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Your Littlebourne Councillors:

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Gail Hubbard (Parish Clerk)
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01227 721500 (LPC office)



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LPC NEWS July 2022

Littlebourne Parish Council Newsletter

Issue 45, July 2022

Welcome

Welcome to the Littlebourne Parish Council's quarterly newsletter. Please also remember to visit our website: www.littlebourne-parish-council.co.uk



www.facebook.com/littlebourne

Village Diary



Up and coming events in Littlebourne to look out for:

Saturday 2nd July
Littlebourne Open Gardens 2-5pm

Wednesday 6th July
Next LPC Meeting 7pm in the LWMH meeting room

Wednesday evenings
Rural Youth Van in the hall carpark 5.30-7.30pm
Free youth activities for 11-18 year olds



Millennium Award 2022

This year's award was won by Nikki Maxted who is working very hard to put new life into the village. She is constantly organising activities for the children – Halloween, Easter and Christmas. She together with her team run The Littlebourne Residents Facebook page and organised the Village calendar 2022. Any spare funds left after events are donated to local groups/charities. Huge congratulations to Nikki!!!

Contact Us

Littlebourne Parish Council Newsletter
Clerk@littlebournepc.org
01227 721500

www.littlebourne-parish-council.co.uk

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Bake off Winners.....



Adult – Ruth Sullivan



Age 11-18 – Isla Maxted



Under 11 – Ella Childs

Littlebourne celebrated the Queens Platinum Jubilee in style on Sunday 5th June on the recreation ground, the weather held off allowing all the plans to go ahead. There was a great turn out of villagers and everyone that came along seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves.

There were dance demonstrations from Shauna Olivia's dancers, a superb selection of cakes entered into the 'Littlebourne Bake Off', live music in the gazebo, cream teas served in the hall, family cricket, face painting in the youth shelter, a childrens corner with bouncy castles, games and Fun Train, various stalls along with hot food and ice creams.

A huge thanks to Nikki and her daughter Cllr Eloise Maxted and their team of volunteers for all their hard work to make this a memorable day for Littlebourne. With thanks to the LPC Community Fund for funding this event, thanks also to Canterbury City Council for a £70 grant received towards the event.



Littlebourne Open gardens

Plans are in place for the Opens Gardens around our village on Saturday 2nd July from 2-5pm, in aid of St Vincent's Church. We are delighted that a number of beautiful gardens of varying sizes and interest in and around the village are opening. The allotments will also be open that afternoon so you can wander through and admire the fruits of their labours. There will be refreshments available at the church and elsewhere. Tickets are £5 (children under 16 free), available to buy from the Church lynch gate on the day.

Chairmans Report from Annual Parish Meeting – May 2022

This is our first Annual Parish Meeting since 2019 because of Covid concerns. Normally we would hold it a little earlier in the year, but we have delayed it as much as possible to allow infection rates to drop for a safer community meeting. Despite the hardships of the last few years, it hasn't all been bad news. A lot of people in the village selflessly stepped up to help neighbours during the COVID lock down periods and this is reflected in the great Littlebourne tradition of

volunteering across its many many clubs and organisations.

Your parish council of volunteer councillors has functioned throughout - initially meeting by Zoom videoconferencing then, at great relief to our eyestrain, by cautious direct meetings. I am very pleased that after many years we now have a full parish council with the final two places recently filled by co-opted new councillors Louise Maxted and Andy Fraser. May 2023 will be your next democratic opportunity to vote for all your parish council members.

Since the last Annual Parish Meeting, Mike Gallagher has retired as the Littlebourne Parish Council chair, and I want to thank him for all his work on behalf of Littlebourne over the years of his tenure and also for his advice to me on taking the Chair. Sadly, many of you will know that Betty Jeffries, past chair of the council recently passed away. She will be remembered for many achievements amongst which are the fascinating historic booklets on Littlebourne she painstakingly researched and produced. If you haven't seen them, buy, beg or borrow copies. They are well worth a read.

We wish new villagers from the Laurels a very warm welcome to the village and hope you will join in with all the many community facilities that Littlebourne has to offer. I'm sure you will bring much to the community here. You are now Littlebourners!

I want to say a few words on the contentious subject of housing developments. Many of the longer-term residents either actively campaigned against the Laurels development or at least *wished* it had not been allowed. For those now in the Laurels, your right to live here is as great as for any of us and you are one of us. But our natural tendency to prefer the status quo - what we know and value - versus a huge national need for new housing is the tension affecting planning in all parts of our country. Most of you will be aware of the recent planning application by Gladmans to build over 100 new houses on the south side of the Hill with an access road onto the Hill. Your parish council polled you the village on your views for or against this and 96% of villagers were against the plan, wishing Littlebourne Parish Council to try and oppose it and as needed to spend your village tax for the defence.

A Parish Council Action group was established consisting of villagers Richard Andrew, Tim Bostock, Julian Petley, Councillor Mick Giles, Councillor Cate Reid, Parish Clerk Gail Hubbard and myself with support from Viv Spratt. A very detailed defence was formulated by this Action Group and submitted by the parish council to Canterbury City Council. In addition,

almost 200 further objections were submitted by individual village residents and organisations.

And the plans were subsequently refused by the planning authority last September citing many of our detailed objections almost word for word. I particularly recall the morning after a call by the Gazette for a photo to be published in that week's paper and the scramble to find at least a few people to make the point of village objection. Well, a few did indeed come out – actually more like over 100 villagers! I don't think the paper had ever seen such a response. I want to give special thanks to the Action Group members who put a lot of their time in and gave their expertise to the village - there are some extraordinary, able people around us in Littlebourne.

What's happened on this developer's plan since? Two key things: firstly, on the *good* side, over six months has passed without Gladman appealing the refusal which theoretically means now that any plan for that land to be developed would have to be by an entirely new application. But, on the concerning side, Gladman is not known for giving up easily especially after the big investment they made in constructing their initial application – so they may come back. Also, the pressure on Canterbury City Council to approve new developments has ratcheted up because they have fallen way short of housing targets set for Canterbury by central government. The City Council will now have to view new applications for development under the framework of initial presumed approval.

Your parish council believes that we are likely to face more such attempts to grow our village not least because of its many advantages: - school, churches, shop, bus service, surgery, and the many great community facilities and societies it has. We are seen rather simplistically as somewhere that a housing development could be easily 'bolted' on. So, in case of any larger scale, inappropriate plans coming up again, your Littlebourne Parish Council approved a small rise in the village precept so that we could fund professional help to support our village interests if it becomes necessary. But, realistically, and due to central government pressure, neither your Parish Council nor even the statutory local planning authority at Canterbury City Council can stop all development - even if that were the right thing to do. And, even if we could stop all development, many people might view this as self-serving when there is such a need for houses. It's stating the obvious perhaps but virtually every house in our village that we live in is on what was once open farmland and probably someone in the village wasn't happy about it. We may or may not wish it, but we cannot remain the same.

So, our real issue is how we can achieve and maintain the *best* village and parish area for existing and future residents. It is for this reason that Councillor Lee Castle will later talk on whether we should have a Neighbourhood Plan. This is a formal, regulated, and substantial piece of work resulting in an approved document to guide any responses to future development proposals (not just housing) in our parish. This would be an attempt to ensure we are part of the decisions on how our village should evolve. More on this later from Lee.

So, what else has been going on? The public toilet project spearheaded by our Cllr Melanie Moore has been approved, and, together with grants from Canterbury City Council, Littlebourne Parish Council and the kind promise of support of builders from Quinn Estates, means that this long-term wish will go ahead – we hope this year.

Littlebourne Parish Council has now received ownership of land at the top of the new Laurels estate. This area will be landscaped and planted by Jenner when the building work at the Laurels concludes and formally opened to the public. This is part of the agreed S106 process between the City Council, developers Moat House and the Littlebourne Parish Council. It is going to be planted as a green area with local and specialist trees to provide a pleasant park environment and maintained by Littlebourne Parish Council for everyone.



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