

# High Halstow TIMES

Home of the Heron  
*The Newsletter for High Halstow*



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September 2020

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## *Legal Action Update*

You will remember last month we had a response from Medway Council in answer to solicitors letter. We were not absolutely satisfied with the response although it did seem to indicate that signing the Grant Determination Agreement for the HIF would not mean that passing the Local Plan was a forgone conclusion.



We can now confirm the Grant determination agreement between Medway Council and Homes England was signed on the 28 July 2024.

Subsequently Medway Council has released some of documents they refused to release prior to the signing of the agreement.

One of those document contains a high Level Ecological Assessment of the route the new **Sharnal Street** railway line will take.

Although the report was only "high level" (i.e lacking in detail being based on a desk top study and a single "walk

over") the conclusion is particularly interesting and says;

*" The route passes through, and close to, a series of designated sites of international importance for over wintering and breeding birds. Construction work and additional train movements could have an adverse effect on bird breeding or the foraging value of parts of these sites. Bird surveys, as well as noise and air quality surveys will all need to be undertaken before these potentially adverse impacts can be assessed. If adverse effects are found to occur, there are limits to how these can be adequately mitigated, which should be seen as a potential risk to the Scheme as a whole.*

*Consultation with the Local Planning Authority and Natural England should therefore commence at the earliest convenience to address the following constraints relating to designated sites -*

- The western section of the scheme currently impacts directly on Ramsar and SSSI designated sites. Consultation with Natural England is required to determine the feasibility of this scheme and to explore alternative options.*
- Due to the proximity of the Site to the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA, it is also likely that the scheme will be subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) to assess the potential impacts on this European Protected Site as well as for the Ramsar designation.*
- Consultation will be required with Natural England for the entire scheme as it lays within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone for several SSSI's.*

In the light of the information now released we are keen to see all of the reports especially those initially requested and not yet in the public domain. Armed with this information we wrote to Homes England via our solicitors asking for the conditions of the agreement between themselves and Medway Council. Unlike Medway Council, Homes England have so far been quite open in their response and have confirmed the following:-

*The Grant Determination Agreement sets out the terms and conditions for Medway Council to receive grant funding for the proposed infrastructure, the scope of which is set out below:*

*Infrastructure Item 1 - Road A Relief Road linking the A289 west to the Hoo Peninsula. Capacity improvements at three junctions on the Hoo Peninsula that would service the new developments and link to the Relief Road. Improvements to the A289, including enhancements at three roundabouts to improve traffic capacity.*

*Infrastructure Item 2 - Rail A new railway Station (Sharnal Street Station); Improvements to the existing Grain railway line; A new Medway Chord and mainline connection; and Re- signalling of the existing line.*

*Infrastructure Item 3 - Environmental Improvements Strategic Environmental Management Scheme ("SEMS") Establishment of blue & green networks protecting landscape & ecology designations, providing active travel links, & maintaining settlement boundaries. 4 SEMS zones across the Hoo Peninsula will deliver: 10,000m of hedging (habitat, shelter & movement routes) 4,000 hedgerow trees 1,000 parkland trees 10 ha of native woodland/ community orchard 150ha of wetlands 365ha of nationally important habitat protected from residential/ recreational pressures and disturbance Interpretation facilities*

*Infrastructure Item 4 - Project Delivery Resource An internal project delivery resource to project management the delivery of Road, Rail and Environmental Improvements detailed above.*

As part of this Agreement, Medway Council must satisfy certain standard and scheme-specific conditions to ensure that the HIF funded infrastructure can be delivered before it is able to draw down any funding towards the infrastructure set out within the agreement. A number of these conditions relate to town planning, including the adoption of the local plan, as that is a key milestone amongst many in bringing forward the proposed infrastructure and the subsequent housing being unlocked by it.



a. A specific environmental assessment was not undertaken during the assessment of the scheme as matters of this nature are assessed in detail through the town planning system.

b. As part of its submission to the Housing Infrastructure Fund, Medway Council was asked to demonstrate support from local stakeholders, and to provide information relating to on- going engagement with the community through the local plan process. The former included letters of support from MPs, Highways England, South East Local Enterprise Partnership, RSPB and Network Rail. This was assessed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

c. Homes England will use Section 19 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 to grant financial assistance.

As we go to press we have again written to Homes England to ask to see further documentation.

George Crozer  
High Halstow Parish Chairman



### *Victory in Japan (VJ) Day*

High Halstow was proud to commemorate Victory in Japan day heralding the end of the 2nd world war on Saturday 14th August 2020, 75 years after 14th August 1945.

The Parish Council laid a wreath at the war memorial in St Margaret's Church at 11.00 am on behalf of the residents of High Halstow.

We especially remember the two commonwealth soldiers buried in our Church yard.

Charles Gabriel King.

service number 719121

Canadian Infantry 107th Battalion.

Died 30th April 1918.

Aged 29 years.

Husband of Minnie King of The Small Holding Sharnal Street High Halstow.

Inscription:- I.H.S. thy will be done.

and

Albert Alfred Izaby

Service number 2088793

Kings Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster)

6th Battalion.

Died 16th April 1941.

Age 34 years.

Son of mark and Emma Izaby of Gravesend.

Inscription:- If all the world we're ours we'd give it, yes, and more to see the face we loved come smiling through the door.



We will forever remember that they gave their lives for the world to live in peace. At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them.

### *High Halstow WI*

We met on the Recreation Ground on Wednesday 26th August. It was the first time we had been together since March. We each brought a chair and a drink, we evenly spaced out in a circle. It was good to chat and see each other again. It was just a lovely social occasion and the best we could do at present.

We plan to meet again next month (weather permitting) on the 16<sup>th</sup> September at 2pm. If you would like to join us please come along you will be made very welcome.

Who knows when things will be normal enough for us to have our usual monthly meetings but we are optimistic that we will be able to return sometime in the New Year.

Crystal Wakefield

President



### *Street Cleaners*

How nice it is to see Jack being helped out by his daughter and two granddaughters as he keeps our streets clean and tidy.

Angela Forward



## Living in interesting times

How many of us would have believed this time last year that life would be so different, so far this year most of us have faced challenges and changes to our everyday life that would have seemed like out of a story. Here in High Halstow we are blessed to live in a beautiful open village surrounded by an amazing variety of countryside. Open fields, woodlands, marshes and even a beach ! I am

sure like me your heart goes out to those who have had to endure this difficult crisis with small children in a high-rise block of flats, without the benefits and blessings we have enjoyed. But I also know that the response of so many of the members of our community to this situation has been admirable. People have volunteered to help others both in and outside our village, with the Road Reps, though wHoo Cares and many other groups. You have donated dozens of boxes of food to the Foodbank, and hygiene banks and other organisations that have reached out to people who are struggling. Our school has worked tirelessly to provide for our children's education and gone well beyond the call of duty to ensure that our children can return to school with confidence. It makes me very proud to live in such a community and want to thank you and encourage you in your good work.

But it has been a very difficult time for many, some have really struggled with dealing with the death of a loved one and unable to receive the comfort and support of family and friends in the way you would normally expect. Others have struggled with sickness, mental health issues, isolation and depression. Some are finding it increasingly difficult financially with the loss of work and income. I think the whole situation has caused many to really begin to rethink the way they live and their values. I have spoke to many who have seen a silver lining in the cloud by being able to spend time creatively with their children and partners. Being furloughed or working from home has for many given them hours more time, due to not travelling to work, and that has been a joy.

But where does the future lead ? Frankly we don't know, and that uncertainty can give many of us real anxiety and fear. As a church we want to support anyone who might need help in any way we can. We are praying for many in our village and you feel you would like to chat in confidence or would like us to pray for you, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We are open for services every Sunday at 10:30am. We are taking in turn to host a service, one week at St. Margaret's High Halstow and then the following week at All Saints Allhallows.

For September the dates are 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> High Halstow and 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> at Allhallows

We are set up to ensure your safety and all seating is socially distanced at 2 meters apart. Feel free to join us any time.

Rev Stephen Gwilt, 01634 250637 or [Stephengwilt2@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Stephengwilt2@hotmail.co.uk)



**The Play Park is now open for the enjoyment of our youngest residents. Please follow the rules and Keep Safe.**



## **Karen Watson**

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- Motivational Communication
- Diabetes
- Food Allergies and Intolerances
- Eat to Gain

**Pilates Classes -Memorial Hall 6.15pm Every Tuesday**

## **High Halstow Parish Council**



## **VIRTUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

HELD VIA

**ZOOM**

MEETING ID

**96458316487**

ON

**WEDNESDAY 9<sup>th</sup>  
SEPTEMBER,  
7.30 PM**

**THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE  
CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND.**

**PLEASE CONTACT THE PARISH  
COUNCIL FOR PASSWORD ENTRY AT:**

**[clerk@highhalstow-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@highhalstow-pc.gov.uk)**

## **Off to University?**

The High Halstow Relief in Need charity (Reg. No. 250996) has a limited number of small bursaries available to students going to University for the first time.

Students who started last year and were able to apply for a bursary may also apply.

The scheme is available only to students living in the parish of High Halstow at the time of application.

Closing date is Friday 25th September 2020 and applications received after that date will not be considered. In your letter of application please state your name, address, telephone number and email address, the universities you have applied for and the length of your course. A copy of your placement offer will be required before the bursary can be given. No appeal is available for unsuccessful applicants.

Please apply in writing to any of the Trustees, or to the Clerk:

Mrs Margot Sturt, 32 Willowbank Drive, High Halstow ME3 8TW

**PLEASE mark 'Bursary Application' on the front of the envelope.**

## *High Halstow Allotments*

### REMINDER

Allotment plots are all in use at the present time but if you have been considering working an allotment plot and would like to place your name on our waiting lists, please let the Parish Council know by contacting [Linda.Atkinson@HighHalstow-pc.gov.uk](mailto:Linda.Atkinson@HighHalstow-pc.gov.uk)

Linda can also be contacted on 07825 619 353.

Thank you.

**Cllr Linda Atkinson**

**High Halstow Parish Council**



## *HH Village Websites*

Please visit the Parish Council website for everything about our village. You can see the minutes of your Parish Council or look up local groups in the village, past copies of the High Halstow Times, and pictures of recent events. [www.highhalstow-pc.gov.uk](http://www.highhalstow-pc.gov.uk)

## *Macmillan Coffee Morning*

It is with sadness that due to the Covid situation it has been decided not to hold the Macmillan Coffee Morning in the Memorial Hall. This annual event has always been such a lovely fundraising day with over £1000 raised each year but the guidelines and restrictions on use of the hall make it impossible to hold such an event.

There are suggestions on the Macmillan website how you might be able to hold your own Coffee Morning either virtually or with social distance guidelines.



## *High Halstow Parish Council Monthly Surgeries*

Owing to the current situation, we apologise for the fact that the monthly Parish Council Surgeries will not take place at Kings Kitchen until further notice.

You can of course contact any of your parish councillors if you have an urgent problem. Their telephone numbers are contained in the High Halstow Times.

**Cllrs Chris Watson and Gary Jerreat**  
**High Halstow Parish Council**



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### *Old Village School Pictures*

Does anyone have photographs of the old village school that was opposite the Red Dog. Mrs Collins was the school teacher and lived at the school with her husband Bert and son Michael.

Michael is putting a booklet together about his childhood for his grandchildren but cannot find any photos of the school.

If anyone can help him could you please contact me on 250677 and I will make a copy and send it to him.

Very many thanks, Margaret Whitbread.



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## High Halstow Community Lottery

### Results

JULY game AUGUST draw £1,300 ME3 9DY £200 ME2 3LL £200

All proceeds only go to groups in High Halstow requiring funding for their projects.  
[www.highhalstowcl.uk](http://www.highhalstowcl.uk) for application form and how to enter. We have a licence with Medway Council and therefore everyone is welcome to play.

**Disclaimer** – this lottery has no association with High Halstow Parish Council and is administered by local volunteers.



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### *High Halstow Relief in Need*

The charity has existed in High Halstow for many years and is an amalgamation of smaller charities/private trusts, the oldest of which dates from 1716 and exists to help the residents of the Parish of High Halstow who are going through a time of need or hardship. This could include not only widows and widowers but also to help people of all ages and from all walks of life. Requests can also be made by organisations or groups in the Parish.

Requests for financial assistance can be made at any time of year, in writing, email or in person to any one of the Trustees. A resident can apply on behalf of someone else in the village—but their permission must be obtained first of all. All requests are dealt with in the strictest confidence. If you are not sure about a request and think it may be rejected, do not be afraid to speak to any of the Trustees listed below about it. These funds are there for villagers who need help.

Rev. Stephen Gwilt	The Rectory	01634 250637
Stuart Bailey	27 Cooling Road	07976 760 844
June Collins	6 Marsh Crescent	01634 250105
John Myatt	Decoy Hill Road	01634 256 185
Chris Peek	2 Willlowbank Drive	01634 252 604
Tamsin Stowers		
Natasha Turner	12 Marsh Crescent	
Office email	<a href="mailto:office.hhrin@gmail.com">office.hhrin@gmail.com</a>	

Dear HHT,

Village Volunteering event – 12th September  
Following another very successful event in August (despite the rain!) the Parish Council invites you to another Village Volunteering morning on Saturday 12th September from 9am.

We'll meet outside the Village Hall and look forward to seeing you there.

Bring some gloves and wear your old clothes. Litter pickers and hi-vis vests will be provided.

We will do whatever litter picking, tidying, pruning needs doing; this could also include some weeding, fence mending or whatever we find.

Let's all muck in and help to keep our village looking great.

Chris Peek, on behalf of the Parish Council.



### ***Your Parish Councillors***

George Crozer, Chair 01634 250286

e.mail: [George.crozer@highhalstow-pc.gov.uk](mailto:George.crozer@highhalstow-pc.gov.uk)

Christine Watson, Vice Chair 01634 256529

Linda Atkinson 07825 619353

Adrian Catchpole 07788 721226

Ray Collins 01634 250105

Gary Jerreat 07880 697657

Tim Munday 07730 477017

Marilyn Stone 07944 490903

Your councillors may also be contacted through the Parish Clerk:

Jenny Allen 01634 710086

### ***The Scarecrows' Parliament.***

It's that time of year. The scarecrows are all ready, with each one made – as always – using the utmost care and skill. So well made, in fact, that just last week they gathered themselves together for their scarecrow parliament! It's true. I was on my way home, sorry, a friend was on his way home from the Red Dog, when he heard them all debating and arguing out there in the field. He was shocked, of course, hadn't realised that they could talk, or that they had their own, secret scarecrow names for each other. Yes, this was all news to me, as well. Apparently, it had gotten dark by that time, and was a little bit chilly for August, although for obvious reasons, those scarecrows weren't going to be lighting any fires! But he could hear them well enough, having a heated discussion about how certain High Halstow cats have been using some of the scarecrows as scratch-posts – sometimes even as beds – I know, what a cheek!

As you may have already guessed, they were also there to decide on which of them was next in line for a one-year reign as scarecrow king and queen. As they were talking, it became very clear that they couldn't care less about which ones we villagers voted for! The poor old out-going couple, known amongst the scarecrows as King Baggy and Queen Old-Hat, just sat there quietly, looking rather the worse for wear and tear.

My friend said he couldn't hear everything that was said because of some late-night tractor noise along Christmas Lane; but the hand-stuffed assembly did keep referring to a certain Lord Rag and Lady Straw. Those two seemed to be the clear scarecrow favourites for this year's autumn coronation ceremony at our lovely old St Margaret's church.

Well, they seem to have made up their minds. But what are the identities, to us humans, of that popular scarecrow lord and lady? I suppose we'll just have to wait, and of course, I'll ask my friend to investigate further...

Meantime, village people, three cheers – and raise your glasses please – to our future King Rag and Queen Straw!

Jed Sheerin

Please feel free to send in any stories, poems or articles for publishing in the HHT.

Next edition October 2020; Contributions for October should be sent by 26th September to:

Carl Mitchell, 8 Marsh Crescent, High Halstow ME3 8TJ  
or e.mail to [editor@highhalstow.org.uk](mailto:editor@highhalstow.org.uk)