



HERNHILL NEWS

DECEMBER 2017

OUTSTANDING!

I am proud and delighted to be able to inform you that we have now received the Ofsted report following the Inspectors visit on 30th October. The school has been classified as 'Outstanding' which is fantastic news and is a fitting testament to the hard work and dedication of all the staff. The school was praised for its ambitious vision of a well-rounded educa-

tion, where pupils have a genuine sense of joy in learning. The excellent teaching was seen as exciting and broad, with a balanced curriculum which made pupils very well prepared for life in modern Britain. Results are exceptionally strong including those for disadvantaged and SEN pupils as a result of the carefully tailored support all the children receive.

Helen Figgis

PARISH COUNCIL

You can contact the clerk for Parish Council business on 07740 706189 or hernhillclerk@gmail.com or hernhillparishcouncil.org.

Copies of the approved minutes are available on the Parish Council website and the notice board.

The full Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 29th November was attended by six Parish Councillors. The Parish Council also held an extraordinary meeting on Monday 20th November which was attended by five Parish Councillors. Five planning applications have been discussed at the November Parish Council meetings; 17/505360/FULL - Mountfield Cottage, Staplestreet, 17/5054408/FULL - 1 The Bungalows, High Street Road, 17/505413/FULL - Plantation House, Plumpudding Lane, 17/505438/FULL - Hathcote Oast, Staplestreet, 17/505439/LBC - Hathcote Oast, Staplestreet.

The Parish Council has now purchased a defibrillator for the community, which is to be installed at the Village Hall.

The Parish Council has expressed concern over the number of vehicles parking at the junction of Church Hill and Staplestreet which is causing a reduction in the sight lines for drivers at the junction and are asking the local PCSO team for support and guidance in the matter.

The Parish Council support the KALC Community Awards Scheme to recognise the work of people within the community. A nomination form has been enclosed with the Hernhill News and further forms are available on the Parish Council website.

Members of the public are reminded that they can report highway matters such as potholes and vegetation obstructing the highway or footway either to the Parish Clerk or directly to Kent County Council at kent.gov.uk

The next meeting of the Parish Council

Chairman: Tony Chapman 01227 750874

e-mail tt.chapman@vfast.co.uk

Clerk: Sarah Muteham phone 07740 706189

e-mail hernhillclerk@gmail.com

Swale Representatives: Andrew Bowles; phone 01227 752840

and George Bobbin; phone 01227 751388

KCC Representative: Andrew Bowles

will be on Wednesday 31st January 2018 at 8:00pm in the Village Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend. If members of the any wish to speak on a

subject at the meeting then please would they contact the Clerk prior to 24th January so that relevant items can be placed on the agenda for discussion.

YOUR COUNTY COUNCILLOR

As many residents read my monthly report in the printed edition of their local magazines this will be, for some, the last report they read from me before Christmas. May I therefore wish you all a Happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

I am changing the format this month by leading with the major part of my Council Leader's Report to the October full meeting of Swale Borough Council. This is due to how strongly I feel on this subject. "Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places. Central Government Consultation Proposals.

After prolonged debate and discussion the Swale Local Plan was recently approved. This makes it clear to developers that if they are going to build, it will be where we, i.e. the Borough Council acting as the voice of our Local Communities, say they can build. As you will all know whilst we were preparing the Plan, the goalposts changed and the Housing Target (calculated using the method insisted on by Central Government) was increased beyond anything we had ever seen delivered in Swale. We argued it was unrealistic, but nonetheless when instructed, we made the unpalatable choices that needed to be made because the risk of having no agreed Plan was even worse. But, as we argued from the start would happen, developers are failing to build the new homes quickly enough. So now, the five year rolling targets aren't being met so consequently the target increases and the newly agreed Plan loses its strength as a defence against unwelcome developments.

And the Government's suggested response? Increase the targets again!

The current consultation on further changes to the Planning System with a one size fits all housing target imposed on Local Authorities would take the numbers of homes expected to be built from what could charitably be described as "optimistic" into the realms of fantasy.

We really can't sit here quietly without raising the loudest possible objection to this nonsensical approach. Having even higher targets, which everyone knows will not be delivered, stands only to make the whole planning system irrelevant. We cannot have the future of our Borough determined totally by Government Planning Inspectors sent up from Bristol. It is time the people of the South East led, one would hope, by their elected representatives both National and Local stood up together to say NO.

We need a Planning System which allows the people of Swale and indeed the wider South East a realistic say in determining the future of their Communities and their Environment."

I realise there is a Housing Crisis, not just the problem of homeless people on our streets but also many of our children and grandchildren are not able to afford to buy or even to rent a local home. Therefore, not all of you will agree with the sentiments of my report to Full Council. I would really appreciate your views; do you agree with me that enough is enough or would you support extra housing? If more houses are to be built can we really support a system that excludes local opinion and your locally elected and accountable Councillors?

My diary during October was to a very large part filled with Kent County Council Committees. Several meetings of both the Strategic Commissioning Board and

the back-bench Commissioning Advisory Board. This was all brought about by our County seeking to change the way in which it commissions services to cope with a vastly reduced budget. I have also this month chaired further all-day sittings of the County Council's Home to School Transport Appeals Panels. Parish Councils attended in October comprised of Tunstall, Graveney, Newnham, Dunkirk and Oare. I have also represented Swale at meetings of both Kent Council Leaders and North Kent Leaders.

Looking ahead November and Decem-

ber are likely to be dominated by major Planning Applications. Applications to expand East Kent Recycling at Oare Creek, to increase the number of Gypsy and Traveller Pitches at Brotherhood Wood in Dunkirk, and for a large (largest in Europe?) solar farm on Cleve and Nagden Marshes in Graveney will all be challenging. I am already working closely with local residents, action groups and Parish Councils on responding to all three applications.

Andrew Bowles



CAROLS ON THE GREEN

This annual event has been growing in popularity and is loved by the children. A happy memory for them in years to come.

This year it will be at 5.00pm on Saturday 23rd December. Bring your lantern and your voices. Afterwards enjoy a hot drink and a mince pie in the warmth of the church.

FROM THE VICAR

I wonder what goes through your mind as you buy your Christmas cards.

Perhaps you want to support particular charities, the words inside may have a part to play, but how about the picture on the front? An alien from outer space might have a hard time deciphering what Christmas is all about with cards showing Father Christmas, robins on post boxes, snow scenes, decorated trees, reindeer, puppy dogs, holly, carol singers, presents; the list is endless and, if you look carefully enough, cards with Mary, Joseph, a baby, a stable, angels, shepherds and travellers on camels. It is a very strange mix of tradition, religion and nostalgia.

For a Christian choosing a card with a nativity scene or Christian message is one way of acknowledging what is at the heart of Christmas but when we look closer what message are they giving about the Christmas story? A clean stable, immaculately turned out magi, tidy shepherds, Mary and Joseph never look exhausted, baby Jesus is the biggest new born ever and even the animals stand patiently by. What was the reality?

Once, in a group of children drawing pictures of the nativity, one child drew Mary lying down. When asked why the child just responded, 'She's just had a baby, of course she's lying down!' Mary and Joseph were effectively homeless, they had to make do in a cave used as a shelter for cattle, not at all hygienically clean for a birth and who was there to help a young teenage girl give birth to her first child?

Have we lost something of the original message that Jesus came as a real historical person, experiencing life in all its fullness, 'tears and smiles like us he knew' as one carol puts it. Through his life Jesus knew what it was to be vulnerable, to have friends who denied or betrayed him, to have friends who loved him, to experience bereavement, to be tempted to the point of agony and to die an excruciating and lingering death.

God is mystery, we can never fully grasp him or his ways, but in Jesus we can see God in human form, helping us to see that God is with us and for us, he knows and cares for each one of us, with him is new life and fullness of life. Through the birth of Jesus we can see something

of the overwhelming love of God for each one of us.
So, have you bought and written your Christmas cards yet and which pictures

will sum up Christmas for you?
With best wishes for a very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.
Revd Jean Burrows

CHURCH OAST CHARITY TABLE

Thank you to everyone who bought from and/or contributed towards the produce on the charity table. My thanks to Will Dawes for letting me glean cherries and

apples which was a good boost to funds. £550 has been sent to famine relief in Africa.

Jill Geliot

HERNHILL CRAFT FAIR

St Michael's Church
Saturday 11th November

The morning was rain swept, the afternoon much better and so numbers attending the Craft Fair began to increase and greatly encouraged by the lovely, tasty refreshments on sale. A wide variety of crafts were displayed revealing a very talented group, many local to Hern-

hill. The total raised for the Church was £577.50, a splendid effort and an increase of over £100 on the 2016 figure. Dave Chapman and Shirley Franklin did a superb job in organising the event and they wish it to be known how very grateful they are to everyone who took part. Well done everyone.

Brian Jelfs

WISHING YOU A VERY HAPPY ETHICAL CHRISTMAS

Christmas can be a very difficult time for many of us. This is often not helped, and, is often, caused, by the pressure to buy and consume as much as possible! When we are all too aware of so many dreadful things happening in the world, this can result in a disconnect between what society appears to be telling us should make us happy and what we innately feel is right. This can lead to feelings of guilt and being powerless. It can feel as if the true spirit of Christmas is buried under the piles of plastic toys, Christmas jumpers, receipts and credit card bills! But take heart; here are a few ideas to help to take that pressure off whilst simultaneously helping to make the world a better place

- A reverse advent calendar is a lovely idea. Decorate a cardboard box and then fill it with small gifts each day. At the end of advent take it along to your local foodbank, homeless shelter or refugee charity. A great one to do as a family!

- Have you ever thought about volun-

teering at a homeless shelter or with an animal charity over the Christmas period? Sharing compassion with those who need it most can be mutually beneficial.

- How about paying for family or friends to go to a show, buy them cinema vouchers or membership of their favourite place to visit or to a charity?

- Maybe a year's subscription to their favourite magazine or newspaper? Ethical Consumer do a fantastic Christmas gift subscription: (ethicalconsumer.org/xmasgiftsubs.a.spx). They also do an excellent ethical Christmas Gift Guide. The guide mentions (Hive.co.uk) as "a great alternative to Amazon" for books, combining online shopping with support for local shops.

- Children, could you pledge to make your family dinner, wash the car, walk with the dog or help with the gardening every Saturday for a month (or year!)?

- How about baking a neighbour a cake or casserole and leaving it on their doorstep with a little note, or even

anonymously?

•For the person who 'has everything', why not invest some money into an ethical lending organisation such as Shared Interest, Charity Bank or Lendwithcare? Lendwithcare gift vouchers allow Britons to lend relatively small sums of money to people in eleven countries who are keen to start or grow their own small business: (lendwithcare.org)

•For those who still love to shop, charity shops have some amazing bargains, often unused goods, and you will be helping the charity as well as

your pocket.

•There are plenty of organisations selling a whole range of fairly-traded and ethically-made gifts from food, toiletries, gadgets, clothes, books and toys. Try Traidcraft, Animal Aid, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, the Vegan Society and New Internationalist for starters.

When most of us have too much stuff and really do not want for anything, remember that time shared with loved ones, friends and even strangers, will be truly appreciated.

Jo Kidd

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

When Brian and I first moved here 30 years ago, we found the Village was a very active place with various societies eg. photography, historical, Hernhill players, two WIs, horticultural and others. There was an annual Village quiz where, during the winter months, these societies vied with one another to win the trophy. At the Parish Council AGM the Village Hall was full of people and other AGMs were well attended. After the fete we had a Village BBQ in the farmyard at Church Farm.

Alas most of this has now gone although there is still a community spirit to be found in the Village. The Horticultural Society is one of the few societies that remain and on paper has 50 members. We have also pared down our activities (I can remember catering for a sit down meal for 80 people in the Village Hall for our annual social evening). But, we still have three shows a year and a number of outings and activities. However active participation in the Society is dwindling and the recent Autumn Show was one of the worst on record in terms of people entering exhibits. Of course people have other commitments and some were probably away on holiday. It is often said that "the pace of life has increased so much that people do not

have the time to get involved". I would argue that it is a matter of what we wish to prioritise as important – life was always busy even in the dim, distant past of our young days. It would be a shame if the Horticultural Society closed down but is it fair to ask members of the committee to spend considerable time planning and preparing for a show or activity if few people turn up?

So what to do about it.

•We could close the Society - people don't have the time and aren't really interested.

•Present members could try to become more involved – just one entry in the show or one attendance at an outing would make a difference. Don't feel you have to have perfect flowers and veggies to enter – most of us go round our garden on the morning of the show to see what we have.

•Ideas for new show classes or places to visit are always welcome.

•We can encourage new members, newcomers to the Village who have an interest in gardening.

We are a very friendly bunch and don't take things too seriously. We should be especially encouraging younger members, as that is where the future lies.

Postscript

There was an encouraging response to

the quiz on Saturday 18th November. Nearly 30 people on five tables battled it out with questions on food and drink, history, gardening, TV etc. The scores were quite close (my table came last as usual!) Our thanks to Mark who thought up and asked the questions and must have spent quite some time collecting leaves and displaying them in bags for

the tree recognition round. A very enjoyable afternoon.

Dates for next year (make a note and try to keep them free)

AGM 10th February
Spring Show 24th March
Summer Show 9th June
Autumn Show 1st September
Jill Geliot Chairman

HERNHILL SCHOOL

Well, we've had quite an exciting Autumn term already and it's not even ad-vent yet!

September started with the launch of our fabulous new creative curriculum. Since January, the teachers had been working hard to design, create and put together a brand new curriculum approach that could be used across our whole school. In order to develop collaboration between year groups and to enable excellent progression in learning, we decided upon a two-year rolling programme of topics with some topics in Year A and some in Year B. Science, history or geography are the key drivers for a topic with the subjects of art, design technology, music, computing and personal, social & health education added to enrich the topic. Religious Education, PE, French and maths are taught as separate subjects. Our school's Christian values are interwoven into each topic. Every class has a high quality text as a key part of the English work for that topic. Each term has a whole school heading so that everyone can relate to the focus.

We started with "Brilliant Britain" in Sep-

tember. Different year groups focused on different aspects of our fabulous country, all with a historical slant. Our topic was launched with a bang with a whole school assembly on 'Brilliant Britain', in a hall bedecked with Union Jack flags, and it included a video message from The Queen! One of the highlights of the term was the actual re-creation of The Great Fire of London in the playground by Years 1 and 2 complete with home-made Tudor cardboard houses and our resident Fireman!

Check out the photo galleries on our website for pictures from the topic! (Hernhill.greenschoolsonline.co.uk/News/Galleries)

Our term 2 topic is entitled "Marvellous Me!" and focuses on lots of aspects of scientific knowledge about animals and humans. On the day after half term, we started our topic with a visit from "The Night Owls", a company who brought in a number of real owls who proceeded to fly over the heads of the children in the morning assembly! What a start!

I look forward to updating you later in the year with more news of our exciting curriculum.

Sarah Alexander

'BREATHING SPACE' CONTINUES

St. Michael's Church, Hernhill will be open from 7.30pm to 8.30pm on the following Fridays; 22th December, 26th January, 23rd February, 23rd March.

All will be most warmly welcomed whether you are a regular churchgoer, or whether you have never set foot in a church in your life, whether you have a faith, no faith or are just curious. Oh, and nobody will make you talk to them or try and make you come back!

Rev Paulette Stubbings

HERNHILL ARTISTS 2018 CALENDAR

On sale now

An excellent buy for £5.00 including an envelope. A very nice Christmas gift for families and friends. The calendars will be on sale throughout the lead up to Christmas at Church events but they are also available from me.

Brian Jelfs 01227 752309
or brian.jelfs3@gmail.com

BITS AND PIECES

First, an apology for not producing an October issue. Just before it was due to be produced I managed to suffer a total blackout as a result of which I crashed head first onto my driveway. The force was such that it fractured three vertebrae in my neck. My GP cheered me no end by saying that when he saw the report he thought that I should have been dead. But I'm not, and I have every intention of making a full recovery. The latest wonderful news from King's College Hospital is that the spine is healing well and that surgery will not be necessary. However, the neck-brace that I must wear has to stay in place for another few weeks. That is going to slow me down a bit.

Frequent visits to hospitals have caused me to miss events that I know I would have enjoyed. These include the 'Spooky Stories' in the churchyard and the Craft Fair in the church. I gather that both were a great success. For the first time in many years I also missed the Remembrance Day Service at our war memorial. Although the weather was dry and sunny, I gather that it was bitterly cold. I'm sure that everyone welcomed the hot coffee and cakes in the church afterwards.

You don't have to take your eye off the ball for long to find that there are changes everywhere. I gather that after relentless local pressure Staplestreet Road has been de-listed as an alternative route for HGV's. Dunkirk Parish Council is now pressing for 'No Lorries' notices to be put up. And then, whilst I was not looking, Henry Bryant has final-

ly retired from producing Christmas Turkeys. I'm glad to say that we are not going to be left without any. Sam Figgis is taking over the task.

I don't know if I have missed any news about developments in Plumpudding Lane, but as I write the mess is still there. And now there has been a major burglary in the area. If anyone cares to update me, I'll pass on the information. One thing I do know is that the School got through their Ofsted with flying colours. More than that, they have won an 'OUTSTANDING' rating. Great credit to governors, staff and children too.

The article from our Councillor makes clear the frustrations generated by Central Government making demands with little understanding of local conditions. It is clear that there are no easy answers but giving orders without detailed local knowledge is not one of them. One can only hope that sanity may prevail in the end.

On a truly local point, may I remind you that there is no Parish Council meeting in December and no 'Hernhill News' published for January. I say that so you won't think that my doctor finally got it right and that I had succumbed. After this current issue, the next 'News' will be for February and I will therefore need articles by Monday 29th January at the very latest. Thank you.

Finally, may I offer you my very best wishes as you thrust your way through the busy weeks ahead. Have a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



ADT

Sun 3 Dec	10.00am	St. Michael's Ch	Sung Communion
Tues 5	-----	-----	Blue Bin Collection
Sun 10	8.00am	St. Michael's Ch	Holy Communion
Tues 12	-----	-----	Green Bin Collection
Sat 16	3.30pm	St. Barnabas	Messy Church
Sun 17	4.30pm	St. Michael's Ch	Lessons & Carols
Tues 19	-----	-----	Blue Bin Collection
Wed 20	2.00pm	St. Michael's Ch	School Christingle
Fri 22	7.30pm	St. Michael's Ch	Breathing Space
Sat 23	5.00pm	Village Green	Carols on the Green
Sun 24	4.00pm	St. Michael's Ch	Crib Service
Mon 25	9.00am	St. Michael's Ch	Holy Communion
Tues 26	-----	-----	Green Bin Collection
Sun 31	10.00am	St. Michael's Ch	Sung Communion
Tues 2 Jan	-----	-----	Blue Bin Collection
Sun 7 Jan	10.00am	St. Michael's Ch	Sung Communion
Tues 9	-----	-----	Green Bin Collection
Sun 14	8.00am	St. Michael's Ch	Holy Communion
Tues 16	-----	-----	Blue Bin Collection
Sun 21	10.00am	St. Michael's Ch	Plough Sunday
Tues 23	-----	-----	Green Bin Collection
Fri 26	7.30pm	St. Michael's Ch	Breathing Space
Sun 28	8.00am	St. Michael's Ch	Holy Communion
Tues 30	-----	-----	Blue Bin Collection
Wed 31	8.00pm	Village Hall	Parish Council Meeting

To book the Village Hall go to www.hernhill-bookings.net

A copy of the Hernhill News and other local information can be found on the Village website. www.hernhill.net

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Articles by
Monday
29th
JAN

