



OFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Newsletter – October 2021

Parish Council October Meeting

- The opening of the Household Waste Recycling Centre in Allington has been delayed by Covid.
- There is no news about the solar park proposal at the Offham Landfill site.
- Cllr Benton is arranging for the Village Sign to be painted, and Councillors will restore the post.
- Cllr Benton is arranging a street party to celebrate the Queens Jubilee which will be held on Sunday 5th June 2022. More details will follow nearer the time.
- The popular Race Night will be held again to raise funds for Parish Council projects in the New Year
- The Christmas Lighting ceremony will be held on Sunday 5th December – more details to follow in due course
- Cllr Marchant will lay a wreath at the Remembrance Service to be held at St Michael's Church on behalf of The Parish Council and in memory of his late Father, Ron.
- The Parish Council hopes to install a Tommy Silhouette from RBLI in time for remembrance.

LGBCE – Electoral Review of Ward Boundaries in Tonbridge & Malling

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is carrying out an electoral review of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. Following an initial consultation on this review in May-July 2021, the LGBCE has published its draft recommendations. These recommendations propose that the council has 44 councillors in the future, 10 fewer than the current number, and that new ward boundaries are established to reflect this change. The number of wards would decrease from 24 to 19. The draft proposals put Offham into a three ward grouping with East and West Malling.

Details of the proposals can be accessed via:

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent/tonbridge-and-malling>
<https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/27207>

The public are being invited to submit their views and comments ahead of the deadline on 13 December 2021.

If you have any queries about this consultation, please contact reviews@lgbce.org.uk



Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council has opened a consultation called 'What matters to you?', inviting views on their future priorities - <https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/policy/matters-consultation>. The consultation is open until 26th October 2021.



Highways Improvement Plan

The Parish Council has been asked by Kent County Council to complete a Highways Improvement Plan - HIP. This is a list of measures that the Parish Council thinks will benefit the village. When we have drafted a HIP, Kent Highways will visit and work through this and tell us what is possible and what is not, how to achieve what we want and the cost. In some cases Highways will pay for the work if it is safety critical, but usually it will be for the Parish Council to pay. At that point the Parish Council would decide if it can pay and how to raise the money, and consult with residents to ensure there is full support before the work goes ahead. The plan will obviously change over time as work is added, or removed or completed. Our success in achieving approval for these plans, will be enhanced by individuals offering their support and involvement for initiatives such as SpeedWatch.

If there are any measures you think would benefit the village, or would like to volunteer for SpeedWatch, please email the Clerk by Thursday 28th October 2021.

Fireworks

Bonfire night is approaching, and many events use fireworks throughout the year. Many Offham residents have pets and there are also a number of horses and other animals kept in the village and nearby. Unfortunately, many of these animals are scared by the loud bangs and bright flashes of traditional fireworks.

It would be extremely helpful and kind if you are going to use fireworks if you could let your neighbours know in advance so they can take steps to protect their animals and so there is less a shock when they start. If you would like to let the Parish Council know, we can circulate details to the wider village, which would be greatly appreciated by many pet owners.

A request has been made for residents to consider using pet friendly fireworks, which are even available at some supermarkets. These are quiet or low noise and are becoming more and more popular at professional displays as well as for use at home. They can be equally as impressive as traditional fireworks but are kinder to cats, dogs, horses and cattle.

Blaise Farm Quarry Footpath Diversion

The planning inspectorate confirmed the order to divert footpath MR286 on 3rd September 2021. The diversion route and permissive path will shortly be opened once signage has been erected in accordance with PROW specifications. MR286 will then close. Please be assured that we will also be displaying a route map (similar to attached) posted at the diversion points, to assist walkers so there is no confusion.

If you would like more details of the diversion or discuss the matter further, please contact our Quarry Manager at Blaise Farm Quarry, Ian Westlake on 01732845653 or email ian.westlake@gallagher-group.co.uk



Kent Highways - Equal distance of Kent to Bristol covered in county road surfacing works

Highways officers have completed an annual round of road repairs using methods which will make road conditions last longer, for less cost and achieving significant carbon reductions.

Kent County Council's highways department has treated the equivalent of 127 miles of road, an equal distance from the county to Bristol, during the 2021 road surface preservation season that ended on September 7. As part of this programme, 1.1 million sqm of Kent's roads have been treated, extending the working life of a large volume of our highway network.

Using these specialist materials and techniques on our roads achieves a significant saving in greenhouse gas emissions and results in minimal waste needing to be removed during the works.

Vehicles also reduce the amount of CO² they emit, by up to 5%, due to the smoother road surface following surfacing works.

This is part of the wider £50 million annual road maintenance programme, of which £11 million is set aside to prevent potholes from forming.

This approach is set out in the council's Highways Asset Management Plan, which continues to ensure KCC uses the best methods and prioritises work in line with its five-year Forward Works Plan.

Kent County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, David Brazier, said: "A key part of what we do as an authority is making sure we future-proof everything, and this includes our roads.

"Our specialist treatments are critical in sealing the surface of our roads to preserve their structure for the future and prevent potholes forming.

"This also has vast environmental benefits and is more cost-effective, delivering on the aims of KCC's Highways Asset Management Plan."

The cost of the methods used is about £7 per square metre and can get a road in good condition for about eight to 10 years. Compared to traditional resurfacing methods, which cost between £25-£35 per square metre.

During the smarter, cost effective works no material needs to be removed or disposed of from the site, and preservation processes use lower temperature materials, significantly reducing carbon output to between one and three kilograms of CO² per square metre, compared to nine kilograms for more traditional work.

Kent's separate £30 million road renewal programme continues and is expected to be completed later this Autumn.

Principal Operations Manager at Amey, Judith Bilboe, said: "2021 has remained a challenging year for many of us but due to the hard work of our highways operatives we have delivered a successful road surface preservation season, treating over 127 miles of roads across the county, future proofing and ensuring a smoother journey for those travelling on the network."

West Kent Area Support Services

This Directory of Services is provided by the West Kent Local Children's Partnership Groups (LCPG) and includes support services specific to Sevenoaks, Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells: <https://sway.office.com/X9OXDLm05WEDPBXM?ref=email>

Contact the Parish Council E: clerk@offham-pc.gov.uk T: 07563 606573. The Parish Council Clerk works 12 hours a week, Monday to Thursday, and aims to respond to emails and phone calls within 5 working days. For more information, please go to our website www.offham-pc.gov.uk

Offham Parish Council Meetings

The next meeting of the Parish Council will take place in the Committee Room of Offham Village Hall on **Tuesday 2nd November at 7.30pm.**

Closure of the Covid-19 Offham Community Network (OCN)

As of 31st October 2021, the work of the Offham Community Network will be concluding.

The network was established in March 2020 to provide a multi-community group response to the threat posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. St Michael's Church Parochial Church Council kindly agreed to provide a safeguarding 'umbrella' for the work while a small army of amazing volunteers around Offham got on with the tasks of helping the sick, the vulnerable and the elderly with grocery deliveries, medical prescriptions and good old-fashioned neighbourliness and friendship during those long months of isolation and lockdown.

Over 70 local people volunteered to help and, at its peak in summer 2020, OCN was helping nearly 40 households every week in Offham. OCN's efforts were held up as an exemplar by Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and the method of working promoted amongst other parishes.

The provision of OCN was always intended as a temporary measure to meet a particular need but life today has moved on considerably. The Covid-19 vaccination programme has enabled a great many people to regain freedom to their daily lives in all sorts of ways such that there have been no calls on OCN volunteers for quite some time. So OCN in its current form needs to finish as its usefulness is no longer what it was.

Residents may look at our current situation and be concerned that this is not a good time to be closing if the winter looks uncertain or in the unlikely event of another period of lockdown. The OCN committee wishes to reassure everyone that if the situation worsens significantly, the network can be reactivated if it is needed.

The parish council is fully supportive of the OCN and wishes to thank the organisers and the many volunteers for their generosity and kindness during the pandemic period. The network could not have functioned without the great support received from St Michael's Church PCC and especially Rev. David Green; to them our grateful thanks.



Tonbridge and Malling Ramblers

Our friendly group is one of 13 Ramblers groups in Kent and part of the national Ramblers walking organisation. We recently helped to organise the Kent Ramblers Wealdway40 festival to mark the 40th anniversary of the Wealdway long-distance trail. 388 walkers took part in the 26 festival walks in September 2021. They walked a total of almost 1,800 miles along the Wealdway (and many more miles on other paths).

We are now back to our regular walks exploring the beautiful countryside within Tonbridge & Malling and surrounding areas. Our group walks are mostly circular with a moderate pace. You don't have to be a Ramblers member to try out a couple of walks with us, to help you decide if you'd like to join.

Advance booking is not required; you can just turn up on the day. However, if you are new to our walks, it's a good idea to contact the walk leader beforehand to check that their walk will suit you.

To find out more, visit our website: www.tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk or email info@tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk.

We look forward to welcoming you on a walk soon!

Date	Route	Distance
Wed 3 November	From the medieval stone bridge at Teston, alongside the Medway to Barming	5 miles
Sun 7 November	Penshurst circular	5.2 miles
Wed 10 November	A gentle walk along and across the Medway from Barming	5 miles
Sun 14 November	Shipbourne to Underriver via plenty of stiles!	6.3 miles

Sun 21 November	Brookland Lake, Snodland - a flat walk around the lakes	4.5 miles
Tues 23 November	Five Oak Green to Hartlake Bridge through farmland and on along the Medway	5 miles
Sun 28 November	Circular walk from Plaxtol Spout	5 miles
<p>Non-members are welcome. Walks start at 10.00. For meeting points, details and walk leader contacts, see the programme link at: www.tonbridgandmallinramblers.org.uk.</p>		



News from Matthew Scott: Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner

PCC LAUNCHES HIS POLICE AND CRIME PLAN SURVEY

TIME TO HAVE YOUR SAY – PCC MATTHEW SCOTT LAUNCHES PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON A NEW POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PCC2021/>

If you can spare a few minutes, we would appreciate you helping us out by sharing your views.

Every four years the Police and Crime Commissioner must decide the priorities for the Kent Police Force. To do that, Matthew Scott has launched a survey and is seeking your opinion on whether the Force is performing as it should and where you think resources should be focussed in the future.

It asks what type of crimes matter most to you: it asks about victim support and vio-

lent crime, as well as road safety and antisocial behaviour. It also asks whether you've been a victim of crime and whether you have installed your own security devices, like alarms and doorbell cameras.

The results of this survey will influence the Commissioner's new Police and Crime Plan, which sets out the strategy for the police for the next four years.

If the link does not work on the pdf, it will also be in the body of the email.



Graphic advertising the Police and Crime Plan Survey

I'm happy to help you or answer questions—please do get in touch with me using the details below

Post: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Kent Police, Sutton Road, Maidstone, ME15 9BZ

Phone: 01622 677055 | **Email:** contactyourpcc@kent.police.uk | **Website:** www.kent-pcc.gov.uk

Twitter: @PCCKent | **YouTube:** "Kent PCC's Office" | **Instagram:** @kent_opcc | **Facebook:** KentPCC | **Nextdoor:** Kent PCC

Police & Crime Plan Survey

kent-pcc.gov.uk



News from Matthew Scott: Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner

PCC LAUNCHES INQUIRY INTO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

The Police and Crime Commissioner has launched his wide-ranging Inquiry looking into violent crimes against Women and Girls in Kent.

Why?

The vision is to make Kent even safer for women and girls be they at work, School, or public place, through partnership working. In the wake of recent horrific events and the Government's ongoing VAWG strategy, Matthew Scott aims to work with others to understand what more can be done, identifying gaps in provision, seeking ways to prevent these crimes affecting women and girls and improving their journey through the Criminal Justice System, building on the good work already being done in the county.

How?

The Inquiry will include various stages to discuss how we can best prevent, engage, understand the victim's journey and rehabilitate offenders. This will include: Roundtables with stakeholders, workshops with victim services and service users, and the pulling together of ten years of data, (as well as looking at how victims have been treated). Set piece events, such as the Performance and Delivery Board with the Chief Constable and the Kent Criminal Justice Board will focus solely on how Kent Police and other Criminal Justice agencies are tackling VAWG crimes will also take place.

One key part of the inquiry is a Call for evidence survey. This is to understand how women and girls in Kent feel about difference issues, like safety at home and at work or school, safety in public spaces at night or day, what prevention methods are being employed and whether victims feel they've been treated appropriately. If you live in Kent and are a woman or girl, you can get your views across by completing the survey to help make a difference to women and girls across the county.

[Link to the survey is within the email.](#)



Graphic advertising the Violence against Women and Girls Survey

I'm happy to help you or answer questions—please do get in touch with me using the details below

Post: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Kent Police, Sutton Road, Maidstone, ME15 9BZ

Phone: 01622 677055 | Email: contactyourpcc@kent.police.uk | Website: www.kent-pcc.gov.uk

Twitter: @PCCKent | YouTube: "Kent PCC's Office" | Instagram: @kent_opcc | Facebook: KentPCC | Nextdoor: Kent PCC

VAWG Inquiry

kent-pcc.gov.uk

KENT'S PLAN BEE



September 2021 Newsletter

Caterpillar Food Plants

September is the time for caterpillars to get themselves ready for winter by eating plants for energy to transform into butterflies the following spring. We put together some guides on which food plants caterpillars need for 10 different butterfly and moth species. Plant those flowers in your garden to help butterflies and moths throughout their whole lifecycle. Find the guides in our Resources and Information photo album on our Facebook Page:

Moth Caterpillar Food Plants:

<https://www.facebook.com/KentsPlanBee/photos/a.107187048198490/185346867049174>

Butterfly Caterpillar Food Plants:

<https://www.facebook.com/KentsPlanBee/photos/a.107187048198490/186008013649726>



Organic September

Soil Association created Organic September to raise awareness of climate and soil benefits of going organic. There are also lots of benefits for pollinators, as it helps improve their habitats and health. By organically growing herbs for pollinators, and soil-saving plants such as clover, you can improve the soil in your garden and improve your garden's overall health. For more information, visit the Soil Association's webpage on Organic September:

https://www.soilassociation.org/take-action/organic-living/organic-september/?fbclid=IwAR1B7RuRXyXWqc8yt9nZjqpCeBBQ_5Xq2cZUTlbZyrvU-mwFJt-SloGxypA

New Gardening Resources

Autumn is the perfect time to get out into the garden. We have produced some new Gardening for Pollinator guides to help you with planning your garden over the winter, ready for next spring. From year-round plants for pollinators, to providing for pollinators' nesting needs, and ways to manage your lawn for wildflowers, there is a guide for you and your garden. Find them in our Resources and Information photo album on our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=KentsPlanBee&set=a.107187048198490>



Autumn Gardening Tips – What to do in October?

Plant bulbs ready for next year. These are the perfect bulbs to plant for pollinators this month:



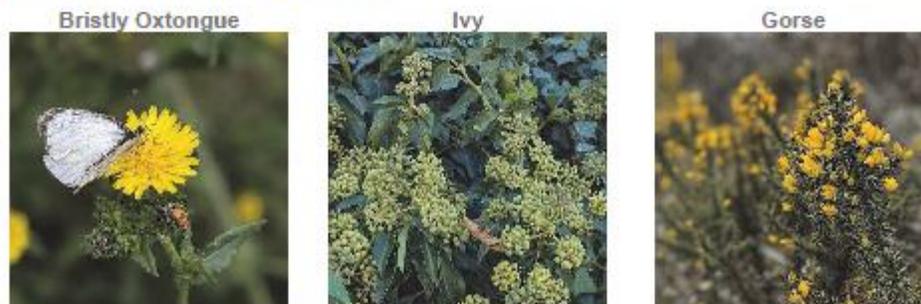
Build a bug hotel. Bug hotels are great protection for overwintering adult pollinators and their larvae. Make sure to fill your hotel with a mixture of these materials:

Bamboo Tubes	Pinecones	Leaflitter	Twigs and Dead Wood
			
Solitary Bees lay their eggs in the tubes, and then seal them up with food inside for the larvae.	Small adult beetles and flies will use the gaps between the seed scales to overwinter in.	Queen bumblebees and adult beetles may use the leaflitter to hide in during the winter.	The small nooks in the bark are great to lay eggs, and some beetle larvae eat dead wood.

Flowers for Autumn Pollinators. Perfect for feeding late-season pollinators:

Bees and Wasps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ivy • Sedum • Honeysuckle • Scabious 	 	Butterflies and Moths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honeysuckle • Ivy • Jasmine • Evening Primrose 	 
Beetles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornflowers • Ivy • Meadowsweet • Wild carrot 	 	Flies and Hoverflies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunflower • Sedum • Hemp agrimony • Blackberry 	 

Wildflowers to See in October



What did we see in September?

September was a busy month for the last of the summer's pollinators. We saw Buff-tailed bumbles stocking up on last minute pollen, and second brood Red Admirals enjoying the warmer days. And let's not forget the numerous moths and their caterpillars still about at this time of year.



Buff-tailed Bumblebee



Red Admiral



Elephant Hawk Moth caterpillar



The Herald



Archoke Plume



Garden Carpet

We would love to see your finds and are always looking for more photos to use in our Newsletters and on our Facebook page. If you would like to see your photos of pollinators featured, email your pictures to planbee@kent.gov.uk or post them on our Facebook page directly.

Gardening for a Wilder Kent Event 23rd Oct

Join Kent Wildlife Trust and their Gardening for a Wilder Kent team at an Open Garden event on the Saturday 23rd October in East Farleigh. Learn about and look for late-season pollinators, as well as a woodland walk in a beautiful 7-acre garden. This is a ticketed event so please head over to Kent Wildlife Trust's event webpage to book your ticket and avoid disappointment:

<https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/events>



Keep up to date with the latest news via our Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/KentsPlanBee>



If you received this email indirectly and would like to subscribe to our mailing list, please email us on the address below with the subject line "Sign Up". If you wish to unsubscribe from this mailing list, please email us on the address below with the subject line "Unsubscribe".

Do you have a Kent pollinator news story or event that you would like featured in our newsletter? Have you created a pollinator friendly community space? Got your neighbours together to create a row of pollinator friendly gardens? Or do you have an event about how to help Kent's pollinators you would like advertised? Email it to the address below and we will be in contact about a potential space in the Newsletter.

planbee@kent.gov.uk

All the previous editions of the Newsletter have now been added to our webpage. You can download them as PDFs or share the website address on your social media. Find all the Newsletters on the Pollinators section of Kent County Council's website, or follow this link: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/nature-and-biodiversity/pollinators/kents-plan-bee-pollinator-action-plan/kents-plan-bee-newsletter>

Edited by Hannah Simmons, Graduate Biodiversity Officer, Kent County Council.

For a Pollinator Friendly Garden of England

