

## News from the Parish Council



### What a week!

On Monday, at our Parish Council meeting we agreed to facilitate a VE celebration at Madge's Field (Green patch of land near the Boat at the top of Bay Hill) for Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May. It would have been a first!

We were looking at a village picnic. Bring a blanket and some food to share. We would have provided safety fencing, a couple of portaloos and contributed towards the entertainment. Hannah from Sandra's was organising the rest.

This morning we decided **not** to go ahead. Events are being cancelled left, right and centre. They are now saying that the peak infection rate will be May/June and our village demographics include a lot of people in the vulnerable sector. Our priorities need to be elsewhere.

Things are changing so fast, and by the time you are reading this, things will have changed further. We will watch the advice given, hope the experts know what they are talking about and let's look after our own. The young and healthy are not going to have a serious problem. It is the elderly and those with underlying conditions, particularly respiratory that may... and they are probably very scared.

Perhaps we can ask neighbours if they need shopping delivered or prescriptions fetched, an odd phone call, email, text, wave through the window or knock (from a suitable distance) at the front door. We have our PCSO and community warden, but I think we are all responsible for our own village and for our neighbours.

One thought perturbs me. Who are the normal village volunteers? - Those that run the luncheon club, the history society, WI or our church. They tend to be the retired and it is exactly these people who should be looking at being less social and less hands on. I suspect the average age on the Parish Council is over 70 but I refuse to calculate it.

I do realise it is the busy younger generations who are already juggling jobs and children, and if the grandparents are no longer available for childcare....

### Footpaths

On another, more normal note, last month I wrote about registering footpaths so they can be preserved for future generations. Next month, I hope, with the aid of a local landowner/farmer to give a perspective on what it means when we ramble off the footpaths.

### South Foreland Valley

Please Read Anna Newton's article, in this edition, on the South Foreland valley. Our village Green. What a responsibility we carry!

## Double Yellows

There are too many cars in the village. Every year there are more. You should already be aware that the Gridlock Group have been working looking at the whole village and have come up with some suggestions as to what can be done. Currently, they are waiting for a meeting with the KCC cabinet member for transport.

Gridlock have suggested five areas where double yellow parking restrictions would be beneficial.

1. **Small section at the very Top of Granville Road Junction**, when you swing in off Sea street to be confronted by parked cars and a dead stop. This can cause problems for the Stagecoach buses too.
2. Coaches/cars parked all around the **informal roundabout by the boat** at Bay Hill which make it difficult for our Stagecoach buses to turn safely or sometimes even to turn at all.
3. **The dip in Sea Street**. It is always rather interesting when you drive down or up Sea Street at around 9am or 3pm. There is a solid line of parked cars on one side of the road. There is deadlock as a line of cars end up nose to nose with another line of cars which are trying to go in the opposite direction. Eventually, one side, gives in and reverse all the way back, (quite a considerable distance on occasions) until they can pull in and get out of the way. It could be amusing if it wasn't interspersed with the children excitedly running to or escaping from school. A small stretch of road with parking restrictions should mean there is somewhere to reverse into or pull into, to let cars past and make this rather dangerous dance much easier.
4. **Junction Reach Road/Royston Gardens**. Cars parking right around the junction, making it very difficult to safely navigate out of the cul-de-sac.
5. **Bottom of Bay Hill** (Between carpark and the hairpin bend). On sunny bank holidays, when the carpark is full, cars are parked/abandoned such that you would never get the emergency services down to the beach and these are the days, when you unfortunately may need them.

I am sure you can think of several other spots too, but I am concerned if we make this application too large it won't get past the first hurdle. We must also appreciate that cars must park somewhere, which brings me back to my first point. There are too many cars....

The Parish Council are trying to be pragmatic and find a balance of something that we could achieve at an affordable cost. We will have to pay out of the village precept. Highways have quote "no money" and unfortunately, we are not just paying for a pot of yellow paint.

If we progress these under one Traffic Regulation Order the cost should be in the region of £5,500. If there are lots of objections it will have to go to the Joint Transportation Board and will incur significantly more costs. Please speak now – We will be posting pictures on our new Facebook page soon and we do want feedback. Schemes with active community

support are the successful ones. I would have liked to have included diagrams here but am fast running out of time. I am not sure how well they would have copied anyway. So please Look on our Web- and Facebook-page.

Normally Highways suggest a Public consultation. But in these troubled times, let us use email, social media and the good old phone call (leave a message on the answering machine – go on - be brave) at least to start with. Community support is key.

Cllr Rebecca Simcox



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