

THE KINGSTON NEWS

November 2022

Email: editor@kingstonnews.org

Issue 424



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SORRY... With everything that happened on Thursday, 8th September in our public life (and for me in my personal life attending an unexpected family cremation on the same day), I forgot to add a postscript to Maria's article to give credit to Terry Krejzl and Jerry Sinclair for kindly painting the race track before the Fête.



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MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Thank you to all the bakers, buyers, donators, and natters for supporting the coffee morning which raised £262.30.

Kate Darby



Please support your local pub if you want it to survive. Editor



A NEW STREET DISTRIBUTOR is required for THE AVENUE

Carol Rogerson is moving from Kingston and has kindly distributed to homes in The Avenue for a very long time, for which I would like to give my sincere thanks.

Please contact me if you would be willing to take on this role from the December issue, which will be distributed to homes in the third week of November by emailing editor@kingstonnews.org.

Katie

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TKN'S INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR 2022

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Income (Adverts/Donation) | £2,567 |
| Expenditure (Printing) | £2,650 |
| 2022 Loss | <u>£ 83</u> |

Katie, Editor/Treasurer



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR sent on 24th September from Victoria Scott



As you may know, Kingston has entered the South and South East in Bloom competition for the last few years in the parish category.

We have just been told that we have won a gold award this year which reflects all the efforts of the Kingston Action Group, Kingston Parish Council and local volunteers. The organisers have sent the report below which I think would be of interest to readers of The Kingston News



South & South East in Bloom - Parishes 2022 Kingston Parish

| Section A - Community Involvement (40% or 40 points) | |
|---|-------------|
| The Parish is working towards things such as: | |
| Being inclusive of local people, including Local ownership | |
| Making a difference to local people & Involving local people in decision-making, communication & implementation | |
| Representative of the wider local community | |
| Planning for the future | |
| Working in partnership with local groups and local organisations (i.e. police, environmental groups etc). | |
| Working towards access for all. | |
| Total Points Assessed (Out of 40) | 35 |
| Section B - Environmental Responsibility (30% or 30 points) | |
| The Parish is engaged in environmental activities such as: | |
| Conserving local habitats & heritage (wildlife, natural landscapes & built environment) | |
| Home or community composting, Green Recycling | |
| Creating, maintaining or improving green spaces (Village Greens, parks & pocket parks, verges, woodlands, churchyards etc.). | |
| The Parish is engaged in addressing environmental issues such as the control of Fly-tipping, Fly-posting, Litter, Graffiti & Dog fouling. | |
| Total Points Assessed (Out of 30) | 27 |
| Section C - Gardening/Horticulture/Conservation Achievement (30% or 30 points) | |
| The Parish Council is employing good gardening, horticultural and tree management practices. | |
| The Parish Council encourages residents to care for their gardens, allotments etc. | |
| That residential gardens are generally well maintained and mostly enhance the parishes appearance. | |
| Total Points Assessed (Out of 30) | 24 |
| GRAND TOTAL POINTS ASSESSED | 86 |
| LEVEL ACHIEVED | Gold |

Areas of Achievement

The judge was taken on a tour of the parish by the chair of the Parish Council and two members of the Kingston Village Action Group. He was provided with a well presented and detailed document supporting the entry. The Kingston Parish Council (KPC) has a number of community assets including the Parish Hall, Village Green, St Pancras Green and the Community Pavilion. Additionally, the Parish has a primary school, church and pub. The judge was informed of the wide range of events and activities in the village supported by the KPC as well as the many clubs and associations. There is good communication achieved through WhatsApp groups, notice boards and the Kingston News. The parish Council is supported and aided by the Kingston Village Action Group (AG) and together they have an established Village Plan and assisted in the production of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan for the South Downs National Park; clearly a major undertaking and an important document that will inform future planning decisions. The Parish, through the Action Group, is engaged in a number of environmental projects and activities aimed at improving the local environment and promoting biodiversity. These include extensive planting of Spring bulbs, the creation of wild flower meadows and most recently, a community wildlife garden. Much of the hard landscaping for the garden has been completed and some planting has been undertaken. The planting of 20 local, heritage apple trees along the Avenue by the village tree warden is lovely addition to the kerbside. The village is free of litter, there was no evidence of graffiti and problems with dog fouling have been overcome through the provision of bins. There is clearly a very strong commitment to conservation and actions to improve the environment through good gardening and horticultural practices. Kingston Parish Council and the Action Group are very proactive and successful in obtaining grant funding for the various projects aimed at improving the village environment and should be congratulated on this.

Areas for Development

The Community Wildlife Garden is, unfortunately, badly overrun with bindweed and the AC will have to make a decision on how to tackle this. An explanatory sign at the front of the garden to inform passers by of progress and next steps would be useful. The wild flower area on the village green is well established but could also be enhanced by the addition of annuals and an interpretation board. The Jug public house also has a well-established wild area at the back that can be viewed at eye level through a picture window and again there is scope for an explanatory sign board and perhaps the provision of some identification leaflets and binoculars for patrons to use. While villagers have been encouraged to let grass areas in their front gardens grow uncut, a more achievable aim may be to go for uncut strips rather than whole lawn. Biodiversity can also be encouraged through attractive well cared for gardens planted with insects and pollinators in mind. The privately owned nature reserve on Kingston Ridge is a major asset but with only limited public access - again, an interpretation board would be very helpful. The biggest impediment to future success and indeed the continued maintenance of many existing projects would seem to be the number of regular volunteers who can be relied on to do the work.

Results

| Level | Description | Points |
|-------|-------------|----------|
| | Bronze | 0 - 35 |
| | Bronze | 36 - 52 |
| | Silver | 53 - 68 |
| | Silver-Gilt | 69 - 85 |
| | Gold | 86 - 100 |



PEALING AND REAPPEALING

Pealing

Last month, we reported the re-hanging of the Kingston Church Bells so that they could be pealed properly again for the first time in over 100 years.

We forgot to mention that there is a small display board of photographs of the bells and the clock on the left-hand side, just inside the church. It includes a brief history of them recently updated by Larry Charlesworth. Displayed on top of the doorway into the Bell Tower, you can also see a part of one of the old bell wheels and a clapper that were replaced. It is worth a few minutes of your time when you are next passing.

Actually, even if you are not passing, it is worth making a detour to visit our lovely church with its collection of stained-glass windows. The church is open every day from 9.00am until dusk, so please feel free to call in whenever you like. I would advise you to choose mid-morning on a sunny day to get the best effect – and 9.45am on a sunny Sunday is particularly good of course!

Reappealing

When you do go into the church, or even just pass it, you will see a box labelled **FOOD BANK** in the porch. Although it is based in Landport, the Food Bank we support delivers as far south as Rodmell, via Kingston, and then north to Plumpton and Newick. It helps to feed 67 households that include **97 children**. Those numbers are rising now, and it is difficult to see what is going to bring them down any time soon!

Please donate to the Food Bank when you can. The box is emptied (almost) every day and the donations are taken to the Food Bank every Monday morning (except Bank Holidays). Fresh produce is welcome – close to Monday.

Money is needed too (to buy eggs, bread, butter etc.), but not in the box please. Please put any cash, or cheques, payable to Landport Community Association, in a sealed envelope with your name and email on the back. Come into the porch (it is only locked at night) of 17, Mushroom Field and post it through the red front door. You will receive a confirmation of receipt (but no other correspondence) via email.

Thank You.

Phil Neller



FILM FESTIVAL COMES TO KINGSTON

Kingston will be taking part in this year's 20th CINECITY Brighton Film Festival which runs from 11th-20th Nov. There will be a special one-off screening on Sunday, 13th Nov in Kingston Parish Hall of the 1960 classic *Village of the Damned* (Cert 12) adapted from John Wyndham's acclaimed novel *The Midwich Cuckoos*.

The screening will be introduced by writer and actor Graham Duff, whose own work has been influenced by the worlds of horror and science fiction. It will be followed by a post-film discussion between Graham and Alex Leith, editor of ROSA magazine (Review of Sussex Arts) who was brought up in the village. Dressing up is encouraged with prizes awarded. Tickets are priced £5 for Kingston residents with children aged 12 and over admitted free.

Please see www.cine-city.co.uk for tickets and further details of the screening and the rest of the film festival which takes place in Brighton, Lewes and Worthing. Tim Brown

WILDLIFE IN KINGSTON



Swallows

It's 12 October - deadline day - and I've been weighing tea spoons. Am I deranged, perhaps? Possibly, but not because of any apparent obsession with the weight of our cutlery. I'm trying to discover which is heavier, a tea spoon or a Swallow.

Of course, tea spoons vary but it turns out that most of ours weigh in between 22 and 24 grammes. Remarkably, that's more or less the same as the weight of a Swallow before it begins its 6000+ mile journey from the UK to South Africa. I don't know about you, but I am lost in wonder at that statistic. That a delicate looking animal weighing next to nothing can fly such a staggering distance, parts of it (both the Mediterranean and the Sahara Desert) non-stop and do so with such navigational precision that it can pinpoint its final destination to within a few yards is nothing short of miraculous.

Anyone with even a little interest in natural history will be aware of their first Swallow record of the year but keeping track of the last is less easy. For the last week or so I've been anxiously scanning the skies around Kingston Hill looking for what might be the very last migrant Swallow and House Martin I'll see in 2022. Today, both were present, albeit in small numbers. Tomorrow? The day after that? One day very soon, both will be gone, not to reappear until next Spring. We'll all be poorer for their absence throughout the long winter months.

Most Swallows still leave the UK by early October, but climate change is affecting their departure dates, with more birds staying later. In very recent years, there are even records of birds overwintering, previously something quite unimaginable. One bird spent the entire winter of 2009 on the Cornish coast and this year it seems that at least 12 individuals

chose not to make the traditional journey south.

The migration of Swallows was once poorly understood. Since they often gather in large numbers around water immediately before migrating, some believed that they might hibernate in mud at the bottom of ponds. Even the peerless early naturalist Gilbert White thought that young birds at least - being too small and inexperienced to undertake long journeys on their own - might do this - or perhaps spend the winter in holes in trees. In a cruel quest for certainty, Swallows were captured and placed in ice houses to see if they survived. The results were all too predictable.

Finally, bird ringing provided the definitive answer, though not until the twentieth century. A Swallow caught on 27 December 1912 in Natal was found to carry a ring which had been placed on its leg in Cheadle, North Staffs, eight months earlier.

Of all birds, Swallow and House Martins have perhaps the closest association with humanity, not only being dependent on human structures for their nests but also for resting, for example on telegraph wires. Both species would have nested in caves (as some still do), very likely sharing that accommodation with early humans. Ornithologists have even speculated that some of those early humans, watching the way in which such birds made their nests using just mud and straw, may have been led to imitate them and ultimately to abandon naturally occurring places of shelter in favour of purpose-built accommodation.

It's a humbling thought - humans taught how to build a house by birds! - but seems possible. What's certain is that when we did start to live in houses, Swallows and House Martins largely abandoned caves as homes and took up with people - and are with us still. Our modern houses - unlike former glass-free dwellings - may exclude them but Swallows continue to use agricultural out-buildings, garages and sheds, chimneys, pillboxes and sometimes church porches for nest sites. They have also been known to resort to human sites underground such as a disused oil depot in Plymouth (40 feet below the surface) and a Cornish tin mine (56 feet)!

Wherever Swallows choose to nest, their homes have been protected by folk lore that threatens dire consequences for those who harm them. In the north of England, for example, it was believed that those who killed swallows would be cursed by their cows producing either bloody milk or none at all. More commonly and less drastically, it was thought that ending the life of a Swallow would result in a lifetime of bad luck - and so it should!

Protecting Swallows makes good sense. Swallows are not just lovely to look at - graceful, elegant and beautiful - but their prey consists of creatures that most of us would regard with little favour - like horseflies, aphids, bluebottles and mosquitos.

Almost inevitably, there is a sad ending to this brief excursion into the world of the Swallow. Numbers of Swallows are declining in the UK and indeed throughout Europe. Many theories have been advanced to explain this including hotter, drier summers (reducing the numbers of pools in which insects available for food can breed), the massive increase in the use of pesticides and even the expansion of the Sahara Desert, making it even more difficult to cross safely. Another factor is the loss of breeding sites, as farm buildings are renovated or converted. Here in Kingston, the Swallows which formerly bred in the outbuildings of Saxondown farm have been rendered homeless and those that have nested in the disused stables at Audiburn on Ashcombe Lane may soon have to go elsewhere. In some parts of the South East, Swallows have become quite scarce. Happily, that isn't the case in Sussex - at least not yet - so there's some reason to hope that we can continue to appreciate this superb bird for many years to come.

Steve Berry
stefalik@aol.com 01273 487743

PS TO TKN'S INCOME AND EXPENDITURE DURING 2022.

(See cover page) The fact that I have had to run a very tight ship - with income solely generated from advertisements - will explain why, this year, I am relying on advertising income generated in previous years, which has now run out! The advertising rate has had to be increased for 2023. Please advertise or donate!

KINGSTON COMMUNITY WILDLIFE GARDEN

October Update: The appearance of the garden is improving markedly and has very recently been much enhanced by a new fence near the rear boundary. Our thanks go to David Hoare for his hard work on this task which he's accomplished pretty well on his own.

We've now started to plant some shrubs in front of the fence and will shortly embark on a much more extensive planting programme. The large central area, bounded on all sides by the new path, has just been exposed having been covered by a weed mat for many months. Time will tell whether we have been successful in getting rid of all the perennial weeds, but the outlook is good at the moment.

We have also cleared away much rubbish, in the form of broken slabs, rubble, plastic, metal and glass, most of which we've dug up over the last year or two. Rather than hire an expensive skip, we used a large "Hippo" bag. It's delivered in a small package but unfolds to form quite a large receptacle. If you don't have a vast amount of stuff to discard, this option is worth considering: it cost us about £230. (No fee has been received from the makers for this advertisement!).

Do you have shrubs which you will be thinning out or digging up from your garden? If so, please let us know. We'd very happily collect them for transplanting in the Garden. We would also very much welcome bags of deciduous leaves to provide a surface mulch: ideal for suppressing weed growth.

Our working sessions have tended to be on a Friday morning, but we are considering having an additional session on another day. If you might be able to lend a hand on another day, even on an occasional basis, we'd very much like to hear from you. Working together is an enjoyable experience - usually anyway!

Rob Watson & Steve Berry
stefalik@aol.com 01273 487743
on behalf of the Kingston Action
Group

TO REWILD OR NOT REWILD: IS THAT THE QUESTION? by David Hoare

I first came across the term "rewilding" while studying Countryside Management at Birkbeck College. The Oostvaardersplassen is a large area in The Netherlands which has been "managed" for several decades in an attempt to replicate natural processes - rewilding. Of course, in the heavily modified landscapes of much of Western Europe, true wilderness is impossible to recreate, so what is rewilding?

The term re-wilding seems to have been adopted to mean "habitat restoration" or making space for nature (wildlife). That raises the question of what is being restored, what does rewilding aim to achieve? The UK has lost a large part of its natural heritage over the past 70-80 years. But this has not been due to the loss of its wild places: these were gone long ago. Even the relatively recent drainage of the Fens, in the 18th and 19th centuries, does not compare with the destruction of the woodland, which was the dominant habitat in the British Isles after the retreat of the last ice sheets, but was much diminished by the time of the Norman Conquest 1000 years ago. The British Isles has for millennia been a managed landscape with only gradual change, and wildlife co-evolved with Man's use of the land. It is largely the dramatic changes in agricultural practice since the middle of the 20thc that has resulted in much of the loss.

Ironically, conservation managers caring for some of the UK's most vulnerable habitats are struggling to prevent rewilding and reverse the process where it has occurred. What remains of species-rich chalk grassland and lowland heath are under threat from natural processes. There are many areas not far from Kingston where encroachment by scrub and coarse grasses have degraded the short turf, chalk grassland that developed as a result of the farming practices conducted on much of the downs over millennia. Similarly, the value to wildlife of much of the lowland heath has deteriorated as secondary woodland colonises once open heathland. Scrub-bashing is a favoured activity of many conservation organisations, such as The National Trust.

Left to its own devices, nature would, eventually, cover much of the British Isles with trees. The natural process of afforestation is relatively slow. Photographs of Kingston from several

decades ago show much of the area with far fewer trees than are present now. I wonder how many long-standing residents noticed the changes year to year. Whilst this could eventually reduce the UK's reliance on imported timber and timber products, where would our food come from as we currently import about 50% of our food? The UK currently imports most of its fibre, cotton in clothing for example. How could this be addressed without an agricultural industry capable of supplying domestic needs? When we import agricultural and forestry goods, we export the environmental harm resulting from their production.

Advocates for rewilding suggest it could provide space for wildlife in an otherwise inhospitable agricultural landscape. Many modern agricultural practices leave little space for wildlife to co-exist, hence the well documented decline in species numbers and abundance. Rewilding of tracts of land, or Land-Sparing, contrasts with Land-Sharing, where farming less intensively allows space for wildlife to live alongside food production, as used to be the case. Regenerative farming is based on this idea. Much of today's food production methods are heavily dependent on cheap energy, oil and gas. The high levels of use of fertilizers, crop protection chemicals, and mechanised farming methods are unlikely to be sustainable in the long term as the cost of raw materials rise. Will changes in farming methods follow?

Rewilding may offer some short-term relief to a longer-term problem but is unlikely to be a panacea. The nature reserves established over the past 100 years or so have failed to halt the decline in Britain's wildlife and species interdependence is complex. The size of reserves and the interaction between wildlife populations within them and the wider countryside would suggest that island sanctuaries have a limited role to play however big they are. There are also species which are unlikely to be helped by rewilding. Many arable weeds, such as corncockle, would not find a niche in such environments. Other species, such as Snake's Head Fritillary have different habitat requirements.

On a smaller scale it is possible for individuals to improve the prospects for wildlife, in gardens for example. Communities, too, can reserve some public open spaces which will be of benefit. If adopted widely, the collective could well constitute a form of rewilding and make space for nature.

KINGSTON DOWNLAND RACE

Report by Catriona Wheeler

The Kingston Downland Race, which was first run in 1977 in celebration of the late Queen's silver jubilee, made a return to the village calendar on Saturday, 24th September when 47 residents dashed up the hill in a quest for victory. The event raised nearly £100 for The Friends of Lewes Victoria Hospital and created a friendly but competitive air over the village.



Congratulations are in order for the following:

- our overall winner David Smith (14:39)
- youngest competitors Lilly (2), who got a little assistance with her endeavours
- and Barney (4), who tackled the course under his own steam
- oldest competitor Adrian Worrall
- fastest family The Meyric Huges
- Canine Combo Lottie and Poppa, plus all the category winners:
- U12 Boys Adam Meyric Hughes and Sam Crawshaw 20:19 (Sam, in the spirit if the event, very kindly helped Adam out on course when he fell, and they agreed to share the spoils)
- U12 Girls Seren Dampny-Jones (25:11)
- 12-17 Boys Noah Stepney (16:05)
- Senior Men and overall winner David Smith (14:39)
- Senior Women Ellen Rotharey (28:30)
- Vets Men Richard Docwra (28:31)

We will look to run the event once again in September 2023 with the date yet to be confirmed. The aim is to reinstate the celebratory post-race bbq/event, so do look out for further

details in The Kingston News and village Whatsapp.

In the meantime, if you fancy getting in training for next year's event, you may consider joining Kingston Athletic Club "KAC", which is the slightly tongue-in-cheek name of an informal group of (mainly) running dads living in Kingston and the area, set up in early 2021. It is not a club in the usual sense, but a weekly group who meet most Thursdays at 7.30pm opposite The Juggs on The Street, followed by a drink there an hour or so later.

There is no joining process, so anyone who wants to take part should just turn up. The route, distance, and speed of the run vary according to the group on the day. Typical easy routes include variations on the Lewes-and-back themes. Our harder routes tend to involve ascending Kingston Hill (there is usually some walking during this bit) and either running back through Castle Hill nature reserve or continuing to Rodmell or similar on the South Downs Way before returning.



At this time of year Pace tends to match the slowest runner (usually nine minutes a mile or slower), while faster runners often form a sub-group and go ahead. We are not, contrary to rumours (yes, we know!), a diehard group of fanatical ultra-runners. There are a few of these in the group, but most of us run uncompetitively between 5k and the half marathon, and the aim of Thursday evenings is a gentler, chatty run rather than a training session.

We are occasionally joined by children of runners, when we do an easier run, so there's no age restriction. Anyone who fancies a run on a Thursday night should feel very welcome to join us. Realistically, the

ability to run 5k in around 30 minutes or better is a prerequisite and, at this time of year, you'll want a light, powerful headtorch suitable for running. Those of us who've been at it a while have found the runs great for motivation, getting to know new people and immersing ourselves in the ever-changing beauty of the local hills. The drinks at The Juggs are optional. For those who prefer beer to pounding the trails, the running is optional too!

KINGSTON WI - CENTENARY

Message from Carol Taplin, President



Our centenary was in March 2020, and we were due to hold a party to celebrate on 28th March 2020.

As a result of Covid and other things, we finally held our belated centenary party on Saturday, 24th September 2022 in Kingston Parish Hall, where our WI meets. Several former members were able to attend, as well as current members

We enjoyed afternoon tea with sandwiches, scones and cakes. Our celebration cake was cut by the current and two past Presidents, at which time we raised a toast to Kingston WI.



The Editor accepts responsibility for any omissions, including spelling and grammatical errors in submissions in this and previous issues of The Kingston News



KINGSTON WI

Report of meeting held on Thursday, 6th October 2022 by Sarah Tasker.

The Treasurer, Helen Dudley, presented her financial report, and Sue Wylde stood in as Chairman for Carol Taplin, who was away. The delayed Centenary Party, a victim of Covid, was held on Saturday, 24th September and was a great success.

Three representatives from Sussex Search and Rescue then gave a fascinating presentation. Tony, the Training Officer, Dave, a former water specialist, and Valli, who have all been members for over five years, give their time and expertise as volunteers. Frequently they search for people who are disturbed or damaged. Needless to say, they can often be called up at around 2am on cold nights! Dogs are occasionally used to assist them. They take on searches when called up by the police. All members receive intensive training and in total they number some sixty plus!

They are all unpaid and rely on fundraising. They form an invaluable resource and as a group were awarded the MBE in 2021.

Our annual Business Meeting is on Thursday, 3rd November at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The Christmas party will be held at 6.30pm on Friday, 2nd December.



The Friends raise funds to support NHS services at Lewes Victoria Hospital helping to deliver excellent care in your local community.

We rely on your support to fund the exceptional care and treatment that the hospital is known for. Pledge today and give something back to your local community.

Donate directly online through our website or our JustGiving and Virgin Money pages. Leave a legacy in your will.

To donate or get involved visit our website at www.folvh.org

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL HOSPITAL COMMUNITY

Please Note: The deadline for the December issue of The Kingston News is Wednesday, 9th November.

AT YOUR PARISH CHURCH

The Benefice of Iford, Kingston, Rodmell & Southease



Worship in November 2022

Sunday, 6th November

08.00 **KINGSTON COMMUNION**

09.45 **KINGSTON FAMILY SERVICE** – a shorter service, without communion, followed by tea/coffee

09.45 Iford Music & Meditation

11.00 Rodmell Parish Communion

Sunday, 13th November - Remembrance

09.45 **KINGSTON REMEMBRANCE**

10.50 Iford Remembrance – outdoor service

10.50 Rodmell Remembrance

10.50 Southease Remembrance – outdoor service

Sunday, 20th November

09.45 **KINGSTON PARISH COMMUNION**

16.00 Iford Evensong

11.00 Rodmell Parish Communion

Sunday, 27th November

09.45 **KINGSTON PARISH COMMUNION**

Iford – No Service

16.00 Rodmell Service of Light

DATE FOR DIARY

Sunday, 18th December

18.00 St Pancras, Kingston Carol Service

Please note - St Peter's Southease is currently closed.

St. Pancras Church, Kingston

Everyone is welcome at all the services.

There is an area for children with toys, books, crayons. Toilet facilities are available.

We usually serve refreshments after the Family Service which takes place on the 1st Sunday of the month.

Kingston church is open every day from around 09.00 until dusk. Please come and visit. There are information leaflets in the church. See porch notice board for further information.

In the porch there is a box for donations to Landport Food Bank, Lewes (non-perishable items please).



JJ's, 7 Lansdown Place, Lewes, BN7 2JT
Mobile: 07462 579 100

Cut and blow dries, colour and 'hair ups' for any special occasion, including weddings, etc.

Mention this ad and get 30% off your first cut and blow dry.



IFORD & KINGSTON SCHOOL

Report by Andrew Dobell, Headteacher

That's all we've got time for, so it's goodbye from me...

I find myself endlessly making comments that give away my age these days, leaving not only the children at the school but most of the staff too, wondering what on earth I'm talking about. Referencing The Two Ronnies is just another example but, for once, there is a purpose.

I want to do two things in this piece for the magazine. The first thing is to pay my respects to Geoff Daw and to try to give some sense, on behalf of the school community, of the influence he has had over the past 30 years or so on the school.

Geoff has been an ever-present during my time at the school in a variety of roles. First and foremost obviously, he was the rector of the parishes that form the school's catchment area. In that role he came to school to lead an assembly once a week (usually, but we won't dwell on the odd missed one) and, in that role, developed a relationship and a rapport with many generations of children. He also led services at St Pancras church a number of times each year and going to church is something that the children always enjoy and remember.

As well as leading services, Geoff was always happy to help out with the teaching of RE at the school. Many's the time where a class has gone to church to learn about christenings, weddings, the Eucharist and so on. Geoff would cheerfully don his robes and carry out mock ceremonies with the children, explaining their significance and history and providing a valuable opportunity for children to learn something in actual context.

Geoff was also a school governor throughout that period and was chair on more than one occasion (he was also chair of governors at Rodmell School before it closed too). Governors at the school have had some good times and some less good times over the years but Geoff was present through both and has played a vital role in the school's development over the years.

Geoff had an uncanny knack for sensing when someone at school had been baking. If a cake appeared on the staffroom table, it was a sure bet that Geoff would appear at playtime to 'catch up with the staff' and to sample the cake at the same time. No-one ever resented offering Geoff a slice of cake though.

As well as a rector and a governor to the staff, Geoff was also a friend whose visits were always welcomed. So much so that two members of staff were married at St Pancras church with Geoff leading the service and then going on to baptise their children afterwards.

For myself, the times before and after the services at church stick out in my mind, as well as his many visits to my office. A smattering of school business would be interspersed with discussions about the fortunes of Ipswich Town and many other topics as we chatted and generally put the world to rights.

I know that so many people will have their own special memories of Geoff and a sense of how he contributed to their lives. His role at the school was just one of the many roles he played in

Kingston, Iford, Rodmell and Swanborough and I know that he'll be missed by many more than those of us in the school community.

In short though and on behalf of everyone at the school, I'd just like to say thank you to a very special man who contributed so much and will be missed by all who came into contact with him.

The second thing I need to do in this piece is to announce my own departure. After 26 years at the school and 13 years as Headteacher, I've decided that it's time to hang up my chalk and mortar board (and there I go giving away my age again; I should probably say hanging up my laser pointer and iPad). I'll be leaving the school at Christmas and handing over the leadership of the school, in the short term at least, to staff from the Skylark Federation who will take the school through the end of the year. During that period, a decision will be made about whether to join the Skylark Federation and make the collaboration a formal and long term one.

It's been a difficult decision to come to but, having made it, I feel it's the right thing both personally and for the school. I'll have a couple more pieces to write for the Kingston News in which I'll try to give you more of a flavour of what's going on here and to share some of the wonderful work that the children do.

In the meantime, I'd also like to thank the long-suffering Katie who gently reminds me, month after month, that I've missed yet another deadline and yet endlessly accommodates me.

Editor's comment on Andrew's retirement

How could I have a monthly publication that didn't give updates and information about Kingston's inspiring, youngest residents, and our future decision makers and leaders?

Andrew, it's been a pleasure to work with you for over ten years to ensure that all Kingston's residents knew as much as possible about the activities of the children attending your school.

I do hope I have the same relationship with whoever takes your vacant post.

I wish you the very best of health in your retirement in whatever it is you decide to do to fill the massive gap leaving this important post will create in your life. Katie

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KINGSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Report by Alex Leith of the meeting held on 28th September.

Packed house

It was great to see an unprecedented (in recent years) twenty-odd members of the public at our latest Parish Council Meeting on 28th September, which lent the proceedings a rather buzzy atmosphere than normal. The reason for this was the presence of developer, Rob Burnham, the Director of Green Span Homes, who gave a brief pre-application presentation regarding the proposed development at Castelmer Fruit Farm, off Ashcombe Lane. A sizeable number of attendees stayed for the duration of the meeting and made interesting contributions.

Castelmer

The proposal is for 11 houses, consisting of four 'affordable' homes and seven 'market' homes, which Burnham suggested might have to be reduced to ten. All homes would be of contemporary design. He confirmed that all houses within the application would have access to a community orchard, the upkeep of which would be the responsibility of the homeowners/occupiers. He fielded questions from the members of the public, many of whom live in that area of the village, notably regarding concerns over drainage, tree removal and the community orchard. A final question alluded to an alleged conflict between Green Span and Nutbush Parish Council over a previous Green Span development in West Sussex. Burnham has agreed to meet residents again.

Rights of Way: a new direction

Cllr Christine Moulder announced she was standing down as Lead on Rights of Way, with Cllr David Hoare opting to take up the reins. Cllr Hoare will also report back from Kingston Action Group meetings, a role until recently taken up by Cllr John Bewick and Cllr Yours Truly. A big thanks is due to David for his energetic commitment to village affairs, and to Christine and John for their hard work in those roles.

Saxondown funds

There has been a good deal of behind-the-scenes work going on by councillors developing the project ideas generated by the public consultation as to how to spend the Saxondown Easement funds, and it's heart-warming to see some projects finally getting off the ground. The Council resolved unanimously to fund a new zip wire and in-ground trampoline at the Village Green at a cost of £19,340.09 (excl VAT). We unanimously agreed to the Parish Hall proposal to purchase solar panels and batteries at a cost of £16,139.21. There was also progress on the provision of sports equipment, picnic tables and seating on St Pancras Green. Watch this space for more news.

Neighbourhood Plan

After a robust discussion on the matter, the Council made a unanimous decision not to develop a neighbourhood plan. This was due to the work and costs involved (it is not unheard of the process taking five years to complete), the lack of support from

residents and the decreasing level of support from SDNP and their professionals. (There is, we have subsequently discovered, another option: in due course we will discuss the viability of a Parish Priority Statement, a new less onerous approach which the SDNPA is currently developing).

Speed Sensor

You may have noticed that the speed sensor on Ashcombe Lane appears to have been turned off. Not the case! It is just the monitor, which alerts drivers to their speed, which has been deactivated: we wanted to see if the information it reveals affects drivers' behaviour. The machine is still collecting data, and the latest batch we have analysed confirms that an extraordinary 2000 vehicles enter the village each day from the A27. The majority of these vehicles travel at or around the 30mph speed limit, though a significant number exceed it: highest speeds are in the early hours of the morning when traffic volumes are lowest. Interestingly, whether the monitor is switched on or off appears to make little difference to drivers' speed. Thanks to Cllr John Bewick for his work in this area.

Next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be at 7pm on 9th November at the Community Pavilion on St Pancras Green. This is *your* Council, remember: members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend. Here's hoping some of those residents who came to the last meeting have a taste for it!

MESSAGE FROM MARIA CAULFIELD

Planning once again is dominating the local news in our parishes and towns. While we have had success in seeing our greenfield sites protected because planning committees have refused to allow development on sites not in neighbourhood plans, we are now seeing these decisions being overturned by planning inspectors.

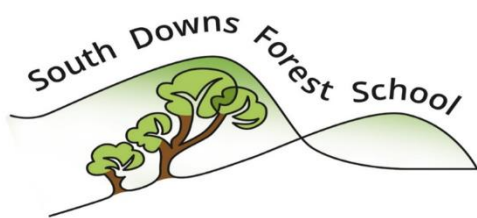
Both in Wealden and Lewes, we have seen sites such as South Road in Wivelsfield and Mornings Mill in Polegate have their refusals overruled by planning inspectors and overturning the decisions of democratically elected local planning committees. The concern is that, with appeals on sites such as Nolands in Plumpton and a number in Ringmer coming up, these will suffer the same fate and I have raised this in Parliament as this is not acceptable.

The planning inspectors give reasons for their decisions and the crux of the matter is that neither Wealden or Lewes District councils have Local plans that are in date and so the protection of the neighbourhood plans on greenfield sites falls. I have been urging both district councils to get their Plans in date for a long time now so that we have the legal protection they offer. While the debate about housing numbers rages on, without any local plan there is no protection at all, and whether the housing numbers are 2 or 2002 currently there is open season on our green spaces as the Planning Inspector makes clear that without a five-year land supply that a Local Plan brings, no site is off limits. Our councillors for both councils need to urgently get this rectified as it is not fair on local people, parish, or town councils. I will fight in Parliament to end the overturning of local decisions, but local councils need to play their part too.



01273 513509

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South Downs Forest School is a Community Interest Company in Iford, that runs term-time sessions for children and young people from disadvantaged and vulnerable backgrounds. All profits go towards subsidising these sessions. I also run local community sessions throughout the year.

Please do get in contact with me for further information:
Lynne Shersby 07881 418 482

NEW! AUTUMN 'BIG GIRLS' FOREST SCHOOL!

(Forest School is not just for children!)

This is a new Forest School session for women, to have some 'you' time! Spend some time away from the normal demands of daily life. You will experience tranquillity in a beautiful, local woodland, refresh your mind, build resilience, make new friends, learn some skills and have fun! We will build a fire and cook something on it, and use tools to make woodland crafts. You may wish to relax, lie in a hammock or chat by the fire or may want to put up a swing!! The choice is yours!

This is an introductory session, but future sessions will be planned.

DATES: Friday, 18th November 10.00-12.00 am and/or

TIME: Saturday, 19th November 10.00-12.00am

COST: £8 per person- to include hot drinks, all resources and a snack cooked on the fire!



Come along, bring a friend or on your own and have some time for you!

COMMUNITY FAMILY CHRISTMAS - FOREST SCHOOL EVENT!

DATE: Saturday, 17th December

TIME: 10:00 am-12.00 pm (possibly in the pm too as this was oversubscribed last year, so please book early).

COST: £8 PER PERSON - for children and adults



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