



Welcome to the first issue of *Communicate*, distributed to every home in Pluckley. Its purpose is to keep everybody informed about what the Parish Council is doing for you. This responds to the questionnaire that many filled in last year (see Parish Plan below), where one of your requests was that the Parish Council communicate better with the village. *Communicate* will be circulated quarterly. We hope you find it informative – but please let us know what you think.

Martin Newman (Chairman)

PARISH PLAN

The Parish Plan sets out a vision for the future of our village. In effect, it is a plan of action for the Parish Council and will contribute towards the village realising the ambitions you expressed in last year's questionnaire and the subsequent workshop. The entire Plan is based on your input and remains the property of the whole community.

The findings from last year have now been collated and the results have led to Working Groups being set up to tackle the following areas:

Parish Plan Area	Group Leader
Housing and Development	Parish Council
Leisure and Services	Janet Gwillim
Village Hall	Mike Whatman
Traffic	Jackie Allen

An action plan has been drawn up, covering the issues you identified in each of these areas, and this has been pulled into the Parish Plan, which is now being checked by Ashford Borough Council. We expect it to be signed off and presented to the village in December. You will all receive a copy through your doors. And that is just the beginning...

Some of the aims you suggested, and the actions proposed, can be achieved simply and quickly e.g. to publicise the Parish Council's activities better within the village. Others, such as improving the Village Hall, or tackling the speed of traffic through the village, involve other parties, require funding, and will take longer. The action plan spells out: who else needs to be involved in each issue; the level of funding required; the likely timescale; and who is responsible. In most cases it is the Working Groups who will drive the initiatives. So, if you wish to be involved in a particular issue, please get in touch with the leader of the relevant Working Group. All their contact details are included on the back of this newsletter. In practice, some of the issues can be resolved in different ways and we will be holding further workshops or pop-ins for you to view possible solutions, offer suggestions and decide which solutions you prefer.

Underpinning many of these issues will be our Parish Design Statement, which has worked well for six years and has already been formally adopted by Ashford Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. So, the Design Statement now becomes a key part of the Parish Plan.

The Plan not only belongs to the village, but will be dependent upon the village for success. Many of the issues will require your suggestions, advice, and input as volunteers over the coming months. It is an ambitious programme but we are confident that together we can deliver it.

CORE STRATEGY – TENTERDEN AND RURAL SITES

The village was much exercised last year over our inclusion in the list of Tier 3 villages to receive allocated housing development. In the event, the strength of feeling in the village prevailed and Ashford Borough Council (ABC) removed us from the list. The current position is that ABC is to consider further changes to the document in November. We understand these do not affect Pluckley.

The remaining timetable is likely to be:

- A further public consultation, probably in December/January
- ABC will then re-consider and approve the document to be sent to the Secretary of State
- Examination by the appointed Inspector, who may invite further consultation
- Final adoption early Summer 2010

So, assuming the Core Strategy remains unchanged, the only housing development in Pluckley between now and 2021 will be small-scale (i.e. less than 5 units) and dispersed. This is what the majority of the village said it wants. The only variation will be Exception Sites, for Local Needs providing housing for local people or managed housing for elderly residents (see below).

...AND THE BRICKWORKS?

The Brickworks site remains a B2 site. A variety of commercial activity could be allowed though ABC planners have made it clear that they will cast a critical eye over any proposal that comes forward. They will be mindful of the problem of traffic at the site, and activity would be limited to the existing building. The planners have confirmed they do not believe the site is suitable for housing. Nor do they envisage a car park on the site.

LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING

Pluckley Parish Council remains committed to finding a site for 6-10 Local Needs homes. We have recently been reviewing all possible locations in and around the village and are drawing up a shortlist of possibilities to discuss with ABC.

When we have identified with ABC where any homes might go, and it could potentially be more than one site, then plans will be drawn up and presented to the village for feedback, before any decisions are taken.

MANAGED HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY

It may be the case that some elderly residents are beginning to find their existing home is getting hard to manage, and yet they wish to remain in the village. A managed housing scheme, with a resident warden, needs about thirty units to be viable – probably a mix of leasehold and rented. It is unlikely that Pluckley

alone could generate this need. We have, therefore, joined a cluster of villages formed by ABC (Egerton, Smarden, Little Chart, Charing, Biddenden and High Halden are the others) to see whether a solution can be found. Chris Housman is leading this initiative, which is considering possible locations, and establishing which developer might best provide such a facility. It is likely that we will be undertaking a survey in Pluckley to see how many people may be interested in such accommodation but, in the meantime, if you know of anyone or have any views to express, please contact Chris (see back page).

OUR WEBSITE

As part of the effort to improve our communication with the village, we are overhauling the website www.pluckley.net. The aim is to provide an attractive site that is easy to use – both for visitors to the village and for those of us who are lucky enough to live here.

The new-look site should be launched shortly. After that, it will continue to develop as further information and links are added. The creative genius behind it is Jeff Moody, who, with Tim Maddrell, will maintain the site.

FARMERS' MARKET

One of the suggestions made in the Parish Plan is that Pluckley should have a Farmers' Market. The viability of this is being explored by the Leisure and Services Working Group (see Parish Plan above) but, in the meantime, if you are interested in local produce, then put Saturday 5th December in your diaries. St Nicholas' Church will be having a home produce stall in the church from 10am until noon that day, with the proceeds raised going towards the St Nicholas Organ and Music Fund.

DID YOU KNOW...

...how valuable your old papers and cardboard, shoes and your bottles are to the village? All of the papers and cardboard placed in the blue Smurfit skip in the lay-by opposite the Thorne Estate contribute towards one of Pluckley's charities – Riding for the Disabled. Linda Goericke, who organises the collections from the skip tells us that more than £3,000 was raised in the past twelve months from this skip. All kinds of paper, newspapers, cardboard, telephone directories, and packaging are welcomed – but please squash them down, so that we can fit more in!

The shoe skip at the Village Hall generates money for the Samaritans, while the bottle banks, newspaper bin and a can skip, also at the Village Hall, generate funds too – to the tune of £3,313.56 last year – that come back directly to the Parish Council and help keep our rates down! *(Remember that this isn't a general rubbish dumping area so please leave nothing else here.)*

STOP PRESS! CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS

Pluckley's Christmas tree will be arriving at the beginning of December. The Black Horse has again kindly agreed to supply the electricity. To celebrate the turning on of the lights, there will be carols and mince pies around the tree at 5pm on Friday 4th December. The school choir will be adding its voices. All villagers are welcome to come along and join in!

YOUR PARISH COUNCIL

With several new councillors, following the election held in June, it seemed like a good idea to put some faces to the names. So, here is the full Parish Council, with contact details.



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Clerk

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The Parish Council meets in Pluckley Village Hall on the third Monday of each month and there is a Council Surgery also in the Village Hall on the last Saturday of each month (unless otherwise announced).