

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————



THE PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

September 2021

Lower Thames Crossing Community Impacts Consultation

There is still time to respond to the Lower Thames Crossing community impacts consultation which runs until 23.59 on Wednesday 8th September. This consultation is intended to gather feedback on the plans to build and operate the proposed Lower Thames Crossing, including its impacts on local communities and the environment, and their mitigation proposals. They are also seeking our views on the changes to the project since their previous consultation, and how they have addressed issues and suggestions received at each of their previous consultations.

It really is a case of information overload this time, but this may be the last opportunity to have your say. We would suggest that you at least read the Ward Summaries, particularly for Shorne, and sheets 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8, 9, 10, & 11 of the General Arrangements and Land Use Plans to get an idea of how we will be impacted.

Make no mistake – we will be impacted. This will be one of the largest construction projects in Europe, lasting for around 6 years. Brewers Road overbridge will be closed for 19 months, and when finished there will no longer be direct access from Brewers Road to the M2. Traffic in Pear Tree Lane is expected to increase significantly, and other areas will also see increases. The local environment between Thong and Shorne West, and between Shorne Woods and Ashenbank Wood will be changed forever.

The consultation can be found at <https://ltcconsultation.highwaysengland.co.uk/>, and there is a public information event at Cascades Leisure Centre, Thong Lane, between 2pm and 8pm on Friday 3rd September.

Shorne Common Play Area

Over 80 people attended the official opening of the new play equipment at Shorne Common on Saturday 10th July. The opening was carried out by the Mayor of Gravesham Cllr Lyn Milner, and was attended by Cllr Bryan Sweetland, Adam Holloway MP, and members of Shorne Parish Council. The new play equipment was given a good work-out by children and grandchildren, and received their seal of approval.

Shorne Common Parking Area

At the time of writing, we are still waiting for the play equipment contractor to replace the gatepost which was accidentally knocked down during the work, and hopefully this will not be too much longer.

Users of the play area will be aware that a section of the parking area regularly gets waterlogged, making it unusable. We have approached Highways England's Lower Thames Crossing team, and their contractor Balfour Beatty has offered to carry out remedial work to the parking area free of charge, as part of their community engagement programme. It is hoped that the remedial work will be carried out during September.

Friends Of Shorne Play Area (FOSPA)

Now that the new play equipment has been installed, it is up to the community to help to make sure it is looked after properly. Users can do their bit by making use of the litter bin and dog bin so that the

area is kept clean and safe for children. Chris Zgoda, Shorne Scout Leader, has kindly offered to help keep the grass cut back around the play equipment where Gravesham BC's machinery cannot reach. But there are other activities that will need carrying out, such as periodic cleaning of the play equipment, weeding and cutting back encroaching vegetation, clearance of tree debris, etc. A number of residents have offered to help, and it is proposed to set up a self-managed group of volunteers to coordinate these activities. If you are interested in taking part, join us for coffee and refreshments at the initial kick-off meeting in the marquee at the Rose & Crown at 11.00am on Saturday 11th September.

Litter Patrol Saturday 2nd October

The next volunteers' litter patrol is scheduled to take place on Saturday 2nd October, weather permitting. We will meet at 09.45 in Shorne Village Hall car park for a safety briefing and to collect bags, hi-visibility waistcoats, and litter pickers, ready for a 10.00 start. We aim to finish around midday. Our litter patrols are very rewarding. At our previous one in March, over 60 volunteers took part, and we managed to clean up Shorne from top to bottom. If you would like to join us, please let Bob know at bob.lane@gmx.co.uk or give him a call on 01474 822680.

Lorry Watch

Regrettably, the long-awaited new width-restriction signs in Brewers Road have once again been subject to delay, but it is hoped that they will be erected soon. We do get the occasional HGV wandering into Shorne, usually because the driver has missed his turn or lost his way. Fortunately it's not too often, but we operate a passive Lorry Watch scheme where you can report these instances. If we are advised of the date, time, location, registration number, and (importantly) the operating company, we write to them to advise them of the incident and to ask them what they intend to do to avoid a repetition. They invariably apologise and instruct their drivers to avoid Shorne, as they know we will report any further occurrences to the Police. Full details of the scheme can be found at <https://shorneparishcouncil.org/lorry-watch/>

Community Orchard at Crabbles Bottom – Pick Your Own!

The parish owns 27 acres of land at Crabbles Bottom, which stretches from the far end of Bowesden Lane through to Crutches Lane in Higham. It includes a traditional orchard of Bramley apple trees. Residents are welcome to come down and pick some apples for your own personal enjoyment. Parking is available in the lay-by in Crutches Lane.

There has been recent adverse publicity concerning people who frequent the Crutches Lane area of Higham to engage in sexual activity. Police patrols in Crutches Lane have been stepped up, but the miscreants seldom venture far into Crabbles Bottom. If you witness any activity in the area which offends public decency you should report it to the Police.

Parish Council Meetings in September

Thursday 9 th September	-	Parish Council Meeting
Thursday 23 rd September	-	Planning & Highways Committee

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

COVID-19 Restrictions

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