

CROWBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

To all Members of the **ENVIRONMENT** Committee (with copies to all other Members for information).

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT** Committee to be held at the Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough on Tuesday 26th January 2016 at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business:-



Town Clerk
20th January 2016

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Questions from members of the public (15 minutes maximum)

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **MINUTES**
 - 3.1. **Minutes – 24th November 2015**
 - 3.2. **Matters Outstanding (including reports on updates)**
4. **RAILWAY REPORT**

Report from John Coleman.
5. **HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT**
 - 5.1 **Strengthening Local Relationships – update from meeting 21st October**
 - 5.2 **Community Match Funding**
 - 5.2.1 **To review list of parking restrictions/yellow lines sites**
 - 5.2.2 **Request for traffic calming measures in North Beeches Road and East Beeches Road**
6. **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

Clean for the Queen – March 4th to 6th
7. **CROWBOROUGH'S NATURAL HABITATS**
 - 7.1 **To review Ranger's report of tasks completed against Management Plans and other work**
8. **FINANCE**
 - 8.1 **Management Account Reports to 30th November and 31st December 2015**
9. **URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING and/or INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

Report for Environment Committee meeting 26th January 2016

4. RAIL REPORT

Please see attached report from John Coleman.

5. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

5.1 Strengthening Local Relationships – update from meeting 21st October

Herne Road – The cemetery entrance kerbing had not been replaced when Herne Road was re-surfaced in 2015 causing surface water to flow into the cemetery; this is being investigated by ESCC maintenance team.

Aviemore Road – The blocked drain outside Robin Hill has been inspected and added to the jetting list.

Alice Bright Lane – The road surface was reported as breaking up. An inspection found nothing that required a repair but regular inspections will be undertaken.

Gully jetting in Crowborough – The work in Crowborough is scheduled to take place between the end of February and the beginning of April.

The next Strengthening Local Relationships meeting is scheduled for 20th April.

5.2 Community Match Funding

5.2.1 To review list of parking restrictions/yellow lines sites

At the last Strengthening Local Relationships meeting, the possibility of applying for Community Match Funding for the process of installing double yellow lines, was discussed. ESCC has provided a list of sites held for parking restrictions in the Crowborough area – please see attached information.

5.2.2 Request for traffic calming measures in North Beeches Road and East Beeches Road

Residents have requested a reduction in the speed limit from 30 mph to 20 mph along North Beeches Road and East Beeches Road and report:

- Speed issues of private cars and delivery vans has been highlighted between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. when children are going to school.
- Between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. when leaving school and when leaving evening classes between 9:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.
- Parked cars increase the danger.

Cllr Richard Stogdon and Cllr Sylvia Tidy have met with residents to review the issue. ESCC has undertaken an assessment and the area has not been identified as a priority for traffic calming. The issues with parking have been assessed and the site has been included on the list of requests in Crowborough for yellow lines.

6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Clean for the Queen – March 4th – 6th

Clean for The Queen is a campaign to clean up Britain in the year of The Queen's 90th birthday, which will be officially celebrated in June 2016.

March 4th to 6th is the period identified for this clean-up.

7. CROWBOROUGH'S NATURAL HABITATS

7.1 To review Ranger's report of tasks completed against Management Plans and other work

Please see attached report.

RAIL REPORT for the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

26th JANUARY 2016

MEETINGS ATTENDED

Uckfield and East Grinstead Lines Community Rail Partnership Stakeholders Meeting 12th January 2016

The work of 2015 was discussed and reviewed and the proposed Action Plan for 2016 was agreed.

Particular actions working with partners include:-

The promotion of accessing the countryside for walking/cycling (by train).

The promotion of travel to young people to encourage sustainable transport by station visits.

The provision of additional localised/personalised posters, onward travel maps and time-tables, &c., for notice boards.

The latest edition of the CRP's Line Guide is in the final stages of preparation and will be published in the spring.

More information on the current CRP's work can be found at their web-site and on Facebook.

Ukfield Railway Line Parishes Committee 13th January 2016

At the invitation Southern this meeting was held at Southern's Selhurst Depot. It followed a tour of that part of the works where the additional Turbostar diesel trains are being made ready for use on the Uckfield line. The Committee members found the visit interesting and worthwhile and were very grateful for the opportunity to see the work being carried out and for the information provided by the very knowledgeable Southern guides.

At the meeting Southern apologised for some poor service days again!

Currently the services remain variable but always overcrowded in the peak hours. The replacement bus services connecting Crowborough to Buxted and Uckfield during the present line closure were reportedly satisfactory.

East Sussex County Council replied to the Parishes Committee's request for action to overcome the parking problems along the roads around Eridge station and stated that it was not going to take any further action regarding the matter. It was agreed that the Committee would write to ESCC requesting bus shelters be provided near the station on the A26.

Uckfield station car park was reported as now being quite well used and seemed to have increased the number of free spaces in the nearby town car park.

Platform lengthening has now started at most of the line's stations. Edenbridge Town, Cowden and Buxted are all quite well advanced. The programme has been slightly delayed by cancellations of some engineering possessions due to poor weather conditions. The time lost should be made up by the end of the current line closure.

The overhaul and restoration of the additional trains is proceeding more or less on programme. The programme is difficult and complex, some of the work required cannot be carried out at Selhurst Depot and so the vehicles are moved out to other works for some tasks. The major overhauls of two of the units are nearing completion and are in progress on the others. When this work is finished they will then be moved again for body repairs. When finally completed the units will be commissioned and put into traffic after testing on the Uckfield line. The Committee was told that the units would be in service by 24th July 2016. Having seen the extent of the work required and learned of some of the problems that have arisen with this work it appears to have been and continue to be a real challenge for Southern, but one that the team are confident will be successful.

OTHER

The latest update of the progress of the GTR/Network Rail Joint Performance Plan makes unhappy and unsatisfactory reading. The latest period reported (ending 12th December 2015) shows performance even worse than the previous 4 weeks, and is well below that at the start of the plan, which commenced last February when things were very poor largely explained by problems at London Bridge. Whilst many of the causes of delays and cancellations are due to Network Rail infrastructure problems, GTR is however, directly responsible for the provision of adequate staffing being available to run the services and for train failures. It is of little consolation that the Uckfield Line services generally appear to have been less affected than others of Southern and Thameslink. Presumably the DfT will be discussing the future performance improvement requirements with the senior managements of Network Rail and GTR.

There has been no official news regarding the status of the South Coast Rail Study being produced for the DfT at the behest of the Chancellor. It has been heard that something might be released towards the end of February.

J N Coleman 18th January 2016

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ROAD NAME	TOWN	PROPOSAL	SCORE	RANK
Osborne Road/Crowborough Hill	Crowborough	DyIs at junction	39	7
Sybron Way/B2100 Rotherfield Road	Crowborough	DyIs at junction	39	7
Medway/Crowborough Hill	Crowborough	DyIs at junction	35	25
West Beeches/Beeches Road/North Beeches/East Beeches/Old Lane	Crowborough	DyIs at all junctions	31	54
Beacon Gardens/Fairview Lane/St Johns Road	Crowborough	DyIs at crossroads junction	29	88
St Johns Road/School Lane	Crowborough	DyIs at junction	29	88
Windsor Road/Windsor Place	Crowborough	DyIs on junction and possibly opposite	29	88
Huntingdon Road/Blackness Road	Crowborough	DyIs around junction	27	129
Whitehill Road/Cranbourne Gardens	Crowborough	Extend dyIs opposite and introduce around junction	27	129
Crowborough Hill,	Crowborough	Limited waiting outside of doctors surgery	27	129
Batchelors Crescent/ErIDGE Road (A26)	Crowborough	DyIs around junction	26	152
High Cross fields/ErIDGE Road (A26)	Crowborough	DyIs around junction	26	152
Victoria Road/Crowborough Hill	Crowborough	SyI alongside Embassy Press	25	163
Mill Lane/Kings Court	Crowborough	DyIs @ junction/access - extend approx 5m either side of the access	25	163
Medway/Rochester Way junction	Crowborough	DyIs at southern junction	23	177
Millwood Close/Millwood Lane	Crowborough	DyIs at junction	23	177
The Twitten/Southview Road	Crowborough	DyIs at junction	23	177
ErIDGE Drive/ErIDGE Gardens	Crowborough	DyIs on junction and opposite	23	177
Southridge Rise/Whitehill Road	Crowborough	Extend DyI into Whitehill	21	212
Park Road	Crowborough	DyIs at junction of Sussex View Close (Private)	19	288
Pine Grove	Crowborough	DyIs on western side	19	288
Victoria Road	Crowborough	SyIs with a 1 hour plug	17	254

Rangers Update for The Environment Committee 26th January 2016

Overview

This report covers the main management activities in relation to The Country Park, The Ghyll and Bluebell Wood.

1. The Ghyll

Jubilee Meadow

- 1.1. Invasive Russian Vine in hedgerow and raspberries within in the field margin by the play park have been cut back and next area for Field margin/woodland edge scalloping has been identified for management as per the management plan.
- 1.2. Cherry Laurel and rhododendron continues to be controlled on an ongoing basis as per the Management plan.

Woodland Path Management

- 1.3. Path drainage continues to be a problem in certain specific areas in very wet weather. To remedy this issue a supplier of local sandstone is now being sought in order to make improvements to the 'high usage' paths throughout the woods.

Gorse Management and selective tree thinning

- 1.4. Leggy Gorse and birch/oak regrowth continues to be managed as per the management plan. Small Glade creation and wider meadow grass edges in compartment 11 is also underway as per the plan.

Burdett Rd Entrance Area

- 1.5. A vehicle has damaged the Post and Rail fencing on Burdett Road. This is currently being repaired.
- 1.6. One of the large mature Oaks at entrance to Ghyll was damaged by storms. Tree has been reduced in size to protect pedestrians/vehicles and to hopefully save the tree.
- 1.7. Work continues to improve the area around the car park with more areas of the outgrown boundary hedge being cut back to encourage stronger regrowth in places to both hide the garden fencing and to provide more nesting/foraging opportunities for birds and insects. This has also enabled the ongoing extraction of large items of rubbish (concrete posts, buckets, plant pots etc.). The gradual creation of this area as a more open glade will continue over the next couple of years.

Heatherview

1.8. Water is permeating out of the Ghyll land at Heatherview and causing excessive surface water to flow across the road at the top of Medway. This appears to have been an annual issue for many years with ice causing a significant issue for the residents. Options are being explored for introducing drainage channels within the woodland at Heatherview. If successful this would be the most cost effective way to stop, or at least significantly reduce the problem. Work will commence in May once the ground is capable of taking a mini digger.

Old Fence removal

1.9. Work to remove the numerous old barbed wire and stock fences has commenced now that there is a regular volunteer to assist.

Pellings Shaw

1.10. The small piece of Ancient woodland between the two Beacon Academy sports fields has now been sold by ESCC to developers. This woodland contains Dormice and also forms part of the Ghyll's Dormouse habitat. This means that if it is developed, then the viability of the overall area to support Dormice would decrease. There is also a stream running along the northern border of the shaw. The stream feeds into the Ghyll stream, before it enters The Ghyll Nature Reserve. There is therefore a concern that any development works could also adversely affect the quality of the Ghyll stream and its ability to support high levels of biodiversity. WDC have been contacted to highlight and record these concerns. WDC are planning to survey the wider area later in 2016 as part of their overall strategy. They have agreed to ensure that their appointed surveyor meets with CTC as part of their survey programme.

2. The Country Park

Erosion

2.1. The previously reported bank erosion by the top bridge continues to be managed. Plans to control the erosion, and for taking the opportunity to landscape the area for an improved vista of the stream, are under development and will take into consideration how the area looks in the Spring, once the exceptionally wet weather has hopefully started to abate.

Bluebells

- 2.2. Work continues on opening up the undergrowth (Brambles and holly saplings) to expose more opportunities for users of the park to see the numerous Bluebells along the Tollwood Rd edge, and between the top bridge and the park entrance by Hilders Farm Close.

3. Bluebell Wood

- 3.1. All invasive plant species saplings (Laurel and Himalayan Honeysuckle) have been removed and Sycamore saplings are currently being thinned.
- 3.2. Another large storm damaged Oak limb (which hangs directly over the recycling station) is scheduled for removal.