



# HERNHILL NEWS

## March 2023

### PARISH COUNCIL

All the latest from your Parish Council: Elections, Neighbourhood Plan, Roads and Planning applications. If you have a suggestion you can contact the Parish Council Clerk on 07876221580 or [hernhillclerk@gmail.com](mailto:hernhillclerk@gmail.com). Full copies of the approved minutes for meetings and updated news on planning and road closures are available on the Parish Council Website.

[www.hernhillparishcouncil.org](http://www.hernhillparishcouncil.org)

The February meeting of the Parish Council was held on Wednesday 22nd in the village hall. It was attended by the clerk and five parish councillors, councillor Rich Lehmann (KCC) and three members of the public.

**Public Participation:** Mrs Geliot let us know that a donation of snowdrops "in the green" has been promised to the Horticultural Society. They will be planted in the churchyard and with the council's unanimous agreement, around the oak tree on the village green.

Mrs Butler asked if there were any plans to celebrate the forthcoming coronation of King Charles. All agreed it would be good for parishioners to share any ideas and publicise them through the parish council and the Hernhill News as well as on social media.

**Elections:** Local elections will be held on Thursday 4th May. This includes elections for Kent County Council, Swale Borough Council and the Parish Council. We urge anyone interested in

joining the PC to fill out the nomination papers which are available at [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk) or ask our clerk for assistance. Everyone please note this is the first election in the UK that photo ID will be needed in order to exercise your democratic right to vote! Passport, driving licence or bus pass is acceptable. If you don't have any of those a 'voter authority certificate' can be obtained online from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) or a postal application form from Swale council. Don't lose your vote!

**The Neighbourhood Plan:** A meeting to plot out next steps will be held on Wednesday 1st March at 7.15pm in the Red Lion. An agenda and some information about Neighbourhood Plans will be circulated by the clerk to all who have expressed an interest in attending.

**Swale Borough Council Household Support Fund:** You may be eligible for support with food and utilities as a Swale resident. Also pensioners can get hot meals and help with shopping though Age UK and this scheme. For more information contact [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk) Help for Households.

**Planning:** The Parish council is allowed to comment on plans submitted to Swale and publicly available to view on Swale planning portal [pa.midkent.gov.uk/online](http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online)

Application 22/505990: Land between A299, Whitstable Road and Staplestreet Road flyover. Temporary

Chairman: Cllr Barbara Heller  
Clerk: Rebecca Parr 07876 221580  
e-mail [hernhillclerk@gmail.com](mailto:hernhillclerk@gmail.com)

change of use of agricultural land for compound for commercial vehicles and welfare cabin for construction traffic Cleve Hill solar park. Discussed last month, the applicants Cleve Hill Solar have now added additional information to the planning portal and hosted a meeting with local representatives, attended by Councillor Waters. Councillors voted unanimously, once again, to object to the application on planning grounds. It was considered that mitigations offered were inadequate and the potential for long lasting disruption for parishioners trying to get to Faversham or onto A299 significant. Application 22/505240: Replacement fencing multi-sports football, Approved. Application 22/504845: Holly House Staplestreet renovations, Approved. Application 22/501068: Thatch Cottage Staplestreet demolition and replacement with two detached two-storey houses and parking, Approved.

**Litter Pick:** Good fun was had by all at the litter pick on 11th February which included many local families. Thanks to everyone who turned out and filled the blue bags. Another date has been booked by popular demand for Sunday

2nd April at 2.00pm. Starting at the village hall as usual.

**Roads and speeding:** Rich Lehmann reported back from a meeting with KCC highways about our attempts to get speed limits placed on traffic through Hernhill. The plan to extend the speed limits to cover the school and Fostal junction, strongly supported by the school, remains unacceptable. Prices for the implementation of any limits are going to rise steeply in April, so councillors agreed to go for what we have managed to get KCC to agree. Helped by a £1000 grant from Cllr Lehmann's fund, we will fund the traffic restriction order and design fees immediately.

**The next Parish Council meeting** will be at 7.30pm on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March in the Village Hall. If you are not able to attend the meeting in person but still wish to make representation to the Parish Council, please email or telephone the Clerk as soon as possible, but ideally a minimum of three working days before the date of the meeting, and the Clerk will ensure that your views are fully considered under the public participation section of the meeting.

## SWALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Local elections and voter identification All seats on Swale Borough Council will be up for election on May 4<sup>th</sup>. This will be the first election to be run under the new law which requires you to produce an approved form of photographic identification to vote. Now is a good time to check the requirements to make sure you won't be caught out. You may already have an acceptable form of identification. You can use any of the following:

- Passport
- Driving licence (including a provisional licence)
- Blue Badge

Certain concessionary travel cards  
Identity card with PASS mask (Proof of Age Standards Scheme)  
Biometric Immigration Card  
Defence identity card  
Certain national identity cards  
Kent County Council ENCTS bus passes (for older and disabled people)  
To check exactly which forms of identification are acceptable visit [electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID](http://electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID)  
If you already have an accepted form of photo ID all you need to do is to take it with you when you go to vote. If you don't have one, or you're not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, you can apply for a free voter ID

document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate here:

[gov.uk/apply-for-the-id-voter-authority-certificate](http://gov.uk/apply-for-the-id-voter-authority-certificate).

You can avoid having to get a photo ID by registering for a postal vote instead of voting in person. Now is also a good time to make sure you are registered

to vote. If you have moved recently or just become 18 you may not be registered. You will find a link to register to vote or apply for a postal vote at the Electoral Commission web-site.

You have until April 17th to register to vote and until April 18th to register for a postal vote.

### **KENT COUNCILLOR**

KCC's annual budget meeting took place last Thursday in Maidstone. There were no cuts to bus subsidies this year, but a combination of rising demand and rising costs meant that there were a number of cuts in other vital areas including adult social care and care for disabled children.

Councillors from all parties expressed concern at the poor financial situation the council is in, and all made it clear that without a significant increase in funding from central government, the council will find it very difficult to make it to the end of this decade. Former KCC leader Sir Paul Carter declared his backing for Kent to be broken up into unitary authorities, arguing that the efficiencies that can be achieved by combining the county council with borough and district level councils would make local authorities far more financially viable.

There are definitely advantages to this approach, but there are also disadvantages too. If Swale were to be absorbed into a unitary authority with some of the surrounding districts, we could see important planning decisions affecting our area made in Ashford, Maidstone or Canterbury (depending on how the boundaries for the new authorities were drawn up).

Without a county level authority we may also have less say on highways issues

which would have a knock on effect on our area. At the moment it seems increasingly likely that National Highways will push forward with plans for a Lower Thames Crossing near Gravesend. This will be beneficial for Dartford as it will reduce traffic using the Dartford Crossing, but it has the potential to be hugely negative here in Swale as traffic that would normally reach the coast via the M20 would be far more likely to travel along the M2 and head down via the already overburdened Brenley Corner.

Having said this, perhaps the additional budget that might be freed up by combining authorities - along with the reduction in confusion caused by having two different councils looking after things like waste collection and disposal - would be enough to offset the disadvantages. One thing I think is certain is that we will be seeing a lot more discussion on this topic in the months and years to come.

### **FINAL BUS UPDATE**

The bus services affected by KCC's subsidy bus cuts finally came into effect this month, with services across the area stopping with effect from 12th February. Users in affected villages will have to rely on the Kent Karrier service which costs £3.50 to use even if you have a bus pass and only serves villages on certain days. For Conyer, Lynsted, Rodmersham, Bredgar, Tunstall and Milstead, the bus is available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays

and goes into Sittingbourne. For Dodington, Newnham and Oare, the bus is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays and can take you to either Faversham or Sittingbourne. For more details, please Google 'Swale Kent Karrier' or call 01892 832447. Any parents unable to get their children

to school may be able to appeal for assistance through the Home to School Transport Appeals process. Please contact me at the email address below if you would like further information on this.

Rich Lehmann  
Rich.lehmann@kent.gov.uk

### CHURCH SERVICES

#### **Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> March, Hernhill**

10.00am Sung Communion  
Rev'd Ros Parrett

#### **Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> March, Boughton**

10.00am Sung Communion  
Rev'd Louise Seear

#### **Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> March, Hernhill**

10.00am Special Mothering Sunday Service  
A short family service. Flowers for mums  
10.30am Holy Communion, Graveney  
Rev'd Nina Coulthard

#### **Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> March, Boughton**

10.00am Benefice Sung Communion  
Rev'd Sharran Ireland

#### **Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> March, St Barnabas, Boughton**

10.30am Lent Wednesday Worship  
Holy Communion, Rev'd Nina Coulthard

#### **Palm Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, Hernhill**

10.00am Sung Communion with blessing of palms  
and narrative reading of The Passion  
Venerable John Barton

**All are welcome to our services.**

### HERNHILL CE PRIMARY

The school has had a busy start to 2023 with lots of the children taking part in sports competitions and events. Year 3 had an afternoon of alternative sporting activities at Herne Bay High - laser tag and rock climbing! They had a great time and other year groups are looking forward to having their turn! The school has participated in the East Kent Sports Partnership 'Wake Up and Shake up' competition and the Cross Country competition. All of the children did themselves proud. Our Year 4 and 5 children enjoyed badminton coaching last term with Year 3 and 6 taking part in the weeks coming up to Easter. The footballers have enjoyed a number of local fixtures and the netball team have been working hard at their training sessions and looking forward to fixtures coming up in the months ahead.

We are delighted that we are now able

to offer every class a term's worth of forest school throughout the school year. Our fabulous Mrs George has completed her Level 3 forest school training and has been leading this across the school since September. There are lots of photos of the forest school sessions on our school website so you can see what we've been up to  
[Hernhill.kent.sch.uk/News/Galleries](https://Hernhill.kent.sch.uk/News/Galleries)

Our Eco Team have been working hard on a new project - an Eco Refill Shop. This will be run on a monthly basis and will sell refills of branded washing-up liquid, hand wash and laundry products. The organisation 'Pupils Profit' are providing support to the children in the setting up of this small business. We very much hope, in the future, to open this refill service to local residents and will be sharing more with the local community in the coming months.

As ever, the children are loving their creative, 'loose parts' lunchtimes. If anyone ever wants to get rid of large sticks, planks of wood, tarpaulins and ropes that they no longer need, we

would be grateful for them and the children would make excellent use of them for den building!

Mrs S Alexander  
Headteacher

### **OVER THE GARDEN WALL**

Well, that was a quick month, where did that go? My best friend and my husband decided to have a New Year clear out. As she has an estate car, they decided to make two trips to the tip to get rid of loads of tat. Both agreed it is so much easier now you have to make an appointment and the staff have time to help you. They have renamed themselves "tip buddies", sad but true.

We finally went to a restaurant in London that I have wanted to try for many years called Oslo Court. It is in a block of flats in St. John's Wood and serves 1970's French cuisine. It really was like going back in time with pink tablecloths & napkins, melba toast and butter curls in a saucer of ice. We had a wonderful meal and it has been a very long time since I have had Steak Diane or Crepe Suzette. The down side was driving

through London. 2½ hours to travel 44 miles and worse was to come when we paid the congestion charges. £27.50 for the joy of moving less than 2 miles in 25 mins. I'm not sure the concept is working.

As the sun finally came out, I decided it was time to get my car washed. You know it is time when you don't like shutting the boot because you will get your hands dirty.

We went to Canterbury shopping and decided to have lunch in a Tapas bar in Sun Street called El Sol. We really enjoyed the experience and would recommend it. Did you know the Normans ate this? We know because of the Bayeux Tapas Tray!

Stay safe & God bless,  
Sandi.

### **WHAT ROAD TO TAKE?**

The closure of Boughton Hill, to carry out essential highways maintenance, is an inconvenience for me and many others who live in Dunkirk, as we have to take a longer alternative route to reach a destination. With the closure expected to be in place for sixteen weeks, although annoying, it is a minor disruption to our everyday lives compared to the hardship and suffering many have to endure in our world today.

On life's journey we all have to decide which road we need to take, as life is rarely a straight smooth road with no twists and turns or bumps. Careers, where to live, family commitments are some of the factors which are taken into consideration when choosing which

road to go down, but such well thought out plans can sometimes need amending and a change in direction is required due to, say, health issues, unemployment or bereavement.

One of the biggest decisions young people have to make is what road to follow in life, especially if there is peer pressure or social media influence leading them in the wrong direction. Regrettably, we have all seen and heard this can sometimes result in tragic consequences.

Then there is the road we sometimes need to travel but don't want to and will do anything to avoid it. In the Bible, when God instructed Jonah to go to Nineveh he took the road to Joppa instead, and we all know what happened

to him, he was swallowed by a large fish! Jesus didn't want to take the road to Jerusalem, but he knew he must even though it would lead to his betrayal, suffering and death.

As we travel along life's path we meet partners, friends, employers and others who may change the direction we are travelling. In Luke's gospel we read of the two disciples who were walking on the road to Emmaus on the evening of the first Easter Day, they completed their journey not realising the stranger walking with them was the risen Lord. Once they did, they rushed back the way they came, to Jerusalem, to tell the other disciples what had happened.

Saul of Tarsus also known as Paul, a persecutor of the early Christians, whilst on the road to Damascus experienced a dramatic event that changed the direction of his life forever. After hearing the voice of Jesus asking "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" and being struck blind for three days, he was baptised, joined the disciples and began proclaiming Jesus as the Son of God. Paul's conversion and actions led him down a dangerous road because many people wanted to kill him for what

he was saying. He endured floggings and imprisonment, and eventually was cruelly martyred in Rome.

Becoming a Christian may result in taking a completely different road in life and there is no guarantee it will be an easy one. Hopefully, it will not be as treacherous as Paul's. However long and bumpy it may be, it will not be walked alone. Jesus may not be seen, as he was on the road to Emmaus, but will be there to guide, comfort and support. The first four verses of well known Psalm 23 confirms this, for centuries these words have been a great comfort to many, and still are.

*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.*

*He makes me to lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in the right paths for his name's sake.*

*Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me.*

Peter Willcock  
Churchwarden

### **GARDENER'S CORNER**

Why do we have gardens? Where did it all begin? Our hunter gatherer ancestors had no permanent homes and spent all their time looking for food and knapping flints. Neolithic forebears were our first farmers growing cultivated crops, looking after the first tamed animals and building monuments like Stonehenge (in their spare time?) – no evidence of gardens. It was the good old Romans who brought a bit of the "good life" when they invaded, building palatial villas with open spaces filled with luxuriant plants and trees. They incorporated ponds, fountains, streams and areas for fine dining al

fresco.

Our gardens today still reflect Roman beginnings and many of our plants have been developed from those that would have been found in Roman gardens. This is particularly true of the gardens of stately homes with their artificial lakes, temples, fountains, tree lined avenues and statues. Many of us have BBQs and seating outside – albeit made from wood or plastic rather than marble.

So we have the Romans to thank for our gardens. The only thing is that they had plenty of slaves to look after them. Now back to the weeding!

Jill Geliot

### **BITS AND PIECES**

When the rains really descend our garden has a miniature stream running through and a number of areas that would like to develop into Olympic size swimming pools. As a result, I spent many hours last month watching the intermittent sun trying to dry out the soggy grass. At last the day came when I could get out the tractor. Then the inevitable happened. The tractor refused to start. The battery was flat and the charger, which I had tidied away last year, was nowhere to be found. A new charger did the job, the grass got cut and I found the old charger smirking at me from the back of the garage.

Even with a few more dark days to come there is still something for us to enjoy. What could be nicer than to snuggle up in your favourite chair with a hot drink and a good book? Or

perhaps you are anticipating your next holiday. In which case, don't forget those days on past trips that were too hot, too cold or too wet. Times when you wished for a long drink and something better to read than a travel brochure on Tibet and Tibetans.

We have the answer. We have been given a quantity of new books for sale at pre-inflation prices (£1 for hard backs and 50p for paper-backs). They are now available in the church. Why not have a look before everyone else gets all the best ones? As an added attraction, Jill Jeliot has sent the following message, "Is anyone interested in starting a book club? Very informal, not too 'nerdy' and perhaps meeting every two months. If so please phone me on 750974." Now, you could buy your book in the church and take it to the meeting.

ADT

### **BIN COLLECTIONS**

|       |    |           |           |
|-------|----|-----------|-----------|
| March | 1  | Wednesday | Brown bin |
|       | 7  | Tuesday   | Blue Bin  |
|       | 14 | Tuesday   | Green Bin |
|       | 15 | Wednesday | Brown bin |
|       | 21 | Tuesday   | Blue Bin  |
|       | 28 | Tuesday   | Green Bin |
|       | 29 | Wednesday | Brown bin |
| April | 4  | Tuesday   | Blue Bin  |
|       | 11 | Tuesday   | Green Bin |
|       | 12 | Wednesday | Brown bin |
|       | 18 | Tuesday   | Blue Bin  |
|       | 25 | Tuesday   | Green Bin |
|       | 26 | Wednesday | Brown bin |

Alan D. Taylor  
01227 751293 e-mail [newsadt@gmail.com](mailto:newsadt@gmail.com)



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