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 all be read via http://www.otford.info/parishcouncil. The next meetings will be on 10th November and 8th December at 7.30pm in the Club Room of Otford Village Hall. Contact details of Councillors can also be found on the website.

Chairman's Report

Car Park

By the time you receive this month’s report, the car park pay-and-display should have been in operation for about two weeks. It will be interesting to see the difference (or not) that it makes on parking habits and street parking in Otford. The Parish Council does not think it will have a detrimental effect on the majority of car park users; the only people who will be “inconvenienced” will be those that use it as free all day parking. We will see, time will tell.

OPC will be running the present scheme for twelve months and then re-evaluating it every six months. It will also be interesting to note the effect of the pay-and-display which is now operational in the Bull car park.

There have been several complaints about cars parking on the grass verges outside Beadles. The Parish Council has raised the matter with SDC and KCC and there is very little that either of the two authorities can do about it. If you want to complain, then please address your comments directly to the management at Beadles Garage and not OPC.

Outdoor Gym

The October newsletter carried a questionnaire (on the back page) regarding an outdoor gym or exercise area. This was another of the ideas put forward by the residents when compiling the Parish Plan. Please complete the questionnaire and return it to the office so that we may have some idea of the latest requirement for the project and be able to make a sound judgement of the issues.

Allotments

There are a number of “water butts” on the allotments manufactured from unwanted bath tubs that have been sunk into the ground. There have been incidents of toddlers drowning in similar situations and as a preventative measure the Parish Council will be replacing them with safe water containment vessels with lids on them.
The Village Green Christmas Tree

As reported last month, the Christmas tree on the green has to be felled as it has a disease that is causing it to lose a lot of its needles and there is probable root protrusion under the nearby wall. It is also being overshadowed by the adjacent small leafed lime tree and it is extremely expensive to hire the correct equipment to enable the lights to be installed - or extremely dangerous to expect somebody to climb the tree to do it. So the idea now is to site the tree outside the parish office where we will be able to replace it annually and mains electricity will be easily available.

Save your Community Warden

You may have heard about the public consultation which began on 29th September and ends on the 9th November regarding Kent County Council’s plans to transform its Community Warden’s service - to you and me that’s friendly Paul Robertson. KCC are putting forward proposals to reduce the Community Wardens budget by £1.28M from next April. This will mean reducing the number of on-the-street wardens from 79 to 40, as well as management and administrative support. Wardens currently work with residents and partner agencies to tackle a wide range of risks including bogus callers, fly tipping, graffiti and vandalism. They operate in local parish districts, spending much of their time in specific areas so that you get to know them. Apparently there is no statutory obligation on KCC to provide the service and KCC agreed at its budget meeting in February to save £1.28m from April 2015 by reducing this area of expertise. As part of the consultation process, parishes and communities are being asked if they would wish to buy into the warden service. OPC will be making representations to retain Paul on a local basis.

The consultation runs from September 29 to November 9 and we are informed that no formal decisions have been taken and that the public’s views will be instrumental in the final decision taken by council members, although the budget cut has already been agreed! Following the consultation, a firm proposal will be reported to the Environment and Transport Committee on 5th December before KCC makes a decision.

You can register your views online: kent.gov.uk/communitywardenconsultation, or complete the questionnaire at the end of a booklet, containing full details of the proposals, which is available from the community wardens, or the parish office.

Alternatively you can call KCC’s Contact Centre on 03000 414141 and ask that a booklet is sent to you in the post.

Otford Christmas Shopping Festival

On Sunday 30th November the only place to be and be seen between 11am and 4pm is your own village of Otford when our lovely shops here in the village will be open for business. There will be street entertainment including Terry Herbert, magician, face painting, Lady Morris Dancers and the Primary School and Community Choirs. Father Christmas will also be visiting and there will be many other exciting things to enjoy including bell ringing and free mince pies distributed by the Otford Methodist Church.

Please come, dress up in Victorian style if you can and bring your friends and family and enjoy this fun day and support YOUR shops who help to keep this such a lovely, lively, thriving village.
Remembrance Day 2014
Please remember that traffic will be halted at the pond between 10.45am and 11.15am on Remembrance Day [Sunday 9th November] So if you are making a journey please get through before but if you do get caught please just be patient and remember why you are waiting. WEAR YOUR POPPY WITH PRIDE.

1914 - 1918 Centenary
‘The Great War and the Songs they Sang’
Continuing Otford’s participation in the commemoration of the centenary of the Great War, now known as World War I, the Community Choir and Otford Players follow their successful production of ‘Otford Remembered 1914-1918 – The Calm before the Storm’ with another original presentation in the Otford Methodist Church on Friday 5th December and Friday 12th December at 7.45pm. The Great War cast a long dark shadow over millions of lives for most of the 20th Century. This production provides an opportunity to join the national expressions of remembrance which honour both the dead and the courage of people who saw us through those desperate years. In spoken and dramatic fashion the story unfolds through eyewitness accounts, giving us a glimpse of life at home and on the Western Front, interspersed with songs of the day that rallied the spirit of the nation. This is a unique occasion that will not be experienced again. Admission by ticket £5. Ring 01959 522709 to book. Proceeds to support the Community Choir and donations to charity.

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 also be contacted on 07813 713366.

Beavers Pack need help
The Otford Beavers Pack need helpers to assist them in their activities. They meet on Mondays between 5.15 pm and 6.15pm in the Scout Hut, Station Road. Please contact Fiona on 07918 727058 if you are able and willing to help out.

Tree of Light
The Tree of Light service will take place on [Friday 12th December] at 7.00pm on the Village Green. Following the service there will be refreshments offered in the St Bartholomew’s Church Centre. Labels for you to write your message on are available from the Parish Council Office. If you cannot get into the office during opening hours (8.30am – 12.30pm) then please phone up and we will write your card for you. Cheques for your donation need to be made out to Otford Parish Council. The Tree of Light will remain lit up until after the New Year. Donations will once again be going to The Hospice in the Weald.
Guide Christmas Post Box

The Guide Christmas Post Box will be in Otford Library between Thursday 27th November and Friday 19th December inclusive during opening hours. A second Box will also be available in the Parish Council Office on Monday to Friday between the same dates. All cards will be delivered by Brownies and Guides over the weekend 20/22nd December. Stamps will be 25p per card and all money will go to the chosen charities. This will be the 32nd year that Otford Guides have been delivering Christmas cards in the village and we would like our Christmas Post Service for the village to continue and be really successful, so please give generously and support us by posting early.

Gardeners' Society

The final meeting of the year will be on Tuesday 2nd December at 7.30pm in Otford Village Memorial Hall will be the Annual Quiz and Fun night. Admission which includes refreshments is £1 for visitors. Contact Janet Finney on 01959 523760 for more details or e-mail gardeners@otford.net.

Otford Twinning

The next Social Gathering of Otford Nefchate-Hardelot Twinning Association will be at the Woodman Pub on Monday 24th November from 7.45pm when we shall be discussing plans for next year. Do join us and tell us what you would like to do in France. Would you like another coach trip or would you prefer a car sharing weekend or both?

Otford Players present 'MURDER INN' - a comedy thriller

Otford Players latest production will take place on Thursday 13th, Friday 14th and Saturday 15th November at 7.30pm in Otford Village Memorial Hall. The dilapidated eighteenth century 'Murder Inn' is supposedly haunted by Marco, a knife throwing poltergeist. A group of tourists, on a Ghost and Ghouls tour is forced, by a storm to make an unscheduled stop at the Inn. As the storm builds and the body count rises, the survivors try to figure out 'who done it' and who's likely to have it done to them next? Please call the Box Office on 01959 525404 or contact otfordplayers@otford.net

St Bartholomew's Christmas Market

The Christmas market will take place in the Church Centre (adjacent to the Church) on Saturday 22nd November from 10am to 12 noon. Stalls will include: gift wrapping, cards, Christmas tree and table decorations, candles, bulbs (the growing kind), Christmas sweets and chocolates, and a herb and spice craft stall. Tea, Coffee and biscuits, stollen and mince pies will also be on sale for you to enjoy while having a chat with friends.
**Sevenoaks Embroiderer’s Guild**

The last meeting this year will take place on **Saturday 29th November** in Otford Village Memorial Hall. There will be a Christmas party and a talk from Alison Hurd. The meetings start at 10am and 2pm and end with tea and cakes at about 4pm. For further information please contact Sylvia Grafton on 01732 452117.

**Otford & District Historical Society**

The next meeting of the new programme will take place on **Wednesday 19th November** at 7.30pm in Otford Village Memorial Hall when the AGM will be held followed by a talk by Davis Walsh on ‘Public Schools and the Great War’. Subscriptions are £6 per year and visitors are welcome at each lecture for £2.

Don’t forget Alison Weir at St Bartholomew’s Church on **Saturday 13th December** at 4pm presenting a lecture with Siobhan Clarke on ‘A Royal Christmas’. Tickets are available from Parish Council office, the Library and Sevenoaks Bookshop at £8.00

**The Otford Society Village Survey**

The Otford Society is running a survey, which is open to everyone who lives in the village, and which seeks views on the Society’s future role and priorities. All responses are welcomed, so that the committee can ensure that they represent as many residents as possible when fund-raising, organising events, supporting village projects, and reacting to planned developments. To participate, complete the survey online at http://survey.otfordsociety.org.uk/ or email survey@otfordsociety.org for a paper copy.

**The Darent Valley Choir Christmas Concert**

The Christmas concert this year will be held in the United Reformed Church (Christ Church) Littlecourt Road, Sevenoaks on **Saturday 6th December** at 7.30pm. They will be singing Handel’s Messiah part 1 together with the Hallelujah Chorus and carols old and new. Do join them for a special evening. Tickets are available at Sevenoaks Bookshop or at the door or reservations can be made at www.darentvalleychoir.com

**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 be on **20th November** when they will be enjoying Edible Christmas Gifts with Angie Jordan of Hot Pot Cookery School. There is a crèche and the first visit is free. Do join them. Contact Jo Hall on 01689 638996 for more details

**Otford Evening WI**

Otford Evening WI’s next meeting will be on **Thursday 9th November** in the Club Room of the Otford Village Memorial Hall at 7.30pm For more information please contact Pat Goddard on 01959 522578
Otford Village Memorial Hall

Can you help your local community Hall? Got a few hours of your time available? Certain parts of the Village Memorial Hall are beginning to look a little sad and could do with some care and attention. As with all community things, funds are forever tight. We are currently looking into refurbishing the ladies toilets in the Main Hall as these are the most used in the building. However, we are in need of the services of (ready?) a plasterer, a carpenter, a plumber and an electrician to undertake relatively small amounts of work before we can tile it from floor to ceiling. Obviously, we would provide all necessary materials; we are just asking for a little of your time. If you can help or you’d like to know more please call Ron, the Hall Manager, on 07887 780 576 or e-mail ovmh.manager@otford.net.

Hospice of Hope

The fundraising Hospices of Hope Craft and Teashop in the High Street is recruiting for more staff and volunteers. If you are a fan of Great British Bake Off, would you like to work in a friendly environment and put your cookery skills into practice then this is the job for you. There are opportunities for full and part time cooks, managers and catering staff with competitive salaries being offered. These positions are 8 hour days across Monday to Saturday. If you would like to discuss these opportunities call Carolyn on 07835077909 or 01322n286587 for an application form or send your CV to Hospices of Hope, 2 Avery Way, Questor, Dartford, DA1 1JZ

Knole Decorative and Fine Art Society

Knole Decorative and Fine Arts Society meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Sevenoaks Community Centre, Bat & Ball. The lectures start promptly at 1.45 pm and finish by 3 pm. The next lecture will be on Thursday 20th November when Clare Ford-Wille will talk about ‘On Either Side of No Man's Land: British & German Artists of the 1914-18 War’. For further information see the website www.knopledfas.org.uk.

Sevenoaks Local RSPB Group

On Thursday 6th November at 7.45pm in Otford Village Memorial Hall there will be a talk by Ed Drewitt on 'Our local raptors or are they?' A stimulating insight into the largely unknown migrations of some of our common and familiar birds of prey. Local Group members are £2.50 and non-members are £3.50. Telephone 01959 563530 for further information.

Heritage Centre Picture for November/ December

The featured artist for the rest of the year is Chris Masson. She says “I cannot remember a time when I was not painting or drawing something, not always with success I might add. I attended the Roan School in Greenwich where I was more often found in the Art room rather than the netball pitch by my exasperated PE teachers. I did gain a distinction in Art in the exam at the end of my school career and it was my dearly held intention to go to the Goldsmiths College to do Stage or Fashion design but it was not to be. After I married John and our Julia was 2 years old I signed up with an art group in Sale, Cheshire where we were then living. We had a superb tutor there and on coming south again I joined an evening class in Sevenoaks. When I retired I joined the Otford Art Group and thoroughly enjoy the art and convivial company each week.
Planning

The following applications have been considered by the Parish Council. 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/14/02646 45 Station Road
External wall insulation to side and rear walls of property. Replacement of existing white render with white render finish.

SE/14/02917 48 Well Road
Demolition of existing dwelling and proposed new dwelling to be built in accordance with the approved consent for the extended house.

SE/14/02966 The Oast House, Shoreham Road
Erection of a two storey side and rear extension

SE/14/03098 1-36 Twitton Meadows
Proposed replacement windows and doors

SE/14/03267 47 Pilgrims Way West
Minor material amendment to application SE/13/03537 for the demolition of existing two storey dwelling and garaging and construction of new two storey dwelling with attached chimney added to the east elevation, kitchen windows altered, tile hanging at first floor to front elevation increased and solar panels relocated to west roof elevation.

b. Results Received

SE/14/02074 Hopgarden Farm, Telston Lane
Conversion of former stables to 2 bed dwelling including link  Refused

SE/14/02150 Brambles, Shoreham Road
Demolition of outbuilding and erection of a single storey rear extension with a glass lantern. Increase in height of existing terrace  Allowed

SE/14/02285 8 Leonard Avenue
Cladding of gable wall with PVC shiplap planking above first floor level  Allowed

SE/14/02220 Greenhill House, Shoreham Road
Erection of garden room  Allowed

SE/14/02352 20 Rye Lane
Single storey front extension with 3 velux windows  Allowed

SE/14/02516 64 Tudor Drive
Erection of a single storey side and rear extension to dwelling. Conversion of roof space, new roof lights to front elevation and dormer window to rear. Covered porch to front  Allowed

SE/14/02198 St Michael’s School
Minor material amendment to application SE/11/02212 for the erection of a new pre-preparatory school following the demolition of the existing Headmasters house together with the conversion of the existing school building to provide replacement accommodation including part demolition and improvements to existing playing field in order to include a larger plant room, arrangements to roof lights and amendments to the proposed deck area. The amendment seeks change of use of part of the former pre-prep building, allowing for the continued use of the first floor as staff accommodation but with more generalised use of the ground floor as classroom space/non-specific ancillary school use and associated alterations to the fenestration.  Allowed
SE/14/02491  Kursella, Sevenoaks Road
The erection of a first floor extension to the north elevation, single storey extension to the south elevation with rooflight, part two storey and part single storey extensions to the east elevations, alterations to the roof and a loft conversion, the addition of a pitched roof dormer window to the east, three rooflights to north elevation and a front canopy porch.

Allowed

SE/14/02646  45 Station Road
External wall insulation to side and rear walls of property. Replacement of existing white render with white render finish.

Allowed

c. Tree Works
SE/14/02952  Bubblestone Farm, The Green
Fell 1 Norway Spruce Tree

SE/14/02963  3 Bubblestone Road
T1 Ash – remove all deadwood and stubs, clear all hanging branches and crown lift to give a 5.2m clearance over neighbour’s driveway.

SE/14/03130  23 High Street
Various works to trees

SE/14/03170  Broughton Manor, High Street
Works to trees

SE/14/03278  Moat Cottage, Station Road
Various works to trees

d. Appeals
SE/14/01130  50A Pilgrims Way East
APP/G2245/D/14/2222529 Single storey rear extension

Dismissed

Parish Councillors Contact Details

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