

Parish Council News

October 2020

Last month we noted that there has been no rain here for weeks. All was becoming brown, the grass, the leaves and even the weeds. But rain had been promised, lots of it and was for days, but little fell here and so still it continues at time of writing.

As detailed in September, your council continues to be very busy on many short- and long-term plans, but this becomes more difficult by the week. With the ever changing Covid situation and consequent changes in government guidelines, it is difficult to know what, if anything, we can plan for this autumn or indeed before next summer. The Remembrance Parade and Service are cancelled, the Friends of St Mary's Christmas Fair likewise. The chances of the substitute event, planned for the open-air by the pond, using the Parish Hall and Social Club, have also probably been dashed by the latest guidelines. So, in a positive spirit, we switch our efforts to making 2021 a success.

Kent County Councillors and most of the Kent MP's are believed to have written to the government expressing their grave concerns about the implications of the new planning regulations and build targets for Kent and the south east. Specifically, for Tunbridge Wells, the new build numbers, having already been increased from 6,500 to 13,500. may now be increased by a Government algorithm to 18,000. The more one builds the more still you must build apparently. However, Kent is saying enough. If members of our parish have an opinion on this, our MPs and county councillors will always be delighted to hear from you.

During the month we have updated our Policy on CCTV and Code of Practice to ensure our compliance to required standards for CCTV at council and other public areas for general security purposes and for the retention, access and removal of images. The Clerk is the appointed Proper Officer under these regulations. The management of Legionella in the Chequers Field pavilion is under consideration, especially after a period of closure. Dog fouling stickers, bins and bag dispensers are being obtained. The Lower Glebe has been twice mown, and the ragwort treated. A Duck House has been ordered for the Goudhurst pond and we hope there will still be water in it when the house is delivered. The Business and Communication Committee has agreed its objectives, reviewed progress on our new website and Ed Bates has been seconded as an advisor to work with us and the community in making

Destination Goudhurst a success. The Highways Committee, working with Greg Clark MP, is making progress on developing proposals for traffic calming on the A21 and the speed limit on the A262 at Iden Green may be reduced to 50 (we hope to get it further reduced to 40 sometime in the future).

If all goes well, on Saturday 19th September Greg Clark MP will have formally opened our new Goudhurst Play Area; what the subsequent use regulations will be under Covid have yet to be defined.

On the 1st of October, after his incredibly dedicated service to our community, as Clerk and Proper Officer to our council for 25 years, Anthony Farnfield, will be handing over the baton to Claire Reed. Having worked with Anthony, as Assistant Clerk, over the past 14 months she will have been well introduced to all things Goudhurst and will already be known to many of you. We wish her good luck in taking on her new position.

We are also delighted that Anthony has agreed to take the role of Deputy Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). He will also continue to look after the Burial Board procedures. We will consider how the parish and council would wish to recognise everything Anthony has contributed to our community, its progress and welfare over those years.

Your Parish Councillors ... David Boniface, Craig Broom, Chris Ditton, Alan Foster, Antony Harris (Chairman), Phil Kirkby, David Knight, Barry Noakes, Caroline Richards, Jayne Russell, Guy Sutton and Peter Wood.

Clerk to the Council. Claire Reed, 01580 212552 and clerk@goudhurst-PC.gov.uk.