



Speldhurst Parish Council

Working for the whole community

NEWSLETTER

Future newsletters

This is to be the last newsletter hand-delivered to your door. In future the Council will be issuing e-newsletters and you can sign up for them on our new website to be launched this autumn and further updates will be in local parish magazines. We will also be issuing updates via Facebook soon

and this will be explained on our website in due course. Those who sign up for e-newsletters can also be alerted to other information, such as road closures and important news affecting the community.

If you do not have access to a computer you

can register by phone on 01892 862927 or in writing to the Clerk, Speldhurst Parish Council, Council Office, Langton Green Recreation Ground, Speldhurst Road, Langton Green, Kent, TN3 0JJ and we will send a copy to you.

Council matters

If you read your local parish magazines you will be aware that the Council has had two more vacancies on the Council. These were caused by the sad death of John Kerby from Groombridge and the retirement, after 15 years, of Trevor Parker from Langton Green. These positions have both been filled by co-option by Alan Rowe and Dave Pate, both from Speldhurst. Alan decided to take advantage of a career break to join the Parish Council and get more involved in local affairs and to make a positive contribution to the villages in our Parish. Dave Pate lives in Barden Road with his family. He has just retired from Kent Police as District Commander after a 30-year career. He now has a long list of DIY jobs to be getting on with and he is looking forward to working for the parish.



Alan Rowe



David Pate

We would like to apologise for an error in our last newsletter when we said that David Jukes was to speak at our Annual Parish Meeting, which was held on April 23rd in Speldhurst Village Hall. After the newsletters had been printed we learned that he was not able to speak because of a rule imposed on Councillors prior to an election called "purdah", even though he was not up for election himself. We were delighted that William Benson, the CEO of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council stood in for him and gave a very informative presentation on the issues facing the Council. We also apologise for the misspelling of Cllr Jukes name.

Air Traffic

You will probably have heard the recent decision by the Government to proceed with a third runway at Heathrow and the subsequent vote in the House of Commons endorsing the Government's decision. At the same time our skies have been quieter recently, so our air traffic noise problems are over?

Definitely not! The recent quieter skies have been caused by unusually persistent winds from the East resulting in aircraft arriving

from the West (so not over us) over 50% of the time as opposed to the more-normal level of less than 25% of days, and we have not hit the peak summer traffic yet. We must expect a return to the normal predominantly prevailing winds from the West which means flights over us, and the concentrated flight paths over us still remain, so that battle is far from won yet.

As far as the Heathrow expansion is concerned, whilst the Government has

made its decision and Parliament has voted in support of it, (at least two) demands for Judicial Reviews are likely to follow from groups strongly opposed to Heathrow expansion. Given the nature of Judicial Reviews, the whole process could drag on for years not months.

This is a saga still in its early days and the owners of Gatwick will be waiting for the next opportunity to raise their expansion flag, so keep watching this closely.

Highways

20 MPH – an update

We are hoping that by the time this newsletter reaches you that progress is imminent on the two 20mph zones we have been pushing for, for so long. We have been informed that the 20mph zone in Speldhurst Village is to be installed in July and we are awaiting an update for the advisory zone in Langton Green.

Speldhurst Road

There were no objections to the proposed lowering of the speed limit from Burnt House Lane to Langton Green and it is planned that the speed limit will be reduced from 60 to 40mph in August or soon after.

Gateways

The second tranche of gateways has been installed, not without problems. The two gateways installed near the water tower in Langton Green are not quite how we expected them to look – we think the 30mph and Langton Green sign would look neater incorporated within the gateway.

Pot Holes

Please remember to report all pot holes you see online at www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-

travel/report-a-problem. It is important that you do so because the number of complaints contributes to the amount of funding that KCC disperse to various areas and this year Tunbridge Wells received a considerable sum.

Langton Road (A264)

KCC has notified that the Langton Road, between The Hare and Farnham Lane, is due for resurfacing and this work will start the week of 15th October, subject to conditions. The road will be closed between 8pm and 6am for 5 days.

Verges

This is a reminder to residents that have deliveries to their houses, especially contractors, to ensure that any damage to verges is repaired.

Hedges

It is important that hedges are kept under control by the landowner and do not impede pedestrians. Please ensure they are maintained.

Accidents

Please remember that the Parish Council

keeps a record of the number of accidents in the parish so please keep us informed. We can lobby for road improvements where they are needed, but without the accident statistics we cannot mount a successful campaign.

Speedwatch

Carrying out Speedwatch sessions is not a function of the Parish Council and we are looking for a person(s) to take the lead on Speedwatch, to be the co-ordinator with Speedwatch Kent Police and run sessions on its behalf. If you are interested in leading a team and would like more information contact the clerk. If you would like to volunteer to help on Speedwatch sessions please also contact the clerk.

Reporting Problems

Don't forget that you can report potholes online at www.kent.gov.uk (search for potholes) and many other forms of problems e.g. dead animals on the road; damaged bus shelters; drainage and flooding; damage to footpaths and pavements; damage to signs and empty salt bins at www.kent.gov.uk/report-or-track-a-fault.

Guided Parish walk in Old Groombridge

2.30 - 4.30 pm Sunday 29 July

After a successful and enjoyable walk on 29th April around Speldhurst, Councillor Judy Price has organised another walk for the last Sunday in July. If you are new to the Parish, this will be a great chance to meet your neighbours and get to know the local area. We will meet by the main entrance to Burrswood House in Groombridge. Just head up the long driveway from The Green and there is plenty of parking in front of the main building. After the walk we will have complimentary tea/coffee or squash in the Burrswood Orangery, sadly you will need to buy your own cake! If you are a long-term

resident it will be an opportunity to meet new people and perhaps explore a different patch of the Parish. We will have Alan Ford with us again to share his knowledge of the local fauna and flora.

The 2.3 mile walk through the Burrswood Estate, Old Groombridge and Newpark Wood will take about an hour and a half. All welcome but be prepared for possible mud, uneven paths and some steep slopes. Walking boots or similar are essential. Friendly, well-behaved dogs welcome.

If you wish to join us please email judy@emailprice.net to confirm.

Finance

The Parish Council has agreed to assist both schools with grants. It agreed a grant of £5,000 towards the Speldhurst School expansion and £8,000 to Langton Green School towards the refurbishment of the toilets.

Diary date

The next Open Meeting of the Parish Council will take place on Monday 8th October at Langton Green Village Hall at 7.30pm. Please come along to meet your Councillors for a social drink and to hear about the work that the Council has been up to over the past year.

FOR REGULAR UPDATES ON ALL OUR ACTIVITIES GO TO OUR WEB SITE
www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk

Speldhurst Parish Council

Neil Barrington-Johnson
(Chairman)
Harry Allen
Richard Ellery
Lynn Jeffreys

Katrina Lyle
George Mercieca
Rupert Milner
(Vice Chairman)
David Pate

Joy Podbury
Judy Price
Alan Rowe
Julia Soyke
Millie Woodliffe

This newsletter will be available, as will future issues, on the Parish Council web site.

All enquiries to the Parish Clerk;
Chris May on (01892) 862927 or at
clerk@speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk