



OFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Council Newsletter – April 2022

Parish Council Vacancies

Offham Parish Council Needs You!

There are two vacancies on the Parish Council. If you are interested in the vacancies you are welcome to contact the Chairman Cllr Charles Unter for more details and an informal chat: charles.unter@offham-pc.gov.uk

Further information about being a Parish Councillor is available at the National Association of Local Councils website: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/local-elections#recruitment-resources>

We look forward to hearing from you!

Parish Council April Meeting

- Brian Jones has retired after three years of service and was personally thanked by Cllr Unter on behalf of the Parish Council for the tremendous amount of work he has done and support he has provided.
- Tracy Benton has resigned from the Parish Council. Councillors would like to thank Tracy for her work on the Parish Council.
- Kent Highways have taken away the Vehicle Activated Sign on Teston Road near Aldon Lane for testing and diagnostics. Due to the age of the sign a repair may not be possible, but we are waiting to hear from the engineers.

Race Night – Save the Date



The Race Night has been re-arranged for Saturday 17th September. Further details to follow.



Offham Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Offham Village Jubilee Celebration 5th June - Afternoon Children's Party and Games followed by Evening Picnic and Band on The Green.
Save the Date! More details to Follow

Annual Parish Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended the APM on Friday 8th April. There were around 40 residents, and it was a very interesting evening. Our thanks to County Councillor Sarah Hohler, Borough Councillor Ann Kemp, Mike Rowe and Matt Christmas from Roth Creative for their presentations.

Gifts were presented to 6 of the 8 Co-ordinators who set up and ran the Offham Community Network, with grateful thanks from the Village for everything they did – Angela Unter, Caroline Dyer, Jane Jordan, Janette Burnard, Fiona Lloyd-Williams and Erica Martin. Lynn Nelson and Kathryn Frankling were unable to attend but their gifts will be presented at a later date. Thanks go to everyone involved in the OCN, particularly Reverend David Green and St Michael's Church, without whom the group could not have run.

The Kent Association of Local Council's Community Award was presented to Caroline Dyer for her long standing and tireless work in the village. Caroline has made outstanding contributions to the community of Offham, including being a member of the Village Hall Committee, a Parish Councillor and the founding member of the Offham Community Network.

Offham Community Awards were given to Rachel Godfrey and to George Rothschild for their enormous contributions to the village over the years. Rachel's Certificate and a framed photo were presented to her by Cllr Unter. George was unable to attend and his certificate will be presented at a later date. Photos of these presentations to follow shortly.

KCC Bus Funding Reduction **Public consultation**

There is a consultation available online at <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/bus-funding-reductions> into proposed reductions to the bus service. Under the proposals, the Number 70 Nu Venture bus which serves Offham would be withdrawn. The consultation is open until **20th April 2022**.



County Councillor Sarah Hohler

- County Councillor Hohler's Annual Report is available on the Parish Council's website.
- She has been County Councillor for nearly 33 years.
- She is Deputy Cabinet Member at KCC for Communities, which covers 13 different services including Community Wardens, Libraries, Coroners and Public Rights of Way.
- It has been a challenging year with lockdown but has enabled fresh thinking about how to do things.
- She is also a trustee for Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority, Kent Music, Rochester Bridge Trust and Turner Contemporary, representing KCC.
- A lot of work and informal consultations are being carried out around Kent libraries

- Kent Country Parks were very important during lockdown, being popular and well used. There are 12 KCC Country Parks. She is trying to connect them to other open spaces. There are 4,827 miles of country paths in Kent and 12,000 hectares of publicly available space
- The Recycling Consultation provided an extraordinary number of responses who liked the booking system, and staff like it also. You can now book on the day, and 40% of bookings are for that day.
- The recycling site at Allington will be opened in May. It is going to be one of the most environmentally friendly waste disposal ones in the country.
- The Green Agenda has a new plan. We do want farmland and environmentally friendly ways to produce food. There are more vineyards in Kent than anywhere else in the country. We are renowned for cutting edge technology and innovation in food. DEFRA does give grants to help farmers but you must be alert to that.
- There is too much building on farm land. It would be good if farmers are confident in producing food and don't sell for building
- She is passionate about road safety. It is essential that anyone walking and cycling should wear bright clothing.



Borough Councillor Ann Kemp

- The Annual Report from Borough Councillors Kemp and Montague is available on the Parish Council Website.
- Things are getting back to normal at TMBC. Everyone was working from home and still a lot of people are. They are trialling to see if that will work on a permanent basis. They are only use half of office space so they have not paid to heat the old Gibson building which has added to savings. TMBC have to find £2.5m savings
- Council meetings are back in the Council Chamber and can be watched on You Tube.
- TMBC took part in Operation Assist going out with the police and other agencies to tackle fly tipping. The only way to stop fly tipping is to catch them red handed so if you see anything please take a photo and please report it.
- Household Waste collections have been a problem over last year so she is pleased it is back on schedule.
- The Local plan was rejected by the Inspector, so they are working on a new plan and hope it will be adopted in 2024/2025.
- There has been a big changeover of staff in the planning department and they are still settling down with new people. There is a back log and matters may be taking longer than normal so please bear with them.
- The Boundary Commission decided to group Offham with East and West Malling.
- Cllr Kemp has been a member since 1999 and started representing Oast Ward (Offham, Addington, Stansted and Trottiscliffe) and then the Downs Ward in the early 2000's.
- She is on the Planning Committee at TMBC, having previously been Chairman. She is now Chairman of the Audit Committee and Vice Chairman of the Licensing Committee. The auditors report this year for TMBC has been without blemish and says the Borough Council are very good value for money.

'Men's Shed'

This is very successful with at least a dozen people attending each week. Meetings are at the Kings Arm's every Thursday from 10am – 11.30am. Details are available later in the newsletter. Please pass the information on to anyone who you think would benefit from being part of the group.

Brown Lidded Bins

There is an issue with plastic contamination being found in garden waste (brown lidded bins) that goes to Blaise Farm IVC. This should not be in there.

Information about what waste goes into which bin can be found on the website at <https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/bins-waste/household-waste-rubbish-collections>.

Parish Council and Village Events

- May Day – 30th April 2022

Platinum Jubilee Street Party – 5th June 2022 – think it is worth 'advertising' the Jubilee celebration rather more than a brief mention and 'details to follow'. Perhaps prominently something like:

" Offham Village Jubilee Celebration 5th June - Afternoon Children's Party and Games followed by Evening Picnic and Band on The Green" Save the Date - Details to Follow

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- NSPCC Garden Safari – Sunday 3rd July 2022
- Race Night with Malling Lions – Saturday 17th September 2022

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 3rd May 2022 at 7.30pm.**



Angela Unter



Caroline Dyer



Jane Jordan



Thanking the Offham Community Network



Erica Martin



Janette Burnard



Fiona Lloyd-Williams

***Presentation by Cllr Charles Unter, Chairman of Offham Parish Council
to the Area Co-ordinators***

KCC BUS FUNDING REDUCTION

Some local bus services in the Tonbridge & Malling area which are '*socially-desirable but commercially-unviable*' are provided with financial support from Kent County Council (KCC). KCC is now faced with difficulties funding them in the future and propose to alter or withdraw services including the following in Summer 2022.

Tonbridge and Malling KENT KARRIER – to be discontinued without replacement.

Bus 58 (Trottscliffe/Ryarsh/West Malling/East Malling/Maidstone Hospital) – to be discontinued without replacement.

Bus 59 (Grafty Green/Kingswood/Chart Sutton/ Boughton Monchelsea/Sutton Road) – Nu-Venture buses to be discontinued without replacement.

Bus 70 (Borough Green/Offham/West Malling/Lunsford Park) – to be discontinued without replacement.

Bus 88 (Kings Hill/Barming/Maidstone) – to be discontinued without replacement.

Bus 208 (East Peckham/Tonbridge/Pembury) – Go-Coach journeys to be withdrawn without replacement.

Bus 222 (Borough Green/Ightham/Plaxtol/Tonbridge) – to be reduced on Mondays to Fridays and withdrawn without replacement on Saturdays.

Bus 502 (West Malling/Kings Hill/Wrotham School) – to be discontinued without replacement.

Bus S4 (Shipbourne – Plaxtol – Sevenoaks) – school times - to be discontinued without replacement.

Buses X1/X2 (Kings Hill/West Malling Station/Maidstone) – to be discontinued without replacement.

If you have any concerns about any of the above proposals, please let KCC have your views at once and **NO LATER THAN 20 APRIL!**

Please check the KCC website – look for

KCC BUS FUNDING REDUCTION – Public consultation

and complete the questionnaire there – by 20 April.

KCC will only review their proposals if they receive views and comments from the affected passengers, community groups and stakeholders.

Don't leave it to others to take part in this consultation!



**PUBLIC
NOTICE**

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
Comp Lane, Offham
(PROHIBITION OF DRIVING)
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
TEMPORARY ORDER APRIL 2022

To allow pole testing works to be carried out, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Comp Lane, Offham.

A closure is planned from 26th April 2022 for up to 1 day between the hours of 09:30 and 15:30, or where stated on a valid Permit (BC008PTMS430601-02 - Openreach). The scheduled dates may vary for these works with appropriate signage displayed on site and the works will be displayed on [One.Network](#)

Comp Lane will be closed between the junctions with Teston Road and Bramble Hill Road, to the extent indicated by signs and barriers on site.

The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while pole testing works are undertaken by Openreach.

The alternative route for any through traffic is via Comp Lane, B2016 Seven Mile Lane, Teston Road and vice versa.

For information regarding this closure please contact Openreach on 0800 023 2023, who will be able to assist with the scope of these works.

*Simon Jones, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport.
Kent County Council, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ*



Offham Parish Council

Race Night

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday 17th September 2022
Offham Village Hall

Doors open 7pm Racing starts 7:30pm
Tickets include Fish and Chip Supper
Bring your own drinks and cash for the tote and the auction

Run by The Malling Lions





THE
KINGS ARMS
'OFFHAM'

MENS SUPPORT GROUP

EVERY THURSDAY 10AM
**Free Tea/Coffee and
Biscuits**

The Kings Arms, Teston Rd, West Malling,
Offham, ME19 5NR

**Well Being Support Group for
Men**

This is an Initiative of Offham Parish Council.



TMBC – Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery funding

With energy prices soaring there's never been a better time to find out about funding for energy saving improvements to help keep your home warm while saving you money on your energy bills and helping reduce carbon emissions.

Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery funding could make your home warmer and help save on your energy bills. Please find details below.

Can I get these free energy saving improvements?

To get these improvements your home should have:

- an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rated Band E, F or G (D rated can also be considered).

And

- You are likely to be an eligible household if you are on a low income and one of the following applies:
 - If your annual household income is under £30,000, or under £20,000 after rent or mortgage costs,
 - Your household is on means-tested benefits.
 - An allowance will also be made for the number of children in your household, or if you have recently lost income.

What energy saving improvements can I get for my home?

These are the energy and cost-saving upgrades that you may be able to receive in your house:

- Insulation & ventilation upgrades (to keep your home comfortable in both the winter and summer and help cut your energy bills)
- An upgrade to a low carbon heating system (to cut your carbon emissions so not gas or oil boilers)
- Heating Controls (that help save you money because you only use the heat when you need it)
- Energy Efficient Hot Water Solution (keeping your water warm for longer and saving you money)
- Solar Thermals panels (to heat your hot water)
- Solar PV panels (to generate free electricity)
- Energy Efficiency lighting (cheaper to run)

The upgrades offered will be based on the results of a free survey.

If you have a flat or maisonette not all these improvements can be done but if you would like, we can come and survey your home and talk with you about finding the best solution for your home.

Who pays for the energy saving improvement?

The funding has been allocated to local authorities from central government.

Who is carrying out the work?

All finance applications are made and managed seamlessly on your behalf by Warmworks (managing agent), who also manage all the installation works.

How is the funding being distributed?

Funding is being distributed on a first come first serve basis.

How do I find out more?

Call the Energy Saving Trust free on 0808 196 8255 or visit <http://surveys.est.org.uk/s/GreenHomesGrantSchemeLAD> for more information and to complete the online application form.



May 2022 group walks

Our friendly group is one of 13 Ramblers groups in Kent and part of the national Ramblers walking organisation. We explore the beautiful countryside of Tonbridge and Malling and surrounding areas.

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. 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.

We look forward to welcoming you on a walk soon!

Sunday 1 May	Circular walk from Plaxtol Spout (moderate difficulty).	5 miles
Thursday 5 May	A walk girdling the hilltop village of Goudhurst with lovely views. Mostly tracks and fields and some quiet roads. Some stiles and hills and a steep climb at the end of the walk (moderate difficulty).	6.5 miles
Wednesday 11 May	Circular walk from Leeds village through Kingswood and Broomfield. Dogs welcome but must be on leads in the castle grounds (moderate difficulty).	5 miles
Sunday 15 May	Circular walk from Ryarsh to the Pilgrim's Way, including a gentle climb to the Pilgrim's Way (moderate difficulty).	5.5 miles
Tuesday 17 May	Leisurely circular walk from Frittenden via Sissinghurst Castle Lots of stiles, some sections on quiet lanes.	5.5 miles
Sunday 22 May	Circular walk in the beautiful countryside around Plaxtol (moderate difficulty).	5 miles
Wednesday 25 May	Circular walk from Boxley with a steep climb to the North Downs Way. Then along the Pilgrims Way, returning via vineyards and farmland (moderate difficulty).	6 miles
Sunday 29 May	Circular walk from Yotes Court, down Gover Hill and along the Greensand Way to Plaxtol, returning via Hurst Wood and the Swanton Valley. Some steep hills (moderate difficulty).	7.5 miles
Walks usually start mid-morning. There's a short break half-way through the walk (bring refreshments) and we usually finish near a pub. For start times and walk leader contacts, see www.tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk or email info@tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk .		

Tonbridge & Malling Police Community Safety Newsletter

Offham

Contacts

csu.tonbridge.and.malling@kent.police.uk Contact your local team

<https://www.kent.police.uk/> Report online, check statistics, information on your area.

<https://www.crashmap.co.uk/> Road Safety Information

March 2022

Information provided by: PCSO 59862 James Robinson Community Safety Unit

Crime Series or Crimes of Note

Nothing to report

Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:

Nothing to report

Items of good work:

17 March – Speedwatch on Teston Road jct with Comp Lane.

Tonbridge & Malling Police Community Safety Newsletter

Crime Prevention Information:

- As spring approaches the number of shed break-ins can increase. Items such as lawnmowers, bicycles, golf clubs, fishing tackle and power tools can all be kept insecurely in sheds and these can all be easy pickings for thieves to target.
 - The tips below can help to prevent you from becoming a victim of this crime.
 - Install a shed alarm, with a notice displayed to warn thieves that it is not worth the effort of breaking in. The alarms are easy to install and can be purchased at most DIY stores.
 - Make sure the door is always securely locked.
 - Ensure all valuable property is marked with your postcode. Post coding property makes your belongings very unattractive to a thief by making items easily identifiable and difficult to sell.
 - Lock up pedal cycles. Use bike locks and chain them inside to other large items or to the shed.
 - Keep a record of the make, model and ID numbers of bicycles and all other equipment and take photographs of unusual items.
 - Check your household insurance policy to ensure that the value of things stored inside is covered by your contents' policy.
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- Please make all reports of ASB via 101, the online reporting form or 999 in an emergency.
 - The Community Support Unit can gain a better picture where reports have an official reference number so we can collate data effectively.