

Shorne Parish Council

— Borough of Gravesham —



PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

July 2017

Advertising Vans

At the time of writing, the Hire2You advertising van has returned to Brewers Road overbridge, completely blocking the pavement and causing a serious traffic hazard. The parish council has again asked the Police to do whatever they can to get the vehicle removed.

Footpath Maintenance

On Saturday 10th June, a small team of volunteers tackled the nettles and overhanging branches that were encroaching on footpath NS162, known locally as Sand Pit Lane between The Ridgeway and Woodlands Lane. They also tackled some of the vegetation that was encroaching on the green in Shorne Common Rough. Our thanks go to Julie Aspinall, Pauline Clifton, and Bob Lane, plus David Parmenter and Martin Redfern who brought their power strimmers.

Kent County Council (KCC) is the authority responsible for cutting back the vegetation on countryside footpaths and public rights of way, but with reductions in funding there is a risk that these will become overgrown during this period of vigorous vegetation growth.

KCC's PROW vegetation clearance service has suffered severe financial cutbacks, to the extent that in many cases they have resorted to providing a reactive service, only when they receive complaints. Even then, the call may go to the back of the queue, which can result in some weeks before the vegetation is cut back.

If we want our footpaths to remain passable at all times, it is down to us to make sure the work is carried out in time. If you notice a footpath is starting to get overgrown, you can report it to KCC at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-on-a-right-of-way> before it's too late. You can also join our team of volunteers, who supplement the work by KCC.

Greens and Verges

Another area where we are seeing evidence of cut-backs is with the verges and greens through the main areas of the village.

Until 31st March this year, these were maintained by Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) who cut them 8 times a year at approximately 4-weekly intervals between March and October. Shorne Parish Council also arrange for supplementary cuts to be carried out in March, April, and May, on the areas where bulbs are planted.

Since 1st April, responsibility has reverted to KCC, who have reduced the number of cuts to just 6 times a year. This resulted in the verges getting into an untidy and overgrown condition, before they were eventually cut on or about 12th June.

The parish council is looking to see whether it can supplement the cuts, or even take over the cutting from KCC. However, this will incur additional costs which are not factored into the budget or precept. But if we want to maintain or improve the local environment, we may not be left with any alternatives.

Residents can help by maintaining the verges outside their homes, and we are grateful to those that already do this. If anyone would like to volunteer to 'adopt' a green or verge for maintenance purposes, we would be pleased to hear from them.

Kent County Councillors

At the County Council elections in May, Bryan Sweetland was re-elected as Councillor for Gravesham Rural division, which includes Shorne and Thong. Councillors elected for Gravesham East division, which now includes Shorne West, were Diane Marsh and Alan Ridgers.

Annual Civic Service

This year's Annual Civic Service will be held at the St Peter's & St Paul's Church at 10.00am, on Sunday 2nd July, followed by a reception in the small hall in the Village Hall.

Parish Council Meetings in June

Thursday 6th July - Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 20th July - Planning & Highways Committee

The meetings will start at 7.45pm in the Committee Room in Shorne Village Hall.

Please note that there are no meetings in August.

Bob Lane

Shorne Parish Council