Autumn Newsletter 2023

from

EYNSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Hello Eynsford and welcome to our latest newsletter. Please read through to be kept informed of what is happening in our village.

We have arranged to borrow the Thermal imaging camera from Sevenoaks District Camera for the month of November. Residents can borrow the camera to see where their homes are losing heat and to improve their energy efficiency. We will take a £20 deposit for each loan. If you are borrowing over a weekend, consider sharing with neighbours so that we can maximise its usage. If you would like to borrow the camera email the parish office to book a slot.

We currently have a 'casual vacancy' for a parish councillor. If you would like to represent and serve your community and be involved in decision making, why not apply. For more information contact the parish office.

We were delighted to be able pass on a grant of £980 to The Space - a community led project providing a warm space and free food, drink and companionship at the Riverside Club every Wednesday morning. We were successful in applying for a 'cost of living grant' for the project from Kent County Council.

Please get in touch if you have any questions or ideas for the parish council.

Holly Ivaldi, Clerk
Eynsford Parish Council, Parish Office, Priory Lane, Eynsford DA4 0AY;
01322 865320; info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk
Find 'Eynsford Parish Council' on Facebook and Twitter.
www.eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk

Eynsford Christmas Lights

Cllr Ferne Haxby

Enjoying the festive season brightens the dark nights of winter. We have received comments into the Parish Council that Christmas lights in the centre of the village would bring smiles to people's faces. A lot of establishments already display lights such as pubs, shops and the Baptist Church and a central display would be welcome.

We have been speaking with St Martin's Church and they have kindly agreed to have lights within their grounds. As the Church is at the centre and opposite the ford, we are grateful to their support.

We are sourcing lights that will go round the lychgate and shine on to the trees in the churchyard and hope to get these in place for the Christmas period, this year.

We have further plans for next year to widen the scope and are always open to ideas from our residents to making our village as pretty as possible to warm us during the cold times at Christmas.

If you have ideas, contact our parish clerks and we can discuss within the Council to see what we can take forward.

Follow us Online

Eynsford Parish Council's website is the best place for you to find useful information about the council and its services. There are also areas dedicated to the village and community groups with the option for you to add your own events for listing. Have a look at **www.eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk**

We are also on **Facebook** and **Twitter** (search for Eynsford Parish Council) where we post up to date news and share useful information . We love to hear your views and to see your pictures too. Do follow us to keep up to date!

Speed Watch

Holly Ivaldi, Clerk

Are you concerned about speeding in our villages?

Would you like to do something about it?

Road safety is a subject that comes up frequently in our community and there is a way that you can help. Community Speedwatch (CSW) is a road safety initiative that's coordinated by Kent Police and run by local communities. Trained volunteers monitor the speeds of vehicles using approved 'speed indication devices' (SIDs).

The aim of the initiative is to:

- reduce death and injury on the roads
- improve the quality of life for local communities
- reduce the speed of vehicles to the speed limit
- increase public awareness of inappropriate speed

We have Community Speedwatch groups registered in Eynsford and Farningham and they work together to monitor the speed of vehicles in locations in both villages. However, more volunteers are needed to make the scheme viable. If you can spare a few hours a month to volunteer with the group, please get in touch. Training will be given on what to do and sessions will be organised to suit the volunteers involved.

If you can help, please get in touch with your local parish council to register and get your training set up.
Eynsford - info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk
Farningham - clerk@farninghamparishcouncil.org

For more information about Speedwatch visit https://communityspeedwatch.org/

Meet Your New Councillor: Jane Laird

I am the most recent councillor to join the team having been co-opted onto the Council on 16th June this year.

I am fortunate to have lived in Eynsford for nearly 14 years. I knew the village as a child because my Aunt and Uncle lived here and I have many happy memories visiting them, walking around the village and always going look at the Highland cows.

I have worked as a commercial property solicitor in both London and Gravesend. I have also volunteered for North and West Kent Citizens Advice.

I have enjoyed being involved in village life. I was an active member of Anthony Roper PTA whilst my children attended the school. I have been part of the Eynsford Green Team since its formation at the beginning of 2021. I am pleased to be part of the this group as I am keen to help the village with environmental initiatives. The Green Team is a subcommittee of the Parish Council and being part of this group has been a good introduction to Parish Council work .

My main interest as a councillor are environmental issues, ensuring we protect the village's character whilst also being progressive. I look forward to being part of the team which helps look after our wonderful village.

Village Hall Update

Cllr Alan Cook

I last reported that the archaeology work was complete and we were waiting on our ground work contractor to start re modeling the football pitch, unfortunately they were delayed by bad weather on another project.

However, volunteers from the village first erected a temporary fence around the work site and including that part of the farmland in the ownership of the parish council, where the excess spoil is to be spread. More robust fencing was also erected at the rear of the changing rooms, the main entrance and around the play area to keep people safe.

Burrows Contractors Ltd, the ground works contractor arrived early on the morning of the 22nd August with large dumper trucks, an excavator and a bulldozer. The contractor had already prepared a computer 3 D model as

to how much material had to be placed in the area of fill and how much material needed to be excavated in order to form a level pitch. Inside the cab of the dozer was computer linked to a GPS station which shows the driver on a small screen exactly how far and to what level the ground needs to be excavated.

In only six weeks on site the contractor had excavated 150,000 cubic meters of mainly chalk, spread the retained top soil over the pitch and spread 500 tones of a sand carpet over the top soil as well as installing a land drain around three sides of the pitch. The final operation was to lay a thin layer of sand mixed with top soil into which the seed is sown. The Parish Council wish to thank the staff at Burrows Construction for their cooperation and the excellent work carried out to date.

The chalk embankments to the north and east side of the pitch will remain as chalk, as the recommendation from a specialist is to leave the natural chalk exposed and in time various vegetation will take root. It is now up to the weather as to how well the seed will germinate.

A permanent fence will be installed around the top of the steep embankments and the parish council's Green Team have met on site to develop a planting scheme around this top edge with the emphasis of enhancing biodiversity.

Another issue facing the parish council is what can be achieved with the chalk spoil heap. Again, the Green Team has been asked to come up

with ideas such as forming a pathway between the edge of the chalk and the allotment hedge or maybe to landscape the top of the mound of chalk creating a pathway along the top to enjoy the rather splendid views of the village and then to link into the footpath onto the High Street.

We will need to keep Harrow Meadow locked to the public until such time the pitch becomes suitable for playing football on. The parish council wants to reiterate that dogs are not allowed on Harrow Meadow as the football teams are tasked with clearing dog fouling before each match.

The next phase of our journey is to plan for constructing the new village hall and car park. We are, however, still short of our target and whilst we are still applying for different grants, 2024 will see us raising the profile of our fundraising, in particular we will be seeking donations from the public as well as putting on a variety of fund-raising events. There is still time to buy one of our 2024 Calendars also our raffle tickets can be purchased at Parish Office, at Normans and at Raffertys.

Station News

Cllr Vince Robson

In a recent meeting with the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership(DVCRP) the new tap in machines were discussed. The original plan was for them to be available in November, however we understand there is a delay to the project, that said no new date is available at the moment.

The Rail representatives spent time reassuring the meeting that the introduction of these machines does not mean that Eynsford will be unstaffed; they reiterated that there are no plans for this. They did confirm, however, that the travelcard will be withdrawn from the 4th Jan 2024. This is due to TFL withdrawing funding for the ticket.

For those of you who use the station you will have seen the extensive refurbishment of the waiting room and ticket office. The use of traditional colours and historical photos in the process has resulted in our station being nominated for an award in the Community section of the Rail Heritage Trust. The awards are in December.

Volunteers – Eynsford Castle

Cllr Ferne Haxby

Eynsford Castle not only provides a great venue for local community events but its history and ruins are a popular space for tourists to the village to visit.

The castle is open almost every day until 6.00pm but to ensure it can be kept open regularly, volunteers are needed to be able to open, check the site and close the gate at the end of day. Residents have held this role in the past and have been valuable to English Heritage to help keep this treasured asset available for all.

English Heritage would like to hear from people who would be willing to become volunteers and to explain what would be required and take any applications further.

For more information and to apply to volunteer visit https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/support-us/Volunteer/eynsford-castle-monitor-volunteer/

Photocopying/Printing

We can help with your group or personal printing. We can print A4 and A3 in black and white and colour. We can also print booklets, but need a little notice. If your file is digital you can bring it on a memory stick or email the parish office. Current costs are:

Community groups (A4)	Black & white 6p	Colour 10p
Personal (A4)	Black & white 10p	Colour 15p

Eynsford in Bloom

Kaz Langridge

For the ninth consecutive year, Eynsford in Bloom won Eynsford Village a Gold award at the South and South East in Bloom competition. Six volunteers from Eynsford in Bloom attended an award ceremony at RHS Wisley on September 29th 2023. In addition, there were two other Golds for the *Environmental Challenge* and *'Wildflowers and Weeds'*, St Martin's Churchyard was awarded a Silver Gilt, and three other Eynsford residents won Silver Gilt awards for *'Wildflowers and Weeds'*, *'Front Gardens'* and *'Grow at Home'* categories, making a total of seven awards! We hear about our Britain in Bloom result on 23 October 2023.

We are keen to encourage more involvement so perhaps it might be worth considering entering your garden next year? There are categories for individual gardens or businesses, or 'It's Your Neighbourhood' initiatives for small groups. Eynsford in Bloom volunteers would be happy to provide more information. Or could you spare 2 hours a week to volunteer with us? We are a thriving group of volunteers, and we welcome new people to our regular work parties, every Tuesday morning, or the first Saturday of every month from 9.30 at the main village car park. The more volunteers we have, the more we can achieve!

Eynsford's Repair Café

Holly Ivaldi, Clerk & Green Team Member

Our Green Team will be running another Repair Café on Saturday 4th November at the Scout Hall from 1-4pm. As well as offering free repairs and advice, we will be serving tea, coffee and cake.

Repair Cafes are a great way to reduce waste and to encourage reuse of objects you might have otherwise thrown away. It is also an opportunity to learn some new skills and find out how to repair things yourself.

We will have a bike expert, people who can mend clothes and textiles, general repairs and new this time, a clock repairer! Our new volunteer has offered to give advice on mechanical/pendulum clocks and to follow up with home visits in some cases. If you have a portable clock, you can bring it along. We also have an IT expert who can help with slow computers, problematic phones and a few small physical repairs too.

So, don't throw it away, bring it along and see if our lovely volunteers can get it working again!

If you like fixing things and would like to volunteer to help at a future repair café, please get in touch via email info@eysnfordparishcouncil.org.uk, or come and speak to us at the Repair Café!

There is no charge, but donations are welcome. Any profits after the costs of the running the repair café will be donated to the new village hall project.

Thank you!

Arbor Day - A Celebration of Our Village Trees - 30th September 2023

Cllr Jane Laird

We held an Arbor Day on the last day of September to enjoy our glorious village trees and to celebrate the new acrostics planting above the Roman Villa near the 'chicken tree'. It was lovely to have so many villagers come to see the new trees. The thirteen new trees were planted earlier this year to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. This was funded by the Parish Council and is on the Alexander's land. Many thanks to them for permitting the planting.

Kaz Langridge gave an introduction to our Arbor day and a history of past Arbor Days in the village. This was followed by a talk from John Gee our tree warden, who initiated the planting and the acrostic to spell out SAVE THE PLANET. John talked about the significance and meaning of some of the trees chosen. (If you would like to listen to this, a link to the speech can be found on the parish council website under Arbor Day). The trees, the beautiful view and the sunshine were very much enjoyed.

Tree walk leaflets were handed out to everyone. This leaflet had a suggested route to Millfield with information about various trees along the way. Trees included in the guide were Silver Birch, Willow, Walnut, Almond, Wych Elm, Tree of India, Ginkgo Biloba and London Plane to name a few. Those on the walk were asked to consider which tree from the walk they would like to vote for as Eynsford Tree of the Year.

Part of the walking route took us round St Martin's church yard which has some lovely trees. We also visited the grave of Elliott Downs Till, a benefactor to Eynsford who first introduced Arbor Day to Eynsford in 1897. Kaz had made a pretty autumnal wreath to put on his grave as by coincidence our Arbor Day fell on the anniversary of this death.

Upon reaching Millfield, cider and apple cake a plenty were on offer to refresh us after our walk. Lots more people joined us at Millfield which was super. There was an informative display about Arbor Day, the trees in our village and wassail traditions. Margery Robson had a fun craft table for the children including the activity of making little pigs out of apples! Kaz gave a talk about wassailing, "to toast ones health," and in apple orchards it is traditional to toast the trees for the next year's harvest. We hung toast dipped in cider on the apple trees, another wassailing custom and we sang some wassailing songs led by Kaz and Chris Lewington on guitar.

We then announced the winner of the Eynsford Tree of the Year as voted for on the day and the clear winner was the London Plane tree. This tree is by the bridge, on the banks of the Riverside Club. It is over 100 years old and is a fantastic tree, do admire it when next passing.

It was wonderful afternoon to have so many villagers together celebrating our trees and to revive the old traditions of Arbor day and wassailing.

Huge thanks to Kaz Langridge for making Arbor day happen and to the Green Team who supported and helped.

Parish Office

You are welcome to pop into the parish office to get bin bags, garden sacks, do photocopying and to ask for information and advice. We are usually open Monday to Thursday 8.30am—2.30pm.

2024 Eynsford Calendar & Raffle

Thank you to everyone who sent in their photos of Eynsford - many of them have been included in the 2024 calendar! Copies are available for £10 from the parish office, Rafferty's and Normans. You can also order online.

Raffle tickets are also available in support of the new village hall project. There are a variety of wonderful prizes including: a 2 day skippered yacht trip, vouchers for Lullingstone Castle the Mount Vineyard, the Plough and The Castle Hotel, tickets for Riverside Players productions and for Brands Hatch, and more. Tickets are £5 and are available from the same venues and will be sold at some events. The draw will take place on 28th November.

Rubbish & Garden Waste Bags

Many residents enjoy the convenience of picking up extra rubbish and garden bags locally at the parish office. Black and recycling bags are delivered to each household quarterly, but sometimes they are not enough for our needs.

As the costs are rising, we have decided to follow Sevenoaks District Council's guidelines and to start charging for rubbish and recycling bags as well as the garden waste bags.

From 1st November 2023 costs will be as follows:
Black bags - £1.50 per roll
Recycling bags: - 50p per roll
Garden sacks: - £1 each (£25 for a bundle of 25)
We will give out two black or recycling sacks for free.

Bags will be available from the parish office during opening times only.

We can take cash or card payments.

Please remember we no longer collect crip packets, they can be recycled at most large supermarkets now.