

CUXTON NOTICEBOARD



The Newsletter by and for the people of Cuxton

October 2021

Kentish Wine Vault: Planning Application

Medway Planning department have agreed to extend the online consultation period on this planning application until the end of September. They will also accept your views emailed to planning.representations@medway.gov.uk until the end of October **but you must include the planning application reference MC/21/2328** in the subject line of your email or letter. You can also write to Planning Department (Planning Representation), Medway Council, Gunn Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR. The Parish Council have given the application detailed consideration and consulted with interested parties such as North Kent Downs and the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England. Residents have also taken the time to contact the Parish Council about their concerns relating to this project.

Although it is hard to find fault with the design of the project, the Parish Council consider the location in the Green Belt and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty accessed from Bush Road is totally inappropriate and may well set a precedent for other large developments on land residents thought protected. The ambition of the vineyard company to have 70,000 visitors a year, all of whom will travel down Bush Road to access the site, is a huge concern. Bush Road is already subject to traffic congestion at peak times and safety concerns at the busy junction with the A228. This level of additional traffic will undoubtedly increase the problems of traffic flow in and out of the village. The addition of a restaurant on site will impact on the volume of traffic travelling through the village late at night as the restaurant will be open until 11.30pm.

The Parish Council have agreed its formal response to the planning application and a copy can be found on the Parish Council website. Copies will also be available in the library and village noticeboards. Whatever your view, please make time to contribute to the consultation on this planning application.

Lower Thames Crossing Consultation

On the advice of the Gravesham Councillor, Tony Rice, the parish council have requested a meeting with KCC Highways department to discuss the traffic projection for Cobhambury, Warren and Bush Roads once the proposed Lower Thames Crossing is open. Unfortunately, our villages fall outside the LTC project remit, so we have been advised to pursue our concerns over projected traffic flow increase through KCC using the data received from the LTC consultation.

The projected 40% increase in traffic on our minor roads is concerning and now is the time to press KCC on the measures they plan to take to mitigate against this increase. A meeting has been arranged with KCC for the 21 September so hopefully we will soon be better informed about any planned infrastructure changes or improvements.

The parish council hope members of Cobham and Luddesdown parish councils will engage in the meeting too as all 3 villages will be impacted by this increase and working together may more effectively place pressure on KCC for infrastructure improvement. **Cllr Kay Hutchfield**

Calling all Cuxton Gardeners!



Would you be prepared to open all or part of your garden to other residents of Cuxton in July next year? A small group of us are thinking of doing just that in July 2022. We are currently seeking advice from other people and organisations who have successfully run open garden events and on the cost of event insurance. In the meantime, we are hoping other Cuxton gardeners will join us. If you are interested in opening your gardens or volunteering to help someone who is, please contact Leigh Powis: email leighpowis@gmail.com. Thank you.

Cuxton Open Gardens Group



Maintenance of the Recreation Ground Football Pitch

Given recent comments on Facebook suggesting that the recreation ground football pitch is not regularly maintained, I would respectfully suggest that concerned residents go down and have a look for themselves as the pitch is in the best condition it has been in for years. Cuxton 91 Football Club secured a £28,000 grant from the Football Foundation for a 5 year pitch improvement scheme and the football club itself will add £12-15,000 over the next 5 years. This is in addition to 10 hours a week volunteers already regularly spend on routine ground maintenance. The grant is already showing positive results after work to improve the drainage of the recreation ground pitch was undertaken last year.

This year the Parish Council agreed to grant £290 towards the cost of some artificial grass to be laid in front of the dugouts to reduce wear on the natural surface. This will also improve the appearance of this area adjacent to the pitch.

Clir Kay Hutchfield

Renovation of Recreation Ground Courts

86 residents responded to the village survey on the proposed renovation of the courts in the recreation ground, 84 of whom were supportive of the proposal. As a result of the positive survey a project manager has been appointed to ensure that the right surface for the courts is selected and a reputable contractor appointed to undertake the work. The courts will need to be of a high standard so they can generate an income to cover maintenance and improvement costs. In that way the maintenance of the courts is not dependant on income from the parish precept but from those who are the primary users. There will also be a booking system that ensures that there is sufficient parking capacity in the recreation ground to accommodate all those using the courts and/or the recreation ground at any one time.

Clir Kay Hutchfield

Cancellation of Cuxton Fireworks Display

Following the most recent meeting of The Wheel of Cuxton, we sadly must advise that we have had to cancel the 2021 Cuxton Firework Display. This is not a decision that has been taken lightly, but following consultation with Cuxton Parish Council, and the Parish Clerk seeking advice from Medway Council, we have been informed that the layout of



the Recreation Ground, with only 1 entrance and exit, means that we cannot comply with current Government Guidance for Public Events. The income from the past year's firework display is used to fund the following year, therefore it is not financially viable to stage the event and ensure the security of future displays if we are unable to have a full capacity crowd.

This will be only the 2nd time in 50 years that Cuxton will not have an organised Fireworks display. The Wheel of Cuxton would like to thank the village for the support they have given for these previous events and especially to the volunteers who are not a formal part of The Wheel of Cuxton but turn up year on year to provide their help to stage the event for our village. It takes more than 30 people to put this event together. To all our helpers and supporters—enjoy another ‘year off’ and we look forward to seeing you next year, all being well. The date for your diaries will be Saturday 5th November 2022.



Father Christmas

Father Christmas will make his annual visit to Cuxton however, we will monitor government guidance to see if we are able to have our usual Present Delivery Service, or if it will be a drive past as proposed last year (which unfortunately had to be cancelled at the last minute). However, the date for your diaries will be Sunday 19th December—we will advise nearer the time how the day will work. Once again thank you for your continued support.

Wheel of Cuxton

Pavilion Re-development

Work with the Football Foundation grant application is progressing. The Parish Council has employed a project manager to complete the next stage of the application which is the financial feasibility report and tendering process. The project manager appointed has successfully worked with Meopham Parish Council on a similar project and will ensure that the tendering process is correctly undertaken and identify what needs to be in place to ensure the project is sustainable in the long term.

A228/Bush Road Junction

On 14th September the Chair of Cuxton Parish Council was invited to a virtual meeting with Ward Councilor, Matt Fearn, and Michael Edwards, Head of Transport and Parking at Medway Council, to discuss the plans for the A228/Bush Road Junction. At the meeting it was clear that permanent traffic lights are not seen by Medway as a viable option because of the severe traffic queues that developed on the A228 during the various trials. The limited use of the pedestrian lights to help traffic exiting Bush Road is likely to be the only option recommended for the junction. This is only a partial solution that not all residents support.

Another concern is what will happen to the S106 money given for the junction if traffic lights are not an option. It would be negligent of the Medway Council to allow this money to be lost to the village and returned to Redrow without a resolution to the problem. If you have any suggestion on how this money should be spent on traffic issues at the junction or in the village, please send your ideas to the clerk at clerk@cuxtonpc.org.uk.

Cllr Kay Hutchfield

Traffic issues in Bush Road

The Parish Council has set up a Traffic Management Working Group, which will include consideration for a Speed Watch campaign. Look out for an update on this group in the next newsletter.

PCSO Surgeries

Come along to our monthly meetings with our PCSO at The Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Bush Road, Cuxton. 7pm-8pm 6th October and 10th November 2021.

A Message from The Academy of Cuxton Schools

Dear Cuxton Community

I hope you had a wonderful summer and were able to embrace some kind of normality over recent weeks.



I am writing to update you on various developments that have taken place at The Academy of Cuxton Schools since writing to you back in the Spring. As you are aware, I have been working with the Parish Council to try and relieve some of the traffic congestion within the village. We sought the views of the parents, whose children attend the school, to see which initiatives they felt would have a positive impact on congestion. Many parents requested a Crossing Patrol Officer and felt this would provide additional support. As a result, I submitted an application for a Crossing Patrol Officer and the council came out and conducted a traffic survey during both the morning and afternoon school runs. Sadly, it was felt that the traffic observed wasn't significant enough to grant funding for a Crossing Patrol Officer in the village. Medway have said to contact them if we feel that the situation has worsened so we will continue to monitor. We also trialled the use of the recreational ground as additional parking. Unfortunately, this was rarely utilised due to the timings in which it could be open to ensure that our pupils could walk up the driveway safely. As a school, we will continue to promote parents parking further away to relieve the traffic on Bush Road and also encourage walking where possible. I would like to thank the White Hart and the Social Club in continuing to allow our parents to use their facilities to park. Recently, we have also signed up to the KM 'Walk on Wednesday' initiative to raise the profile of walking to school with our pupils; we are hoping that this will have a positive impact over the week and not just on the Wednesday!

At this time of year, we are preparing for new admission tours for prospective EYFS pupils. You will see us advertising our wonderful school on various websites and social media pages across Medway. This year we have had 59 new pupils start with us, which is a fantastic achievement considering it is a low birth rate year. I want to take this opportunity to provide some clarity around our admission process, as a couple of parents who live within the village raised queries (which I am sure you also have as Cuxton residents). When I first started teaching at Cuxton (many years ago now!) we were a 1 and half form entry school (45 pupils per year) due to there not being enough children within the village to fill 2 classes; this resulted in mixed aged classes, which many parents disliked. Although we taught successfully with children from two year groups in one class, it was more of a challenge. The Curriculum now stipulates that we should go deeper within a year group's content, rather than going up to the next year group's skills and knowledge; single aged year groups enable us to do that successfully. With various building work taking place within Strood, Halling and Snodland it was agreed, in conjunction with Medway Council, that we could increase our intake to 60. This enabled us to accommodate children in the new housing developments but also move to 2 single-aged classes per year group. When children apply to attend Cuxton, we have to use our admissions criteria to rank them in order of acceptance:

1. Children in public care/looked after children and previously looked after children
2. Attendance at the paired infant school (for Junior admission only)
3. Sibling
4. Medical, health and special access reasons
5. Children of teaching staff
6. Nearness of children's home.

The Local Authority then place the children across Medway into schools using the ranking system to support them; we have no involvement in this process at all. I hope this clarifies some of the points raised around children travelling to Cuxton from outside of the village, as I know there are often questions around this

As a school, we are really keen to continue the fantastic work over recent months on working with our community. 'Community' is one of our school values and it has been very pleasing to hear from parents stating that they feel that the community feel is back in the school. Last academic year, we started careers talks for the children in KS2, with parents coming forward and sharing knowledge around their career choices. Many of our children have been inspired by the talks and now have a greater understanding of how the skills and knowledge they are being taught can have a positive impact on their later life. We are very keen to work with businesses in the village to roll this out further. If you own a business within the village and would be willing to talk to our children (whether it being in person or virtual) we would love to hear from you. Please do contact Mr Bilton, our Deputy Head, who will be able to talk you about this. We are also very happy to advertise businesses on our Facebook page to increase interest!

As the Government guidance now states that schools can have parents in schools, we are hoping to hold our annual Christmas and Summer Fêtes this year. These are fantastic events, which not only raise a huge amount of money but also bring our community together. If you would like to advertise or sell something at one of our fêtes we would love to hear from you. Mrs Searle, our Fundraising Lead, is also looking at raising the profile of our Parents Association again. If you have any spare time and would like to support us in the organisation of fundraising events, please do get in touch.

We are very much looking forward to continuing to work with our Cuxton community over the coming months, for the good of our children and also Cuxton itself!

Kindest regards,

Charlotte Aldham-Breary

Head Teacher

www.cuxtonschools.co.uk/

What's on in Cuxton

To advertise an event or group on the Cuxton Parish Facebook/Twitter or Instagram pages(such as the WI or Scouts/Guides) please contact the Assistant Clerk by emailing asstclerk@cuxtonpc.org.uk

White Hart Tel:01634 789969 www.whitehartcuxton.co.uk

Cuxton Social Club Tel: 01634 718068 **Golden River Chinese** Tel: 01634 296888. Collection service only (no deliveries at the moment due to pandemic staffing issues).

Cuxton Library

Cuxton Library is now back to normal opening hours:

Tuesday 9am to 1pm

Thursday & Friday 2pm to 6pm

Saturday 10am to 4pm (no lunch closure)

The public computers are available for library members for one hour sessions.

There is a charge of £3 per half hour for guest sessions

Customers are still recommended to wear facemasks and scan the NHS QR code when entering the building but this is not now a legal requirement.

Useful Contacts

Medway Council has a website that deals with A variety of problems including; Dogs, Fly-Tipping, Roads, Street Lighting etc.https://www.medway.gov.uk/site_search/results/?q=report+a+problem

Cuxton Tip: To book a slot go onto the Medway Council site and select a date and time. **NO booking, NO entry.** https://www.medway.gov.uk/directory_record/153/

Doctor out of hours: 111

Police: 101 for non urgent matters

Public Defibrillator: Box on the wall of the Social Club

Cuxton Parish Councillors

Chairman: Kay Hutchfield

chairman@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Vice-Chairman: Tracy Thorley

tracy@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Martin Burley

martin@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Natalie Jackson

natalie@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Elizabeth Maisey

buffy@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Julie Porter

julie@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Pat Reynolds

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Hilary Savage

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Simon White

simon@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Sarah Wilson

sarah@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Stuart Moore

stuart@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Ward Councilor: Matt Fearn: 07739 706432

matt.fearn@medway.gov.uk

Parish Clerk: June Nicholson 07483349613

clerk@cuxtonpc.org.uk

Assistant Clerk: Linda Elliott asstclerk@cuxtonpc.org.uk

The Parish Office: The Pavilion, Cuxton Recreation Ground, Bush Road, Cuxton, ME2 1EZ

www.cuxtonpc.org.uk www.facebook.com/CuxtonParishCouncil

Academy of Cuxton Schools

Autumn term dates 2021:

Term 1: Wed 01/09/2021 to Friday 22/10/21

Half Term: Monday 25/10/21 to Friday 29/10/21

Term 2: Monday 1/11/2021 to Friday 17/12/2021



*Cuxton Parish Council
Serving our community*