

Otford Parish Council

April Newsletter 2010

No 189

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

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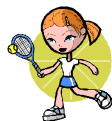
Parish Council

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 be read via <http://www.otford.info/parishcouncil>. The next meeting will be on **Monday 10th May** at 7.30pm in the Club Room of Otford Village Hall.



The Henry VIII Show

In Otford Village Memorial Hall on **Friday 7th May** at 7pm you will be able to see the 'On The Other Hand Puppet Theatre Company' with their '*Henry VIII Show*'. This unique show tells Henry's story in his own words, with the ghosts of his Queens and principal courtiers coming back to haunt him, oh, and his dog gets in on the act too. It is a vividly entertaining show with a mixture of high drama and low comedy. This is an ideal show for children aged 6+ yrs so come along and meet Henry VIII for yourself. Tickets are £5 for adults, £4 for concessions and £3 for children. Please call 01959 524808 for bookings.



Easter holiday Mini Tennis courses

Mini Tennis for the Under 9's will be taking place at Russell House School from **Tuesday 6th to Friday 9th April**. For further information go to www.otfordminitenis.co.uk/courses For an application form or to find out more please contact Mary Evans on 01959 523701 or e.mail: mary.a.evans@btinternet.com

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.

Otford Village Fete



Due to popular demand the fete will begin one hour earlier. The procession will leave Hale Lane at 11.30am and make its way through the village and onto the Recreation Ground arriving at 12noon when the gates will open. We still need local associations to enter floats in the fete. This year the response has been very slow. The procession has been a focal point of the fete for many years and it would be a shame if we were not able to continue this wonderful tradition. Please contact jackycot@hotmail.co.uk for more information.

In addition to non-stop live music and the now famous Dog Show run by Elands Veterinary Clinic we will be having a Warlords Re-enactment Group performing, a first for the Fete.

Naturally, an event this popular takes a lot of organising and we desperately need some local help on the day of the fete. We want people to assist with the preparation (from 7.00am) as well as volunteers to help sell raffle tickets (between 12noon and 4.00pm). The fete raises money to help local Otford Associations and the raffle is one way of helping us help others. If you could spare an hour or two please contact patty.chatterjee@virgin.net

All information about the fete and the contributors can be found on our website www.otford.info/villagefete This site is constantly being updated.

Spring Walk - Oxenhill Meadow & Shaw

There will be a Sevenoaks District Council organised Spring walk in Oxenhill Meadow & Shaw on **Saturday 1st May** at 10.30am. Meet at the bottom of Tudor Drive. All welcome

Otford Allotment Association

As the weather gets better and the growing season takes off why not go and have a look and see what goes on if you have an allotment. Guided tours are available. Contact Barbara Hine on 01959 525468 or email barbara.hine@otford.net if you'd like to be shown around. If you want to put your name down on a waiting list as plots very often become available during the year contact Barbara on the number above.

Otford & District Historical Society

The last meeting of 2010 will be on **Wednesday 21st April** when Mike Brown will talk about *'The real Dad's Army - the Home Guard'*. Meetings take place in Otford Village Memorial Hall at 8pm. After the outstanding success of the first publication, the new

Otford - Past in Pictures II Book is now available for sale at £7. They are available from the Parish Council Office / Heritage Centre, The Crown PH, The Chemists, The Post Office, Willow Tea Rooms, Yvonne's and Sevenoaks Bookshop

The Otford Society

Our AGM will be held on **Thursday 15th April** in the Village Hall at 8pm. Bill Latimer is the speaker and will be asking '*How Green is our village ?*'. There will be a tea interval during the meeting. Everybody is welcome.

St George's Day Lunch

Don't forget the St George's Day lunch at the Woodman PH Otford on **Friday 23rd April** at 12.30pm. Advance booking only to Alf Cook on 01959 523983. The cost is £13.50 which includes gratuities and donation to Otford Society.

'With a little help from our friends...'

We can make the Otford Society even more efficient. We need a Minutes Secretary to help with fixing dates, sending out agendas, and preparing brief minutes for our committee meetings (3 per year); and by writing short notes on the AGM and Autumn meetings. If you have a little spare time and can do basic word-processing, we will be delighted to welcome you to the Committee and provide you with templates etc. Please contact Carol Griffiths - 01959 523140 email carolgriffiths@waitrose.com

Otford Tennis Club Open Day

Otford Tennis Club is holding its Open Day on Sunday 25 April, 10am - 1pm. All are welcome to come along - adults or children interested in taking up the game, or experienced players. There will be free coaching on the day by LTA-qualified coaches, and an opportunity to sign up to coaching courses run over the summer.

Also if you decide to become a member of the club on the day you will be eligible to enter the club's draw for the chance to buy tickets for this year's Wimbledon championships (for this you must also be at least 9 years old and you must register free with British Tennis).

The club is located at the recreation ground in Otford, past the children's playground on your left. There are floodlights for play throughout the year in the evenings.

or more information see www.OtfordTennis.org.uk.

Yoga Class

The new term for your friendly Hatha Yoga class at Otford Church Hall starts on 20 April 2010. Classes are weekly, 7.30-9.00pm in term time and cost £8 per lesson. Beginners and all abilities are welcome. For further details and to reserve a place please contact Brenda Hambrook on 01959 525969 or yoga@otford.net.

Otford Gardeners' Society

The next meeting of the Otford Gardeners' Society will take place on **Tuesday 4th May** when Dennis Worcester will talk about '*A Beginners Guide to Birds*'. Dennis will help us to identify the birds which inhabit our gardens. Meetings start at 8pm in Otford Village Memorial Hall. Admission is 50p for members and £1 for non-members to include refreshments.



Darent Valley Choir

Ben Odom our Musical Director has chosen Haydn's Creation for our Spring Concert. We sing at St Mary's Church, Swanley on **Saturday 24th April** at 7.30pm. We hope you can join us. Tickets are available from Sevenoaks Bookshop or from 01474 815591 or 01959 523279.

Sevenoaks Embroiderers' Guild

The next meeting will take place in the Otford Village Hall on **Saturday 24th April** when the talk will be by Lorna Bateman on '*An African Experience*'. Morning sessions begin at 10am and afternoons at 2pm. More information can be obtained from Sylvia Grafton on 01732 452117

In Touch Community Handypersons Services for the older, disabled and vulnerable households.

Are you looking for an honest, trustworthy painter, decorator or gardener? In Touch Services also carry out low cost works including minor plumbing repairs, carpentry, home security and other general DIY services to help you remain safe, secure and independent in your own home. All the employees have been vetted using the Criminal Records Bureau Service. Contact them on 01732 525520.

Driving Miss Daisy

Could you occasionally help with driving older people who have difficulty using public transport?

These are many local older folk who may need to get to hospitals, clinics, day centres, lunch clubs, chiropodist, and hairdressers, or to the shops.

Volunteer drivers are needed in the Otford area now. Reasonable expenses are paid to volunteers, and a CRB check and references are taken up. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or to register as a client of The Sevenoaks Brighter Futures Team, please call 01732 469000 or email driving@vawk.org.uk. Volunteer drivers who already contribute to the Sevenoaks Brighter Futures project, find this a very flexible way of doing rewarding community work because they are not tied down to a particular day and time. Become a part of Otford's Caring Community.

Want to have your say

The Sevenoaks District Older Persons Forum is in the process of being formed and it is looking for members. This is a new, government-approved pressure group with access to ministers. It is an opportunity to have your views listened to by the appropriate authorities. It allows anyone 'over 50' to have a voice about 'general' matters that concern them, and getting them heard and acted upon at either local, county council or government level. It has already proved enormously successful and productive in East Kent and in Sussex and is now being launched in Sevenoaks. It is an opportunity for more mature residents to talk some common sense about what might be improved upon. If you would like to get involved and have your say, as a member or as part of the forum committee, please contact: Fiona Watkins on 01732 454785 or email at: fiona.watkins@vawk.org.uk

Parish Plan News

Planning ahead for the next 10 years is no easy task. The steering group, who are managing the preparation of the Otford Parish Plan, have to find the best way to respond to the community's concerns expressed in the questionnaire, search out the best ways to implement the action that's needed and then find the funding that will pay for it. Only then can a proper Parish Plan be prepared and discussed with the Parish Council who will take it forward as part of their future plans. What sort of things?

Our main concerns include traffic, caring for more vulnerable residents, looking at the viability of opening up a safe cycle route to Sevenoaks, examining ways in which we can improve the look of our village and make Palace Field a prouder historical site and of course, finding ways we can reduce our carbon footprint. That's just some of the things we are doing.

So the Parish Plan teams are busy - not least searching for ways to finance all these initiatives - and we still welcome more volunteers to provide us with ideas and help in reaching our conclusions. The important part is that with your help we will make Otford a better place to call home.

If you would like to participate, collect a form from the Parish Office or down-load from our website www.otford.info/parishplan

Caring for the roads in the neighbourhood

A Neighbourhood Watch scheme operates in many of our roads. At the same time many roads are missing out on this valuable community support service. The scheme still proves to be a very good deterrent to household crime. The figures prove it. Neighbourhood Watch has also been shown to reinforce a sense of community. As part of the Parish Plan initiative it is now hoped that this valuable local service might extend to keeping a weather eye upon the more vulnerable who live in every road -

particularly if there is a power-strike, heat-wave or blizzard (Many of our Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators already do this) - and everyone knows someone more vulnerable living in their road.

If your road is not included in a Neighbourhood Watch scheme and you would like it to be, or you would like more information, please contact Sue Stephenson at the Parish Office (524808) and she will be in touch with the Neighbourhood Watch Liaison officer on your behalf. We hope that every road in Otford will support and be supported by this initiative.

Otford & District Wine Club

Could all members and friends of the Otford & District Wine Club, please note that we have been forced to make a change to our program as follows. The Meeting on **Wednesday 28 April**, 2010, will not be held in Sainsbury's as set out in the Program of Events. Instead it will be held in the Otford Memorial Hall beginning at 8 p.m. and it will be a Tasting of Wines derived from the Pinot grape. Cheese and biscuits will be provided and there will be a raffle. As usual the evening will be free to members, but guests will be charged £5. Why not come along for a good night out amongst friends? If you have any queries, please ring the secretary on 01732-761359.

Otford Oast WI

The meetings take place on the 3rd Thursday of each month starting at 9.30am in Otford Village Memorial Hall. The next meeting will take place on **Thursday 22nd April** when Sue Briarly will talk about '*Hearing Dogs for the Deaf*' There is a crèche and the first visit is free. Do join them.

Otford Afternoon WI

Meetings are held in the Village Hall at 2pm on the 2nd Tuesday each month. The next meeting will take place on **Tuesday 13th April** when there will be a talk by Christopher McCooey on wacky, weird and wonderful '*Kent Characters*' Then on **11th May** they will hold their '*Annual Meeting and Resolution plus a few laughs*' Annual Subscription is £29.50 and visitors at £2 are very welcome. For further details please contact Joyce Shaw on 01959 522736.

Otford Evening WI

Otford Evening members will be enjoying a three course dinner on **Thursday 8th April** to celebrate the institute's 51st birthday. Music will be provided by harpist Melanie Jones. Menu choices need to have been made beforehand so any member who hasn't already done so should ring Pat on Otford 522578 to make their choice. The new discussion group which meets

monthly on the third Wednesday morning has got off to a good start and looking ahead we shall be having our usual cake and plant stall at the Village fete on 31st May. And, we hope, walking in the procession. All meetings take place on 2nd Thursday of each month in Otford Village Hall. The next meeting to be held will be on **13th May** with their Resolutions meeting. Visitors are always welcome at the meetings which start at 7.30pm

Otford Bridge Club

Otford Bridge Club meets every Friday evening in Otford Church Hall at 7.30pm, it is a friendly club and they would be pleased to see anyone who fancies a game.

Girlguiding UK



Otford's Rainbows, Brownies and Guides are again collecting Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers and Tesco vouchers for schools and clubs and would be grateful for your help. In the last couple of years we have collected enough vouchers to get new cooking equipment and aprons, dance sessions with qualified instructors, circus skills equipment as well as replace our old bean bags, balls and skipping ropes which we would not have otherwise been able to afford. On the 'wish list' this year are craft supplies, cheerleading sessions and camping equipment. Please save your vouchers for us and drop them into the collecting boxes located in the Parish Office. Thank you.

Girlguiding UK is celebrating its Centenary this year and to mark the occasion there is a new exhibit in the Heritage Centre displaying a selection of interesting memorabilia and photographs of local Rainbows, Brownies and Guides from the last 100 years. Do go along and have a look.

Get Up and Running to beat depression



Women in Sevenoaks are being given a unique opportunity to join a brand new running group to help tackle mild to moderate depression. The non-competitive, friendly group is for anyone who is experiencing depression, anxiety, negative mood or low self-esteem and will guide participants through walking and running gradually over eight weeks.

The group takes place **every Wednesday** at 1pm. Each session costs £2 per person. The group will meet at the Sencio cafe at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, and a short walk into the beautiful surroundings of Knole Park will be followed by a walk and gentle jog in the Park's picturesque grounds. The group is social and supportive. From start to finish each session will last a little over an hour. No specialist equipment is required, just suitable trainers and comfortable clothing. Regular exercise can help people to recover from depression with recent studies showing that it can help to

reduce anxiety and tension, lift moods and help with sleep. Exercise is a very natural way to respond to feeling down whilst giving a sense of achievement and control. Cllr Pat Bosley, Sevenoaks District Council's Cabinet member with responsibility for healthy living, says: "Depression is a very common problem and affects about one in six people at some point in their life. This is a great new group which supports not only the physical health of women living and working in our District but can help you deal with negative emotions and bring you a general sense of mental wellbeing." The group leader Shona Campbell has extensive experience in teaching people to run and everyone will be encouraged to walk or jog at their own pace. Shona adds: "I know from personal experience how helpful jogging in the fresh air can be in lifting people's mood, and I believe a non-competitive, mutually supportive group like this is the best way to go about it." Residents who are interested in taking part, should call Shona Campbell on 07710 279497 or Harriet Heal on 07855 893863 for an informal chat. The Up and Running Group is supported by Sevenoaks District Council in partnership with NHS West Kent as part of the Choosing Health Agenda which aims to make healthier choices easier.

Hospices of Hope

'Be a Whizz at the Otford Quiz'

The next fundraising event will be a Supper and Quiz night on **Saturday 10th April** at 7pm in the Otford Tea Rooms. The cost is £10 per ticket. Please contact wendy@hospicesofhope.co.uk or 01959 525110 for tickets.

Picture of the Month

The artist for March / April is Evelyn Hubner. Evelyn moved to Otford from Orpington in 1985 and on retirement joined the U3A in Sevenoaks. Seven years ago a China Painting group was formed which she joined and she has been painting ever since. China Painting is quite different from water colours and the picture is built up gradually by firing in between, one piece can be fired two or three times. She has her own kiln at home which enables her to fire several pieces of china at once. Please contact Doug Dickerson on 01959 524183 if you would be interested in displaying your work in the Heritage Centre.



Community Safety Unit

The CSU (Community Safety Unit) was launched August 2009 and incorporates Community Development, Environmental Health, Licensing, CCTV Control Room & the Contact Centre as well as six Police officers and partners who 'hot desk' which include community wardens, youth workers and others. The CSU holds daily briefings where the previous day's crimes are reported and action taken.

From 1 February to 28 February 2010, the CSU received 71 reports, actions have been completed and where appropriate 68 of these actions have been fed back to the community. As a result of the CSU, fly tipping has been cleared up within 3 working days across the District.

Police have visited reported abandoned cars across the district including areas such as Sevenoaks, Edenbridge, Horton Kirby & South Darenth, Kemsing and Crockenhill have been visited and determined whether they are abandoned and if so have been removed.

Call 01732 227000 to report graffiti, abandoned vehicles, intimidation, drugs problems, hate crime, noise and other nuisance, joy-riding or rowdy behaviour. For more information and full quarterly reports visit our webpage http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/public_safety/community_safety/3913.asp

The Community Safety Unit is still receiving reports of companies telephoning households in the Sevenoaks District offering security devices. This ranges from free shredders, to home security alarms for as little as £1! Some of the companies named are SAS Security and Direct Response. Please be wary of these sorts of companies; they often charge inflated prices in the long-run through a monthly charge, and offer products that are not suitable for the occupier. Some companies are also claiming to be doing crime surveys and that they are working with the Police, which is false. Do not give out any personal details to people who call you. If you are interested in getting security alarms or other devices for your home call 01732 227000 or e-mail community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

FREE Family Fun Days



The SDC In the Zone Team will be out and about providing four free Family Fun Days and two days of skate and BMX coaching during the Easter holidays this year.

Full details are on www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/inthezone

Each day, the fun starts at 11.00am and finishes at 3.30pm. All the activities are free and there is no need to book - just turn up.

All children must be accompanied by a parent or carer. The Zone Team will be on hand to run games and help families make the most of the activities on offer, but cannot take responsibility for individual children.

Tuesday 6 April - Inclusive games and sports such as Boccia and New Age Kurling. Plus join in with fun and games and arts and crafts to take home
Swanley Youth Centre, St Mary's Road, Swanley

Wednesday 7 April - Try out the bouldering climbing wall - can you cling on? Plus join in with games, circus skills and arts and crafts to take home
The Edenbridge Centre, Four Elms Road, Edenbridge

Thursday 8 April - ever been part of a human table football table? Try it out with us today or come and make some pompoms and join our Cheerleading Dance workshop too!
Sevenoaks Community Centre, Crampton's Road, Sevenoaks

Friday 9 April - Time to glide or wobble your way around our indoor ice rink! Skates will be provided. Plus fun and games and arts and crafts to take home
Horton Kirby Village Hall, Horton Road, South Darenth
Please note, the skate coaching events are dependent on the weather!

Thursday 15 April - Skateboard and BMX coaching with Skaterham from 1.30 - 3.30pm. Plus games and arts and crafts to take home. Please bring your own boards and bikes, helmets will be provided. Greatness Recreation Ground, Mill Lane, Sevenoaks

Friday 16 April - Skateboard and BMX coaching with Skaterham from 1.30 - 3.30pm. Plus games and arts and crafts to take home. Please bring your own boards and bikes, helmets will be provided. Swanley St Mary's Recreation Ground, St Mary's Road, Swanley

Knole DFAS

Knole Decorative and Fine Arts Society meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Sevenoaks Community Centre, Bat & Ball. The next lecture will be on **15th April** when Matthew Williams will talk about '*Tyntesfield - A Victorian House Rediscovered*'. The Victorian County House Tyntesfield in Somerset was acquired amid great excitement by the National Trust in 2002. Matthew Williams explains the story of the house and of the people who created it. The Lectures start promptly at 1.45pm and finish by 3pm. Anyone interested in attending a lecture or joining the Society please contact Alison Davis on 01732 780453.

Sevenoaks DFAS

The Decorative and Fine Arts Society of Sevenoaks (Evening NADFAS) 2009/2010 lecture season continues on **13th May** when Mrs Linda Hall will talk about '*The Vernacular Architecture of Kent*'. The meetings are held in the Ship Theatre at Walthamstow Hall Senior School, Hollybush Lane, commencing at 8.15pm. Please contact Mrs Maggie Llanwarne on 01732 460709 or Mrs Mary Aldous on 01732 452209 for more information and membership.

Otford Primary Top Draw

TOP DRAW - The Otford Primary Draw. Your chance to win cash prizes and raise money for your local school.

The winning numbers of the February TOP Draw are:

1st Prize £50 - 82, 2nd Prize £15 - 405, 3rd Prize £10 - 32

Citizens Advice Bureau Surgery

The next CAB Surgery will take place at School House on **Tuesday 4th May** between 10am and 12 noon. No appointment necessary.

T'ai Chi Classes

[General aims: The aims are to improve the general health, strengthen the legs, improve balance & coordination, promote better circulation, whilst bringing relaxation and increased energy. The courses will also work on improving posture and breathing.]

Sevenoaks: Thursday 22nd April: 6.35-7.30pm ... at The Bradbourne School, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks. TN13 3LE. ALSO: Class for T'ai Chi **Broadsword** Form - on Thursdays at 8.35-9.30pm. **Friday 23rd April:** 1) 12.05-1.00pm & 2) 1.05-2.00pm both at St. Luke's Church Hall, Eardley Road, Sevenoaks. TN13 1XT. The 1st class is specifically aimed at the over-60s, but anyone can attend. **Longfield: Friday 23rd April:** Beginners: 10.05-11.00am... at The Longfield Integrated Care Centre, Tuppence House, Brickfield Farm, Main Road, Longfield, Kent. DA3 7PJ. **Length & Cost of Course:** 14 weeks [Try-out session: £5 & the remaining 13 weeks of the course:£135]. Email: james@taiji.co.uk or call 07836 -710281 or visit www.taiji.co.uk or www.qigonghealth.co.uk

James Drewe has more than 34 years of experience in t'ai chi and qigong. He is a qualified teacher (PGCE), has studied t'ai chi & qigong with teachers both in the UK and in China, and is trained in Traditional Chinese Medicine (Dip. Ac). He has been teaching t'ai chi professionally for 17 years, has published two books on t'ai chi, and is currently working on a third. James Drewe is Vice-Chairman of the Longfei Taijiquan Association and a member of the BCCMA.

Refuse Sacks

Remember if you run short you can obtain rolls of refuse sacks from the Parish Council Office. Black bags are FREE, white recycling ones cost 50p and Garden Waste bags are £5 for 12.

Planning

The following applications are considered by the Parish Council in April. 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/10/00513 **32 Hillydeal Road**

Erection of gable roof over existing lounge, side extension incorporating a roof extension with rooms in the roof and decking to rear to form granny annexe.

Formation of new access and parking area

SE/10/00508 **43 Greenhill Road**
Erection of a two storey rear and side extension

SE/10/00598 **88 Evelyn Road**
Demolish existing garage and erect detached garage

SE/10/00673 **Martins, Shoreham Road**
Retrospective application for timber deck

b. Results received

SE/09/02972 **Block 4 Vestry Estate**
Recladding, alterations to both internal and external layout (for uses falling within class B). New access path fencing and security gates together with 27 parking bays and 2 disabled. *Not valid*

SE/10/00022 **88 Evelyn Road**
Demolish existing garage and erect detached garage *Allowed*

SE/10/00033 **31 High Street**
Erection of pitched roof with three velux windows over existing flat roof *Allowed*

SE/10/00078 **7 Orchard Road**
Two storey extension to side of property *Allowed*

SE/10/00088 **April Cottage 8 Leonard Avenue**
Erection of single storey rear extension *Allowed*

c. Amended applications

SE/09/02828 **McDonalds Restaurant**
Refurbishment of restaurant and patio area. Change to elevations. Erection of small under eaves extension (17.62m²). Installation of customer order display and height restrictor. Various signs in line with refurbishment including 4 fascias, freestanding, 1 height restrictor and 1 customer order display

SE/09/02829 **McDonalds Restaurant**
Various signs in line with refurbishment including 4 fascias, 4 freestanding, 1 height restrictor and 1 customer order display

d. Appeals

310/92/202 **14 Shinecroft**
Appeal against enforcement notice for: without planning permission, the carrying out of building operations namely the erection of a wooden fence and gate with canopy feature which also forms part of the structure

