

CENTRE PIECE FOR OCTOBER 2024 KEYS MAGAZINE

On Wednesday 11th September the Parish Council met following the summer break during which time sadly, the council's Vice-Chair, Cllr Karen Dobson, resigned from the council for personal reasons. This means there is a vacancy for a new parish councillor which is the perfect role for anyone wishing to get more involved in serving their local community. Parish councillors are required to attend one council meeting a month, on a Wednesday evening, and be willing to join at least one of the committees – Planning, Finance and/or Open Spaces. The council currently has members from a diverse range of backgrounds leading to interesting discussions from a range of perspectives about issues concerning the residents of Hildenborough. Please contact me for more information if you think this is a role you would like to consider.

Highways

At the September Parish Council meeting the councillors agreed unanimously to accept Kent County Council's offer to upgrade the existing village name plate on the B245 to a "gateway" with the words "Please Drive Carefully" to remind motorists of the 30mph speed limit as they come into Hildenborough from the London Road end of the B245. With regard to the potential installation of double yellow lines opposite the Harvest Garage to try and deter inconsiderate parking, the first stage of the process will be for the Parish Council to carry out a "Pre-consultation Engagement" exercise to provide evidence to Tonbridge and Malling District Council of local support for the project. Judging by the number of complaints we receive regarding the risks being posed to pedestrians by motorists obstructing the pavement, we trust there will be plenty of support for anything that will improve safety for local residents.

Recreation Ground

This summer our contractor spent a couple of days clearing out the ditches around part of the perimeter of the Recreation Ground, ready for the rainy season. We were very pleased that the work was completed quickly with minimum disruption to the users of the Rec and carried out a thorough clean up and removal of the debris afterwards.

Our Maintenance Contractor, Andy, has repaired the broken fence at the playground recently and treated it with preservative and one of the next jobs on the list will be to repair patches of the surface of the playground that are showing signs of wear and tear. Members of the Parish Council and an ex-councillor undertook a playground safety training course during the summer to enable them to carry out the weekly safety checks in the event that Andy is unable to do so.

West Wood

Work on completing the installation of the new picnic table in memory of Cllr Mike Dobson was completed this summer and all that is left to do now is to fill the planter with a selection of hardy plants. There is no water supply close by for watering the plants which will limit the choice but there are drought-tolerant plants, such as grasses, that it has been suggested would be suitable.

Nature has been working its magic around the renovated pond, with native plants repopulating the areas that were covered in silt that was removed from the pond when the work was carried out. However, thorny brambles are winning the race to re-establish themselves so the

Hildenborough Conservation Group are being asked to recommend how best to manage the process so that more attractive, native wild plants can hold sway over the brambles.

Village Green

We would like to say a big “thank you” to the residents who have been helping to look after the trees and planters on the Village Green all through the summer. Their regular watering of the flowers in the planters has helped to ensure a colourful display for residents and users of this local public space to enjoy.

Police

This summer we said goodbye to Hildenborough’s Beat Officer, PC Ollie Evans, who has moved on to pastures new and from 9th September PC Tom Mead took over the role. Before he left, Ollie asked me to share the following message with readers of Keys magazine: “I have enjoyed my 15 months working in Hildenborough and would like to thank the residents for being so forthcoming with me. The village is a very safe and respectful place to live and work in and it has been a pleasure to see the community spirit thrive. Remember to remain vigilant and report anything suspicious to the police or Parish Council as, believe it or not, there is lots going on behind the scenes working towards keeping you safe! All the best, Ollie.”

I am sure PC Tom Mead will enjoy meeting Hildenborough’s residents as he familiarises himself with his new area.

Finally, I am sure users of the Village Hall will be pleased to hear that the building can now offer free WiFi access to visitors, courtesy of the Parish Council who are the trustees of the building.

Please e-mail clerk@hildenboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk or call me on 07828 329029 if you have any issues you would like to report. On Tuesday 8th October, members of the Parish Council will be at Hildenborough Farmer’s Market for a coffee and chat with local residents.

Julia Church