

# Shorne Parish Council

— Borough of Gravesham —



## THE PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

June 2021

### Shorne Common Play Area

At the time of writing, we are still awaiting a date for the installation of the new play equipment which is currently being manufactured in Finland. It is hoped that the equipment will be installed within the next month or so. In the meantime, the chestnut butts between the Common and the parking area have been replaced with a 3-bar fence and field gate. This is to prevent children from inadvertently running into the parking area.

### Nuisance Motorbikers

Meetings have taken place and discussions are ongoing with the Police regarding the perennial nuisance caused by antisocial motorbikers, not just in the usual hotspots such as Park Pale and between Claylane Wood, Shorne West, and Thong, but in other areas. The problem seems to be very widespread recently, affecting our neighbouring parishes as well as Shorne. Whilst the Police have taken some action and stepped up their patrols, residents are strongly advised to report any instances by calling 101.

### Lorry Watch

Just recently, there has been a spate of HGVs using Green Farm Lane, which is subject to a 7.5 tonne weight restriction. This has been raised with the Police, and in addition Shorne Parish Council sent Lorry Watch letters to the principal parties identified, and the situation has improved significantly. Shorne Parish Council operates a reactive Lorry Watch scheme, where we write to offenders reported to us. However, to be effective, we need to know the date, time, registration number, and crucially the vehicle operating company to enable us to contact them. Full details of the scheme can be found on our website at <https://shorneparishcouncil.org/lorry-watch/>. In the meantime, we are still awaiting Kent County Council to install enhanced width restriction signs in Brewers Road, to help reduce the frequency of HGVs straying into Shorne.

### Lower Thames Crossing

Representatives of the Parish Council continue to have frequent online meetings with Highways England to discuss our “issues list” in an effort to narrow down the points of contention between us and to secure improvements to the scheme. In the main, the meetings are positive, and have so far covered aspects such as cultural heritage, landscape & green infrastructure, utilities, highways & alignment, footpaths & non-motorised users, and legacy & benefits. Whilst we still oppose the Lower Thames Crossing, we have managed to gain a better understanding and to secure some minor improvements should the crossing go ahead.

## **Shornemead Level Crossing**

The railway crossing at Queens Farm Road remains closed, and Network Rail have secured a further extension to permit the closure to be extended for up to two years. Network Rail is planning to replace the crossing with a footbridge, anticipated to be by October 2022. However, the question of access for agricultural vehicles and utility vehicles remains an outstanding issue.

## **Annual Report**

Our annual parish report is currently under preparation, before going to the printer for publication, which we hope to achieve during June. We will then arrange for a copy to be delivered to every property in the parish. We rely on volunteers to help with the door-to-door deliveries. If you would like to spare an hour or so to help with the deliveries, please let us know by contacting us at [clerk@shorneparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@shorneparishcouncil.org).

## **Future Meetings**

The Annual Parish Meeting took place by video conference on 6<sup>th</sup> May, the last opportunity to hold formal meetings online before the temporary legislation expired. As the Village Hall is not scheduled to reopen before 21<sup>st</sup> June, the next two Committee meetings will be held online for information and advisory purposes only, and no formal business will be conducted. This will be carried over for ratification when we are able to meet in person.

- Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May - Planning & Highways Committee informal meeting; (for information and advisory purposes only; 7.45pm online.)
- Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June - Footpaths, Properties & Greens Committee informal meeting; (for information and advisory purposes only; 7.45pm online.)
- Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June - Parish Council Meeting; 7.45pm in Shorne Village Hall.

## **COVID-19 Restrictions**

The rate of COVID-19 infections is now comparatively low, as is the hospitalisation and mortality rate, and it is hoped that there will be further easing of restrictions in June. However, the virus is still with us and we should continue to respect the rules and social distancing guidelines in place at the time. Residents are advised to stay up to date and continue to follow the latest precautions published at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> and the government advice published at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

Bob Lane  
Shorne Parish Council