

Otford Parish Council

May Newsletter 2010

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Kent and South & South East England

Village of the Year 2002

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Annual Assembly

This is notification for the Annual Assembly of the Electors of the Parish, more commonly called the Annual Parish Meeting, which will be held, in the Club Room of the Village Hall on **Monday 24th May** at 7.30pm. This is your chance to ask questions about what is happening in the village, so please attend if you can.

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 14th June** at 7.30pm in the Club Room of Otford Village Hall.

Spotlight on the Parish Council

A parish council has to care for and run many things; these are important to the appearance and smooth running of the village - and can be time consuming.

Our Otford cemetery, in common with many others, is intended to have as simple and natural an appearance as possible and be economical to run.

We ask for all graves to be without an edging and with small plants.. We also ask for dead flowers to be put in one container and plastic in another. Many find this difficult and the council now has to take appropriate action.

Keeping the pond area looking splendid is a constant battle with vehicles. Wooden posts are relatively unobtrusive and generally prevent cars over-running the verge and entering the pond on the south side, but lorries often damage the grass on the northeast corner; now we are trying large stones to persuade the drivers to steer more carefully.

(If you wonder why our Muscovy ducks sometimes perch on the duck house roof - in their natural habitat they roost in trees, and there they have a good view of the Otford traffic from a distance!)

Although Otford is fortunate in having many volunteers assisting in running organisations, we have so far been unable to find anyone to help care for the Solar System model. This really is a world-notable structure, with our nearest stars marked at their correct distances and positions all over the world. Otford people who have travelled to America and the southern hemisphere have seen the scale models of stars in museums and observatories, and visitors from abroad do come here to see the central model of the solar system in Otford. It deserves to be kept in perfect condition.

I hope the movements of the planets since it was constructed to mark the millennium will be shown at this year's fete, and bring the importance of Otford's model (and the inspiration of the resident who conceived it) to everyone's attention.

The small pavilion on west Otford recreation ground that provides changing rooms for football teams, is now also used as a meeting place for young people in the area. It has been there for many years and requires much maintenance and electrical work, both inside and out, to make it acceptable. The young people there have already assisted by doing some inside decoration but professional decoration and repairs are also required.

The District Council found as part of its economy measures it had to cease the children's holiday (day's entertainment) programme, and asked for funding from parish councils for the events. Otford was one of two parishes that agreed, but now KCC have stepped in and Otford may see

the usual events on the main and W Otford Recreation Grounds for one day each.

These are just a few of the many items that will be put before the parish council at the next meeting.

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



Visitors are reminded that this year the fete opens at 12noon on **Monday 31st May** and anyone wishing to enter the dog show, which is run by Elands Veterinary Clinic, should register at 11.30am to avoid disappointment.

In addition, we have live music both inside the halls and in marquees located on the recreation ground. This year we have three tribute singers as well as a Rock Choir, RattleMac who came to the 2009 fete and a new group Where's Billy.

The usual village stalls will be there and our very own Bobbo the Clown will be joined by Mrs Bobbo. As in previous years we will also have two Punch and Judy shows during the afternoon.



We also have something completely new - the Warlords Display Team. As well as joining the procession you will be able to travel back in time and see what life was like in years gone by. To announce the fete the Warlords will be letting off a gun, safely installed on the recreation ground at 10.30am - one hour before the procession is due to leave

Hale Lane for its journey through the village until it reaches the ground just before mid-day.

Entry to the fete will be £1.00 (under 14 free). Cars can park for an additional £1 per vehicle. Income raised, after expenses, from this event goes towards helping local associations within Otford. Your support is very much appreciated.

You will be able to look at the full programme on our website www.otford.info/villagefete

KENT POLICE



Kent Police

In April, PCSO Wright, in conjunction with the Bike Team, organised a speed check in Shoreham Rd with a result that two drivers were summonsed for dangerous/careless driving, one for excess speed, two for no seat belt, one for mobile phone use, two for having no driving licence and two for no insurance (one vehicle seized). Fourteen drivers were issued with Fixed Penalty Notices for excess speed.

The Sevenoaks district is a safe place to live and recent figures published on our website show a decrease in burglary of just over 13% compared to the same three month period last year.

However your neighbourhood team has noticed that where you live there has been a small increase in burglaries and vehicle crime. Thefts from vehicles are often opportunistic crimes so you can help by being careful not to leave anything of value in your car and to make sure that sun roofs and windows are closed and all doors locked when you leave your vehicle. Don't give anyone the opportunity to see you putting your valuables in the boot or the glove box, as there are no real hiding places.

Here is some advice that could help to keep your vehicle and property safe:

- If your sat nav is portable keep it safe by taking it, together with the support cradle and suction pads, with you when you leave the car.
- Wipe away any suction pad marks left on the windscreen or dashboard, as thieves will look for these signs.
- Never leave your vehicle documents in the car - these could help a thief to sell your vehicle.
- Mark your sat nav system with your postcode and house number, your vehicle registration number or other unique number, using the special security markers widely available. Property that is marked is less desirable to a thief as it is harder for them to sell on. Also, if your property is stolen and it is marked there is a greater chance that you will get it back. Finally, if a criminal is arrested with property that is marked it is easier for the police to prove that the property is stolen and charge the offender.

- Make a note of the make, model and serial number of your sat nav and keep this information somewhere safe i.e. not in your car!
- Never leave the keys in the ignition when the car is unattended, even when you are merely paying for petrol or visiting a recycling centre.
- At home, never leave your car keys on a windowsill or hall table where an opportunist thief might see them.

Please don't forget about home security as well. Remember to keep doors and windows locked and don't leave keys in the lock or on show nearby. If you are out when it's dark or away for a few days use a time switch to turn lights on at pre-set times. Finally, never let unexpected callers in no matter what excuse they give.

To find out about this or get advice about security for your home speak to your neighbourhood officer, you can find out who this is by dialling 01622 690690. If you are deaf or speech-impaired, text 'police', followed by your message, to 60066. For more information, or details on how to keep yourself, your property and your valuables safe, visit www.kent.police.uk/safetyadvice

Kent Police has received reports that a number of security companies have been contacting residents in the Sevenoaks district by telephone. The security companies claim to provide household alarms for low prices and some claim to be working with Neighbourhood Watch and Kent Police.

Kent Police does not endorse products or services for external companies. If a product or service looks too good to be true, check it out thoroughly before making any financial commitments.

Often the caller refers to crime rates in the area and says that the resident can protect themselves by having an alarm system. While the initial cost may be negligible the reality is that the resident could find themselves in a contract requiring they pay large sums of money they may not be able to afford for maintenance and monitoring. Our advice is to politely decline the call.

Residents in the Sevenoaks district can be assured they do not live in a high crime area but it is understandable that people like the added security of an alarm system. If you are considering installing an alarm we suggest you approach reputable companies and get more than one quote. Vulnerable victims may be able to get assistance from the KCC Handyvan service.



Recently there has been an increase in the number of bicycle thefts in Otford. Keep your bike secure. Bike Crime can be prevented by following crime prevention guidelines:

- Get a good bike lock, look for products that have been tested against attack or ask for a recommendation at a reputable bike shop.
- Get your bike security marked or engraved
- Always lock your bike even if you are only leaving it for just a few minutes.
- Lock your bike through the frame to something secure such as a proper bike anchor or robust street furniture
- Lock the removable parts of your bike.

To contact your neighbourhood officers PC Ben Clatworthy or PCSO Jane Wright please call them on 01732 379371. The next Community Engagement opportunity with PCSO Wright will be on **Tuesday 11th May** between 11am and 11.45am at The Parish Council Office.

Baby & Toddler Fair and Nearly New Sale.

At Otford Village Memorial Hall on **Saturday 5th June** between 1pm and 3.30pm

Buyers - £1.00 entrance fee, free for under 16's.

This is your opportunity to have a clear out, hire a stall and sell all your good quality nearly new maternity, baby & toddler products. Clothes, toys, baby equipment, prams, car seats, pregnancy aids and anything else baby or toddler! Visit stalls of various local baby & toddler activity groups and find out more about Monkey Music, Baby Sensory, Water Babies, Nature Nuts to name a few .. then go on to browse a selection of craft stalls and other small businesses such as baby photographers, silver print baby prints, nappy cakes and much, much more!

FACE PAINTING, Colouring Competition and refreshments will also be available... A great afternoon out!

TO HIRE YOUR STALL OR FOR MORE INFO, Caroline@buyitbaby.co.uk or call 07958 762828 or www.buyitbaby.co.uk

Barn Dance and Ceilidh

On Saturday 15th May at 7.30pm for 8pm in Otford Village Memorial Hall the Otford Players are hosting a Barn Dance and Ceilidh.

Please contact Carole Cole for tickets on 01959 525404 or carole.cole21@googlemail.com. Tickets cost £10 and this includes food but please bring your own drinks. Come along and have a dance and a lot of fun and laughs.

Otford Allotment Association

As the gardening season gets underway so a lot of activity is created on the allotments - do go along and have a look at some of the superb plots, and if you think you would like to join the team, give Barbara Hine a ring on 01959 525468. There is a small waiting list but don't despair and remember green fingers are good for you apparently.

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 1st June** when Doris Smallwood will be giving a talk entitled '*Brush up your Patio; Exciting Planting Ideas*'. Doris is a Chelsea Gold Medal winner for Courtyard Gardens and Containers so she is more than qualified to bring us some new ideas for the patio. Meetings start at 8pm in Otford Village Memorial Hall. Admission is 50p for members and £1 for non-members to include refreshments.

Come rain, hail, thunder or sunshine (yes we have had them all), you will find us on the Recreation Ground with our stall for the Otford Village Fete. We will be selling ornamental and edible plants all raised by our own members. Come and grab a bargain.

Sevenoaks Embroiderers' Guild

The next meeting will take place in the Otford Village Hall on **Saturday 29th May** when there will be an all day workshop by David Nicholls, entitled Celtic Knotwork, design methods and construction, also mini workshops led by members. Morning sessions begin at 10am and afternoons at 2pm, during which tea and homemade cake will be served. More information can be obtained from Sylvia Grafton on 01732 452117

St Bartholomew's Church Fair



Have a lovely family afternoon out and go along to St Bartholomew's Church Fair, on **Saturday 19th 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.

Twinning

There is an opportunity for a 15 year old boy and a 17 year old girl to take part in an exchange visit with a family with a house in Neufchatel-Hardelot and one just outside Paris. Please contact the Parish Office for further details.

Iris Society



The Kent Group of the British Iris Society are holding their combined Show and Display on Saturday 22nd May at the Otford Methodist Church Hall. Visitors will be welcome from 12 noon to 4pm. Entrance is free and there will be plants for sale.

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 20th May** which is their AGM and Resolutions meeting. 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 8th June** when there will be a talk by Steve Roberts on *'The Life of a Detective at Scotland Yard'* 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

All meetings take place on 2nd Thursday of each month in Otford Village Hall. The next meeting to be held will be on **10th June** when Lesley Gould will talk about the *'Life of a Japanese Woman'*. Visitors are always welcome at the meetings which start at 7.30pm

Plant Fair and Farmers Market

The Hospice in the Weald Plant Fair and Farmers Market takes place on **Saturday 15th May** from 10am to 2pm at the Hospice in Maidstone Road, Pembury. There will be hundreds of plants, herbs, trees and shrubs for sale at bargain prices! New for 2010 - Farmers Market selling delicious local produce. Barbecue, refreshments and cakes available. Admission is free. For further information please call 01892 820508.

Picture of the Month

Our artist for the months of May and June is Betty Medhurst. Betty says that she stopped painting when she left school a few years ago and has only taken it up again on joining the Otford Art Group. While Betty normally paints in watercolour this is an example, she says, of an attempt to paint in oils. Please contact Doug Dickerson on 01959 524183 if you would be interested in displaying your work in the Heritage Centre.

Hospices of Hope/ Events

Would like to remind all local residents that there is now a donation drop off point inside the Otford Tea Rooms & Gift Shop, 11a High Street, Otford which is open Monday - Friday 10am - 4.30pm and Saturday 10am - 5.00pm

Make every day count by recycling your old clothes, books and furniture through our shop. We can even recycle your old mobile phone. Should you have furniture or large items please call 01689 876626. Many thanks for your valued support.

On **Saturday 22 May** at Christchurch, Tunbridge Wells at 7.30pm Hospices of Hope present their Summer Clothing Collection Sponsored by the Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells shops. See the collection ... and then have the opportunity to buy!

Tickets £3 available from Tonbridge shop 01732 771919 / Tunbridge Wells shop 01892 532004 or email shops@hospicesofhope.co.uk

On **Monday 31 May** at the Otford Village Fete Hospices of Hope are delighted to have a team from the "Rock Choir" singing on their behalf- all are welcome!

On **Saturday 12 June** at Christchurch, Tunbridge Wells at 7.30pm, Stuart Pendred and Hospices of Hope present: 'You Raise Me Up!' featuring special guests Caroline Clipsham & Eliana Pretorian. This is an evening of popular classical arias and favourite piano highlights. Standard ticket is £10 or a VIP ticket is £12.50 to include glass of wine / orange juice with canapés during the interval

Do not miss out on this evening - contact wendy@hospicesofhope.co.uk or 01959 525110

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 **20th May** when Nicholas Bagshawe will talk about '*A Victorian Dream of Greece and Rome: England's Classical Painters at the End of the Nineteenth Century*'. Fine Art dealer Nicholas Bagshawe will talk about England's Classical painters at the end of the 19th Century; how they were inspired by the art of Greece and Rome and how they were constantly striving to give Victorian England their vision of the classical idyll. 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 **10th June** when Mr Tom Errington will talk about '*Trompe L'Oeil - The Art of Illusion*'. 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 March TOP Draw are:

1st Prize £50 - 396, 2nd Prize £15 - 451, 3rd Prize £10 - 179

Citizens Advice Bureau Surgery

The next CAB Surgery will take place at School House on **Tuesday 1st June** between 10am and 12 noon. No appointment necessary.

Planning

The following applications are considered by the Parish Council in May. 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/10/00606 **The Oast House** **Twitton Lane**

Demolition of existing attached garage and construction of single storey attached structure to form habitable room with pitched and cantilevered roof

SE/10/00815 **41 Knighton Road**

Erection of a two storey side and rear extension

SE/10/00833 **6 Orchard Road**

Erection of a two storey side extension

SE/10/00867 **Bag End** **Shoreham Road**

Retrospective application for minor regarding works within rear garden, including provision of retaining walls, to provide level area of 126 m²

SE/10/00902 Clan Cottage Pilgrims Way East

Demolition of existing cottage and erection of five bedroom house

b. Results received

SE/09/02329 Hoggarden Farm Telston Lane

Change of use of land for stationing of one static caravan and one touring caravan for residential occupation by single gypsy family with associated septic tank and hard standing and conversion of end stable for utility room. Temporary basis of 3 years. As amended by additional information received on 22.12.09 and 07.01.10 *Refused*

SE/10/00219 Hillway Pilgrims Way East

Erection of replacement dwelling *Refused*

SE/10/00236 Mayola Station Road

Construction of two detached residential dwellings with detached double garage *Refused*

SE/10/00242 8 The Old Walk

First floor extension above existing garage and utility room, front extension to garage and porch infill *Allowed*

SE/10/00311 69 Sidney Gardens

Erection of single storey side extension and demolition of existing garage *Allowed*

c. Appeals

SE/09/02586 Bag End Shoreham Road

Retention of wooden decking over existing paved terrace, with two small additional areas and one set of stairs repositioned

SE/09/00631 17 Greenhill Road

Appeal against refusal of removal of condition 3 of SE/09/00631 *Appeal allowed*

SE/10/00198 Bankside Cottage Shoreham Road

Demolition of existing side extension, conservatory, garage and outbuilding and erection of new single storey side and rear extension (including garage) together with ancillary works

d. Tree Preservation Order

10/00969/WTPO 12 Hopfield Close

Reduce 3 poplar trees by 30%

HW/TPO/04/2010 Land at Station Road

TPO confirmed