

"The greener Eynsford working group has been busy developing initiatives and projects that will make Eynsford more eco-friendly including the following:

We are constantly looking for areas where trees could be planted that will absorb carbon dioxide and exude oxygen. We have planted a new hedge alongside the access road to Castlefield car park and persuaded a local farmer to plant a large number of hedging trees near the parish boundary between Crockenhill Lane and the M25. We also have a plan to plant additional trees at the common meadow. We are in the process of communicating with all local landowners to identify further planting opportunities as well as exploring other areas for cooperation.

A team member is studying greenhouse gas emissions in the parish with a view to developing a strategy that could enable us to reduce them. Most emissions come from domestic heating and transport.

We would also like to install some electric vehicle charging points in the village, for the use of residents, in order to encourage the transition to electric vehicles, and various sites are being considered."

Chair of Facilities & Environment Committee, Michael Barker

FREE FAMILY FUN DAY 30TH JULY 10am—2pm, Anthony Roper Primary School

Families are welcome to attend our fun day which absolutely free!

Provided in conjunction with Sevenoaks District Council, the event will feature,



**games, sports, bouncy council, circus skills
and face painting.**

We are also expecting a visit from our local police officers who will answer any questions.

Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Bring a picnic. No dogs on the school grounds. Light refreshments will be available to purchase.

Thank you to Anthony Roper Primary School for hosting the event.



Summer News 2021

from
EYNSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Welcome to the Summer Newsletter from your parish council.

From crime, speeding, and grass cutting, to art and fun days, we have everything covered!

As a council we are looking forward to the easing of restrictions and to meeting back in our parish office. It was good to see several of our residents at our zoom meetings during the past year—you are welcome to attend any of our council or committee meetings in person as they are all open to the public.

We have continued to offer services to members of the public including the ever popular bin and garden waste sacks. We are also continuing to collect your empty crisp packets for recycling.



We were hoping to be able to announce the results of the Tree of the Year competition here, but it will have to wait until next time. We had a good number of nominations. Thank you.

Our free family fun day is on 30th July this year (see back page for details) —so bring along your children, your grandchildren or your neighbour's children. We will be there serving the tea!

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

Tackling Crime in Eynsford

Cllr Phil Ward, Chair of the Parish Council

Walking along Riverside earlier today, peaceful with a few people seated, a family looking for fish and a couple strolling. It's mild but overcast; a typically pleasant scene in Eynsford and most of the time this is how things are; sadly, there are times when it's quite not so idyllic.

Eynsford has attracted visitors for decades, drawn by the ford and the riverside experience, and I'm sure some current residents moved here because of pleasurable memories they have of years gone by. Sadly, some visitors also bring with them vehicles and picnics, leaving rubbish and frustration for local people, and sometimes they may indulge in anti-social behaviour or worse.

Fortunately, crime in Eynsford is relatively low when compared to other parts of the district but, crime and disorder wherever it occurs is unpleasant for those affected. In these busy summer months, the focus is on places like Riverside, but recorded crime can paint a different picture. Looking at the published figures it's difficult to identify particular problem areas, crime occurs in varying locations and is not focussed in one particular area. Kent Police are promoting an online tool called e-watch that, amongst other things shows recorded crime for Eynsford and other parishes, it is certainly worth looking at. <https://e-watch.co/viewArea.php?viewbeat=35>

Kent Police have also recently issued their Eynsford Annual Report 2021 focussed on policing matters in Eynsford over the last year. A copy can be found via our website using the link here [https://](https://www.eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk/spage-parish_council_information-managing_crime_and_anti_social_behaviour.html)



**Kent
Police**

www.eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk/spage-parish_council_information-managing_crime_and_anti_social_behaviour.html

The Parish Council recently met with a representative of Kent Police to discuss crime with a particular focus on the incidents around Riverside. It was a good opportunity for councillors and the public to question the Inspector

"The PC commented upon many planning applications during the year but there were a few notable ones. An application was made for a residential property on the former railway goods yard at the station – this was turned down by SDC mainly due to the effect on the Green Belt although an appeal has been lodged by the applicant.

Planning consent was however received for the construction of a new village hall on Harrow Meadow together with the re-alignment of the football pitch to create, literally, a level playing field! The application however for the redevelopment of the existing hall site has stalled with the planners due to design requirements although we are hopeful that all issues have now been resolved and consent will shortly be received.

Planning consent was also received for the conversion of two former barns into three new houses at Pollyhaugh Farm and for two new houses at the rear of Bower House in Bower Lane so, although not social housing, an increase of five houses in Eynsford."

Chair of the Planning Committee, Malcolm Richardson

"The Council were delighted to give the Community Award to Christine Witton for her collection of litter around the villages.

Many of the villagers see Christine on her daily walk, sometimes with her dog, Bella around the high streets for Eynsford and Farningham, Sparepenny Lane, Crockenhill Lane, down by Eagle Heights and back to Station Road. Every other day, Castle Road up to the Hope Farm, along the river path and Lullingstone Lane. Once a week, Austin Lodge Road and on alternate months Button Street and Eglantine Lane. A huge area covered by Christine for the last four years and very well deserved."

Chair of the Community Committee, Ferne Haxby

"During the Covid lockdown, the allotments became very popular with tenants being able to spend more time on their plots. Also, the demand for an allotment plot grew and therefore the parish council approved a budget to extend the allotments to the south of the existing plots.

Work started with the removal of three small trees and the cutting back of saplings around the perimeter. A small excavator was then brought in to scrape the surface and remove most of the weeds. Seven more plots were marked out, and new tenants immediately started to dig them over. Within weeks these new tenants had introduced low fencing, planted up raised beds, erected small sheds, and had a variety of vegetables growing."

Chair of the Open Spaces Committee, Alan Cooke

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01322 865320**

Annual Parish Meeting 2021

Eynsford Parish Council held a rather smaller than usual annual parish meeting on Friday 25th June. However, we were pleased to meet with several members of the public in the village hall, and to chat about issues of concern in a socially distanced manner.

The chair of the council and committee chairs had all produced reports on activities of the council over the past year which will be available on our website. Here are some snap shots of some of the reports.

“What a difficult year covid has made it for everyone, the council was no exception. We were unable to meet in person, councillors and clerks desperately getting to grips with technology for Zoom meetings and the challenges of dodgy internet connections. But somehow, we made it work and business continued. You’ll see from the committee reports all the good work your Council has been involved in.

The community response to covid was amazing with many volunteers helping those less able and more vulnerable during lockdown. The council clerks, Holly Ivaldi and Naomi Morgan stepped up helping coordinate volunteers and visits, my sincere thanks to them for all their good work.

One of my early changes was to modify the structure of our committees adding a new committee with a focus on the environment including green issues. I feel this is a key area of interest that deserves direct oversight and I believe it’s already working well. Another reason for the change was to spread the workload and give another councillor a chance to develop with direct responsibility, again this has been a positive step for the council.”
Chair of the Council, Phil Ward

“We have joined the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership, covering the stations from Swanley to Sevenoaks. The aim of this body is to deliver 21st century services on a 19th century infrastructure. Take a look at Bat and Ball station to see what can be achieved by a concentrated effort to make a difference.

In Eynsford, work starts shortly on rebuilding the shelter on the northbound platform and plans have been drawn up to renovate the old waiting room and install a new toilet which will accommodate disabled access. We also plan to provide drinking water availability.

We are hoping to obtain funds to refurbish the entire station, including step free access to the Northbound platform, as has been achieved at Bat and Ball.”

Chair of the Highways & Transportation Committee, Geoff Kirby

on their response to recent incidents. The key message that came from the meeting is that we should report all crime using 999 for emergencies or 101 or online for less urgent issues. Like many aspects of life money is key, and the police are no different. Resources are limited and allocation of resource is targeted towards identified problem areas as measured by recorded crime. So, to increase our chances of high levels of policing we need to report all crime.

One issue that affected our village recently was an incursion of young people with a number of horses onto the Common Meadow cricket field. The Parish Council are working with the cricket club to protect the pitch and this important green space from horses and unwanted vehicles by installing new fencing and a kissing gate.

Following on from the meeting with Kent Police we have arranged another meeting with them to focus in more detail on antisocial behaviour. We have also recently met with KCC to look at solutions to the ongoing parking issues around Riverside, Lullingstone Lane and other problem areas in the village.

The Parish Council can never solve all the problems of crime and disorder, but we will continue to press for increased police presence and a robust response to reported crime. We also encourage the wider community to play their part and are encouraged by the formation of a local group called Riverside Watch; we look forward to working with them and others to find the best solutions for our village.

EVS Public Art Trail

Sally Coston, Chair, Eynsford Village Society

We hope that you will find enclosed a leaflet which describes the now completed “Public Art Trail” organised by a sub-committee of Eynsford Village Society. It makes an interesting walk around the village either as a resident or visitor, and even better when accompanied by a picnic. We hope you will enjoy the experience.

It has taken us since its inception in early 2014 to produce the 9 installations which make up the Trail. We began with little idea of where we would end up, each location evolving as ideas, materials and most importantly, finances to proceed became available.

It caused some controversy at the outset with imaginations in the village running on overdrive needing a Public Meeting in the Village Hall to reas-

sure some of us that it was not likely to involve large Disneyesque statues or plinths of modernism. Slowly and as the first few installations went up, hostility and concern seemed to die down with the real turning point being when the artwork went up in the station waiting hut which looked wonderful when lit up at night. The pieces are currently stored, awaiting the replacement of the presently condemned hut which we hope won't take too long but it is a listed building and has to be identical, so quite a project. The artwork will return as soon as SER gives us the okay.

Usually, the sub-committee was made up of about 5 of us with an interest in art or with a creative flair, and willingness to put in the time and effort needed; the composition of the group did fluctuate from time to time when those requirements ran out amongst us. The Trail speaks for itself using this leaflet.



We have had help from several sources, and I would like to formally thank, in alphabetical order:

James and Robert Alexander for permission to hang Hamish; Carol and Dennis Brown for donating the Competition prize money; Phil Collins, resident Bower Lane for constructing the bee hotel; Roger Gough, district councillor and chair KCC for financial support with the mosaic and with the sculpture; Janet Murray, former art TA at Anthony Roper School, for managing the children's artistic input to the bee hotel and to the mosaic; Mick Reardon, local artist for the painting in St. Martins porch; David Statham, CEO SER for support with the station waiting hut and financial support towards the sculpture; EVS for financial support with the bench; EPC for their precept grant donation towards the printing costs of the leaflet and all the local artists who contributed to the station project, and those who entered the Competition for the window space outside Rafferty's.

Thanks all.

There are several other areas in the parish for which the parish council has responsibility and in many of the areas, not including playing fields, the frequency of cutting has been reduced to improve natural habitats wherever possible.

It is likely that, to start with, these areas will look quite untidy and that might offend some people but over the next few years increasing numbers of beautiful wildflowers, or hedgerow flowers, will appear, sustaining greater numbers of bumble bees, other solitary bees and also other insects.

Rural grass, i.e. grass alongside roads such as A225 beyond the bottle bank lay-by is cut annually by Kent County Council, with sight-lines being cut more frequently for safety. If anyone is interested in what they do, please go to www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/soft-landscape-maintenance.

Eynsford Parish Office

The Parish Office has a stock of black and recycling bags and garden waste sacks that you can collect/purchase during opening hours. We also offer a photocopying/printing service at competitive prices. If you have a larger amount to do, please contact us in advance to arrange. We can offer help and advice on a number of issues and can put you in touch with other services.

Normal opening hours are 8.30am—2.30pm Mon—Thurs
01322 865320; info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk

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



Changes to the Grass-cutting Regime in Eynsford.

Cllr Michael Barker, Chair of Facilities & Environment

There are 313,500 miles of rural road verge in the U.K. supporting 700 species of wild flowers, wild flowers that are required by pollinators to survive and to maintain biodiversity in the countryside. Sadly, over 97% of meadows have been destroyed since the 1930s so road verges are more important than ever as a refuge for pollinators and other wildlife.

Eynsford Parish Council, prompted by the Green Team, is determined to do what we can to make our verges a haven for pollinators and other invertebrates by a sensible programme of management. Many grass verges are cut too frequently and often the clippings left lying on the ground. The clippings then break down and create a superficial layer of soil that is high in nutrients and which encourages grass growth. The grass deprives the wild flowers of nutrients and consequently they fail to thrive.



There are a number of areas in the village, including the Priory Lane triangle, the Crockenhill Lane triangle and the grassy areas adjacent to the A225/bottle bank that are to be cut less frequently this year in order to allow wild flowers and other grasses to flourish. The Priory Lane triangle will be cut in August or September and in the spring so that wild flowers can flower and shed their seeds onto the soil before the grass is cut. The grass clippings will be removed.

Within the grassy area between the bottle bank and the railway bridge a test area has been outlined in which the grass will be cut annually and the grass clippings removed in order to proactively try and create a wild flower meadow. Some areas have been seeded with wildflowers in order to initiate this process. Because of the cost of removing and disposing of grass clippings, for the rest of this area the clippings will be left. Some small pieces of carpet and corrugated metal have been placed in this area to attract and support cold-blooded wildlife such as slow-worms which have been detected here in the past.

Is 20 Plenty?

Cllr Geoff Kirby, Chair of Highways & Transportation

Recently, Kent Highways has relaxed its opposition to more speed controls on major A roads such as the A225 and side roads within town and village envelopes. This signals a move away from their previous policy to promote free traffic movement to a more nuanced attention to safety, encouraging cycling and walking for health reasons and reducing pollution.



Very soon you will see a new 20mph limit in Otford, along the High Street and around the pond, up to Pilgrims Way.

Similarly, Westerham will impose a blanket 20mph limit across the whole town, including the A25 section within the town boundaries and all side roads.

We are asking villagers views and ideas on imposing new, lower speed limits throughout the village and surrounding roads within the Parish as an informal consultation, to gauge whether to draw up a full traffic management scheme for submission.

There are various options open to us.

- 20mph on the A225 within the village envelope.
- 20mph over the whole village, bearing in mind many side roads do not have pavements.
- Should we Include Lullingstone, Austin Lodge and Sparepenny Lane in an overall scheme?
- Imposing a 50mph limit from the station bridge to the Shoreham border. Shoreham intend to apply for a 50mph limit to the Otford border.

Speed limits work best if drivers believe they will be enforced. We will:

- Install speed cameras to enforce the limits.
- Expand our newly introduced speedwatch scheme. See our article on how you can help.

Let us know your views on moving forward to protect our village. Drop us a line to the Parish Office or speak to one of the councillors.

Post COVID Village Event

Cllr Ferne Haxby, Chair of Communities

June 2022 sees two momentous events happening in the village. Her Majesty celebrates her Platinum Jubilee, and the Parish Council is planning a post COVID event.



Saturday 4th June is going to be a day for residents of Eynsford and Farningham to come together and celebrate the wonderful community spirit that has kept us going through the pandemic years.

During the day, a good old fashioned village fete is planned in Eynsford Castle moat. We want the groups and local businesses from the villages to have stalls to show what they have done over the period of lockdown and restriction. Also to advertise for new members and have games, cakes and tombolas for all to enjoy.

There will be an exhibition arena with local music, displays and kids games to keep everyone entertained. We will be inviting some groups and local pubs to put together a tug of war team to bring back the competition of years ago – maybe even a woman's team to show the men a thing or two!!!!, Duck race on the river and lots more!!

Moving to the evening, we are planning a music event on Harrow Meadow showcasing local bands and headliner. It won't finish too late as we need to be mindful of local residents but a good knees up is needed after what everyone has gone through. This will be limited, for safety and by ticket only. Fancy a night of music and dance?

To give us an idea on numbers for the day and also if you have any offers of help you can give, contact us at the Parish Council on info@eynsfordparishcouncil.org.uk to let us know:

- Stalls you would like to have
- Help you can offer – don't worry if you are not sure but want to be involved, we will find something fun for you to help with!
- Register your interest in coming to the evening event, so we can get an idea of numbers (only residents of both villages will be able to come)

Look forward to hearing from you!!

Speedwatch

Cllr Geoff Kirby

Do you want to do something about vehicles speeding through our village? Now you can!

Join a growing band of volunteers from Eynsford and Farningham who are making a visible difference.

Research has shown that speeding drivers will only comply with the speed limits if they believe the law is being enforced and they may be caught.



Speedwatch allows a highly visible roadside group with a camera and speed indicator to operate in locations approved by the police. Speeds and car details are fed back to a central police unit in Canterbury who take the necessary actions. Warning letters or fines are posted out depending on the seriousness of the transgression or previous history.

Although the group was formed at the end of 2019, covid restrictions halted the roadside sessions until last month when we held our first session in Eynsford. Located near Priory Lane, 240 cars passed in the hour, not one over the limit! We did however recruit two more volunteers from the Mums on the school run who were pleased that something positive is being done to safeguard the schoolchildren.

And that is the point of this article. We need lots more volunteers who are willing to give a couple of hours a month or more so that we can run two or three sessions a week in different locations in the village. The more often drivers see the yellow high vis jackets, the more likely they will moderate their speeds.

Are you willing to be part of the solution? Training will be given and it is not difficult. You choose how often you take part and it is totally voluntary. We supply the high vis jackets and all the equipment and indeed the companionship and you will be part of the mission to make Eynsford a safer place.