

BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk



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11 April 2015

To All Members of the Council, press and public.

There will be a meeting of the **Environment Committee** on **Monday 20 April 2015** 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 Interests, dispensations, predetermination or Lobbying** (7.31)
Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.
3. **Minutes of the Meetings of 9 March 2015** (7.32)
To consider the minutes of the meeting (already circulated) and if in order to sign as a true record.
4. **Matters Arising From Minutes** (7.35)
 - 4.1 Minute 2732/4.1 Boxley Warren gate. Work is now planned for July 2015.
 - 4.2 Minute 27232/4.2 Pilgrims Way/Lidsing Road junction. Work is now planned for July 2015.
 - 4.3 Minute 2732/4.5 No motorcycle signs Beechen Bank Rd/Cossington Road entrance. Walderslade Woodlands Group do not wish to see signs erected as it is felt that these would advertise the existence of the path.
 - 4.4 Any other matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda.

To adjourn to allow members of the public to address the meeting (7.40)

5. **Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration** (7.50)
See attached list (page 3). For decision.
6. **Planning Decisions, Appeals and Appeals Decisions** (8.00)
To receive any information.
7. **Volunteer Groups** (8.01)
To receive any reports from volunteer groups associated with the parish council
Walderslade Woodlands Group (page 3). For information.
Friends of Boxley Warren. For information.
8. **Highways and Byways** (8.10)
 - 8.1 HGV parking on residential roads see reports (pages 4-5).
 - 8.2 Footpath between Wildfell Close and Boxley Road see report (pages 5).
 - 8.3 Equine crossing Dunn Street see report (pages 5).
 - 8.4 Parking St Michael's Close see report (page 6) and enclosed letter.
 - 8.5 Dropped kerb at Sandling Lane, Sandling (near Running Horse PH) see report (pages 6-7).

- 9. **Policy and procedures review** (8.30)
Sale of Public Land (review) see report (page 8).
- 10. **MBC Local Plan** (8.33)
To receive an update on any progress or issues, see report (page 9).
- 11. **Street Maintenance** (8.34)
Concrete apron at post box and noticeboard in Boxley Road, Walderslade see report (page 9)
- 12. **Matters for information** (8.40)
None received at time of compiling agenda
- 13. **Next Meeting** (8.41)
Next full environment meeting 11 May 2015 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 5 May 2015.

Pauline Bowdery
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:

Jan 2015 Minute 2715/8.3 PROW Round Wood Valley, review the request to KCC PROW for it to be made a PROW in June 2015. Minute 2639/4.1 Grovewood Drive North crossing improvements.

Legislation allows for meetings to be recorded by anyone attending. Persons intending to record or who have concerns about being recorded should please speak to the Clerk.

REPORTS ATTACHED TO ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA 20 April 2015

Members are reminded that the Chairman will assume that these papers have been read prior to the meeting.

Councillors wishing to suggest changes to any policy document or procedure in this agenda should notify the office, in writing, at least three working days in advance of the meeting. This will allow details to be circulated at the meeting (or in advance if particularly contentious).

Item 5 Planning Applications. *Purpose of report:* To consider planning applications. Members' are reminded to consider possible section 106 requests or to suggest any conditions.

Item 5.1.

15/502433/FULL. Demolition of conservatory and store, erection of single storey rear extension with the insertion of roof lantern. Conversion of roof space to include roof extension with insertion of rooflights, new dormer and changes to fenestration at Wilmarie Chatham Road Sandling Kent ME14 3AY. Deadline 28 April 2015

15/502437/FULL. Demolition of conservatory and store, erection of single storey rear extension. Conversion of roof space to include roof extension with alterations to rooflights and new dormer at Northdown Chatham Road Sandling Kent ME14 3AY. Deadline 28 April 2015.

15/502371/TPO. TPO application to remove one limb of 1 tree of unknown species at Edelweiss Boxley Road Walderslade Kent ME5 9JG. Deadline 28 April 2015.

15/502550/FULL. Removal of Condition 07 (details of no-dig permeable surfacing within the root protection areas of retained trees) of planning permission MA/13/1712 at Court Lodge Farm The Street Boxley Kent ME14 3DX. Deadline 1 May 2015.

15/502550/FULL. Removal of Condition 09 (existing buildings within the site to be removed) of planning permission MA/13/1712 at Court Lodge Farm The Street Boxley Kent ME14 3DX. Deadline 4 May 2015.

14/505095/TPO. TPO application to crown reduce and reduce height by 50% of 3 no. Ash trees and 1 no. Conifer at Ambleside 4 Greenways Weaving Kent ME14 5JU. Deadline 28 April 2015

Item 7 Volunteer Groups *Purpose of report:* Information.

Item 7.1 WWG. Status Report for April 2015.

We are planning to apply for funding through Awards for All (A4A), which is National Lottery based. This is to enable us to pay for our second store.

At our last quarterly meeting, we agreed to amend our Constitution in the area of actions on dissolution of the group.

I have been getting lots of people highlighting the fact that motor bikes and quads had been seen in the Coalbottom area. This being the case, our Task Day was spent tidying the general area, and blocking the circuit that has been made by their illegal activities. There had also been a certain amount of fly tipping at the entrance to the woods from Woodlands, which was tidied. All this work was done with great care and an eye to minimising the impact on the bluebells in the area. A very large branch of an oak was hanging dangerously, over a path. This was made safe.

Please see the pictures of our works on our Facebook page.

Regards.

Rob Burrows (Chairman).

Item 8. Highways and Byways. *Purpose of report:* Information.

Item 8.1 HGV parking on residential roads

8.1.1 Update from KALC on the meeting scheduled with KCC. "Unfortunately the meeting was postponed and we will now be meeting with the new Interim Director of Highways (Roger Wilkin) on 30 April. We will also be writing after Easter to all principal authorities about HGV parking".

8.1.2 Petition.

Prime Minister Petitions are an excellent way, if you can gain the support, to highlight an issue. A threshold of 100,000 supporters requires the Government to consider the issue but it does not guarantee any action.

Members are asked to approve a draft of the petition statement, a photograph can be uploaded to the petition website.

Many communities, the length and breathe of the country, are cursed by illegal lorry parking with drivers parking, in the day and overnight, their lorries and trailers in many residential and non-residential areas causing unacceptable:

- *Noise pollution from chiller units and early morning starts leading to the disturbance of sleep patterns for nearby residents;*
- *Filth and litter being deposited on verges, in residential gardens and other areas. The health and safety of people and wildlife is at risk and there is a cost to local authorities and businesses from litter clearance and decontamination of areas;*
- *Safety issues for other road users. Lorries can narrow road widths, are often unlit and create dangerous situations as they attempt to pull away ;*
- *Impact on the livelihoods of businesses and quality of life for residents.*

Penalty notices are issued however it is difficult and time consuming for local authorities to collect those given to foreign vehicles. Whilst the Government states that there are procedures in place to collect from any European based vehicle it is clear that this system does not work otherwise foreign lorries would stop parking illegally and use official lorry parks instead. Evidence also exists that illegally parked lorries often have outstanding fines for congestion and toll charges. Also vehicles registered outside of the EU are not covered by the current system.

We call upon the Prime Minister to investigate and resolve the problem of antisocial and potentially dangerous parking of lorries and trailers and ask that legislation is introduced to make it a criminal offense for any foreign registered vehicle not to pay the fines so that drivers would be forced to pay before they left the country.

8.1.3 KALC Maidstone Area Committee agenda. A request for this to be placed on the agenda for discussion will be made once the wording of the petition is agreed by members. Draft for request

Dear Geraldine,

Communities in Boxley Parish and also other Maidstone parishes have been cursed by illegal lorry parking with associated noise pollution, disturbance and filth. Boxley PC wrote to its MP and copied in all the Kent MPs and parishes to request that action was taken to ensure that enforcement takes place and that legislation is introduced to make it a criminal offense not to pay the fines so that drivers of foreign vehicles would be forced to pay before they left the country. Unfortunately there was no support from the Minister. In view of this Boxley PC would like to suggest that KALC Area Committee becomes involved and works with the parishes to raise a Prime Minister Petition to demand that the issue is investigated. It is felt that there are many regions in the country that suffer a similar curse and with Ashford Borough Council looking to start a 6 month trial clamping scheme now might be the time to consider doing this.

The parish council suggest the following statement for the petition

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The parish council would be grateful if this could be placed on the next agenda for discussion.

8.1.4 KALC meeting with KCCH,W&T.

From KALC *"Unfortunately the meeting was postponed and KALC will now be meeting with the new Interim Director of Highways (Roger Wilkin) on 30 April. We will also be writing after Easter to all principal authorities about HGV parking".*

Item 8.2 Footpath between Wildfell Close and Boxley Road.

Investigations have taken place and these have revealed that the land is owned by Weaverton (S.E) Limited, this was the developer that went into liquidation and in 2012/13 the parish council was unable to track any administrator etc.

A resident has requested

"As there is no apparent landowner to take responsibility for the land then I feel that the Parish Council should assume responsibility as a duty of care to the residents. As well as bait boxes I would request that the Parish Council clear the area of the overgrown vegetation which will make it less attractive to the rat population".

Financing work. The parish council's Environment Committee has a street maintenance budget of £3,500 in 2015/2016 financial year and County Councillor Paul Carter has a community budget and he could be approached to release some of this.

Maidstone BC. The Borough Council has no responsibility for the area and it contracts pest control work out to Mitie which charges £45 for two visits (minimum) per domestic property.

Item 8.3 Equine Crossing Dunn Street.

To ratify the Clerk's decision, taken after consultation with members. The Clerk had suggested that if members' wished to see a contribution then this could go to F&GP Committee however on reflection a grant from the Street Maintenance budget might be more appropriate.

Item 8.4 Parking St Michael's Close.

Further details including photographs will be forwarded to committee members and on request to other members. The company is willing to contribute to the work but is having trouble getting their request heard and are hoping if the parish council supports their request this will lead to meaningful discussions with KCCH,W&T.

Item 8.5 Dropped kerb at Sandling Lane, Sandling (near Running Horse PH).

County Councillor Paul Carter is paying for a dropped kerb at the following location and the following plan and update has been received

"Highways Officers have now drawn up a proposed scheme for a dropped crossing which Mr Carter had agreed to fund from his Members grant. I attach a copy of the design for your information. Elaine Hendren has advised me that the design is still subject to a road safety audit. She has also written to the Area Building Manager who is responsible for the car park seeking their permission to remove a short length of the low level railing.

I will update you again in due course but in the meantime can you confirm the Parish Council are happy with the proposed works?"

Item 9. Policy and procedures (review). *Purpose of report:* **Decision.**

Clerk's note: Members' are asked to consider whether it is still relevant that it has to make a recommendation to the parish council or whether the decision should solely lie with the Environment Committee.

Sale of public land by Kent County Council

Background.
An agreement exists with KCC that it will notify the Council if it is considering selling any of its public land. When dealing with small scale requests e.g. to extend a garden KCC has stated it will not sell the land if the Parish Council objects. Highway land can only be disposed of (legally it has to be Stopped Up) if a Parish Council agrees to it. Any sale of public land will probably result in a planning application for change of use and information gathered during this process can be used during the consideration of any application.

Policy

The Environment Committee will initially consider the application, and make a recommendation to the full Council which is responsible for the decision on whether to object to the sale.

Procedure

Members, when considering these applications and in the interests of being open, accountable and to encourage consistency, should

Visit each site (a map will be provided) and consider the effect on the following:

Visual amenity from afar and the immediate visual amenity (remembering that fence lines will be moved and there may be a loss of landscaping).

Will any new fence line be adjacent to a road or footway thus preventing any further changes to these facilities?

Will the sale of the land stop the introduction of a footway at a later date, if one does not already exist? Is there a footway on the opposite side of the road?

Will the introduction of a large new fence along the boundary of any land sold interrupt the vision splay for drivers? Check if the land is near a junction, on a sharp bend or next to someone's driveway.

Are there any obvious signs (street lights, manhole covers etc.) that utilities run under or over the land?

Are there any large trees growing on the land and what is the potential loss if these were felled? As any TPO on a tree is lost if planning application is given for a change of use and another application will have to be made.

Item 10. Local Plan. Purpose of report: Information.

Call for sites - Gypsy/Traveller.
Information from MBC.

"As for conventional housing, there is a need for the borough council's emerging Local Plan to allocate additional sites for Gypsy & Traveller pitches. Whilst we have had very many sites put forward by landowners in the Call for Sites for housing, very few have been put forward for Gypsy/Traveller use although we know that there is a need for additional Gypsy & Traveller pitches just like there is a need for additional homes for the period up to 2031.

To address this shortcoming, colleagues have been contacting the owners/agents for all the sites rejected for housing from the Call for Sites to ask them to confirm if they would ultimately be willing to make their land available (by sale or rent) to Gypsies and Travellers and to have their land assessed for this use. A willing landowner is needed if development, of whatever kind, is to happen. This contact does not mean that planning officers consider the site is suitable for inclusion in the Local Plan. The owners/agents for all the sites rejected for housing in the Call for Sites are being approached. As these landowners have already signalled willingness to develop their land for housing, some may be interested in this alternative use for their land.

To underline, the fact that landowners are being approached does not mean that any particular site will prove suitable as a Gypsy/Traveller site.

I wanted to make you aware of this work in case you receive any queries from your parishioners. I anticipate that the outcomes of this work will be reported to Borough Members in July with a first round of public consultation on any selected sites thereafter".

Item 11. Street Maintenance. Purpose of report: decision

Concrete apron at post box and noticeboard in Boxley Road, Walderslade. A request, last year, for improvements at this area was deferred until this financial year. The post box and notice board are set into a highway verge. Dirt from the verge, road and leaf litter accumulates in front of the facilities meaning that visitors to both have to stand in a muddy wet patch.

To achieve an apron the verge will have to be excavated to create an almost flat area (camber to be towards the road so that water does not accumulate). Approximately 1.5 - 2m x 0.75m of ground work will be required. As can be seen from the photograph work in front of the facilities has the potential to undermine the stability of the posts holding the noticeboard and post box and so some form of restraining barrier, which will also stop the wash down of mud from the verge, needs to be erected to give a flat face to the edge. This could be brick, concrete gravel board or oak planks.

The request is that concrete is then used to surface the new apron.

Any work will need the approval of KCCH,W&T.

