Shorne Parish Council

Borough of Gravesham

THE PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

June 2025

North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve

The North Kent Woods and Downs has now been officially established as a National Nature Reserve, part of the prestigious King's Series of National Nature Reserves, a collection of sites designated for their exceptional ecological value during the reign of King Charles III. Stretching from Gravesend to the Medway Valley, the North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve brings together ancient woodlands, chalk grasslands, and historic parklands. These places are full of life, with ancient trees, rare wildflowers, and rich wildlife habitats - a landscape shaped by nature, people, and shared care for the land.

Shorne Parish Council is proud to report that it has been accepted as an Affiliate Partner of the National Nature Reserve, and that Crabbles Bottom and Shorne Common Rough form part of the North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve.

You can find out more about the NNR at https://kentdowns.org.uk/nkwd/.

Shorne Crossroads

Kent County Council has secured a £100k design budget from the central government Active Travel Fund to design a scheme to improve highway safety at Shorne Crossroads. Their consultants have produced a report and gathered data over the past year, and the £100k will be spent on a design consultant, using the report and data gathered, to design a proposed solution that is justifiable and fit for purpose, so that the subsequent bid for funding for carrying out the work will be fully costed and substantiated.

The proposed solution is unlikely to include traffic lights; KCC do not consider that these would be justifiable, affordable, or practical for this location. It is likely that any proposed solution could include widening parts of the splitter islands to effectively narrow the carriageway, and to create shorter filter lanes and longer waiting areas for traffic wishing to turn across the carriageway. If achievable, this would slow traffic, provide proper pedestrian refuge island crossing points to the West and East of the crossroads, and make it safer for traffic entering or leaving Forge Lane and Green Farm Lane. As part of the design, KCC will also be looking to see how much additional footway can be provided and investigate the possibility taking cyclists off the main carriageway and onto shared cycle and pedestrian footways at the approaches to the junction.

The next round of funding bids is in September 2025, and they hope to have a scheme drawn up and fully costed by then, so that if the bid is successful, they can carry out the work in 2026. They expect to assess the impact on traffic speed post installation, with a view to reducing the speed limit as part of a phase 2 for the following year(s).

Internal Audit Completed

Each year, the Parish Council is required to undergo an internal audit of its accounting practices, budgetary controls, expenditure, assets and balances, policies and procedures, etc, to ensure that we are operating correctly and transparently, and to identify any shortcomings,

prior to submission of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. We are pleased to report that we have received a clean bill of health, and the AGAR will be signed off at the Parish Council meeting on 12th June in readiness for submission to the External Auditor and publication on our website. We would like to thank our Clerk Diane Salmon for making this a smooth and problem-free process.

Annual Council Meeting

Under the Local Government Act 1972, Parish Councils are required to hold an Annual Council Meeting within fourteen days after the day on which the councillors were elected, or at some time during May in any non-election year. The election of the Chairman shall be the first business transacted at the annual meeting of the Parish Council. The Annual Council Meeting for Shorne Parish Council was held at the Village Hall on 8th May, and Bob Lane was re-elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year.

Annual Report Delivery Volunteers Needed!

Good progress has been made on compiling and editing the Annual Report, and it is expected to be printed and ready for delivery to every property in Shorne shortly. With deliveries to over 1100 properties spread between Shorne Ridgeway, Shorne West, and Lower Shorne, we rely on volunteers to help carry out this task. If you can spare an hour or so to carry out some of the deliveries, please let us know.

Parish Council Meetings in June

The meetings scheduled for May are:

Thursday 12th June	-	Parish Council Meeting
Thursday 26th June	-	Footpaths, Land & Properties Committee

The meetings will commence at 7.30pm in the Committee Room at Shorne Village Hall.

Bob Lane
Shorne Parish Council