

Come to our Annual Parish Meeting!

On **11th May 2018** we will be holding our Annual Parish Meeting in Eynsford Village Hall between 6 and 9pm.

This is your chance to find out what your parish council has been doing over the past year, what we do to support our community, and how we can help you. You can read reports on our work, see our accounts and more. As well as councillors, there will be representatives from other agencies attending who can tell you about the services that they provide to residents of Eynsford. These will range from the police and the highways authority to volunteer organisations.

We will be presenting out Community Award during the evening too - this is an award for a person or group who has made a significant contribution to our community. This year it will be presented to Margaret Newbold.

If there is anything in particular you would like to find out about at this event, please let us know so that we can prepare the information.

We are also planning to provide CPR training in the Darenth Room during the evening - it would be great if more of our community would feel equipped to help out in an emergency.

This is a free pop-in event with a short formal element at around 7.30pm. All are welcome to stay for 10 mins or all evening. Light refreshments will be available too.



Spring News 2018

from
EYNSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Welcome to the spring newsletter from Eynsford Parish Council.



Photo: Michelle Hayes

We hope the spring weather is now here to stay and that there will be no more snow. In this issue articles on the use of the ford, fireworks, budgets, the garden safari, the community award and more!

Our Annual Parish Meeting will be held on 11th May - don't miss this annual chance to speak to councillors and others about the work of the council and other local services.

We have been involved in recent discussions about changes to the train services from Eynsford and will be lobbying our MP and the rail companies for improvements.

Holly Ivaldi, Clerk

Eynsford Parish Council, Parish Office, Priory Lane, Eynsford DA4 0AY; 01322 865320; eynsford.pc@tiscali.co.uk
Find 'Eynsford Parish Council' on Facebook and Twitter.
www.eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk

EynsFORD

Cllr Philip Ward

It's official, silly season has started on Riverside. Locals will know the sport of finger-pointing at the misfortune of drivers stuck mid-ford then posting a trophy picture on Facebook. This year there have already been at least 3 cars stranded in the ford and the snow has yet to clear. Why do they do it? Perfectly rational drivers turn the corner onto Riverside and at the sight of the enticing waters they lose all reason and sound judgement. In their defence, it is rare for a car to become stranded with a lone driver. There is usually a partner or children present offering I suspect a little vocal encouragement, or maybe it's a misguided eagerness to impress. Either way, it often leads to an embarrassed call to the AA, the RNLI or similar. Several years ago I actually witnessed a gallant chap piggy-backing his fair maiden to the bank after becoming stuck mid-flow.

Eynsford actually made a list published recently on the BBC of most roadside (or should that be Riverside) call outs for flood related breakdowns. Between 2013 and 2017 Eynsford recorded 39 call outs to the ford, making 5th on the national list!



Photo by Holly Ivaldi

This is all very comical but there can be more profound consequences. Several years ago, in particularly heavy river flow, a car actually floated and became wedged in the arch of the bridge; no injuries thankfully. On a more the most recent occasion, a 2018 registered Audi became stuck in the river, most amusing, but this coincided with several lorries needing to use the ford from the High Street. This led to a tailback of traffic at a busy time of day and no doubt delayed deliveries to local businesses.

What will it do?

The plan is to research fully the landscape and history of the valley and improve our knowledge and bring this information to the wider public. Specific projects will enhance access to and improvements to historic sites in the valley such as Eynsford Castle and Otford palace, with improved signage and site information.

The Darent Valley Path will be significantly improved for the whole length of the river with accessibility, signage and information the main themes.

EEC funding is mainly aimed at improving the River Darent itself; the quality of the water and river banks and taking measures to alleviate flood damage.

Samuel Palmer, an famous and outstanding landscape artist who spent much of his productive life in the valley recording it's beauty will be celebrated by bringing his works back to the valley where they were created. Many of his paintings are held at the Ashmoleum Museum in Oxford and they, as one of the schemes sponsors, are keen to display his work in local exhibitions.

Many events are planned to inform people as to the proposed activities and open up some of the unknown stories and places on our doorstep. Watch this space!

Follow us Online

Eynsford Parish Council's website is the best place for you to find useful information about the council and it's 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, 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.



Introducing the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership (DVLP)

Cllr Geoff Kirby

Many of you have heard about this scheme over the past few years as work has gone on to develop the plans and gain the necessary funding. This huge amount of work has now come to fruition and the scheme is about to be launched.



What is the DVLP?

It is a scheme to enhance and improve your experience of the Darent Valley.

What area does it cover?

The whole valley, from the river's source near Squerries Court in Westerham to the Dartford Marshes where the River Darent enters the Thames Estuary.

Who runs it?

It is run by a specialist team backed by KCC and the Kent Downs AONB team. They are in process of setting up new offices at Castle Farm, near the Lullingstone Country Park entrance in the heart of the valley.

Who is paying for it?

The total funding so far is over £4 million, over half funded by the National Lottery Fund, substantial grants for the EEC and some funding from the local councils in the valley. This is a five year project and further funding and activities are expected to spin off from the core projects.

It would be fair to say that most of the poor unfortunates are not local, although maybe there's the odd red face amongst you, and although it is fun for us, it can be a nuisance and will have expensive consequences for the car owner. So, if you know of any friends, family, colleagues or acquaintances that will be visiting in their cars, could you provide just a little word of advice to use the bridge, lest they become another Facebook statistic.

The Old Chalk New Downs Project

Hilary Hunter

Chalk grassland was once prevalent throughout much of the Kent Downs as large areas under permanent sheep or cattle grazing. The combination of continual grazing and the nutrient-poor conditions of the Downlands produced a short turf (or sward) and allowed a variety of herbs, flowers and grasses to flourish.



Since the early 19th Century, much land has been converted to arable. The escarpments, once cultivated but not mechanised, remain on the fringes of farms. Over the last fifty years centuries-old grazing has been phased out as uneconomical or intensified by fertilizer inputs in favour of sites that can be mechanised. The flocks of sheep have gradually disappeared. Where grazing has persisted, sheep have generally been replaced by cows.

Kent contains around 5% of Britain's chalk grassland reserve. Today there are only 700 hectares of unimproved chalk grassland left within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, of which 60% are designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Many rare species such as orchids, butterflies and other insects and plants depend on this type of habitat for their survival.

The main threats to these sites are linked to the various actions of mankind, so it is down to us to ensure its protection and longevity. In an age where society is increasingly noisy, pressured and unhealthy, this wonderful landscape still provides a place to escape to for tranquillity and wellbeing. Whether you are an organisation, charity, business, landowner, farmer or individual, you have a part to play in its conservation.

This Heritage Lottery funded project began work last June, after several years of development. Over four years the Old Chalk New Downs (OCND) project will improve, restore, and reconnect threatened chalk downland habitats and calcareous grassland.

The Capital works, and land management support for landowners, will be complemented by a range of community engagement activities that will include volunteering opportunities, learning and skills development, surveying and monitoring, public access improvements, a programme for schools, and digital and interactive resources. A student bursary scheme will encourage new studies of this precious habitat.

Working with KCC's Public Rights of Way we'll be investing £141K on improving access to the project area, which is in and around the Kent Downs AONB. All of this would not be possible without the help of our local partners, who include Kent County Council, Kent Wildlife Trust, Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre, Kent Downs AONB, Tonbridge & Malling and Gravesham Borough Councils, Natural England and Medway Valley Countryside Partnership. We shall be working across 33 parish council areas.



If you would like more information about this topic visit our website at: www.oldchalknewdowns or please contact:
 Hunter, Hilary - GT EPE (Outreach Officer) hilary.hunter@kent.gov.uk
 William Moreno (Project Manager) Tel: 03000 410348 william.moreno@kent.gov.uk
 Matt Pitts (Connectivity Officer) Tel: 03000 415104 mattew.pitts@kent.gov.uk

Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, English Heritage, Woodland Trust and DRIPS.

The leaders of local Scouting and Guiding groups are very supportive with environmental, horticultural and craft work. The school gardening club and the pre-school are teaching practical horticulture. The Woodland Classroom at the school facilitates the national curriculum in the natural environment. Also the new Eynsfara group have contributed to our work!

Sevenoaks District Council and Coolings are now advertising their own local In Bloom events. Six Eynsford residents gained awards last year. Kent Wildlife Trust are again holding their Gardening for Wildlife event. Two of our gardens received awards last year. Entering either or both events demonstrates pride and pleasure in caring for your patch. Details will be posted soon.

Eynsford in Bloom aims to keep the village clean and attractive for residents and visitors. We enter the annual South and South East in Bloom event to encourage us to complete the annual work and would welcome more volunteer help, even if it is only occasional. We do need our footpaths to be clear of overhanging hedges and branches. Most are very good, but some overhang dangerously forcing pedestrians to walk closer to the road and traffic.

This year we will plant the War Memorial with the colours of the campaign to secure women's suffrage in 1918. We will use purple salvias and pansies (for dignity), white begonias (for purity) and green leaves (for hope). In our front gardens and village borders we will use red (mostly geraniums) to create a Ribbon of Red in remembrance of those who fought for us in WWI. Do feel free to use either of these colour schemes for your own garden.

All we need now is some gentle sunshine and warmth to encourage us out to work and to get the seeds sown and growing. This late winter weather may be followed by Summer drought so we should all be saving the rainwater in butts.

Starting on 23rd April, BB2 will be running a programme about Britain in Bloom with 15 half hour episodes featuring 15 communities. This may include Eynsford with filming in May - July, and would appreciate any help if this goes ahead.

Growing for Gold Again: Eynsford in Bloom

Pauline Penney

Two judges from South and South East in Bloom visit and judge Eynsford during the first two weeks in July. They look for horticultural, environmental and community work throughout the year. During the five months since November, eight volunteers have worked on Tuesdays and seven more people have joined them on the first Saturday of each month. Of course, not everyone is able to come every time. Five invaluable people are occasional helpers with special skills such as publicity, mending tools and equipment and heavier work.

It is a great help where sites are gardened or get summer watering by nearby residents. A lady maintains the Boys and Girls sign flowers at Fountain Court. Two children nine and eleven years old, clear and plant up the boat in Sparepenny Lane every June and October. Two ladies look after the Little Saddlers footpath borders and one lady looks after the Butchers Lane troughs. It would be very helpful if more residents could help like this, especially with summer watering.



Soon we will start out Thursday evening work parties and hope the different time of 6-8pm will enable more people to join us. A monthly report of our work is included in the Trident magazine. We are fortunate to have a facebook page which is updated weekly. Please add your own horticultural and environmental photographs and report any problems spotted, e.g. flytipping. Thanks to the many residents who regularly pick up litter around the village.

Eynsford is rich in natural habitats, wildlife and heritage. The River Darent and hedgerows are our wildlife corridors. Our own gardens contribute to the biodiversity surrounded by farmland. Several organisations help to maintain local sites, these include Kent

Your Village Needs You!

Phil Blakemore

We are very lucky in Eynsford to have a wide range of community groups and societies for people of all ages and interests. They all rely on volunteers to organise, promote, help out and more. If you have any spare time whether it's a couple of hours a month to serve on a committee or a couple of hours a week to help out at a weekly group, then your village needs you! Some examples of the groups that need your help are here (but these are only a small sample!). If you have time or a skill you would like to share get in touch with the contact below or with Eynsford Village Society where someone can put you in touch.



The Eynsford Village Society produces an information sheet each year detailing some of the projects it has been involved with over the years. EVS has always been lucky in having people who have helped with these projects but now find that it could do with fresh ideas and input. Do you have an idea for a village project that the Village Society could be involved in which will be for the benefit of the community. You will be welcome to put any ideas to the EVS committee and if the idea is feasible join the committee to see it through. Contact phill.sue@btinternet.com 01322 861372

Eynsford in Bloom will again be entering the South & South East in Bloom event in which the village has achieved a GOLD award for the last three consecutive years. To maintain this remarkable record more helpers are required. EIB have a number of sites they maintain in the village and meet on Tuesday mornings and on the first Saturday of each month. Can you spare them some time to keep the village looking good? If this is not possible can you perhaps check your own gardens to ensure that any foliage and branches do not encroach on to pavements. Every little helps.

Telephone Pauline Penney 864751.

The Scouts are short of helpers and leaders. Were you a Scout or Guide in your youth and would like to help? The Beavers (ages 6-8) especially need assistance as they may not be able to meet for much longer unless they have another uniformed leader. They meet in the Scout Hall between 4.30 pm and 6.00 pm on Fridays in term time, if you can help please telephone Beaver leader Debbie Roberts 861825.

The Scouts also need help to put the paper they collect into a skip. This is a valuable source of income and if a few people could spare an hour a month it would help in preventing the area around the Scout Hall looking like a rubbish tip. Telephone Ken Baker 863069.

The Tuesday Club has been going since 2009. The Club acts as a meeting place for retired people, some of whom may not get out very often. It meets in the Darenth Room at the Eynsford Village Hall on Tuesdays between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm. The Club will welcome new members to chat, play games and enjoy tea and cake. Trips and meals are arranged and everyone enjoys themselves. Would you like to join or spare a couple of hours every month to help with the tea and refreshments. Telephone Ken Baker 863069.

Whatever you would like to do there will be an organisation that you can join or assist. Eynsford is a great village and if you are able to contribute to the life of the village I am sure you will find it very fulfilling.

For more information on what goes on in Eynsford and how you can be involved you can contact either me on 861372 or Holly Ivaldi at the Eynsford Parish Council Office on 865320.

**For a large print newsletter call
01322 865320**

Don't Cause Fireworks in the Village!

Cllr Phil Ward

I love fireworks, they bring colour and light to celebrations, the screeching sounds thrill us and the deep thud of a large mortar brings excited expectation as we gaze skywards. Eynsford has a tradition of a marvellous firework display each November bringing joy to children young and old, long may that continue.

Now here's the 'but'. While many of us enjoy firework celebrations, the burning of Guy Fawkes, a birthday or wedding, there are those who experience the bangs and flashes with trepidation, pet owners and those with young children being particularly concerned.

Last month, a celebration in the village culminated in a firework display at about 10.30 pm, large enough to light up, and wake up, most of the village. This prompted numerous complaints with residents telling of their traumatised pets and woken children. We're not looking to ban fun or celebration, but we are asking for those planning a firework event to consider the impact and be sensible about how they are used.

Information

- Tell neighbours in advance giving them an opportunity to prepare.
- Consider posting a pre-event notice on facebook, "The Massive" is an effective medium for sharing information.
- The Parish Council may also be able to help spread the word.

Timing

- Fireworks before 10pm seem reasonable, after 10pm much less so.
- Why not start your celebration with fireworks rather than end it.

Scale

- Try to scale your display to be appropriate for the location and audience.
- Are professional sized fireworks suitable for a private village based celebration?

Fireworks can be fun and exciting and we want you continue to enjoy them, but please be considerate to your friends, neighbours and their pets.

Garden Safari in Eynsford

Sunday 17TH June 2018

Cllr Alan Cooke

Once again Eynsford is hosting a garden Safari on 17th June where you will be able to stroll through the village taking in a number of glorious gardens with the proceeds going to the Village Hall Rescue and Renewal Fund.

All the gardens will be open from 11am to 5pm and the entrance fee of £5 for adults (children under 16 and accompanied by an adult will be free) will give you entry to all the gardens. Sorry – no dogs apart from assistance dogs and we regret that the majority of the gardens are not suitable for wheel chair users.

In certain gardens there will be tea and homemade cakes, ploughman lunches, sparkling wine with savoury snacks. In addition there will be various plants for sale and the Plant Doctor, from Coolings Nursery, will be on hand to provide horticultural advice, so be prepared and come along with your questions.



All the gardens are of a different shape and size, some with ponds or specialising in fruit and vegetables and others with a mixture of herbaceous perennials, shrubs and annual planting and of course many with outstanding views of our lovely village.

Programmes will be available prior to the event through Malcolm Richardson at The Old Manse, High Street by telephoning 01322 861695 or on the day at each of the open gardens.

Community Award 2018

Holly Ivaldi, Clerk

We are delighted that Margaret Newbold has been selected to receive the Kent Association for Local Council Community Award for Eynsford this year. A certificate will be presented at our Annual Parish Meeting on 11th May in Eynsford Village Hall.

The award is well deserved, and I doubt there are many people in the village with such a long 'Community CV' as Margaret.

Many of you will know that Margaret edits the Trident magazine which is produced monthly and provides an excellent service providing information about both the church and community groups and events in Eynsford, Farningham and Lullingstone. However, not many will know that she has been doing it for 35 years - that is 420 issues!



Margaret Newbold worked as a teacher at the primary school in Eynsford for 30 years and was also Chairman of the Governors for several years. She helped with the Rangers in the 1960s and was also Brown Owl to the 1st Farningham and Eynsford Brownies in the 1960s too.

Margaret was chairman of the Best Kept Village group when it was featured in '20 Miles from Piccadilly Circus', was Chairman of DVYM for 10 years, and has also been President of Eynsford WI. She organised school productions of Jesus Christ Superstar and Joseph and also many religious dramas and nativities at the church and school.

Margaret created the Christmas Tree Festival and Lights of Love and organised it for 10 years. She has acted as a church warden

and made and embroidered the new altar frontals and communion cloths for St Martin's church.

Most recently you will have seen Margaret's requests for knickers for girls in Malawi and help to purchase sewing machines for the community there.

We hope you will join us in congratulating Margaret on her achievements when she receives her award.

Budget News

Holly Ivaldi, Clerk

As usual the parish council went through its budget setting process in November and December last year. This is a careful balancing act between meeting the financial needs of providing the village's amenities and not putting too much burden on the tax payer. This year our precept request has risen by around 4% - this is reclaimed by Sevenoaks District Council via your council tax bill.

Eynsford Parish Council owns and looks after various amenity and recreation areas in the village: Common Meadow, Harrow Meadow (including the changing rooms and play area), Riverside, Castlefield Allotments and Castlefield Car Park and the History Society Building on Furlongs Road. Budgets are set to look after these areas and for some areas a rolling fund is held for larger repairs and maintenance.

Another large area of expenditure is maintaining and replacing the streetlights in the village. We have now replaced most of the lamps with LED but there are a few more columns due to be replaced for safety reasons this year.

We have a fund to repair and replace other amenity items around



the village such as litter bins, dog bins, benches, signs and noticeboards. We also give an annual grant to Eynsford in Bloom to help them to buy plants and bulbs for the village and to help them maintain some of the areas owned or looked after by the parish council. A small contribution is paid to the three churches in our area towards the maintenance of the churchyards.

The parish council has also been putting aside money over the past years to put towards the building of a new village hall.

Running the parish office also takes funds and helps us to provide a better service, information and advice to you.

Other funds go towards the free family fun days in the summer and in grants and donations to local groups and charities.

The full budget is available to view on our website under 'Finance and Budgets' or on request from the parish office., and will of course be available at the Annual Parish Meeting on 11th May where councillors will be able to answer any of your questions.

Parish Council Surgery & Meetings

The Parish Council surgery is held on the last Saturday of each month between 9am and 11am. Come along to the Parish Office to speak to a councillor about your concerns.

Our main meetings are generally held on the third Thursday of the month and we have committee meetings on the first Monday of the month. All meetings are open to the public and start at 8pm. Full details can be found on noticeboards and our website. We break for public questions at around 9pm.

Do pop in when the office is open to pick up bin bags, look at leaflets and magazines in the office and to ask any questions or raise any concerns! We also offer a photocopying service for a small charge.

Normal opening hours are 8.30 - 2.30 Monday and Wednesday, 9.00 - 3.00 Tuesday and Thursday.