

SHOREHAM

Parish Clerk:

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COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of SHOREHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Shoreham Village Hall 1st September 2021 from 7:30pm

Present: Jonathan Histed (in the Chair)
R Blamey, M Cockburn, A Hibbins, S Hubble, B Jeffery and N Powell

Also Present: Cllr John Edwards-Winser
17 members of the public

Clerk: Sarah Moon

Public Question Time : The river footpath is very overgrown at the moment. What are the Parish Council doing about it? The Clerk explained that the footpath is the responsibility of KCC, not SPC and that anyone could log their complaint/concerns via the KCC website. In this case however, the Clerk stated that she would write to KCC and request that the hedges/foliage be cut back.

1. Apologies for absence were received from District Councillor Irene Roy and from Cllr Sheward.
2. There were no disclosures of interest.
3. The Minutes of the meetings held Wednesday 7th July, 4th August and 11th August 2021 (copies previously distributed) were received and authorised by the Chairman.
4. **District/County Councillor Reports**

County Councillor Roger Gough

KCC are running a consultation on the waste recycling centres and how they should be organised. Post Covid, there are various views on booking versus not booking being the best way to organise the waste recycling centres, and this will be reviewed. It appears many people like a booking system, and many people also dislike it.

KCC are also looking at what neighbouring authorities have done e.g. having constraints on what they take etc. and want views.

District Councillor John-Edwards Winser

COVID – While the current rates for Sevenoaks are to be welcomed, there are still 400 active cases, particularly amongst 15-19 age range. The return to school will likely impact still further on the number of cases recorded, as has already be seen in Scotland.

Covid Testing – The testing site will be returning to Otford Road in Sevenoaks at different dates during September (13-19 and 28-30).

Business Grants – All Covid business grants are now closed for applications. In total, since the start of the pandemic, the council has paid out a total of £61,809,909 to local businesses.

7am – 7pm Customer Services – From Monday 13th September, residents will be able to speak with the Council's Customer Solutions team by telephone from 7am – 8pm, Monday to Friday. This will be for a trial period, lasting to the end of this calendar year.

Hybrid Working - As we enter September, the Council has started its move to hybrid working, where all colleagues that are able to, will be working from the office up to 60% of their working week, with the remainder of their time working from home.

5. **Chairman's Report**

There was no report from the Chairman.

6. **Report from the Clerk**

- A donation of towards the £100 village sign has been given by the Mail on Sunday in return for the use of the car park for a photo shoot.
- The heavy goods freighter is now back in action. It will next visit Saturday 20th November.
- Following the introduction of annual tennis memberships last year, we are now seeing these subscriptions being renewed for another year.

7. **Darent Valley Landscape Partnership**

An update was given by Rod Shelton, Chairman of Otford Society on behalf of the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme regarding the various projects currently underway.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Path from station to Shoreham
- Samuel Palmer Trail
- Permanent exhibition of Samuel Palmer's paintings in Dartford
- Hiding power cables at Preston Hill
- Improvement to Darent Valley Path and possibly a segregated cycle path
- Chalk grasslands work at Preston Hill and Fackenden Down
- Darent Valley Farm Cluster

See Appendix A for full details of these and all the other projects being undertaken in the Darent Valley.

8. **Bus Services**

a) **Well Hill**

An email has been received from a resident of Well Hill requesting that the Parish Council object to TFL's proposed change to the R7 route. The R7 is the closest bus stop to Well Hill and the proposal would mean an extra 15 minute walk to the nearest bus stop. This will have a severe impact on Well Hill residents that use the R7. As the consultation is now closed, it was RESOLVED to object on the basis that the proposed change was not well advertised, not even being posted on the bus stops affected.

b) **Shoreham**

Some time ago, the village bus service was decommissioned. Subsequently, an on-demand service was introduced. The current arrangement has been in place for a year or more and residents are now requesting a review on the basis that:

- The on demand service can enter the village whereas part of the reasoning behind decommissioning the village bus service was the fact that it was difficult for vehicles to navigate the narrow streets/bends and parked cars.

- That bus passes are not accepted on the on demand service and many of the people holding such passes are not able to walk up to the bus stop on the A225.

Residents would like to see the bus service through the village reinstated. It is an important means of socialising for those who meet up at the local bus stop. These include the elderly, disabled and wheelchair users. These people are not able to walk up to the A225 to get on the bus there. The on demand alternative, does not accept concessions or carers concessions, which makes it a costly and often unviable option for many.

The current on demand service currently either comes down Filston Lane or Church Street. As some residents complain about it coming down Church Street, it could enter the village via Filston Lane instead.

District Councillor John Edwards-Winsor explained that KCC no longer fund local buses so any service being run by Go Coach would need to be economically viable. It would however, be worth contacting Go Coach, whose own strategy has been cited in the government's 'Bus Strategy' and used as an example for the future of public transport in rural areas. If the service is unaffordable for those who need it most however, Go Coach would surely need to look at this again.

County Councillor Roger Gough also stated that buses in Kent are now commercial propositions with only a very small number of routes being subsidised. Cllr Hubble asked for an explanation of the criteria for determining which routes were subsidised and County Councillor Roger Gough replied that he would take this up with KCC.

Furthermore, the government's National Bus Strategy sees a moving away from the regulated model but local authorities do have a duty both to provide a bus service improvement plan (which needs to be submitted by the end October) as well as a future enhanced partnership (partnership between local authorities and bus companies) by next spring.

The current consultation on buses is still open and can be accessed via KCC's website. This consultation relies on submissions via the web, which will then be considered, rather than a survey per se.

County Councillor Roger Gough also stated that he had attempted to get a Wednesday service reinstated before the pandemic struck but it may be worth lobbying for this again. The Head of Public Transport at KCC had however reported, lower usage post pandemic than before, which does effect the overall economics of the situation.

Finally, a member of the public asked whether Shoreham Parish Council could subsidise an operator to run a regular service e.g. once on a Wednesday and once on a Friday to Sevenoaks and if so what would that cost. Given that at the moment members of the public can phone for a bus, and will get transport for £4, if the bus company would charge the council that, perhaps it could look for funding or consider it coming out of its budget, to create a regular bus stopping within the village. However, without knowing the cost to the council or without the cooperation of / engagement with the bus company this cannot be properly considered.

Following these discussions the Clerk was asked to do the following:

- Write to County Councillor Roger Gough so that he can take up the point with KCC about concessions being accepted on the on demand service;
- Write to Go Coach (Austin Blackburn) asking them to consider reinstating a weekly service using smaller vehicles entering the village via Filston Lane. Ask how much this would cost and whether SPC could help subsidise such a service. If this were an option, could Go Coach keep notes on how many people use the service? This would help monitor the demand/use and inform SPC as to what the spending of public money had achieved.
- Write to Sarah Newman, Rail Officer for Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership to amplify the request for disabled access at Shoreham Station

- Comment on the KCC consultation.

District Councillor John Edwards-Winser also promised to write to Go Coach with regard to improving services in Otford and Shoreham.

9. **First Aid and Defibrillator Training**

It was RESOLVED to support the First Aid/Defibrillator training course, which has been organised by Louise Norris for 13th October and to donate £300 towards the cost of running this.

There will be three sessions – one at the Village School, one in the afternoon for the 'Over 60's' group and one in the evening at 6.00pm for the rest of the village. If demand is high, a further session could be organised for another evening.

10. **Working Party Updates**

- a) The Heat Network Committee has completed its grant application for funding for a feasibility study and is waiting to hear whether it has been successful.
- b) The Broadband Working Party have received no further updates from Open Reach although they had previously been given an October date for work to commence. Meanwhile, Trooli have been busy digging up the roads to lay their cables.
- c) The CCTV Working Party reported that Shoreham Parish Council have teamed up with SDC Enforcement to produce a CCTV network. Around 20 homes are now on the network, mostly on the outskirts of the parish, and these homes will share their footage with SDC in the event of a fly tip.
- d) The reduction in the speed limit on the A225 and the start and end points of the reduction is due to be discussed by the JTB but in the meantime, County Councillor Roger Gough suggested teaming up with Eynsford Parish Council to discuss traffic speeds limits on that road.

11. **Village Sign**

Due to a lack of time, it was agreed to defer this item until the next Parish Council meeting.

12. **Correspondence/Information**

- a) The Summer edition of the CPRE's Countryside Voices magazine has been received.
- b) The August 2021 edition of the Allotment & Leisure Gardener has been received.
- c) The September 2021 edition of Clerks and Councils Direct has been received.

13. **Financial Matters**

Accounts/Payments: Payments were authorised as per the schedule (see Appendix B).

14. **Next meetings** (all starting at 7:30pm in Shoreham Village Hall unless otherwise stated)

- a) Planning (if required) and Finance – Wednesday 15th September 2021
- b) Planning (if required) and Parish Council Meeting – Wednesday 6th October 2021
- c) Planning (if required) and Amenities & Services Meeting – Wednesday 20th October 2021
- d) Planning (if required) and Parish Council Meeting – Wednesday 2nd November 2021

Sarah Moon, Clerk to Shoreham Parish Council
The meeting closed at 9.50pm

Appendix A – DVLPS Update Report

- **The path from the Station into Shoreham:** The landowner has now granted permission for a permissive path licence agreement along the edge of the field as a safer alternative for walking down the road. This connects the village and station far more effectively and safely
- **The Samuel Palmer Trail** QR discs have been mounted on posts starting in the village. The objective is to follow your phone's link from one point to another. You can then better appreciate the link between Palmer's paintings with the landscape you see ahead of you. There was a soft launch of the app and the trail in July and it was well received by the test groups. Promotion is underway shortly once the app is live on App Store A leaflet has already been produced and way-marking has now been completed.
- **(In Dartford)** The Bodleian Library (who hold almost all Palmer's paintings) are negotiating through us with Dartford Dist. Council for conversion of the Coach House at **Accacia Hall** to house a permanent collection of Palmer's paintings there. It is currently looking very optimistic. We have recruited a new Arts and Communications manager- **Seleina Levinson-Drake** to manage this major project..
- **Hiding the Power Cables.** The objective is to bury underground the unsightly power cables that stretch across the valley at Preston Hill. All approvals have now been received from the appropriate land-owners for this to take place. The project is now on-going.
- **The Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership.** This has been set up to emphasise and enhance links between the key stations of the valley and promote visits by rail. Special *Rail Trail* tickets are being planned and the opportunities this provides will be publicised. Both the Shoreham and Otford Societies will be concentrating on ways of enhancing our stations.
- **The LiDAR Project.** LiDAR is a 3D lazer ground-penetrating mapping facility. Last February, when there was little growth or leaves on trees, an aerial LiDAR survey took place of the entire Darent Valley from Dartford to Westerham. The results are still being analysed but Roman sites, early road lay-outs and river course-changes all suddenly become incredibly visible. These are then followed up with what are known as 'ground-truthing' expeditions to check out the sites out on land. I'm afraid I don't know details of what may have been discovered in Shoreham but when studying photos of Otford for instance, I discovered the exact location of our Bowl Barrow and the ramparts (now clear as day) of the late Bronze-age promontory fort up on the Mount. Not a bad start. Now what about Shoreham? There is a technique to reading the data but regular courses take place to enable students to use the technology. Information is on our DVLP website.
- **Lullingstone archaeology digs.** Prior to Covid, there were regular digs in the area of the Lullingstone Villa Barn sited beside the river. These will now continue at which enthusiasts and amateurs can apply to be involved. Much has already been learnt from last year's digs on the site.
- **Developing the Eynsford Castle site.** The DVLP are working with English Heritage to increase interest in its 'hidden' 12th century remains of this fascinating 'protector of our valley'. I created a scale model of the castle as it was in the 12th century which is now on permanent display at Lullingstone Castle.
- **Lullingstone Castle Bath House and Ice House Conservation.** With the support of the Hart-Dykes, structural engineering reports are now all completed. Plans are in transit for securing the structures and making them more accessible to the public. There have also been limited explorations around the castle itself. I'm hoping to complete a scale model of the castle as it was in about 1640 over the coming 12 months, bringing it to life for visitors.

- **Revealing Dartford's Gunpowder Works.** I don't know how many of you are aware of the existence of the Gunpowder Mills just to the South of Dartford? Believe it or not, they were, in Elizabethan days, the major source of gunpowder manufacture for the Royal Navy and pretty-much fuelled our fleet at Trafalgar. Now their role seems forgotten yet, if you visit there, their broken grinding stones are still visible lying in the river. It is hoped a regeneration project can put the mills back into prominence as a part of Dartford's heritage story.
- Something close to our hearts: **The Darent Valley Path**
- **In the upper Valley stretch from Westerham,** we have instigated a monthly **DV Path working group** to galvanise and coordinate local action in this area. This has helped progress conversations around the DV Path extension from Brasted up to Westerham. Meetings with Squerries Estate however are slow and causing some delay. Creating the route between Brasted and Sundridge is going to take a lot of work as well as a link through to Riverhead.
- The path through the **Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve** though, is now completed. Work with the wildlife reserve has been very successful and the eastern part of the lake has been radically improved.
- **At the Lullingstone Country Park, the Darent Valley Path** is in a pretty poor state of repair. The Hart-Dyke's have already given permission for surface improvements. DVLP will now investigate the practicalities of may be introducing a form of segregated path for use by cyclists as well as walkers along this section.
- **At Horton Kirby, the Westminster Fields to Station Road section** is very narrow and muddy. It is to be radically improved. Site surveys have already been completed. Discussions are underway with KCC Footpaths. We need to understand details of what it is that makes this sections flood so easily.
- **The Chalk grassland projects** are progressing with the seasons. For a start, restoration work is completed at Preston Hill and fencing is already underway by the Country Parks Team. Work at Fackenden Down to install stock fencing is also complete. Also at this site the introduction-programme of *Kentish Milkwort* is complete. This has been led by Kent Wildlife Trust in partnership with Kew Gardens. The milkwort has established well and is now being monitored by volunteers.
- **Work at Filston Farm** has revealed two ideal sites for the development of natural water meadows. The works will be designed to increase habitat for fish and invertebrates and will involve gravel seeding, tree works, and the creation of backwaters. It will be delivered in partnership with SERT, NWKCP, John Dinnis the owner and Park Farm Fisheries. It means we can provide attractive habitats for a wide and varied species of water-fowl as well as support natural flood management by reducing the potential for flooding further down-stream.
- **At Lullingstone Country Park,** our work is to increase awareness of the many *veteran trees* within the park, some of them hundreds of years old. A second purpose is to provide visitors with *trails* to follow using their APS and QR points. This is all now, on-going.
- **The Enchanted Woodland of Farningham Woods** is already in development. Work is continuing to seek ways to develop the woodland. Plans include ways to enhance its improvement though including the use of QR points to explain its history and its ancient heritage. (Even possibly bird-song recognition tapes for broader appreciation of its wildlife)
- **At Preston Farm:** phase one of the river works at this site are now finally complete. The wetland area is functioning well and ditches and ponds are filling up at times of high

rainfall. The second stage of the project is now awaiting consent from the Environment Agency and once received, plans to move forward with phase 2 can begin.

- **The Quadrangle Forest Garden** site is being managed by Deborah Wolton. A number of Fresh ideas for its interpretation are currently under consideration.
- A new concept for a **Darent Valley Farm Cluster** has been created to help and enable local farmers to work in a more collaborative way and benefit one another as well as bringing benefits to the valley. An offer of recruitment for the office had been accepted (Kent Wildlife Trust are leading on this). He will integrate closely with the DVLPS team.

There are of course so many other projects and I hope it won't be so long before I can visit you again to tell you of their progress. I'm sure there are questions you'd like to ask but time is pressing. So could you address these to Sarah, your Parish Clerk and I will do my very best to answer them by email? If you'd like to know more look on our website, DVLPS

[Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme - DVLPS \(darent-valley.org.uk\)](http://darent-valley.org.uk)

Appendix B

Schedule of Payments

31 August 2021 (2021-2022)

Shoreham Parish Council

PAYMENTS LIST

Voucher	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
116	Training	25/08/2021		NatWest current acco		Training	KALC	S	50.00	10.00	60.00
127	Subscriptions - KALC/SLCC/C	31/08/2021		NatWest current acco		Subscription	Zoom	S	11.99	2.40	14.39
128	Computer/Printer Consumabl	31/08/2021		NatWest current acco		Website	Hugo Fox	S	29.99	6.00	35.99
122	Broadband	31/08/2021		NatWest current acco		Broadband	Sarah Moon	X	10.00	0.00	10.00
123	Office Rent/Storage	31/08/2021		NatWest current acco		Office Allowance	Sarah Moon	X	30.00	0.00	30.00
124	Car Park	31/08/2021		NatWest current acco		Business Rates	Sevenoaks District Council	X	84.00	0.00	84.00
125	Toilets	31/08/2021		NatWest current acco		Water charges	Castle Water	X	78.70	0.00	78.70
126	Toilets	31/08/2021		NatWest current acco		Electricity	EDF Energy	X	145.00	0.00	145.00
115	Scribe licence	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		Scribe licence	Scribe 2000 Ltd	S	400.00	80.00	480.00
111	Grasscutting Shoreham	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		Grass cutting	GF Garden Maintenance	X	255.00	0.00	255.00
112	Grasscutting Shoreham	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		Hall hire	Shoreham Village Hall	X	54.00	0.00	54.00
113	Advertising	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		Advertising	Shoreham PCC	X	100.00	0.00	100.00
114	Printing Gazette/Shoreham P	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		Printing Shoreham Post	Silver Pines Services	X	40.20	0.00	40.20
117	Tax and NI	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		PAYE & NI	HM Revenue & Customs	X	54.53	0.00	54.53
118	Lengthsmen	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		Lengthsman wages	Mrs A Hollands-Parsons	X	267.30	0.00	267.30
119	Lengthsmen	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		Lengthsman wages	N McDonnell	X	35.64	0.00	35.64
120	Clerk's salary	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		Clerk's salary	Sarah Moon	X	1,070.23	0.00	1,070.23
121	War Memorial/Meenfield Cro	02/09/2021		NatWest current acco		Strim and spray Cross	Jeremy Tooley	X	60.00	0.00	60.00
Total									2,776.58	98.40	2,874.98