

Shadoxhurst Village Forum

Notes from the Village Forum meeting held in the Pavilion

on Thursday 22nd February 2018

- 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 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

27 people attended the meeting.

Cheryl welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2) Freedom of Information Conclusion

Cheryl had made a complaint to the Information Commissioner regarding missing information. Further notes came forward, but they still do not pinpoint when the decision was made as there was no mention of Shadoxhurst in the notes. The system does not seem democratic or professional considering the amounts of money involved when dealing with property developers and needing to be even handed with all parties. Cheryl has already passed her report to the Parish council, and handed round copies of the report to the members for their perusal. David is reviewing all the paperwork and will report back to the Forum in March on next steps.

3) Rural Means Rural

Sally gave further information to Forum members about Rural Means Rural. This campaign was started in response to the relentless pace and scale of continuous development which threatens our rural areas and village identities. The more people and villages that join together, the louder our collective voice will be. The aim is to get local and national government to adopt a landscape protection policy, and it will be one that takes account of our collective concerns. A professionally created Landscape Protection Plan will be presented to the Local Plan Inquiry in April.

Also, the local group wants to respond to Shadoxhurst concerns, in particular for a meaningful green belt or green buffer zone to ensure that our village does not become part of urban Ashford.

There are lots of ways in which people can get involved in the campaign, for example there will be door to door leafleting commencing shortly and a petition is already available for everyone to sign. There will be posters printed for people to display in their windows or gardens – hopefully people will also be willing to give

a donation towards the cost of the signs. Please let Lorraine or Sally know if you are willing and able to volunteer.

Will was thanked for his work creating ideas for posters, banners and stickers, as was Tony for his map which is most informative in that it shows all developments together. The map will be available to view at the forthcoming RMR Open Day. The Action Group will look to use Nick Green's beautiful photographs of the wildlife that is abundant in the village. The open day will be held at the village hall on 17th March, 10.30am – 12.30, to give lots of information and raise awareness. PLEASE COME ALONG!

It was agreed, by majority vote, to use seed funding from our Forum funds of up to £450 for RMR campaign stationery, posters, banners, car stickers etc. If we receive any donations then we may not need to use all of this amount of money.

It was also agreed, by majority vote, to give a donation of £300 as a one off payment from Forum funds towards the £3000 needed by RMR towards the cost of the Planning advisor at the Inquiry.

David agreed to coordinate village speakers for the Inquiry.

4) Minutes from the Forum 11th December 2017

The minutes were agreed.

5) Matters Arising

5.1) Parish Council News

The Parish Council has put in objections to the Local Plan and will speak at the Inquiry. The Local Plan examination begins on the 11th April and lasts for 7 weeks, however they have scheduled 14 days, so it would appear it is two days a week.

The Parish Council have made objections to the proposed development off Farley Close. These comments are in the public domain. There is still time for you to comment – the deadline is Friday 2/3/18

There are currently 2 public rights of way on the King's Head pub field. One is going to be diverted to the eastern boundary, Pentland Homes propose that the other footpath goes along pavements. They've promised an (unofficial) route into Nairne Close to replace the one that was there. SPC, the Ramblers, the Forum were originally consulted and we agreed that the western footpath be diverted around the western edge of the development, Kent County Council would not support this and went with Pentland's design. The Order to alter the two has been published and the deadline is until 23rd March to make any comments to Kent County Council. Objections will be heard by the Secretary of State.

The Parish Council has asked for more information about Pentland's proposal to site 2 LPG tanks on the site's green space.

The Parish council has an advisory group currently looking at drainage issues in the village and feeding back to planning on the application sites. The council would also like to set up a little group to review the village conservation area – please let David know if you are interested.

We hope you like the new look village newsletter – but we need some more money to be able to continue. Our borough councillors will be asked if they can help. Do you think we should include advertising to help pay for it? Let us know your thoughts. A special thank you to all our volunteers who deliver the newsletter.

5.2) Superfast Broadband

Carol gave an update. The good news is that Shadoxhurst will get 100% coverage. The bad news, as you know, is that a mixture of engineering problems, data errors, processing delays and ISPs being unwilling to pay for their share of the infrastructure, have all led to huge delays in superfast broadband being available in our village. The ongoing works have also slowed down the existing poor service.

Some local cabinets are now live and available for service, others are still ongoing. You're not always connected to your nearest cabinet, so if you're unsure which cabinet you're on, but you have a BT phone line, put your details on www.dslchecker.bt.com and it will tell you, it will also give an indication of the broadband speed available.

If your cabinet is live, but your internet service provider tells you that you can't have a service, this may be incorrect for a whole number of reasons. If you email the broadband team at broadband@kent.gov.uk they will be able to find out what the problem is.

5.3) Speed Limit

The village speed limit will change (reduce) shortly – this is likely to be April at the earliest. The Parish council hope to invest in some speed check equipment. They are also investigating 'Lorry watch'.

6) Upcoming Events

6.1) Murder Mystery

Back by popular demand - Murder Mystery Evening 'A Blow to the Head' on 28th April. £10 per person including fish and chip supper. Book early, tickets from Lis on 732901.

6.2) Showcasing for Business

Only one response so far for the Showcasing for local business event scheduled for 21 April at the village hall. If you know anyone who may be interested please ask them to contact Cheryl on 733124. We may have to cancel if there's no interest.

6.3) Village Fete

The Village fete is scheduled for Sunday 30th September this year. The fete committee is already busy planning and we'll need volunteers for the event – the more the merrier! Please contact Ian or Carol on 732084 if you can help.

6.4) Matter of Life & Death Cafe

David plans to run a 'Matter of Life and Death' café sometime during the week of May 14th (which is 'Dying Awareness Week') at the Pavilion. Anyone who is interested can come along and will receive a warm welcome, details will be in the next newsletter.

6.5) Scouts BBQ

Simon is planning a BBQ that the whole village can attend to celebrate 50 years of Scouting in the village. All three sections will also take part in the Village Spring cleaning day.

6.6) Spring Cleaning day

It's on 24th March, meet at the Pavilion at 9.45am for 2 hours doing litter picking and other tidying. Please volunteer to help if you can. Contact David who is co-ordinating the event. The appropriate protective and safety reflective equipment and litter bags will be provided.

6.7) Other Events

Other possible events were mentioned, subject to there being enough interest and people being willing to step forward to help organise: children's Christmas party, under 14 years; New year's eve party for adults, and children over 7 years if accompanied; Homemade crafts auction; Table Top sale; Summer ploughman's lunch. Other suggestions were a Garage Safari, and it was suggested to liaise with Vanessa regarding the Children's Christmas party as she runs one for the football lads and Lasses.

A huge thanks to Karen and Ron for a very well organised and well run quiz night. £347.80 was raised, after expenses and prizes. Karen and Ron say they are willing to do another one. (thank you x).

7) Clubs

7.1) History Club

The history club meets in the Pavilion at 10.30 am. Next meeting is Thursday 8th March. No need to be a history expert! Everyone is most welcome.

7.2) Ark Drama

Ark Drama meets at Kingsnorth Church. Their next production is 'Into the Woods' at the Tower theatre, Saturday June 30th. Ark Drama will also be supporting the fete in September.

7.3) Wine Circle

Next meeting 16th March at David's.

7.4 Sewing Club

Next meetings are the 15th and 29th March. The meeting scheduled for 1st March has been cancelled due to snow and ice.

7.5) Coffee club

Every Tuesday 2pm – 4pm in the Pavilion, for coffee/tea, biscuits or cake. We may consider extending this to 4.30pm during the lighter summer months. Our numbers are growing with approximately 25-30 people. Everyone welcome.

8) Projector

A new projector has been purchased – thanks to everyone who has helped to raise the money. It will definitely enhance our clubs and meetings (once we get the hang of it), and David used it to good effect to talk through the geography of the re-routing of the public rights of way near the pub.

9) Bus Routes

Cheryl had written to Cllr Balfour about local concerns regarding possible Kent County Council cuts to bus services. The council are still looking to make cuts, but these are nowhere near the amount of money previously proposed. No decisions have been made yet. The response from Cllr Balfour was read out, outlining that 3% of all services are loss making. KCC have included an apology for the alarm the previous announcement had caused. We will keep a close eye on this.

Carol explained that our 2A bus service is subsidised for every day of the week, but given that so many other services have much bigger subsidies than the 2A, we hope it will survive intact.

10) Sign

Our pub says that it could do with a 'caution lorries turning' sign for its loading area, for the safety of the public highway users. David will look into this. Perhaps this could be included when KCC are in the village signposting for the new speed limit?

11) Ham Street Petition

KCC are going to implement something in April to improve road safety along Ham Street road near to Bromley Green Crossroads, although Sally doesn't know what they're going to do yet.

12) Duck Lane

A notice in last week's Kentish Express states the business that is run there want an operator's licence for 3 more vehicles at the end of Duck Lane. Any objections need to be sent to the Traffic Commissioner by 21 days from the notice. Some residents raised issues and are very concerned about what is actually going on – they say there are 3 big buildings with no planning permission, hardly any business rates being paid, a landscaping and planting plan that was never fulfilled, a lack of enforcement, skip lorries using LCP's operator's licence to operate. Dennis has previously written to the Traffic commissioners but been ignored, he asked David for advice about what he should write. Other villagers will think what else could be done to assist.

13) Sheep Worrying

Peter Webb (as our Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator) outlined that over one night very recently, there were three separate incidents of what appeared to be dog(s) worrying sheep and killing some of them, in our village. The residents agreed that if anyone had any information which would assist the police, and therefore the farmers involved, then they should report it. Anyone who sees a dog worrying sheep must report it to the police and farm workers/farmers are within their rights to shoot the dog. Other sheep that were attacked but not killed were very traumatised.

14) Date of Next Meetings

27/3/18 from 7 pm Pavilion, and Saturday 12/5/18 (AGM) 2pm Pavilion