

EPPC NEWS – MAY 2016

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

Dear All,

This month we start by thanking everyone who came to one of the biggest annual events in East Peckham, which was the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting held on 04 April 2016. This was not a Parish Council meeting but a village meeting which we are delighted to host as it gives you the opportunity to ask us questions and find out more about we do. It was a great privilege to us to host this annual event and feedback from those who attended was extremely positive.

At this year's Annual Parish Meeting; the 2016 Awards were presented. We would like to offer our congratulations to our award winners who are as follows:

BILLY CAN AWARDS:	Tony White (EP Boys Brigade) and Barbara Breden.
PC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SHIELD:	Carol Hodgson
KALC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:	Brookside Garden Centre

This month, we received notification that we have been accredited by the Living Wage Foundation. Our County Association, the Kent Association of Local Councils has advised us that we are the first Parish or Town Council that they know of within Kent to have received this accreditation and that they will be featuring us in an article in a forthcoming issue of their monthly Parish News.

If you read the Parish Councils newsletters and look at our website and twitter account regularly, you will know what has been happening in our village over the past year. We are often asked what the Parish Council does; we hope our annual report has given you a flavour of what we do on behalf of the village.

We have continued to work with Neil Gunn from the Environment Agency on the proposed flood defence work for the village and work will start in the next few weeks on a more detailed action plan, although a little more funding still needs to be found from any source we can find.

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 within the year.

We had a flag pole installed in the village centre and celebrated Commonwealth Day on 14 March with help from pupils from the Primary School. Village groups are welcome to use the flag pole to fly flags to celebrate special occasions.

We are continuing with our mission to be a 'paperless' council and are just about launch our new app to make it easier to access all the council information on your phone or tablet.

The proposed closure of the surgery has taken up much of our time, we continue to do all we can to resist the closure. As we battle to retain this essential service, we are enormously grateful to Tom Tugendhat MP for his continuing support. We have appreciated the local and national media interest this issue has generated. The loss of the surgery to the village is unthinkable as is the negative and detrimental effect it would have on our community. We have been successful in obtaining a six month extension to the proposed closure and have appointed Peter Clymer as our surveyor. Peter surveyed the premises on 12 April and we will soon know if it will be possible to alter the facilities so that it meets NHS standards and the likely cost of doing so. It is likely that work will be funded through an amalgamation of parish council funds and external funding from grants,

private donations and fundraising. If we are unable to alter the existing premises then we will look at other long term solutions. What we have achieved is unprecedented, no other public body in this country has been able to obtain a delay in a branch surgery closure and our work has received local and national interest to the extent that we have been nominated by our peers for awards.

We are aware that speeding remains a concern and we would like to set up a Speed Watch initiative. Whilst we are committed in principal to funding the purchase of speed watch equipment, its operation will rely on volunteer help. If you are interested and would like to volunteer do please let us know.

We look after the village planning interests which involves dealing with basic applications through to complicated ones involving new housing and other development. In the past year we've made recommendations to TMBC on over 100 applications and we've ensured that we make our representations heard. We're a Consultee, and quite often TMBC takes our recommendations on board. We're fortunate in having great technical expertise, so you can rest assured that we usually know what we're talking about, as well as being confident in our recommendations to TMBC.

On 21 April we celebrated the Queens 90th Birthday by having a village wide Litter pick followed by the planting of a Field Maple future Heritage Tree on the playing fields, in the evening a beacon was lit at St Michaels and we will be presenting each child at the Primary School with a special medal to commemorate the occasion.

Crime figures remain stable, but we ask you to report any unusual behaviour or nuisance problems, by dialling 101 and not the next time you see our PCSO's or Community Warden,

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. The playing fields 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 will which will blend in with the environment, for both children and adults.

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.

Kind regards
Chairman, Councillors and Clerk

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.

We've started an online petition, 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've welcomed the media exposure which has included being featured in local and national media and took the lead in drawing up the Action Plan which was approved by NHS and will keep the surgery open for six months whilst long term solutions are explored.

We appointed former resident Peter Clymer to carry out the survey, this was done on 12 April and shortly we'll know if it will be possible to refurbish the surgery to meet NHS regularity standards and the cost of doing so. If felt too costly or not possible then at that stage the Action Plan will allow us to consider other long term solutions such as the placement of a porta cabin on the playing fields or the conversion of part of the Jubilee Hall. If we're unable to fund the full costs of works we'll look for external funding sources such as crowdfunding and will accept private donations. We've registered as a beneficiary in TMBC's new online lottery where for every £1 lottery ticket sold chosen good causes will receive 50p with an additional 18p going into a general pot which will also be awarded to good causes.

Whilst Woodlands Health Centre has confirmed that the proposed closure was bought about by regulatory challenge and that they have no desire to withdraw the service, they've stated that they're not in a position to contribute funds now or in the future towards the survey or renovations. Given that the Parish Council has offered to fund the survey they feel that they will be unable to project manage the survey or the works required and this will be our responsibility. This has undoubtedly placed an unfair burden upon us but for the benefit of the village we will rise to the challenge facing us over the coming months in this respect.

It is worthy of note that we are currently the only Public Body in the country which has been able to persuade NHS to reverse a surgery branch closure decision.

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.

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!

GARDEN COMPETITION

Back by popular demand is the Garden Competition. The competition is by entry form only which was included in our Annual Report or you can download and print off an entry form from our website, we look forward to receiving your entries which we would like by 01 June 2016.

THE LIVES THEY LEFT BEHIND

Margaret Lawrence our village historian has informed us that now that the publishing costs of The Lives They Left Behind have been cleared all money from future sales will be donated to the Help for Heroes charity.

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 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.

EAST PECKHAM BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Are you a member of the Business Community? Would you like to see the village have a business forum? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Some of the things the forum could do are create a loyalty scheme, publish a business directory and produce a visitor's information leaflet. It would be fantastic if the East Peckham Business Community could come together for a 'Showcase Evening' where local businesses could display their 'commodities'. We think it would be a wonderful opportunity for everyone to see what is produced, meet the business owners and find out about local services and trades available in the village. We would like to invite representatives from local businesses and community groups to a networking breakfast, please let us know if this is something that would be of interest to you.

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. 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. We 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 two vacant plots. Sadly the new communal allotment shed was completely destroyed by Storm Katie. Whilst we will be able to claim some of the costs to replace the shed we were heartened to receive a donation from Abbey Funeral Homes which will cover the insurance excess. Our heartfelt thanks for this wonderful donation.

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.

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/00170/LB	New ensuite in existing annexe at The Barn, 26 Church Lane	NO OBJECTION
TM/00171/LB	Internal alterations at The Barn, 26 Church Lane, East Peckham	NO OBJECTION
KCC/TM/0048/2016	Remove existing sheds and replace with timber storage shed at East Peckham Primary School	NO OBJECTION

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

TMBC are investigating a Static Home which has been installed within the vicinity of Seven Mile Lane, possibly just within the East Peckham boundary.

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 which are the Neighbourhood Plan and 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

The preferred way to let highways know about faults such as potholes or overgrown vegetation is through the website www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults. In an emergency call 03000 41 81 81. There's no need for EPPC to refer issues direct as this can give the impression to customers that they need to come back to the Parish Council. You might be interested in the roadworks.org website which gives details of planned works.

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

MAY 2016 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

09 May 2016	Planning & Transportation Committee, 7.00 p.m. in the Jubilee Hall Meeting Room
09 May 2016	Finance Committee, (follows the Planning & Transportation Committee) in the Jubilee Hall Meeting Room
16 May 2016	Full Parish Council, 7.15 p.m. in the Jubilee Hall Meeting Room

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

POP UP SKATEPARK –
COMING SOON TO EAST PECKHAM



WHEN	14 MAY 2016
WHERE	EAST PECKHAM PLAYING FIELDS
TIME	11.00 A.M. – 3.00 P.M.
COST	FREE

- Various size ramps will be erected for the day
- Safety equipment will be provided as will skateboards and scooters
- There will be 2 qualified CRB instructors on site, one of whom will be first aid trained.
- we're hoping that a burger van and ice cream van will be on site

All welcome to come along and have some fun