



RYARSH PARISH COUNCIL

May 2024 Parish Council Meeting

- Cllr McKinlay was re-elected as Chairman of the Parish Council and Cllr Sutton was re-elected as Vice-Chairman. Cllr McKinlay's Annual Report is available on the Parish Council website.
- The End of Year financial statement for 2023-2024 is available on the Parish Council's website.
- The Parish Council has donated £1,200 to St Martin's Church towards the Annual Cost of Churchyard Gardening
- Details of National Highways Emergency Area Retrofit Programme are attached later in the Newsletter. M20 Js3-5 will be affected from 22nd May 2024.
- The Parish Council has taken delivery of Unknown Tommy and Women in War Statue Pair. The RBLI Statues will be put up for the D Day commemoration in June. Statues will be sited by the Village Sign at the Roughetts Road junction and in Ryarth Park.
- Councillors were concerned about the grass in the Recreation Ground which has not been cut and will contact the Village Hall Trust about this.
- The Parish Council has funded a new bench to be used in Ryarth Park. Trinity, the Managing Agents, have agreed to install the bench.
- A New Notice Board to replace the damaged one by the Recreation Ground has been ordered. Cllr Hohler was thanked for her generous donation of £1,000 towards this from her Members' Fund.

Presentation of KALC and Ryarth Village Awards



Cllr McKinlay presented the Kent Association of Local Council's Award and a framed photo to Ivor Emson. Ivor has been a lifelong resident of Ryarth. He has an incredible knowledge about the village and is an important part of the community. He served for 33 Years on the Parish Council, including decades as Vice-Chairman.

Cllr McKinlay presented a certificate for the Ryarth Village Award and framed photo to Brenda Hurd with grateful thanks for her loyal and committed service to the Village.



Kent County Council

County Councillor Hohler's Annual report is available on the Parish Council's website. There was a discussion about the quarry application. Cllr Hohler has supported the village's objections to previous quarrying applications and will continue to do what is best for the village.



TMBC

Borough Councillor Boxall reported:

Parking charges are being introduced in Martin Square and West Malling High Street, although they fought against them. The first hour will be free.

The next stage of public consultations into the draft Local Plan will begin in June.

The quarry application is a KCC matter, but the Borough Councillors will work with the Parish Council.

Proposed Quarry at Land West of Roughetts Road – Public Consultation

The Parish Council submitted a formal objection as part of the public consultation into the proposed sand quarry on Roughetts Road. The Parish Council is working to get support from neighbouring parishes, KCC and TMBC and is doing everything possible to resist the proposal. There is no further action needed until a formal planning application is received. There will be a public meeting as part of that process.

An information brochure is available at <https://landwestofroughettsroad.co.uk/>

Highways Improvement Plan

The Parish Council works with Kent Highways to agree items to be included in a Highway Improvement Plan (HIP). This is a list of measures that the Parish Council thinks will benefit the village. Residents were consulted about this initially in 2021. Kent Highways work through the HIP with the Parish Council and tell us what is possible and what is not, how to achieve what we want and the cost.

In some cases Highways will pay for the work if it is safety critical, but usually it will be for the Parish Council to pay. At that point the Parish Council would decide if it can pay and how to raise the money, and consult with residents to ensure there is full support before the work goes ahead. The plan changes over time as work is added, or removed or completed.

A summary of the items contained within the HIP is at the end of the newsletter. If you have suggestions that you think would improve the roads or safety in the village please let us know.

Action can only be taken on land that is owned by Kent Highways.

Fault Reports

Street sweeping is the responsibility of TMBC. Any issues can be reported to TMBC using their online form at <https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/bins-waste/report-problem> or by email to waste.services@tmbc.gov.uk

Gulley cleansing is the responsibility of KCC and any issues can be reported to Kent Highways - <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>

Reports to TMBC about litter bins, dog waste bins or missed bin collections can be made to <https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/bins-waste>

Fly Tipping can be reported online through the TMBC website at <https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/bins-waste/report-fly-tipping> or using the Country Eye App

If fly tipped waste is blocking the public highway and may cause an accident, it should be reported urgently to Kent Highways on 03000 418181 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday or on 03000 419191 at all other times.



Kent Fire &
Rescue Service

together

Fire Home Safety Visits - <https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/hfsv>

Next Parish Council meeting

The date of the next Parish Council meeting is **Monday 10th June 2024**, 7.30pm, at Ryarsh Church Hall.

Please note the July meeting date has changed to **Monday 29th July 2024**.

You can contact the Clerk by email at 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. 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

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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 or call 03000 410 950.



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KENT & MEDWAY VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

FOR CANCER PATIENTS & UNPAID CARERS



PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Trained, DBS-checked volunteers offer practical assistance and companionship at home or transportation to health appointments.

INFORMATION & GUIDANCE

Our experts provide a wide range of useful information and guidance, available in Kent and Medway, for patients and carers.

COUNSELLING

We offer free counselling with a counsellor in training, available for Carers and supporters of a cancer patient

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Transport for the South East wants YOUR views about future transport needs

Transport for the South East (TfSE), the Sub-national Transport Body for the south east of England, is asking people to take part in their 'Your Voices' survey and submit views on the future transport needs of the region.

People are being asked to take part in the online survey where there are questions about transport-related issues such as accessibility and affordability.

Participants can also share their experiences regarding congestion, noise pollution, air quality, road safety, public transport, personal safety, and walking and cycling routes.

The 'Your Voices' survey can be found online at tfse.org.uk until Sunday, 2 June 2024.

A special podcast has been produced that explains in further detail why TfSE needs the views of people across the south east and how those views will help shape the future work of TfSE. The podcast can be listened to online at tfse.org.uk and is also available on Apple Podcasts and Spotify by searching for 'The TfSE Podcast.'

Councillor Keith Glazier, Chair of TfSE, said: "We want to hear the views and experiences of those in the region when it comes to all things transport related. One of our roles is to speak to government about the priorities they should consider when improving transport connectivity locally. To do this effectively, we need to hear from as many people as possible across the south east."

The south east is defined as Bracknell Forest, Reading, Windsor & Maidenhead, Slough, West Berkshire, Wokingham, Kent, Medway, Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton, Isle of Wight, Surrey, East Sussex, West Sussex, and Brighton & Hove.

Transport for the South East (TfSE) is a sub-national transport body bringing together a partnership primarily of 16 local authorities across the region. Our purpose is to determine the investment needed in our transport system to connect people and places and support economic growth across the south east. As well as our local transport authorities we also represent district, borough, town, parish and community councils such as yourself. Kent County Council is the main partner in relation to your area with one of the councillors sitting on our Partnership Board.

I recently joined the organisation and want to put a renewed focus on our engagement with both authorities across the region and the wider public.

We're happy you are already subscribed to our communications, if your individual councillors, residents or anyone else would like to receive this directly you can [sign up at the bottom of our website](#) where you will also find our Privacy Policy.

North Downs Walk

for Cancer Research UK

Rotary
Weald of Kent



SUNDAY 9th JUNE 2024
Online Registration now open

www.wealdofkentrotary.org.uk/north-downs-walk



A sponsored walk, starting and finishing at Harrietsham Village Hall, followed by a ploughman's lunch and live musical entertainment.

Choice of 1,3,6 and 9 mile routes.

50% of sponsorship money is donated to Cancer Research UK, and the other 50% to your choice of charity or good cause.

An opportunity for your fundraising, with Rotary providing the organisation



All expenses are underwritten by our event sponsor, Family Funeral Service.

Every penny raised in sponsorship will go to the charities.



Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1183444), Scotland (SC041669), the Isle of Man (1188) and Jersey (647).
Registered address: Redman Place, London E20 1JZ



By email

11 April 2024

To whom this may concern

National Emergency Area Retrofit - work is set to begin on the M25 and surrounding motorways in the next few weeks.

We are delivering a government commitment to add more than 150 more emergency areas to motorways across the country including several sections of the M25 and surrounding motorways.

Work to install additional emergency areas is already taking place along the M1 corridor from junction 16 up to junction 35a.

The programme of work in the south will start from 25 April 2024 and all sections are expected to be open by the end of March 2025. I am writing to give you an overview of what this means for the strategic road network.

In the South East over the coming months work will start on:

- M25 between junctions 5 (Sevenoaks) and 7 (Redhill), due to start from 25 April 2024.
- M25 between junctions 23 (South Mimms) and 27 (Epping), due to start from 25 April 2024.
- M3 between junctions 2 (Thorpe) and 4a (Farnborough), due to start from 29 April 2024.
- M4 between junctions 10 (Wokingham) and 12 (Theale), due to start from 7 May 2024.
- M20 between junctions 3 (West Malling) and 5 (Aylesford), due to start from 22 May 2024.
- M27 between junctions 4 (Southampton) and 11 (Fareham), due to start during summer 2024.

Please be aware we do our utmost to maintain these dates, however dates are subject to change, and it may take a few weeks before the roadworks appear as preparatory work is completed. We will regularly publish information about the upgrade and the roadworks on our website at <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/emergency-areas>.

There are major upgrades already underway at junctions 10 and 28 of the M25, as well as regular roadworks for maintenance and renewals. We know just how busy this section of the motorway network is and are working tirelessly to coordinate all this work closely and keep disruption to an absolute minimum. You can find out more about these projects, including a series of planned weekend closures on the M25 junction 10 project on their webpages: <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/south-east/m25-junction-10/> <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/south-east/m25-junction-28-improvements/>

We are in close contact with local authorities through coordinated collaborative meetings to minimise the impact of roadworks as much as possible.

To carry out the work safely, lane one (the left lane) on the four-lane motorways listed, will be closed throughout construction. Lanes two, three and four will remain open with a 50mph speed limit in place. Existing emergency areas through roadworks will remain open and a free recovery service will be in place throughout the roadworks.



The traffic management for the working areas will be installed overnight when the traffic flows are quieter. We always do our best to minimise disruption and we apologise in advance for any inconvenience these works may cause.

The new emergency area work will mainly be carried out Mondays to Fridays from 7am to 7pm. There will be occasions when we need to close lanes, slip roads or the carriageway between junctions for construction activities and deliveries to the work sites, but this will be overnight and at weekends when traffic flows are at their lowest. Should there be a need to close overnight there will be clearly signed diversion routes in place.

Please do plan your journeys and check before you travel via: [Road closure report - National Highways](#).

Emergency areas provide a place to stop in an emergency if drivers cannot exit the motorway or stop at a motorway service area. They are clearly signed at regular intervals along the motorway and have bright orange road surfaces to help identify them. At 100 metres long, they have plenty of space for even the largest lorry plus a recovery vehicle and they are equipped with emergency telephones linking directly to our control rooms to get help on the way quickly.

You can find out more about what to do if your vehicle breaks down on the motorway here: <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/road-safety/breakdowns>.

This investment in extra emergency areas, along with technology like stopped vehicle detection, more signs, and clear advice about all lane running motorways online and an updated Highway Code, will help road users feel safe and be safer on our roads.

Through all the work we are doing we are determined to further improve public confidence in driving on our motorways, and to continue to build and operate one of the safest and best performing road networks in the world.

For more information you can follow National Highways [@highwaysseast](#) and <https://www.facebook.com/HighwaysSEast>.

Please re-share our posts and information on your channels, to help increase awareness about the work with your audiences.

You can visit [Driving on the motorways - National Highways](#) for more details on what to do in the event of an emergency, and how to use an emergency area.

I hope you find this update useful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or the project team directly on EAretrofit@nationalhighways.co.uk or by calling: National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. Clayton".

Felicity Clayton
National emergency area project sponsor



Guided group walks – June 2024



Southborough Common – 13 June walk

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.

For details of all upcoming walks and walk leaders, see **Tonbridge and Malling Ramblers Facebook page** or visit www.tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk.

Sunday 2 June	Lamberhurst Loop - circular walk taking in Cooksbroom Wood, Snagg's Well, Furnace Mill and Owl's Castle Farm. Several short steep ascents and descents, some stiles and lovely views throughout. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 mile s with 3.8 mile s optio n
Thursday 6 June	Circular walk from Penshurst to Leigh. Moderate difficulty.	5 miles
Sunday 9 June	Circular walk from Borough Green on quiet lanes and footpaths to Basted, Plaxtol Spoute and Dunks Green. Picnic stop at the Kentish Rifleman. Return via Plaxtol and Yopps Green through the orchards. Moderate difficulty. We will be guiding members of London Blind Ramblers along the route. Support from sighted walkers will be greatly appreciated.	7.5 mile s
Thursday 13 June	Circular walk through the woods from Southborough Common to Bidborough with great views north. Then down to Haysden and back. Moderate difficulty with one steady climb.	5 miles

Sunday 16 June	Circular walk below the North Downs from Ryarsh via Trosley Court and along the Pilgrim's Way. Good views to the south. Moderate difficulty.	5 miles
Sunday 23 June	Circular walk from Shoreham to Eynsford with a fairly steep climb up the Otford Hills. Return via the Roman villa, Lullingstone Castle and the country park of Lullingstone. Moderate difficulty.	6.5 mile s
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).		



Highway Improvements Team working in Partnership with Ryarsh Parish Council Highway Improvement Plan

Roughetts Road Safety and Speeding Concerns

- Crash data shows one slight accident and speeds in 20's in a 30mph zone and 30s in a 40mph zone (Jan 23). Ryarsh Parish Council (RPC) provided examples of incidents and accidents that should be considered
- Automatic Traffic Counts arranged for April 23. Results: average speeds are below the Posted Sign Limit of 50mph. 88-94.5% of drivers are driving below the enforcement speeds of 46mph
- Highways suggested a possible lining scheme, refreshing existing SLOW markings and adding SLOWs to complement existing warning signs and installing 40mph roundels at the terminals and repeaters. They can see if the signage at the junction with the A20 can be replaced/re-erected. RPC agreed to these suggestions.
- Kent Highways said this work (and work on Birling Road and The Street) could be arranged as one larger job would cost up to £4/5,000 and asked if the Parish Council could fund or part fund it. RPC said it did not have the funds in the budget.

Birling Road between Ryarsh Primary School and Birling – speeding cars and danger to pedestrians and school children. RPC Suggestions: Install a Vehicle Activated Sign or a Speed Indicator Sign?

- Data shows average speeds in their 20s
- To install a SID, a minimum of 3 different locations on 30mph roads are required
- Flashing wig wags outside the school were considered but Highways said there was not the underground electricity supply to power them
- There is scope to improve existing school warning signage. Highways agreed they could refresh the School Keep Clear markings. The school warning sign can be installed on a grey backed sign and they can add a SLOW marking on the carriageway to improve visibility. They could add SLOW markings at the Birling Road junction with Chapel Street as well as on the East Bound Approach. RPC agreed to these suggestions
- Kent Highways said this work (and work on Roughetts Road and The Street) could be arranged as one larger job would cost up to £4/5,000 and asked if the Parish Council could fund or part fund it. RPC said it did not have the funds in the budget.

Birling Road – Traffic Calming Island – Removal of the first traffic calming buildout adjacent to Place Farm Cottages. Bollards are Difficult to See in the dark.

- Highways would not recommend the removal of the build out
- In March 23 the average speed was around 28mph with 0 damage or personal injury collision in the last 3 years. Double yellow lines were considered but this would be a lengthy and costly process for a short section and could displace vehicles to an even less appropriate place. If parking is caused by the school run, this will be addressed by the School Travel Planner.
- RPC asked for this to be reconsidered in July 23. The Planning and Advice Team considered whether the island is difficult to see and asked for the streetlight to be repaired as it was not working. RPC have done this. Highways will clear vegetation and ask that white lining is refreshed.
- Kent Highways said this work (and work on Roughetts Road and The Street) could be arranged as one larger job would cost up to £4/5,000 and asked if the Parish Council could fund or part fund it. RPC said it did not have the funds in the budget

Woodgate Road – speeding cars, particularly after the bend near Byeways, and the road is narrow. RPC

Suggestions: signs, lower speed limit, speed bumps, chicane?

- KCC reviewed the Ordnance Survey data which shows speed in the 20s (between 22.87 and 30.34mph) which indicates good compliance with the 30mph speed limit. Highways feel there is possibly a perception of speed.
- There can be no physical traffic calming (eg chicanes or speed bumps) as there is no street lighting
- A SID would cost around £8000 but the devices would need to be set back a minimum of 450mm from the carriageway and there isn't the available verge width along this road. You're also required to have a minimum of three posts per SID (well distributed and not on a single corridor) with fixed 4m posts at all locations, leaving two empty poles around the parish when not in use as the SID must be moved every two months by volunteers to comply with movement requirements and retain effectiveness.
- 20mph speed reduction – Highways said that minimum length of a speed limit should not be less than 600m and the 30mph length of Woodgate Road is less than this. As 20mph speed limits need to be self-enforcing they would need the average speed of vehicles to be below 24mph already. Looking at speed data, the average speed seems to be higher than 24mph
- There are signs and Cllr Hohler arranged for a further sign to be installed
- Cllr Sarah Hohler requested an ATC to provide a clear indication of speeds which was carried out in April 2023 for 7 days. Results were: Eastbound average speeds 28.5mph and Westbound average speeds 27.8mph
- KCC arranged and paid for a Pedestrian Warning sign at the Roughetts Road end of Woodgate Road to be installed

The Street – the road narrows, poor visibility. RPC Suggestions: install warning signs and complementing SLOW road markings

- Kent Highways confirmed they could look to add road narrow signs on Roughetts Road co-located with the bend warning sign as well as looking at the give way sign and co-locate the bend warning sign on a grey black board with a left arrow. On the Eastbound approach they can look to sign by the pub with a distance plate co-located with a SLOW marking. RPC agreed to these measures.
- Kent Highways said this work (and work on Roughetts Road and Birling Road) could be arranged as one larger job would cost up to £4/5,000 and asked if the Parish Council could fund or part fund it. RPC said it did not have the funds in the budget.

Woodgate Road from junction of The Street to 3 Woodgate Road – Sight lines to and from the junction blocked by parked cars

- TMBC are looking at parking in this area. RPC agreed no further action

PREVIOUS HIP CONCERNS WHICH HAVE BEEN CLOSED

Old School Lane Junction with The Street – Unsuitable HGVS turning into Old School Lane

- Highways installed signage

The Street – removal of the white lines from just before the junction with Roughetts, Woodgate and Workhouse which indicate two vehicles can pass each other which they can't

- Highways does not deem these lines a hazard and they will wear over time

Birling Road – railings from the school entrance to the road to stop children running out are not long enough

- School Travel Planner contacted the school to discuss Travel Plan

Chapel Street – cars parking on the pavement, block the pavement. Cars parking in the road, block the road

- Double/Single yellow lines will push the problem to other locations

- Difficult problem to engineer out

The Street – Entrance to Brookline coaches is used as a passing point

- Brookline Coaches are not concerned by this issue