

Kennington Community Forum

Newsletter SPRING 2009



Message from the Chair

There are positive signs that Spring is in the air and topics that have been worked on for some months are now showing signs of life as you will see in the variety of articles in this issue. In particular, although the possibility of restoring the War Memorial Garden has been discussed for more than a year, the initiatives taken by Chris Morley have brought the actual work within reach. All we need is a final fundraising effort.

Since Christmas the Forum has had to deal with a mixed bag of Planning Issues that have included:

- Two separate proposals for the Post Office, Faversham Road. The first, subsequently withdrawn, relegated the Post Office counter to a room at the rear of the premises and the substitution of the convenience store with a dental surgery. The second is an amended version of the first, but still wishes to dispense with the shop. As I write, this application has not yet been decided by Ashford Planners.
- An Ashford wide consultation over land that could be earmarked for alternatives uses, including housing, should the implementation of the Core Strategy be shown to fall short of strategic development targets. Several sites within Kennington were specifically highlighted including the playing fields of Ashford Rugby, Golf, Cricket and Hockey Clubs, as well as the “triangle” outside St.Mary’s church and vacant land to the east of Canterbury Road. Should it come to it, dealing with detailed planning applications for these sites should be a very interesting exercise.

By the time this edition is delivered British Summertime will be, or about to be, with us. Let’s hope it actually brings some summer weather, at least for the Fayre on Saturday 20th June. In the meantime I wish you a Happy Easter.

Please note that our A.G.M. will be at the Towers School on Tuesday June 30th at 7 p.m. when we anticipate our guest speaker will be a senior Police Officer. Please come along to support the Forum and share your views.

Pat Boorman

Kennington Summer Fayre 2009

Once more the Kennington Summer Fayre Committee has been elected, and that we have every intention of ensuring that the Fayre will be going ahead.

This year sees a minor change from previous years arrangements in that it will be on Saturday 20th June, the third Saturday in the month – a week EARLIER than usual.

The new Chairman, and last year’s Secretary, Phil Sims, said, “We are all very enthusiastic about this year’s Fayre, and hope to make it an even greater success than last year’s. We already have two new stallholders ‘booked-in’ as well as the American car display, which was such a draw last year. There is discussion of having a Climbing Wall as a key attraction – watch this space. I am also pleased to announce that the event will be opened at 12:00 on the 20th, by KMFM’s morning DJ Team –Kirstyn and Webbo.

We look forward to seeing everyone enjoying themselves on the day”

LETTER FROM KCC COUNCILLOR ELIZABETH TWEED

We've heard a lot about the credit crunch, the recession and unemployment, so "let's hear it" for some good news stories this Spring and here are just a few:

You may not be aware that at long last we have a bus service connecting Kennington with William Harvey Hospital and Tesco at Willesborough, without the need to change buses in the town centre. This is the new "C" Line, which starts in Trinity Road and also serves Bockhanger and the Rail Station, Bank Street and Hythe Road. The service is roughly every 15 minutes. There is also an hourly service on Sundays and Bank Holidays partly funded by Kent County Council in response to many of you who asked for this, so it just shows that persistence pays off! The buses are "Easy Access" and replace the old routes 3 and 5. Pick up a timetable or visit stagecoachbus.com/eastkent for updates.

Discussions with Stagecoach and Keith Ferrin, KCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport took place locally to look at providing a bus to Julie Rose Stadium.

Whilst Stagecoach is still of the opinion it would not be viable, Cllr Ferrin thought there may be other ways transport to the Stadium could be arranged, and I will follow this up.

For those of you who have to drive to the hospital, you may like to know there are an extra 200 parking spaces available, cutting down on the stress of trying to park and get to the appointment on time.

As you all know, I have asked over and over again for a pedestrian crossing outside Towers School, and I am delighted that this is now at the design stage, and should be installed early in the new financial year. There will also be a pedestrian crossing in Bybrook Road, close to Phoenix School, and this will soon be a reality.

Kent Highways are consulting with local interest groups to produce a "Cycling and Walking" strategy for Ashford, and this should bring about real improvements and the joining up of various existing routes.

I used to wonder why everything we all want takes so long to achieve, but it does seem that in aiming to get it right first time, there has to be a long period of consultation, planning application(s), funding application, and in the interests of efficiency and transparency of the process, that's how it has to be, annoying as it can sometimes be!

From the neighbourhood Policing Team.

Across the County and in Ashford during the past few months there has been an increase in Thefts From Motor Vehicles. Much of this problem is associated with the introduction of Satellite Navigation Systems and just as the public wants to keep up to date with technological advances, so do criminals. Simple measures like taking such devices, and their cradles, out of your vehicles at night can, in itself, avoid the problem, as can the simple step of cleaning the inside of windscreens regularly to remove the obvious sticky mark/s made by the cradle suction pad.

The simple message is "Don't leave valuables in your car". 'Sat Nav's', mobile phones, laptops, wallets and bags are a great temptation for criminals hunting for their next opportunity – Don't give it to them.

Other potential targets are expensive gardening equipment, so to avoid problems please ensure that all outdoor buildings and sheds are kept secure

To find out more about Kennington Community Forum, please email us at kencf@ashford.gov.uk, visit our page on the Ashford Borough Council Website or pop along to one of our meetings. We meet at 7pm on the last Tuesday of every month (except December and the AGM in June) at St Mary's Church Hall, Church Rd, Kennington

Kennington Memorial Shelter Restoration

The project to restore the Memorial Shelter in Kennington's Garden of Remembrance took a major step forward in February when English Heritage awarded Kennington Community Forum a grant of £4,710 towards the capital cost of the first phase, repair of the oak shingled roof.

Dr Andy Brown, English Heritage's Planning & Development Regional Director - South, and Katherine Ellery from the Central Office of Information visited the site to meet representatives from the Forum and to see at first hand the plans for restoration

Dr Brown commented that the structure of this memorial is

particularly interesting, with its use of Kentish materials such as oak shingle tiles. He also emphasised that many memorials are not listed or protected in any way and thus need the community's special vigilance

David Geoghegan, Kent Council's Community Liaison Manager for Ashford and Shepway, also attended the site visit to present a cheque for £2,000 from the KCC Small Community Capital Projects fund. The award of this grant in 2008 kick-started the project and enabled essential activities, such as a structural assessment and the creation of a method statement outlining how the work should be done, to be put in hand.

At the time of writing, the Forum have secured more than two-thirds of the funds required, through grants and through generous donations from individual contributors. However, additional funding is needed before work can begin, and we are now asking for your support to help complete this task!

If you would like to make a donation, please send a cheque made out to "Kennington Community Forum" to The Treasurer, KCF, 1 Orchard Lane, Kennington Ashford, TN25 4DX

News from New Hayesbank

Extended Hours: The New Hayesbank Surgery has recently extended its opening hours on certain days of the week. We are now open until 8pm every Monday and from 7am every Wednesday and Thursday except Bank Holidays. These appointments are available for booking up to two weeks in advance and we hope that this service will enable patients to have more flexibility when booking their appointments. Please note that our telephone lines are NOT open during the extended hours.

Travel Reminder: The European Health Insurance Card replaced the E111. The EHIC gives the holder rights to treatment that becomes medically necessary during a temporary visit to EEA (European Economic Area) countries or Switzerland. People who are ordinarily resident in the UK can apply for an EHIC and each individual travelling requires a separate card. It is advisable to apply for one of these cards in plenty of time before travelling. This can be done by going online to <https://www.ehic.org.uk/Internet/home.do> or alternatively, by calling 0845 606 2030. These cards were first issued in 2004 and need to be renewed every 5 years. It is possible that your card has already expired.

COUNCILLOR DETAILS

Charles Findlay – County Councillor
☎ 01233 812342

Norman Ayres – Little Burton Farm
☎ 01233 620767

Michael Claughton – Bockhanger
☎ 01233 635969

Marion Martin – Bybrook
☎ 01233 628811

Elizabeth Tweed – County Councillor
☎ 01233 714689

John F Kemp MBE – Kennington
☎ 01233 624162

Rita Hawes – Boughton Aluph & Eastwell
☎ 01233 627117

THE TOWERS YOUTH PROJECT

Marie Boniface, Community Youth Tutor at Towers School reports that two major activities in the project's 2008 programme, Music Workshops and Snowdonia Challenge, were given impetus by grants from Robert MacAlpine Leadership Fund and the Youth Opportunity Fund.

Music Workshops are extremely popular and provide training and experience of the world of music. Young people have released their first mix tape and write and record their own tracks and currently are working towards producing their own CD. Grant funding now allows the members to plan a tour of local youth centres and schools. Another group are involved in making sense of the driving theory test and are writing a track to help young people around the county understand such terms as "static hazards" and "pedestrian".

Snowdonia Challenge was faced by nine girls who were in a party of 40 taken by the school for a week in November to the Kent Mountain Centre. The girls cooked all their own food and took part in a range of outdoor activities such as an all-day hike to the base of Snowdon where they camped overnight before next morning canoeing on the lake back to the Centre. Overall the trip was amazingly successful; the girls gained independent living skills, confidence and pushed themselves further than they themselves thought possible. Consequently all nine completed Bronze Youth Achievement Challenges.

Other Activities include:

A **Youth Club** that continues to run on Monday evenings.

Charlton Athletic Football – Coaching Sessions – Wednesday evenings

Young people from Kennington have access to free football coaching in which they can work towards Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. Currently over 20 young people are eligible for Access Certificates. For some this is the first recognition they have received.

Rotary – Interact Club:

This new club, with the motto "Service before Self", supported by Ashford Rotarians is designed to encourage Towers pupils to support local and international charities in practical and financial ways and at the same time earning "V" certificates.

Uganda 2009:

Two Tower's six-formers will be raising funds so, with pupils from Homewood School, they can spend two weeks exploring Uganda culture, sharing their English culture with Ugandan young people.

Anger Support:

This continuing programme comprises workshops to explore and understand the anger emotion.

For further information on any aspect of the Youth Project contact Marie Boniface, Towers School, Faversham Road, Ashford, TN24 9AL, Tel: 07774554207 or Email: bonifacem@towers.kent.sch.uk

Tailpieces

Improved 'bus services for Kennington:

In a joint operation between K.C.C. and Stagecoach, new Optare "easy access" buses have been introduced to improved services running in South Ashford, Kennington and Willesborough.

The New C Line "Kennington" Service:

The old routes 3 and 5 have been combined. As a result services from Kennington now run every 15 minutes (hourly on Sundays and Bank Holidays) and have been extended so that every bus visits the Domestic Railway Station en route to Bank Street and thereafter they continue to William Harvey Hospital and Tesco Superstore and return.

Road Repairs:

The heavy frosts of winter have left some of our roads in poor condition. Pot holes will only be repaired if Kent Highways know about them. **Kent Highway Services contact number is: 08458 247 800.**