

Luddesdown Parish Council Newsletter 2017

Luddesdown Parish Council would like to invite you to the Annual Assembly which will be held in Luddesdown Village Hall at 7.30 pm on Monday, 27th March. We look forward to seeing you there. We would like to welcome all new parishioners who have joined our community recently and hope you will be able to come to the meeting. It is a good opportunity to meet your parish councillors and to learn more about what goes on in Luddesdown from local organisations who report at the meeting on their activities over the past year.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Throughout the year your Parish Council holds regular public meetings to which all parishioners are very welcome to attend. At each meeting parishioners do have the opportunity to raise any issues that they would like discussed although it has been rare for any matters to be raised in this way. Still, we would like to remind everyone that this facility is available. You will find the meetings advertised on your local Parish Notice Board and also on the Parish Council's website. We have a new website which is at www.luddesdown-pc.gov.uk.

The Chairs of the six parish councils in Gravesham are continuing to meet periodically with the leader of Gravesham Borough Council to discuss matters that are of concern to the parishes. We are able to add things to the agenda for each meeting so if there is a topic you would like raised at any time please let your local parish councillor know.

We also have Rural Forum meetings which are attended by members of both Gravesham Borough Council and Kent County Council, as well as the Chairs of the parish councils, where matters of importance in the local rural parishes are also discussed.

PARISH COUNCIL EVENTS

Beating of the Bounds - Once again we provided refreshments at Luddesdown Village Hall for the walkers who undertook the Mayor of Gravesham's annual Beating of the Bounds event that took place in October last year. Many thanks to everyone who provided their help on the day.

Annual village clean up – You may remember that last year there was a national Clean for the Queen campaign encouraging litter picks and community clean ups in the run up to the Queen's 90th birthday. Luddesdown PC participated in the event and we managed to fill a whole skip with rubbish picked up from the verges and hedgerows in the parish. Unfortunately our verges and hedgerows have acquired more litter and other rubbish over the past year. We are hiring a skip again this year and we would like to encourage as many parishioners as possible to take this opportunity to improve and protect your local environment and spend a bit of time helping to clear up the litter and other rubbish that is lying along our roadsides and paths at the moment. The skip will be situated in Brookers Farm Yard from Friday, 31st March to Monday, 3rd April.

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

We continue to do our best to keep the Parish Council's expenditure as low as we can. However, in line with government policy to reduce council tax grants to local authorities we will be receiving a lower grant for the next financial year. We have had to make a small increase to the precept to address this and also to factor in some expected expenditure increases.

LOCAL ISSUES

Fly Tipping - Unfortunately, fly tipping continues to be a serious problem in the Parish. We encourage you to report any fly tipping you find to Gravesham Borough Council either by telephone (01474 337533) or by email (waste.management@gravesham.gov.uk) or on its website at

<http://www.gravesham.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/flytipping>.

Gravesham will respond quickly to collect the rubbish and do appreciate any information that may help them prosecute the offenders. Gravesham and Kent County Council are committed to prosecuting fly

tippers whenever they can but catching offenders is difficult. Gravesham would like to make people aware of things they can do to avoid waste they produce from being fly tipped. Householders are legally responsible for the waste produced on their property. People who offer to remove rubbish cheaply are probably not licensed to do so and are most likely not going to dispose of the waste legally. Householders can be prosecuted and fined if their waste ends up fly tipped and they cannot show that they took reasonable steps to prevent this. For further advice on the safe disposal of rubbish please see GBC's website at <http://www.gravesham.gov.uk/home/street-care-and-cleaning/fly-tipping/get-rid-of-your-rubbish-safely>.

Roads - Kent County Council has continued to carry out repairs to various roads in the Parish over the past year, including some resurfacing. However, as ever, potholes remain a problem on some roads. We hope you will make use of the link on the KCC website to report problems with roads to tell KCC about any pothole you find in order to initiate getting it fixed. The link is at the following address

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>.

Planning - To keep up to date with regard to planning applications relating to the parish please click on the Planning Tracker tab on the parish council's website.

Lower Thames Crossing - This time last year a public consultation was underway to obtain views about Highways England's preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing, Option C. However, we are still waiting for the results of the consultation to be published. So far all we have been told is that about 47,000 people responded. At the time of writing it is not clear when the government is going to make a decision about the crossing but it is expected that an announcement on the matter will be made shortly.

Gravesham Borough Council and the six rural parishes in Gravesham have continued to oppose Option C as it will devastate the local environment and community and spread noise, pollution and poor air quality to thousands of people not currently affected. Members of GBC and parish councils in Gravesham have been supporting the work of The Lower Thames Crossing Association which was set up to benefit the communities impacted by the proposed Option C Lower Thames Crossing route. Its principal objectives are to oppose Lower Thames Crossing options which are to the detriment of the environment and communities of north Kent, to promote Lower Thames Crossing solutions which provide maximum relief from traffic congestion and pollution, and to promote measures to mitigate the adverse impacts of the final crossing option selected. Please see the LTCA's website at <http://www.ltca.uk> to find out more about the work of the association and to keep up to date with news regarding the Lower Thames Crossing.

Finally, on behalf of all members of Luddesdown Parish Council I would like to offer you our best wishes for the next year and we hope that you are able to join us at the Annual Assembly.

Chris Mileson
Chair, Luddesdown Parish Council

Your Parish Councillors:

Sally Stanier – Brookers Farm – tel: 01474 814476

Kate Rogers – Oakenden Farm – tel: 01474 812007

Noel Clark – Leywood Farm – tel: 01474 813770

Anne Moorhouse – Leywood School House – Vice Chair – tel: 01474 813242

Chris Mileson – Winnats Farm – Chair – tel: 01474 816517

Clerk to the Council: Roxana Brammer – 53 Capelands, New Ash Green, Longfield, Kent, DA3 8LQ – 01474 872729