

Centre Piece for July 2017 Keys Magazine

Another busy month seems to have disappeared into history. Working recently has been very difficult in the high temperatures we have been experiencing. Currently I write this during a thunderstorm which resulted in an interruption to our power supply but hopefully temperatures will now come down to more comfortable levels.

The Parish Council met on Wednesday 21 June when they were extremely thankful for the air conditioning in the Finzi Room. There was much to report with few items to decide this month. Reports of overhanging vegetation seem to be to the fore at the moment. By the time you read this the hedge at the entrance to the Recreation Ground will be cut back to allow for greater visibility and also from the footway. Hedges, where visibility isn't a problem, will be left for the benefit of the birds until the beginning of August. However, please do check your boundary hedges are not overhanging footways as this can be dangerous to pedestrians and children in push chairs etc.

It was with great regret that at this meeting the Council accepted the resignation of Rev'd Wooding Jones. He too, said he regretted having to take this decision due to work pressures. The chairman, on behalf of the Council, thanked Rev'd Wooding Jones for his contribution to the work of the Council during his term of office and said he would be greatly missed. This leaves a vacancy on the Parish Council and you may have seen the Casual Vacancy notice displayed on the Council's notice boards. This is to establish if an election is to be called, but please do not let this stop you contacting us if you are interested in becoming a Councillor, as once the formalities have been completed the Council will be seeking either through election or co-option to fill this vacancy for the period until the next election in May 2019.

The good news this month is that the kitchen has been refurbished in the Pavilion. In fact the whole Pavilion looks a great deal better with new flooring throughout and a thorough cleaning of all walls, ceilings and furniture. The kitchen now meets requirements for providing refreshments with hot water supply, new sink unit, separate wash hand basin and work surfaces as well as a cabinet fridge. It is not, of course, suitable for the preparation or cooking of meals.

There are two events shortly to be held in the Recreation Ground, one will be over by the time you read this, that of the Scout's Music Festival. I know a lot of local residents are very much looking forward to this so I guess there will be quite a crowd. The other is to be held on Friday 14 July when the Goatham's Great Kent Cycle Ride will be using the Recreation Ground as a stopping off point between 12.30 -2.00pm.

After much deliberation the Parish Council has now decided the fate of the defective roundabout in the older part of the Activity Zone. They decided at the meeting on 21 June to replace the bearing so that it is working for the Summer. It will be used until, as they suspect, water will build up underneath the mechanism and once again rust the bearings. After this it is suggested that the roundabout is replaced with equipment which does not require a mechanism underground and thus avoid the problem of lying water in the working parts.

A recent tree safety survey has revealed a number of trees which require surgery. These trees are not immediately dangerous but it is recommended that action is taken with the next 6 months in most cases. The Council has the trees overhanging footpaths in West Wood, their field and play

areas inspected annually as well as the regular visual checks by our caretaker. During the recent gale there were two casualties which could not have been predicted. Boughs on a tree in West Wood were left hanging and were dealt with as soon as they had been spotted, and the new Rowan tree on the Village Green was blown down, fortunately it had not broken off and was able to be re-staked. The Council has ordered a second Rowan tree for the Village Green to be planted in December along the same side as the current one.

There is good news for young children who play on the equipment in the West Wood play area where their equipment will have the current matting replaced with wet pour similar to that around the junior pieces of equipment. It is expected this will be carried out a little later this year but in time for the winter in order to avoid wet conditions and thus make the play equipment usable all year round.

Kent Highways contacted the Council during this month as they were concerned over the number of advertising boards, posters and banners which had appeared along the roadside. These are, of course, very distracting for drivers and clearly of benefit to the advertisers. The Highways Department have been along the roads and removed all the offending advertisements, but are not able to remove those on private property. A few concerns have been raised by those advertising events.

You may have noticed that some of lighting columns have been repaired or replaced along Noble Tree Road and Rings Hill. This is in preparation for the conversion to LED lighting. We have yet to receive a date for this conversion which is expected soon.

The Council was pleased that their cctv coverage of the play area was able to identify perpetrators of vandalism to the play area fence, and our local PCSOs were able to take action over this. However, the main problem in the Recreation Ground at the moment is litter. A new litter bin has been installed in the new section of the Activity Zone in an attempt to encourage users to dispose of their rubbish in an environmentally friendly way.

Have you seen the recent article in Town Crier on the Parish Council's publication 'Tales of a Kent Village, Hildenborough, as seen through the Parish Council Archives'? This was an excellent representation of the book and has resulted in an increased demand for the publication. Don't forget if you would like a copy it is available direct from me or at the Farmers' Market on the 2nd Tuesday of the month (11 July between 10.00am and 11.00am). there are a few copies of 'This is Hildenborough from A to Z' still available, again direct from me or at the Farmers' Market. The cost of Tales from a Kent Village is £10 and the A-Z is £9.50.

Pam Gow