

Otford Parish Council
June Newsletter 2016
No 253

Twinned with Neufchatel-Hardelot

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Parish Council

For those interested in all the activities of OPC, the minutes of meetings are available in the library, and all minutes, agendas and newsletters can be obtained via the web (also available in the library). They can all be read via <http://www.otford.info/parishcouncil>. The next meetings will be on **9th May** and **13th June** at 7.30pm in the Club Room of Otford Village Hall.

Chairman's Report

INFORMATION FROM KENT HIGHWAYS IS THAT THE HIGH STREET WILL BE CLOSED TO THROUGH TRAFFIC FROM TUESDAY 31ST MAY AND RE-OPEN HOPEFULLY BY THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND.

The Annual Meeting of the Electorate was held on 25th April. Thank you to those who attended. Please see the Annual report below.

The Annual Report

Yet again, it has been another very busy year for councillors and the clerks, and as a result, this report will not be too dissimilar from last years. I would like to thank both Sharon and Sue for all the invaluable assistance they have given me and the Councillors during the past year. I would also like to thank all the councillors for their support. Their continuous "voluntary" work on behalf of Otford, most of which goes on in the background and is largely unheard and unseen, but without which the effects would soon be noticed. Otford has long been well-served by volunteers and I would like to thank all of them for all their efforts and hard work in helping the community.

As you know, we are now twinned with Neufchatel-Hardelot and there have been several reciprocal visits between us. My thanks to Cllr Jane Lawrey for masterminding all the hard work involved in its organisation and implementation. I will

now give you a short précis of what your council does, what we have achieved and what we hope to achieve in the future. During the past year, I have combined some of the committees so the previous six have now become four. These committees report to our monthly Parish Council meetings and I will briefly outline their roles and work carried out on your behalf.

Planning - led by Martin Whitehead



The Planning Committee meets on a bi-weekly basis on Wednesday mornings at 9.15 in the Parish Office. These meetings are open and I would encourage the applicants and objectors to attend. I would also encourage prospective applicants to consult with OPC prior to submitting their applications to SDC. During the last year we have reviewed 91 planning applications covering developments from minor works, small and large extensions, through to new builds. Of these the committee had no objection to 75 and recommended refusal of 16, all with supporting detailed comments. To date the District Council granted 77 and refused 14. From those 14 there have been 4 planning appeals during this period. To date, none of them have been successful.



Amenities (used to be Services and Highways committees) -

Chaired by Jackie Howe

Amenities have continued with their H&S reviews, Fire Risks and general Risk Assessments of the office and other PC assets.

We have made the office approach Wheelchair friendly.

Carried out repairs to several fences around Otford - at this point I would like to thank Brian Thomas and Norman Catt for their varied and invaluable help around the village. We distribute some Monthly newsletters by e-mail to reduce the cost of postage, at the moment mainly to those residents that live on excessively dangerous roads or Otfordians that have moved away from the village. We oversee Speedwatch to which we have added "Lorry watch" We have installed new Parish notice boards around the village. We notify KCC of Footpath hazards - and some resurfacing has recently taken place.. Potholes - we report and progress all potholes. Otford Cemetery. All maintenance issues are overseen by the Parish Council. You might have noticed that 2hr parking restrictions have recently been introduced in the Cemetery Car Park so as to prevent the all-day parking that had presented difficulties for those visiting the cemetery, attending funerals and dog walkers. The bus shelter at Bubblestone Road was recently blown over by storm Katie and cannot be repaired. A replacement is being considered. A recent addition is the bench in memory of Carole Griffiths, in situ on the Village Green by the bus stop. The Pay and display system continues to function well in the village car park. Following consultation with residents, parking restrictions have been introduced in Warham Road and restricted parking (no parking between

7am and 8am) will shortly be imposed on the Sevenoaks Road to prevent all day parking by commuters.



Recreation & Environment - Chaired by Mary Evans

At the beginning of this Council year, the Recreation and Environment committees were amalgamated, so under this heading we now cover the following areas:

The High Street Recreation Ground and play area, Petanque Terroire, Hale Lane recreation ground and play area, Telston Park, the Chalkpit, the allotments, Oxenhill Woods, Palace Park Woods, the Cemetery, The Village Green and Pond, Palace Field and Palace Approach, and some of the planters around the village. Oxenhill Woods are situated at the bottom of Tudor Drive and in conjunction with Kemsing Parish Council, SDC and the Forestry Commission we look after this naturally regenerated woodland, which runs parallel to the railway line to Sevenoaks. It is currently having some work done to widen some of the rides, which will be repeated again next year on the advice of the Forestry Commission. With a small picnic area up at the top which is at the moment is full of primroses it is a really beautiful spot. If you haven't seen this area, it is well worth a visit in the summer when the land has dried out a little.

The Otford Sports Association (and I would like to thank Kay Drake for her assistance as Secretary of the OSA) works with the Sports clubs to maintain the High Street Recreation ground from day to day, with further maintenance work being carried out by the Parish Council. Recently we have run a Dog Poo Flag day with the SDC Dog Warden. It was very disappointing to find that there were over 40 infringements. We shall be carrying out more spot checks this summer, so please can we urge you to clear up after your dog, it isn't pleasant for anybody who helps to maintain this green and otherwise beautiful area.

Thank you to all the Parish Councillors and volunteers who helped with our Clean for the Queen efforts, it was much appreciated, but a shame the weather couldn't have been kinder to us. Also our thanks go to McDonalds who fielded a large team of supporters to help us clear litter along the Sevenoaks Road. However we can't do all the work ourselves and we are always looking for more volunteers who would be prepared to join working parties throughout the year. This may be planting of bulbs, trimming back the hedgerows on the footpaths or even litter-picking. If you would like to help, please leave your contact details with the Parish Office.



Finance - Chaired by John Edwards-Winsor

You will be glad to know that due to careful monitoring of expenditure this year we came in ahead of budget although some projects planned for last year have had to be moved to the current year. The car park is making a small profit - estimated IRO £10K in the year - which will go towards further improvements and maintenance.

You might have noticed that the parish precept for the year to 31st March 2016 was not increased although the overall Council tax has been increased in line with inflation by SDC, KCC, the Fire services and the Police

I must again mention Brian Thomas our Grounds Maintenance Supervisor and Cemetery Supervisor. He meets frequently with bereaved families at the cemetery, a task he handles with great sensitivity. He also inspects the playgrounds on a weekly basis and advises on the care of all our natural sites. It is down to Brian that the pond looks so good and of course he also looks after the ducks.

On the downside, the decision has been taken to close the public toilets permanently. They are costing IRO of £8k year to run and maintain and we consider that this is no longer a viable situation. During the past year, the toilets have been repeatedly targeted by vandals making them unusable. Initially the Council considered renewing all three toilets, but to bring them up to current H&S regulations, costs were prohibitive (IRO £20K). We acknowledge that in an ideal world, toilets would be an invaluable asset to the village, but experience over the past few years contributed to the decision to close the toilets permanently.

Otford Village Fete - Monday 30th May - Starts at 12.00noon



1000 years ago a battle took place in Otford, 50 years before the more famous one at Hastings! Had Canute won, English might not have been the main language spoken by residents of our village.

To commemorate this important battle the committee has chosen this theme for the 2016 fete and have arranged a number of

activities, including a Kent based re-enactment group who will be performing their own 'battles' in the arena during the afternoon. If you want to come along dressed as an Anglo Saxon Warrior or someone from the Danish enemy, we would love to see you.

Of course we will still have our usual attractions - live music courtesy of 'Frank Sinatra'; 'Elvis' and this year 'The Beatles'.

Elands Veterinary Clinic will be running our ever popular Dog Show - please ensure you register by 12noon to take part as it is always over-subscribed.

With real ale, delicious food outlets and lots of activities for the young and the not so young, what's not to like.

Entry Fee: £1.50 adults, children 10 and under free.

For more information, please visit our website www.otford.info/villagefete



Community Warden Surgery

Paul holds his weekly surgery to discuss any problems and community issues at School House on Tuesdays between 11am and 12 noon. Come and see him. Paul can also be contacted on 07813 713366.

St Bartholomew's Church Fair



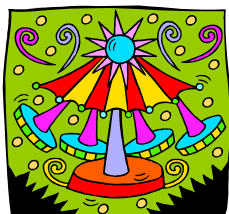
St Bartholomew's Church Fair will be taking place this year on the VILLAGE GREEN on **Saturday 18th June** from 2pm. Stalls will include: Books, Plants, Cakes, Crafts, White Elephant, raffle, unwanted gifts, bottles, toys, soft drinks, strawberries and cream and ices. Other attractions include children's games and a bouncy castle. There will be a children's art competition with the theme of 'The Seaside' There are two categories 7-11 and under 7 with good prizes. All village children are welcome to submit an entry. Contact Christeen Malan on 01959 522654. There will be guided talks about the church during the afternoon Also there is a single rose competition judged by silent auction so why not bring along an entry this year on the day.

The Otford Society

The Otford Society's AGM was held on 13th April. Facing dwindling membership and volunteer resources, the committee proposed that, in order for the Society to survive, it should switch from being a "membership charity" to a "supporter charity". This means the abolition of annual membership fees and hand-delivered newsletters, with future projects to be funded ad-hoc through specific village events and initiatives. The proposal was approved by an overwhelming majority of members so will be implemented later this year.

Anyone wishing to register as a supporter and so keep in touch with Society affairs is requested to email membership@otfordsociety.org.uk without commitment. The Society remains in desperate need of volunteers so anyone able to help - whether by spending an hour a year helping at an event, or by joining the committee - is asked to email chairman@otfordsociety.org.uk with their details.

Otford Primary School Fete



The PTFA of Otford Primary will be holding their annual Summer Fete will take place on **Saturday 2nd July** between 12 noon and 3pm. There will be lots of exciting games to play, tombola's, bouncy castle, inflatable assault course, face painting, glitter tattoos, raffle, silent auction, BBQ, refreshments, entertainment, shopping stalls, plants and lots more.

We are also looking forward to a special visit from some magical unicorns!! Lots to offer for everyone so please come and join us! Adults £1 entry, children are free."



Discover Art on your Doorstep!

The South East Open Studios event takes place in June across the county.

Two Artists who live and work in Otford warmly welcome visitors to come to their workplaces on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays during June (3rd 4th 5th and on 10th 11th 12th and 17th 18th 19th) For Paintings, Prints and Cards visit Ann Bridges at 6A High St. (above Willow Residential Estate Agents, next to Pond View Tea Rooms)

Opening hours 10.00 - 5.00pm

For indoor and outdoor Sculpture (Glass, Ceramic, Resin and Bronze) visit Angela Bishop at 5 Broughton Road - Opening hours 11.00 - 5.00pm

For more information visit www.seos-art.org or contact Ann (07906 310021) or Angela (07967 965202)

Sevenoaks Summer Festival



The 47th Annual Summer Festival will take place at various venues in the District between **Saturday 18th June to Sunday 3rd July.**

Pick up your festival programme from the The Stag Box office, libraries and other shops and some copies are available in the Heritage Centre. Celebrity acts this year include Rick Wakeman and Sir Willard White.

Gardeners' Society



The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 7th June** at 8pm in Otford Village Memorial Hall when Alexander Huunt from Potash Farm will give a talk about 'Cobnuts, Walnuts and other trees'. There will also be a sale of items from the farm shop. For more information contact Janet Finney on 01959 523760 or e-mail gardeners@otford.net. Admission which includes refreshments is £1 for visitors.

Limehouse Lizzy



One of the country's biggest tribute bands is coming to Otford. After six months of negotiation the management of Otford Village Memorial Hall are delighted to announce that Limehouse Lizzy will be appearing at the Hall on **Saturday, 23rd July**. Limehouse Lizzy continue to keep the spirit of Celtic rock icon Philip Lynott and his band

Thin Lizzy alive and well and dominating stages worldwide. The band have also added a tribute into their show to ex-Thin Lizzy guitarist (and world renowned solo artist) Gary Moore. From their Official PRS award, performing for Virgin Atlantic in Barbados, T.V. appearances (BBC 2's 'Arena' amongst others), and to actually being recruited to record and tour by members of the original Thin Lizzy, Limehouse Lizzy enter their 21st year with their most explosive show and critically-acclaimed line-up yet.

Tickets are available now at just £14:00 in advance (£15.00 on the door although we don't expect there to be any!), by calling 07887 780 576 or by sending an e-mail to ovmh.manager@otford.net. Alternatively, tickets are now available from www.wegottickets.com/event/338639 but are subject to a £1.40 booking fee. Tickets can also be purchased in person from Otford Parish Council's offices in the High Street (Mon-Fri, 08:30-12:30, no credit cards). Wegottickets is also the only way to pay using a credit card.

As with all concerts organised by the management, all profits will go towards the Hall's refurbishment fund.

Further details from - Ron Dullage, Secretary to the Trustees, Otford Village Memorial Hall - 07887 780576 e-mail: ovmh.manager@otford.net

Greg Alcock, Manager, Limehouse Lizzy - e-mail: gregalcock@yahoo.com

Websites - www.otford.info/ovmh /www.limehouselizzy.co.uk

Otford-Neufchatel-Hardelot Twinning



Following on from the great success of last year's day coach trip to Hardelot we are now looking forward to Saturday 3 September 2016 when the children will be able to enjoy more activities with Isabelle from the Office de Tourisme or, if they prefer, to take part in the Boucles d'Hardelot running races (1 kilometre for 5 - 7yrs, 2 kilometres for 8-11yrs, 3 kilometres for 12-15yrs and 10 kilometres for the adults). You may prefer to explore the village and the beach area by yourself. We could even challenge our "Twins" in a Petanque tournament. Let us know what you would like to do. Just £38 per adult, children FREE (plus £5 per adult, £10 per family if you have not yet paid your subscription for 2016) Please contact Jane Lawrey for an application form via the Otford Parish Council.

Otford Youth Singing Group



A new group is being formed for young people aged 9 to 17 to enjoy some fun learning to sing. The group will meet once each month for an hour on a Sunday afternoon, and is open to those from within our church, from local schools and from the village. It doesn't matter if you can already sing - or not!

Just come along. The aim is to start in September, but there may be a taster session during the summer. If you are interested, please contact St Bartholomew's Church office or phone 01959 523185.

Pond View Tea Rooms



Pond View Tea Rooms will be offering a Sunday Roast every week and daily specials. To book a table for Sundays please call 01959 522150.

Watercolour Painting Classes



Popular Artist and qualified teacher Sue Bradley is holding watercolour painting classes in Otford Village Memorial Hall on Wednesdays between 9.30am and 11.30am on **1st June, 8th June and 15th June**. The classes are £14 for 2 hrs. Classes are aimed at beginners and improvers in watercolour technique. For booking and enquiries please contact suebradley5@sky.com or call 07715 663993.

Ballroom Dance Social Evening



Ballroom/Latin/Sequence social dance evening, (not lessons). In other word come on out, have a drink, have a chat and even a dance or two. Bring your own drinks, entry £5.50 per person, Sundays **June 26th, July 24th, August 14th**, and many more. In Otford Village Memorial Hall between 7.30pm - 10.15pm. If you require any more details either call Les on 01474 324759 or email l.johnson1@sky.com

Otford Library Craft Sessions



There will be **FREE** craft sessions at Otford Library on **Saturday 11th June** from 10 until 12 noon. All children welcome, to book a place please ring 03000 41 31 31. Baby Bounce and Rhyme takes place at Otford Library on Monday mornings between 11am and 11.30am and on Thursday mornings between 9.30am and 10am. Also Storytime takes place on Tuesday between 2pm and 2.30pm (term time only).

Otford Oast WI



The next meeting will be on **Thursday 16th June** at 9.30am in Otford Village Memorial Hall. This month they have a talk about '*Cadbury, Fry & Rowntree - The Chocolate Quakers*'. A crèche is available and the first visit is free. For more details

or if you wish to join please contact the Secretary Barbara Singleton-Green on 01959 525515.

Oxford Evening WI

The next meeting will be on **Thursday 9th June** at 7.30pm in the Club Room of Oxford Village Memorial Hall when Lucy Allen will talk about *'From Titanic to Harry Potter - The Highs and lows of a stunt woman's life'*. Their President can be contacted on 01959 524831 for further information.

Sevenoaks Shakespeare Society



Sevenoaks Shakespeare Society are currently rehearsing in Oxford for their open-air summer show to mark the 400th anniversary of the Bard's death. This year they will be performing "The Comedy of Errors", Shakespeare's shortest and possibly funniest play. Performances will be at the White Rock Inn at Underriver TN15 0SB as part of the Sevenoaks Summer Festival on **June 30th, July 1st and 2nd and July 6th-9th** at 8.00pm. Matinee on **Sunday July 10th** at 3.30pm. Tickets (£12 in advance, £15 on door, children and students £5) in person or by telephone from The White Rock Inn 01732 833112, or from the Festival Box Office www.stagevennoaks.co.uk 01732 450175. Bring warm clothing and rugs or low-backed folding chairs!

Sevenoaks Embroiderer's Guild



The next meeting will take place on **Saturday 25th June** in Oxford Methodist Hall (PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE) when there will be a talk by Gwen Hedley entitled *'Drawn to Stitch'*. The meetings start at 10am and 2pm and end with tea and cakes at about 4pm. For further information please contact Sylvia Grafton on 01732 452117.

Kemsing Singers Spring Concert



On **Saturday 4th June** at 7.30pm in St Edith Hall, Kemsing the Kemsing Singers and guest jazz ensemble will present a lively, mixed medley including Phantom of the Opera, When the Saints - the John Rutter arrangement and Chilcott Little Jazz Mass. Directed by Sara Kemsley and accompanied by Peter Young. Tickets £8 from 01959 523752.

Knole Decorative and Fine Arts Society

Knole Decorative and Fine Arts Society meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Sevenoaks Community Centre, Bat & Ball. The lectures start promptly at 1.45 pm and finish by 3 pm. The next lecture is on **Thursday 16th June** when Julian Halsby will talk about *'The Glasgow Boys: Painting in Scotland 1875 - 1914'* For further information see the website www.knoledfas.org.uk.

Heritage Centre Artist for June -Sue Isted



This month's painting is by Sue Isted. Sue took up painting after her first child was born 25 years ago. At school she never took art seriously and was considered a 'no hoper' by her art teacher. She started classes at Sevenoaks Adult Education Centre and then progressed to Chipstead Art Group under the guidance of Eirlys Hollands who introduced her to the joy of pastels. Now, Sue is with the Otford Art Group with whom she is very much at home. She mainly loves painting animals and portraits, older face with character being of particular fascination. Occasionally she dabbles in acrylics and watercolour but always returns to pastels for sculptural quality.

Citizens Advice Bureau - Otford Outreach



The Citizens Advice service provides free, confidential, independent and impartial advice to help people solve their problems. Help is available on a range of issues: Employment, Housing, Consumer, Relationships, Benefits, Debt problems and others. Sevenoaks Citizens Advice hold a weekly surgery at the Heritage Centre in Otford every Tuesday from 10.00am till 12.00noon. Drop in appointments may be available on the day. For telephone advice or to book an appointment at the Otford outreach: ring 01732 440488 and leave a message at any time. Someone will call you back.

For email advice: info@sevenoaks.cab.org.uk

For further information about Sevenoaks Citizens Advice: visit the website www.citizensadvice.org.uk/sevenoakscab



Hospices Of Hope Events

Ladies Lunch with Eurobe Fashion

Thursday 9th June at 12:00

Rowhill Grange Hotel & Utopia Spa, Wilmington, Kent, DA2 7QH

£29 per person to include an arrival drink, two course luncheon with a glass of wine and coffee with mint chocolates. Followed by

a fashion show featuring the latest labels from Eurobe Womenswear. For tickets please contact amy@hospicesofhope.co.uk / 01959 525110

Ladies Lunch with Tea Expert and Tasting

Monday 13th June at 12:00

Alexander House Hotel, East Street, Turners Hill, East Grinstead, RH10 4QD

£29 per person to include an arrival drink, two course luncheon with a glass of wine & coffee with chocolate mints. Followed by Alex Probyn from blends for

friends, who will be sharing his wealth and experience about tea and demonstrating some of the skills as a tea taster.

For tickets please contact amy@hospicesofhope.co.uk / 01959 525110



Planning

The following applications have been considered by the Parish Council. For more information, please contact the Parish Clerk or the Head of Development Services, Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent on 01732 227000.

a. New Applications

SE/16/00862 Rosemar Cottage, 17 Station Road

Erection of a first floor rear extension with front dormer. Conversion of garage into habitable space.

SE/16/00948 Holmewood, 8 Bubblestone Road

Minor material amendment to SE/15/01748 to show removal of kitchen windows to provide new external doors. Formation of 3 no new velux windows to the loft space. Tile hung to be removed all round and replaced with a render finish.

SE/16/01007 The Crown Inn, 10 High Street

Demolition of existing extensions and erection of a two storey rear extension to enlarge bar area to ground floor and office units to first floor.

SE/16/01105 13 The Butts

Demolition of the existing double garage/utility room and the erection of a new single storey side extension. The construction of new detached double garage.

SE/16/00995 Akenfield, 35 Greenhill Road

Erection of first floor extension. Part demolition of single storey rear extension. Erection of detached garage. Relocation of main entrance. Conversion of existing garage to habitable space with changes to fenestration. Loft conversion.

SE/16/1141 Land rear of 7 Hale Lane

Demolition of existing shed. Erection of a dwelling.

SE/16/01233 23 High Street

Erection of 2no brickwork piers set back 6m into site with existing refurbished iron gates relocated to new piers and made electrically operated. New dense hedging to be installed and entry phone system.

b. Results Received

SE/16/00066 Kent House, The Green

Demolition of existing garage and shed. Erection of a single storey rear and side extension together with alteration to entrance gateway and swimming pool in garden.

Refused

SE/16/00203 **Lower Barn Cottage, Park Farm, High Street**
Proposed cellar and single storey extension to NE facing elevation *Allowed*

SE/16/00268 **52 Pilgrims Way East**
Removal of existing roof and erection of a new roof of increased height, incorporating habitable rooms within roof space and dormer windows to both side elevations. Demolition of existing garage to facilitate the erection of a two storey side extension. External insulation to walls and rendered above damp-proof course. Changes to external fenestration to include Juliet balcony to ground floor at rear. Internal alterations *Refused*

SE/16/00393 **23 Willow Park**
Demolish the garage, construct a two storey and single storey side extension and a single storey rear extension with roof lights and parking space in front of dwelling *Allowed*

SE/16/00111 **Unit 3 Vestry Road**
Demolition of existing buildings and erection of four units for Class B8 (storage and distribution) and Class B2 (general industrial) purposes as amplified by additional drainage details submitted. *Allowed*

c. Trees

SE/16/01155 **Moat Cottage, Station Road**
Fell 1 Willow Tree in Conservation Area

Newsletter Deliverers

If anyone is willing to cover Station Road (even just half the road) please could they contact the office or just go on a reserve list in case of holidays please let the Parish Council know. Many thanks.

Rubbish



If you see litter outside your house, please pick it up don't just leave it for somebody else. Let's try and make our village litter free

Hedges



Hedges are growing very quickly at the moment and growing over the public footway. This can cause a nuisance to pedestrians, especially those who have poor sight. Please check the boundaries of the property you are in and if necessary arrange for it to be cut back from the footway as soon as possible. Thank you.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for items for the July/August Newsletter will **Friday 17th June**