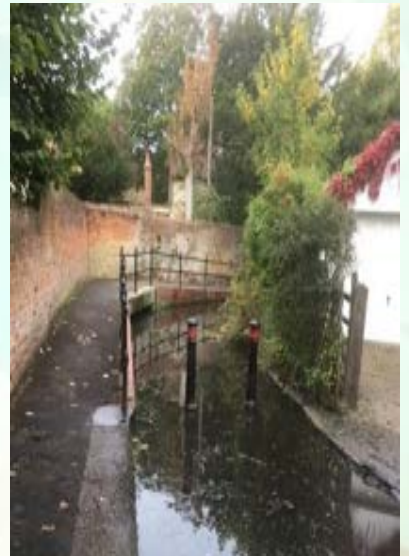




DITTON GAZETTE

Summer 2023



DITTON GAZETTE

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Chairman's Report

Nigel Newman
Parish Council Chairman

A warm welcome to the Summer Edition of the gazette.

Firstly, I would like to introduce myself as the new Chairman of Ditton Parish Council. I have been on the Council over a period of time and have served on all of the Council committees. For the past four years I have been the Vice Chairman and for the last two years I have been the Chair of the Planning committee. I thank my fellow Councillors for electing me into this role. I relish the challenge of working with my colleagues to serve you, the residents of Ditton in the new Council year.

Secondly I would like to personally thank John Lover who has served the Parish Council as Chair for the past four years. As you will agree, the last four years with the COVID outbreak have meant we have all had to adapt to the challenges that occurred. John handled the role as Chair with great character. John has decided to step down from the Council and we thank him for his hard work as a Councillor over the past nine years.

The Council did not require an election in May as there were insufficient candidates which resulted in five vacancies. We are delighted that James and Lisa Cox joined as Councillors at the start of the new council year in May and Dan Markham and Adrian Waters joined us in July. We do still have two vacancies on the council - if you are interested in contributing to your community as part of the council, please contact the Clerk who can explain how you can join.

We have already seen many events and challenges occur in 2023 already. The first was the successful and very popular community concert which took place on 3rd June. Many families joined in the fun as a variety of acts entertained on a very pleasant afternoon. I would like to thank Ian Riches and all of the Parish Council staff who made the event the best to date.

The elections for Borough Councillors took place following a boundary review which meant the Borough Councillors serve Aylesford South and Ditton. Robert Cannon, Steve Hammond and Colin Williams were elected to be your Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council representatives. We wish them well over the coming electoral term.

We have recently said goodbye to Brad Rose who has been working as part of the open spaces team. Brad made a tremendous contribution to the village and will be missed.

Finally the Council has been working hard getting ready for the proposed 1600 house development between Hermitage Lane in Aylesford / Barming and Kiln Barn Road in Ditton. The Council has already had one public meeting to discuss the consultation phase and is building the evidence to challenge the application when it goes in (expected later this year).

Reports on other events including the Annual Parish Meeting/Report are inside this issue.

I hope you have a pleasant summer!

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Parish Council is very aware of the recent anti-social behaviour taking place in and around the village and Community Centre. We have been in regular contact with our local police and Community Warden about the issue.

The police have said that it is essential that our local officers are provided with the most accurate picture possible and anyone experiencing antisocial behaviour is encouraged to **report it to Kent Police**, either by calling **101** or through the Kent Police website:

<https://www.kent.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

CHANGES TO THE REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE 2023

This year there will only be one service on Sunday 12th November.

Also the main service will be held in the Church followed by the parade down to the War Memorial where a further short service will take place including the two minutes silence at 11am. The move back to the Church has been agreed with the Rev Ross Terranova as numbers attending the service have reduced in recent years. The Service was traditionally held at the Church and was only moved to the Community Centre to accommodate larger numbers. As the numbers have fallen it seemed appropriate to move it back to the Church.

There will still be road closures and the need for volunteers and anyone interesting in assisting with this year's service, please get in touch with the Parish Office.

Further information on timings and road closures will be shared on the Council's Website, Facebook Page and Notice Boards nearer the time.



Find us on 

at www.facebook.com/dittonparishcouncil

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/23

REPORT GIVEN BY OUTGOING CHAIRMAN, JOHN LOVER
AT THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 24TH APRIL 2023

At last life is getting back to normal after the Pandemic. We have been able to fully open all the facilities at the Community Centre for business as usual and we have welcomed back our regular hirers and look forward to welcoming newcomers. All the Council's staff have worked hard to maintain the high standards expected of our community.

Nationally this has been an exceptional year - the death of the Queen so soon after her Platinum Jubilee, which we celebrated on the recreation ground with music and picnics and later the pageantry associated with her lying in state and funeral. We then acknowledged the accession of Prince Charles as King Charles III and his wife as Queen Camilla.

I would also like to congratulate our Parish Clerk, Mrs Nicola Greenaway who completed 20 years of service to the Parish last October. I would add my personal thanks for her help and guidance in carrying out my duties. I also congratulate Cllr Mike Porter who achieved 30 years service as a Councillor in May. I am also pleased to welcome our new Community Warden, Donna Sales to the area and would like to give thanks to Sue, our previous Warden who did so much during her time in Ditton.

I have to thank the Committee Chairs for their reports covering what has taken place in their areas of responsibility over the last year.

Planning: I would like to thank Nigel for all the extra work that he has undertaken to keep us informed of all the challenges of proposed and granted development taking place.

The Parish Rate: We have again managed to keep our precept down to 76p per year on a Band D Property. This has been achieved by use of our reserves to cover maintenance and essential equipment.

Parish Council Membership: we still have vacancies.

Staff: I am grateful to all members of our staff, both full and part-time for the effort to keep the Community Centre, Kilnbarn Bar and outdoor spaces running smoothly.

Events: We held a well attended Remembrance Service and music event for the Jubilee. This year we will be holding another outdoor music event in June and the Remembrance Service will be moved to the Church.

Twinning: Cllr Anne Throssell and myself, together with representatives of the Twinning Association went to Rang-du-Fliers in July for the Bastille Day celebrations and representatives will hopefully be attending again this year. There will also be a Barn Dance in May.

And Finally: I would like to thank KCC Cllr Andrew Kennedy and Borough Cllrs Rob Cannon and David Cooper for their service and support through the year. Rob is standing in the May election but David has decided to stand down at this time, so thank you David for your past service.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Community Warden News

Events Planned: Bike Signing with the Youth Club and Kent Police
Venue: Youth Club, Ditton next to Muddy Puddles
Date:8/8/2023 Time: 12.30-14.30

Chill & Chat: Selection of pastries, toast, tea cakes, coffee and tea
Raffle £1.50 @ Youth Club, next to Muddy Puddles
Date:15th August 9.30am-12.00pm

Surgery: Every 3rd Thursday 14.00-16.00 next surgery 10th August
@ Youth hub, next to muddy puddles.

Computer Club: I am working on establishing this again in the village with KCC Digital Innovation and a lovely volunteer this will be a six week free course held in the youth hub further information will be posted on the above sites.

All activities are advertised through the Parish Council and Ditton Connected.

Anti-Social Behaviour: There has been several incidents recently including localised vandalism all incidents need to be reported to 101 or Live Chat to Kent Police. If you feel you need to discuss this with me, please contact me on donna.sales@kent.gov.uk. There have also been reports of the Community Centre Car Park being used late at night - the Police are aware and the more it is reported the more it will be acted upon this is your village so let's all try to work together to make it a safe environment.

The Community Warden service is under review and a public consultation is happening now till the 3rd of October at :

kent.gov.uk/communitywardenreview

with an online questionnaire - please fill in if you have the time.

I hope that you all enjoy the Summer months ahead and the rain eases soon.

If you see me out and about please do come and say hello! Stay Safe

Donna



NEWS FROM DITTON QUARRY LOCAL NATURE RESERVE



In February, the Parish Council planted trees in the Quarry - the trees are to celebrate the life and service of Queen Elizabeth II and celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. The trees were obtained from The Woodland Trust and have been registered as part of the "Queens Green Canopy".



Above: Groundsman Brad Rose planting the trees.

Right and below: the planted saplings



News from St Peter's Church



Ross Terranova - Rector of Ditton

Whose Truth ?

Recently the report on ' Partygate ' landed and predictably that seems to all the media are interested in.

The days of the Covid lockdowns and restrictions are mercifully fast fading but for many people it is still very that those who make the rules for us (Parliament) stick to the rules - especially if you are the Prime Minister! This is not an article about Boris Johnson, rather how all of us relate to the truth - or what we think of as true . We hear a lot today about people speaking 'their truth' as if a subjective interpretation of an event matters more than how things actually are, and how someone feels about the world is more important than how the world actually is. No doubt this is affecting our politics more and more - and many worry that we are moving towards the situation in the USA.

Yes we do expect more from our leaders but we have to be careful that we do not too easily occupy the moral high ground . We all lie : To the tax officer (expenses?) , to the Doctor (only a couple of glasses a week Doc), to the Police (what speed limit?). So people lie in politics, sport, the media and no one is surprised anymore. Maybe we add to the story - or leave something out? We tell the story to make ourselves look good- we spin the story.

Do we treat words and speech in our society too lightly? Are we too cavalier with the truth? We need to be truthful in what we say for the health of our society, for our relationships and for ourselves. Like many I hate going to the dentist but the last thing I want when I get there is to be told all is well with my teeth when I've actually got a rotten cavity that needs to be filled! It certainly is not kind of my dentist to hide this truth from me!

The Bible repeatedly compares truth and falsehood with light and darkness. Truth really does matter and the gospel accounts record how truth matters to Jesus. St John tells us that when we encounter Jesus we meet someone full of ' grace and truth'. When we come to him there is no deceit, there is no spin. He speaks truth, not only that He is the truth.

Where we continually fall short and fail, he is true. His advice is simply "Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'. No spin , no obfuscation, just 'yes' or 'no'. You know where you are and with that is found the most precious and vital foundation of all human relationships - trust.

Ross Terranova

News from St Peter's Church

St Peter's Church: Who's who and what do we do?

The Rector of St Peter's Church is a well-known figure in the local community and a regular contributor to the Ditton Gazette, but how much do you know about the roles of other office holders within the Church? In the first of what we hope will be a series of interviews featured in the Ditton Gazette, we are introducing Mrs Ruth Campbell in her role as Parish Safeguarding Officer or PSO.



Ruth, what is meant by safeguarding?

Safeguarding is any action that is taken to promote health, well-being and human rights of individuals. It allows people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults, to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

OK, so what does a Parish Safeguarding Officer or PSO do?

The PSO takes a lead role in fostering inclusiveness and promoting a safer Church where everyone can thrive and grow. The PSO has an overview of all church activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults and works to ensure the local implementation of the Church of England's safeguarding policy and the latest safeguarding guidance.

So, is the PSO responsible for all safeguarding work in the Church?

Absolutely not! Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It is at the heart of our Christian faith and each of us has a responsibility to maintain a safe environment for all in the Church family and the wider community.

How is safeguarding promoted in the Church?

There are lots of ways we promote safeguarding in the Church, but here are some of the key things we do. We make good use of the excellent training, policies, guidance and resources provided by the Church of England National Safeguarding Team. All those who serve in positions of responsibility in the Church, whether paid or voluntary, are appointed using safer recruitment practices. They must also undertake regular safeguarding training, so they are equipped to engage positively with the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults in both a practical and theologically informed way. You'll find safeguarding information and materials displayed in each of our Church buildings.

What should I do if I have a safeguarding concern?

St Peter's Church is committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of the children, young people and vulnerable adults within our church community and to encouraging an environment where all people are able to worship and pursue their faith journey with encouragement and in safety. Please contact the PSO if you believe there is something we could do better or you believe there may have been a breach of safer working practices.



If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please seek advice from the PSO, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) or report the matter to the Local Authority Social Care Service using the contact information below. If there is immediate danger, call 999. Any concerns reported to the PSO or DSA or will be treated with appropriate discretion and sensitivity.

Safeguarding contacts

Ruth Campbell, Parish Safeguarding Officer, has a dedicated email and mobile phone number for Parish safeguarding matters.

Email: safeguard.stpetes@gmail.com

Telephone: 07731 467835

Greg Barry is the Lead Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor. Contact details for him and his team may be found at <https://www.rochester.anglican.org/safeguarding/>

Kent Social Care Service

For concerns about a vulnerable adult, call 03000 416161 or out of office hours call 03000 419191

For concerns about a child or young person, call 03000 411111 or out of office hours call 03000 419191

NEWS FROM DITTON C of E JUNIOR SCHOOL

It has been a busy time at Ditton Church of England Junior School for all students and staff. We have just relaunched our vision and values after a consultation with all children, parents, staff and governors. Our new motto of Aspire, Believe, Care, underpins everything that Ditton Juniors is about and will be about as we continue to move forward in the future.

The summer is always a busy term, with SATS tests for year 6 pupils, along with their residential and the excitement of changing schools and joining a secondary school setting. We also look ahead to our new intake of children arriving in September, some with siblings already in the school and welcoming some new families to the school as well.

I would like to thank the parish council for their donation towards the school to support our shared coronation event, which helped to pay for cake and pin badges for all the children.

Graham Ward



Headteacher

Ditton C of E Junior School

DamARA

Ditton & Malling Active Retirement Association:

Our May meeting was a celebration afternoon to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles!!!. We ran a Crown competition and were amazed at the wonderful exhibition of crowns of all sorts and sizes that were on display. The result of this was: Winner Monica Bradshaw (centre) 2nd place was Pat Barton (Left) and in third place Rosemary Martin (right).



We asked members to decorate their tables and what a great job they made of them.

We are, as our title says, an Active Retirement Club, but we do not stop people who may have walking difficulties from joining and just attending our monthly meetings.

Our monthly meetings, at the community centre on the 2nd Wednesday each month usually with either a speaker or entertainer or perhaps just a nice afternoon with some games and perhaps someone from a local organisation giving us tips on how we can make our lives safer and happier.

Activities during the month includes A Walk, New Age Kurling (at the community centre) and Ten Pin Bowling at Maidstone. We also run Outings and Day's Out, which are now mainly run through Brookline Coaches. Our latest events have been a day out to Clacton-on-Sea and a visit to a Musical 'Ain't Too Proud'.

For more details of our club please contact our secretary:

Maralyn Mulcuck on 01732 844195 or email mulcuck.anthony@sky.com.

**COME ALONG TO ONE OF OUR MEETINGS AT
DITTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH
AT 1.00PM UNTIL 4 PM.**



Ditton Infant School

After our return from Easter we held another Festival Day. This time the children learnt about Eid Al-Fitr. This is a Muslim festival which comes at the end of the month of Ramadan. 'Eid Mubarak' is a greeting often used during the festival. It means 'Have a blessed Eid!' Some Muslim families celebrate Eid Al-Fitr by putting on new clothes.

They enjoy sharing meals with family and friends. They prepare all different kinds of foods like samosas, pakoras, kebabs and much much more.

Each teacher prepared a different activity related to Eid. The children chose which class they wanted to visit. Some children learnt a song, some children made decorative lanterns and some made Eid decorations and hand patterns.

We then started getting ready for our Coronation celebrations. The children learnt our National Anthem and a song called 'Our King'. They performed this to parents with Ditton Junior School on 5th May proudly wearing commemorative pin badges. These badges were purchased after the Parish Council kindly donated some money to each school to celebrate this momentous occasion. The children were invited to make and decorate a crown at home and take part in a regal parade. Mr Ward and I then judged the winning entries. The children at the infant school are also working together to make a commemorative wall hanging.

This term we are preparing the children for their move to a new class or school. It is also lovely to begin welcoming in our new YrR cohort.

In June we enjoyed our Sports Week which was supported by Ditton Minors FC who ran football training taster sessions. Our Sports Leader also organised a trampoline workshop, skateboard workshop and we had an invigorating 'wake up, shake up' exercise class each morning.

With best wishes,

Mrs C Lewer
Headteacher

DITTON TWINNING ASSOCIATION

The Ditton Twinning Association committee were pleased to organise a Barn Dance for last May. This had originally been planned as part of our 25 years of twinning anniversary in 2020, but unfortunately had to be postponed. It was an enjoyable evening, with superb music from the Climax Ceilidh Band, while the caller Kerry Fletcher managed to lead everyone through a variety of traditional European dances. During the interval we were entertained by Kits Coty Morris, whose performance was brilliant. After many very positive comments about the evening the committee has decided to arrange a similar event for next year. We hope to see you there.



Rang-du-Fliers



Members of the Twinning Association and Ditton Parish Council were invited to Rang-du-Fliers for the 13th and 14th July, Bastille Day celebrations. They were made very welcome and enjoyed meeting members of the community. On Thursday evening there was a candlelit parade through the village and the following firework display was superb.

DITTON TWINNING ASSOCIATION



The next day floral tributes from Ditton Parish Council and Twinning Association were laid in the Place de la Paix (Peace), and the Square de Ditton, in memory of those who have died in war-time, and with hope for peace and friendship in the future. During the following lunch with the French twinning committee, there was an opportunity to chat with old friends and discuss plans for future twinning events.



Members of Ditton Parish Council with Patrice from Rang-du-Fliers Twinning Committee



Rt: DPC VICE-CHAIR MIKE PORTER, 2nd Rt: M.COIN, MAYOR OF RANG-DU-FLIERS

DPC & TWINNING ASSOC.

We are hoping to arrange for Ditton Pétanque Club to visit Rang-du-Fliers for the annual twinning pétanque match this September. The Twinning Association committee is also organising a quiz night at the Ditton Community Centre on Saturday 30th September. Further information will be published nearer the time, but please think about bringing a team. It is always a good evening.

In October we are looking forward to entertaining a group from Rang-du-Fliers who are coming to Ditton for the first time.

If anyone is interested in learning more about our twinning, please contact Monica and Colin on 01732 844292 or email: stanleycol@aol.com

1st Ditton Scout Group – Update

The Group is back with a new team helping prepare our young people with skills for life supporting their personal development and empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

Red Beaver (Helen Fermor) continues to lead our Beaver section for children aged 6 to 8 years. This term they have been concentrating on their badge work which has included cycling, cooking, den building, and water sports!

Our Cub section for children aged 8 to 10.5 years has a new Akela in Sandra Finch. The Cub team has set out an engaging programme building upon the skills developed in Beavers and they are keen to get the young ones out and about.



Our Scout section for children aged 10.5 - 14 years has a new team in Paul Lock, Lloyd Covey and Pete Cole. This term they are focussing on badges for athletics, DIY, street sports, outdoor cooking as well as going climbing, on hikes, laser tag and water sports at Leybourne Lakes.

On Christmas Eve we helped Santa deliver over 80 gifts to the children of Ditton. The Santa Run continues to be a great success so thank you to everyone who supported us, and we look forward to working with Santa again this Christmas!

All sections recently attended an activity weekend camp called Quest 8. They experienced; climbing, quad bikes, go karts, inflatables, frisbee golf, football golf, a cave bus, a fun bus, archery, tomahawks, shooting, crafting, a silent disco, drumming, campfires, laser tag, laser clays, pioneering, animal encounters as well as a range of water sports on More Park Lake.



We have places available for young people in Cubs and Scouts but to support their journey we need more willing adult volunteers. We understand that committing regularly is a challenge, which is why we need to build a larger team to be able to provide you with more flexibility. All we need you to do is show willing and we will find a way to make volunteering work for you and the group.

Opportunities available include:

- Team members for all sections, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts.
- A team leader and team to run a Squirrel section, for children aged 4 to 6 years - something we have never had before but would like to offer.
- Trustees.
- Fundraising.
- Santa Run.
- Communications / creating media / website.
- Building & equipment maintenance.

If your business is interested in supporting us as part of your community investment strategy, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you and establish how we could work together.

Thanks for reading and we look forward to hearing from you:

Email: info@dittonscouts.org.uk

Telephone: 01732 247 217

Website: www.dittonscouts.org.uk



Time to get walking again!

Walking in Kent <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/kent> has loads of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

So home or away, check out the websites and get walking!

www.walkinginengland.co.uk
john@walkinginengland.co.uk

DITTON HERITAGE CENTRE



THE OLD MILL HOUSE OF DITTON

The Old Mill House at Ditton, by Aylesford, in the County of Kent, is old. This sounds obvious, yet it is necessary at the very beginning of an historical enquiry to separate out the genuine old from the “would-be-old.” It is not merely playfully ancient like Ye Old Petrolle Pumpe by Ye Tudor Cotte, which knew not the Tudors and is a veritable upstart in comparison with the aforementioned Pumpe. The Pumpe at least has a venerable lineage of a few years. We know then that in this spot men were digging, and we deduce that at such a place the purpose of their digging was to control a stream and so we can look for a water-wheel. Just a small piece about the Old Mill House that is part of the very large collection of Documents, Photographs and Artefacts that we put together here at the Ditton Heritage Centre. Why not find out more about the Old Houses of Ditton or even your very own family history by visiting us in New Road.

Our programme of Open Days is as follows:

All on Sundays:- 13th August; 7th & 24th Sept (part of the National Heritage week) and 22nd October all running from 10am until 3pm (last entry 2.30pm).

We are also holding a Craft Fair on Sunday 10th September 11am - 3pm at the Ditton Community Centre.

If you would like to learn more about our Heritage Centre and possibly become a ‘Friend of the Centre’ then why not come along and see what our centre has to offer you in the way of the history of our Parish.

**To arrange a visit please contact our Secretary:
Mrs M. Mulcuck, 8a Bradbourne Lane, Ditton, Aylesford ME20 6PA T
el: 01732 844195 or email: mulcuck.anthony@sky.com**



Did you know that there is a licensed bar right on your doorstep?

The Kilnbar

Situated at the rear of Ditton Community Centre facing onto to recreation ground.

Sky and BT Sports showing all major sporting fixtures. Entertainment is held on a regular basis including Discos and Live Music .



OPENING HOURS

MONDAY - THURSDAY

3:30PM - 8:30PM

FRIDAY & SATURDAY

2PM - 11PM

SUNDAY

12MIDDAY - 10PM

RESPONSIBLE DOGS OWNERSHIP

Ditton has a great many dog walkers of whom the majority ensure their dogs do not run out of control whilst on the recreation grounds and wouldn't dream of not clearing up after their dogs foul. Unfortunately the minority who do not clear up after their dogs and those that do allow their dogs to roam out of control is of concern to the Parish Council and something that we receive many complaints from residents about. The Parish Council's Byelaws state that dogs should be under control when on Parish land. The Council therefore asks all dog owners to be mindful of other users of the recreation grounds and open spaces and to keep your dog under control and not allow them to interfere with other peoples enjoyment of the open spaces.

The Council would also remind dog owners that it is an offence to not clean up after your dog if it fouls in a public place, and you could incur a fine of up to £80. Not only is dog fouling very unpleasant there is the risk of contracting Toxocariasis. This very unpleasant infection most commonly affects children.

MUSIC *in the* PARK

June 2023

We had an amazing day at this year's music event. We had some great performances, and wonderful weather. A big thank you to all that took part, the people that brought it all together, parish staff that helped on the day and to all of you that came along to support the event.



MAISY BETH



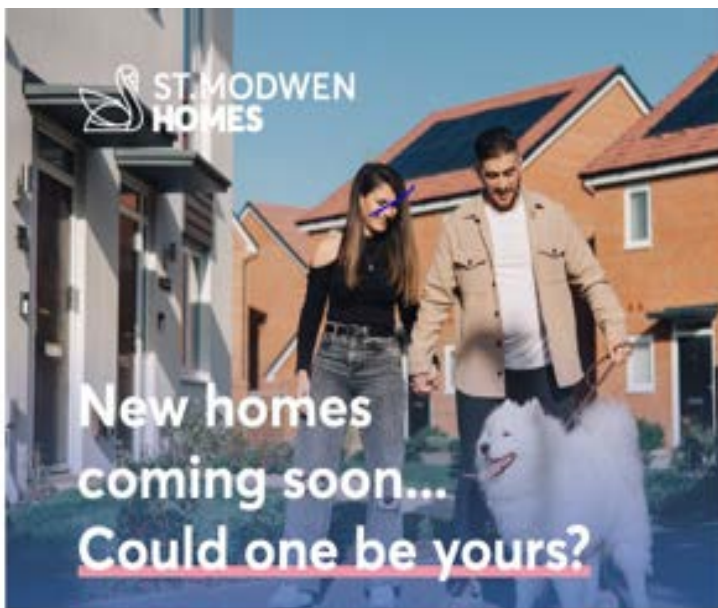
Go-Go Mojo



Special thanks go to Sally in the Parish Office for co-ordinating the event and to Ian Riches for bringing all the great bands and performers together [and performing with his band - the fantastic Mustn't Grumble]. Thank you to our sponsors this year - Gallaghers and St Modwen Homes - their generous donations paid for the fabulous stage and posh portaloos!



If you enjoyed this year's event, put the date in your diary for next year when we will be doing it all again! ** Saturday 1st June 2024 **



Orchard Mill is launching soon and will offer a selection of new build homes. Situated in the desirable village of Ditton, Orchard Mill is well located for access to local amenities. The popular town of Maidstone is under five miles away which offers a great selection of shops, restaurants and galleries to enjoy with your family and friends.

Scan the QR and register your interest!

www.stmodwenhomes.co.uk



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Kent Community Warden Service Review

Consultation document
and questionnaire



Have your say!

We are proposing to make savings by redesigning
the Kent Community Warden Service.

Find out more and tell us your views at

kent.gov.uk/communitywardenreview

Consultation open from 12 July to 3 October 2023.



**PLEASE COMPLETE ONLINE IF YOU CAN - PAPER COPIES ARE AVAILABLE
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