



# HERNHILL NEWS

## DECEMBER 2022



### CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

from  
St Michael's Church

You are all warmly invited to the Services and events being held locally to celebrate Christmas.

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*

*(Isaiah 9.6)*

### PARISH COUNCIL

News from the final Parish Council meeting of 2022, Latest planning applications, Neighbourhood Plans and village speeding limits. We try to keep you informed.. If you have a suggestion, you can contact the Parish Council Clerk on 07876221580 or

[hernhillclerk@gmail.com](mailto:hernhillclerk@gmail.com).

Full copies of the approved minutes for meetings and updated news on planning and road closures are available on the Parish Council Website.

[hernhillparishcouncil.org](http://hernhillparishcouncil.org)

The November meeting of the Parish Council was held on Wednesday 30th in the village hall. It was attended by seven parish councillors, the clerk,

Alistair Gould SBC and six members of the public.

**Hernhill Neighbourhood Plan:** As we know, several local areas have formed groups to write a neighbourhood plan in attempts to gain legally binding control of growth and development in their communities, retaining green spaces and historical character. Indeed our own neighbours, Boughton and Dunkirk, have very recently completed the process and their plan has been ratified. Financial and professional support is available through the Locality Fund and an enormous amount of guidance material has been gathered. We have had a few expressions of interest from the community in exploring this further.

Chairman: Cllr Barbara Heller  
Clerk: Rebecca Parr 07876 221580  
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A get together, probably in a local hostelry, to explore possibilities is planned in January. If you would like to come along, please contact the clerk.

**Planning:** The Parish Council is allowed to comment on plans submitted to Swale and publicly available to view on Swale planning portal

<https://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online>

Application 22/504486 Land at Plum Pudding Lane and Highstreet Road, Hernhill. Re-submission following withdrawal of previous plan to include drive through restaurant with the industrial units currently submitted. Councillors discussed the plan for three industrial units on this site and voted by majority to oppose it on grounds of highway safety, lack of access (unless by car), landscape impact, loss of biodiversity and increased flood risk.

Application 22/502910: Smith's Transport Yard, Highstreet Road, Hernhill: for removal of landscaping conditions imposed when the permission was granted for the industrial units on this site. Application refused by SBC.

**Monkshill Road:** Councillor Donna Waters gave a report on recent developments at Monkshill Farm which appear to have generated additional traffic on Monkshill Road, a narrow road which is in a poor state. The council noted that they have not been made aware of any changes of use through planning since 2016/17. The clerk has agreed to speak to Swale planning team.

**Speed limits:** Councillor Chris Page gave an update on the progress of our highways improvement plan (HIP). A new team at KCC highways have renegotiated on the previously agreed extent of speed limits through Hernhill; now only part of Staplestreet and the village centre can be 30mph. This news was greeted with disbelief by all those present. Cllr Page agreed to ask KCC if they are still able to provide funds towards the application and design process as previously offered. Also we will ask the school to separately request the full implementation of the originally planned speed limits extending to the school and Fostall.

**Litter and bins:** We are still waiting for replacement bins from SBC for the village hall and for Forge Farm Row. Cllr David Figgis reported that the new bins on Wey Street slip road are constantly filled to overflowing; we will ask SBC about larger bins plus more frequent emptying. Cllr Alistair Gould offered his support with SBC. A village litter pick is planned for February.

**No Mow May:** The council agreed to join in for the village green and churchyard front and sides.

**Queen's Green Canopy:** The bare rooted crab apple and oak tree ordered for the churchyard and school will be delivered by Edible Culture for planting in January. The plaques are ready to go alongside.

The next Parish Council meeting will be





at 7.30pm Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January at the Village Hall. If you are not able to attend the meeting in person but still wish to make representation to the Parish Council, please email or telephone the Clerk as soon as possible, but ide-

ally a minimum of three working days before the date of the meeting, and the Clerk will ensure that your views are fully considered under the public participation section of the meeting

### **SWALE BOROUGH COUNCILLOR The Local Plan**

In the August magazine we reported that Swale Borough Council had adopted a new timetable for the local plan. At that time changes in national policy guidance were expected to be published in July. The aim was to publish a revised plan for public consultation (known as regulation 19 consultation) in November which would take account of the new policy guidance.

Since the summer there has been considerable political upheaval in central government. Liz Truss said that housing targets for local authorities would be removed. Plans for investment zones were announced, which would remove virtually all planning restrictions. Kent County Council has proposed several investment zones in Kent, but fortunately none in Swale. There is considerable uncertainty as to what changes are still on the table. With the policy guidance expected in July still not having been published and further uncertainty added by the changes in government, Swale Borough Council is in a very difficult situation. There is little point in spending

considerable effort and expense producing a consultation document which may be out of date before it is published. Therefore, along with many other councils, Swale has decided to pause the local plan process. Work in gathering evidence to support the revised local plan will continue, so the council will be able to publish a robust plan once the required guidance has been received. There is no set timetable in place, but it is expected that a revised local plan will not be published for 12 – 18 months.

The existing (2017) local plan remains in place and all planning applications must be evaluated against the local plan policies. However, as an update is overdue, it does allow developers to argue that the plan is out of date. In addition, as a revised local plan has already been consulted on, it too has some weight in planning decisions. In effect the situation is similar to that which has applied since February 2019 when the previous administration could no longer demonstrate a 5-year land supply. Under these circumstances a 'tilted balance' in favour of sustainable development applies. However, development still must be in





the right place. Inappropriate development can be refused. The council has been successful in defending refusal of inappropriate development at appeal.

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Alastair Gould  
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### COUNTY COUNCILLOR

As we gradually head into winter, I am feeling grateful for the delayed arrival of the colder weather. Temperatures in October were so mild that the government saved £260m on price cap payments to energy companies. Many families will be better off too as a result of this, and the continuing mild weather in the first half of November will have helped lower people's bills too.

**Buses.** Sadly, the most recent full council meeting voted in favour of the bus subsidy cuts. This means that many bus services across our area will stop next February. In Swale East the affected services are Chalkwell services with the following route numbers 8, 9, 343, 344, 345, 662, 664 and 666. (the Stagecoach 666 from Faversham to Ashford will continue running). I met with KCC transport officers this week to see if anything could be done to save the services, even on a reduced frequency, but unfortunately was not able to make much progress. I will next be contacting the bosses at Chalkwell buses to try and work out a financially viable route which could perhaps cover more of the villages than the previous routes did.

As things stand, from February on-

wards, the Kent Karrier will be the only bus option for the majority of adults in Bredgar, Rodmersham, Tunstall, Lynsted, Doddington, Newnham, Conyer and Oare. It only serves villages on 2-3 days of the week, costs £3.50 for a return journey and needs to be booked in advance. I will share more information on this service in future columns, but if you would like to know more, please search 'Swale Kent Karrier' on Google for information relating to this service.

**Winter.** As noted last month, I have arranged for an organisation called Green Doctors to visit some of the parishes across the area in early December. They will be holding five drop in sessions to give energy advice and money saving tips. The sessions will take place at the following locations:

Thursday 8th December  
10.00am to midday – Newnham Village Hall  
1.30pm to 3.00pm – Sheldwich Village Hall  
3.30pm to 5.00pm – Oare Village Hall  
Friday 9th December  
9.30am to midday – Teynham Community Hall  
2.30pm to 4.00pm – Boughton Village Hall





More information on Green Doctors can be found at [groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor/](http://groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor/)  
I will be attending all of these sessions

too, so please feel free to come along if you have any other local issues you would like to discuss.

Rich Lehmann  
[rich.lehmann@kent.gov.uk](mailto:rich.lehmann@kent.gov.uk)

### FROM OUR MP

Often when I sit down to write these newsletters I look back on the previous six or eight weeks and am amazed just how much has happened – and very often how much has changed. But in all the time I've been doing them it's safe to say there has never been a period like the one since my last update. Last month we mourned the loss of Queen Elizabeth II. A day we all knew would eventually come, but hoped in our hearts might not. She was a constant in so many of our lives. A symbol of national pride, who brought people together because of the remarkable person she was – a lifetime of service carried out with unwavering kindness, grace and good humour. While national mourning has come to an end, there is still a great sense of loss at The Queen's passing. There are little reminders – especially in Parliament where it is now His Majesty's Government – that catch us out and bring home the reality of this new era. It was a privilege to take part in the tributes in Parliament the day after we heard the sad news. I have never known an atmosphere like it in the House of Commons – sombre, but with smiles and laughter piercing the si-

lence as MPs reflected on their memories of The Queen. I know just how much The Queen meant to people in Faversham and Mid Kent. On almost every school visit, I would get asked if I had met The Queen, and in so many places and buildings there were signs of cherished visits and occasions.

Clearly there has been a lot of change in Westminster during the last few weeks too, and I want to say sorry for the uncertainty this has caused. Liz Truss is right about the magical qualities of economic growth. Quite simply it makes people's lives better, and we should want more of it. But as she acknowledged, her plan went too far and too fast – especially while we're spending tens of billions of pounds to support people with the cost of energy. I know Rishi Sunak will be an outstanding Prime Minister. I worked with him in the Treasury and saw his grip of the economic challenges we face first hand. There is no one better to steer our economy through these difficult times. He showed during his time as Chancellor that he will always support the most vulnerable when times are tough, both with the furlough scheme and with the energy support package. We now need to get on with





the job. We must steady our economy and bring inflation under control. We need to transform our domestic energy network while standing with Ukraine against Putin. And we need to unblock our NHS as we go into winter. Throughout this period, I've been working to make our lives better locally: bringing people together to support with the cost of living, fighting for a

solution to Operation Brock, and making the case for improvements to local infrastructure. You can find out more about this and much more on my website. These are difficult times, but we will get through them. And as The Queen reminded us on so many occasions, storms are best weathered together

Helen Whatley

**A TIME OF EXPECTATION AND PREPARATION**

This Christmas will be the second one for our benefice without a priest in charge, but the life of the church continues and we look forward to celebrating the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Everyone is warmly invited to our services and events throughout December. (Full details shown separately). December starts with Advent and for many this is a warning Christmas is on its way and time is running out, cards need to be written, presents bought and wrapped, extra food and drink organised for an influx of family and friends, a lot of rushing around and a general atmosphere of panic. In the retail world it signals the final frenzy of Christmas shopping. For the children it is the big countdown of "Sleeps to Santa" and a daily consumption of chocolate from their Advent calendars. Sadly, for some people this year Advent will be a very anxious time if they are finding it difficult to make ends meet with the rise in the cost of living.

The atmosphere in our church buildings during Advent is so different from that of our towns and villages, where there are Christmas trees, lights and decorations galore. There are no flowers in church, apart from the evergreen foliage on the advent wreath and the colour of the altar frontal is purple, as it is during Lent. Anyone not familiar with the traditions of the church may wonder why there are no decorations, tree or crib to be seen. Shouldn't Advent be a joyous time, as it heralds the start of the celebrations for the birth of Jesus? Advent for the church is not part of the Christmas season, but a preparation for it and in years gone by Advent, like Lent, was a time of penitence. Nobody is quite sure when the season of Advent was first observed but we know from about 480 AD monks in France fasted every day in December until Christmas. In the 5<sup>th</sup> Century the Roman Catholic Church encouraged fasting 3 days a week during Advent, but it was never obligatory and is not expected now, although it might be





good if we did, in preparation for any over indulgence that might occur later! Advent is now a season of expectation and preparation rather than penitence. The word Advent comes from the Latin *adventus* meaning “coming”. As Christians we prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ with his Incarnation at Bethlehem and his second coming, when He will come again in glory to be our judge.

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year, but beyond the tinsel and the festivities the suffering of our fellow humans continues with the ongoing war in Ukraine and war and conflict in other nations; global economic problems and climate change. We see the cruelty, corruption, greed and aggression of our world and can sometimes despair at the future. Below are two verses from the carol, *It came upon the midnight clear*, which is about the angels’ message of “Peace on earth, goodwill to all”, to the shepherds on that first Christmas night. Written in 1849, the words still resonate with us in 2022.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife

the world has suffered long;  
beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and warring humankind hears not  
the love-song which they bring;  
O hush the noise of mortal strife,  
and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hast’ning on,  
by prophets seen of old  
when with the ever-circling years  
comes round the age of gold;  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendours fling,  
and all the world give back the song  
which now the angels sing.

Edmund Hamilton Sears  
(1810-1876)

I know we all have different Christmas-  
es, whatever form they take, may we all  
find comfort and joy this Christmastide  
and the peace of the Christ child be in  
our homes, our troubled world and our  
hearts.

Peter Willcock  
Churchwarden  
St Michael’s Church  
Hernhill

### HERNHILL CE SCHOOL

November has been a busy month at school.

Our Year 6 children joined 850 other Year 6 pupils at Canterbury Cathedral for one of the Cathedral Schools Days in early November - the first on-site days in three years. The children explored the Cathedral,

focusing on a theme of looking after and preserving special places. The day gave our children the opportunity to turn their hands to the ancient arts of stonemasonry and stained-glass window making, as well as engaging in drama, costume trails around the Cathedral and prayer spaces. In the afternoon, all the schools gathered together for in-





spiring acts of worship in the Cathedral Nave. The pupils were joined by an archdeacon and we were honoured to be asked to provide two pupils to lead the act of worship. The two girls did brilliantly and were a credit to themselves and to the school.

We were very touched to be joined by so many members of the local community at our moment of remembrance on 11th November. Huge thank you to our Year 5 class for re-painting all the poppies on our Poppy Memorial in the car park in advance of the event. The children sang and read beautifully, and having one of our Year 6 children play the "Last Post" on the flute was particularly poignant.

November has also been a very sporty month for us. We have had a team of Year 5/6 children take part in the East

Kent Sports Partnership Basketball tournament, our Year 6 visited Herne Bay High for an afternoon of roller skating and a team of Year 2/3 children took part in the Unihoc Cornerball Festival (again organised by the East Kent Sports Partnership). In addition, our school football team played their first few league matches against local schools.

And now we head into December with the sound of nativity song rehearsals spreading down the corridors on a daily basis. We are very much looking forward to welcoming parents and carers into school for the performances - the first for three years.

With best wishes for a joyful advent and Christmas to all,

Sarah Alexander  
Headteacher



**CAROLS ON**

**THE GREEN**

**5.00pm on Saturday 17th December**  
**Community carol singing followed by mulled wine**  
**and mince pies in the church**

## **BREATHING SPACE**

Evenings of rest and refreshment with sacred music and silence. In candlelit Hernhill Church.







### GARDENER'S CORNER

What a year it has been. There was the hose pipe ban and drought. Scratching around to find a little water started to make me feel a little stressed out. It pained me to watch the poor plants suffering. And look now, too much rain, you cannot win when it comes to nature. Many rhododendrons have still not recovered from the drought, no buds for the spring.

I have to rethink what plants will cope with wet and dry. I have bought and planted some already but I'm sure they are starting to think when is this rain going to stop. I'm beginning to wish that I had waited until the spring before planting them. I felt a couple were saying, "boy-oh-boy this is too wet for me", but hopefully in the spring they will be saying, "You know, it was not a bad idea to plant us out last autumn as my roots have had enough water to give me a good start even if there is no rain now". Well that's what I'm hoping they will think. Mind you it was not all bad, some plants were really loving the dryness. For example, the bananas, phlomis, medlar, figs, roses and cannas.

Some plants like our hydrangeas, day-lily, black bamboo and daffodils are a little confused due to this mild spell. They are thinking that it's spring, poor things, and some are trying to make up for lost growth during the drought. Our Acanthus, that had died right back, and the bamboo are trying to get some new shoots now that they have more than enough moisture and some warmth.

We've started to put the tender plants away for the winter such as dahlias, pomegranate, mandarin, cannas, fuchsia, agapanthus, bananas trees and what bananas cannot go into the greenhouse are wrapped up, just in case we have a very cold winter.

Now that we have too much rainwater we're storing what we can and adding the spare to the garden to help build up the water table. Half the tree leaves have fallen and we're collecting them for leaf mould to use as compost and mulch in a years time.

I still have tulips and nectaroscordum to plant out, but I'm scratching my head as to where to put them, where they can stay all year round.

In October we sowed loads of seeds for new plants next year. Most have germinated and are ready for potting on. Hopefully they'll get through the winter in the cold frame as this will cut down on the amount of plants I buy next year. Talking about next year we will be opening the garden in May, June and August for the National Open Garden Scheme (NGS) plus a few hours for the British Red Cross near the end of June.

It's now so cold and wet that I'm beginning to think that I should also go into hibernation like some of the plants, i.e. sitting in front of the television with the occasional check on the plants in the greenhouses. Then I'll be nice and fresh and ready to go come mid January. Oh I forgot, that is what I do most years where the garden is concerned. I just view the garden through the windows





<p>with camera in hand for photo attachments for messages to friends. Well I hope that we all have time to garden next year be it be in the garden or indoors. Indoor plants are becoming more popular now, especially where</p>	<p>people have little or no garden space. We wish you all a Merry Christmas, a Happy and prosperous New Year and time to spend in gardens.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Best wishes Violet Croll</p>
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<p><b>OVER THE GARDEN WALL</b></p> <p>Halloween was brilliant this year, although I don't think I trust pumpkins, they always seem very seedy. We entered on the trail and, along with our neighbours, decorated our car port area. The spooky cocktails supplied by Sue went down brilliantly. Peter was disappointed that a whole tub of 'Heroes' disappeared before he could have one. But, well done to all who entered into the spirit &amp; particularly Joy, Jane &amp; Ian at Summer Lees.</p> <p>The Christmas craft fair at Hernhill church was brilliant as always and hopefully raised plenty of much needed funds for the church. Following the successful decoration of the car port area it was delightful to see again the beautiful crocheted poppies done by some of our brilliant neighbours.</p> <p>We were invited to attend the semi-finals of 'The Times &amp; Temple Moot'</p>	<p>competition. We were royally looked after at Temple Gardens with an afternoon tea, followed by the competition in the Royal Courts of Justice. What an amazing building. After, we attended a champagne &amp; canape reception at The Amicable Society. of Lazy Ballerinas in Fleet Street. Lanson Black Label flowing like water, lovely. Unfortunately, the high-speed train back from St. Pancras to Canterbury terminated at Ashford due to power failure. We eventually shared a taxi back to Canterbury with a nice young man, but our fast train had definitely turned into a <i>slowcomotive</i>.</p> <p>Oh, and yes, we have had yet another very large mouse trap appear outside our bathroom window. Surely someone must have noticed them going missing. Anybody??</p> <p>Stay safe, have a very Happy Christmas &amp; God bless,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Sandi.</p>
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<p><b>CHURCH SERVICES</b></p> <p><b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December</b> 10.00am Sung Communion, Hernhill, Rev'd Rex Morton.</p> <p><b>Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December</b> 3.30pm A special "Seek and Wonder" at St Barnabas, Boughton Street.</p>	<p>Christmas craft activities for the family.</p> <p><b>Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December</b> 10.00am Sung Communion, Boughton Parish Church. Venerable Andrew Sewell, Archdeacon of Maidstone. 4.00pm Christingle Service</p> <p><b>Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December.</b></p>
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6.30pm Carol Singing at St. Barnabas with the Salvation Army and Boughton & Dunkirk School followed by refreshments.

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December.**

10.30am Holy Communion, Graveney Church. Rev'd Nina Coulthard

4.30pm Lessons and Carols at Boughton Parish Church.

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December**

6.30pm Carol Singing at Dunkirk Village Hall followed by refreshments.

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December**

**Christmas Eve**

4.00pm Crib Service at Hernhill Church. A popular service for all the family. Children can come dressed as an angel or a shepherd.

7.30pm Quiet Service for Christmas Eve at St Barnabas, Boughton Street.

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December**

10.00am Christmas Day Holy Communion with carols. Hernhill Church. Venerable John Barton

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> January**

**The naming of Jesus**

10.00am Sung Communion, Hernhill, Rev'd Norman Woods

**Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> January**

**Epiphany**

10.00am Sung Communion, Boughton, Rev'd Sharran Ireland.

**Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> January**

10.00am Wednesday Worship, St Barnabas, Boughton. A short service, followed by refreshments.

**Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> January**

10.00am Morning Worship, Hernhill.

10.30am Holy Communion, Graveney. Venerable John Barton

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> January**

**Plough Sunday**

*Plough Sunday is held after Epiphany and its origins can be traced back to at least medieval times, when the ploughs of the parish were dragged to church to be blessed before the ploughing season began. With Hernhill being surrounded by farmland, the church continues to hold this special service.*

10.00am Sung Communion, Hernhill, Rev'd Louise Seear

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January**

**Candlemas**

4.30pm A special service. St. Barnabas, Boughton Street.

**BITS AND PIECES**

Many will be sad to hear that two past members of the village have died recently. Pam Jacquet was an active member of the Crafts Centre and jam maker par excellence. She reached the grand age of 103 years. Ian Clarridge was for many years the village plumber. He will be remembered wheeling his

bike from job to job laden with the tools of his trade, including great lengths of copper piping.

Thank goodness, this year we don't have the threat of another lock-down driven by misused statistics. This year there is something different. We are told that Christmas celebrations are threatened by many things. Hospital waiting



lists and inadequate after-care are getting worse. Bird flu. Strikes are threatened for multiple providers of goods and services. Problems with supplies of gas and electricity. Soaring inflation dragging people into poverty. And so on and so on.

Before we hide our aching heads under a pillow, it is worth remembering that 'news' favours reporting the worst events. Some of these predictions will not happen at all. Others will be less severe than predicted.

An old joke....

"Christmas comes but once a year  
And when it does it's too damned dear."

As we all know, we have been here before.....and survived. Of course, be aware of the potential problems. Of course, avoid unnecessary risks. And when you have done that for yourself and your loved ones, see if there is something you can do for others. I am delighted to say that villagers are good at doing just that. A fine example is that the Halloween supper party raised nearly £1,000 for the Faversham Food Bank. Well done indeed. (And the ghoulis displays were great fun too!)

Happy Christmas.  
ADT



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