Shorne Parish Council

Borough of Gravesham

THE PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

December 2020

Following the resignation of Steve White, we have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor in the Shorne Village Ward of Shorne Parish Council. Shorne Village Ward includes Thong, Shorne Ifield, Shorne Ridgeway, Lower Shorne, and the village. It is important that all communities in Shorne are represented within the Parish Council, and we would particularly welcome applicants from Lower Shorne and Thong.

If you would like to be considered for co-option as a Parish Councillor, please send us a brief resumé, telling us why you are interested and why you think you would be suitable for the role, and outlining any relevant skills or experience you may have. Please send your application by email to vacancy@shorneparishcouncil.org, or by post to: The Clerk, Shorne Parish Council, c/o Shorne Village Hall, The Street, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3EA, to reach us no later than **Thursday 31st December 2020.** This period may be extended if there are insufficient applications received.

Shornemead Level Crossing

As many residents will be aware, the level crossing at the northern end of Queens Farm Road has been closed for over a year, following a highly publicised near miss involving a youth on a mini motorbike. A number of other irresponsible actions have been recorded on CCTV.

Members of the Parish Council met representatives from Network Rail on site on 6th November to discuss their proposals. We were pleased to hear that they have secured funding for a footbridge at this location, but less pleased that it will take a further 2 to 3 years, and that they propose to close the crossing to all vehicles. This could result in heavy vehicles using the former tow path. These concerns will be conveyed to Network Rail.

Trees in The Ridgeway

Kent County Council has written to Shorne Parish Council requiring us to cut back trees adjacent to The Ridgeway in Shorne Common Rough and the Recreation Ground. This is as a result of concerns raised by Redroute Buses to provide clearance for their double deck buses. It is understood that up to 100 property owners along the route between Meopham and Higham received similar letters. It is particularly frustrating, since neither Shorne nor Cobham Parish Councils consider that double deck buses are suitable for this route. We have managed to get the period for compliance extended to 3 months, but this will result in the Parish Council incurring significant unbudgeted expenditure.

Local Plan Partial Review

Gravesham Borough Council is currently carrying out a consultation on their partial review of the Local Plan, which includes a report on their recent Green Belt review and possible site

allocations for new housing development. This has significant potential impacts for the rural parts of Gravesham. Shorne Parish Council will be submitting a response to the consultation, but residents are advised to have their say on the proposals. The consultation runs until 31st December 2020 and can be accessed online at:
https://localplan.gravesham.gov.uk/consult.ti/REG18S2/consultationHome

Lower Thames Crossing

At the last moment on 20th November, Highways England withdrew their Development Consent Order application, ostensibly to address feedback from the Planning Inspectorate. This does not mean it has gone away. Highways England state that they will collate the information required for the specific points raised and intend to resubmit the application early in the new year.

Parish Council Meetings in January

There are no meetings planned for December. The meetings scheduled for January are:

Thursday 14th January - Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 28th January - Planning & Highways Committee

Meetings will be held by remote video conferencing on Zoom for the foreseeable future. If you wish to attend any of the meetings, please contact the Parish Clerk at clerk@shorneparishcouncil.org for joining instructions.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Precautions

At the time of writing, we are still under lockdown to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Residents are strongly advised to stay up to date and continue to follow the latest precautions published at: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/ and the government advice published at: https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus.

If you are able to, please support those more vulnerable residents who may be housebound or unable to collect their prescriptions or get to the shops. If you require help, please contact: https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/home/environmental-health/coronavirus-guidance/help-and-support. For urgent needs, Kent County Council's helpline is available 24 hours a day for vulnerable people, telephone 03000 41 92 92.

Who could have imagined what was ahead of us this time last year? Let's hope that there is some form of relaxation to enable family and loved ones to see each other over the Christmas period. On behalf of the Parish Council, I wish all our parishioners a happy and healthy Christmas, and hope that 2021 sees a return to our normal way of life.

Bob Lane
Shorne Parish Council