



## High Street Facelift for 2010

Plans for major upgrading of the High Street commissioned by Tenterden Improved have now been approved. The works are due to start in February and be completed by March. They include:

- A new forecourt for the Town hall, to be paved in York stone. A power supply is to be installed for outdoor community events and for market stallholders
- Three parallel parking bays are to be created in front of WHSmith. These will partly offset the loss of bays in front of the Town hall.
- Heritage style railings with the town coat of arms will replace those at the junction of the High Street with Recreation Ground Road
- Pedestrian finger posts to assist visitors and tourists will be sited throughout the town, replacing redundant posts where appropriate.

In addition, Kent Highways are planning to replace the pavement on north side of the High Street between the Town hall and Lloyds TSB Bank with York stone. Many complaints have been received about the condition of this. Inevitably there will be some disruption, but the work will hopefully be completed well before Easter.

Also planned is a visitors map in the Leisure Centre car park, matching those in the High Street. The long promised resurfacing of Coombe Lane and Station Road pavements is also to be completed by Kent Highways at some time during the year.

## More Homes - What You Said

The Association's open morning in October was in danger of being swamped by the sheer number of visitors! The exhibition on future growth and plans for an additional 475 allocated homes on land to the south of the High Street between the Smallhythe Road and Recreation Ground Road, were the major attraction.

Many of you were surprised at the scale of ABC's preferred option for allocated housing. The feasibility of access to the two adjacent sites from Recreation Ground Road and two new roads from Smallhythe Road was questioned, as was the impact of the proposals on the wild flower meadow and the junior school playing field. There were queries about the possible relocation of the surgery and whether there would be adequate provision for school places. Environmental implications, including the loss of footpaths and the loss of views of the town and St Mildred's church from Smallhythe Road, were a major concern.

The infrastructure required to support the extra homes and the phasing of the building programme were major issues.

Your committee believes that Ashford's original figure for Tenterden's growth of 265 additional homes by 2021 was more realistic and manageable and that the Government Inspector should not have overturned it last year.

There have been requests from members for more consultation and information as plans are developed. We therefore intend to provide further opportunity to consult as the scheme develops.

## More Homes - Ashford Boroughs Further Thoughts

Since the exhibition, ABC has undertaken a review of the draft development plan and proposes some changes as follows:

The site for twenty houses on Land north of Westwell Court identified as TENT 2) has now been dropped. (In our comments to ABC we said that "site TENT2 should be deleted from the DPD".)

TENT1 (site south of the High Street) should accommodate a further 20 houses within phase 1. Within Phase 1 part an average density of 40 dwellings per hectare should be achieved, realising an indicative capacity of 300 units

The Tenterden Healthcheck and Action Plan Report should also be taken into consideration for applications in the Tenterden area.

The capacity in the local sewerage system is insufficient to service the proposed development without action by the developer.

Despite these changes we have fundamental reservations about the lack of any clear strategic policies to protect the character and setting of the town. These in our view are essential, especially if TENT 1 landowners fail to reach agreement on when and how to develop. We have therefore made further written representations to Ashford Council.

### **What Next?**

Ashford Council will consider comments made on the proposed changes and decide on its final version of the Development Plan Document for formal submission to Government. This stage is scheduled for February.

An Examination In Public (EiP) is likely to take place about 3 months later (probably late May). For people who wish to speak at the EiP, there is usually an opportunity to submit further 'evidence' to support their position in advance of the EiP hearings. The Inspector will set the timescales.

We expect the inspector's decision at the end of the year.

### **Chairman To Stand Down**

It is with great regret that Alan Bates, our chairman, has decided to stand down. Earlier in the year he expressed concern that he might be perceived to have a conflict of interest since he owns land to the south of the High Street in what was, at that stage, one of the 29 possible sites identified in the original consultations on sites for allocated housing.

Once Ashford identified Tenterden 1 as a preferred site last year he sought the committee's views and offered to stand down with immediate effect. The committee felt that this was the proper course to ensure the Association's strict impartiality.

Chris Mason has kindly agreed to undertake the role of Acting Chairman until the AGM in April. Alan Bates will continue as a valued member of the committee, but will not participate in committee discussions on the development plan.

### **Crime**

PC Tom Newbury our beat officer reports that there has been an upsurge in the theft of metals across the Tenterden area. These include lead flashings from houses.

Theft of SATNAVs from cars, especially cars parked in remote areas such as Hemsted Forest, has increased. Remember to remove SAT NAV cradles when leaving your car unattended and clean off the giveaway sucker marks on the screen.

Many of the thefts in recent weeks have been shop lifting, but crime figures overall for the four months to December are down on the past two years.

### **Lines, Posts and Parking Charges**

Further restrictions in East Hill are to include double yellow lines around the junction with Oaks Road and Beacon Oak Road, following approval by the Joint Transport Board in December

At Boresisle, St Michaels, Kent Highways has installed wooden posts around the grass verges "to prevent vehicular access once and for all", however, concerns remain about alternative on street parking.

ABC is considering an increase in parking charges from April as a means of balancing Ashford's budget. In the meantime we are still awaiting the maintenance marking in the car parks that was promised for autumn 2009.

### **Members' "Post Box"**

#### **- and Donations**

Members may leave notes of suggestions or concerns for the attention of the committee with Nigel Webb, our Secretary, at Webbs Ironmongery Shop.

Gentle reminder: Annual donations to the Association are due on 1st April at the time of the publication of the next Newsletter