

EPPC NEWS – JUNE 2016

Your monthly newsletter from East Peckham Parish Council - Working on behalf of the people in East Peckham

Dear All,

We hope you are all enjoying the lovely weather we have been having. It's hard to believe the wet winter was only a few months ago, now that summer is finally here and blossoms are in full flower!

During the growing season we would very much appreciate your help. Please can you monitor your vegetation, hedges and trees and keep the roads and pavements outside your property clear and unobstructed for the benefit of pedestrians and other highway users. Please also keep streetlights and road signs adjacent to your property clear and unobstructed.

There has been some low level crime in the village. We are aware that many people think there is no point in calling the police when the crime appears to be minor i.e. youths causing disturbance or petty theft, but we would urge you to report all crime, no matter how small by either by telephoning 101 or by contacting our Community Warden Lara Sams on 07969 584183. This way, the police can note any particular patterns of crime in the local and surrounding area and take suitable action.

If you read our newsletters and look at our website and twitter account regularly, you'll know what's been happening in our village recently. Work continues on our village enhancement projects and a few more of our finger posts have gone in the ground with the rest due to be completed shortly.

The future of the surgery continues to take up much of our time. We were successful in obtaining an extension to the proposed closure and appointed Peter Clymer as our surveyor. Peter has surveyed the premises and we are currently waiting to receive some feedback from the CCG in this respect. It is likely that refurbishments will be funded through an amalgamation of council funds and external funding from grants, private donations and fundraising. What we've achieved is unprecedented, no other public body in this country has been able to obtain a delay in a surgery closure and our work has received local and national interest to the extent that we were recently awarded a national Council of the Week Award and Karen Bell our Parish Clerk together with councillors Penny Graham and Stephanie Watson has been invited to speak at a forthcoming conference. We're delighted that our work is being recognised locally and nationally.

With regard to the Playing Fields which we own, our main priority here is to maintain this important area of village open space to a high standard. The Playing Fields are a beautiful open space and they are open for the use of anyone in the village 24 hours a day. They are also available for hire by any organisation in the village and it would be wonderful if various village celebrations took place there such as fetes or musical picnics. The fields are kept as a haven for families and for children to run around safely, and there are benches to sit and have picnics. I am sure you will agree that they are a wonderful village asset. We are currently looking at installing a Play/Trim Trail on the playing fields and some additional tree planting which will blend in with the environment, for both children and adults.

On 16th May, at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, Stephanie Watson was re-elected Chairman, Peter Crawford was re-elected Deputy Chairman and Penny Graham was elected Chairman of the Planning & Transportation Committee.

We are delighted to confirm that work will start shortly on the renovation of the war memorial. We have set a deadline for the completion of the work as 31 August 2016.

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. The office will however be closed between 01 June 2016 and 06 June 2016.

Kind regards
Chairman, Councillors and Clerk

COMING SOON - NEW PARISH COUNCIL APP

The app will be interactive with key functions to allow access to information 'on demand', so residents can engage with parish representatives and the local community, whilst 'on the go' or in the comfort of their own home. In essence the Parish App is a great opportunity for residents to connect, be informed, book facilities, share news and promote local events. Look out for more announcements. We hope you will download the app, spread the word and get connected. Better communication leads to better communities and engaging in local events, sharing news and ideas helps make a better neighbourhood.

EPPC'S ACCOUNTS FOR 2015/2016

Our accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2016 together with our Annual Return, have been published and are available on our website www.eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk. Our balances carried forward to 2016/2017 are 2015/2016 of £255,112 consisting of earmarked reserves of £98,665 and net reserves of £156,444. Our Independent Internal Audit for 2015/2016 has been carried out. Our auditor acted independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2016. On the basis of the findings in all areas and in all significant respects the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the council

TMBC REVIEW OF FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

TMBC is considering changing the way that it charges for the Tonbridge & Malling Borough element of your Council Tax bill from 2017/18 onwards. Currently, the cost of providing Borough Council services is shared by all council tax payers in the borough. However, some residents live in areas with several Borough Council-provided facilities and services while others live in areas with fewer because these services are provided by the local parish council. The Borough Council think it could be fairer if the people who benefit from these local services paid for them via a "Local Charge", in the same way that those who live in parished areas pay through their "Parish precept".

Residents in East Peckham pay a parish precept for the local services (such as playgrounds, playing fields, floral displays, Christmas lights, allotments, churchyard maintenance, streetlights and open spaces) we provide. As Tonbridge is not parished, TMBC has to provide services to the residents of Tonbridge. TMBC does not charge any extra council tax to the residents of Tonbridge for these services because all residents pay a general "Borough precept". To help make things fairer, TMBC gives us money to help us with the costs of the local services which we provide. This allows us to reduce the amount of Council Tax we charge in our Parish precept. Cuts in the government funding that the Borough Council receives mean that it needs to save £1.8 million over the next four years. The Borough Council is seeking to make these savings while protecting the services that it provides. One of the areas being reviewed as part of this process is the grants that are made to the parish councils. However, it would be unfair to simply remove the grants to the parish councils without considering the cost of the local services that the Borough Council provides in Tonbridge.

TMBC is considering the introduction of Local Charges to pay for the local facilities and services they provide such as local parks, playgrounds, allotments, flower displays, events, cemeteries and churchyards. The majority of Borough Council services, such as waste collection, recycling, street cleansing, environmental health, housing and country parks, are borough-wide and will not form part of a Local Charge. The way that Council Tax charges are applied for services provided by other organisations such as Kent County Council, Kent Police and Kent Fire & Rescue would be unchanged. In addition to improving fairness, Local Charges would replace the need to give grants to parish and town councils, saving approximately £226,000 per year.

As the Borough Council are considering only a small number of services for a Local Charge, there would only be relatively small changes to individual Council tax bills. Tonbridge residents would see an increase to take account of all the local services they receive. Those with no local services in their areas would most likely see a modest reduction in their Borough precept. Parish councils are likely to need to replace their lost grant income, which may mean a small increase in Parish precept, depending on the area that you live in. We have estimated the changes that residents in each area of the borough are likely to see in their council tax.

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is inviting borough residents, parish councils and other key stakeholders to take part in a Public Consultation. For more information and for details on how to take part in the public consultation please see the flyer at the end of this month's newsletter.

COUNCILLORS AREAS

Your Parish Councillors represent the village collectively, but for administrative and Community Emergency Planning purposes the village has been divided into areas which have been assigned as follows;

- Hale Street, Bardsley Close, Hale Court, Medway Meadows, Cates Court & Maidstone Road P. Crawford
- Smithers Lane, Pattenden Gardens, Hop Bine Close, Smithers Court, Beltring Road & Branbridges Road, Maidstone Road (A26) M. Hodgson
- Old Road, Strettitt Gardens, Pinkham & Pinkham Gardens P. Graham
- Addlestead Road, Chidley Cross Road, Caysers Croft & Tonbridge Road L. Wright
- Pound Road, The Old Dairy & Snoll Hatch Road S. Page
- Orchard Road, The Freehold, Red Roses, Marvillion & Crown Acres (Odds) C. Silver
- Whitebine, Golding & Henham Gardens & Crown Acres (evens) M. Barton
- Fell Mead, Stockenbury, Bramley Road, Pippin Road & Russett Road S. Watson
- Hatches Lane, Bullen Lane, Bells Farm Road, Grove Close & Stanford Lane J. Macdonald
- Westwood Road, Drage Road, William Luck Close & Cotman Way H. Harratt
- Court Lodge, Roydon Hall & Bush Roads, Seven Mile, Martins & Church Lanes M. Ferguson

EAST PECKHAM SURGERY – WHAT IS THE LATEST?

The proposed closure of the surgery continues to dominate much of our time and we remain committed to doing all we can to resist the closure. Our online petition is still open, if you've not yet seen it do please go onto our website www.eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk and follow the link to add your signature. We have welcomed the media exposure which has included being featured in local and national media. We took the lead in drawing up the Action Plan which was approved by NHS and will keep the surgery open whilst long term solutions are explored.

BLOOMING IN EAST PECKHAM

We'd like to form an East Peckham in Bloom group whose aim would be to enhance the appearance of the village. If you're a local business and would like to sponsor this project, let us know. We've many ideas for brightening up our village. If you're interested in becoming part of an East Peckham in Bloom group, let us know. Let's get our village of East Peckham looking beautiful in 2016 and be proud of where we live!

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANNING

Would you be prepared to help your community? We have 3 ways you can help, first the East Peckham Flood Group which is independent of the Parish Council is looking for a new Chairman, we're also looking for someone to coordinate the village Flood Warden Scheme and finally we'd like to have more Flood Wardens. If you're interested and would like to find out more please let us know. Free training is available via TMBC and all Flood Wardens are given a flood preparedness kit. To receive Flood Warnings, visit the website www.environment-agency.gov.uk or telephone 0845 988 1188.

JUBILEE HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS

We own and manage the facilities where many activities take place from the toddlers' groups including gym, parent and toddlers and Mini Music Makers to activities like Keep fit, badminton, bowls and Zumba, we are also the venue for a monthly carers group and an outdoor goal keeping school. Starting on 06 June a new Piloxing class will be taking place on a weekly basis between 9.30 a.m. – 10.30 a.m. We have hot drinks, cold drinks and snack machines too. Please consider our facilities for your events. Whilst most users of the Sports Hall are regular there is some weekday morning availability and we can currently offer evening and daytime availability in the Meeting Room. A programme of activities and the organisers contact details can be found on our website. In addition to regular activities which take place we'd like to widen the availability of sporting and other activities and would be pleased to hear from you if there are any indoor or outdoor activities you would like provided such as archery, cycling and running clubs. We would also be pleased to hear from you if you would be interested in starting up a new activity.

The playing fields are a lovely open space and are open to everyone all year round. We want them to be a haven for you to enjoy peace and quiet and for children to play safely, families to picnic and joggers to run securely. So that the playing fields are well equipped with leisure facilities for everyone, we'll continue to develop them

Children's Party Packages: We have some fantastic packages, offering hassle free solutions to make your event a great success. For more information such as costs and availability please contact the Parish Office,

Business Event Solutions: We offer solutions for business events such as one-to-one consultations, a classroom or meetings. We provide a great space for training, meetings and exhibitions. We have a hearing loop and projector which can be hired. Please contact us for more information such as costs and availability.

TENNIS COURT

The Tennis Court is open all year round and is free to use on a first come basis by residents and those who work in the village. If you'd like to use the tennis court for a specific purpose we can take bookings.

ALLOTMENTS

Allotments are provided on land adjacent to the Playing Fields. We currently have a few vacant plots.

OVERGROWN PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

KCC is responsible for maintaining public rights of way. Report problems by telephoning 03000 414145 or online at <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccesscams/issues/default.aspx>.

ABANDONED VEHICLES

These can be reported at <http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/abandoned-vehicles>.

PARKING STILL AN ISSUE!

We take the issue of inconsiderate and dangerous parking seriously and are continuing to work with KCC, The Police, the Community Warden and TMBC to investigate ideas and schemes to alleviate the problem. Please be a considerate vehicle user. Pedestrians, wheelchairs, pushchairs, cyclists all need to use the full width of the footways. Private driveways, entrances and junctions need to be kept clear of obstruction for safety reasons. Please help us to help you.

LITTERING

Litter doesn't clear itself away. The cost of clearing litter runs into hundreds of pounds. A person is guilty of a littering offence if they throw down, drop or deposit and then leave it in a public place. TMBC will respond to complaints and has the power to issue fixed penalty notices. If you'd like to do your bit to help keep East Peckham tidy, please clear up your frontages and collect rubbish along your roads. Our thanks go to the unsung heroes who regularly collect litter.

TWINNING

East Peckham is twinned with Chéreng in the Nord de Pas de Calais. The Twinning Association is independent of the Parish Council and activities are funded by those taking part and by fund-raising with no use of parish funds. Events planned for 201 include the annual Fun Day in Chéreng. For more information on Twinning please send an email to admin@eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk.

EAST PECKHAM POLICE CONTACT POINT

This is your opportunity to discuss any policing issues with a neighbourhood officer, get expert crime prevention advice, have your say on policing in Kent and pick up a free crime prevention item (subject to availability). The Police Contact Point will be available on 09 and 23 June outside the Co-op, Branbridges petrol station, Branbridges Road, East Peckham, TN12 5WH between 4.30pm – 5.30pm.

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The Committee aims to represent the views of the community when consulted on planning applications and to improve transportation issues in East Peckham. The committee has recently considered the following:

TM/16/00783/FL Stable block with hay store at Land Known as Challops Field, Maidstone Road, East Peckham **NO OBJECTION**

TM/16/00874/FL Confirmation of D1 use permitted under TM/14/00462/FL for change of use of leisure building to Quest School for a further temporary period of 5 years at The Hop Farm Country Park **NO OBJECTION**

TM/16/00948/FL Single storey extensions at Janela, 14 Smithers Lane, East Peckham **NO OBJECTION**

TM/16/01007/FL Conversion of existing garage into habitable accommodation at 5 Strettitt Gardens **NO OBJECTION**

TM/16/01186/LB Revise ground floor layout to provide relocated bathroom and kitchen at Keeble Cottage, Snoll Hatch Road, East Peckham **NO OBJECTION**

DEMOLITION OF THE FORMER ROSE AND CROWN PUBLIC HOUSE

Please see below the statements from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

From: Emma Keefe [mailto:Emma.Keefe@tmbc.gov.uk]

Sent: Monday, May 23, 2016 12:59 PM

To: Jill Anderson; Howard Rogers; Janet Sergison; admin@eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk

Subject: FW: Rose and Crown, East Peckham

Dear all,

Please find below an update concerning events at the Rose and Crown, East Peckham. Once the Enforcement Notice has been completed, I will let you know the precise nature of its requirements.

Kind Regards

Emma

From: Emma Keefe

Sent: 23 May 2016 12:57

Subject: Rose and Crown, East Peckham

Thank you for your emails which have been forwarded on to me to respond to directly.

I would firstly like to clarify that the Senior Enforcement Officer visited the site on Friday morning and spoke to the site foreman. He told him at that point to stop works and immediately followed that up with Baxter Homes, who assured him that work would stop. This has been followed up this morning with a further site inspection by the Senior Enforcement Officer.

We have undertaken a land registry search and can confirm that the site is owned by Baxter Homes.

I can appreciate your concerns regarding what might happen to the site once it is cleared in terms of unauthorised development or activities but we are in the process of drafting a formal Enforcement Notice requiring that the site is cleared, tidied and secured. The Notice will be very specific in all these regards, particularly regarding the means of securing the site.

I hope this clarifies the Council's position in respect of this matter.

Yours Sincerely

Emma Keefe

Development Control Manager

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – DOES EAST PECKHAM NEED ONE?

Villages across Kent are facing a range of challenges at the present time: housing developments, an aging population and traffic growth to name but a few. The loss of key services such as shops, pubs and schools doesn't help but there are two important tools available to local councils that help address those challenges.

- The Neighbourhood Plan
- The Community Led Plan or Parish Plan.

Neighbourhood Plans are land use plans with a set of policies that consider future housing, public open spaces, buildings and commercial development. A Parish Plan is a more inclusive plan that also looks at activities and services in the community. On 1 April 2016, the grant available to those wishing to complete a Neighbourhood or Parish Plan is now £9,000. There is a mine of information available at <http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/neighbourhood-planning>. There are currently 49 councils in Kent that are taking forward their Plan, and there are likely to be many more in the coming months.

Neighbourhood planning gives communities the opportunity to direct the development of their areas through creating plans and policies. Local authorities have the responsibility to support communities who wish to engage in the neighbourhood planning process and have the responsibility to use the policies and orders produced.

The Localism Act sets out how communities will be able to get more involved in planning for their areas – specifically around creating plans and policies to guide new development. Neighbourhood planning is about letting the people who know about and care for an area plan for it. It is led by the residential and business community, not the council, and is about building neighbourhoods – not stopping growth. Neighbourhood planning is optional but if adopted neighbourhood plans and orders will have weight becoming part of the plan making framework for the area. See http://www.pas.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning/-/journal_content/56/332612/15322/ARTICLE#sthash.aACjY1kS.dpuf

We would be pleased to hear from you if you think East Peckham should have a Neighbourhood Plan and if you would like to be involved in a Council led Steering Group to formulate such a plan.

HIGHWAYS

Potholes and other highway problems can be reported directly to Kent Highways. You might be interested in the roadworks.org website which gives details of all planned works for the village, on this website if you 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. The preferred way to let highways know about faults such as potholes and overgrown vegetation is through the website www.kent.gov.uk/highways, 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, residents should call 03000 41 81 81.

OVERGROWN VEGETATION

Every year throughout the spring and summer KCC Highways & Transportation receive numerous complaints regarding trees, hedges and other vegetation, which overhang the highway from private property. This matter can pose a number of problems for people trying to use the footways, especially if they are trying to pass with buggies, wheelchairs and scooters. It would be greatly appreciated if you could ensure that any trees and hedges that are bordering the Highway are maintained and cut back to your boundary which would greatly benefit all Highway users. This will help us all keep the highway safe and prevent the need for KCC Highways & Transportation writing to you requesting that you cut back your vegetation. Also, we would ask that you pay special attention to your trees, hedges and vegetation if your property is on or near a junction, and/or inside bend of the road, to maintain maximum visibility for road users. So that you are aware of the requirements, please refer to the following below.

If the boundary of your property borders the footway, then please be aware that:

- The full width of the footway/pavement must be available for use by pedestrians.
- As well, there must be a minimum height clearance over the footway/pavement of 2.1 metres / 7 feet for any vegetation.

If the boundary of your property borders the carriageway, then please be aware that:

- If you have vegetation that overhangs into the road, there must be a minimum height clearance of 5 metres / 16 feet, to accommodate buses and HGV's that may use the road.
- If your property is rural, then vegetation should be 0.45 metres / 1'6" feet behind the edge of the road and all signs need to be kept clear of foliage for at least 20 metres.

DOG FOULING

We take dog fouling seriously and over-stress the dangers dog faeces poses. It's illegal not to clear up the mess left by your dog and dog mess in public places is offensive to see, smell or tread in. It's a shame that just a few uncaring dog owners spoil things for others. Dog deposits provided it's bagged up can be put into any bin. If you see anyone failing to clear up after their dog please contact the Community or Dog Wardens. Please be aware that failing to clear up after your dog is an offence and TMBC enforces dog fouling through the Dogs Fouling of Land Act 1996 which applies to all land within the borough which is open and to which the public have access.

- For a found, lost or straying dog telephone 01732 876181 (also out of hours service), or
- For fouling, dangerous dog, a dog on dog attack etc. telephone 01732 876147 or Email: dog.warden@tmbc.gov.uk.
- If a person has been bitten then the incident is to be reported to the Police on 101

EAST PECKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Contact Details: Clerk to the Council, Karen Bell, East Peckham Jubilee Hall, Pippin Road, East Peckham, TN12 5BT, Tel: 01622 871309, Email: admin@eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk
Twitter @EastPeckhamPC

JUNE 2016 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

01 June 2016 Carers Group, 12.00 p.m. in the Meeting Room at the Jubilee Hall
13 June 2016 Meeting of the Planning & Transportation Committee at 7.15 p.m.
20 June 2016 Meeting of the full Parish Council at 7.00 p.m. in the Meeting Room at the Jubilee Hall

EAST PECKHAM PARISH COUNCIL: 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 located in the Jubilee Hall, Pippin Road, East Peckham and is open weekday mornings during term time except Wednesdays. 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.

POP UP SKATEPARK



East Peckham Temporary Skate Park **Saturday 14th May 2016**

On Saturday the 14th May 2016, with funding from Action with Communities in Rural Kent, East Peckham Parish Council arranged for the Revolution Skate Park Team to bring in some of their temporary ramps which were placed in the tennis court in the Jubilee Hall car park. Approximately 60 people from turned up to use the facility from tiny tots to some older residents in their formative years.

The mayor of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council turned up to show his support as did other Parish and Borough Councillors from within Tonbridge and Malling. The day was a huge success and has been spoken about within the community for the last several days. East Peckham Parish Council now wants to start a fundraising campaign to raise the funds to provide a permanent facility. To start this off a special thank you must go to Martha Hodgson, Caitlin Bell, Kirsten Young-Rogers, Oliver Brown and Justin Gregory, Year 5 children from East Peckham Primary School for raising a brilliant £32.50 for selling drinks, sweets, crisps and cakes and to the ice cream van who donated 10% of the day's takings.

Stephanie Watson, Chairman of East Peckham Parish Council said. "It was wonderful to see the children having fun in the outdoors and we really hope we can bring the Pop up Skate Park back to East Peckham soon while we fundraise for a permanent one. Our next step is to organise a meeting with Action with Communities in Rural Kent in order to harness the enthusiasm and interest generated on Saturday"