

### **News Letter Contents / Council committees**

Chair's Report, Current Council business/projects (including finance, open spaces etc.), Parish Hall, Key Contact Details, Charing Library, Charing Arts, Neighbourhood Watch, Notice board

#### **Chair's Report**

Reflecting on the last few months things have been relatively quiet, but we are still suffering from anti-social behaviour both in Charing and Charing Heath and I suspect that during the summer break there may well have been more instances of mindless and thoughtless incidents. We will try to identify the culprits and pass the information onto our community police contact.

Charing village has seen a constant number of vehicles turning right out of Station Road daily, not just cars but trucks as well and we are actively seeking an alternative with KCC to the traffic signs which are constantly being ignored. The implementation of the building process for the new developments in Charing are still being held up by the "Stodmarsh Issues" and Natural England's criteria for mitigation of run off contamination to the Stour, ABC are actively looking for solutions for themselves with active input from developers.

Charing Heath has had its own issues with antisocial behaviour on the football field with graffiti being sprayed over the changing rooms again. Also there have been breaches of planning conditions for three sites within Charing Heath and one outright refusal. The PC is waiting to see whether ABC follows up on these sites with firm actions.

ABC have just started a review of the Borough Plan that will commence the period from 2030-2040 and as a result have a call for sites which will be reviewed over the coming months to see which may be suitable for increasing the housing stock going forward into the next decade. You can make your thoughts known about the proposals on ABC's portal:

[haveyoursay.ashford.gov.uk/lp-explained-events](http://haveyoursay.ashford.gov.uk/lp-explained-events)

Sadly, the Save Our Heathlands community group have had to withdraw from challenging Maidstone Borough Council over the plan for 5000 houses through lack of funds to fight their case.

Some good news - Charing will find out if we have won an award in The Village in Bloom competition which will be announced on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September and I would like to thank Dawne, Jo and the gardening society for their input.

Finally, the Parish Council will hold its first meeting in Charing Heath and Lenham Heath village hall on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September @ 7.30 pm. If you have anything you wish to discuss with The PC there will be ample opportunity to do so.

**Chris Prinn**

**Chair of Charing Parish Council**

## **Snapshot of current and ongoing Council Business and Community Projects**

1. Finance. 2. Cemetery 3. Open Spaces 4. Communications 5. Charing Station 6. Highways 7. Website

.....

### **Finance Report**

We are pleased to report that the CCTV system is up and running, we hope that the cost will bear fruit and help reduce the near £1000 per month that vandalism and anti social behaviour costs the Parish Council.

The new government are determined to build the houses they say are required to meet the countries housing needs, Ashford have had their target for development reduced, but the target still remains, we are prepared for the fight and will do all we can to maintain the Parish as a beautiful and pleasant place to live.

There are fears that cut backs from central government to borough council funding will mean services being withdrawn and we will look to maintain the services that are required to keep Charing Parish as we know it, there may be the case that the Parish Council has to step in and fund the services locally. We hope to have more details after the Autumn Statement has been delivered and ABC have considered the outcomes.

David Bennett

Chair, Finance Committee

.....

### **Cemetery**

Continuous improvement of the cemetery is an ongoing process. So far this year we have prepared the ashes internment area ready for a yew tree hedge to be planted later in the year, the railings along School Road have been re painted and tree work has been undertaken around the boundary.

Some policy changes from the cemetery committee will see some changes to improve our environmental footprint and our health & safety requirements.

Plots are available in a separate area within the cemetery for the internment of ashes. For further details please email or call the clerk on 713599 or [cpclerk@charingkent.org](mailto:cpclerk@charingkent.org)

.....

### **Open Spaces**

Our open spaces (Clewards Meadow, picnic area next to A20, Piquets play area and adjacent green space, Charing Heath recreation ground, Westwell Leacon recreation ground) are wonderful assets for the village. Please can we ask all dog walkers to:

- a. Clean up after their dogs and place waste in the appropriate bins around the village.
- b. Be in control of their pets for the safety of other members of the public.

All recreational users please maintain respect for:

- a. The environment.
- b. Noise pollution.
- c. Neighbours and neighbouring properties.

## Communications

Over the course of 2024 we have resumed work on communications to try to ensure that the Parish Council connects more effectively with you – the people who live in the village. This isn't as easy as it sounds since our village community is made up of very different people, with very different expectations. For some, communication is about technology, whilst for others it is a matter of receiving printed newsletters. And many people have a preference for hearing the latest news word of mouth.

So, whilst trying to be cost-effective, we are also trying to reach out to meet the expectations of all of our residents – the young, the old and the in-between, those who have lived in Charing for many years and those who have only just arrived, those who are in the centre of the village and those in other parts – for example in Charing Heath and Westwell Leacon.

Our website provides the key information you have a right to expect from us. It tells you who the Parish Councillors are, and it will provide information on Parish Council meetings too. We have included other local information – about local businesses, about the school, about Charing surgery and so on, to provide a resource that's available if you have a question about what is going on in the village or who to contact.

Inevitably, we have debated the merits of setting up a new website, perhaps to give a more current look and feel to the information. However, websites cost money and we have no wish to spend unnecessarily. We have decided, for the moment at least, that we should stay with our existing format, seeking to streamline it and to ensure it is up-to-date.

Our second commitment is to continue the production of a regular newsletter, and we aim to get this out to everyone in the village. Where possible, we deliver the Charing Parish Council Newsletter by hand (it gives Parish Councillors some exercise!) to save costs. However, parts of the Parish are rural – even isolated – and so we post the Newsletters where we have to. And of course, the Newsletter is also available on our website too. If anyone would like to help with the delivery please contact [cpclerk@charingkent.org](mailto:cpclerk@charingkent.org).

Finally, we are trying to improve on face-to-face communication. Members of the public are always free to attend Parish Council meetings, held on the first Tuesday of the month in the room above the Charing Parish Hall. In addition, we have held Councillor surgeries both in Charing village and in Charing Heath and will hold a full council meeting in Charing Heath in the autumn.

We try, as a Council, to be available to residents and to communicate with all 2,500+ residents in a way that they find most helpful. If you have suggestions or comments, please do let us know.

Jan White

Chair, Communications Committee

## Charing Station



Charing Parish Council is a station 'adopter' at Charing, our local station. This means we are trying to improve the environment there. Those of you who use the London-bound platform may have noticed recently that a gate has been put in to allow access to the unused, Network Rail land behind. The wonderful staff at Heath Farm School, also a station adopter, are planning to turn this land into an outdoor learning space and community garden for children at the school. This is a community project and currently the land is overgrown with various saplings and hog weed which needs to be cleared before this plan can go ahead.

Network Rail have asked if there is anyone who can use power tools who would be willing to help support the clearance activity. The timescale is likely to be 1 day's activity sometime

between October and February to avoid the nesting season, however the earlier the better. The area is about 5 metres by 15 metres.

If you think you would be able to assist, could you please contact Janet White, Parish councillor - [Janet@charingkent.org](mailto:Janet@charingkent.org)

## Highways

Our Highways projects are proceeding slowly as always – but there is some progress.

If you drive down Pluckley Road you are bound to spot the notices asking people to check their speed. Speeding is a problem in Pluckley Road with surveys confirming that many people drive noticeably faster than the 30mph limit. We felt that much speeding was inadvertent, particularly in the part of the road which is straight and, relative to other roads in the village, comparatively wide.



These are informal signs so have to be placed on private land – e.g. attached to someone's fence. Residents were enthusiastic; a number were happy to display them and a number were generous enough to donate towards the cost. The Parish Council thanks them for their generosity. It is thought that they have made some difference to the speed of traffic but we will need to take a survey in due course to check this.

The plan to extend the 40mph limit on Faversham Road has now passed its legal stage (the Traffic Regulation Order). The next stage is the detailed design – for example exactly where the main signs and the “repeater” signs should go – and after that it should actually happen.

We have agreed with KCC Highways the plan for “gates” on the A20 coming from Ashford, the A252 just before the Faversham Road junction and, if possible, a small gate on Pluckley Road. This is now also about to enter the detailed design stage.

In March this year planning permission was granted to Quinn estates to convert the old pumping station behind Harrison Court and build three more houses. The plans incorporate a pavement on the opposite side of the road (where there is a wide enough verge) up to the WOW factory. This will make it easier for residents in both the new houses and in Harrison Court and the other houses to walk towards the station and the village without having to walk on the road itself. The pavement has to be completed before the first of the new houses is occupied.

The Traffic Regulation Order to provide legal force to zig zag lines outside a number of schools in the borough, including Charing, should shortly be underway. The delay was checking which schools needed this.

We have yet to hear anything about the review of the A20/Station Road/High Street crossroads which was due to happen a few months ago. We keep asking.

Jill Leyland, Highways Committee

## Website

Within our website we have a section for local businesses and clubs and society's if wish to be added then please email the contact details to the clerk [cpclerk@charingkent.org](mailto:cpclerk@charingkent.org) and we will add you to our list.





## Parish Hall

### ***Coffee Mornings at the Parish Hall***

There are coffee mornings held at Charing Parish Hall on Wednesday mornings. Come and join us and keep warm! These are free events for all. Donations will be welcome to assist with running costs. Wednesdays 10.00 am to 12.00 noon. We look forward to seeing you there. A Community Warden event in conjunction with Charing Parish Council.



### ***Food Bank (Fortnightly Service)***

The food bank is now a fortnightly service. It's available for anyone in need to use and is open during the above coffee morning between 10 and 11.30am.

Donations for the foodbank can be left at the Church or brought to the hall on a Wednesday morning.

### ***What's on at the hall***

Monday	Zumba	1900-2000hrs	Contact Becki	becki@dancevisions.co.uk
Tuesday	Pilates	1800-1900hrs	Contact Lesley	Tel: 07815961043
Wednesday	Ballroom*	1900-2000hrs	Contact Rory	rorycostain@icloud.com
	Ballroom*	2000-2100hrs		Tel: 07798728955
	Whist drive#	1930-2130hrs	Contact Sandie	sandiewhoosh@hotmail.com
Thursday	Pilates	1745-1845hrs	Contact Keighley	Tel: 07765221374
	History#	1930-2130hrs	Contact chairman@charinghistory.co.uk	
Friday	Pilates	1045-1145hrs	Contact Keighley	

\*3 times a month    # Once a month

### Key contact details

#### **Parish Councillors - Charing**

Lady Corry Bain Smith (vice chair) 712594  
 Ms Carrie Allen carrie@charingkent.org  
 Mr Dennis Gudge 07957432104  
 Mr Terry Hayward terry@charingkent.org  
 Mrs Julia Strike 07855064707  
 Mr Tylden Reed 713136 or 07767861003  
 Mr Matt Roderick matt@charingkent.org  
 Mrs Janet White Janet@charingkent.org  
 Mr Stephen Woodbridge stephen@charingkent.org  
 Mr Olly Worsfold olly@charingkent.org

**Rural Community Warden**  
**Carol Coveney** 07977981990

**PCSO** TBA 101

#### **Parish Councillors Charing Heath**

Mr Chris Prinn (Chair) 07872190187  
 Mr D Bennett (vice chair) 712054

**Borough Councillors**  
 Mrs Y Roden (Charing)  
 Yvonne.Roden@ashford.gov.uk  
 Mrs C Bell (C/Heath) 07970885065

**County Councillor**  
 Mr C Simkins (County Cllr) 756705

**Parish Clerk**  
 Mrs Dawne Austen 713599

**Burial Clerk**  
 Mrs Hilary Evers 632671

#### **Charing Parish Newsletter**

**Editors: Dawne Austen (clerk) and Olly Worsfold (councillor)**

Contributions or correspondence for upcoming newsletters should be sent to:

6 Haffenden Meadow Charing

Kent TN27 0JR

Tel: 01233 713599

Email: cpclerk@charingkent.org / olly@charingkent.org

## **Charing Library**

### ***Discover Charing Library's new wildlife courtyard haven***

This month, the dedicated team at Charing Library rolled up their sleeves and transformed the library's courtyard into a vibrant wildlife garden. This initiative, led by Alison, Matt, Paramita, and Sharon, with additional help from Christine, Paul, Sarah, and Shirley, marks a significant step towards creating a beautiful space that can be enjoyed from within the library, while also supporting local wildlife.

The project began with a thorough clean-up of the courtyard. Leaves were cleared, weeds were cut back, and an overgrown thorn bush was finally tamed after much effort. The team then planted a variety of wildflower seeds and flowers, donated by Charing Parish Council and Sharon, to attract local wildlife.

In addition to the beautiful flowers, the team also created various wildlife shelters using pots and dead wood found during the clean-up. These shelters provide a safe haven for insects and small animals, encouraging biodiversity in the area. Young people from across Kent contributed by creating and donating bird boxes and bug hotels, adding a personal touch to the garden.

While the garden is not accessible to the general public, it can be admired from inside the library. This ensures that visitors can enjoy the beauty of the garden and observe the wildlife it attracts, all from the comfort of the library.



### ***Call for gardening volunteers***

To maintain the garden's beauty, Charing Library is looking for a gardening volunteer. If you have a passion for gardening and wildlife, this is a wonderful opportunity to contribute to your local community and help keep the garden thriving. If you would like to volunteer, visit Kent Libraries Volunteering (<https://www.kent.gov.uk/volunteering>).

Kent Libraries would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who participated in this project, especially Christine for organising such an amazing few days. The transformation of the courtyard into a wildlife garden is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Charing Library team.



### ***Charing Library opening hours***

Tuesday	9am – 1pm
Wednesday	9am – 1pm
Thursday	9am - 1pm & 2pm – 5pm
Friday	1pm – 5pm
Saturday	9am – 1pm

For more information about Charing Library visit the Kent Libraries website [www.kent.gov.uk/libs](http://www.kent.gov.uk/libs) email [charinglibrary@kent.gov.uk](mailto:charinglibrary@kent.gov.uk) or call 03000 41 31 31.

## **Charing Arts - Charing's newest society**

Charing Arts was created in May this year to give more profile to the arts – including music – in the village. Early ventures included art classes, a trip to Dulwich Picture Gallery and the organisation of Charing's Art Festival at the end of August. At the time of writing, the Festival is about to take place but once it is over we will have other exciting ventures under way.

### ***Art Classes***

The art classes, held in the early summer, proved enormously popular and will continue in the autumn, taking inspiration from the beautiful village of Charing. The classes will celebrate village landmarks using different artistic media including inks, chalks, pastels, charcoal and watercolour pencils. The cost of the classes includes materials and is £12.50 a lesson for non-members - £50 for a block of four. For members of Charing Arts the fees will be £10.50 per lesson or £42 for the block of four. Dates are: September 16<sup>th</sup>, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Charing Church Barn 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 mid-day. For more information or to register your interest please contact Jenny on [Indianlights@live.co.uk](mailto:Indianlights@live.co.uk)

### ***Music Classes***

There will also be a very special opportunity to experience the challenges of starting to learn a woodwind instrument. Our teacher is an experienced and highly skilled professional musician in Charing, who is kindly giving her time and loaning us instruments. Whether you are a beginner or more advanced, you could have four 'try-out' classes, learning the flute, clarinet, oboe or bassoon. In the fifth class you will have an opportunity to play with a small ensemble.

All classes will take place in Charing village. Instruments will be provided and the only charge will be £2.00 per session for reeds (for health and safety reasons). The dates of classes - all on a Thursday between 9.30 am and 10.25 am - are as follows: 26th September - flute / 3rd October - oboe / 10th October - clarinet / 17th October - bassoon / 24th October - all together.

You are welcome to try any or all of the instruments. Numbers are limited so early application is advised. Contact [sue.lowind@gmail.com](mailto:sue.lowind@gmail.com)

### ***November 9<sup>th</sup> - The Big Indoor Picnic***

It has been a challenging summer for those of us who love picnics, too often washed out by the rain! And, as autumn looms, with winter not far behind, we are planning another picnic – but this time - indoors.

We have booked the Charing Parish hall for the evening of Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November when you are invited to bring your own food and drink and enjoy the music of the Morley Big Band. Morley College are renowned for their great music and we are really fortunate that their big band have agreed to come to Charing. This will be a very special evening with the band performing some well-known numbers and some more contemporary pieces. Charing Parish Hall isn't licensed so you are invited to bring your own wine/beer as well as food.

Entry tickets (available from Geoff - [w244@aol.com](mailto:w244@aol.com)) will be £5.00 for members and £7.00 for non-members.

There's more to follow so watch out for so look for more Charing Arts news in this Newsletter.

## **Neighbourhood Watch**

I am very grateful for the space and opportunity to contribute to this vital communications platform with the residents via the Council Newsletter. It is an essential publication as it will reach residents who are not on many of the modern media communication platforms.

**Crime trends:** Anti social behaviour, criminal damage, theft from vehicles (leave absolutely nothing on show in a parked car - vans carrying tools and equipment are at risk), theft from garages, sheds, barns, stables and outbuildings, theft of internet shopping parcels from doorsteps (vans are now follow, even remote residents and properties are vulnerable), special crimes (e.g. theft of high end keyless cars), bonus callers/rogue traders/scams, fly tipping.

Please join Neighbourhood Watch - it is completely free my contact details are below. Please report all crimes and attempted crimes, we must know what is happening to be able to offer help and advice and importantly further crime prevention advice.

*"Crime cannot flourish or succeed in communities that care and are alert and vigilant"*

Thank you for your support as always.

Peter New ([peternew1@aol.com](mailto:peternew1@aol.com) and 07768437422), Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood



## Notice board

### The Pavilion

We are a friendly welcoming bar in Charing in a beautiful setting situated on the Arthur Baker Playing Field with ample free parking.

We're open Tuesday to Thursday from 6pm. Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 12pm.

On Friday, we're excited to offer The Pavilion Pantry. Please see to the left an example menu.

We are also available for private hire including birthdays, anniversaries and Celebrations of life etc. Please call 07301 816626 for any enquiries.

Chris & Lou

# THE PAVILION PANTRY MENU - FRIDAYS, 12 - 4PM

LIKE OUR PAGE 

## SANDWICHES

on White, Gristley or Gluten-free bread

TUNA & SWEETCORN	£7.00
CHICKEN & HAM MAYO	£7.00
HAM & CHEESE	£7.00
CHEESE & TOMATO (V)	£7.00
FISH FINGERS & TARTAR SAUCE	£7.00
KORRKERS SAUSAGE	£7.00
EGG MAYONNAISE ROLL (V)	£5.00

All served with salad and crisps

## DESSERT

SLICE OF HOMEMADE CAKE	£4.00
<small>(see specials board for today's selection)</small>	
HOMEMADE CUPCAKE	£3.00
SCONE WITH CLOTTED CREAM & JAM	£4.00

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** All our food is prepared in a kitchen where rice, gluten and other allergens may be present. Please note, we take every precaution to prevent cross-contamination, however, any menu item or product may contain traces of allergen as all menu items are produced in the same kitchen.

## LITE BITES

QUICHE OF THE DAY (V)	£7.50
<small>(see specials board for today's selection)</small>	
HOMEMADE SCOTCH EGG	£7.50
<small>on a bed of rocket salad with honey &amp; mustard mayo</small>	
WARM BREADED CHICKEN SALAD	£7.50
PITA BREAD WITH HUMMUS AND HOMEMADE SUN-DRIED TOMATO & GARLIC DIP (V)	£6.00
KORRKERS SAUSAGE ROLL	£4.00
CHEESE ON TOAST (V)	£5.00

## DRINKS

TEA	£2.00
COFFEE	£3.00
ESPRESSO	£2.00
HOT CHOCOLATE	£3.00
GREEN TEA	£2.00

THE PAVILION

CHARING PLAYING FIELDS, THE MOAT,  
CHARING, KENT TN27 0JJ

[the-pavilion.co.uk/shop/food-and-drink/](http://the-pavilion.co.uk/shop/food-and-drink/)

## THE PAVILION, CHARING



HOME OF CHARING FOOTBALL, CRICKET AND TENNIS CLUBS

WEDNESDAY 6 - 11PM | THURSDAY 6 - 11PM  
FRIDAY 12 - 11PM | SATURDAY 12 - 5PM  
IF NO PRIVATE FUNCTION, SATURDAY 12 - 8PM  
SUNDAY 12 - 8PM



Like our page

Follow us

**VENUE AVAILABLE FOR HIRE**

PERFECT FOR PRIVATE EVENTS, WEDDINGS, BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, CELEBRATION OF LIFE

CALL US ON 07301 816626  
OR EMAIL: HELLO@THEPAVILIONCHARING.COM

CHARING PLAYING FIELDS, THE MOAT  
CHARING, TN27 0JJ

### Bar opens on Charing High Street

Faced with its imminent closure a group of Bookmakers Arms regulars realised we needed to move fast to save the last drinking establishment standing on the High Street!

So eight of us met up (in a state of emergency!), mobilised, and created The Charing Bar Company with the generous help and skills of our friends in Charing. Sam's beautiful oak bar is a work of art!

Our dream is for The Bar to feel like home to all members of our community – a place where everyone in the village can meet, socialise and raise a glass of whatever they fancy. And we're proud to contribute to the thriving social scene established by our friends at The Pavilion.

So why not come down and give us a try? We have a varied menu of wines, beers, spirits and soft drinks. We're open Tues-Sun (and bank holiday Mon) – all our info is on our Facebook page @The Charing Bar Company. Like, follow... see you soon!

### Charing Lazy Boot Fair update

We held the third Charing Lazy Boot Fair on Sunday 14th July on Clewards Meadow, and I am very pleased to report that we raised the amazing sum of £570 for the Charing Christmas Lights fund.

Huge thanks to everyone who came along and supported the event, and to those who helped out on the day.

Julia Strike

### Charing Playing Fields AGM

Charing Playing Fields Annual General Meeting from 7.30pm on Monday 23rd September at the Pavilion, Arthur Baker Playing Field, The Moat, Charing TN27 0JJ. What three words: thirsty-bombard-gentleman.

All welcome.

