

Jubilee celebrations in the Parish!

Following an initiative started by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Speldhurst Parish Council offered grants to a number of organisations in the Parish to help celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. A special 'Community Songs of Praise' was held in All Saints' Church, Langton Green; in Ashurst, a party held on the sports field was very well attended and viewed by those who went as a great success; Speldhurst Guides, Langton Green School, Ashurst Place and Speldhurst Village all had events and the Langton Green



The Parish Council marked the occasion with a tree planting in Speldhurst by the Deputy Lieutenant of Kent, Peter Blackwell. He was ably assisted by Tilly Owen, daughter of Parish Councillor Crispin Owen. At a small ceremony, Peter Blackwell praised the Queen for her 60 years of service to the Country and wished all attending events a wonderful time.

A Diamond Jubilee Awards scheme for children at Langton Green and Speldhurst schools is taking place and a presentation will take place during the month of July. The awards will be presented to children to recognise work they have done as volunteers during the year.



Families Group held a Jubilee Party in the village hall where 125 people attended.

These events were, of course, only part of the many and varied street parties which took place throughout the parish.



New Councillors

An election took place in May for the two vacancies on the Council and both places were filled by Speldhurst residents. Joanna Horne and David Turner were duly welcomed to their first meeting on May 14 at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

Photo shows the current Parish Council – excluding Councillor Mrs Horne and Councillor Woodward who had prior engagements when the photograph was taken.



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www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk



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FOOTPATHS - a major problem

Everyone will have noticed that the long spell of dry weather earlier in the year has been followed by one of the wettest May and June on record. The result has been that nettles, weeds and brambles have got out of control. In the past, Kent Highway Services have maintained these footpaths but after extensive cuts were made to the Council's Countryside Access Service budget, work has been seriously reduced and despite the best endeavours of volunteers to keep these footpaths open, they cannot manage it on their own. WE ARE THEREFORE MAKING A POLITE REQUEST. For those residents who own a property which has a footpath running past it, we would ask you to take responsibility for keeping that section of the footpath clear. According to Kent County Council, there is an obligation upon landowners to do so and in this way, you will help us to keep your path



open, which will be to everyone's benefit. If you are aware of any problems but are unable to help, please get in touch with the Parish Clerk.

Local needs housing

Speldhurst Parish Council has been advised by English Rural Housing Association that they are postponing their involvement in the Speldhurst Local Needs Housing project. Due to recent changes in the funding requirements of their lenders, the Speldhurst scheme no longer complies with the financial parameters set by their board. They do not envisage the funding environment improving markedly during the lifetime of this government. The Parish Council will be having discussions with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in July about the future of the Local Needs Housing Scheme.

Broadband - an update

We are still expecting, with the help of Kent County Council funding, to see improvements to services for many Langton Green residents in 2013, but most effort by the Broadband Working Group is currently addressing the harder-to-reach rural parts of the Parish. In this respect, we were very pleased to see our application for possible DEFRA funding endorsed in March of this year. We are now putting together our final application for DEFRA funds, submission being due by the end of September. Though led by the Parish Council, the Working Group includes six residents of the Parish and this initiative now involves six neighbouring parishes and is being actively supported by TWBC and Sevenoaks District Council.

Traffic restrictions being introduced

Following a spate of accidents in recent years at the 'S' bend in Stone Cross, measures will shortly be put in place to slow traffic, not just on the bends, but also on the stretch from Langton Green to Ashurst where a 50mph speed limit is being introduced. All the surveys have been carried out, funding has been found – mostly coming via our Kent County Council Councillor's Member Fund, and installation should take place in the very near future. A restriction on Groombridge Hill is also being introduced – the Parish Council are just waiting for the signage to be put in place.



**Speldhurst
Parish Council**

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Speldhurst Parish Council

Lynn Jeffreys (Chairman)

Tony Hemming

Joanna Horne

Rosemary Hull

Ed Langridge

Rupert Milner

Crispin Owen

Trevor Parker

Chris Pendleton

Joy Podbury

Julia Soyke

David Turner

Chris Woodward

This newsletter will be available, as will all future issues, on the Parish Council web site.

All enquiries to the Parish Clerk;
Chris May on (01892) 862927 or at
clerk@speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk