

# Otford Parish Council

## April Newsletter 2003

### No 111

Kent and South & South East England  
Village of the Year 2002

Clerk: Mrs. B.J. Darby  
The School House, 21, High Street, Otford,  
Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 5PG  
Telephone/answerphone: 01959 524808  
Fax: 01959 525298  
[otfordpc@btinternet.com](mailto:otfordpc@btinternet.com)  
Office hours 8.30 to 12.30 Mon to Fri

### Otford High Street Closure Bridge Repairs

The following is a letter from the Engineer in charge Mr David MacKay

"As term consultant to Kent County Council, Babtie Group are currently preparing a scheme to replace the bridge deck of Otford 2 Bridge, which crosses the River Darent between The Horns Public House to the east and the Roman Catholic Church of the Most Holy Trinity to the west. This is necessary as the existing bridge is in poor condition.

In order to advise the residents, and other interested parties in Otford I would normally undertake a letter drop in the area. However, Otford Parish Council have kindly agreed to publish this letter in their newsletter as a means of advertising the matter to as wide an audience as possible for which I thank them.

Unfortunately, in order to carry out the work it will be necessary to completely close the road in the immediate vicinity of the bridge for a period of up to 10 weeks. A temporary footbridge will be installed with pedestrian access maintained across the river at all times.

In order to avoid the village fete and procession and also to carry out the majority of work during the school summer holidays it is proposed to close the road from:

**Mon 23rd June – Fri 29<sup>th</sup> August**

Advance warning signs will be erected at least two weeks prior to commencement and a fully signed diversion route will be put in place at the start of the closure.

I would like to take this opportunity to apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused by the road closure and assure you that every effort will be made to minimise this throughout the period of the work.

If you have any queries at any time or wish to discuss matters further please do not hesitate to contact me on 01622 666 141"

Further information will be provided in the May and June newsletters.

### Station Road Pedestrian Refuge

The Parish Council has been informed by Kent Highways, that the starting date for the construction of the pedestrian refuge on Station Road will be **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April**.

This refuge will allow pedestrians to stagger their movements across a busy section of carriageway. They are also looking at reducing traffic speeds on the approaches through the proposed extension of the central hatching, on this section of the A225.

The provision of this refuge will improve the pedestrian links with the railway station, and in order to improve public transport links they are providing an additional bus stop, on the Otford bound carriageway of the A225. This will be enhanced by additional pedestrian improvements through the construction of a hard standing area on the section of land between Station Approach and Bambrooks entrance, therefore enabling pedestrians a safer crossing of these various access points.

It is proposed to further reduce traffic speeds into the Station access through the proposal of a raised area of carriageway at the entry point. This raised area, in association with the previous proposals will allow for a clearer definition of the vehicular accesses, and the related turning movements in this area of Otford.

The work will take approx 2 to 3 weeks to complete.

### Otford No 1 Bridge

This is the bridge over the River Darent and dates from 1968 when the original bridge was washed away in the floods. The existing bridge now needs repainting (in pale green) and this will start on **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April**.

Babtie Group assure us that the pavements and roadway will still be available for pedestrian and vehicular access but please – 'Mind the Paint'

### Annual Assembly

There was a disappointingly low turnout of residents at **your** Annual Parish meeting on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March. Only 19 residents turned out on the night and the Parish Council thanks them for coming to hear the council give a resume of the past year and the hopes for the year ahead. Congratulations to Graham Webb of Coombe Road who was presented with the Kirsch Cup for his outstanding achievements as a sporting all rounder.

### Litter Picking

Please do not drop litter in this village, there is no need to do so as rubbish bins are provided at a number of locations. If all residents would pick up a piece of litter as you walk around the village it would help keep our village as lovely as it should be as befits our title of Village of The Year for Kent and South and South East England.

## Dog Fouling

Despite many pleas to dog walkers to clear up their pet's deposits on our public recreation grounds in the centre of the village and Hale Lane, it is becoming an even greater problem – and a serious health hazard. When football players have to clear up the pitch before they can play their game, it is a disgrace. Of course, failure to clear up is an offence: in an adjoining village a thoughtless dog walker was convicted simply because another resident reported the matter to the police and was prepared to give evidence. It needs such a public – spirited act by an Otford resident to bring home to the small minority of dog walkers the error of their ways.

Always take a plastic bag with you when you go for a walk and use it please. Bags can be put in ordinary waste bins but there are now dog bins on the Recreation Ground, Hale Lane and Telston Park (Plastic carrier bags are available from the parish office when open) Remember that under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 the law says that all dog owners must clean up after their dog fouls in a public place. If you don't you risk having to pay a fine of up to a maximum of £1,000 or a fixed penalty of £25. Dog wardens do patrol the area and every effort will be taken to discover who is responsible and when caught, fined.



## Otford Gardeners' Society

BBC Radio 4's popular programme 'Gardeners' Question Time' will be recording two programmes in the Otford Memorial Hall on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May by invitation of Otford Gardeners' Society. On the panel will be Bob Flowerdew, John Cushnie and Matthew Biggs. Entrance is by ticket only. Society members have until 17<sup>th</sup> April to apply for free tickets. Anyone who would like to be at this recording should call Janet Finney on 01959 523760 or Doug Dickerson on 01959 524183 for complimentary tickets. This recording will replace the lecture from Colin Morgan, the curator of the Bedgebury Pinetum though the visit to Bedgebury on 14<sup>th</sup> May will still go ahead.

## Otford & District Historical Society

The April meeting takes place on Wednesday April 16<sup>th</sup> at 8pm. The talk is 'Paddling on the Thames: the History of the General Steam Navigation Company' by Peter Gurnett. Membership is only £3 per year and non-members are always welcome to each talk for only £1.

## Police Surgery

The next Police Surgery with PC Jackie Allen will be held Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May between 10am and 12 noon in School House. If you have any problems or concerns about crime please come and see her.

## Sevenoaks Police Station

Sevenoaks Police Station is shortly moving to Epicurus House, Akehurst Lane, Sevenoaks, TN13 1JN (by the vehicle entrance to Waitrose). Watch the press and this space for their new telephone number.

## Village Community Performance

A meeting is being held in the side room of the Church Hall on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April at 8pm, to read through 'Joe Carpenter and Son' an English Nativity Play by Graham Clarke. It is to be performed in the Parish Church of St Bartholomew's on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November 2003. They will be very pleased to see anyone interested in acting or assisting in any capacity. As it is a 'community production' all are welcome. For further information please phone the Director, Tibbs Finch on 01959 523581

## St Bart's Church Hall – Clean Up

Are you at a loose end on Bank Holiday Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April, St Bartholomew's Church Hall is having a working party to spring clean and freshen up for all its many users. A lick of paint is needed, lots of dusting in high places, oven cleaning and a general smartening up. They would love to see you anytime between 10am and 4pm for an hour – or more if possible. The idea is that 'Many Hands Make Light Work'. Take yourselves only – in old clothes. They will provide the equipment. Any queries to Sally Woestmann on 01959 523392. Thank you in anticipation.

## Wine Club Talk

On Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April, the Otford & District Wine Club are having a talk by Mr Jim Murray in the Village Memorial Hall beginning at 8pm. Jim was a Foreign Correspondent with the Daily Express for many years and has had a long and colourful career in journalism. It is sure to be a very interesting talk, so be certain to put the date in your diaries. Bring your own liquid refreshments but cheese and biscuits will be provided. As usual it is free to members but visitors will be welcome for a small charge.

## Another Applause Production

This time at Bradbourne School on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm – *Batanai Marimba* – a group of African Dancers – 'Rivetingly visual, Gloriously musical, Entirely danceable'. Tickets at £10 (£5 for children) from 01732 469160

## Otford Methodist Wednesday Afternoons Women's Fellowship

Everyone is welcome to attend these meetings which take place at 2.30pm in the Methodist Church Hall and a list of next two months speakers are as follows: -

### April

30<sup>th</sup> – Jean Bright – *Just a note*

### May

7<sup>th</sup> - Robert Chaver Vicar of St Lukes

14<sup>th</sup> – Rosemary Clary – *Why rituals?*

21<sup>st</sup> – Anniversary service – leader Valerie Ruddle

28<sup>th</sup> – Tea at Ellenors

## Sponsored Walk at Lullingstone

In aid of Cheshire Homes, Demelza House Children's Hospice and other children's charities on **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May**. Choice of 4,5,5.5 or 10 miles. Ring 01732 454011 for info and sponsorship form

## Concessionary Fares

From April 1<sup>st</sup>, men aged 60 and above will be entitled to one of four travel concessions that previously were unavailable until they were 65. Until now, only women were entitled to travel concessions from the age of 60 as well as some disabled people.

However, a change in the law has meant that all councils have to provide the same entitlement to both men and women of the same age. Both men and women aged 60 and older, and some disabled people of all ages can apply for help with bus or rail travel from one of the following options:

- ◆ An off-peak District bus permit allowing bus journeys at a flat rate of 20p at certain times.

From 1 April 2003 to 30 June 2003 - £6.25

For a full year from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2003 - £25

- ◆ An off-peak Kent Countrywide bus permit allowing half fare travel throughout Kent at certain times

No charge

- ◆ An all-day Kent Countrywide bus permit allowing half fare travel throughout Kent at anytime

From 1 April 2003 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2003 - £7.50

For a full year from 1 July 2003 - £30

- ◆ A rail warrant which gives discount when used as a part payment towards a Senior Citizen Railcard

No charge

The concessions are available at the District Council's offices in Sevenoaks. Applications can be made by post providing the relevant proof of eligibility and payment, if applicable, is sent at the time of the application. (Application forms can be obtained from the Parish Council office)

For more information, please contact the Concessionary Fare Helpline on 01732 227158.

## Citizens Advice Bureau

A recent survey for the Citizens Advice Bureaux Service revealed that around the UK, CABx are currently dealing with a staggering 1.2 billion worth of debt. The average total debt per household is £10,700, while the average household income is only £800 a month. The main trigger factors to a debt crisis are job loss and low income while relationship breakdown and illness are also significant.

Here are some key tips for dealing with debt:

- Don't panic and don't ignore the problem
- Avoid borrowing further to try to pay off existing debt
- Talk to your creditors
- Work out which debts are your priorities – rent, council tax, child maintenance, utilities – and pay them first. Don't fall into the trap of paying whoever shouts loudest first
- Work out a budget that covers all your income and essential outgoings
- Think twice before paying for debt advice
- Seek help from Sevenoaks CAB

To find out more contact the trained volunteer advisers at The Library, Buckhurst Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1HW. The office is open from 10am to 3pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Wednesday 10am and 1pm appointments for form filling

( Tel No : 01732 - 454443

( Fax No : 01732 - 463164

( e-mail : [7oakscab@dial.pipex.com](mailto:7oakscab@dial.pipex.com)

web page : [www.7oakscab@dial.pipex.com](http://www.7oakscab@dial.pipex.com)

An adviser from CAB is at the Otford Parish Council office on the 1st Tuesday of each month between 10am and 12 noon. Please use this local service. The next surgery will be on 6<sup>th</sup> May.

## Subsidised Waste Collection

The District Council agreed last year to reduce its charge for green garden waste sacks from £7 to £6. Householders in receipt of Income Support, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Means Tested Job Seekers can purchase a roll of sacks for just £3. These are available from the Parish Office.

## Musicathon

This event run by Amhurst Rotary Club takes place on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June** in Blighs Car Park in Sevenoaks from 10.00am.

Are you musical – do you love playing your favourite music – classical or pop – with your friends?

If you do ring Ray Gulliver on 01959 523010 or Philip Spicer on 01732 469160 and talk about it. Its all in aid of Hospice in the Weald, the Demelza Trust, Save the Children etc.

## Planning

The following applications were considered by the Parish Council at its meeting in April. For more information, please contact the Parish Clerk or the Strategic Services Director, Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent on 01732 227000



### a. New applications

SE/02/02723 91 Willow Park  
Rear conservatory

SE/02/02811 J Sainsbury Otford Road  
Extension of supermarket and associated works, revised car park layout

SE/03/00320 52a Pilgrims Way East  
Proposed timber cabin

SE/03/00455 40 Hillydeal Road  
Creation of dormer windows to front and rear elevations as amendment to approved house

SE/03/00426 Broughton Manor Oast High Street  
Amendment to existing permission, two storey rear extension to existing oast house

SE/03/00456 6 The Charne  
Single storey rear extension

SE/03/00489 Orchard Field  
Erection of a flagpole to fly cricket club flag

SE/03/00578 32 Willow Park  
Proposed single storey and two storey extension incorporating garage, together with front porch and formation of garden store

SE/03/00592 Unit 3 Block 5 Vestry Estate Vestry Road  
Change of use to storage display, hire and sale of garden marquees, tents, camping equipment and associated leisure goods

SE/03/00731 Land r/o 18-20 Tudor Crescent  
Erection of a dwelling with integral garage

SE/03/00736 61 Willow Park  
Proposed first floor extension.

### b. Results Received

SE/01/01469 11a High St  
Lawful Development Certificate for existing use – for a maximum of 70% of the ground floor area of the building for the sale of antiques and furniture and a maximum of 30% of the ground floor area for the use as a tea room including the sale of hot and cold beverages, cold food and hot food including toast, baked potatoes and fillings, soup, quiches and a number of light meals that are reheated on the premises

*Allowed*

SE/02/02489 The Shaw Shoreham Rd  
New dwelling. Revised application for additional 2 velux windows to west elevation and single window to north elevation gable, all at second floor level

*Refused*

SE/02/02728 19 Tudor Drive  
Proposed 2 storey extension. Amended plans received 30.1.03

*Allowed*

SE/03/00062 Block 1 Vestry Estate Vestry Road  
Erection of a warehouse with offices, parking and turning area

*Refused*

SE/03/00190 Block 8 Vestry Estate Vestry Road  
Refurbishment of external elevations

*Allowed*

SE/03/00207 18 Hillydeal Road  
Detached outbuilding as garage single storey to west side

*Allowed*

### c. Planning Appeal

SE/02/00005 West Kent Cold Store Rye Lane Dunton Green  
Erection of B1(a) office campus (42,345m<sup>2</sup>), creche, coffee shop, car parking, access and new roundabout access on Station Road/London Road. As amended - Appeal against failure to give decision within eight weeks

### d. Tree Works in Conservation Area

324.110/03.21 92 High Street  
Various trees to be pruned

**A Happy, Peaceful and Joyous Easter  
to you all**



