



Speldhurst Parish Council

*Working for the whole community*

# NEWSLETTER

## Council matters

Councillors Jo Horne and David Turner, both from Speldhurst, resigned in September and October 2017 respectively – they have both been replaced by the co-option procedure as no election was called. The new Councillors are Richard Ellery from Speldhurst and Millie Woodliffe from Langton Green. We are delighted to welcome them on board.



## Information about your Parish Council

### Continuing our piece about what the Council does

Councillors are elected every four years, the next election is in May 2019. Speldhurst Parish Council has thirteen Councillors who form the Council and it is the Council, as a body, that makes the decisions. It is funded by the precept that forms a part of the Council Tax paid by every household. The Council is not legal unless it has a Chairman and every year a Chairman is elected, and his prime function is to manage Council meetings that are held on the first Monday of every month. He has no more authority than a Councillor except he has the casting vote. Speldhurst Parish Council is managed by committees and each committee has its own Chairman and rules, known as Terms of Reference. These committees each have their own responsibilities: Finance, Planning, Amenities, Highways, Governance and Air Traffic. The Council also has working groups, which are not constrained by so many rules but have a limited mandate. The council can delegate to a committee, a sub-committee or another authority but in practice most

delegation is to the Clerk. It must never delegate to an individual Councillor.

The administration is managed by the Clerk and in 2011 Speldhurst Parish Council had an office built adjacent to the Village Hall in Langton Green. Until then all office business was conducted from the Clerk's house, and this is still the case in the vast majority of rural parishes.

### GDPR

What is GDPR? It refers to the new General Data Protection Regulation procedures that look set to be law in May this year. It is a European Directive to combat data crime and it affects everybody. For us as a Council we now must review all data we hold, where it came from and who we share it with. Life is becoming complicated....

### Diary date

The next Open Meeting of the Parish Council will take place on St George's Day Monday 23rd April at Speldhurst Village Hall at 7.30pm. This year Borough Council Leader David Jukes has agreed to talk about developments in Tunbridge Wells. Please come along to meet your Councillors for a social drink and to hear about the work that the Council has been up to over the past year.



David Duke  
Borough Council Leader

## Speedwatch

Two Parish Plans have been produced in recent years, the first in 2010 and the second in 2016. Both had one thing in common – the main issue that residents were concerned about was traffic and speeding through the villages.

Over the years Parish Councillors have been carrying out Speedwatch at various locations throughout the parish with equipment purchased by the Parish Council. At every opportunity we ask for volunteers to come forward to help and yet we only have 6 non-councillor volunteers on our records.

Carrying out Speedwatch sessions is not a function of the Parish Council and we are looking for a person(s) to take the lead on Speedwatch, to be the co-ordinator with Speedwatch Kent Police and run sessions on its behalf. If you are interested in leading a team and would like more information contact the clerk. If you would like to volunteer to help on Speedwatch sessions please also contact the clerk.



## Highways

### 20MPH – an update

In Langton the 20mph limit will be at school opening and closing times and at the February meeting Councillors considered guidance from Highways that solar power would work in this environment. This recommendation has been accepted to speed up implementation and reduces costs.

In Speldhurst we have been advised that because of the official notification required involving changes in speed limits it is likely to be installed late spring/early summer.

We hope, when our next newsletter comes out in the summer, that we can say that it is working.

### Reporting Problems

Don't forget that you can report potholes online at [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk) (search for potholes) and many other forms of problems e.g. dead animals on the road; damaged bus shelters; drainage and flooding; damage to footpaths and pavements; damage to signs and empty salt bins at [www.kent.gov.uk/report](http://www.kent.gov.uk/report) or track a fault.

**Report  
ONLINE**

The easy way to report crime

- Go to [www.kent.police.uk/report](http://www.kent.police.uk/report)
- Report a crime, incident or non-injury collision in minutes
- Receive your confirmation email and reference number immediately

## Accidents

There have been several bad accidents in the parish recently. The Hare crossroads has seen a few and there have been serious accidents in Ashurst and Speldhurst. Please remember that the Parish Council keeps a record of the number of accidents in the parish so please keep us informed. We can lobby for road improvements where they are needed, but without the accident statistics we cannot mount a successful campaign.



FOR REGULAR UPDATES ON ALL OUR ACTIVITIES GO TO OUR WEB SITE  
[www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk)

### Speldhurst Parish Council

Neil Barrington-Johnson  
(Chairman)  
Harry Allen  
Richard Ellery  
Lynn Jeffreys

John Kerby  
Katrina Lyle  
George Mercieca  
Rupert Milner  
(Vice Chairman)

Trevor Parker  
Joy Podbury  
Judy Price  
Julia Soyke  
Millie Woodliffe

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

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