

**HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL - ARTICLE FOR PARISH NEWS
FEBRUARY EDITION**

TRAFFIC SOLUTIONS IN HORSMONDEN

As we are all too aware, the traffic problems in our village are not yet resolved and we have recently suffered another crash at the crossroads.

Prior to Christmas, Kent Highways services had commissioned an independent audit of our crossroads and we understand they are now looking at the results and recommendations from this, together with suggestions put forward by the Parish Council and members of the public, to try and find a solution for us.

At the Parish Council meeting on Monday 7th January, the Parish Council commended KHS for all their hard work, as the traffic team at KHS have constantly given this matter a great deal of their attention over the past few months. They are a small team of officers and are dealing with a very large geographical area in Kent, so we are extremely grateful for their hard work in trying to resolve matters for us.

Unfortunately, it may not always be understood that Kent Highways Services are governed by many complicated policy and legal restrictions regarding the solutions they can implement for us. They are however, determined to try and find a suitable way to resolve this problem and are in regular dialogue with the Parish Council. Greg Clark's office are also copied into these communications and have also been involved in discussions with Google mapping to try and ensure that our crossroads are represented correctly to drivers who may be unfamiliar with the area.

Finding a solution to try and prevent future accidents is a complicated issue as part of the cause of many accidents can be attributed to driver error which, although it can be limited by road signs etc, is difficult to prevent completely.

So, it certainly looks like this will be an on-going project until we find a suitable solution and we hope to be able to keep parishioners updated via the Parish noticeboard and our website as soon as any major decisions are made.

The Parish Council would also like to thank Kate and Andy Mills for removing part of their hedge in an effort to try and improve sight lines at the junction, which was most generous of them.

The new village gateways are now paid for and we have been informed that the contractors will implement these within the next 12 weeks. KCC Cllr Hamilton has agreed to assist in trying to get these in place for us as soon as we can, as they will replace our current village entry signs which are dilapidated and almost non-existent in places. The new Gateways will serve to alert drivers to the fact that they are entering a village centre, and we hope may encourage some drivers to slow down and keep to the 30mph speed limit.

HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL

The Parish Council are having a new front door installed at the Village Hall on 18th January as the old one has been proving difficult to lock at times. So, by the time this article goes to print the door should be in use. They are also hoping to shortly replace the kerbstones at the parking area in front of the Hall as these are

beginning to lift in places and break up. These will be replaced with smart new granite kerbstones which will be harder wearing and should last longer.

FROMANDEZ DRIVE

I know many parishioners have mentioned the poor condition of the wooden posts around the green area at Fromandez Drive and this has also been mentioned in our Parish News before, with promises that the posts are due to be renewed shortly. I can now confirm that the posts are due to be delivered on 17th January, so by the time you read this they will be with us and hopefully the Parish Council will have a date for installation. This is now one of our priority projects and we hope to have the posts in position and looking good around the green as soon as we possibly can. The posts will be made from recycled plastic which means that not only will they last much longer than wooden ones, but they also tick a box for sustainability!

SPEED WATCH EQUIPMENT

The Parish Council also made a decision at their January meeting, to replace their old Speedwatch equipment with new modern equipment. The modern equipment is much lighter and more compact to carry and will make life so much easier for the volunteers who have to struggle with lifting the equipment around the village and storing it in their homes. The current equipment does still work, albeit cumbersome, so we hope to pass this on for use to another parish who can then join us in the campaign against speeding. The clerk will be applying for two grants towards purchase of the new equipment, one from Speedwatch themselves and another from KCC.

The Parish Council are very grateful for all the hard work and time which the Speedwatch volunteers have put in this past year as they have been very active and held many sessions in the village. If you would like to join the team in the fight against speeding please let the Clerk know and she can put you in contact with the coordinator, as new members are always welcome on board.

STREET LIGHTING / HALL LIGHTING

The Parish Council are currently looking at quotes to replace the remaining 17 street light lanterns which are not yet LED, as this would provide a saving on our electricity bills and also assist the environment, in line with the Council's sustainability policy.

The main lighting in the Village Hall is also being looked at and alternatives sought to reduce the energy bill and perform more sustainably.

We will keep you updated about these projects in future editions of parish news.

FORTH COMING MEETING DATES

An inventory of parish council meetings scheduled for the forthcoming year will be posted on the Parish Council's notice board and website, but for your information the February and March meeting dates have been included in this article:

February Parish Council meeting – 4th February
February Planning Meeting – 19th February

March Parish Council Meeting - 4th March
March Planning Meeting – 19th March

Please note that most Parish Council meetings take place in Horsmonden Village Hall , situated in Back Lane, and usually commence at 7.30pm, however meetings are subject to change and cancellation, so for confirmation of the time , date and venues please check the noticeboard on the Village Green or the Parish Council's website www.horsmonden-pc.gov.uk

PLEASE CONSULT THE WEBSITE FOR ANYTHING YOU WISH TO KNOW ABOUT THE COUNCIL OR ITS ACTIVITIES. There is also a lot of other useful information on the site, such as dust cart timetable, local road works etc. You can sign up for email alerts which will let you know when a news item has gone on site!

Please feel free to contact the clerk, as below.

Lucy Noakes (clerk) on (01892) 724989

Clerk to Horsmonden Parish Council

Telephone: 01892 724989

mobile: 07484904765

E-mail: clerk@horsmonden-pc.gov.uk

Office open to the public: Mon & Wed 9am-3pm , Fri 9am -12pm .

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS:

Kent Highways services 03000 418181

Tunbridge wells Borough Council 01892 526121

Environment Agency 24-hour Flood line:

08459881188

PCSO Jenkins - 07969584279

Non-emergency Police line – 101

Emergencies only – 999

UK Power net works – Power cut -0800 31 63 105 on a landline or 0333 32 32 105 (if calling from a mobile)