



## RYARSH PARISH COUNCIL

### March Parish Council Meeting

- The Parish Council's contractor has replaced the street lantern on one of the traffic calming islands on Birling Road with a more robust LED lantern
- The Parish Council has a new address for all correspondence: PO Box 503, West Malling, ME6 9NN
- There is a layby at the bottom of Brickfields, as you turn left towards Wrotham. Brickfields forms part of West Malling Parish, but the layby marks the start of the Ryarsh boundary. West Malling Parish Council would like to apply for a Traffic Regulation Order which will affect the layby, following complaints by residents leaving Brickfields about problems with visibility. Ryarsh Parish Council had no objections to West Malling applying for this
- The KALC Award and the Ryarsh Community Award will be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Two new silhouettes will be purchased for Remembrance from RBLI – an unknown Tommy and a Women in War statue
- The Parish Council will make its annual donation of £1,200 to St Martin's Church towards churchyard and cemetery gardening in April
- The Parish Council agreed to make donations of £100 each for 2023-2024 to the following charities:
  - Citizens Advice Bureau – they have helped 22 clients in Ryarsh this year with more than 150 issues
  - Heart of Kent Hospice. They treated 8 patients from Ryarsh this year
  - KSS Air Ambulance Charity. An emergency could happen to anyone, anywhere and could benefit Ryarsh residents at any time



### Kent County Council

County Councillor Hohler provided the following report:

- Cllrs discussed TMBC's planning department and delays in reaching or publishing decisions. Cllr Hohler said they are changing staff at TMBC and have some staff absent through sickness so it is difficult
- TMBC have refused the application for a lorry park at Wrotham Heath
- Rural Officers from Kent Police have recovered £400,000 of vehicles in one month
- The Budget has been difficult. KCC are making record levels of investment in adult social care and children's social care. There is also a lot of expense on home to school transport for children who need this.
- The weather has been appalling for Highways
- There is a mature drivers club running at 37 different venues - <https://kentroadsafety.info/road-user-types/mature-drivers/>
- Secondary School offers are down as fewer children have applied this year
- School buses are safe until April/May next year

- Trading standards are working hard to tackle illegal vapes coming in, mainly from China. The legal puff limit is 600 but some of those coming in are 1500 which is very dangerous. Little disposable vapes with lights have lithium batteries
- KCC have rejuvenated Oakwood Park in Maidstone which is a good venue for weddings. In 2023-24 there were 6,304 ceremonies in Kent organised by KCC
- KCC has a Film Office in Kent which was set up in 2006. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter last year they handled 88 filming requests and logged 79 filming days, bringing £820,000 into Kent and Medway. On average, filming generates more than £5m direct spend into the Kent and Medway economy ever year
- Ferns lorries have been travelling through the villages, due to problems in Ford Lane. This is being monitored, but the road should have re-opened now
- There has been a Burger Van in a small layby on the A20. The footpath was cleared of brambles and the van parked there. KCC gave 28 days notice to leave the site
- There have been quite a lot of complaints about litter and fly tipping. Rural police are working with TMBC to deal with this. TMBC are increasing fines. Fly tipping is a TMBC issue. Some parishes are getting together teams to go out and clean litter, but you cannot do this on roads where the speed limit is over 30mph.



## **TMBC**

Borough Councillor Banks and Boxall reported:

- Council Tax - The Borough Council will be increasing their section of the Council tax by £6.93 (typical band D). Although the Borough Councils financial position is good at the moment, it is forecasted that will need this increase to greater protect the future
- Fly tipping - Penalty charges for fly tipping have been increased from £150 to £500 for littering and from £400 to £1000 for fly tipping. Please be aware that we have had instances when residents' cardboard recycling bin has been emptied and 'addressed' recycling has blown out and enforcement officers have found it
- Community Grant Scheme - This scheme is now open where community and voluntary organisations can apply for funding to support their community's needs. Last year we were successful in securing grants for Leybourne's church and Leybourne Chase. Should you know any groups that wish to apply please see the TMBC website but also feel free to copy us in or let us know if you have any questions.
- 40 Acres - Pippins Place - The new housing development continues along London Road. Recently we have noticed that the developer has closed off sections of the footpath (which was a diversion from the public footpath) that had previously agreed to remain open. We have contacted the landowner of the west field and developer to get them reopened. It also appears that the developer has cleared a number of trees past the entrance to the site, where the proposed cycle/footpath is planned. This proposal has been called in to the area planning committee.
- Tree Projects - Children from Leybourne School are planting trees (whips) this Thursday at Castle Lake opposite the Brewers Fare Restaurant. Children from Rosewood School are planting trees(whips) near Hodges Close Leybourne Chase later this month. Hopefully, further planting will be arranged in October/November on new sites



### **Number 58 Bus Service**

KCC Financial support for this weekly bus was withdrawn on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2023. Ryarsh Parish Council agreed to pay its share of the cost, £154.90, to make sure the bus service continues to run for residents.

However, since the meeting, Borough Councillor Mike Taylor has been able to secure new funding from KCC to pay for this service for the next year. He has worked closely with Nu Venture.

### **Next Parish Council meeting**

The date of the next meeting is **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024**, 7.30pm, at Ryarsh Church Hall.

You can contact the Clerk by email at [clerk@ryarsh-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@ryarsh-pc.gov.uk) or by writing to Box 503, West Malling, ME6 9NN. For more information, please go to our website [www.ryarsh-pc.gov.uk](http://www.ryarsh-pc.gov.uk). The Parish Council Clerk works 12 hours a week, Monday to Thursday, and aims to respond to emails and phone calls within 5 working days



## Guided group walks – April 2024



Our friendly group is one of 13 Ramblers groups in Kent and part of the national Ramblers walking organisation. We explore the beautiful countryside of Tonbridge and Malling and surrounding areas.

You don't have to be a Ramblers member to try up to three 'taster' walks with us. If you're new to our walks, please contact the walk leader to check that their walk will suit you.

*Leeds Castle - 14 April walk*

For details of all upcoming walks and walk leaders, see our [Facebook page](#) or [www.tonbridgeandmalligramblers.org.uk](http://www.tonbridgeandmalligramblers.org.uk).

Sunday 7 April	Circular walk from Wateringbury along the Medway Valley then up over the hill past Roydon Hall and back down via Pizien Wells. Moderate difficulty.	6 miles
Sunday 14 April	Circular walk through parts of the Leeds Castle estate, across farmland and woodland paths through King's Wood and Broomfield. Return alongside the River Len, close to the moated Castle. Two stiles and short sections of wet mud are likely. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 miles or 2.5 miles (see webs ite)
Thursday 18 April	Circular walk up the North Downs from Kemsing. Moderate difficulty	5.5 miles
Sunday 21 April	Leisurely walk from Five Oak Green climbing gently up through hop fields and orchards to a ridge looking over a valley. After Spring Grove Farm we make our way back through more orchards at Amherst Bank. A lovely Spring walk.	5 miles
Thursday 25 April	Circular walk from Barming passing through Oakham Woods and the East Malling Horticultural Research Station. Return through fields and ancient woodland with some fine views of the Kent countryside. Mainly flat but there may be some mud. Moderate difficulty.	6 miles

Sunday 28 April	Circular walk from Plaxtol Spout; moderate difficulty.	5 miles
Walks usually start mid-morning. There's a short half-way break (bring refreshments) and we usually finish near a pub. Most walks are dog-friendly (see website).		

# HELPING TONBRIDGE & MALLING GET DIGITAL

You could be eligible to access free:

- Gifted 2-in-1 laptop
- Digital skills sessions
- One to one digital support

This is available for Tonbridge & Malling residents over the age of 16 and digitally excluded, that meet one of the following criteria:

- In or at-risk of financial hardship,
- Not in education, employment or training, or
- Looking to develop skills to support employment or career development.

Full eligibility details and how to apply are available at [www.digitalkent.uk](http://www.digitalkent.uk) or call 03000 410 950.



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## Snodland Library

16-17 High Street, Snodland. ME8 5DA

**Get Digital!** Whether you need support with using your tablet, the NHS app or just getting online. **We're here to help.**

Third Tuesday of the month between 10am and 12pm on:

- 16<sup>th</sup> April
- 21<sup>st</sup> May
- 18<sup>th</sup> June
- 16<sup>th</sup> July
- 20<sup>th</sup> August
- 17<sup>th</sup> September
- 15<sup>th</sup> October
- 19<sup>th</sup> November
- 17<sup>th</sup> December

To book onto a session and find out more, please visit [digitalkent.uk](http://digitalkent.uk) or call 03000 410 950.

