

Shadoxhurst Village Forum

Notes from the 9th Village Forum meeting held in the Scout Hut on Thursday 2nd February 2017

- To maintain the quality of life for all in the village
- To generate issues that could be put to the Parish Council
- To re-kindle community spirit and engender friendship
- To build a social feeling in the village
- To suggest things that will bring people together
- **With a vision to create and develop a positive community spirit.**

1) Welcome and Notes from last meeting

20 villagers attended the meeting. David Ledger, chairing the meeting, welcomed everyone.

A summary of notes from the last meeting had been circulated and there were no comments or further additions to them.

2) Update on planning appeal site in Woodchurch road

The appeal was scheduled to take place on 21st March, which was after the new application for 12 houses on the site which would be heard by Ashford Planning committee on 15th March. The Parish Council will shortly submit some large documents of objection

Advice from Aline (our Borough Councillor) was that a group of people from the village should attend the planning meeting to demonstrate the local strength of feeling about development on this site. Any letters sent to committee members would need to be sent a few days before the meeting so that they would have good time to read them. Mr Jarvis has indicated that he will withdraw the appeal if given planning permission on the 15th.

3) Update on the King's Head pub field planning application

Some amended documents had been received. Aline said that a meeting was scheduled with the planner and developer next week. Aline would meet the Planning Officer on Friday 10th February. There are technical issues with this site, including access and drainage, which still need to be resolved. There is still time to comment, but although we have asked, we still don't know when this will come to the planning committee. The Parish Council is still working on documents.

4) Village Events

i) Table Top Sale

A chance to de-clutter and recycle and reuse our stuff! The sale will be in the village hall on Saturday the 25th February at 10am – 12 noon. Please come along and support this event. If successful we could do a second later in the year? Carol was thanked for stepping forward and organising the event.

ii) The Great British Spring Clean

If you're willing to volunteer, please let David know by 26th February so that high viz jackets etc can be ordered from Ashford Borough Council. The Spring Clean will take place on Saturday 4th March, volunteers to meet at the pavilion at 10am. Small working parties will undertake

different tasks around the village, and when we're finished, we can all meet up in the pub afterwards! There is litter picking needed on the roadsides, although ABC are not able to provide insurance on any road of 40 mph or above. If people are happy to do this, we will put protective measures in place to keep people safe. We can use flags and signs, it was suggested we ask our local PCSO to have a visible presence. We can leave the filled bags in pre-arranged places and Biffa will collect. The Cubs and Beavers have their own high viz and will just do the recreation ground to avoid road work. We need to ensure we take photos. Peter said he can bring sets of walkie-talkies on the day. A show of hands showed about 12 people willing to join in. The roadsides to be cleared were Woodchurch Road, Criol Lane and Tally Ho, but also Church Lane.

iii) Showcasing Shadoxhurst

An event for local clubs, groups and societies to showcase what they have to offer. It will be held in the village hall 10am – 3pm on Saturday 25th March. If you have a stall, you'll be able to set up from 9am. A separate meeting will be held to organise publicity and how volunteers can help – please let David know if you want to get involved.

iv) Other possible events to think about for the future

If there is enough interest and volunteers to help:

- A showcasing event for small businesses in the parish.
- An indoor race night – David Webb would lead on this, and Alan Porter knows someone with equipment.
- Teddy Bears picnic for younger people.
- Plant a Hanging basket / planter / window box – brighten up the village, then take photos of them in full bloom and have an exhibition of them all later in the year.
- Ploughman's lunch – bring your own wine!
- Beetle Drive
- 60's dance (Alan knows someone who does discos)
- Bingo (someone in Kingsnorth has an electronic bingo system)
- Bat and Trap

v) The Baden Powell Scouts Village Fete and Dog Show

The Dog Show is looking for sponsors.

5) How we communicate to each other.

We use emails, the Parish Council website, Shadoxhurst a small village in Kent Facebook site and a new site called 'Next Door' (there are about 20 villagers on it so far). Not everyone has access to computers, smart phones or the internet, but we also have Forum meetings, the village newsletter (at present delivered to every home), and village notice boards in the village hall car park and by the church.

If we could collect more email addresses we could save time and money by sending most newsletters electronically, with just a few delivered to those without the internet. We could ask about this in the next newsletter.

Do people actually read the notice boards? Perhaps we could make the notice board in the village hall car park two - sided, so that one side is for official parish council notices and the other side for village events. Perhaps some posters could be placed in the bus shelters and phone box in the village.

6) Moving the Forum Forward

David told everyone that he didn't feel comfortable being both Chair of the Parish Council and of the Forum. He asked if anyone would be willing to come forward to Chair Forum meetings. Likewise, there may be a role for a Treasurer and a Secretary. Colin felt that it would be better to have an alternative Chair, secretary and treasurer. If someone steps up as Chair, David would still help and come along to talk about planning issues.

David didn't want things to be too formal, but there were issues to be considered, especially if we were going to hold events and raise some money.

Peter thought that money raised should go to the Parish Council and be ring fenced, then the Forum and Parish Council could decide what to spend it on. David agreed that a few ideas could be put forward for the group to decide upon. People were asked to think about what funds could be used for and to bring their ideas to the next meeting.

David asked if everyone was happy with the informality of the event – and there was general agreement to this. Martin thanked David for his work getting the Forum going.

7) Village Updates

The phone box will stay – not 100% sure if the telephony will remain. If not, it could become a book swap library.

BTOR are installing 3 cabinets in the village so that most people will have access to superfast broadband if they want it. The one at Hornash Lane / Woodchurch Road is now completed. Their work should be completed by March 2017.

The Parish Council have asked for quotes regarding repairs to the lights and carpark in the Recreation Ground.

Cheryl informed everyone that there had been a burglary in Hornash Lane on Wednesday. Small electrical items had been stolen.

David will write to Mike Angell (our County councillor) regarding reducing the speed limit in the village from 40 to 30mph. He also told us about an online petition to reduce a 60mph speed limit on single track roads down to 30mph.

Someone new has taken over the Neighbourhood Watch role – David will invite him to a future Forum meeting.

The four houses proposed on the old vacant transport depot land in Blindgrooms Lane have recently been given planning permission. That is a good result.

8) Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 16th March. David thanked Simon and Kim for hosting the meeting, and thanked everyone for coming. Thanks also go to Carol for taking the notes of the meeting.