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). Copies of the Helplines Directory can be printed off for residents if required. They can all be read via http://www.otford.info/parishcouncil. The next meetings will be on Monday 13th June and Monday 11th July at 7.30pm in the Club Room of Otford Village Hall.

An update from the Parish Council Chairman

Changes in the Parish Council

Our Parish Council began its new 4-year term on 9th May 2011. Out-going chairman, John Allen, received a warm accolade from the members as he decided not to seek re-election after 20 years’ service with 9 years as leader of Otford’s PC. The role of chairman is now taken over by John Edwards-Winser who has also been elected a District Councillor for Sevenoaks. This means that along with Michelle Lowe, Otford now has two active District Councillors looking
after our interests. Howard Leicester also joined the Parish Council as a new member and Jon Verrall was co-opted.

Train timetable will change during the Olympics
It was reported that train timetables are likely be changed during the period of the Olympics. It is also possible that the Blackfriars/Sevenoaks times may be altered as a result of the introduction of the new High Speed train link. More on this, once it is known.

Pond Willows under threat
There is concern over the health of our two willows by the pond. Brian Thomas will be supervising a survey of both trees so that the experts can establish their condition. Facing up to the inevitable, it was suggested that two new willows be planted close to the standing trees. In this way when the older trees need to be felled the younger replacement trees will have had time to establish themselves.

Looking after our own footpaths in future?
It is being suggested that Parish Councils may in future be required to look after their own footpaths. At present they are the responsibility of KCC. There will of course be many advantages to being able to respond to nettle problems or overhanging branches, simply by dealing with them straight away. However, there will be a degree of expense involved and the Otford PC are trying to establish just what funding will be available if responsibility is transferred to them.

What’s happening to all the Highway ideas?
There can’t be many members of the Otford community who haven’t heard of the efforts of the PC and Parish Plan team to obtain improvements for the safety of our pedestrians. Yet nothing has moved forward as OPC is currently awaiting a response from KCC.
Re-surfacing Car-Park
Three estimates had been received for re-surfacing the car-park, all higher than the budgeted amount. The re-surfacing may therefore have to be delayed until next year.

Parish Plan – an appeal to Michael Fallon
The chairman of the Parish Plan reported that he had sent a copy to our MP Michael Fallon, with a request that he use the information on our behalf when discussing the Localism Bill currently going through Parliament.

Feedback
Feedback on the above or any other Parish issues would be welcome
Phone 01959 524808 or email us on otfordpc@btinternet.com with your comments

St Bartholomew’s Church Fair
Have a lovely family afternoon out and go along to St Bartholomew’s Church Fair, on Saturday 11th June at 2pm in the beautiful grounds of Castle House, by kind permission of the owners. Stalls will include Plants, Cakes, Toys, Crafts, Music, White Elephant, Books, and other attractions. Refreshments will be served all day. Programmes will be on sale before the fair and on the gate for 50p children under 5 free.

Rose & Summer Show
The Rose and Summer Show will take place on Saturday 25th June. This is the best show to come to if you are a fan of the scented garden. On display will be roses as well as other summer flowers and plants. Fruit and vegetables, floral arrangements, preserves and cookery, photographic classes and junior classes are included. The show takes place in the Otford Village Memorial Hall and opens to the public at 2.15pm. Admission is 50p, under 16’s admitted free. Teas will be served until 4pm and there will be a sales table open all afternoon.
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. Come and see him. Paul can always be contacted on 07813 713366.

Police Contact Details
To contact our neighbourhood Police Officer Brian Smith please call 07972 004450 or for local PCSO Jane Wright call 07772 226036. To report a crime please call 01622 690690.

Classic Car Show
Otford Methodist Church is holding another classic car show on **Saturday 23rd July** from 4.30pm to 7.30pm. Once again an exceptional display is expected of rare and interesting cars dating from early last century. The display will be in the Church car park in the High Street. Photographs of the last event can be seen on www.otfordmethodistchurch.org.uk. For more information please contact Derek Baxter on 01959 523687.

Youth Activities
Play Place Innov8 CIC a not for profit community company will be delivering fun activities for children, young people and families across a number of Sevenoaks Parish Councils in 2011. Play Place will be working in Otford on the High Street Recreation Ground. These activities are supported and funded by Otford Parish Council, KCC Wardens Services and a Members Fund Grant (Nick Chard). The project will provide sport, craft, music and outings and aims to support young people and children between 8 and 16 years of age. The youth team of experienced workers will be based under gazebo’s and will be on the Recreation ground as follows:

**School Term – Every Thursday between 6pm and 8pm.**
Play Place will also be providing activities on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the summer holidays (times to be confirmed).
Sevenoaks and Swanley Citizens Advice Bureau

In 2010 your Citizens Advice Bureau helped 4,700 local people deal with over 17,000 concerns. Although we receive invaluable support from Sevenoaks District Council, we have lost significant public funding in the past two years. We need to find new sources of funding to maintain our services. This will come mainly from charitable donations and community support.

Our future

After serving the local community for over 70 years, the largely volunteer based service of Sevenoaks and Swanley CAB is under serious threat. In 2009 the two Bureaux merged to reduce our costs, but this will not be enough to cope with the funding cuts we now face. Added to this, our caseload has continued to rise - last year the number of enquiries we handled increased by over 30% on the previous year. We are now working hard to find possible new sources of funding, but, in the current economic climate, this is a difficult task. We always value greatly the donations we receive and are appealing directly to our local community for further help.

Our service

CAB support has a positive impact on people’s lives. Research carried out by MORI found that 46% of people felt less anxious, less stressed, or had fewer health problems after receiving help from the CAB. This also helps to ease pressure on other services, for example, local GPs. In the well respected tradition of CABs our staff and volunteers remain determined to continue to offer a free, confidential service available to everybody.

Each hour of advice costs us £15 to provide. At any one time we can be conducting three or four interviews, while three or four other advisers are completing case notes, writing letters on clients’ behalf, dealing with emails, answering telephone enquiries or researching solutions to more complex problems.

For many we are the first port of call when a problem emerges, for others we may be the last port of call when things have gone badly wrong. Often we deal with a problem from beginning to end, or we can signpost clients to more specialist agencies for additional support.

Managing debt

Helping people manage debt problems takes up a considerable amount of our time. These often arise as a result of a dramatic change of circumstances, for example, losing a job, relationship breakdown or ill health. Last year we opened a weekly debt clinic to provide a dedicated service to clients.
struggling with debt. We are looking for financial support to continue with this valuable service after its current funding comes to an end later this year.

**Welfare benefits**
The benefits system is complex and our specialist advisors and form fillers help ensure that claimants follow the correct procedures. We do not help people cheat the benefit system - instead we aim to ensure that clients can claim the benefits to which they are entitled, particularly those clients who are disabled or genuinely too ill to work

**Employment**
Employment problems also make up a significant proportion of our caseload. Some employers do not understand their obligations, others choose to ignore them. Again, our specialist advisers work hard to help resolve employment issues. This will mean that clients may keep their job or obtain rightful compensation if they lose it.

**Family, legal and other matters**
We help clients deal with a wide range of other problems. For example, relationship breakdown is frequently discussed in detail for the first time at the Bureau. We also help clients who have been made homeless, or who are threatened with it; advise them on how to exercise their consumer rights, deal with problems following a bereavement and many more issues.

**Our social policy work**
Another very important part of our service is our social policy work which seeks to influence the decisions of government and policymakers at local and national level. For example, providing evidence from clients on changes to the benefits system which may result in them being disadvantaged; highlighting excessive bank charges, creditor harassment and the poor enquiry and complaint handling systems of some utility companies.

*Can you help us sustain this valuable, free service to the local community? Any assistance you can provide will be greatly appreciated*

**Further information**
If you would like to make a donation, a leaflet can be obtained from the Parish Council. If you can offer help or ideas for our fundraising activities please contact Colin Logier at funding@sevenoaksdistrictcab.org.uk or on 01732 456100, weekdays 9.30 3.30.
Knole Decorative and Fine Arts Society
Knole Decorative and Fine Arts Society meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Sevenoaks Community Centre, Bat & Ball. The next meeting will be on 16th June when Oliver Everett will talk about 'Treasures and Curiosities from the Royal Library at Windsor Castle'. Oliver is Librarian Emeritus of the Royal Library which is primarily used by the Queen to show to her guests at Windsor Castle. The library is not open to the public and therefore this lecture will constitute a rare opportunity to see its rooms and treasures which include not only rare and beautiful books but also drawings, watercolours, miniatures and even the shirt in which Charles I was executed. The lectures start promptly at 1.45 pm and finish by 3 pm. Anyone interested in attending a lecture or joining the Society, please contact Alison Davis on 01732 780453 or email knoledfas@gmail.com

Sevenoaks Embroiderers Guild
The next meeting will take place in the Otford Methodist Hall (PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE) on Saturday 25th June when Joanna O'Neill will talk about 'Felt Underneath (felt as a basis for stitches)' Morning sessions begin at 10am and afternoons at 2pm. More information can be obtained from Sylvia Grafton on 01732 452117

The Quilling Guild – Otford Branch
The next meeting will be on Saturday 11th June in Otford Village Memorial Hall between 1.30pm and 4.30pm with Diane Bowden

Otford Oast WI
The meetings take place on the 3rd Thursday of each month starting at 9.30am in Otford Village Memorial Hall. There is a crèche and the first visit is free. Do join them. The next meeting will be on 16th June when they will be learning about 'Perfect Pastry with Chef Claire'. For more information please contact the Secretary Jane Dean on 01732 460512
Otford Afternoon WI
Meetings are held in the Otford Village Hall at 2pm on the 2nd Tuesday each month. The next meeting will be on 14th June when Ken Gunderson will talk about ‘Coal and the Bevin Boy’
Visitors are very welcome, and further details can be found on the Otford Village web site at www.otford.info with the link to the WI or call Joyce Shaw on 01959 522736

Otford Evening WI
The Otford Evening WI recently held a lively evening discussing this year’s Resolutions and re-electing their President Eve Wiltshire for the coming year. Ken Gunderson gave an illustrated talk on the cultural shock of being drafted in as a ‘Bevin Boy’ at the tail end of the war. This month they have popular Monty Parkin speaking about Sevenoaks markets.
All meetings take place on 2nd Thursday of each month in Otford Village Hall. Visitors are always very welcome. For more information please call Eve Wiltshire on 01959 524887 or Joan Beacom on 01959 524304.

Picture of the Month
The artist for June / July is Steve Sargeant. Steve says that he is a self taught artist and his main focus is on portrait painting, both in oils and pastels, usually working from photographs. He not only tries to capture the likeness but also the personality of the model and enjoys trying to capture the energy and movement of the human figure. He is at present exhibiting paintings at the Sevenoaks Art Shop. Please contact Doug Dickerson on 01959 524183 if you would be interested in displaying your work in the Heritage Centre.

National Trust - Knole
“Dwelling within the walls of the kitchen gardens as we did was rather like living, during the summer months at least, in a huge bowl: a cornucopia from which supplied fruit, vegetables, flowers and herbs to both the Sackville family and those that had apartments within the house”
(Margaret Simmons who was a resident at Knole for over 50 years)
Can you help them to uncover the hidden history of Knole and tell your stories? For almost 500 years, Knole has been both a show house and a working community with strong links to the town and the local area beyond
the park boundaries. Up until now the focus for visitors has largely been on the early history of the estate, dictated by the rich and powerful. Knole’s ‘Hidden Histories’ Oral History Project is about to change this. They are undertaking a project to collect and preserve people’s every day memories, artefacts and photographs from recent times. Knole has always drawn local people through its gates, whether as visitors or people who have worked on the estate. Do you have a story to tell? If so, get in touch. Whatever your story, they’d like to hear it, whether it’s a single anecdote from last year or a lifetime’s worth of recollections passed down through your family.

The reminiscences you record will enable them to collect a memory bank to be preserved for future generations and will be shared with visitors to the house in a newly-opened room dedicated to Knole’s recent history. In addition if you have any artefacts or photographs that have a link to Knole and would be willing to lend them to us for display get in touch.

If you have anything you’d like to share please get in touch. However unimportant it may seem to you, they’d like to hear about it.

Please contact Clare Thake at Knole on 01732 462100
Email: clare.thake@nationaltrust.org.uk

Sevenoaks Book Fair
The next Sevenoaks Book Fair will take place on Saturday 18th June between 9am and 2.30pm in Otford Village Hall. Admission is Free

Rockdale Appeal
Rockdale are pleased to announce that as part of their Appeal to build a new residential home for the elderly at their site in the centre of Sevenoaks they are running the following event:

Mrs Jane Rogers of Riverhill House has kindly offered to open the House and Garden for the Rockdale Appeal on the evening of Saturday June 11th between 6 pm and 8.30 pm. The Rogers family have lived at Riverhill House since 1840 - don’t miss this opportunity to view Riverhill House which is rarely open to the public.

The Halstead Concert Band will entertain everyone in the Garden and the ticket price of £15 will include a glass of wine and canapés as well as a visit to the House and the Garden. Walk along the hillside garden with wonderful
views over the Weald of Kent. Since Riverhill House appeared on Channel 4’s Country House Rescue programme last year there have been several changes to the Garden, including a Himalayan Garden which has been added. Please telephone 01732 458762 or email lynn.tier@rockdale.org.uk for details. For tickets please send cheques made out to Rockdale Housing Association to Fundraising Office, Rockdale Housing Association, Rockdale Lodge, Rockdale Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1JT.

**Hospices of Hope**

Visit the Otford Tea Rooms & Gift Shop, 11a High Street, Otford which is open Monday - Friday 10am - 4.30pm and Saturday 10am - 5.00pm.

**Next Events**

Ladies Luncheon at Brandshatch Place Hotel & Spa, Fawkham, Kent, with guest speaker Barbara Thorn on **Tuesday 14 June** 12.30 for 1.00pm

Enjoy a drink on arrival followed by a 3 course lunch, glass of wine with lunch and coffee. You will then be entertained by Barbara Thorn, very famous TV actress who played Inspector Christine Fraser in 'The Bill', Barbara McKenzie in Lynda la Plant’s 'Trial & Retribution' and most recently Coop in 'Judge John Deed'.

Cost is £28 per ticket, contact Wendy 01959 525110 or at wendy@hospicesofhope.co.uk

Hope In Summer on **Sunday 19th June** at 4pm at Bessels Green Baptist Church, Sevenoaks.

The Sackville Singers will be celebrating the season with strawberries, cream tea and songs in a summery mood.

Cost is £12 per ticket or family ticket for £25, contact Wendy 01959 525110 or at wendy@hospicesofhope.co.uk

**Citizens Advice Bureau Surgery**

The next CAB Surgery will take place at School House on **Tuesday 5th July** between 10am and 12 noon. No appointment necessary. To contact them at Sevenoaks please call 01732 454443.
Otford Methodist Church  YAHOO!  Holiday Club

For Primary school children

On **Monday 1st August** from 9.45am to 4pm

At Otford Methodist Church Halls (In Otford High Street next to the library)

Picnic lunch included

Cost £5

Come along for fun, games, stories, puppets and crafts, linked to famous Bible stories, and all with a Wild west –Yahoo!! theme!!

To register for a place please phone Armanda on 07904 018987

Or email armanda.nick@dsl.pipex.com

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**The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe**

On **Tuesday 12th and Wednesday 13th July** the Acting Up Theatre Company at the New School at West Heath will be performing this all time classic children's story from the Chronicles of Narnia.

There will be two afternoon and two evening performances open to the public. Performances start at 1.30pm and 6.30pm. Tickets are priced at £5 each. To book tickets please contact Laura Christmas on 01732 460553 ext 273.

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**Planning**

The following applications are considered by the Parish Council in June. 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/11/01044  **Mayola Station Road**

Variation of condition 2 (Approved plans) of Appeal ref:APP/G2245/A/10/2131253 (SE/10/00236/FUL) to vary the appearance of the two properties as recommended in the parish design guide by changing the facing material and baywindow roof detail to plot 2.

SE/11/00758  **Lloyds TSB Bank Plc  3 Sevenoaks Road**

Creation of new front entrance to self contained flat and the provision of 2 rear parking spaces
Variation of condition 6 (Approved plans) of CONVAR SE/10/02606/FUL 'Demolition of existing dwelling and replacement with two detached dwellings with access from Hillydeal Road' - to allow the construction of a single storey side as per revised drawings 983/01/02 and 03.

b. Results received

SE/11/00417  44 The Charne
Erection of single storey rear extension, alteration to existing rear extension roof and erection of side entrance porch.  Allowed

SE/11/00509  Crammond Shoreham Road
Demolition of existing two storey side extension and construction of new two storey side extension  Allowed

SE/11/00625  Hawthorns Station Road
Conversion of existing outbuilding to form annex accommodation  Allowed

SE/11/00683  18 Ryecroft Road
Erection of front porch and single storey rear extension  Allowed

SE/11/00698  14 Telston Lane
Erection of a single storey rear extension (Amendment to previously approved scheme SE/10/02216/FUL reflecting change to built extent at boundary)  Allowed

SE/11/00213  Sainsbury Petrol Filling Station
Erection of single storey front extension, refurbishment of the existing petrol filling station kiosk. Re-cladding of the existing forecourt canopy, replacement petrol pumps and provision of a rainwater harvesting system for the existing car wash.  Allowed

SE/11/00063/ Pond View Café and tea rooms
Replacement fascia sign to front and a sign to either side of premises.  Allowed