



## Pressing Concerns From Residents

It was standing room only for the committee and members at this year's AGM. Well over a hundred members attended and there were some lively inputs on recent developments and planning decisions in the town. Strong feelings surfaced that the "Gateway" provision was overcrowded and with complaints about being "buffeted".

The future use of "The Pebbles" was raised and there was widespread dismay at the decision by the "Kentish Express" to close its office there. The loss of our town-based reporter is a serious blow to the community.

Several members raised concerns about the need for enforcement of speed limits, not only on the approach roads into the town, such as Smallhythe Road and St Michaels, but also in the town centre.

There was concern that KCC will "rubber stamp" plans for the intensive three-storey redevelopment of Little Hill, Sheltered Housing at Wayside, St Michaels, ignoring objections and suggestions by local residents. However amended plans are being submitted and we will see whether they address our concerns.

Guest speaker, Dr. Neil Pillai, gave an illuminating personal insight into his own background as a GP and the past and future development of the Ivy Court Surgery.

## Station Road Improvements - Just In Time

Much of the Tenterden Improved scheme for Station Road and Coombe Lane was completed just in time for the tourist season in April. New steps from the car park into Coombe lane now provide a more pleasant introduction for visitors and will benefit the local businesses. The new car park surface has ducting incorporated into it for possible future provision of CCTV in Coombe Lane. Tree planting has softened the starkness of the toilet block. Updated

copies of the WKPS town map in new heritage frames have been installed in both the coach and the Town Museum car parks, and those in the High Street have been updated. The numerous redundant signs that previously existed have been removed. Access to the old burial ground from the car park has been improved.

## But more has yet to be done....

Unightly commercial waste bins in Coombe Lane are to be screened off and business signs for outlets in Coombe Lane will be incorporated in a single frame at the lane entrance from the High Street, in keeping with the historic nature of the buildings.

The Tenterden Footpaths Group has kindly offered to help purchase some suitable bench seating in the burial ground to create a more inviting park-like setting, with the agreement of the vicar, Canon David Trustram.

The Highways Authority agreed to resurface Coombe Lane and pavements in Station Road by Easter this year, but because of a "scheduling cock up" (their words, not ours) this will now be undertaken in October to avoid disruption to tourists. And all this will have been done well within budget.

## High Street Changes Exhibition

Schemes for further improvements based on the Healthcheck and the Streetscape Masterplan are now in preparation and include:

- The introduction of a series of pedestrian heritage finger posts to aid visitors.
- The replacement of the utilitarian railings at East Cross with black heritage railings incorporating the Town's Coat of Arms
- Extending the pedestrian area outside the Town hall, identified as a priority in the Streetscape. This will involve the loss of some parking space.

There will be a public exhibition in the Town Hall from 6pm to 8pm on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> and from 9am till 12noon on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July when there will be opportunities to comment on all these proposals before final decisions are taken. Please share your views with the representatives there.

### **Our New Committee**

The following committee and officers were unanimously endorsed at the AGM:

Alan Bates (Chairman) Nigel Webb (Secretary), Mike Lyons (Membership Secretary), Bill Chantler, Aline Davies, Peter Davies, Lisa Lovelidge, Ian Marsden Susan Pughe, Christopher Mason.

### **£600k From Tenterden Parkers!**

ABC has disclosed that Tenterden car parking generated more than £600,000 in the financial year April 2007-8. This included £561,455 from the ticket machines and £63,134 from penalties. Councillors and residents greeted these figures, released at the Town Meeting in May, with disbelief. But amazingly no one challenged them! We shall therefore be asking ABC for answers to the following:

- Why does Tenterden apparently contribute more than half of the total parking revenue from the 12 carparks in Ashford centre and Tenterden?
- Why did ABC carparks run at a loss last year?
- How much of nearly two thirds of a million pounds is spent on wardens?
- What proportion of warden hours is dedicated to Tenterden and how many to Ashford centre? Is that needs driven or income driven?
- How much is spent on maintaining and operating ticket machines and how much on the car parks themselves?

There has been precious little evidence of any surfacing or re-lining during the past two years period. There is a growing suspicion that Tenterden is being used as a milch cow to subsidise Ashford.

### **Welcome To Our New Mayor**

Our very good wishes to Cllr Alan Sugden our new mayor, who has served on the council for six years, the last two as deputy mayor.

### **Heronden Gatehouse Progress**

We reported at the AGM that progress is being made in the planned restoration of Heronden Hall Gatehouse. The owners hope to improve their driveway access and the gatehouse. This was confirmed by Martin Vink, ABC development control manager, at the town meeting.

The work is likely to involve extensive use of steelwork as a supporting frame, but the intention is to restore the building externally to its original glory as a key feature of the town that has existed for 150 years.

### **500 Homes - Comments Invited**

Preferred sites for the building of the 500 allocated homes in Tenterden are identified by ABC in the latest phase of consultation on the local plan for the period up to 2021. Residents can access the proposals and comment on [ashford.gov.uk](http://ashford.gov.uk) by entering 'consult' in the search box to bring up the consultation portal. The consultation period is from 29<sup>th</sup> June until 10<sup>th</sup> August. Please share your views with us.

### **"No Parking on Verges"**

We regularly receive complaints from members about the damage to the verges, especially along the main entrance to the town through St Michaels. We understand that some residents in Boresisle, St Michaels have received letters from KCC Highways to remind them that verges outside their houses should not be used for parking and action will be taken against individuals who ignore the warning.

### **Crime Trends**

In what has generally been a generally quiet time in the town, P.C. Tom Newbury reports that there have been two exceptions: a replica hand gun was waved a police officer in the High Street (an arrest was made and a man is in custody); there was a robbery of a young male in Oaks Road in the early hours. There have been two incidents of burglaries and theft of strimmers and "ride-on mowers" in the rural area. Do make a note of serial numbers and mark your equipment

Successes have included the eviction of a resident in Priory Way for anti-social behaviour and the elimination of anti-social behaviour in Henley Fields as a result of the gating of the footpath.