



WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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Chairman: Alan Wesley

Town Clerk: Angela Howells

Deputy Clerk: Debbie Marshall

Assistant Clerk: Deborah Rogers

FREE SUMMER FAMILY FUN SESSIONS

Funded by Westerham Town Council

Four THURSDAY MORNINGS in August - 10.30am – 1.30pm

KING GEORGE'S FIELD, WESTERHAM

The sessions will be on Thursday 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th August 2016.

There will be inflatable fun at each session including a Magician on the 3rd, and African Drumming 17th.

If the weather is wet all sessions will be held in the Westerham Sports Association building on King George's Field.

Lorry Watch

Observations of lorries/HGV's that are suspected of using unsuitable roads or not sticking to the limits and restrictions, should be passed directly to Kent County Councils Freight Team on freight@kent.gov.uk or reported via the KCC online reporting tool www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/track-a-problem. You will need to provide the vehicle registration number, vehicle details, date & time of incident. Once the information is collected, it is passed to Kent Police who can find the vehicle's registered keeper. If the vehicle is ignoring the legal limits and restrictions, the police contact the company and warn them that if they continue it may result in formal action. If there is no limit or restriction but the road is thought unsuitable, Kent County Council will contact the company and advise them to use the Kent Freight Gateway journey planner. Thank you for your continued help with this.

Be proud of your Town – keep Westerham clean and tidy!

Keep Britain Tidy estimates that street cleaning alone costs taxpayers almost £1 billion a year in England. With ever-decreasing budgets, local authorities are struggling to keep town and city streets and public spaces clean.

Westerham Town Council already supplements the services offered by Sevenoaks District Council and Kent County Council to keep Westerham looking attractive: we undertake the mowing of key amenity spaces in the town; apply a quarterly weed treatment around the town centre; install dog bins and have them emptied; plant the flower beds and work in partnership with Westerham Society to provide hanging baskets. We also organise litter picks from time to time around the town – the last one, held in March, produced 20 bags of rubbish!

We want to raise awareness of the problem of littering and ask people to think more about their actions. We would encourage everyone to do their bit to help keep Westerham clean and tidy by:

- not dropping litter and cigarette butts
- dog owners clearing up after their dogs
- retailers/businesses keeping their frontage litter free

Anyone wanting to arrange a community clean up in their road/street is welcome to borrow litter pickers from the Town Council office – call 01959 562147. To report a problem with litter or fly tipping call Sevenoaks District Council on 01732 227000.

Westerham is a beautiful town and if we work together we can keep it that way - clean and tidy and a more attractive place to live, work and visit.





All reports presented to the Annual town Meeting on 10th May

Allotments, Playing Fields and Open Spaces Committee Annual Report 2017

Westerham is rightly proud of its green spaces, The Green, Verralls Corner, open spaces at Granville Road, Madan Road, Crockham Hill Garden, King George's Field and our allotment sites. Your Council works hard to maintain these so that they are attractive, accessible and available to those who work, live or visit our town.

Open Spaces

Keeping our green spaces green and fit as venues for the many events held around the town is a never ending task: we 'weed, feed and mow' all our green spaces, continuing to supplement KCC's weed killing schedule: we cut our hedges to keep them in shape. We commissioned a survey to identify those trees on our land in need of attention either to ensure the trees' health or to avoid damage to people or property. We are now carrying out the work identified. Sadly we had to decide to replace two of the maple trees on Grange Island which were of a variety too big for their situation. Already raising the footpath and cracking the retaining wall, they were felled and replaced by a variety of maple more suited to the space.

The memorial in Crockham Hill Garden commemorating the 21 children and 8 staff who lost their lives when a flying bomb struck the home for evacuated children was dedicated by Rev Sue Diggory on 30 October 2016.

There are three Greensand Commons within the Parish. We are contributing to a grant funded project which will much improve their accessibility and condition.

Council has committed £7,500 to the Darent Valley foot path and cycle path project with its starting point in King Georges Playing Field.

King George's Field

The first stage of the rejuvenation of King George's Field has been completed with the installation of the outdoor gym, made possible by grants from Kent County Council, Aqualisa Products Ltd, Sevenoaks District Council, the Town Partnership, Bill Curtis Associates and Moore Energy as well as the Town Council. Work continues on the remainder of the project: the provision of a multi use games area, replacement of the skatepark and the refurbishment of the pavilion. Funding is a big issue and progress is necessarily protracted and time consuming.

In the meantime the junior football club continues to flourish as the main users of the field. During the coming summer, the ageing bridge from the Darent car park to the south west corner of the field will be replaced.

Allotments

Westerham is fortunate to have three allotment sites; improvements – noticeboards, raised beds, communal areas - have been made on all sites. However, supply continues to exceed demand, and despite continuous advertising, we have been unable to find plot holders for all plots.



My thanks go to my Committee colleagues and especially to our Deputy Clerk and Groundsman for all the work they do.

It is sad once more to conclude this report with a reference to vandalism: this has been felt in all parts of the town, but especially affects our open spaces. Shattered glass, waste and dog bins set alight or destroyed on King George's Field, damage to the Bowls Club as well as intimidating and abusive behaviour have all been reported. Work continues with SDC's Community Safety Unit and the Police to identify and bring to book those responsible.

Helen Ogden
Chair

Highways & Lighting Committee (H&L)

During this last year the Highways and Lighting Committee met five times and in between meetings members also gave of their time.

Highways (public roads)

A range of transport issues are high on the agenda for residents. It is widely acknowledged that NW Kent is seriously over reliant on private car use for transportation and this is having a serious and detrimental impact on the physical environment and in particular on air quality.

'Speed Watch' & 'Lorry Watch'

Speeding is a perennial problem on some of Westerham's roads. WTC has recently bought its own 'speed-watch' monitor and several more volunteers have been trained up to operate it. It will be getting its first use this summer.

Road repairs

This being a Kent County Council (KCC) area of responsibility, H&L promptly report and lobby KCC when road repairs are needed. Whilst urgent repairs are usually carried out quickly the same cannot be said for routine maintenance. The latter seems to be well down the list of KCC's priorities. The standard and extent of all road works carried out is usually the bare minimum.

Road Signage and Traffic Calming

New road signage and other measures have been put in place on Hosey Hill, a key Westerham road. Residents had petitioned the relevant joint KCC and Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) committee after the death of one cyclist being followed by serious injury to another in consecutive weeks. The area's KCC Councillor then stepped in to fund the works requested from public monies set aside for his discretionary use.

Parking

This is the joint responsibility of KCC and SDC. Westerham Town Council (WTC) and other interested local groups have brought (and will continue to bring) parking issues to the



attention to the attention of KCC and SDC. **This is a growing area of concern.** Traffic flows on the Town's side roads are just about being maintained but parking is a significant and growing local issue, particularly after work and in the early evening. There is sufficient visitor parking during the working day and the Darent Car Park's overflow area is now fully operational with the number of days it is open having been extended.

Lighting

New Street and Footpath Lighting

Three new lights were authorised and installed during the year. The installations were discussed following residents' requests and site visits. Please note that in accordance with Council policy all new lighting makes use of LEDs.

It is intended to extend the use of LEDs for the Town's main roads during 2017-18. This year has seen the completion of the installation programme for the Green and Market Square first begun in 2015-16. Initially the remainder of London Road's lighting which is yet to be replaced will be the first priority. Croydon Road will be next and then followed by Hosey Hill.

Repairs

It is WTC policy and practice to carry out lighting repairs promptly.

As Chairperson I should like to thank those of my colleagues serving on H&L for their tolerance and sterling effort. Finally I wish to make mention of the efficient and reliable service of 'Streetlights' the WTC's lighting contractor.

Neil Proudfoot Chairperson

Planning Committee Annual Report 2017

It remains the responsibility of the Town Council, through its Planning Committee, to review and opine upon local planning applications in line with current Central and Local Government policy, law and guidelines. Our aim is to protect the fabric of our community whilst promoting its continuing regeneration and renewal to make it an attractive and enjoyable place to live and work.

New Sevenoaks District Council Local Plan 2015-2035

The plan is still in its early stages of data collection from the *call for sites* to the new district wide Character Assessment Report; as well as the independent consultants (Arup) report to SDC on the Greenbelt and potential for future development across the district. The District Council and Town Council continue to update information on the progress of this plan through their web sites and newsletters.

Westerham Design Statement



Work on reviewing and updating the *Village Design Statement* (VDS) has been progressing over the past twelve months and we expect to publish a draft consultation report before the end of April to enable the public to comment on our findings before we submit a final draft to SDC. They will review this and if found to be sound they will submit it to the planning inspectorate for approval as supplemental guidance under the current and future local plans.

Squerries Estate plans

Over the last twelve months there has been much publicity from the Estate and their consultants on proposals by Squerries to offer large amounts of land for development under the new SDC local plan, linked to the restoration of the covers Farm quarry and a potential Westerham Bypass. Whilst Westerham Town Council have closely monitored this activity we have not opined upon the proposals until a clearer view is established in line with the developing Local Plan. Instead we have sought to make all information in the public domain available to our residents through our web site, meetings and newsletters. Once a clearer picture emerges and SDC brings forward sites in the greenbelt around Westerham for development we will be able to take a more robust position based on feedback from residents and local businesses.

DPD- Moorhouse

As most will know the distribution site proposed on our western border with Tandridge did not gain planning consent and the company withdrew its revised proposals in December. There is every expectation that DPD will not go away and we remain committed to opposing this scheme, which would significantly and adversely affect traffic through the centre of our Town.

Current developments in the Parish

There are currently two reasonably significant housing developments in Westerham in Old London Road and Croft Road. The building works have caused and continue to cause problems for local residents, which is always regrettable and the Council is working hard with the developers to minimise the issues raised. The fact remains that the Town needs new housing and the completion of these sites will provide much needed new homes.

Similarly the redevelopment of the Nat West Bank building has inconvenienced pedestrians and shoppers in the town centre but we hope to see this building brought back into use and make a positive economic contribution to the vibrancy of the Town soon.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of my Committee who have served diligently throughout the past year.

P Ashley
Chairman of Planning Committee



Youth and Community Committee

Youth Club/ Youth Forum

After closure of the Youth Club in the Pavilion on King Georges Playing Field we have established an after school programme at Churchill School for year 5 and 6 pupils. This initiative has been outsourced to PlayPlace and has been very successful.

Attendees generally exceed 20 children with the prospect of a craft based Accredited Arts Award for committed participants.

This programme will continue during 2017.

Play Provision and Family Fun Days

These events have proven to be very popular and well received. We plan to continue them in 2017.

We thank Westerham Sports Association and Westerham Hall for their support in providing refreshment and shelter when needed.

Forget-me-not Café

Steve Grange our Community Warden and Angela Howells our Clerk have been instrumental in developing this excellent and much needed resource. Their work has won well deserved Community Project Recognition at the Kent Dementia Awards held in October 2016.

Christmas Lights

The lights last year were the best in terms of coverage and impact. This year further enhancements are planned even allowing for the challenges posed by Westerham's aged electrics.

We thank local traders, the Westerham Town Partnership and the Westerham Society for their financial support.

Sea Cadets

The Westerham Company of Sea Cadets goes from strength to strength and provides an excellent environment for the boys and girls involved.

PCSO/Community Warden

Our replacement PCSO, Tim Darling is a good resource for the Town, even allowing for his large workload and the fact that we're only part of his "patch".

Steve Grange our Community Warden continues to prove a tremendous asset to the Town and his involvement with the Forget-Me-Not-Café and various groups for the more elderly residents is much appreciated.

Fullers Hill Public Toilets

This facility is past its "sell-by-date" and the Town Council, subject to community consultation, plans to replace them in 2017.



Provision for more Elderly Residents

As well as the Forget-Me-Not-Café we have helped in the provision of the Community Lunch Club which meets the 2nd Friday of each month.

Through the generosity of Mr Kailey who owns NISA Store, we were able to donate £1000 to the Tuesday Club which meets weekly and provides lunches, outings and Christmas get-together's for its attendees.

Antisocial Behaviour

During the past year the bad behaviour of a very small group of youths has escalated to unacceptable levels.

We have been working closely with the Police, the Sevenoaks Community Safety Unit and the Kenward Trust (who work on an outreach basis with juvenile addiction and behaviour issues) to help us control this.

We meet regularly with the Police and they have been putting extra resources into Westerham involving evenings of saturation coverage, the use of unmarked vehicles and having several PCSO's in Town at the same time.

The Kenward Trust are employed by WTC to do outreach work and engage with the youths where they congregate.

This programme will be continuing during the spring.

We would strongly urge anybody witnessing any unsatisfactory behaviour to report it by dialling 101. If you see any crimes being committed or you feel threatened then call 999.

We will continue to do what we can to stamp out this unacceptable behaviour as we cannot allow the few to spoil Westerham for the many.

Eddie Boyle

Chairman, Youth and Community Committee

FORTHCOMING TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

June

- 19th Highways and Lighting
- 22nd Planning and Development
- 26th Finance and General Purpose

July

- 6th Planning and Development
- 10th Council
- 20th Planning and Development



Members of the public are very welcome to attend these meetings. The first ten minutes of every meeting are available for members of the public to raise any issues with Councillors. All meetings start at 7.30 p.m. - except Planning which is held at 9.30 am - in the Town Council Chamber in Russell House. **Visit our website westerhamtowncouncil.gov.uk for more information.**