

Parish Council Matters. March 2015

Kent County Council reject Shorne Parish Council's claim to a legal right of way at Shorne Mead level crossing

KCC have ruled that the footpath from Queen's Farm Road in Lower Shorne to Shorne Marshes, which follows the route of the ancient village droveway to Shorne Mead for grazing cattle and has been used by local residents for many decades, has not been proved to be a legal right of way.

This means that action taken arbitrarily by Network Rail in November 2009 to close the level crossing at Shorne Mead, which was built across the route of the current footpath, has not so far been successfully challenged.

Given the weight of supporting evidence, including more than 60 witness statements and 35 affidavits detailing past use of the footpath showing how extensively this right of way has been enjoyed for many years, the Council is both surprised and disappointed at this outcome. It means that this traditional and easy access route to the northern part of our parish and the riverbank, including Shorne Marshes and the historic Shornemead Fort, continues to be obstructed.

Having taken advice, the Council have lodged an appeal to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We are now preparing evidence in support of our case which, having considered the arguments deployed in KCC's ruling, we believe to be persuasive.

Disturbances in Park Pale

A number of Shorne residents, together with representatives from Shorne Parish Council and other interested parties, attended a meeting with Kent Police at Rochester & Cobham Golf Club on 20 January to discuss the frequent noise disturbances and hazards caused by motorcycles and cars in Park Pale.

Although not directly connected, the damage to lawns in Woodlands Lane was also discussed.

Chief Inspector Simon Alland, Gravesham Area Commander, said that although the Police were operating under significant budgetary and resource constraints, he recognised the concerns raised and the Police were treating the matter as important.

Chief Inspector Alland reported that a number of Section 59 warning notices had been issued to bikers in Park Pale, and he reported on other measures that are expected to be in place before the summer. It was later confirmed that a valid traffic regulatory order was in place, prohibiting all motor vehicles from entering Park Pale except for access, and that this prohibition is enforceable.

Residents were encouraged to report all disturbances in Park Pale by telephoning 101, and stating that they are reporting nuisance vehicles in Park Pale which is in the Gravesham Police Area (beat code XC24). This should draw the call operator's attention to the history to

enable an accurate log of events to be collated, and will ensure that the call is directed to the correct Police area.

A further meeting is planned for later this year in order to review progress and the effectiveness of the measures taken.

In the meantime, Inspector Chris Carter will oversee police operations with regard to Park Pale, and Sergeant Carli Deacon and Bob Lane will liaise as principal points of contact.

Bob can be contacted on bob.lane@gmx.co.uk or 01474 822680.

Bob Lane

Next Parish Council meetings

The next Council meetings take place as follows -

Thursday 5 March 2015 [Planning and Highways Committee]

Thursday 19 March 2015 [Footpaths, Properties and Greens Committee]

Thursday 9 April 2015 [Council]

All the meetings take place in Shorne Village Hall starting at 7.45pm

Parishioners are most welcome to attend any of these meetings.

Roy Dinnis
Shorne Parish Council