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Issue No 1

THE BEACON

Bean Parish Council News Letter

Web Site <http://www.beanpc.kentparishes.gov.uk>



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Spirit's Rest

This winter has been the busiest we have ever had, working closely with many agencies and animal charities. We have needed to replace and update facilities on site to cope with the number of animals we are being asked to help and we would like to thank Cllr Jeremy Kite & Cllr Peter Harman for their recent member's grant funding which has allowed us to rebuild the front fence, repair all the internal fencing and build a hay storage barn. Thanks must go to Reg and Cathy for their on-going efforts to raise money for hay and bedding and for everyone who donates items for the many boot fairs they attend. We are now raising money for a shed which we will be able to use to treat injured wild life and to make space to treat feral cats - we have a large group on site. We recently took in two new horses and their treatment is on-going. We have new fox cubs we are caring for as well as helping foxes and other wild life injured from our ever busy roads. Spirit's Rest is open 365 days a year and we never say no and if we can't help we will know someone who can. If you would like to make a donation or you have items you could donate for our boot fairs please contact the Parish Office on 01474 832999 who will pass your details on to us. Thank you.



Bean Triangle

There has been a lot of concern shown by the residents' and businesses on the Bean Triangle regarding the fact the triangle has been included within the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation boundary. However, the Parish Council and Residents' Association have been repeatedly assured that this does not mean that the EDC are looking to develop this area. What this does mean though is that the Development Corporation is now the local planning authority and is responsible for the determination of planning decisions for its area (excluding plan-making which remains with Dartford Borough Council). We have met with representatives from EDC and accompanied them on a visit to the triangle and they are now fully aware of the ancient woodland, businesses, residences and animal sanctuary located within it. Both the PC and RA, as stakeholders, continue to represent the village at consultation meetings, workshops and events involving the EDC.

Bean Roundabout

For some considerable time, the Parish Council, together with representatives from the Residents' Association (RA) have been meeting with Bluewater Management and Kent Highways to seek a solution to the traffic congestion on the Hope Cottages roundabout which occurs especially over the Christmas and New Year period. Bluewater Management are extremely keen to assist in resolving the problems we experience in Bean and over the last 2 years have implemented portable signage to direct shoppers leaving the centre to use alternative routes to minimise the congestion on the Ightham Cottages roundabout. However, as we all know, our problem is trying to leave Bean during this period as the shoppers form a never ending stream of traffic entering Hope Cottages roundabout from the A2 making it extremely difficult for Bean residents to join the queue to head towards Greenhithe or the hospital and practically impossible to cross the roundabout to join the A2 London bound. We have just been advised that a proposal to install KEEP CLEAR road markings on B255 Bean Roundabouts has been completed by AMEY with recommendations and RA and PC will be invited to a presentation of the action plan. Check the Parish website for update (www.beanpc.kentparishes.gov.uk)

Blocked Drains affecting Beacon Drive

This is a polite request to ask residents through the High Street, Ashwood Place, Turner and Foxwood Roads to please refrain from putting disposable wipes, baby wipes, sanitary products including tampons and panty liners into their toilets. These get caught up and cause blockages. That part of the village is still served by the original very narrow pipe, just 6" diameter and it blocks easily if anything other than sewage and toilet paper is flushed down the toilets. Recently this resulted in sewage flooding into gardens in Beacon Drive which we are sure you will agree is not very pleasant. Thank you for your consideration

Parking in the Village

We are a small village with not a lot of spare room for parking so it's important that when we do park it's not in a dangerous place and we are considerate, not only to our neighbours but also to our fellow road users. Areas of concern are Beacon Drive at the junction with both Foxwood Road and Drudgeon Way and on the bend at the crest of the hill. Turner Road junction with Bean Lane, Bramble Avenue and of course School Lane during school pick up and drop off times. Please park considerately.

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Beacon Woods

We are so lucky as a community to have an asset such as Beacon Woods on our doorstep so it is especially sad when we have to report that vandals seem to take delight in damaging the equipment and facilities we have there. Earlier this year someone tried to hacksaw through the hinges of the new container which we had to pay to be repaired and we can only presume that they were not to be defeated and returned with an angle grinder to cut a square in the side of it to gain access. What they found must have disappointed them because we do not store any power tools or anything of value in there. The container is used to house our second hand garden tools and wheelbarrows, etc. Certainly nothing worth stealing for selling on. This time we had to send the container away to be repaired and it cost us £360. Notices seem to attract the vandals as well and to date we have 'lost' our 'No



mushroom picking' signs and the car-parking sign board. Why? We are bemused! The Parish Council leases Beacon Woods from Tarmac (previously Lafarge) and the maintenance of the woods is funded by grants obtained by the Parish Council, fund raising by the Friends of Beacon Woods (FoBW) and the parking

fee. A fitness trail was installed by Bunzl in the area around the picnic benches, this seems to be used and enjoyed by children and adults alike.

We are indebted to the FoBW who do a tremendous amount of work in the woods but who are small in number and desperately need extra volunteers. They meet on the first Sunday of every month from 10-2 and there are jobs to suit folks of all abilities. If you are one of the regular users of the woods and would like to give back to the community, please come along and help. If you would like more information, please contact the Parish Office.

Litter in Bean

Yes, we do have a lot of litter in Bean. The photo shows the debris left on the banking opposite Sans mini market Bean.

Whilst we might blame motorists who have stopped to visit the shop and decided to empty their vehicles of rubbish onto the bank or those thoughtless visitors to Bluewater who jettison their rubbish as they drive around the roundabouts and then it gets wind-blown along by Hope Cottages and down the High Street the result affects us all. It's no good saying that that the clearing of the litter is Dartford Borough Council's responsibility as they have limited resources working on a reduced budget and their schedule for road sweeping means that they visit Bean on average once every 4 weeks. If we are to do something about the litter, we have to do it ourselves. Having said that we don't even clean up after ourselves. The recreation ground, used by our residents, has 5 litter bins and yet every day time is spent by a Councillor picking up litter that has literally just been thrown on the ground. Who do you want to blame for that? If we are to take pride in our community and want our village to look nice we must take personal responsibility, educate our children not to drop litter and start clearing up ourselves. If everyone cleared litter from outside their homes and picked up rubbish when they were out walking or visiting the recreation ground it would make a considerable difference. Dartford Borough Council would also support local groups of litter pickers or 'wombles' by supplying bags and litter picking tongs and would make arrangements to collect full bags from designated drop off points. If you are interested in setting up such a group, please contact the Parish Office. Let's not moan, let's do something!



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Recreation Ground

Have you tried out the new fitness equipment yet? We were delighted to receive a grant of £8,000 from Tesco's Bags of Help campaign to which we added £3,000 which has allowed



us to purchase and install 7 individual items of equipment. It is lovely to see so many families enjoying the facilities that the council has provided in the park. Do you have any suggestions what else we could do?