

EAST PECKHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWS – MAY 2015

The monthly Newsletter from East Peckham Parish Council - Working on behalf of the community

Dear All,

The Parish Council continues to go from strength to strength and we are confident that this year will be no different. We have a proper vision for our community. Our easy access website and monthly newsletter, enables us to keep in contact with our residents and let you know the latest news that concerns all the community. We have some regular features that appear in the news each month and we hope you continue to find this newsletter interesting.

With the wet weather we had over the winter months, the roads in the village have suffered. The Highways team is pretty prompt at dealing with any queries, but obviously they need to be made aware of them first! Please report any potholes you see to Kent Highways at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>.

During 2015/2016 we will be considering the possibility of starting commencing a Neighbourhood Plan. A Neighbourhood Plan refers to housing – how many houses and where they will be located and will give residents of the village a say on these matters. This will involve a large amount of work and we will need volunteers to help us bring this to fruition. If you are interested in being involved, please put your name forward to the Parish Office. We continue to invest in our community assets, provide key community services and represent the views of residents of East Peckham. After taking on the operations of the Jubilee Hall in 2011, we have been working hard to increase income to give the best value to council tax payers. Work will focus on this throughout 2015/16. Plans for the coming year include additions and improvements to the facilities and services we offer the community. Finances are tight so no major projects are planned but we will begin preparing for new community facilities which we will implement either when funding allows or if we are successful in obtaining grants. We will continue the strategic review of our operations, which have grown significantly in the last few years, to ensure that we continue to provide residents with best value. Council income is derived from the Council precept, which is collected via council tax, hire charges for use of council facilities and grant funding to support community activities. The Council is striving to increase income from facility hire charges; we anticipate that on-going running costs of the Jubilee Hall facilities will be mainly met from operations and hire income.

By now you should have received your copy of our 2015 Annual Report, the report is also available on our website www.eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk and we have some A4 copies which are available from the Parish Office, the Library and the Village Stores. The 2015 Annual Parish Meeting which took place on 28 April 2015 was well attended. Thank you all for coming, the new and relaxed informal format which we trialled last year has proven to be a huge success and we have noticed a significant increase in numbers attending this annual event. A post event report will be published shortly.

The big news at the moment is the forthcoming elections which are being held on 07 May 2015; you will have the opportunity to elect your local MP and representatives to serve on the Borough and Parish Councils. Lists of the candidates who are seeking election can be found on our noticeboard (Village Stores) and on our website www.eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk.

When local elections are being held at the same time as a general election the principles of *purdah* are usually applied. *Purdah* has been imposed in ministerial guidance since at least the early 20th century reflecting an earlier "self-denying ordinance", and has considerable moral authority, its breach carrying with it in worst cases the possibility of actions for abuse of power and misconduct in public office. Otherwise its lack of statute or common law means different local authorities adopt different standards as to the extent to which they observe the convention, and executives are always mindful of the possibility of decisions being open to judicial review on the grounds of legitimate expectations, breach of natural justice, or procedural impropriety if *purdah* is breached. Where observed, *purdah* bars entering into any transactions or carrying out any works which would clearly, directly conflict with already stated commitments.

We produce our newsletter to keep you up to date about council services and news. If you have any comments about the newsletter we'd love to hear from you.

The Parish Office is open weekday mornings during term times (except Wednesdays), do feel free to drop in and talk to us about any village issue you think that the Council can help you with. As we also run the Jubilee Hall and Playing Fields, feel free to speak to us about anything to do with those facilities as well. Thank you residents for all your support this year; please continue and let us know your views.

Kind regards
Chairman, Councillors and Clerk
East Peckham Parish Council

2015 ELECTIONS

On 07 May 2015, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council will be holding elections for all Borough and Parish/Town council seats alongside the UK Parliamentary General Election. By 11 May 2015 we will know the results of all three elections and those who will be representing us at a local and national level for the next few years.

What is a Parish Council?

A Parish Council is the tier of local government closest to the people. It is not linked to the church in any way. The Council can respond to the needs of the community - delivering the services or representation it most needs. To do this well we need to hear from the community about local issues, so please keep in touch.

What does a Parish Council do?

The responsibilities of a Parish Council can include the provision and management of allotments, looking after open spaces and maintaining bus shelters and community buildings. A Parish Council can provide them itself, or by helping others (such as a charity) financially to do so. Councils are also the focal point for various local consultations. The Parish Councillors know the village and can represent its views to other authorities.

Who runs the Council?

Parish Council elections were held in May 2015 and will elect eleven councillors to run the council for four years. They work for the community on an unpaid voluntary basis. A Parish Clerk is appointed to advise the Council and manage the administration of the Council.

What does East Peckham Parish Council (EPPC) do?

EPPC is responsible for the following:

- The Jubilee Hall
- The Jubilee Playing Fields
- Maintenance of the outdoor equipment at the Playing Fields, i.e. fitness equipment, play areas, tennis court, ball court, street snooker and youth shelter
- Footway Lighting
- The provision and maintenance of some bus shelters
- The Pound Community Notice Board
- Allotments
- Consulted on all planning applications in the parish
- Acting as a liaison between the community and other local organisations and Councils
- A monthly newsletter and an annual report
- Nominates representatives to serve on local voluntary, public and community organisations
- Condition and upkeep of land at The Pound
- Churchyard Maintenance at St Michaels and Holy Trinity churches

What does the Parish Clerk Do?

She is the councils Senior Office and responsible for the following:

- Council Governance
- Legal and Financial Issues
- Jubilee Hall and Playing Fields
- Staff and contractor management
- Freedom of Information requests
- Amenities
- Planning & Transportation
- Office Management
- IT & administration
- Hire of the Jubilee Hall rooms for private hire, block bookings and meetings
- Maintenance of the Jubilee Hall
- Event organiser for the Jubilee Hall
- Monthly newsletters and annual report
- Responsible Finance Officer
- Maintenance of the councils website

COMMUNITY GRANTS

If your group or organisation would like to apply for a small grant please visit the website www.eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk where you will find details of our grants policy and application form. For 2015/2016, we have made a provision of £1,000 available specifically for grants to community groups and organisations.

COMMUNITY DEFIBRILATOR

The community defibrillator is housed in a secure box attached to the wall of the Parish Office at the Jubilee Hall. This allows the defibrillator to be stored securely but enabling access by all residents. The defibrillator is vital to the village and an ongoing training programme is offered to anyone who wants to learn how to use it. There is no charge for this training so do please if you are interested let us know. The defibrillator is an intelligent and affordable item of medical equipment which 'talks' to the operator and gives easy to follow instructions on where to place the electrode packs on the chest, how to administer Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and when to press the 'shock' button. An operator cannot 'shock' a patient that does not require it and cannot make a bad situation worse. SECamb know of the location of the defibrillator so that when someone dials 999 about a possible heart attack, they can immediately see if there is a defibrillator nearby to the caller, give them the access code and direct them there.

JUBILEE HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS

We own and manage the Jubilee Hall complex which comprises of the Playing Fields, Sports Hall and Meeting Room. The complex has many regular activities and events for adults and children and is buzzing with excitement. From the under-fives toddlers' afternoon and gym sessions to activities for adults such as Keep fit, badminton, bowls and Zumba, we are also the venue for a monthly carers group. Outside clubs include the East Peckham Football Team and a goal keeping school. We have hot drinks, cold drinks and snack machines too for your comfort or for your event. The facilities are perfect for any occasion be it a children's party, sports activity or business function. If you are looking for a venue for an event or meeting, please contact us for details of availability and hire charges. Our latest programme of activities and the contact details of the activity organisers can be found on our website.

The Jubilee Hall continues to provide a wide range of classes and facilities for the residents of East Peckham and the Playing Fields are in an excellent condition. Our aim to widen the number of sports provided is slowly being achieved; in addition to the WOK Gym Club (a major user), football, goalkeeping courses, keep fit, Zumba and badminton all take place each week, with others planned. We would like there to be available other outdoor activities such as archery, cycling and running clubs and would be delighted to hear from you if you would be interested in starting up a new activity.

Children's Party Packages: We have some fantastic packages, offering hassle free solutions to make your life easier and your event a great success. We now offer a variety of levels of service for children's parties.

Bronze	3 hour exclusive use of the Sports Hall, Tables and chairs, Kitchen and toilet facilities, free parking, Free Wi-Fi £50 (£55 non East Peckham residents)
Silver	All of the above, plus exclusive use of the meeting room, Paper plates, cutlery and napkins £75 (£85 non East Peckham residents)
Gold	All of the above plus cleaning after the event £100 (£120 non East Peckham residents)

Business Event Solutions: We can offer solutions for business events such as one-to-one consultations to a classroom or meeting venue. We can provide a great space for training, meetings and exhibitions at a low cost. We also offer the following:

Hot drink station, Classroom for 12 – 30 people, Consultation Room, Board Style meeting for 25 people
Free Wi-Fi, Projector Screen, Free parking

The playing fields are a beautiful open space in the centre of the village and are open to all residents. We want them to be a safe haven for residents to enjoy the peace and quiet and for children to play safely, families to picnic, joggers to run securely, play rounder's, kick a football, fly a kite or just a place to sit and contemplate. We will continue to develop the facilities so that the village; is well equipped with leisure facilities for everyone to enjoy. We have just installed a fabulous new Youth Shelter.

EAST PECKHAM BUSINESS COMMUNITY

We would like to see East Peckham have a business forum and would be delighted to hear from you if you would like to be involved.

ALLOTMENTS

Allotments are provided on land adjacent to the Playing Fields. The annual rents are very reasonable at £15.00 for a small plot and £20.00 for a large plot. There are currently a few vacant plots, if you are interested, please contact the Parish Office.

TWINNING

East Peckham is twinned with Chéreng in the Nord de Pas de Calais. Twinning activities are funded by those taking part and by fund-raising with no use of parish funds. For information on Twinning please visit our website www.eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk.

Kent Highway Services – Update

Request for new sand and grit bin: We have asked for a new sand and grit bin to be installed at the junction of Martins Lane with Seven Mile Lane.

Postponed Hale Street Chicane Improvement Works: No new information had been received.

Litter along Seven Mile Lane: We have referred this unsightly mess to both KHS and TMBC.

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The Planning & Transportation Committee aims to represent the views of the community when consulted on planning applications and to improve transportation issues in East Peckham. The Committee would like to encourage residents to exercise their rights to comment on planning applications. Committee meetings are held at 9.30 a.m. on the first Monday in each month (except August); meetings are held at the Jubilee Hall Meeting Room, Pippin Road, East Peckham, TN12 5BT.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee has recently considered the following planning application

TM/15/00133/FL Variations of conditions 5 & 6 of TM/02/03452/FL (Fruit & bin store) to allow fruit to be packed within the building and fruit grown within the wider holding of Little Rhoden Farms Limited to be stored within the building at Crowhurst Farm, Bells Farm Road, East Peckham **NO OBJECTION**

TM/15/00584/LB Removal of chimney stack and add timber cladding to make good at Little Mill, 212 Tonbridge Road, East Peckham **NO OBJECTION**

TM/15/00795/RD Amended materials relating to plot 2, pursuant to condition 2 of TM/13/03818/FL (Erection of two detached four bedroom houses) at Land Adjacent to 19 Golding Gardens, East Peckham. **NOTED**

TW/14/506766/OUT **Consultation by TWBC.** Hybrid Application - Erection of up to 375 dwellings, associated access, open space, landscaping, highways, foot and cycle paths, drainage, earthworks and a primary school at Mascalls Court Farm, Mascalls Court Road, Paddock Wood

We have expressed concerns to TWBC on the following points of note

- The apparent absence of strategic planning for the infrastructure required for such large developments including drainage, roads, public transport, health services.
- Increased flood risk to existing communities
- The impact of such large scale development would have on East Peckham
- Poor traffic and access planning and deficiencies in the traffic surveys

PLANNING DECISIONS

The Borough Council has **GRANTED PERMISSION** for the following:

TM/15/00168/TNCA Reduce lime tree by approx. 20% at 24 Old Road, East Peckham

The Borough Council has confirmed that **PRIOR APPROVAL IS NOT REQUIRED** for the following

TM/15/00508/PD1 Single storey rear extension at 126 Pound Road, East Peckham

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT INVESTIGATIONS

ROSE AND CROWN: TMBC has advised that powers under S215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) allows them to serve a formal notice if it appears that the amenity of the land was adversely affected by the condition of land. Having carried out a recent site inspection, TMBC concluded that the condition of the land at the time of the site inspection could not be regarded as adversely affecting the amenity of the area. Consequently more formal action would not be taken. Nevertheless, the land owner has been asked on an informal basis and in the interests of goodwill towards local residents, to improve the appearance of the site so that its condition does not deteriorate to a point where it will adversely affect the amenity of the area and warrant more formal action. The landowner has been advised that the appearance of the site could be improved by:

- the removal of all weeds growing around the car park fronting Branbridges Road and adjacent to the building, and;
- the removal of weeds from the area of land to the north of the building fronting Branbridges Road and Old Road, and;
- the removal of bags of waste from that part of the land adjacent to the boundary wall fronting Old Road, and;
- The removal of all banners, placards and posters from the building.

We are unhappy with this response and have asked the borough council to clarify the criteria for issuing a S215 notice and to explain the conditions which would have to be met before a development was considered to adversely affect the amenity of the area. We have also expressed our concern with regard to the fabric of the building that remains.

Hale Street Van Sales: The business owners have been requested by TMBC to submit a planning application, if they fail to do so TMBC will proceed with Planning Enforcement.

STREET NAMING & NUMBERING – NEW DEVELOPMENT AT LAND REAR OF 11 THE FREEHOLD (FORMER SOCIAL CLUB)

We have been consulted on the developer's suggestions for the name of the new development. The developer has suggested Hop Garden Close, Hop Garden Place or Hop Fields. We consulted Mrs Lawrence the village historian who was able to tell us that the former social club originated from a WW1 war memorial, namely The Red Triangle Hut (1920) which was organised by the war memorial committee for those in need as a result of war. It then went on to become the HQ of the East Peckham branch of the British Legion. We believe that the idea of associating the land with the hop industry is historically and factually incorrect and from a village perspective out of date as Henham Gardens, Golding Gardens and Whitebine on the Crown Acre Estate and Hop Bine Close all commemorate the hop industry. We have therefore suggested that a more appropriate name for the new development should be Red Triangle Close, Legion Close or Club Close. The developer has since chosen Legion Close as the name for the new development.

PUBIC RIGHTS OF WAY

It is Kent County Council who are responsible for maintain public rights of way. Regardless of the growing season the majority of the rights of ways will be cut twice each year. Please report any problems to Kent County Council by telephoning 0845 345 0210, or by reporting the fault online at <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccesscams/issues/default.aspx>

DOG FOULING

Sadly we still have the ongoing disgusting problem of dog fouling particularly on the Playing Fields. Dog deposits provided it is bagged up can be put into any bin in the village. If you spot anyone failing to clear up after their dog please contact the Community or Dog Wardens. We have a supply of dog bags which subject to availability are available free of charge from the Parish Office. Please be aware that failing to clear up after your dog is an offence and the Borough Council enforces dog fouling through the Dogs Fouling of Land Act 1996 which applies to all land within the borough which is in the open and to which the public have access. If you have a dog fouling complaint try and obtain as much information as possible as it will assist the Dog Warden. There have also been reports from residents about dogs off leads and our Community and Dog Wardens are seeing what can be done. For a found, lost or straying dog telephone 01732 876181 (also out of hour's service), for fouling, dangerous dog, a dog on dog attack or anything else telephone 01732 876147 or Email: dog.warden@tmbc.gov.uk. If a person had been bitten then the incident is to be reported to the Police on 101

Thoughtless Dog Owners – We’re watching you!

New posters have gone up around East Peckham in a joint effort by Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and East Peckham Parish Council to reduce dog fouling in the village. The ‘Keep Britain Tidy’ campaign sets its sights on irresponsible dog owners, with innovative glow-in-the-dark ‘eye’ posters designed to keep a constant watch on dog owners – day and night! The ‘We’re watching you’ posters glow in the dark at night thanks to the use of fluorescent paint.

Recent research carried out by Keep Britain Tidy showed that dog walkers are more responsible, and pick up after their dogs, when they think they are being watched. Research also suggested that dog fouling tends to occur at night time and during the winter months, as some dog owners feel they can’t be seen ‘under the cover of darkness’.

We believe that the scheme, promises to be an effective way of changing people’s behaviour and reducing incidents of dog fouling. Thankfully, most people do clear up after their dogs but we want to send out a very clear message to the irresponsible few that fail to do so that we take a ‘zero-tolerance’ approach towards dog fouling and anyone caught failing to clear up after their dog will be fined and, if necessary, prosecuted.”

LITTERING

Litter does not clear itself away. The cost of clearing up litter runs into hundreds of pounds. It is an offence to leave litter and a person is guilty of an offence if they throw down, drop or otherwise deposit and then leave it in a public place. The Borough Council will respond to complaints and have the power to demand a person’s name and address in order to issue fixed penalty notices.

PARKING ON PAVEMENTS

With the problem in the village of inappropriately parked vehicles on pavements, we have registered our interest with ‘Guide Dogs for the Blind’ who are campaigning against pavement parking. It is being proposed that motorists should be banned from parking on pavements because the practice forces vulnerable pedestrians to walk in the road and blocking the pavement, is inconsiderate and dangerous. There is already a ban on parking on footways on most London streets and a recent poll suggests that most people want restrictions for the rest of the country. If you spot a vehicle wrongly parked, please call 101 and our PCSO’s will try and attend, contact the owner and get the vehicle moved on. Whilst the PCSO’s cannot issue tickets they can issue advice notices.

HIGHWAYS

Did you know that the preferred way to let highways know about faults such as potholes or overgrown vegetation is through the website www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults where details can be easily uploaded and locations pinpointed on an interactive map. Providing this information will help speed up the rate of repairs. In the event of an emergency or if you don’t have access to the internet you should call 03000 41 81 81. There is no need for the Parish Council to refer highways issues direct to Kent Highways as this often gives the impression to customers that they need to come back to the Parish Council in the future. You might be interested in the roadworks.org website which gives details of all planned works for the village, on this website, type in the web address it will come up with a map, in the search field type in the location and it will zoom in on all the works for the area.

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

If you witness any incidents of anti-social behaviour, anywhere in the village, or know who is involved, please tell us, our community warden or the police. Anti-Social Behaviour can affect everyone’s quality of life and should not be tolerated.

MAY 2015 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

05 May 2015	Carers Support Group. 12.00 p.m. in the Jubilee Hall Meeting Room
07 May 2015	Elections of Parliamentary, Borough and Parish Elections, polling stations opened between 7.00 a.m. – 10.00 p.m.
11 May 2015	Count takes place of the Parish Election
18 May 2015	Annual Meeting of the Parish Council followed by a meeting of the Planning & Transportation Committee. Proceedings commence at 7.00 p.m.

EAST PECKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Contact Details: Clerk to the Council, Karen Bell, The Parish Office, East Peckham Jubilee Hall, Pippin Road, East Peckham, TN12 5BT, Telephone/answerphone: 01622 871309, Email: admin@eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk.

The Parish Office is open weekday mornings during term time except Wednesdays. We love seeing you in our office and look forward to your visits. If you have an important matter which you wish to discuss, please make an appointment so that we can make sure we are available. Karen works part time and is sometimes at external meetings and therefore not always available, so do please ring or email first. If you would like to speak to a Councillor please write, phone or email and a Councillor will contact you; alternatively you may contact a Councillor via our website www.eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk. Don't forget that our website is a useful tool to find out more about East Peckham and your Parish Council, on the website you will find regular updates, details of all Parish Council meetings and links to agendas, consultations and other information relevant to the whole village. Our new Welcome Pack is also available on our website; we do have some hard copies available if you would like one. If you are organising an event that benefits the community and would like it included on the Parish Council's online calendar, email details to the Parish Office.

VILLAGE NEWS UPDATE

POLICE

Police Contact Points are on a rolling two week schedule. The police van will be in the Co-op Car Park, Branbridges Road, East Peckham for an hour long visit on Thursday 07 and 21 May 2015 from 4:30pm to 5:30pm on a fortnightly basis. Come along to talk to a neighbourhood officer about any policing concerns you may have, to get safety advice or to collect a free crime prevention item. (Subject to availability).

How to Contact Kent Police: In an emergency, if a crime is in progress or life is in danger, call **999** For non-urgent issues call **101** If deaf or speech impaired, text „Police „and your message to **60066** For news and advice visit www.kent.police.uk Follow on Twitter [@kent_police](https://twitter.com/kent_police) or [@kentpoliceton](https://twitter.com/kentpoliceton) Find Kent Police on Facebook

E-watch

The Parish Council would like to encourage residents to sign up to E-watch, the website that provides twice weekly updates on reported incidents from the police by area, together with important updates from Trading Standards. To sign up please go to their website e-watch.co

Why Not Sponsor a Community Project

Would you like to sponsor a community project? We have various projects that you could help fund. If so please email admin@eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk

Summer Playscheme 2015

Summer Playschemes are a great way for children aged 4–11 to have fun and make friends over the long summer holidays.

Monday 3 August – Friday 21 August 9am–1pm

For further details please visit www.tmbc.gov.uk or contact the Playscheme hotline on **01732 876166** or email leisure.services@tmbc.gov.uk