

Shadoxhurst Village Forum

Notes from the 5th Village Forum meeting of 2017 held in the Pavilion on Wednesday 21st June 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 Introductions

18 villagers attended the meeting.

David Ledger welcomed everyone to the meeting. He then introduced Cheryl Vander, who has kindly agreed to be the new Chair of the Village Forum and to run its meetings.

Cheryl thanked David for all the work he does, and for setting up and running the successful Forum group.

2) Open Forum

Cheryl said she wanted people to be able to come along and say what they feel (as long as it's nothing derogatory). 'Open forum' would be a regular agenda item where people can raise issues to be dealt with at the meeting.

2.1) Borough Councillors

It was agreed that our Borough Councillors should have an open invitation to the meetings. As they often had many demands on their time, we would try to give them as much notice as possible for any meetings where we felt we would especially value their input.

2.2) Health Issues

It was agreed that Cheryl would speak with Dr Kelly of Kingsnorth Medical Practice with a view to organising a talk in the autumn about general health issues, including the impact of and arrangements for Chilmington Green regarding health services.

2.3) Counteracting Loneliness

People of all ages and in all walks of life can feel lonely at certain times in their lives. A discussion was held to consider how we can best include everyone in the things that are going on in Shadoxhurst:

- Our clubs and societies may help – more are being set up and this may widen their appeal
- The Parish Council has prioritised getting funding for disabled toilets and baby changing facilities so more people can participate

- Be a kindly neighbour
- We could publicise our clubs with leaflets

3) Harvest Festival

Simon explained his ideas for this event, which would be a fund-raiser for the village. He asked for the support of a group of people to help pull the event together. The provisional date would be Saturday 30/9/17 at 10am – 3pm and David said he would check on the availability of the field. It was felt that the name of the event was a little confusing. Concern was expressed that there might not be enough time to organise such an ambitious event by the end of September. It was suggested that Roland Cooper (a great event organiser) may be willing and able to give some advice.

Stuart, Margaret, Ian and Carol said they would be willing to help and a meeting was arranged for 7pm in the Pavilion on Wednesday 28th June.

4) Dog Show

The Village Forum and Parish Council would be sharing a stall at the dog show at Green Farm on Saturday June 24th. A rota was agreed as follows:

Carol & Ian 9 – 11; Cheryl 11 – 12; Ron & Karen 12 – 1; Cheryl 1 – 2; Margaret & Stuart 2 – 3; David & Sheila & any others 3 - 4

There will be a free raffle for people who sign up to receive the village newsletter by email. Donations of prizes will be gratefully received – Val has agreed to bake a cake. Doggy related prizes would probably be popular. Please leave any donations at David's house if you can. We will also market our village clubs, discuss planning issues and have a speed reduction petition available to sign.

5) Parish / Village Update

David, Sheila and Carol have seen our MP, Damian Green, about planning issues in our village. Now we are going to lobby the Housing Minister, and have asked other parishes to join us. So far there have been lots of takers.

There are rumours that the pub field site may go to the planning committee in July, although there are no new documents on the web site.

The Local Plan is about to be released for consultation until the end of August and we need to respond to this. David spoke at cabinet meeting last week against the inclusion of the pub field site in the Local Plan. Shadoxhurst is working together and sharing information with the Saxon Shore villages to object to some development – if you are willing and able to join in and do a bit of research please let David know.

Regarding the field between Park Farm Close and the Hollies that was recently granted planning permission, Cheryl is going to send an FOI request to Ashford Borough Council to try and drill down into the reasons for their complete U-turn.

Depending on their response, this may be passed on to the Parish Council.

6) Future Events

6.1) Quiz Night

Ron and Karen are organising a Quiz night in the Village Hall on Saturday 25th November. Peter will supply a PA for this event, and Karen will supply the paper and prizes. People will bring their own drinks and nibbles. There will be 12 tables of 6 people, cost is £5 per person, payable in advance, and money raised will be held in the Parish Council account. A 'Heads or Tails' event during the interval will also raise some money. It will be advertised in the newsletter, with Karen's address & details so people can contact her directly.

6.2) Race Night

Cheryl will speak with Alan to see if and when he is able to organise this.

6.3) Murder Mystery Evening

Peter and Liz are offering to do a 'murder mystery' evening on Saturday 14th October. The group usually charges a fee (donated to charity) and Peter will find out what this would cost. There will be 12 tables of 6 people. Bring your own drinks and nibbles. The group would need to shut off the kitchen area for their use, and would need access to the hall from 5.30 to rehearse for a 7pm start. The event would finish about 9.30 – 10pm.

6.4) Village Clubs

Contact Sheila for details of the Sewing Club. It's hoped to start on the 3rd or 6th July.

A Village History club will start in September, date tbc shortly. Please let Carol know if you are interested.

A poem was read out at the meeting, about Shadoxhurst village - our lovely countryside, peace and quiet, and how unnecessary development threatens to spoil this. We discussed how it is this emotion that drives us to try and defend our quality of life, and that this process can be very wearing. It is nice to be able to use our creativity to celebrate how we feel and what we love in such a positive way. Ian aims to start a local group to foster this, (date tbc), and hopes very much that you will join him. It will be a chance to share and discuss issues, ideas and feelings through creative arts such as poetry, photography, storytelling, music and art.

Gillian and Peter have recently started a conversational Spanish club. Hola!

Shadoxhurst Wine Circle started with a bang last month, although one or two people may not remember. Bring your own homemade wine for tasting (buy some if it's not ready yet). Colin can offer advice and some brewing equipment if required. Due to popular demand an emergency meeting will be called next month. Date tbc. Let Colin know if you're interested.

7) Neighbourhood Watch

A key coordinator is needed to be the person the Police pass information to. This will then be disseminated down to a pyramid of people already in place. Colin will ask Ted if he is willing to take responsibility in this role. If not, Peter is willing to do it, if it doesn't compromise his pyramid role.

8) Defibrillator

The Parish Council are considering options to rent or buy, and a decision will be made soon. The defibrillator will probably be located at the village hall.

9) Super Fast Broadband

The BTOR roadworks are currently in the village. There have been snags but it is hoped everything will be up and running by the end of August. Cabinets will be released as they are completed and operational, the one on Church Road will probably be last.

10) Car Parking at the Village Hall

This is meant to be for hall users only. One or two local families have been cheekily using it for their own private off road parking, but have now been told to stop doing this. We don't want their behaviour to set a precedent, but we don't want to have to lock the gates. We will monitor the situation.

11) Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Monday 17th July, 7pm in the Pavilion.