

Chairman's Letter

August 2018



Hello Everyone

This is new! I will place a monthly letter on the web site, FACEBOOK page and notice boards a week after the monthly Full Council Meeting. My aim is to give you a summary of up-to-date information about what is happening on the parish council.

Our second "Walkfest" event is due on 4 August. Let's all get out there and enjoy our footpaths. Posters will be appearing soon – look out for them. I'll be taking not only a dog but a pair of secateurs to trim the fast growing undergrowth where it impedes progress.

This year is the centenary of the end of the first world war, there will be many events to celebrate and especially to remember those who gave their lives in that awful conflict. Some who often get overlooked are those who came home – the silent soldiers. We have taken up the opportunity to place a "shadow" commemoration of the silent ones, a life-sized figure will be placed on the small green area outside St Lawrence Church. Look out for it and give them a thought when you pass. This is being funded by our KCC councillor Sean Holden.

The war memorial outside The Royal Oak is being cleaned, the adjacent tree will be trimmed and some of residents have discovered new names to be added to the memorial, including one who gave his life in the Afghan War. Both Borough Councillor Bev Palmer and County Councillor Sean Holden are contributing funds to this project.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council are progressing their new LOCAL PLAN for the period 2013 – 2033 but the timescale has slipped, we now expect to see a draft version early in 2019. Hawkhurst's Neighbourhood Development Plan, which passed referendum in February with 91% of the vote is a contributor to TWBC'S Plan.

As I have mentioned previously, in the last LOCAL PLAN in 2006, 240 houses were allocated to be built in Hawkhurst over the 20 year period 2006 – 2026, a number we exceeded. This time, for the period 2013-33, the Government has doubled the number allocated to the Tunbridge Wells Borough so we must expect a higher target. Our biggest issue – traffic - must be dealt with first and the parish council is representing your views strongly. Watch this space...

Recently there have been two important Consultations:

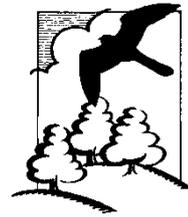
1. "The Big Conversation" – KCC are consulting the public about rural transport, buses in particular. They have no control and little influence over the bus companies but subsidise the cost of travel for bus users and are keen to ensure that their subsidy is spent appropriately to meet the needs of the people of Kent. If you can't get to an event, there is some literature in the Parish Office.
2. NHS West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have been holding events to discuss the idea of "Local Hubs". More information is available on their web site www.westkentccg.nhs.uk

A third Consultation is underway –

3. Draft Public Rights of Way (PROW) - Improvement Plan. The PROW is referred to in the Neighbourhood Development Plan, so we will be responding. You can too on this link www.kent.gov.uk/rightsofwayimprovementplan

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We are still short of a parish councillor so if you are willing to get involved contact the Parish Clerk 01580 752058 and have a chat about what is involved, then put yourself forward and get stuck in - you'll be very welcome.

I hope you all enjoyed Flix and Pix and the summer Fete, enjoy the summer and relish this good weather while it lasts, I'm off to water the garden.

Julia Newman
Chairman, Hawkhurst Parish Council
20 July 2018