



Speldhurst Parish Council

*Working for the whole community*

# NEWSLETTER

## Council matters

Two vacancies have occurred following the resignations of Councillors Rosemary Hull and Chris Woodward. We would like to thank them both for their hard work and contribution to the Council. Rosemary is from Speldhurst and has been on the Council since 2008 and Chris, from Langton Green, since 2011. Chris will continue his work as a Borough Councillor representing Broadwater.

This is an opportunity to get involved in and make a difference to your local community. The Parish Council is involved in a wide range of local issues and responsibilities and whilst the time-commitment is not great the difference you make can be. **Should you be interested in becoming a Councillor and would like to know**

**more about what the position entails please contact the Clerk.**

Min Flemington left the post of Assistant Clerk at the end of January after almost 6 years but she has agreed to return on an occasional basis to help us when needed. We would like to thank Min for her considerable efforts on behalf of the Council and the community over that period. We also welcome Kate Plunkett as the new Assistant Clerk.

Since the last newsletter two new Councillors have been co-opted to the Council. They are Councillors Katrina Lyle and George Mercieca, both from Langton Green.



Cllr Katrina Lyle



Cllr George Mercieca



Kate Plunkett, Assistant Clerk

## Langton Green Sports Pavilion

Now that the old pavilion has been demolished, work will start this year on the new pavilion at Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG). The pavilion is being funded by a grant applied for by the Langton Green Community Sports Association (LGCSA) from the FA and a substantial contribution

from LGCSA. It is hoped that the building will be finished in June in time for the annual football fiesta. When the building is finished it will pass to the Parish Council to manage and maintain. There will be a function room available for hire and the Council is interested to hear from any potential users.

## Defibrillator training

All four defibrillators are in situ and are located at the Village Halls in the villages. These have been provided by the Parish Council for use within the Parish, however it is understood that using one can be a daunting prospect. The Parish Council is setting up training sessions with Stephen Benbow, a Speldhurst resident, to help you learn how to use one. Should you be interested in attending a training session please contact the Clerk.



## Diary date

The Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish Council will take place on Monday 25th April at Speldhurst Village Hall. The speakers this year are Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Leader Councillor David Jukes, and Ken Howes, Chairman of the Parish Plan Working Group. This is an opportunity for you ask questions and to tell councillors about your concerns.

# Parish Plan

The response rate of the household survey conducted last November was about 50%. This is quite an achievement and in excess of comparable types of surveys. Overall respondents were generally satisfied with the Parish as a place to live but it is no



surprise that strong concerns were expressed about a number of aspects, traffic and aircraft noise, in particular.

The Parish Plan Working Group is preparing a report which will provide feedback on the results of the survey. This report will be delivered to every household in the Parish in February. Once the report is complete the working group will be providing recommendations to the Parish Council on how life in the Parish can be improved.

Ken Howes, Working Group Chairman

# Cycling

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is producing a cycling strategy which the Parish Council is supporting and we have asked for a route between Speldhurst and Langton to be included.

Much of the Parish has unlit, and in some cases narrow, roads and at night, particularly in the extended winter evenings, cyclists (and even pedestrians in some locations) can be vulnerable. We strongly encourage cyclists in particular to wear high-visibility clothing when out in the dark in addition to ensuring bicycle lights are working and visible.

# Air traffic news

On July 1st the Airports Commission issued The "Independent Review into Gatwick Arrivals" completed its information-gathering at the end of December and the team is now preparing a report and recommendations to be published on 28th January. At a meeting on 16th December they gave some initial findings and indications of recommendations. We are reasonably optimistic that the report will carry some sound recommendations to ease aircraft noise over our area, although the final format of these and whether they will be implemented is far from certain. We will update residents once we have seen the final report. The Government has delayed any announcement on runway expansion in the South and as a result it is clear that, despite the very strong recommendations of the Howard Davies Commission, Gatwick remains very firmly an option. Speldhurst Parish Council will continue to work with other local Councils and action groups objecting to any expansion at Gatwick and we will maintain our efforts until any announcement is made. After that we will need to adjust our actions depending on the Government's decision. We will again keep residents up-to-date on developments via the Parish Council website.

## REMINDER

The Parish Council has been keeping a record of the number of accidents in the parish over the last couple of years and relies on information from residents, 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.

# Highway issues

The Parish Council is aware that traffic issues continues to be the major concern throughout the parish and has made a priority the establishment of 20mph limits outside Speldhurst and Langton Green Primary Schools. The Parish Council is prepared to fund this once it receives firm costs from Kent County Council Highways but this is proving more difficult than first imagined. It appears that KCC Highways is under-resourced and does not have the man-power to support outside body funded projects. We continue to try and implement the scheme.



The order for a Speed Indicator Device (SID) has been placed and four initial sites have been chosen. They are Groombridge Green, Ashurst Hill, Speldhurst Hill and the Langton Road A264 by the water tower (west side). The SID will advise motorists of their speed as the picture shows

At the Open Meeting in October many people said they preferred a SID that quoted motorists' speeds and said "thank you" or showed a smiley face if they were under the limit; and conversely, when motorists exceeded the limit it would show a sad face next to their speed. We have been advised by KCC that these are no longer permitted.

FOR REGULAR UPDATES ON ALL OUR ACTIVITIES GO TO OUR WEB SITE  
[www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## Speldhurst Parish Council

Neil Barrington-Johnson  
(Chairman)  
Harry Allen  
Joanna Horne  
Rosemary Hull

Lynn Jeffreys  
Katrina Lyle  
George Mercieca  
Rupert Milner  
Trevor Parker

Joy Podbury  
Julia Soyke  
David Turner  
Chris Woodward

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](mailto:clerk@speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk)