

National Highways & Transport Public Satisfaction Survey

Cllr Malcolm Richardson

This year, for the second year, Kent County Council is taking part in the National Highways & Transport Public Satisfaction Survey on Highway and transport services. The main survey is being carried out by Ipsos MORI who will be sending forms to a representative sample of households, nevertheless KCC have opted to take part in six web-based surveys on specific issues:



- Highway maintenance – for instance there are questions on street lighting, condition of the roads including cleanliness, road markings, road signs etc, and of course, potholes.
- Accessibility – this relates to issues such as pavements, dropped kerbs, cycle lanes, access to public transport, community transport etc.
- Walking and cycling – questions on the provision of cycle lane, for instance are there enough of them, are they well maintained, plus the condition of pavements and rights of way.
- Public transport – this mainly relates to buses, their frequency and cleanliness, provision of bus stops.
- Road safety – dealing with speed limits, obstructions to pavements
- Congestion – questions on local congestion, pollution, road works plus traffic lights etc

These surveys are publicly available online and we would urge residents to have your say on the issues of highways and transport in this area. The greater the number of people who take part, the more likely that KCC will recognise some of the issues facing people living and working in Kent.

The survey can be found at https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/Nationaltransportsurvey2019_20/consultationHome The consultation period finishes on 29th February 2020.



Autumn News 2019

from
EYNSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Welcome to the autumn newsletter from your parish council.

We are looking for a new councillor and it could be you! See the middle pages for details.

Also included are articles on the river Darent, the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership, the Village Hall and a Highways Survey. The village hall trustees are looking for someone who can help with fundraising either as a one off, or on a longer term basis. Maybe you could be the one?

The parish council is kept busy with issues ranging from planning policy consultations, to vandalism, to green issues. We are always pleased to hear from you about issues that are important to you, and if we can help we will, or point you in the right direction.

Did you know that you can use our photocopier in the office for a small charge? This is less expensive than using your home printer! A reduced price is offered to local clubs and societies. Contact the office for details.

Holly Ivaldi, Clerk

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Find 'Eynsford Parish Council' on Facebook and Twitter.
www.eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk



Darent Valley Landscape Partnership (DVLP) Update

Cllr Geoff Kirby

Some of you have read here previously about the launch of this Lottery and EU funded scheme to improve and inform about the amenities and landscape of the Darent Valley, from the river's source in Westerham to it's confluence with the River Thames at Dartford.



**DARENT
VALLEY**
LANDSCAPE
PARTNERSHIP

After a slow start in recruiting the management team, searching for the right people to make a success of the venture, we are pleased to announce the completion of the team and the start of the projects.

Based at Castle Farm on the Eynsford and Shoreham borders and drawing on the resources of the KCCs Kent Downs Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the team and their responsibilities are:

- Rick Bayne, Partnership Manager. Rick is the driving force for the partnership, building the team and sourcing the funding from various bodies including the National Lottery and EC grants. The pot currently stands at just under £5million.
- Antonia Omirou is our financial bulldog, making sure the funds are delivered and the projects are run to budget.
- Jennifer Smith, Interpretation and Community Learning Manager. Jen is the information hub of the Partnership and has just launched the new website, which you can find at <https://darent-valley.org.uk/>. Keep visiting this site for all the news and updates on projects.
- Anne Sassin, Community Archaeologist. Anne led the recent dig at Lullingstone Roman Villa which some of you visited and some others lent their muscles, digging during the recent hot weather. Watch out for a report on the findings in the near future. Anne is assisted by Archaeologists Andrew Mayfield and Emily Hull.
- Mary Tate, Countryside Manager. Mary is coordinating the various landscape and restoration projects, including improving

- we can increase supply in Kent by making more water transfers between regions from areas of water surplus to areas of deficit. Currently, incredibly, only 4% of water supplies are transferred between individual water companies. Why? Investment has to be made in transferring the excess into the regions that need it. (Did you know that Kent is dryer than Istanbul?)

- We will need to build more desalination plants. There is an impressive one in Beckton (Essex) which can provide up to 150 million litres of drinking water each day, yet it is only ever in partial use.

- we must build new reservoirs. We have not built a new reservoir in the UK for decades, largely because clearing all the planning and legal hurdles necessary is so difficult and local opposition so fierce. We need to wise up. Lives are at stake here not just a pretty view.

Our concern in DRiPS is to protect our valued chalk stream and all those creatures and the invertebrates who rely upon it maintaining a healthy flow. Unless we can help a change in attitude we will have no more river to protect. Thank you Eynsford PC for supporting our work. If you are interested in us do take a look at our website on www.darent-drips.org.uk where you can download our latest newsletter. Join us at our annual meeting in the Castle Hotel on Thursday 24th October at 7pm. Non-members are very welcome. rodshelton@greenbee.net

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! Let us know what you think and what other kind of information you would like us to share.



TO DO OR DIE?

Rod Shelton (Secretary DRiPS)

The Darent River Preservation Society (DRiPS) was formed in 1985 when many will remember stretches of our river, between Eynsford and Dartford, drying out completely. People would even park their cars on the riverbed beside the ford! Local resident, Alan Williams, who sadly died last year, was an active chairman right through the 90's up to two years ago. Under his guidance, the Darent Action Plan was formed with Thames Water and the Environment Agency to gain a reduction in the abstraction of water from the chalk aquifers beneath us. It has saved the Darent, just, until now. As he fore-told before his death, even this reduction would not be enough to save the river into the future.

Sir James Bevan, the head of the Environment Agency no less, reported in his speech entitled "The Jaws Of Death" in March this year, "Chalk Streams are ecologically vital, supporting a rich biodiversity: trout, voles, otters, kingfishers. And they are under threat, because their aquifers currently provide drinking water for millions in South East England, and that is unsustainable in the long term. That's why we are working with the water companies to reduce or in some cases end abstraction from chalk streams."

The future that he referred to, is already on the horizon. Climate change is visibly resulting in a steady decrease in rain and an increase in hotter weather. Yet the water companies continue to draw from our aquifers, less more recently but for how long? With 7,970 homes planned to be built in the Dartford region and a further 10,950 homes in the Sevenoaks region, these new families will require an additional 6 million litres of water, EVERY DAY! And from where will that water come? Right now, their only source must be our aquifers. That is going to happen within the next 15 years. The river will again dry out but this time it will be for ever. There will be no water to feed it. The aquifers will have been sucked dry. So what can be done?

- We can reduce wastage by putting more pressure on the water companies to reduce leakage, by creating sustainable drainage systems, and insisting on new building regulations to drive greater water efficiency in our homes. Above all we need to support ways to cut down the amount of water we each use as individuals.

and upgrading the Darent Valley Path and the restoration of The Bishops Palace in Otford. The Darent Valley Path improvements and several landscape improvements will be lead By Tim Owen.

- Madeleine Hodge, Art and Inspiration Manager, is the most recent appointment. Watch out for events and workshops such as the recent Silk Painting Workshop at Lullingstone Castle.

The valley is a beautiful place and the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership is helping make it even more accessible and sustainable for future generations.

For more information and the latest news see <https://darent-valley.org.uk/>

Launch of the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership

Cllr Geoff Kirby

Yet another abbreviation for you to remember - DVCRP! ☐

What is community rail?

Community rail is a growing grassroots movement made up of community rail partnerships and groups across Britain. They engage communities and help people get the most from their railways, promoting social inclusion and sustainable travel, working alongside train operators to bring about improvements, and bringing stations back to life.

There are nearly 70 CRPs across Britain and are mainly scenic rail routes. Communities adopt their local railway line and stations, giving input to the railway companies on improvements they would like to see and forming volunteer groups to improve the station environment. See what other schemes have achieved on the Association of Community Rail Partnerships <https://communityrail.org.uk/community-rail/>.

The steering group for the partnership is formed from representatives from the Town and Parish Councils with stations on that line, the train companies and Network Rail. So the DVCRP consists of representatives from Sevenoaks DC, Bat and Ball (Sevenoaks Town Council), Otford, Shoreham, Eynsford and Swanley, South Eastern, Govia Thameslink and Network Rail. Funding is provided by these organisations plus the Government in the form of the Dept for Transport.

The partnership is looking for suggestions for suitable projects. To see

what can be achieved, visit Bat and Ball Station. Newly restored and redecorated, disabled access installed to the southbound platform, meeting room facilities with catering, and landscaping all now completed.

Your council is proposing the following and we are looking for any additional ideas which can be adopted. We are seeking funding for these proposals, we will keep you updated on progress. Please let us know your thoughts on these proposals.

1. Station Parking and Safety Scheme. Install a disabled Ramp access from the recycling area to the London bound platform with a ticketing machine. Create a "green car park" in the recycling area to take parking off the surrounding roads. Install single sided yellow lines with a 1 hour parking restriction on surrounding roads to discourage day long parking on these roads. Extend the 30mph speed restriction 250 meters further south to slow down traffic entering and leaving the village and create a bus stop and pedestrian crossing, roughly where the recycling area entrance is. Install a new pavement from the bridge to the crossing and new walking route signs to the Roman Villa and Lullingstone Castle and Lullingstone Park. Create disabled parking bays.
2. Seek to extend the current car park southwards into the overgrown area next door.
3. Install electric vehicle charging points in both parking areas.
4. Install water fountains for water bottle refilling
5. Redecorate refurbish the ticket hall and the old waiting room and toilet and provide an external access to the toilet.
6. Install Wifi.
7. Open up the triangle as a public open space. We will need volunteers to maintain this space under the leadership of Eynsford in Bloom.
8. New bench on the forecourt.
9. Give the station a dementia friend makeover to signage and access.
10. Your ideas!

This is an exciting scheme to help make this important gateway to our village something to be proud of. Put your thinking caps on!
info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk

issues occurring in the medium term.

The cost of these repairs was in excess of £650k and would not address the limitations of the hall with regard to disability legislation, restrictions on the size of the kitchen and the poor condition of the electrical and heating installations as well as only having four parking spaces. It is for these reasons that the committee decided to build a new hall on the only suitable site in the village at Harrow Meadow.

The new building will offer modern facilities with flexibility of space, more parking with better access for the disabled, energy efficient resulting in less maintenance and will future proof for generations to come.

The consultant quantity surveyor's estimate when combined with professional fees, realigning the football pitch and including an element for inflation is in the order of £1.8m. The funds at the present time include donations from the parish council and Riverside Players, from the potential sale of the existing hall site and monies held by the village hall trustees means that around £900k has to be raised.

A subcommittee has been set up headed by Theresa Durrant with the aim of improving communications with the community and existing users of the hall, using social media such as Facebook and Twitter along with regular updates in the Trident and the parish newsletter. The other purpose of this subcommittee is to co ordinate the necessary fund raising. This may take various forms including seeking grants, donations from local businesses, community donations for example buy a brick or sponsor a room to running social or sporting events. The trustees currently run a lottery, with cash prizes every month, which is a great way to start your support. The committee desperately needs your help, no matter how small, to assist with the fund raising and would welcome an email to theresadurrant@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk.

Assuming a favourable planning consent is granted towards the end of this year, the trustees with the community support will decide whether to instruct consultants to produce the working drawings, at which stage the FUND RAISING WILL BEGIN in order to start building at the end of 2021.

NEW VILLAGE HALL at HARROW MEADOW

Update to Eynsford Community October 2019

Cllr Alan Cooke

In the summer news letter we reported that it was hoped to submit a planning application for both the houses on the existing hall site and a new hall on Harrow Meadow in August. It now seems more likely that these applications will be submitted in October.



It was somewhat disappointing at the level of response from the community to return the questionnaire enclosed with the last issue of parish news letter. However, the majority of those that did reply were generally in favour of the developments and the committee would like to thank those who made time to send in their comments. Drawings of the proposed new hall are still on display in the foyer of the existing hall although minor modifications will be made prior to the application including the kitchen area. Once an application has been made, drawings of the proposals will be displayed around the village and on social media.

It is worth recapping as to why we need a new village hall. The current hall was built in 1905 and now has a number of significant structural defects. In 2006 cracks were noted in the two main walls of the hall and at the junction with the more recent rear extension.

A structural survey revealed a number of issues associated with the foundations, drainage and roof structure. The list of remedial work was extensive and included replacing the entire roof, replacement and repair of the underground drainage, replacement of the ground floor slab as well as underpinning parts of the foundations. Ongoing



monitoring is being carried out and the structural engineer has indicated that the building has a limited life expectancy and could not guarantee that even with refurbishment this may not prevent further

A Greener Eynsford

Cllr Theresa Durrant



Like or loathe her, there is no denying that Greta Thunberg has done more for raising awareness about climate change than all the politicians and scientists put together. After calls for councils across the country to declare a 'Climate Emergency', Eynsford decided against it. However, this doesn't mean that we aren't serious about reducing our impact on the world around us. Rather than jump on a bandwagon, we went straight to setting up a Greener Working Group with members of the parish council and local residents.

The first meeting, held on the 23rd September 2019, outlined the main objectives of the group. The two main priorities are to raise awareness on the things individuals can do to be greener and look at green initiatives around the village that can help us, as a community, to reduce our impact on the environment. With between 150-200 species of plants, animals and insects being lost everyday; the threat of sea levels rising, plus more and more pollution related illnesses putting pressure on the NHS, the time for taking action has long since passed. However, we are undeterred. In one short meeting, the working group came up with lots of ideas that can make a big difference within our community.

First on the list, was how we can reduce single use plastic around the village. For example, promoting the use of metal reusable water bottles to encourage people to top up at home rather than buying bottled water. The group are also researching about the installation of water fountains around the village, so that everyone can access and top up their own water bottles.

We are also considering planting more trees and wild flower areas to help those species that are coming under pressure from development and loss of habitat. By creating corridors of trees, hedgerows and flowers those little creatures that are vital for pollination and farmers etc. are more easily able to access the resources they need to survive.

The group are also looking into Terracycling. There is still too much waste being produced that local authorities cannot recycle at their facilities, such as; crisp packets, chocolate and sweet wrappers, oral

care packaging and pet food pouches, all of which end up in landfill. By networking with other neighbouring villages or towns, or by setting up temporary recycling centre we hope to do our bit to reduce landfill and put pressure on the authorities to recycle more waste.

The use of electric vehicles is still blighted by the lack of charging points around the country, making it difficult for those who frequently travel or need to travel by car, adopting a more environmentally friendly version. The group is currently investigating into the installation of electrical charging points in publicly accessible areas around the village.

Finally, another suggestion was the installation of turbines to harness nature to produce power. Of course we are mindful that we live in an area of outstanding natural beauty and don't wish to detract from this. Whilst wind turbines are the obvious choice, we are aware that other parishes are opting to look at water turbines. If you have any suggestions or ideas that you would like to put forward to the Greener Working Group, please email the parish office on info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk.

Could you be a Parish Councillor?

Holly Ivaldi, Clerk

We have a vacancy for a parish councillor in Eynsford and it could be filled by you!

We are a friendly, but busy council and meet two times a month on the first Monday and third Thursday of the month. The council consists of 8 councillors supported by two part-time Clerks.

If you are keen to get more involved in the community, this is an excellent opportunity. Parish Councillors are elected to represent our residents, so we welcome applications from all! The role of councillor is voluntary, but you may reclaim out of pocket expenses incurred while fulfilling your duties such



as travel to training courses.

Parish Councils are the third tier of local government and we have a variety of powers and are also statutory consultees on a variety of issues. Our work includes:

- Responding to consultations on planning applications in the parish.
- Responding to consultations on planning policy.
- Lobbying for changes and improvements to Highways safety, and schemes and requesting repairs.
- Working with other village organisations on community initiatives and changes to our village environment.
- Maintaining green recreation and verge areas within the village.
- Providing allotment plots for local residents.
- Maintaining buildings owned by the parish council.
- Maintaining and providing amenities such as litter bins and benches.
- Supporting local groups and charities.
- Communicating with Eynsford residents via our newsletter, website and social media.

There is also the opportunity to start or get involved in new initiatives that may be of benefit to the community. For example, we have recently joined a Community Rail Partnership, and we are also researching how we can be more 'Green' as a village. We are also involved in the new village hall project which we hope will be built on our land at Harrow Meadow.

Applicants must be:

- Age 18 or older
- Eligible to vote*
- Resident in Eynsford or within 4.8km for the past 12 months, or principally working in this area for the past 12 months.
- Without a criminal conviction resulting in a sentence in the past 5 years.

*full conditions are available on request.

To find out more contact the Clerk on info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk or speak to one of the Councillors and have a look at our website www.eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk.

To apply, please contact the Clerk for details.

Deadline for applications: 15th November 2019