

Shorne Parish Council

— Borough of Gravesham —



PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

April 2016

Lower Thames Crossing

The consultation closed on Thursday 24th March.

The parish council submitted a formal response to the consultation, rejecting the proposals for a crossing east of Gravesend, and expressing our extreme dissatisfaction with the consultation process in general. In particular, we are concerned that it was clear from the consultation documents that Highways England had already made the decision not to include any questions relating to Option A at Dartford in the consultation, even though Government ministers have since stated that Option A is still on the table.

In addition, we are concerned that the consultation was extended to hundreds of thousands of people, including Dart Charge customers, who have no knowledge of the local environment and yet were invited to express their opinions on the proposal for a crossing east of Gravesend. We consider that they were given no reasonable options for addressing congestion at Dartford other than to agree to a crossing east of Gravesend, and that there was insufficient information in the consultation booklet to enable them to make an informed decision.

Along with councillors from Gravesham Borough and other parishes, we are considering the option of challenging the consultation under the judicial review process. In the meantime, residents are encouraged to write to Highways England and the Secretary of State for Transport to express their dissatisfaction with the consultation process.

The next step in the process will be for Highways England to prepare a post-consultation report, analysing the responses received, before the Secretary of State makes a decision later in the year. There is expected to be a further consultation on the final route.

Review of Conservation Area Appraisals

Parishioners may recall that in autumn last year, Gravesham Borough Council carried out a consultation on appraisals and management plans for the rural conservation areas in Gravesham. These included the four conservation areas in Shorne, namely Chestnut Green, Queens Farm, Thong, and Shorne village.

The draft documents have been updated in light of comments received, and Gravesham is now carrying out a further consultation on the updated documents and the process to date. This is in order to progress towards their adoption as Supplementary Planning Documents.

Supplementary Planning Documents provide more detailed advice or guidance on the implementation of policies and proposals in the Local Plan. Whilst Supplementary Planning Documents are non-statutory, they are material considerations when assessing planning applications. The relevant documents and the consultation survey form can be found online at www.gravesham.gov.uk/conservationappraisals.

To let Gravesham Borough Council know your views, please complete the online survey, or you can pick up a paper survey form from the Civic Centre or from local libraries.

The consultation runs for four weeks from 21st March to 17th April 2014.

Clean For The Queen Volunteer Litter Patrol Success

36 Volunteers turned out to 'Clean for the Queen' on Saturday 5th March, collecting 60 bags of litter from the streets of Shorne!

Starting out from the Village Hall, the yellow-vested volunteers fanned out across the parish, reaching out as far as Green Farm Lane to the north, Pear Tree Lane to the east, Brewers Road to the south, and Shorne Ifield Road to the west, and combing all the streets in between. The litter patrol had been kick-started a few days earlier by Barbara Millatt who couldn't make it on the Saturday, so she cleaned up most of The Ridgeway and Brewers Road earlier in the week, collecting 3 sacks of litter on her own.

Over in Shorne Ifield Road, Jeff and Sally Wright, assisted by Russell Cooper, rolled up their sleeves and turned the litter patrol into a full scale fly-tipping clearance operation, clambering down the banks and removing around 40 car tyres, dumped fridges, furniture, and general rubbish, before carefully stacking it up for easy collection by Gravesham Borough Council.

Organiser Bob Lane said, "Last March we managed to get 9 volunteers to join in for National Clear Up Day. In our October litter patrol, we doubled this to 18 volunteers. This time we managed to double it again and had 36 volunteers on the day, a tremendous response from the village. Whether this was a display of loyalty to Her Majesty, or a demonstration of our defiance to the Lower Thames Crossing proposals, I couldn't say. But it clearly goes to show how proud we are of our village and how determined we are to protect our environment."

Bob Lane

Shorne Parish Council