



Summer Newsletter 2024

from
EYNSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Welcome to the latest newsletter from the parish council. Do have a read to find out about recent activities and news.

Included are articles about the village hall project, the Big Green Week, policing in Eynsford, children's play facilities, parking restrictions and more! We would love to hear from you about any of the issues in the newsletter or anything else that is important to you.

Also, we are now advertising a vacancy for an Assistant Clerk. Sadly our Deputy Clerk Naomi Wintour has left us for an exciting new job, so we are recruiting. More information is available in the article and on our website.

Don't forget to come to our Free Family Fun Day on 7th August! Full details are on the back page. Thank you to Anthony Roper Primary School for agreeing to host again.

The picture shows Anne Marie, one of our Green Team members receiving a Wilder Kent award for Eynsford.



If you would like to get involved with any of our 'Green' initiatives, please get in touch!

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

Farewell from Your Deputy Parish Clerk & RFO

Dear Parishioners,

It is with a heavy heart and a deep sense of gratitude that I write this farewell message as I prepare to step down from my role as your Deputy Parish Clerk after 17 wonderful years of service.

When I first joined the parish council, I could never have imagined the incredible journey that lay ahead. Over the years, I have had the privilege of working alongside dedicated council members, passionate volunteers, and, most importantly, you—the vibrant and supportive community that makes our parish so special.



Reflecting on my time here, I am filled with pride and appreciation for the many achievements we have accomplished together. From organising community events, such as post-covid music festival, our jubilee fete, to implementing vital projects including the extra war memorial to remember all our fallen, our collective efforts have truly made a difference. It has been an honour to witness the growth and positive changes within our parish, and I am grateful to have played a part in this journey.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the parish council members, past and present, whose unwavering support and collaboration have been instrumental in our success. Your commitment to serving our community has been inspiring, and I am confident that you will continue to lead with the same passion and dedication.

To the residents of our parish, I cannot thank you enough for your kindness, trust, and encouragement over the years. Your feedback, involvement, and sense of community have been the driving force behind everything we have achieved. It has been a privilege to serve you, and I will always cherish the relationships and memories we have built together.

As I embark on this new chapter of my life, I do so with a heart full of gratitude and fond memories. While I look forward to the adventures that

lie ahead, I will always hold our parish close to my heart. I am confident that the council and the community will continue to thrive and achieve great things.

Thank you once again for the incredible support and for making my time as your Deputy Parish Clerk and RFO so rewarding.

I wish you all continued success, happiness, and prosperity.
Warmest regards,

Naomi Wintour

Meet your new Councillor

Cllr Heather Sim

We moved to Eynsford 26 years ago to enable our family to enjoy the countryside whilst having easy access to London and both my sons have continued to live locally.

The Darent Valley is beautiful and has inspired many artists most notably Samuel Palmer; as was celebrated recently by the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme.



All this makes Sevenoak's decision to include Pedham Place, which lies within the Green Belt unacceptable. More insidious is the gradual erosion of the Green Belt through the development of agricultural buildings, which suddenly become surplus to requirement and are converted into housing. Sevenoaks seem oblivious to this threat but I will be vigilant in reminding them. On a more positive note I heartily support the development of the new village hall having worked on gaining grants to move this forward. My vision is for an Eynsford that continues to be a wonderful place to live, in beautiful countryside, with a vibrant community spirit.

Parish Office

You are welcome to pop into the parish office during opening hours to get bin bags, garden sacks, do photocopying and to ask for information and advice.

Pedham Place Update

Cllr Vince Robson

Sevenoaks District Council have confirmed that the 2040 plan has been delayed by some months. The reason they have given is to capture more evidence. We, the Protect Our Greenbelt Together team, believe this is as a result of the pressure we are all putting them under. They must be accurate and detailed because we are all scrutinising their behaviour and work! That said, the DCAC meeting on 11th July alluded to SDC focussing on Options 1 and 2 only from the Consultation, and with mention of Junction changes, it means Pedham Place is still very much in their plans. The POGT team need a summer break, this delay affords that time out, so do not expect any contact until nearer the time. The radar will still be operational and SDC will continue to be monitored though. If you have any information that may be useful to the group then please email it protectourgreenbelttogether@gmail.com.



Thank you to everyone who made the Pedham Place walk, the volume of people has to make Sevenoaks District Council, and our MP, take notice that there is no local support for Plan 2040 in its current version. I trust we reached everyone to attend the Pedham Place walk on the 29th June, there is a picture of those who made it below. If we did not reach you then please let us know at info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk. I have spoken to

a small number of people about why we are not getting as much support as we could. One response was that people are thinking Pedham Place “is a done deal”. I can assure you that this is not the case, not until the Inspectorate sign off Regulation 19 early summer 2025. We can all still make a difference by standing together and supporting the activity that gets us press coverage and holds SDC to account. There are many concerns with building on Pedham Place, however one that should concern us all is that if they can somehow justify building at Pedham then no greenbelt is safe. It could set a precedent that other developers use to argue for their land to be built on. This affects the whole district, so we must continue to resist SDC’s attempts to build on this land.

Eynsford Parking Schemes

Naomi Wintour, Deputy Clerk

Eynsford Parish Council recognises the parking issues that have been raised over the years. This concern affects many residents, and we have been exploring potential solutions.

One idea is to introduce a resident parking scheme. Before proceeding, we need your feedback on whether you think this is a good idea. This feedback is required by Sevenoaks District Council and K.C.C. to support further investigation.



Here are some basic points to consider:

- If implemented, the scheme will incur costs. For example, it may cost £50 per year for a household without a driveway and £100 per year for a household with a driveway. The cost increases for additional cars. (More information is available at the Parish Office).
- Consider the impact of any local developments, such as Pedham Place, on parking.
- If roads near the station, for instance, vote for a parking scheme, it may displace commuter cars further into the village.

This is a village matter, so a collective approach is needed. If you support some form of resident parking scheme, or if you do not, please send an email to survey@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk with your views and the road you live on. A simple Yes or No (with your road details) will suffice at this stage.

Village Hall Update

Cllr Alan Cooke

You may have noticed the lack of activity at Harrow Meadow regarding construction of the new hall as well as the removal of the 'Fund Raising Thermometer' outside the existing village hall. I can assure you that the development committee is still doing a lot of work behind the scenes.



The committee had been working towards an application for a government grant, we had even been provided with a mentor that could assist in preparing our application, so we considered that we had a good chance of obtaining this sizable grant. This would have put us in touching distance of reaching our target, however, everything stopped because of the elections and we do not know whether this grant will be still be available.

Another setback is that the contractor who provided the lowest tender has withdrawn his offer. Therefore, we are now having to enter into discussions with the second lowest contractor. The development committee continue to look at other fund-raising events, including Eynstock in August, as well as making other grant applications.

We have previously reported that the funds raised by the sale of the existing hall site, which has planning permission for three houses, will add a significant sum towards the new hall development. We have now appointed a firm of estate agents to market the site, but first we have been advised that a valuation survey is required by an independent chartered surveyor in order to satisfy the Charity Commission that we are getting best value. This survey was carried out towards the end of June and we are hoping that the site will be on the market towards the end of July.

Once we have an interested developer, we will enter into discussions as to whether we can retain the use of the existing hall whilst the new hall is being built. However, we do recognise that the community may be without a hall for about a year.

The committee has agreed to carry out an enabling contract during August this year, whereby a contractor will excavate the area of the proposed car park down to formation level and then lay part of the aggregate sub base. This will have two advantages, firstly it can be used for parking during football matches and secondly, it provides a working platform when the building works start.



The grass on the football pitch is now well established and with the current weather conditions it requires cutting every week and should be ready for the start of the new season. Earlier in the season, the embankment immediately behind the top goal was covered with poppies which looked spectacular. The Green Team have planted a number of trees

around the top of the steep embankments along with over 400 hedge saplings.

The parish council is fully aware that our play area in Harrow Meadow is looking a bit tired and will be looking at ways not only to provide new equipment but to make the area more inviting. Also, consideration is being given as to the use of the area behind the bottom goal for other activities.

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!

Big Green Week 8th -16th June

Cllr Jane Laird



The Green Team hosted various events during the Big Green Week, a national initiative to celebrate community action to tackle climate change and protect nature.

The first event to kick off this week was a rewilding walk. Damian, a parish councillor, led walks over his land at the old Austin Lodge golf course. Damian has owned this land for 9 years and is currently in the process of letting nature come back to this precious chalkland site.

There was a longer walk in the morning with 9 walkers joining him, followed by a picnic for those that wanted to stay and then a shorter walk in the afternoon with 20 people joining that walk. Damian explained the rewilding process and pointed out special features about the site. The walkers were treated to stunning views of the valley full of flora and fauna including bee orchids. The site was full of bird song and swifts and red kites were spotted in the skies above.



On the Sunday, the Green Team with the support of the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership (DVLPA) organised various art events to emphasise the beauty of the valley and to connect people with it. A frame decorating workshop ran during the morning for families to come and decorate cardboard frames, the idea being to frame the nature around us. Lots of families came including a French family from the twinning visit.

In the afternoon a local artist, Victoria Threlfall took 12 budding artists on a walk around Eynsford and Lullingstone, for sketching in the valley with them finishing their art projects in St Martins Church with tea and cake. The nature and art day finished with a wonderful evening called "Sounds and Sights of the Darent Valley" held in St Martins Church. Beautiful Samuel Palmer prints were on display together with other local artist's

work. Sarah Newman from the DVLP gave an interesting talk about Samuel Palmer and other artists inspired by the Darent Valley. Paul Cheese gave us a talk about his project the BigRecord:Darent Valley. He has created a unique piece of music from collecting sounds and rhythms from the area. The sounds ranged from ducks, gates creaking, horse hooves, a spitfire, church bells, yoga ums and many more. It was so clever how he put this together to make a magical piece of music.



The following weekend we joined with Eynsford Gardening Club on Saturday afternoon and hosted a repair café during their summer show. This was well attended and many items were repaired including bicycles, clothing and electrical items. We gifted any donations for repairs to the village hall fund.

We finished the Big Green Week on Sunday with a community litter pick and were thrilled to have all ages from the village come and help, from teenagers to an octogenarian. We collected lots of litter from all around the village, including Bower Lane, the layby near the station, Common Meadow and Crockenhill Lane. The litter pick was also supported by the Rainbows who picked litter the day before during their meeting in Millifield.

The Green Team really enjoyed organising and hosting these events and would like to thank every involved who made them happen and all those who supported and attended.

Kent Wilder Awards

We were delighted to hear that we were awarded a bronze for the Kent Wilder Awards, a scheme to help connect people with nature and protect wildlife. Entering the scheme has been a useful to help as reflect on what we have achieved over the last year and to get us thinking about future green initiative

Sevenoaks Community Safety Unit

Kelly Webb, Health & Communities Manager, Sevenoaks District Council

The Community Safety Unit (CSU) consists of Council Staff, Police, Community Wardens, Housing Associations and other partner agencies. The CSU deals with all aspects of ASB and community safety. If you have a problem that you would like the CSU to get involved with then please contact us.

Partners meet on a daily basis to discuss Community Safety Concerns, Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) calls that have come in from residents and partner agencies including the Police.

The CSU is a great way for partners to address current concerns and have a speedy and effective response to residents of which all are updated. Please be assured that all information is treated in confidence and will never be disclosed to individuals identified as causing anti social behaviour. We will also keep your details anonymous if you prefer, when discussing with partner agencies.

The CSU also focuses on safety campaigns and we have great initiatives for residents in rural and urban areas to keep them safe and their belongings safe. The CSU has timer switches, shed alarms, personal alarms and card protectors to name but a few which are free to residents. To find out more e-mail community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk or phone 01732 227000.

We are unable to monitor all Social Media posts, we can only work on reports that are sent into us or partner agencies such as Police via calling 101 on online www.kent.police.uk. If you have any community safety concerns please call us on 01732 227000 or e-mail community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

You can also follow us on twitter to see what work the partnership does @sdc_csp

Residents can also join Kent Police My Community Voice via <https://www.kent.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/wsi/watch-schemes-initiatives/kent/my-community-voice/> This is a two way engagement tool that allows residents to inform Kent Police of their local issues.

If life is in danger or a crime is in progress, always call 999.



For non – urgent police matter call 101 or report online <https://www.kent.police.uk/services/report-online/>

Teams meeting with Kent Police.

Cllr Michael Barker

Councillors Jim Griffiths, Vince Robson and Michael Barker, Kelly Webb, Community Safety Manager and P.C. Ashleigh Wilson recently met on zoom with members of the Kent Constabulary.

Eynsford is covered by the West Division of the community safety unit which deals with local crime and safety issues and anti-social behaviour. Their role is to make life safe for members of the community and to work to that end with other agencies including local authorities.

We emphasised that in the period leading up to the meeting there had been a significant increase in ASB and that it had tipped over into vandalism and criminality. This had been extremely stressful for Riverside residents.

Members were able to advise police that 4 CCTV cameras had been installed covering various parts of Riverside and that the film was retrievable. The police advised that CCTV door bell footage could also be useful if suitable quality.

The police are aware that Riverside has been an ASB hotspot and have designated it as a red route so that police units will detour to check it out if passing nearby.

It's important to call 101 to report crimes, calls are monitored, response time is monitored, calls not answered before the person rings off are also monitored. If you report a crime be sure to get a crime report number.

The police are keen for people to use My Community Voice website to report ASB. There is guidance at mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk.

The arrival to the village of anti-social visitors can also be monitored by CCTV at Eynsford Station and British Transport Police can get involved.

If identified groups or individuals persist in anti-social behaviour to the detriment of the well-being of residents a community protection warning followed by a community protection notice can be issued by the police or the local authority.

UNESCO Geopark comes to Eynsford!

Cllr Damian Naylor

The Kent Downs National Landscape (previously called Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or AONB) team will be applying for UNESCO status for the cross channel Geopark later this year. 'UNESCO Global Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development.' The Geopark covers the Kent Downs National Landscape and runs across the channel into our neighbouring protected landscape in France; the Parc Naturel Regional des Caps et Marais d'Opale.



Image from kentdowns.org.uk/geopark/

The River Darent is one of only 210 chalk streams in the world and between Otford and Eynsford it will be designated a Geosite as part of the Geopark project. Councillors recently met some of National Landscape team to hear more about this exciting project and discuss a chalk stream interpretation board for Riverside, we've been working on this for over a year and it's now planned as part of the Geopark bid. The Geopark is based on a section of the chalk layer which runs from the UK to France, Holland and beyond and is the foundation for so much of the beauty of the Kent Downs, and also the reason why so many vineyards are appearing locally.

The chalk layer connecting the UK to France still exists below the English Channel, 'hundreds of thousands of years ago a catastrophic flood swept away the chalk ridge connecting Dover and Calais, carving out the white cliffs of Dover and starting Britain's history as an island'.

I will shortly become a Geopark Ambassador, the training is in Folkstone but closer to home, Dryhill Local Nature Reserve just west of Sevenoaks is a former ragstone quarry which has been left to nature since the 1950s and where rock formations believed to be 115 million years old can be seen.

'Geodiversity is all around you. It is all the parts of nature that aren't alive; including everything from minerals and fossils, to soils and spectacular landscapes.'

Rubbish & Garden Waste Bags

Sevenoaks District Council are making changes. They are no longer delivering black rubbish sacks to households. You can buy them from the parish office and other locations or buy your own from the supermarket.

Clear recycling bags will continue to be delivered until the new 'reusable bags for life' are delivered to each household this autumn. These large bags will be emptied and returned to you each week by your binman. You can also continue to use your clear sacks until you run out.

If you wish to purchase any extra bags they are available from the parish office during opening times.

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 can give out two black or recycling sacks for free.

We can take cash or card payments.

Please remember we no longer collect crisp packets, they can be recycled at most large supermarkets now along with other soft plastics.

Facilities for Children at Harrow Meadow

Cllr Oliver Young

Just recently with the help of a local resident the parish council has turned its thoughts to the Harrow Meadow playground facilities.

It was our hope anyway that once the new Village Hall had become established the playground would become a more welcoming space for parents and children, not so isolated from the village centre, pubs and shops.

We envisaged (with the blessings of the Village Hall Trustees) a more connected space with access to the new hall's café and toilets. But now the football pitch has been reorientated it's become easier to see how much physical space there is for us to utilise.

So we'd like to move forward sooner, revamping and extending the playground to run along the bottom of the football pitch. It would of been lovely to completely revamp the space and facilities entirely, perhaps adding tennis courts or a smaller football pitch for younger children, but unfortunately we are confined by the space we have at Harrow Meadow. So instead we are looking at revitalising and extending the existing playground facilities, also looking at what might appeal to older children, for instance a small 'MUGA' and/or outdoor gym equipment.



We have our own ideas but would very much welcome thoughts and suggestions to bring this project together for children of all ages sooner rather than later.

Regular safety checks are carried out at the playground by parish councillors and an annual check is made by ROSPA.

So please get in touch with us at info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk with ideas and include pictures if you can of what you would like to see.

Vacancy - Assistant Clerk, Eynsford Parish Council

Holly Ivaldi, Clerk

Eynsford Parish Council is looking for proactive individual with experience of administrative and customer facing work to make an important contribution to our community. If you are keen to make a difference in our parish we would love to hear from you.

Parish Council work is interesting and varied. The Parish Council manages allotments, a car park and open spaces. It responds to consultations and lobbies local and national government and other bodies about issues that affect our parish. The Parish Council works with Kent Highways to improve and resolve highways issues and to work on new plans. It works on various projects to improve facilities, amenities and the environment of Eynsford. The Assistant Clerk will support the Clerk in carrying out the work of the parish council.



This is a part-time position - 12 hours a week including some evening work - and a working pattern can be negotiated to suit your needs. Full details of the position and how to apply can be found on the parish council website under 'News' - visit www.eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk. The deadline for applications is 30th August at 5pm.

If you have any questions, please contact me at info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk or call 01322 865320.

Free Family Fun Day Extravaganza!

Date: Wednesday, August 7th, 2024

Time: 10:30am to 1:30pm

Location: Anthony Roper Primary School, High Street, Eynsford

Bring your family and friends for a day filled with fun, laughter, and unforgettable memories!

Activities Include:

Arts and Crafts: Unleash your creativity with hands-on activities for all ages.

Games and Sports: Keep active with fun organised sports.

Face Painting: Fun for the little ones with colourful face painting.

Inflatable Football penalty shootout: Test your football skills with our inflatable football penalty shootout.

Giant Snakes & Ladders game: Try you hand at our giant snakes & Ladders game, who can get to the top first.

Giant soft Lego bricks: Come and see what you can build.

Refreshments: Enjoy delicious cakes, treats and refreshing drinks. Available for a small charge. You are also welcome to bring a picnic.

Activities provided by Sevenoaks District Council and Eynsford Parish Council. All children must be accompanied and supervised. Sorry, no dogs.



Images by freepix

