



Hello!

Just a quick reminder that you can still comment on TWBC's Draft Local Plan. The consultation was extended and now ends at 5 pm on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019. I suspect many of us have been wondering what's the point? After all, it often feels like we're being ignored. However, I'm hopeful things are starting to change at TWBC. Whatever your personal views on the proposed Civic Complex at Calverley Square, the fact that it was rejected shows that the Borough Councillors are not just "rubber-stamping" decisions. Please do make sure your views are known.

So much of the Parish Council's work is taken up with planning and development at present that it sometimes feels that it crowds out everything else. Obviously, it is incredibly important as we will never be able to restore the countryside once it has been developed. However, there are plenty of other issues that impact on our village as well.

This month Councillor Lusty, Richard (our clerk) and I have had a number of meetings with KCC Highways. Some positives from these meetings include the fact that there will be a programme of repairs on several of the roads through the centre of Hawkhurst, including clearing the gullies, which aims to resolve the current issues with flooding. This should happen in October/November.

Hawkhurst Parish Council has been encouraged to work with KCC Highways to produce a Highways Improvement Plan. We understood this to be the process whereby we could use local knowledge to make suggestions to KCC Highways about what would benefit Hawkhurst. As positive as this sounds, unfortunately, this was not our experience. The first piece of bad news was that KCC would not be contributing any money to the items on our plan: we would have to find the funding, either by paying ourselves or from development.

Even more frustratingly, KCC Highways then proceeded to advise that many of the items on our wish list were not appropriate for a Highways Improvement Plan. For instance, the improvements to the junction of the Cranbrook Road and Heartenoak Road could not be included because that was a planning condition. Even though KCC Highways have been helping us with the feasibility study for the proposed zebra crossing near Tesco, they told us we were not allowed to have a zebra crossing on an A-road. Apparently, our only option is a signalised crossing, which would cost in the region of £200,000. This is more than our entire year's budget!

We will keep fighting for these improvements, but it is so disappointing that we find ourselves having to fight KCC Highways rather than working with them. At present, we are collating evidence of other A-roads that have zebra crossings to help us make our case to KCC. It would be really helpful if you could let us know if you see any zebra crossings on A-roads in Kent. We have set up an email address [zebra@hawkhurst-pc.gov](mailto:zebra@hawkhurst-pc.gov) to collate this information. Thanks so much for your help with this.

Clare Escombe  
Chairman, Hawkhurst Parish Council  
October 2019