

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————



THE PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

Shorne Common Play Area

At the time of writing, the work to install the new play equipment is scheduled to commence on Monday 21st June, with the removal of the old apparatus. Once the new equipment is installed, we then need to have new safety surfacing laid. When the work is finished, it will be necessary to have the site independently inspected and certified before it can be used, so please keep children away from the play equipment until it is officially opened. We hope to arrange an ‘official’ opening on Saturday 10th July, provided the work progresses satisfactorily and it passes inspection. Keep an eye on noticeboards and the Parish Council website and facebook page for updates!

Over the summer, there may be some other minor works, new signage, perhaps some seating, etc. Phase 2 will follow in the winter, when we hope to set out a small adventure trail.

New Village Gateway Signs

Residents may have seen the new “Welcome to Shorne – please drive carefully” gateway signs in The Ridgeway. These have been a long time coming, as we have been arguing with KCC to have the 30mph speed limit extended and the signs installed nearer to Brewers Road, but they will not agree so we reluctantly accepted the signs where they want them. But it is better than nothing, and the signs will be supplemented with road markings to help slow traffic before they enter the village environment.

Unfortunately, one of the new signs fell off on the same day it was installed, but Shorne resident Colin Barden kindly refitted the sign and re-fixed the other sign so they cannot fall off again!

Brewers Road and Park Pale

Shorne Parish Council and Shorne Country Park have jointly funded the installation of wooden bollards alongside Brewers Road between the entrance to the country Park and the A2 overbridge, to combat inconsiderate and illegal parking on the pavement and verges outside the country park.

This will be complemented with new signage making it clear that vehicles are prohibited from entering Park Pale except for access to Harlex and the golf club, and that it is not an overspill parking area for the country park. To reinforce this, the Police intend to enforce the traffic regulation order prohibiting vehicles from Park Pale.

Regrettably, the bollards and the signage, including new width-restriction signs in Brewers Road, have once again been subject to delay, but it is hoped that they will be erected very soon.

Lower Thames Crossing

It is expected that Highways England will carry out a further consultation on the proposed Lower Thames Crossing during the summer, before resubmitting their Development Consent Order application to the Planning Inspectorate later in the year. The consultation is expected to focus on construction issues and associated operational matters.

We should not underestimate the impact that the construction work will have on us if the project goes ahead. The utility diversions and power supplies will be huge operations in their own right. The whole of the countryside from Lower Higham Road at Chalk and the A2 between Marling Cross and the Inn

on the Lake will become one massive construction site, heavily impacting Thong and Shorne West, and extending east to Gravesend Road in Shorne and alongside Shorne Ifield Road. Thong Lane will be diverted whilst a new bridge is built. A new road will be built linking Halfpence Lane to Henhurst Road and Marling Cross. As well as the relocation of a huge gas pipeline, the A2 will be completely rebuilt from the M2 to Marling Cross, becoming a 12 lane highway, taking a slice out of Shorne Woods. Brewers Road overbridge will be closed for months while this work is in progress. Residents are strongly encouraged to take part in the consultation.

Ward Changes

The Local Government Boundary Commission England (LGBCE) is proposing to reduce the number of Borough Councillors in Gravesham from 44 to 39. This will inevitably have an impact on Wards and ward boundaries, and may well impact on Shorne, Cobham, and Luddesdown Ward. The LGBCE is currently consulting until 2nd August 2021, and you can have your say at <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent/gravesham>.

Annual Report

We would like to thank all the volunteers who kindly helped to deliver the annual parish report door-to-door to every residential property in the parish towards the end of June and early July. We hope that you find the report interesting and informative. We also thank the local clubs and organisations for their contributions towards the report. These organisations have found it difficult during the pandemic restrictions, and they deserve our support in the future.

Future Meetings

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 at the Parish Council Meeting on 9th September when we are able to meet in person.

Thursday 8th July - Planning & Highways Committee informal meeting;
(for information and advisory purposes only; 7.45pm online.)

Thursday 22nd July - Footpaths, Properties & Greens Committee informal meeting;
(for information and advisory purposes only; 7.45pm online.)

There are no meetings scheduled during August.

COVID-19 Restrictions

Rather worryingly, the rate of COVID-19 infections has increased significantly over the past few weeks, largely due to the spread of the Delta (Indian) variant. Fortunately, it appears that the vaccination programme has helped to keep hospitalisation and mortality rates relatively low, but we need to remain vigilant and continue to respect the rules and social distancing guidelines. 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