

EAST FARLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
YOUR EAST FARLEIGH LOCAL NEWS APRIL 2018

The **Annual Parish Meeting** is being held in the Old School Hall, Lower Road at 7.30 on 24th April. It is an evening when we share with everyone news about village activities and we finish the evening with a glass or two of wine and canapes. Please come along and join us.

So, what is your Parish Council responsible for? It is the first tier of local government and the local eye. East Farleigh Parish Council has a budget of circa £50,000, raised via your council tax, in the form of the precept. There are nine voluntary elected councillors meeting every first Tuesday of the month for a four-year term, with the current term ending in 2020. We monitor planning applications and comment where required; manage our maintenance contractors who cut publicly owned grass areas and do regular litter picking; organise Speedwatch patrols; monitor flood measures; report overgrown hedges and road repairs such as potholes; make sure footpaths are clear and many other things that crop up.

There is a huge amount of voluntary work which goes on in the village. Many of these can be heard from at the **Annual Parish Meeting**, but they include:

- The Fete Working Party who organise the lighting of the Christmas tree with proceeds from the Fete. The Fete this year will be on Saturday 23rd June and everyone is invited to help or come along for all the fun of the fair.
- Gardening club
- Brownies
- Farmers Market
- The Farleighs WI
- Speedwatch
- Many events in the Old School Hall – antique fairs, quizzes, parties and classes
- The Church: we particularly work together on the Christmas tree lighting and celebrating our war heroes in November. All are welcome to attend these events.
- The Farleighs Youth Football Club
- The School and Pre-School
- The Parish Council: my whole working life has been involved with the dairy industry. Early on as a herdsman looking after a herd of Friesians and later as an agriculture dairy consultant, I heard grumbles from many, that local farmers are shutting people out of their fields and preventing walkers from using them. It probably won't surprise you that I do have sympathy with the agriculture community when I see people walking their dogs over farmers' fields planted with crops and letting dogs wander freely and many not picking up after their dogs. I recently noticed walkers with dogs on a field sprayed with insecticide just hours before. Shouldn't we respect private property? While I am talking about dogs and owners not picking up their mess, please try to observe and report back to the Parish Council those that are not following the country code, especially in areas where children walk and play, as it can be a huge hygiene risk.

The Parish Council has invested in a defibrillator this year, which is situated at the Old School Hall on the side of the building leading to the church. We have recently taken control of the telephone box at the top of Gallants Lane to install a second one when we have the funds.

As a Parish Council, let's look back at our other achievements. We continue to lobby for low levels of development in East Farleigh but accept the effect houses in other villages have on traffic volumes. We are working with Kent Highways to try to slow traffic down. To that end, and with financial help from County Councillor Paulina Stockell, we have purchased a new Speed Indicator Device, which can be moved around and placed in

designated spots around the village. It will be in one place no longer than eight weeks, which will prevent complacency. As you receive this newsletter, and again with Paulina's help, we are having traffic speed and weight and volume surveys carried out in eight places around the village, so that we can ascertain the actual speeds that vehicles travel at, to take to highways as evidence for the need for calming measures. Along with all of this, we are endeavouring to enable a scheme for the bridge that will deter large vehicles and clearly mark viewing points, in the hope of preventing vehicles meeting on the bridge with the inevitable delays that follow.

It will be noticeable that we have removed some trees on the recreation field. This was required to allow the remaining trees to flourish. We also removed an enormous bramble growth that left a void which has now been planted with fifteen new trees, kindly donated by the village fete fund. While this work is being carried out, we have taken the opportunity to renew a worn-out fence between the allotments and the recreation field. How could we ever have known that, having cut the trees down in the only dry spell since Christmas, the heavens have opened ever since and prevented the final clearing up...

There are many people who regularly pick up litter in the village and my family do their share. Sometimes it can be very dangerous with the increasing traffic, so please take care if you attempt this yourself. A huge thank you to you all. I only wish that drivers of vehicles would have more consideration and not discard it in the first place. TAKE IT HOME. We continue to employ our village maintenance team who usually attend on Wednesdays and carry out a litter picking rota, mowing and spraying in the summer and general maintenance as and when required. Please let Sarah, the Parish Clerk, know if you notice a maintenance requirement.

I continue to wish we could keep our verges and front of properties tidy and trimmed. East Farleigh has some beautiful walls that in the past would have been maintained for all to admire. We find an increasing number covered with ivy or hedgerows with the inevitable result of narrowing the roads, making it more difficult for traffic to pass. It is particularly difficult when buses and the excessively large lorries try to get through. If anyone can help with any of this from a personal point of view I would be delighted.

We hope to run our garden competition again this year. Hadlow College's Broadview Garden Centre has supported this now for a number of years. If you are passing Hadlow, it's worth a visit, especially to the display garden that has free entry. This competition is aimed at trying to improve the overall tidiness and beauty as we drive through the village.

If you are a dog owner, please use the dog mess bins or the general litter bins to dispose of your dog's mess, as this will make walking around the village more pleasant.

We have been really lucky this year to welcome two new co-opted Councillors, and they are Jackie King and Brian Dorton which has taken us up to our full complement. A full list is available on our website <http://www.eastfarleighpc.kentparishes.gov.uk/>

I hope to see many of you on the 24th, but would like to thank Sarah, our Clerk for holding us all together and to thank all the Parish Councillors on your behalf for giving of their time to manage our village. A personal thanks to Peter Beasley my Vice-Chairman and all the councillors for their support and dedication.

Glyn Charlton
Chairman of the Parish Council