which was attracting the unwelcome attention of a couple of teenagers who were caught trying to inflict further damage to the fence with their boots. Please report any sightings you may have of any further destructive behaviour which I can then report to our local Beat Officer who can increase his patrols in the area. Fortunately, vandalism in Hildenborough is very rare, so hopefully this incident was a one-off and the youngsters involved will find more appropriate ways to expend their energy in future.

Later this summer we are looking forward to seeing the installation of the new picnic table in West Wood, located on the land in between the service road and Tonbridge Road and in line with the playground. The picnic table will be accessible to those in wheelchairs and will be a lovely new addition to West Wood.

The renovated pond is continuing to attract new wildlife and nature is helping the pond to gradually transform into a beautiful natural feature, embraced by the woodland. The Parish Council will soon be implementing further safety measures at its location, as recommended in a recent risk assessment.

Tree Survey

A safety survey has been carried out recently on the trees in West Wood, the Village Green and the Recreation Ground. We are looking forward to receiving the report and will then be able to arrange for any remedial work to be carried out to ensure the trees do not present a hazard to the public. Sadly, we still receive reports of trees having Ash Dieback from time to time, and if they are badly affected the trees may have to be taken down. Fortunately, we have not received any reports from the latest survey of any trees presenting a hazard that needs urgent attention. Trees can of course become unstable at any time after they have been inspected. If you spot a dangerously loose branch or other issue with one of the trees in the Parish Council's Open Spaces that you believe needs to be checked out by one of our contractors, it would be helpful if you could please contact me at the e-mail address or phone number below.

Police

PC Ollie Evans reported that for the month of May until 7th June, there were 16 crimes reported in Hildenborough, one or two less than usual for that time of the year. Four of the crimes were drug related, following vehicle stops on the B245, so the offenders were not necessarily from Hildenborough. Therefore, Ollie said that this does not mean that Hildenborough has an issue

with drug supply. Other crimes relate mainly to rural thefts, but this is an issue countrywide. Ollie says that securing sites, having CCTV cameras and being vigilant are all still key in preventing offences. With regard to the suspected dog poisonings that occurred in May, having carried out investigations and unable to identify a source, unfortunately he has drawn a blank but there is nothing to suggest any malicious intent. He will continue to monitor the situation but given there have been no further reports he is happy to say that it should be business as usual for local dog walkers.

To report any concerns you believe the Parish Council may be able to assist with, please e-mail me at my new e-mail address - clerk@hildenboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk or call me on 07818 329029. You can follow us on Facebook @hildenboroughparishcouncil.

Julia Church

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Photo caption:

Some of the new fencing at the pump cycle track in West Wood.