



Meopham Mercury

The Meopham Parish Council Newsletter March 2021

REMINDER THAT THE CENSUS DAY
IS COMING – SUNDAY 21ST MARCH

census 2021

Your help is needed with the census which gathers vital information to help plan services such as transport, education and healthcare.

For the first time the Census is 'digital first' which means that the questionnaire is online and paper questionnaires are only available to those who specifically request them.

You must complete the census by law

Look out for your invitation pack in the post. It will show you how to complete your census. Your answers will be protected by law and will be kept confidential.

For further information visit

www.census.gov.uk

Follow [@census2021](https://www.facebook.com/census2021) on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

If you need help completing the census, from now until 4th May, **Citizens Advice in North & West Kent** is the designated Census Support Centre for Gravesham Borough. To speak to a **Census Support Adviser, please call 0330 053 7333**.

The adviser can support local residents over the telephone in a number of ways:

- Answering specific questions people might have about the Census process or specific questions within the Census.
- Creating a new Census access code for someone who has lost

their ONS letter (these should be being received by every household in the coming days).

- Talking people through step-by-step completing the Census themselves online.
- Completing the Census on someone's behalf, by asking them the questions over the telephone and entering their answers into the online questionnaire. This process is completed live and no answers are recorded outside of the official ONS system.

SUPPORTING MEOPHAM, superneighbours

Meopham's volunteer support service is still available for anyone who needs help during lockdown with shopping, collecting prescriptions, collecting urgent supplies, helping contact other services, a regular friendly phone call or even walking the dog! You can contact the superneighbours team via our email: superneighbour@mail.meopham.org or telephone or text on 07908 155669.

SO YOU'VE HAD YOUR VACCINATION...

Many people in Kent have already had their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination and some have even had both doses. The roll out is now top priority for those who are over 50 years of age. You may well have some questions regarding your health once you have had your vaccination. The Government has issued a leaflet that many may find helpful to them. It can be accessed by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-what-to-expect-after-vaccination>

HOW TO BOOK A SYMPTOM FREE COVID TEST



Everyone without symptoms should get tested every 2 weeks, especially if they are leaving the house for a necessary reason, such as going to work or shopping for essentials. Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 have no symptoms, so get tested regularly to make sure you are not unknowingly spreading the virus.

You can book an appointment at any of the 22 sites across Kent. [COVID-19 Test Appointments Home \(healthit.org.uk\)](https://healthit.org.uk)

These sites are in addition to the regional and local testing sites for people who have symptoms. Symptom-free testing sites are being set up using funding from central government to support local councils and help reduce rates of COVID-19.

Further details regarding the Symptom Free COVID tests that are available can be found by following this link: [Symptom-free testing - Kent County Council](#)

KCC CONSULTATION ON THEIR DRAFT 5 YEAR PLAN FOR ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY IN KENT

Kent County Council are consulting on their draft five-year Road Safety Strategy for Kent and their 30-year vision. Their ambitious 'Vision Zero' aims for zero, or as close as possible, fatalities on Kent's roads each year by 2050. Visit <https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/visionzero/consultation> for details on the consultation and how to complete this. The consultation closes at 23:59 on **15 March 2021**

HEARING AID CLINIC IN MEOPHAM ON 9TH APRIL 2021



Hearing Aid Maintenance Clinic St John's Centre, Wrotham Road, Meopham, DA13 0AH

The next clinic will be held on Friday 9th April 2pm – 3pm. For more information or support please phone 01622 691151 or visit Hi Kent's website www.hikent.org.uk

PARKING AND TRAFFIC ISSUES

Speedwatch Update – we are hoping to hear from Kent Police at the end of March as to when we will be able to commence with Speedwatch in Meopham.



Following the installation of the new signs at Camer Parade in Meopham, please adhere to these and don't park on the double yellow lines. Parking on the double yellow lines is not only illegal, it also obstructs the view of drivers trying to exit the Parade.

REPORTING POTHoles TO KCC

Following the winter months, you might notice potholes appearing on the roads in Meopham. If you do, then please report to KCC Highways with as much detail as possible, including a photo if possible, and the approximate size and location of the pothole. Report at: - <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and->

[travel/report-a-problem](#) or tel: 03000 418181

Please keep a record of any fault reporting number that you are given for future reference.

NEW NOTICEBOARDS IN THE PARISH

We have purchased a new 3 bay noticeboard for Judson's Pavilion. We are currently awaiting delivery of this, which is due at the end of March. We are now looking into a new noticeboard for Camer Parade and are currently looking at designs.

Don't forget that if you wish to display a notice, please contact the Clerk for a noticeboard number to display your A5 poster. Please ensure you display notices in the correct public section on all the noticeboards. Commercial notices are not permitted.

JUDSON'S RECREATION GROUND

Councillors approved funding and a contractor to replace the wetpour safety surfacing at the fenced-in playground area. The climbing net on the climbing frame is also to be replaced along with a new flat swing. Work is due to commence in April.

We are also currently looking at designs for replacement trim trail equipment which had to be removed due to the equipment reaching the end of its life span. We are limited by the space available for this but once we have researched further into designs, we will consult Meopham residents on this. Look out for further information on this on our website, facebook and twitter pages in the coming weeks.

FLY-TIPPING

We have received an update from Gravesham Borough Council on a fly-tipping offence which occurred in Camer Park Road on the 17th February. During the day a tipper deposited a large amount of UPVC door and window frames in a farmer's field to the west of Camer Park Road. Fortunately, this incident was witnessed and a vehicle registration

obtained. GBC are currently in the process of an investigation into this offence and have identified the company the vehicle belonged to. It transpires that the offender for the fly-tip was a former employee who has since been sacked. They were shocked by the incident and have since attended the location and removed all the waste. GBC will be prosecuting the offender.

You can report fly-tipping to Gravesham Borough Council via their online form at <https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/home/street-care-and-cleaning/fly-tipping/report-fly-tipping>

If you see fly-tipping on the highway, please report to KCC Highways as an emergency issue on 03000 41 91 91.

FOOTPATH OFFICER WANTED IN MEOPHAM

Meopham and District Footpaths Group are still looking for a volunteer to fill their vacancy. If you are interested please contact: John Macknish 01474 361437 Email: johnmacknish@blueyonder.co.uk or Email: Ken Dare at kenmolly@outlook.com. For further information on what is involved in this role please visit <https://www.meopham.org/news/vacancy-footpaths-officer-meopham-district-footpaths-group>

BUDGET INFORMATION

The Parish Council agreed to set the parish precept at £119,067.00 for 2021-22. This will cost local tax payers £34.94 per year for the average band D property which is an increase of £3.98 per year compared with 2020-21. Meopham is still considerably below the national band D average for parish councils, which in 2020-21 was £69.89 per annum.



As always, the Parish Council is mindful

of the financial resources required for its community facilities such as the Judson's recreation ground, play area and car park, Judson's Pavilion, its village green open spaces, the public toilets, allotment grounds, trees plus various pieces of street furniture around the parish. With grant funding increasingly difficult to acquire in the current climate, the parish council is having to budget carefully and use some of its reserves for repair work. For example, this year we are using part of the play area 'sinking fund' for the replacement of the wetpour in the play area which has seriously deteriorated.

The Parish Council is also having to look at taking back ownership of the streetlights in the parish from Gravesham Borough Council after enjoying a maintenance agreement with them since 1980 as GBC have now given notice to terminate all such agreements. It is hoped that once brought up to an adoptable standard, KCC will take on the maintenance and adoption of certain streetlights in the parish. Others will have to be maintained by the Parish Council in the future if they are to remain. With this in mind the Parish Council has had to increase the precept to fund the future maintenance costs involved here to start building up its resources in preparation for the handover of certain streetlights.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW COUNCILLOR

We would like to welcome Cllr Chris Dalby who joined Meopham Parish Council last month, representing the Meopham Green Ward to the Council.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

This year, the Annual Parish Meeting will take a very different format as we will be holding it virtually. The meeting will be shorter than usual as we will not be including speakers but members of the public are very welcome to attend and ask questions. If you have any questions, we would appreciate it if you could email them to the clerk in advance at

clerk@meopham.org. We will be producing an annual report this year. Details of the agenda including the time and zoom link will be notified in mid-April.

YOUR PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Hook Green & Nurstead Ward

Sue Gofton, Graham Green, Jo McTavish and John Ogden (Vice Chairman)

Camer & Meopham Green Ward

Tony Bourke, Sheila Buchanan (Chairman), Barbara Wade, Chris Dalby

Culverstone & Harvel Ward

Max Bramer, Dawn Bramer, Pat Luxford and Andy Rose

Parish Office Staff

Sarah Egglesden (Clerk)
Nicki Jerram and Jo Barker (Clerical Assistants)

WAYS TO CONTACT US

Due to the covid-19 we are only able to produce an online version of the Meopham Mercury. Please tell your friends and neighbours about this being available on the parish council website and social media pages, along with lots of other useful local information

The Parish office remains closed to members of the public and staff are working from home. We can be contacted via the following methods: -

- E-mail at clerk@meopham.org
- Leave a message on our answerphone – 01474 813779
- www.meopham.org
- Facebook 'Meopham Parish Council'
- Twitter @meophamPC

2021 Virtual Meeting Dates

23 rd March 21	Planning Applications Committee
30 th March 21	Full Council
20 th April 21	Planning Applications Committee
27 th April 21	Annual Parish Meeting