



# BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk

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**To All Members of the Council, press and the public.**

4th February 2013

There will be a meeting of the **Environment Committee** on **Monday 11th February 2013** at **Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade** commencing at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business;

1. **Apologies and absences** (7.30)  
To receive and accept apologies for absence.
2. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.** (7.31)  
Members are required to declare any interests or lobbying on items in this agenda.
3. **Minutes of the Meetings of 7<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013.** (7:32)  
To consider the minutes of the meetings and if in order to sign as a true record (pages 3 - 8).
4. **Matters Arising From Minutes.** (7.40)
  - 4.1 Minute 2499/4.1 signs at Cossington Lane, see report (page 8).
  - 4.2 Minute 2499/4.2 Boxley Road/Grange Lane movement of speed restriction, see report (page 8).
  - 4.3 Minute 2499/4.3 Beechen Bank, see report (page 9).
  - 4.4 Minute 2499/4.4 Saracen Fields open area, see report (page 9).
  - 4.5 Minute 2499/4.5. Suggestions, trees leaning over Walderslade Woods Road and other work, see report (page 9).
  - 4.6 Minute 2499/4.6 Salt bins 'use on highways only' signs, see report (page 9).
  - 4.7 Minute 2493/4.7 Maidstone Studios, see report (page 9).
  - 4.8 Minute 2502/9 Walderslade Woods Road traffic island work, see report (page 9).
  - 4.9 Minute 2501/12.2 Listed Buildings Register, see report (page 9).

**To adjourn to allow members of the public to address the meeting.**

5. **Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.** (8.05)  
To consider planning applications. Members' are reminded to consider possible section 106 requests or to suggest any conditions.

MA/12/2222 – Retrospective application for the creation of a parking bay in front garden including the excavation of earth and erection of walls at Fortrouge, Weaving Street, ME14 5JR. 14/2/2013

TA/0222/12 Tree Preservation Order No. 1 of 1969: An application for consent to coppice 1 Oak tree at 11 Sylvan Glade, Walderslade ME5 9PW. 13/2/2013

Planning Appeal. Bredhurst Nurseries, variation of the condition 'the use hereby permitted shall only be carried by Bredhurst Juniors Football Club or other football club bases in the parishes of Bredhurst or Boxley'. The committees' reasons for supporting MBC's refusal will be forwarded on to the planning inspectorate.

6. **Planning Applications and Appeals Decisions** (8.14)  
 MA/12/2142 – Listed building consent at Barn Cottage, Boxley Road – REFUSED, a planning application was never submitted.
- MA12/2149 – Erection of two storey and single storey rear extension and installation of swimming pool – REFUSED.
7. **Neighbourhood Development Plans** (8.16)  
 A working group meeting will be arranged, an e-mail to members asking for availability will be sent.
8. **Volunteer Groups.** (8.17)  
 To receive a report/update on the activities of any volunteer group supported by the parish council see report (page 9).
9. **Highways and Byways.** (8.21)  
 To consider any issues raised by Councillors or the residents.
- 9.1 Grove Green Lane response to resident's petition see report (page 10).  
 9.2 Cabinet Member Cllr Ring's invitation to meet with parishes about any litter issues.  
 9.3 Setting local speed limits DFT guidelines see report (page 10).  
 9.4 Quad bikes, Lordswood see report (page 10). A resolution may be placed before members.  
 9.5 Winter maintenance see report (page 10).  
 9.6 Lights Beechen Bank Road see report (page 10).
10. **Policy and procedures review.** (8.35)  
 Street Maintenance policy and pro forma see report (page 11).
11. **Matters for information.** (8.42)  
 For members to be notified of any information or for members to request agenda items see report (page 11)
12. **Next Meeting.** (8.43)  
 Next full environment meeting 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

In view of the confidential nature (personal details and data) on the Enforcement item about to be transacted, it is advisable that the public and press will be excluded from the meeting for the duration of or part of the item.

13. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC.** (8.44)  
 To consider, if any received, confidential updates.

Clerk to Boxley Parish Council.

In accordance with policy the meeting should close no later than 9.30 pm but the Chairman has devolved powers to extend it by 30 minutes.

Items to be returned to agenda: Minute 2492/4.2 (10/12/12) PRow Round Wood valley, return to agenda December 2013.

**Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 7th January 2013 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.**

Councillors present; Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr K Perry, Mrs A Spain, Mr A Springate, and Mrs M Waller together with the Assistant Clerk.

**1. Apologies and absences**

Cllr Holmes (absent)

**2. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**

Cllr Perry notified members that he knew the agent of the application MA/12/1426 but had not been lobbied.

Cllr Spain notified members that she had a non-pecuniary interest on application MA/12/1424.

**3. Minutes of the Meetings of 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> November 2012.**

The minutes were **agreed** with amendments and **signed** as a correct record.

**4. Matters Arising From Minutes.**

4.1 Minute 2492/4.1 marker at Cossington Lane. **Noted** a further sign has been erected for restricted access for HGVs and clarification is being sought from KCCHT. A letter to residents has been drafted and agreed by the Chairman and once clarification has been sought will be distributed.

4.2 Minute 2492/4.3 Boxley Road/Grange Lane movement of speed restriction. **Noted** Information on why the Police had refused to support the request to move the speed limit signs were still awaited: as was a response from the police officer who attended the KALC meeting in December. **Action; Clerk.**

4.3 Minute 2492/4.5 Beechen Bank land ownership, **Noted** further information will be sent once a cheque has been raised by the Parish Council. **Action: office.**

4.4 Minute 2492/4.6 Saracen Fields open area. **Noted** a response is still awaited despite further requests, from County Councillor Paul Carter who has asked an officer to investigate. **Action: office to chase for a reply.**

4.5 Minute 2492/4.7. **Noted** A response is still awaited from KCCH&T regarding the overhanging trees along Walderslade Woods Road and other work, would be considered for Cllr Paul Carter's devolved budget.

4.6 Minute 2492/4.9 Salt bins 'use on highways only' signs. KCCH&T had been contacted about whether they had signs that could be purchased. **Noted** a response is still awaited.

4.7 Minute 2493/4.10 Maidstone Studios. **Noted** dates for a meeting were still being awaited from the studio. **Action office.**

The meeting was not adjourned as no members of the public were present.

**5. Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.**

5.1 MA/12/1426 Erection of single storey building comprising four retail units for uses falling within Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A5 or D1 with associated pedestrian and vehicular access ways, refuse stores, car parking and landscaping at Land at Penhurst Close, Grove Green. Amended details received December 2012. Ratified the Clerk's decision, after consulting with the Environment Committee, The Parish Council wishes to reiterate its previous reasons [not produced for this report as it was a direct repeat of the previous decision], and makes further comments below.

*If the Planning Committee was minded to agree the development with the amended details then members asked that the following additional conditions be imposed:*

*9. Restrictions on the size of delivery vehicles entering into Penhurst Close.*

*10. Restriction on any take away service offered by restaurants and or cafes.*

*10. Restrictions on the lighting of the car parking and frontages on Penhurst Close.*

5.2 MA/12/1883 erection of a two-storey rear extension and installation of first floor windows to the side elevation (resubmission of MA/12/0609) at 16 Trotwood Close, Walderslade. **Ratified** and **agreed** the Assistant Clerk's decision, after consulting with the Environment Committee, *Boxley Parish Council would like to withdraw its original decision on the above application, after carefully considering all the facts that have been presented to them they have decided they **Do not wish to object.***

5.3 MA/12/1931 Erection of conservatory at 1 Sandbourne Drive, Maidstone, Kent ME14 2JA. **Do not wish to object.**

5.4 MA/12/2110 construction of a rear balcony at 5 Round Wood, Walderslade ME5 9UL. **Do not wish to object**

5.5 MA/12/2119 single storey rear extension and new pitched roof to existing rear extension at The White House, Tyland Lane ME14 3BH 03/01/13. **Ratified** Clerk's decision, after contact with committee members, **Do not wish to object.**

5.6 MA/12/2142 Listed building consent for insertion of 4 conservation roof lights to rear elevation, the handing of the front door and adjacent window, insertion of a window to front elevation, and internal alterations including removal of existing staircase and insertion of new staircase to serve first floor self-contained flat at Barn Cottage, Boxley Road ME14 3DN. **Do not wish to comment and defer to the views of the conservation officer.**

5.7 MA/12/2149 erection of a 2 storey and single storey rear extension insertion of a side and rear dormer windows and installation of a swimming pool (amendment to previously refused MA/12/1458) at Myosotis, Chatham Road, Sandling ME14 3AY. **Do not wish to object.**

5.8 TA/0206/12 application for consent to fell Silver Birch at 15 Ploughmans Way, Walderslade ME5 9DE. **Ratified** the Clerk's decision, after consultation with members, **Do not wish to object** but defer the decision to the borough landscape officer however a replacement tree should be of an indigenous species.

5.9 MA/12/2193 Erection of a rear storey conservatory at 14 The Hedgerow, Weaving, ME14 5TG. **Do not wish to object.**

## 6 **Planning Applications and Appeals Decisions**

MA/12/0693 GRANTED\* Tesco application to vary delivery condition. **Noted.**

## 7 **Neighbourhood Development Plans**

The Chairman thanked Cllr Perry for his work on the Grove Green Neighbourhood plan and confirmed a meeting of the working group will be arranged in February 2013.

## 8 **Walderslade Woods and Volunteer Group**

Cllr Springate gave a brief report on recent work of the group which included developing a link between Cossington Valley and Roundwood Valley.

Cllr Bob Hinder gave a brief report on The Friends of Boxley Warren. A meeting has been arranged with Mike Philips to discuss the purchase of equipment and the next task day is scheduled for Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2013.

## 9 **Highways and Byways.**

Cllr W Hinder notified the meeting that the gutters in Brownlowe Copse and Beechmore Drive needed a sweep because there is lots of detritus due to impacted leaves. Cllr W Hinder also stated the litter bin at the Southern End of Boxley Road needs emptying **Action: Cllr Hinder.**

Cllr Dengate reported that a litter pick had been carried out by MBC along Gleaming Wood Drive approximately an hour before the refuse trucks collected the weekly rubbish which caused even more litter once they had left the site. **Noted**  
Cllr Springate requested a litter pick along Lordswood Lane. **Action Cllr Springate.**

Cllr Bob Hinder requested clarification from Cllr Paul Carter for the work that is currently being undertaken on the Walderslade Woods Road between Tunbury Avenue and Impton Lane whereby islands have been installed. This area technically falls within Tonbridge and Malling and he would like to know if these islands will be installed further along the Road towards Roundwood Roundabout.  
**Action: office.**

Members were informed that MBC contact centre have been telling residents who request a litter pick or similar service that there is no money in their budget to carry out these duties and are referring them to their Parish Council. The Clerk has suggested an article is placed in the next issue of the Downs Mail newsletter advising residents on how to request a litter pick. **Action office.**

10 **Policy and procedures review.**

Members **received** and **agreed** to the review and the Clerk's comments.

11. **Examining the Speed Limit for HGVs over 7.5 tonnes on Single Carriageway Roads: A Consultation Document.**

Members **agreed** not to respond to this consultation on the grounds the Parish Council does not have any expertise in this field.

12. **Matters for information.**

12.1 Business rates retention and the local government settlement. A plain English guide is available at [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk). **Received and Noted.**

12.2 Listed Buildings Register, members were notified the office had compiled a register for listed buildings within the parish based on information supplied by English Heritage. Members requested a copy is circulated once it had been checked and a laminated copy is kept in the environment box along with other useful documents. **Action Office.**

13. **Next Meeting.**

Next full environment meeting 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

14. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC.**

There were none.

Meeting closed at 8.22 p.m.

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**Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 28 January 2013 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 9.35 p.m.**

Councillors present – Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr D Holmes, Mr K Perry, Mrs A Spain, Mr A Springate, and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk.

6. **Apologies and absences.**

None as all present.

7. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**

There were none.

The meeting was not adjourned as there were no members of the public present.

## 8. Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.

3.1 MA/12/2074 – Retrospective application for erection of a garden shed, summerhouse and circular tree seat in rear garden at Cartref, Weaving Street.  
*Do not wish to object but the parish council would like it noted that they do not like retrospective applications.*

3.2 MA/12/2096 – Installation of fencing and gates at Units A and GG and HH, St Michael's Close, Aylesford.  
*Do not wish to object.*

3.3 MA/12/2162 – Permanent retention of modular kitchen and canteen unit at Valley Park Community School, Huntsman Lane.  
*Wish to see approved.*

3.4 MA/12/2236 – Advertisement consent for the installation of ten non-illuminated fascia signs and one non-illuminated free standing sign at Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd, Cobtree House, Forstal Road, Aylesford.  
*Do not wish to object.*

3.5 MA/12/2259 – Retrospective planning permission for the erection of a hot tub house and utility annexe at Ambleside, 4 Greenways, Weaving.  
*Do not wish to object but the parish council would like it noted that they do not like retrospective applications.*

3.6 MA/12/2261 – Outline planning permission for the erection of six detached dwellings with garages with all matters reserved for future consideration at land at High View Farm, Lordswood Lane.

*Wish to see refused for the following reasons:*

- *Would contravene ENV35 of the MBC Boroughwide local plan and BNE34 of the Medway Plan as development would have an adverse and harmful impact on the character and amenity of the locality as it would restrict views of the prominent local woodland on Beechen Bank. It would also materially damage the current green and undeveloped feel to the west side of Lordswood Lane. The erection of the closed boarded fence (objected to by the parish council) should not be used as a reason to allow this development.*
- *It is considered that the economic and social benefits of this application will not outweigh the local priority to conserve the area's landscape. The properties being proposed for the site are large 'executive style' four and five bedroom dwellings and it is considered that there is no identified local needs for such development in such an area.*
- *High View Farm has not been identified by either Maidstone or Medway as an allocated housing site.*
- *Emerging Local Development Framework plans at Maidstone and Medway offer protection for local landscape character and it is felt that this proposal will contravene emerging policies CS5 of the Maidstone Core Strategy and CS7 of the Medway Core Strategy.*
- *The development of the land would impact on the biodiversity of the woodlands and surrounding areas as flat areas adjacent to woodlands support bats and other animal's and insects.*
- *Concern is raised about the potential adverse impact on the Ancient Woodland adjacent to Lordswood Lane. Urbanisation close to woodlands often results in encroachment and damage.*

*It is considered that this application would intensify and urbanise the area thus materially harming the landscape character.*

3.7 TA/0213/12 – An application for consent to fell 1 no. silver birch tree, crown reduce 2no Hornbeam trees by 20% and crown reduce 1no Oak tree by 30% being subject to Tree Preservation Order 1 of 1969 at 53 Olivine Close, Walderslade.

*Do not wish to object defer to the Landscape Officer's views.*

3.8 TA/0217/12 – Tree Prevention Order, TPO No 1 of 1969, application for consent to crown thin 2no Oak Trees by 10% and to clean trunk to 5m at tree to rear of Bellgrove Court, Boxley.

*Do not wish to object defer to the Landscape Officer's views.*

**4. Next Meeting.**

Next full Environment Committee meeting 11 February 2013 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

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*Clerk's comment; at time of dispatching agenda clearance of the following draft had not yet been received from the chairman.*

**Minutes of the Environment Committee on Tuesday 29th January 2013 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.32p.m.**

Councillors present – Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr D Holmes, Mr K Perry, and Mr A Springate, together with the Clerk and two representatives of the applicant Ms M Davidson and Mr M Hughes.

**1. Apologies and absences.**

Cllrs Brooks (predetermined), Ivor Davies (family commitment), Spain (convalescing) and Waller (predetermined). County Councillor Chittenden.

**2. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**

All members declared that they had been lobbied.

The meeting was not adjourned as there were no members of the public present.

**3. Planning Application MA/12/2314.**

The chairman welcomed the representatives and invited them to address the meeting and then answer questions. Discussion took place concerning all aspects of the application including; traffic; alternative sites; impact on the retail in the town centre; traffic congestion; impact on local communities; design; light pollution etc.

The representatives choose to leave prior to the decision being taken and following their departure discussion covered; the local plan and core strategy, concerns, reasons for and reasons against and possible conditions that needed highlighting to the planning officer. Cllr Springate proposed that the committee did not object to the application but raised concerns and conditions; **agreed** (with one objection).

MA/12/2314 Erection of Class A1 retail development (with ancillary café) and associated servicing, car parking, landscaping and access arrangements at Plot 4, Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne Road.

Having carefully considered; the application; traffic issues; the employment that will be bought to the site which has been undeveloped for 10 years and the impact of such a prestigious development for a gateway route into the county town the parish council's response is

Do not wish to object however there are concerns about;

- The impact of traffic.
- Impact on the town centre.
- Light pollution impact on the AONB;
- Impact on the surrounding area.

If the planning officer was minded to grant permission then the following conditions/investigation should be considered;

- A robust examination of the green travel plan with a condition included in any permission granted to ensure that this plan is adhered to.
- It is requested that there is a change to the traffic layout being planned for the new junction as it is considered that the introduction of traffic lights will seriously impact on the current traffic flow adding to the considerable congestion experienced in the area. A one way flow system through Eclipse

- Park, possibly in from Bearsted Road out at Sittingbourne Road, would negate the need to have 'cross over traffic lights' at the proposed new junction utilise existing road infrastructure and reducing expenditure.
- Require a lighting design that compliments the area and negates light pollution.
  - It is understood that there has been a change in the location of the store and that this will allow more perimeter landscaping and this is welcomed. It is requested that vertical green walls are introduced to soften the impact of the building.
  - A condition should be introduced to ensure that the applicant cooperates with other local developers to look towards establishing and maintaining bus services to link said developments with the town centre and park and ride.
  - A robust investigation into the Retail Impact Assessment to ensure that there is no substantial impact on the town centre retail.
  - The issue of traffic and the possible development of plot 4 for retail should be referred to the Integrated Transport Strategy Consultation review.

#### 4. Next Meeting.

Next full Environment Committee meeting 11 February 2013 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

**Item 4 Matters Arising From Minutes.** *Purpose of report: information and decisions if required.*

- 4.1 Signs at Cossington Lane. A letter requesting the removal of the 'private road' sign was delivered to properties and the sign has been removed. A letter has been received at the office requesting that the residents be allowed to put up a new sign and for the parish council to agree the wording. A copy of this letter is enclosed for councillors.
- 4.2 Boxley Road/Grange Lane movement of speed restriction. Members requested details of why the Police objected to the request to move the speed limit and the following was received from KCCH&T.  
 "Kent Police would object to the 30mph speed limit being moved any further north than it is at present.

I have checked our records and the 30mph speed limit in Penenden Heath was extended in 2004 from the original gateway at Harbourland to just south of the Grange Lane junction. The section between Grange Lane and Boxley village was reduced to 40mph. Both of these sections were originally national (60mph) speed limits. My predecessor Dick Hubbard was consulted on these speed limit changes and offered no comments or observations on these proposals.

The 40mph speed limit and the 30mph speed limit between Grange Lane and Harbourland are in the main not complied with. In both directions driven speeds are generally over 40mph in the 40mph speed limit and drivers continue at this speed into the 30mph limit as there is no real change in the road geometry and environment, until reaching the Harbourland area just prior to the M20 bridge. Here they tend to reduce their speed as there is more development and lack of forward visibility over the M20 bridge.

If I were to be consulted on these speed limits now I would ask for the 40mph speed limit to be increased to 50mph, and the first section of 30mph to increase to 40mph up to the original gateway at Harbourland. These would be realistic speed limits and would be in the main self enforcing.

During a recent site visit I noticed that there is vegetation on both sides of Grange Lane to the south and north, so I don't really see what would be gained from moving the signs in regard to maintenance."



- 4.3 Beechen Bank. A copy of 60 title deeds have been obtained, the cost £180 will be taken from the Street Maintenance budget. Members guidance on what they wish to do with the information is sought.
- 4.4 Saracen Fields open area. Another e-mail, this time copied to County Councillor Paul Carters PA asking for help was sent on 01/02/13. If a reply is not received in time for the meeting it is requested that the issue be escalated to the Chairman who is requested to take over in trying to get a response.
- 4.5 Suggestions, trees leaning over Walderslade Woods Road and other work with funding being requested from Cllr Paul Carter's devolved budget. Also requested at the same time was for the footpath between Lordswood Lane and Boxley Road to be cleared. Another e-mail asking for a reply was sent 01/02/13. If a reply is not received in time for the meeting it is requested that the issue be escalated to the Chairman who is requested to take over in trying to get a response.
- 4.6 Salt bins 'use on highways only' signs. KCCH&T have started installing signs on all its salt bins; at no cost to the parish council. Cllr Wendy Hinder has been contacted by residents who have informed her of neighbours taking grit from the bin and using it on their private drives. She is asking that members consider arranging a letter drop. Three bins that do not have the relevant signs have been reported to KCCH&T.
- 4.7 Maidstone Studios. Contact has been made to arrange a meeting between councillors and the studio to try to resolve the issue of parking on Grove Green. The studio representative agreed to supply suitable date but failed to do so and has been 'chased' on a number of occasions. The issue of no reply has been escalated to the chairman.
- 4.8 Walderslade Woods Road traffic island work. County Cllr Carter has paid for the installation of road junction islands along Walderslade Woods Road which it is hoped will eradicate the overtaking which has caused safety issues at the many junctions. A period of monitoring will be undertaken by KCC and if things do not improve then there is a possibility of a phase 2 which could see an application for a reduction in the speed limit along the length of Walderslade Woods Road. The parish council has been asked to await the results of this monitoring. Unfortunately the Speedwatch equipment available to parish councils cannot be used on roads with a speed limit over 40mph.
- 4.9 Listed buildings. Members will be updated on the situation as soon as the list has been checked.

**Item 8 Volunteer Groups.** *Purpose of report: To receive a report/update on the activities of any volunteer group supported by the parish council.*

### **Report from Cllr Springate on the Walderslade Woods Task Day 13<sup>th</sup> January 2013.**

Twelve members of WWG cut two new paths along the southern edges of Cossington and Round Wood valleys. This means that users no longer have to walk along Walderslade Woods (road) in order to go from the very top of Cossington to the very top of Round Wood. These new paths will eventually become part of the Circular Walk.

About a dozen bags of rubbish were collected, along with other objects such as street bollards, drain covers, garden ornaments, plastic drainage parts and metal window frames.

This Task Day sees the finalisation of our work in Cossington; we now move on to Tunbury valleys and its issues.

Additional equipment has been purchased to allow the group to expand its work.

**Item 9. Highways and Byways.** *Purpose of report:* To consider any issues raised by Councillors or the residents.

**Item 9.1** Grove Green Lane residents petition to KCC; the following information is given as an update for members. The parish office was copied in on the petition and was instructed, by members, to write to the MP in support of the residents. A response has now been received by the residents and no action will be taken at this moment but the situation monitored annually. Reasons for no action are stated as:

- No history of personal injury crashes at the junction in the past 3 years; or in Weaving Street in the past 10 years.
- Adequate signage and speed limits are in place.
- The lane is private and the “*sight lines when exiting Grove Green Lane remain in private ownership*”.

**Item 9.3.** In September 2012 the Environment Committee responded to a DFT consultation on the Speed Limit Guidance it gave to local traffic authorities. TA revised circular (01/20132) has been published. Unfortunately the committees’ request that more protection be given to vulnerable road users in rural roads has not been taken up. The wording of the circular does however allow local traffic authorities to lower, for example, a 60 mph speed limit in an AONB area. The committee room can receive our office broadband signal so there will be an opportunity for the meeting to go live onto the Speed Limit Appraisal Tool and actually review each road. Members should consider using the tool and the new guidance document to pressurise KCCH&T for the changes that they may want.

*Clerk comment:* I could not trace the appraisal tool on the website so I have sent an e-mail via the website asking for a link.

**Item 9.4 Quad bikes.** This item has been requested by Cllr Hinder due to an e-mail she has received and which she will pass onto the office. Members may be asked to consider releasing some of the street maintenance budget to pay for barriers to stop quad bikes. At the time of writing the agenda no further information as available.

**Item 9.5 Winter maintenance.**

Farmer snow plough. *Clerk comment: the following is information I supplied to a resident but which covers issues I think members may wish to consider.*

“Saracen Fields and all roads in the area are on the winter schedule map I provided to KCC and also to the farmer and I spoke to the tractor driver myself this year. I noticed that they had a larger ‘snow scoop’ on the tractor and that may cause some problems. Winter clearance is down to be discussed at the 11<sup>th</sup> February Environment Committee meeting as I wanted to check with my members which roads got missed out etc. When I spoke to the driver he did indicate he could not get down a number of roads as vehicles were parked at or near the junction/top of the close and he couldn’t get in or he was concerned that he might get stuck himself or damage cars. He actually mentioned he could not get down Forestdale and 2 roads in Lordswood because of the cars lining the junction mouth. I will approach KCCH&T or the farmer about the gradient on Saracen Fields as it occurs to me that the winter clearance tractor might not be able to be safely employed on the gradient there. The driver didn’t mention this to me but I will double check if Saracen Fields has had an assessment about this”.

Salt bins. Problems areas; a resident has asked Wendy Hinder for another bin at Saracen Fields.

**Item 9.6** Lights Beechen Bank Road. The old columns that are still in place but not lit, specifically numbers 1, 2 13, 10 and 20, are due for replacement with new columns. Work to install the new columns and have them connected and is schedules for 14/15 March.

**Item 10. Review of policies and procedures 2013/2014 timeline.** *Purpose of report: to review if still fit for purpose.*

**Street Maintenance 'Policy' for budget expenditure.**

When suggesting additional work individual members are asked to identify the following:

- what additional work they want;
- why they consider it is needed (whether it is for practical or aesthetic reasons);
- (if known) whether the land/vegetation is highway or private. If private can they identify the property owner/house number etc.
- have they reported the problem to KHS at any time (reference number to be given if possible)?

The Environment Committee will consider requests for the budget to be allocated and has identified the following criteria/requirements that need to be considered before a decision is made.

Is the issue on Highway property (verges/footways) and have reasonable attempts been made to get KHS to do the work? *Reasonable is considered as a report/request made for the work and its progress is checked 7 days later. If work not scheduled or no answer than parish office to contact the Highway Inspector/Contact Centre for advice/response/schedule for any planned work allowing another 7 days for response/work. Issue then taken to Environment Committee for consideration. If there is a safety issue then response times allowed will be cut to 3 working days.*

Encroaching vegetation from private property. KHS can send a letter requiring the work be done and this can be arranged via the Highway Inspector.

Footways, especially if on a school, cycle or access to public facilities route are considered a priority by the Environment Committee. Salt bins can be supplied for footway maintenance.

Vision splays are a H & S issue if they are overgrown and should be cut as and when required. This is the same as vegetation around speed signs and highway directional signs.

When considering projects Environment Committee should consider the following

- whether the request is commensurate with the possible cost.
- H & S issues if it is going to arrange for work to be done.
- Who uses the footway, footpath etc.
- Why is it used (does it connect to a bus stop etc)
- Is it a 'make it pretty' request or a practical request.

There is a limited budget for work and where possible problem areas will be identified as soon as possible. The Environment Committee can consider work for aesthetic reasons but these should not take priority over work needed for practical reasons.

**Item 11. Matters for information.**

Change to the management of Public Rights of Way. Two of the twelve Area Managers have been moved to the 'maintenance delivery team' increasing their number from two to four as KCC PROW unit tries to work more effectively and efficiently. The new Area Manager for our area is Katie Cullen.

Kent Fire and Rescue, fire hydrant inspections. Parish councils are being approached to see if they wish to work with KFand R in keeping an eye on fire hydrants and reporting any issues. This will be a visual inspection only.