



HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL - ARTICLE FOR PARISH NEWS FOR MAY 2021 EDITION

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Local and parish elections are taking place at the beginning of May. However, since nominations for the Parish were no more than the required number, an election is not necessary in Horsmondens.

Most of the current councillors are continuing their roles but there will be an opportunity for one more councillor to be co-opted in May or June. If you would like to apply for this role, please keep an eye out for notices about it.

The Council wants to support the Parish in these changing times and will continue to do that in whatever way it can. Thoughts and input from parishioners are always welcome and valued so do contact the Clerk with whatever queries or concerns you may have.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

As we said last month, there are plans to begin face-to-face meetings again which will allow the public to attend all the Council's public events. At this point, it is still unclear exactly when these will take place so please look out for this on our website, Facebook and noticeboards.

The Council is looking forward to meeting residents again although Government guidelines will restrict numbers and physical arrangements so if there is a meeting when a large number of parishioners are wishing to attend, some may have to do so remotely.

COVID-19

As businesses and venues are beginning to reopen, we are hoping to be spending more time with relatives and friends, as well as getting out and about more generally. What great support and service our local businesses and care groups have given over the past year, for which the Council is so grateful.

The Government website continues to give up-to-date information so please use this link to look for guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

THE INSTITUTE

The Institute clock should now be working after some more repairs to our historic timepiece. There may still be more modifications to the area housing it which will take place over the coming months.

The Council is also currently applying for planning permission for the Institute to replace old windows and doors on the building and also to install the William Lambert plaque which used to be set into one of the Boddingtons factory buildings (now Olivers Court). The plaque (1893) commemorates William Lambert, known as the maker of steam engines in the village.



The William Lambert plaque

It is hoped planning permission will be granted and works will begin over the coming months.

POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER ("PCSO")

Tom Costin is our new PCSO, covering Horsmondens, Brenchley, Matfield and Pembury. If you attended our Annual Parish Meeting in April, you will have heard him introduce himself to the village. If you want to contact him, his email address is:

Tomas.Costin@Kent.Police.uk

Tom is keen to hear your views and will be able to provide support and guidance.

He also wants to alert residents to ask us to make sure we secure our property, fences and gates to try and ensure we try to deter thieves from entering your property.

Tom also reminded us that we should not open our doors to anyone we do not know, or can see, since there have recently been a few issues in the area.

Another problem which has seen a large increase nationally and locally over the past year, which Tom highlighted in his feedback, has been the increase in dog theft. Nationally, the charity Dog Lost has seen reports of thefts rise by 170% in the last year from 172 dogs in 2019 to 465 in 2020. Earlier this month the National Police Chief's Council warned that criminals are exploiting the huge increase in prices and demand for puppies during lockdown.

In **Kent**, between October 2019 and September 2020, 121 dogs were reported stolen, with just 24 returned to their owners, according to Kent Police.

The advice is to try to keep your dog close by when out walking and avoid leaving your pet unattended in gardens especially if near to roads and footpaths where they can be easily seen by passers-by.

If you notice any signs of suspicious behaviour, please contact Tom on the email address above or dial 101.

ALLOTMENTS

The Council continues the search for a suitable site for allotments and would like to hear from anyone who may have land or ideas of space which could be made available for this worthwhile amenity. Please contact the Clerk who will be pleased to answer any questions.

LOST PATHS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY IN THE PARISH

The Council now has a group of councillors who are working on the search for lost footpaths in the Parish. They will be reporting on their findings to allow the Parish to apply for the most important ones to be included in the official public rights of way maps. The Ramblers Association is taking the lead on this important project. Here is a link to their website where you can find details: <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/>

If you see any problems with existing paths, Kent County Council has a useful website where you can report faults. Use this link to record the information: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-on-a-right-of-way>

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH AND PLANNING

It is a busy time for planning applications at the moment. If you want to know about any local applications, use this link to find out about them: <https://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/planning/applications/search>

The Clerk is also available to help either by email and phone:

Lucy Noakes (Clerk)

Clerk to Horsmonden Parish Council

Telephone: 01892 724989 (to leave a message)

Mobile: 07484 904765

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

JOHN, if you have space, your layout for these numbers was really great.

SOME USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS:

NHS: 111

Kent Highways Service: 03000 418181

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council: 01892 526121

Environment Agency 24-hour Flood line:

08459 881188

Emergencies only: 999

Non-emergency Police Line: 101

UK Power Networks – Power cut: 0800 31 63 105 on a landline or 0333 32 32 105 (if calling from a mobile).