



Tenterden and District Residents Association

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held in St Mildred's Church Hall, Church Road, at 7.30p.m. on Tuesday 28th April. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Neil Pillai, partner in the Ivy Court Practice. He will be talking about his background and future developments in the practice.

Tenterden W.I. has kindly agreed to provide refreshments.

Station Rd & Coombe Lane Facelift

Work on the "Tenterden Improved" scheme for upgrading the coach/carpark in Station Road and Coombe Lane is nearing completion in time for the tourist season.

The original scheme had to be modified because of difficulties with underground services and the conditions required by KCC. Nevertheless the Highways Authority has agreed to resurface Coombe Lane and pavements in Station Road. Services have been incorporated in the carpark for possible future provision of CCTV in Coombe Lane.

Updated copies of the WKPS town map are being prepared for heritage frames in both the coach and the Town Museum carpark, and to replace those in the High Street. The numerous signs that previously existed have been removed and will be replaced with simpler and more welcoming ones. Tree planting has softened the starkness of the toilet block. Access to the old burial ground from the carpark has been improved and the Tenterden Footpaths Group has kindly offered to purchase some suitable seating there to create a more inviting park setting.

Waste bins in Coombe Lane are to be screened off and business signs will be incorporated in a single frame at the entrance from the High Street in keeping with the historic nature of the buildings. The new steps from the carpark into

Coombe lane will we hope provide a more pleasant introduction for visitors and benefit the local businesses.

Future Housing- Possible Sites

Further consultation by ABC with local representatives, including the TDRA, Tenterden Improved, WKPS and our Ashford and Tenterden Town councillors, took place in February at the second workshop on allocated housing provision. Tenterden is expected to identify sites for building an additional 500 houses in the period up to 2021. A comprehensive review of land proposed by developers and owners, along with other strategically important areas has been undertaken. There are thirty sites in all and ABC officers gave their initial responses on the suitability of each, categorising them under three headings "Rejected" "Marginal" and "Strong Candidates".

Sites near the town centre that are high on the list for consideration are land at Hales Place and the continuous area of land stretching from Smallhythe Road to Hales Place. ABC officers' views on all of the sites are included in your 2009 edition of "The Resident". We should stress at this stage that no decision has been taken by Ashford Council and there will be further opportunities to comment and raise questions before the final plans are ratified in the Development Plan Document

We Put Your Queries and Concerns to TESCO

Thank you to all of you who contacted committee members regarding the expansion of TESCO. Major concerns included the threat to High Street businesses, additional traffic, road safety, parking, the impact on the environment, countryside and neighbouring properties

We raised these issues with key TESCO representatives at a meeting with them in early March. Their responses, in brief, are on the following page:

High Street

Tesco are "concerned to protect the town centre". There will therefore be no pharmacy, post office, delicatessen or opticians in the Tenterden TESCO. The focus of their expansion will be on the range of goods and their availability. Staples, such as bread, milk and toilet rolls, frequently run out at present. Non-food items will be "very limited:" and will be "mainly what is there already." There will be no café (despite a survey indicating that a third of customers wanted one) and "no filling station at the present time" (this had also been identified by customers). Both of these are costly in terms of space and are not profitable or have low profit margins.

TESCO will encourage customers to use the High Street by introducing "directional signage". Nearly a half of all TESCO shoppers currently use the High Street facilities when they visit the store (e.g. for banking, non-food items, the Post Office, clothing). The two hours of free parking will therefore remain in order to encourage customers to shop in the town as well as the store. The previous three hours had led to "some abuse".

Traffic Cars and Parking

The TESCO planners will look at traffic calming measures within the site as far as the entrance, but off-site movements are the responsibility of Kent Highways. The TESCO representatives were asked whether it was the case that traffic movements on the Smallhythe Road were higher than the figures originally predicted when the store was first opened. They were unable to provide data.

As well as the official TESCO delivery vehicles there were also regular deliveries of perishable goods by other commercial vehicles. No figures were given.

Questioned on why only 60 additional parking spaces were being planned when the floor space increase suggested a significantly greater number, they told us that the parking spaces met TESCO's recommended standards for the store size.

It was acknowledged that the proposed additional parking would be on land originally designated for nine homes in the original TESCO scheme and that planning agreement had now lapsed.

The Environment:

The original proposal for a wind turbine had been rejected on the grounds of noise and visual impact. They were sceptical about solar energy (it was often "window dressing"), but agreed to reconsider it. The store would have an "energy champion" to look at scope for reducing energy and there will be a "green travel plan" for staff

An acoustic assessment for adjacent Longfield properties had been undertaken and retention of trees and "blast wall" were seen as effective solutions. Shared boundaries with three houses in Smallhythe Road would be protected by a 5 metre gap and a buffer of trees of 4.5 to 5 feet high initially and close boarded fencing.

The TESCO representatives agreed to look again at the issue of light pollution from the site, especially when viewed from the south. They would also review what could be done to screen the eyesore of the current EDF sub-station, although they are not technically responsible for it.

Crime

Tom Newbury our beat officer reports two recent successful outcomes: three males were arrested in mid- March, in connection with a robbery; incidents of window breaking last year led to one arrest and there have been no further incidents. There has, however, been a spate of overnight break-ins of vehicles parked on road and drives. Tools from workmen's vans and Sat Navs are particular targets. Do not leave empty Sat Nav cradles in the car as this alerts thieves to the possibility that equipment may be stowed in the glove box.

Crime in the Town remains at a low level. Be alert, however, to seasonal thefts such as strimmers and chain saws. Please note serial numbers on garden equipment to help convict offenders and ensure that stolen items are restored to their rightful owner. With the economic downturn, householders should be vigilant against a likely increase in opportunistic crime.