

Parish Council Matters for September 2013

Shorne Parish Council is very pleased to be able to report, in the current and future editions of this magazine, on parish developments and action which is being taken by the Parish Council in response to issues affecting parishioners.

Foremost in the minds of most parishioners just now are **the Government's proposals for a new Lower Thames Crossing**. This spring, the Government published three options for creating an additional crossing in the Lower Thames area in response to the congestion problems currently experienced at the Dartford crossing.

One of these alternatives - known as Option C - would entail a bridge or tunnel crossing the river from Chalk to Tilbury. The road link would run right through the middle of Shorne Country Park, also directly affecting some properties nearby. It would then run close to Shorne and Chalk villages, impacting directly on the Green Belt and threatening internationally protected wetland areas, a nature reserve and six sites of Special Scientific Interest.

The Government's other options would provide for a new crossing near the existing one at Dartford [Option A] and a route through the Swanscombe Peninsula [Option B].

More than 150 Shorne parishioners packed into Shorne Village Hall in June to hear and discuss the parish's response to the Government's proposals. The Parish Council's total opposition to Option C on the grounds of cost, health and damage to the environment was fully supported by all those present. The Parish Council, in strongly opposing Option C in its representations to Government, also put forward a cogent case for Option A to be adopted for both financial and health reasons.

We await the Government's response due in October. The Parish Council is under no illusions as to the threat to our community if Option C were to be the Government's preference, and will fight any such proposal with the utmost vigour. In this event parishioners' support, already much in evidence during the recent consultation period, will be greatly welcomed.

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Shorne Parish Council