



OFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Council Newsletter – September 2022



Offham Parish Councillors are deeply saddened by the news of the passing of Queen Elizabeth II and offer their sincere condolences to the Royal Family at this time.

September Parish Council Meeting

- Councillors were sad to accept the retirement of Robin Taylor from the Parish Council. Robin has served on the Parish Council for many years, and will be much missed. There are now two vacancies on the Parish Council.
- If you are interested or would like to find out more about the role, please contact Cllr Charles Unter who is happy to chat through what this involves with you, with no obligation. charles.unter@offham-pc.gov.uk
- Residents reported problems with a large number of flies from Blaise Farm, from the Anaerobic Digestion Plant (AD). It is hoped this doesn't recur next year, but if you experience any problems you should contact the site direct and telephone the Environment Agency (EA incident reporting line - **0800 80 70 600**). Contact Details are at the end of the newsletter.
- Councillors are planning to repair the Well on the Green shortly.
- Highways issues continue to concern residents and the Parish Council. The Parish Council is working with the authorities who have the power to take action and putting together a Highways Improvement Plan. KCC Highways approve whether work can be done or not, and if they will not pay what the cost to the Parish Council will be. Residents can report highways issues to KCC Highways direct <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>. To report any emergency issues to KCC Highways outside of normal office hours (Monday – Friday, 9am till 5pm), please telephone **03000 41 91 91**.
- The Village Green is owned by the Parish Council and is a public open space. Details of byelaws which govern the Green are available on the Parish Council website. Residents and visitors are asked not to drive or park on grassy areas of the Green, which include the area opposite the pub by Hayes Lane. This prevents damage.
- The Men's Shed continues to be very successful. The Parish Council has been funding this project, since the monies provided by the Offham Community Network have run out. Councillors are investigating new sources of funding and fund raising to ensure this project continues.
- The 2023 Calendar will be available for purchase shortly, raising important funds for Parish Council projects, such as renovating the play area.

Kent County Council

Arriva Strike Action

On Thursday (1st September), KCC were advised of industrial action being taken by Arriva employees and the Unite Union in response to a dispute over pay.

The first day of action was **Monday 5th September**. Further strikes could follow on 16th, 20th and 30th September unless a resolution between the parties is reached.

This is entirely a matter between Arriva and their employees, which KCC cannot influence. KCC understands the impact this will have on residents and has sought assurance from Arriva that talks to resolve the dispute and avoid further action remain ongoing.

The action is expected to include the majority of bus drivers and will mean **the majority of Arriva Bus Services in Kent will not operate on the days when action is being taken.** We are arranging to send communications advising passengers to **assume that no Arriva service will operate including buses for school children.**

The timing coincides with the first full day of the new school year and will cause significant disruptions for schools, students and parents. While services provided by other operators are not affected, these will not have capacity to absorb all other passengers and so parents and students who usually travel on Arriva services are advised that they will need to make alternative arrangements for travel to and from school. It will also undermine our efforts to replace other services that have been cancelled by some operators, in some instances creating capacity pressures that could not have been anticipated.

Unfortunately, the scale of Arriva's operation means that there is no scope for KCC to consider the provision of replacement services particularly at the moment when a shortage of drivers is making the operation of the current network a challenge for operators in its own right.

Cllr Sarah Hohler's Report:

- Beware of a Citizens Advice SCAM
- BUSES: Our officers have been working hard with bus companies over the summer to secure routes to schools. Children going to Maidstone schools should have transport from the Aylesford area and to Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells from the Sevenoaks area, which includes Wrotham.
- The bad news is that Arriva bus company have announced strike days on 5th, 16th, 20th and 30th September (if agreement is not reached). This will be very inconvenient for parents and children and it is likely that buses run by different operators will already be full.
- The better news is that those routes which KCC consulted on ending as they were being subsidised, notably the 58, will run until further notice so please continue to use them. Operators will accept Kent Travel Saver and other bus passes. www.kent.gov.uk/buses for further information.
- From October this year until March next year we have some emergency funding. We need to assess the extra funding from government and how it can be used to help.
- At the time of booking at our 19 HWRCs, customers were asked if they would be prepared to answer questions as part of a survey: there were about 11,000 responses. 95% said they were either satisfied or extremely satisfied and that it was easy to book. 55% booked on the day as the public requested in an earlier survey.
- The new suggestion, which we are trialling, is for extra help for the elderly, disabled and pregnant unloading their rubbish (not with heavy builders' bags or hippo bags!) There is now a flag on the form when you book so staff will know, when they see the car, that extra help is needed.
- In October we are also trialling furniture disposal in co-operation with 'Making a Difference to Maidstone' at our Tovil site. The furniture will either go to those in need or to a charity shop. Other re-use options are being examined, including books.
- KCC's Waste Management Team has been shortlisted out of 307 local authorities as 'Best Team of the Year' by the Local Authority Advisory Committee.
- We have just finished a survey asking the public for their ideas on energy saving at home. Further advice and ways to ask for help will follow.
- The Local Government Association is calling on government to ban HGV drivers from using car sat navs as they do not give bridge heights, narrow roads and roads unsuitable for

HGVs. I hope they have more luck than I have had with my campaign to government on this same issue!

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

In October, we should be notified by Government that our UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan has been approved. The Investment Plan includes a number of proposed projects that will be delivered over the next three years. To find out more about our Investment Plan go to [UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council \(tmbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/uk-shared-prosperity-fund)

In order to measure the impact of these projects once they have happened, we are looking to gather some baseline data and get views from local residents and businesses about their thoughts on things as they are now. It is really important to have views from as many people as possible so we get an accurate picture of perceptions. The survey can be accessed by going to <https://forms.office.com/r/eitjLbS4t6> . It should only take around 4 minutes to complete!

The deadline for responses is **30 September 2022**.

Parish Council and Village Events

Postponement of Race Night. Following the sad news of the death of Queen Elizabeth II, there are restrictions in place for the normal activities of public bodies during the period of National Mourning. This includes the holding of events such as our Race Night on Saturday 17th September.

The Race Night is therefore postponed and an alternative date is being sought for early in the New Year.

For those who have purchased tickets, the Parish Council can hold the money and ask you nearer the "yet to be decided" date to confirm your attendance.

If you would like your money returned to you now, please contact the person from whom you purchased your ticket and the appropriate arrangements will be made.

Thank you for your continued support.

- Men's Shed – The Kings Arms, every Thursday 10am-11.30am
- Offham Food Bank – every other Monday from The Kings Arms (offhamvillagehall@outlook.com)

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 6th September 2022** at 7.30pm.

PARISH COUNCIL OFFHAM
OF

VACANCY FOR A PARISH COUNCILLOR

There is a vacancy on the above Parish Council due to:

RETIREMENT

For an election to be held to fill the casual vacancy for the above Parish, a request in writing to the Proper Officer must be received within 14 days (dies non) from the date shown at the bottom of this notice from ten electors from the Parish.

The address for the Proper Officer is:

Ms Julie Beilby
Chief Executive & Proper Officer
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building
Gibson Drive
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4LZ

If no valid request is received, the Parish Council will fill the vacancy by co-option.

Signed **Lynne Mackie**
Clerk to the Parish Council

Date 07.09.22

Notes

1. Dies Non are 'working days', so exclude Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.
2. For further information about the election process, please contact Electoral Services at Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. Visit www.tmbc.gov.uk/voting, email voting@tmbc.gov.uk or call 01732 876022.
3. For further information about the co-option process, which the Parish Council will follow if no valid request for an election is received, please contact the Parish Clerk.

BLAISE FARM IVC



- Blaise Landline – 01732 873215 (07.00 – 17.30)
- blaise.admin@newearthgroup.co.uk
- Shelley Stimson, SHEQ Officer – 07551 464847, shelley.Stimson@newearthgroup.co.uk
- Neil Winchester, Site Manager - neil.winchester@newearthgroup.co.uk, 07540 924626.

BLAISE FARM AD PLANT



- Darren Smith, Environmental & Compliance Manager - d.smith@b-ne.uk

BLAISE FARM

You should contact the **operator** about any concerns first since they are best able to respond to queries and address any issues that may arise. If this does not secure a satisfactory outcome you should then contact **KCC** for issues relating to the permitted minerals (quarrying) and waste management development and the **Environment Agency** who have issued the Environmental Permits and are the Primary Regulator.

- Kent County Council (Minerals and Waste Planning): planning.applications@kent.gov.uk
- In order for the Environment Agency to act upon and hold a formal record of complaints please report all complaints to their incident reporting line which is **0800 80 70 60**.
- Environment Agency - enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

If you are making complaints to KCC and the Environment Agency it would be useful to also copy in:

- Kent County Council Councillor Sarah Hohler - sarah.hohler@kent.gov.uk
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council - environmental.protection@tmbc.gov.uk

Ann Kemp, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Councillor - ann.kemp@tmbc.gov.uk
Piers Montague, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Councillor - piers.montague@tmbc.gov.uk

- Offham Parish Council – clerk@offham-pc.gov.uk

Please do not copy all emails to KCC, TMBC and the EA, but contact the sites in the first instance. For the waste sites it may not be clear which plant is responsible for the issues you are concerned about, so it is suggested that you report to both the IVC Site and the AD Site who will be able to identify which is responsible.

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

August 2022

Information provided by: **PCSO 59862 James Robinson** Community Safety Unit

Crime Series or Crimes of Note

8 August – Teston road. Theft of trailer.

Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:

Items of good work:

Tonbridge & Malling Police Community Safety Newsletter

Crime Prevention Information:

- Number plate theft is on the rise again. Please ensure you have tamper proof screws holding your number plate on to the vehicle.
 - The tips below can help to prevent you from becoming a victim of 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 report non-emergency crimes online where possible.
 - The Community Support Unit can gain a better picture where reports have an official reference number so we can collate data effectively.



**Kent
Police**

For more information about policing in your area,
visit www.kent.police.uk

To report a non-urgent crime online, visit
www.kent.police.uk/contactus

Tonbridge & Malling Police Community Safety Newsletter



Be the first to find out what's happening in **your area**

My Community Voice is a two-way engagement tool brought to you by Kent Police.

Whether you live, work or socialise in Kent or Medway, My Community Voice provides real-time messages directly from our police officers, staff and volunteers, about matters that may affect you or your community.

Your voice is important to us and we want to hear what concerns or views you may have in the area that is important to you. You can also share messages with others or reply to our alerts if you have information to share.

From crime prevention advice, to the latest updates on scams, appeals or events – you control what information you receive and how you receive it, by email, text or voice message.



Sign up today or to find out more visit www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk

Report a crime

Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report

Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact

In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**

If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service 18000. Or text us on 599 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service.

www.kent.police.uk   



**Kent
Police**

For more information about policing in your area,
visit www.kent.police.uk

To report a non-urgent crime online, visit
www.kent.police.uk/contactus

SEE SOMEONE BEING
HARASSED IN PUBLIC?

WHEN YOU FEEL SAFE, ASK THEM...

'ARE YOU OKAY?'

THOSE THREE LITTLE WORDS
LET THEM KNOW
YOU STAND BY THEM, AND THAT
STREET HARASSMENT IS NEVER OKAY.

IF YOU SEE IT. ASK IT.





October 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 a couple of walks with us, to help you decide if you'd like to join. If you're new to our walks, it's a good idea to contact the walk leader beforehand to check that their walk will suit you.

For details of all our upcoming walks and walk leader contacts, see www.tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk. Why not join us on a walk soon?

Sunday 9 October	Otford to Shoreham circular walk with one steep climb at the start and a few stiles. Great views across the Darenth Valley. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 miles
Wednesday 12 October	A walk from Meopham Green to Luddesdown, then along the Wealdway and back via Priestwood Green. Moderate difficulty.	6.5 miles
Sunday 16 October	Circular walk from Knockholt Pound (moderate difficulty).	5 miles
Wednesday 19 October	Fairly flat and leisurely circular walk from Wateringbury.	4 miles
Sunday 23 October	An undulating walk from Meopham Green, along woodland paths, tracks and fields with lovely views across the valley. Very few stiles; some hills and uneven ground. Moderate difficulty.	4.5 miles
Thursday 27 October	Bough Beach circular walk through woods and meadows with great views of the reservoir and its bird population. Seven stiles; moderate difficulty.	6 miles
Sunday 30 October	Circular walk to view the ancient sites in the countryside around Aylesford with spectacular views from the North Downs Way at Blue Bell Hill. Moderate difficulty.	6 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.		