



HERNHILL NEWS

February 2023

PARISH COUNCIL

All the latest from your Parish Council: Neighbourhood Plan, Litter Pick, Planning applications and Allotments news. If you have a suggestion you can contact the Parish Council Clerk on

07876221580 or
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

The January meeting of the Parish Council was held on Wednesday 25th in the village hall. It was attended by six parish councillors, councillor Alistair Gould (SBC) and four members of the public.

The Neighbourhood Plan: A meeting was held in the Red Lion to begin developing our parish neighbourhood plan and to share knowledge of the process. Ten people attended and more have since expressed an interest. There is a flyer with this edition of the HERNHILL NEWS to spread the word and gain more support. A further meeting to plot out next steps will be held on Wednesday 1st March at 7.15pm, again in the Red Lion. Please let the Clerk know if you would like to come.

Planning: The Parish Council is allowed to comment on plans submitted

to Swale and publicly available to view on Swale planning portal

"pa.midkent.gov.uk/online".

Application 22/505759: Fairbrook Grove Staplestreet. Resurfacing of road. The council offers no adverse comment.

Application 22/505990: Land between A299, Whitstable Road and Staplestreet Road flyover: Temporary change of use of agricultural land for compound for commercial vehicles and welfare cabin for construction traffic Cleve Hill solar park. Councillors voted unanimously to object to the application. Should the application be approved planning conditions to be applied were suggested including a comprehensive plan for restitution of the site.

Application 23/500310: Listed building consent Hathcote Oast, Staplestreet: Change to previously approved plan for new side extension and changes to windows. Five councillors discussed and unanimously agreed to support the plan on grounds of improved visual amenity and streetscape.

Planning Decision:

Application 22/504757: Yew Tree Cottage, Staplestreet: Construction of two new houses each with three parking spaces, new splayed access from Dawes road. Application refused.

Allotments: A new gate has been fitted.

Chairman: Cllr Barbara Heller
Clerk: Rebecca Parr 07876 221580
e-mail hernhillclerk@gmail.com

Litter Pick: Councillor Rumble has arranged a village litter pick for Saturday 11th February 2.00pm. Starting at the village hall as usual we will agree which areas to cover.

Bins: Swale council has agreed to replace the missing bin at the village hall and the Staplestreet 'wonky basket' with modern multipurpose covered bins as requested. They will also ask Biffa to increase the frequency of emptying bins on Wey Street.

Road Closure: Boughton Hill, Canterbury Road will be closed from mid February until end of May for further stabilisation work. From Horselees

Road to Courtenay Road. Access will be signposted via Brenley roundabout and A2.

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Wednesday 7.30pm February 22nd 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 ideally 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 COUNCIL

New Waste and Recycling Contract

Swale Borough Council - working together with Ashford and Maidstone Councils, as the Mid Kent Waste Partnership - have awarded an eight-year waste and recycling contract to Suez Recycling and Recovery UK. The new contract begins in March 2024 and will bring improvements to the existing service and make use of the latest technology.

Fortnightly collections of waste and recycling will continue across the borough, with one wheeled bin for dry recycling, alongside the regular weekly food waste collections. The new contract aims to increase recycling rates and improve route efficiency. Lower emission vehicles will be used along with better technology to keep residents up to date. The new vehicles are being funded directly by the councils to help save costs and will be more modern vehicles that use electric bin lifts, reducing the consumption of diesel dramatically and helping lower the services' carbon footprint.

Suez will also deliver the street cleansing service in Swale. The new

contract includes improvements to the level of cleansing in rural and residential areas, as well as quicker response times for the removal of fly-tipping.

As part of the tender process, the council consulted residents about their views on the current service through a survey and via the Swale Area Committees. It was very clear that residents wanted to continue to use a single bin for mixed dry recycling, rather than have a separate bin for paper and cardboard (as used in Canterbury for example). There was a widespread view that street cleansing in rural areas was not adequate, and there was concern about the time it can take to clear fly-tipping. The tender for the new contract has reflected these priorities.

The current service will continue to be delivered by Biffa until the start of the new contract in March 2024. Staff working on the existing contract will be transferred to the new contractor.

Tim Valentine
(TimValentine@swale.gov.uk)

07752 191807

Alastair Gould
(AlastairGould@swale.gov.uk)

KCC COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The couple of months since I last wrote one of these columns have been a real rollercoaster for me. I'm grateful there have been a number of wins to offset some of the losses across our area, although sadly none of the wins are on the scale of the loss of a regular bus service to so many local villages.

In keeping with the long held tradition, I'll start with the bad news.

Unfortunately, I've been unable to make headway with the public transport officers at KCC and local bus operators, so the services earmarked for cuts in KCC's budget last year will stop running on 11th February. Bus users in affected villages will have to rely on the Kent Karrier service which costs £3.50 to use even if you have a bus pass and only serves villages on certain days. For Conyer, Lynsted, Rodmersham, Bredgar, Tunstall and Milstead, the bus is available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and goes into Sittingbourne. For Doddington, Newnham and Oare, the bus is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays and can take you to either Faversham or Sittingbourne. For more details, please Google 'Swale Kent Karrier' or call 01892 832447. I would urge any parents unable to get their children to school to contact me for information about submitting an appeal for transport assistance. I will continue to monitor this situation in the hope that a new service can be created to serve the villages that are now without regular public transport.

In December, Network Rail applied for the emergency closure of a well used foot crossing at the western end of Teynham Station. This crossing is part of a very popular walking route and was used by hundreds of residents.

Network Rail have since applied to divert the public right of way and a consultation on this will be opening shortly. I will ensure local residents are aware of the survey when it opens to enable all those that use the path to share their views on the proposals.

Upcoming roadworks on Boughton Hill scheduled to take place from February to May will cause a huge amount of disruption for residents in Boughton and Dunkirk, especially those that rely on the bus service through the villages. Unfortunately the works are required to protect against the dangerous levels of subsidence in the area. Once the works are complete, the road should be safe from subsidence for the rest of the century. As above, I will do my best to ensure residents are kept updated on the roadworks and the replacement bus services that are put in place.

And onto the good news. The Green Doctors sessions held in early December were very successful. Despite the cold snap, dozens of residents came to visit the events and left with some great energy saving freebies like hot water bottles and draught excluders.

In Teynham, a couple of long awaited improvements finally came to fruition in December. One of the footpaths just north of the level crossing was given a makeover, and some trees were planted on the verge alongside Station Road.

Another project I've been supporting since my election was a speed limit reduction in Sheldwich. The main part of Lees Court Road through the village and beside the green will soon be reduced from a 60mph limit down to a far more appropriate 30mph. Further speed limit reductions in Selling, Dunkirk and along the A2 between Bap-

child and Teynham are all progressing well too, so will hopefully be in place by the summer.

Rich Lehmann
rich.lehmann@kent.gov.uk

GARDENER'S CORNER

In the last few weeks, as you have raised your heads above the covers on dark dreary mornings, listening to rain pattering on the window and the wind howling in the trees, spring has seemed far away. There have been bright sunny mornings but usually accompanied by frost covering the lawn and frozen hard earth in the flower beds. However spring is on its way. The other day I noticed some snowdrops raising their heads and some pink hyacinths in bud. Other bulbs are beginning to show above the soil as well. The survival and regeneration of plants always amazes me and I love walking around the garden this time of year to welcome the spring bulbs –

either newly planted in the autumn or old friends planted many years ago.

This is also the time to sort out the seeds you are going to plant this year and you can make an early start by using sunny window sills to encourage germination. I always start tomatoes and peppers this way. It does sometimes blur the edges between cooking and gardening in the kitchen but only for a short time!

The summer drought, when we were lugging watering cans around and watching plants shrivel seems far in the past. Be aware that the rain falling this autumn and winter will help to keep the deeper soil moist during the summer and rejoice.

Jill Geliot

CHURCH LETTER

As I begin to write it's 6th January – the twelfth day of Christmas, and the traditional date for taking down Christmas decorations and cards. My own decorations are back in their boxes and my cards in a pile, waiting to be read through again and messages replied to. For the Eastern Orthodox Church this is the date they celebrate Christmas, as the news reminded us this year. And in the western church it's the Feast of Epiphany – the day we remember the long journey of the wise men as they seek the Christ Child and bring him gifts.

In the church calendar, the season of Epiphany continues until the end of January and is marked by readings that tell us about other epiphanies – other revelations of the Messiah – such as the Baptism of Christ and the miracle of water turned into wine at a wedding in Cana. So although I have taken

down my decorations and cards, I will keep my little nativity crib out until the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (also known as Candlemas) on 2nd February, to remind me that Christmas is not quite over yet and to help me reflect a little longer on the significance of the birth of a baby two thousand years ago. We'll be marking Candlemas on 29th January with a Taizé-style service at St Barnabas at 4.30 pm, with music, candles and quiet prayer.

The Feast of Candlemas is a turning point in the church calendar. It's an opportunity to take a last look back at Christmas and an invitation to turn to face the approach of Lent, Holy Week and Easter. It acts as a sort of hinge between the two great Christian celebrations of Christmas and Easter, the miracle and wonder of God born into our world as a helpless baby and the

profound mystery of our redemption through the Cross and resurrection. The wonder of Christmas lights our way to the mystery of Easter with its promise of new life.

But we are not there yet. During February our services lead us to Ash Wednesday on the 22nd and to the beginning of Lent – a time to reflect on our faith and its meaning in our daily life. One of the ways we can do this is by using the Church of England's resources for Lent, which this year are based on the theme *Lent is Dust and Glory: A Lent journey of faith, failure and forgiveness*. The booklet and app based on this theme offer a daily Bible reading, short reflection and practical challenge, as well as a prayer linked to the theme of each week. They are linked to the Archbishop of Canterbury's 2023 Lent Book, *Failure: What Jesus said about sin, mistakes and messing stuff up*, by Bishop Emma Ineson (SPCK). You can find out more, including links to the app, on the Church of England website and also on the Canterbury Diocese website. And the booklets will be available at church services, Wednesday Worship and coffee mornings at St Barnabas if you would like one.

At the Quiet Service on Christmas Eve, I read two poems by Patrick Purnell about the Incarnation from his book, *Imagine*. Below is another. It's called 'Christmas Is Being Put Away'. It's a reminder that although the decorations and the crib are put away, the mystery of Christ's birth and the questions that raises remain with us. It's good if we can carry those questions into Lent and let them lead us into new reflections about the place of faith, hope and love in all the mess and confusion of daily life and the world we live in. May Lent be a time of blessing for you.

Christmas is being put away:
The Kings in a cardboard box,
Mary stashed in tissue paper,
Joseph wrapped in a woolly hat,
And the Infant Christ in a nylon sock;
All tucked away under the stairs,
We'll climb another year
Up to bed and down to breakfast.
And somewhere in the pantry of my
thoughts,
A wistful coil of questions
Goes unanswered.

Pat Saunders
Reader, Benefice of Boughton,
Graveney & Hernhill

SEEK AND WONDER

Our next session is on Saturday 11th February at 3.30 pm in St. Barnabas Parish Centre. We will be thinking about Creation. Children and their families are welcome to join us for an hour of story, music and crafts. Just turn up on the day or for more information contact Pat Saunders (07790 703675; patriciasaunders679@gmail.com)

CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 5th February

10.00am Sung Communion, Hernhill
Rev'd Sharran Ireland

Sunday 12th February

10.00am Sung Communion, Boughton
Canon Struan Dunn

Sunday 19th February

10.00am Sung Communion, Boughton

Venerable John Barton

Sunday 26th February

10.00am Benefice Sung Communion,
Boughton. Rev'd Martin Burrell

Wednesday 8th February

10.30am Wednesday Worship,
St Barnabas, Boughton. A short service followed by refreshments.

All are welcome to our services.

DARGATE FIBRE - UPDATE

Most of you who supported the Dargate Community Fibre initiative last year will already know the very good news that the Dargate UltraFast Fibre Broadband project is **COMPLETE!!** In other words, UltraFast Fibre Broadband services are now available for you to order from a supplier of your choice.

The Dargate scheme covers the 87 addresses from Hernhill School all along Butlers Hill to The Dove (incorporating Woodlands), and through Dargate along Dargate Road and Plum Pudding Lane (and a few other periphery properties). Even if you did not pledge a Government voucher but you live along that route, you will be able to order a fibre broadband service. All we need to do now is get ordering to complete our pledge to the scheme. Many residents I've spoken to have been quick off the mark by simply asking their existing broadband supplier to upgrade them. They are finding there is just a small increase to their monthly broadband cost but with a ten-fold increase in speed.

It's important to remind everyone, particularly those who did pledge and validate their voucher (residential or business), of the key terms and conditions of the Government voucher scheme. This is important so OpenReach can redeem the value of the voucher from the Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)...

You have to order an "UltraFast" Fibre Broadband service and do so within a "reasonable" period of the service be-

ing available (as of 17th Jan 2023), but no later than two months. The contract for the UltraFast Fibre Broadband service you enter into with your chosen supplier should be for a minimum of 12 months. The UltraFast Fibre Broadband service you enter into with your chosen supplier must 1) deliver a minimum bandwidth of 30Mbps download, and 2) deliver at least double the bandwidth of the broadband service you are currently consuming, or over 100Mbps. It is my understanding that those of us who validated our voucher will individually receive an e-mail from DCMS asking us to confirm we have ordered a service that meets the required above characteristics. Please make sure you respond to this when you receive it. One other point to remind everyone of is this is 'fibre to the property' (FTTP), so the final step of the installation will require your chosen supplier to run the fibre from where OpenReach have terminated it (a e-graph pole) and then directly into your house. Please do let me know when you've ordered your service so I can keep track, as I'm sure I will need this at some point. I would also be interested to hear of any interesting experiences people have with getting your service connected.

That is it for now. Feel free to ask me any questions and I'll either attempt to answer where I can, clarify with OpenReach, or some will be more applicable for the supplier you choose to provide your service. Thanks,

Paul @ Elm Tree Cottage
paul@marshy.org.

HERNHILL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Do you love where you live? What do you want for the future? Is the local area important to you, your family, your business? Do you want to keep

the distinctive 'village feel' by protecting and maintaining local character and natural environment of where you live? Do you want to have a say in improving the recreational, economic and environmental well-being of our

area? A neighbourhood plan is the opportunity to describe what is important to those who live and work in the area (now and in future).

If the plan is approved by the community, those views have to be considered in local planning decisions. Hernhill has a number of communities scattered across the parish. It is important that everyone has the chance

to have their say. To start the process, we need to collect as much information as possible about the character and important features of our area and its development needs. Please get involved. Contact Hernhill Clerk on 07876221580. Come to a meeting on 1st March at the Red Lion Hernhill at 7.15pm. Your village needs you

VILLAGE FETE

As the Coronation of King Charles III is taking place on Saturday 6th May, the date of the village fete has been moved to the second Saturday in May. The fete will now be held on

SATURDAY 13TH MAY

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

I am writing this as Chairman of Hernhill Parochial Church Council.

I am sure that everyone is aware of the perilous state of the finances of nearly all the rural parishes in the Church of England and our parish of St Michael's Hernhill is no exception. However, we have an equally challenging problem that the P.C.C. wishes to share with you. We have been without a vicar for over 18 months and are unlikely to have one for at least another 6 months. This has meant that much of the work that a vicar would normally be expected to do has fallen onto a few volunteers (most notably our only Churchwarden Peter Wilcock). Although our congregations are

holding up well we are becoming desperate for some young parishioners to step up and help. Helping with some of the everyday tasks does not commit anyone to coming to church (but that would be wonderful!)

I hardly need to say that our church is an integral part of our village and one of the features that make Hernhill so attractive to us and to visitors. Like all treasured buildings it needs regular love and attention to maintain it in a state that can be admired. We must not allow it wither on the vine.

I thank you in anticipation.

Henry Bryant.
bryanhenryh@gmail.com

OVER THE GARDEN WALL

Christmas came and went quickly. It was heart warming to see so many people at the carols on the green, even if it was freezing cold. The crib service went well despite there being considerably more adults than children. Christmas Day was great, church, pub, home. What more can you ask for?

We decided to stay home on New

Year's Eve and due to the scintillating programmes on TV, we were in bed by 11.15pm and had to watch the fireworks on catchup the following day.

Thinking we may decide to take a holiday, we went in search of a travel agent. None in Faversham, Whitstable or Herne Bay and only two in Canterbury. As a last resort we had to go to Blue Water where there are at least four. Of course, I had to have a good

shop in the sales whilst we were there. Well, it would be rude not to. Still no sign of booking the holiday though! We decided to change our broadband provider which was fairly straightforward, however we then had to reconnect both mobiles, the computer, the printer, an iPad, a tablet, both Kindles, Alexa & the smart TV. Won't be doing that again in a hurry!
My lovely neighbour has turned all arty

crafty since the Halloween & Remembrance decorations on our gates. They were then decorated for Christmas & I understand Valentine's Day is all ready to go followed by Easter. Keep an eye out when driving through the village. So it's a New Year, I've only just got used to the last one!
Stay safe, Happy New Year & God bless,

Sandi.

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY AGM

Saturday 26th February at 2.00pm in the village hall.

A business meeting, refreshments and a chance to chat. Schedules for 2023 shows will be available.

Many horticultural societies are clos-

ing through lack of support don't let this happen in Hernhill. Come along with your ideas and comments.

Potential new members are very welcome and new committee members are urgently needed.

Jill Geliot

BITS AND PIECES

Two days before Christmas I had a message that I didn't want to hear. After four months of uncertainty and anxiety, it was confirmed that the innocuous blemish on my left ear is a cancer with a potential to migrate through the lymph glands to other parts of the body. Urgent surgery was proposed. Just over two weeks later,

a large chunk of the offending ear was removed together with a length of suspect lymph gland.

The hope is that the cancer has been completely removed but further tests will be required. This may mean that the Hernhill News could be late from time to time. Sorry.

ADT
(V van G)

BIN COLLECTIONS

February	7	Tuesday	Blue Bin
	14	Tuesday	Green Bin
	15	Wednesday	Brown Bin
	21	Tuesday	Blue Bin
	28	Tuesday	Green Bin
March	1	Wednesday	Brown bin
	7	Tuesday	Blue Bin
	14	Tuesday	Green Bin
	15	Wednesday	Brown bin
	21	Tuesday	Blue Bin
	28	Tuesday	Green Bin

Alan D. Taylor
01227 751293 e-mail newsadt@gmail.com