



July 2009
Issue No. 57



Contribution Freeze!

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With the assistance of the spending committees, the VA Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Bob Stinton, recommended to Council of Management that

the contribution rate should not be increased this year. This was accepted at the 40th AGM of the Association held in June and the current rate of £15.40 per 100 sq.ft. will continue unchanged.

The Association will continue to deliver value for money by making efficiency savings where possible to see us through the current economic downturn.

Graffiti & Vandalism in NAG

Graffiti and Vandalism in New Ash Green has taken off at an alarming rate. Two recent examples are the Millfield graffiti (pictured right) and the vandalism in Lambardes play area (pictured below). The graffiti in Millfield was extremely unsightly as can be seen. The slide in Lambardes play area had been punctured several times by a metal spike which was left in-situ - which could have caused a severe injury! It is up to everyone,

Parents, Police, Councils and Schools to assist in finding those responsible, making sure young people understand the consequences of their actions. Graffiti and vandalism not only make the village look a mess, it is also very costly to rectify and has to be paid out of the contributions made by all residents. If you have any information please contact our local Police in confidence, as any information may lead to apprehending those responsible.



VOLUNTEERS STILL WANTED!!!

Do you want to have a say on one of the VA's Committees? If so, our Hardland and Greenland Committees are trying to recruit more members. You will need to spend about two hours every six weeks discussing lighting, paths, play areas, future projects and all matters relating to Landscape Management. If you feel you would like to help, please contact the VA office on 872691.



Change the covenants? - **OF COURSE NOT!!!**

In our December 2008 Newsletter we placed the article "Of Course Not!!!", which related to the Covenants and stated that we would welcome replies to be published in future editions. We only received one reply to-date which is below, also published is our response.

Should you wish to do so, please send any views to the VA office or by e-mail to office@nagval.com

Dear Editor

I write with reference to the article in the December newsletter entitled 'Of Course Not', which invited replies regarding the issue of covenants.

I suspect I am in common with many NAG residents in my feelings of ambivalence towards the covenants – I recognise some of the benefits but find it frustrating that seemingly unnecessary restrictions are imposed upon my ability to make routine choices & alterations in relation to a property that I own, I am not referring to major alterations that require planning permission, but relatively minor changes that the majority of UK homeowners take for granted.

So how relevant are the covenants in their current format? When I purchased my property in the early 90s, my solicitor remarked on the draconian nature of some of the restrictions, which is a concern that resonates among many residents. Even the author of the article, who is clearly a covenant supporter, draws attention to some obscure restrictions including, of all things, drying laundry! The author is keen to point out that there is a level of tolerance for the inevitable breaches of such rules and, in the same context, refers to satellite dishes. However, this is a relatively recent concession. The VA regularly issued instructions prohibiting residents from having dishes and took action to enforce their removal. It was only when this position became unsustainable that the VA was dragged kicking & screaming into the 21st Century. The covenants and how they are interpreted need to move with the times if they are to be relevant for the modern world. Today the issue is satellite dishes, tomorrow it maybe solar panels or wind turbines or the next 'must have' innovation that is waiting in the wings. NAG cannot languish in a time warp while everyone around us embraces the changes.

When I explain to people, not familiar with the village, some of the restrictions imposed by the covenants, they assume that it must be akin to a heritage site or that the buildings are of such a classic design that alterations would be sacrilege. When they see the village for themselves they, like me, wonder what all the fuss is about. What changes are we so frightened of and precisely what idyllic setting are we trying to preserve?

NAG is a pleasant village but, without wishing to be derogatory, we are surrounded by more salubrious and aesthetically pleasing locations that seem to manage perfectly well without such a comprehensive list of covenants.

Before embarking on this next paragraph, I wish to make it clear that I have had personal dealings with both the VA and my Resident Society regarding changes to my property, including a proposed extension and my experiences have been extremely positive. Unfortunately, I have also had dealings with individuals who purport to represent the aforementioned bodies but, in reality, seem to be pursuing their own pedantic agenda. Clearly, such individuals misrepresent the VAs position and have contributed to widespread disillusionment with the covenants and the perception that they have become the obsession of an ever-decreasing minority who want to cling to their own brand of 'Nanny State'. Within this context, the patronising tone of some written communications of years past have served to fan the flames of a 'Them & Us' culture and perhaps explains, at least in part, the current lack of participation in the Residents Societies and attendance at AGMs that is the cause of understandable irritation among the many hardworking volunteers.

I have to confess that, during my 17 years as a NAG resident, I have never understood why uniformity is King. Does it really matter if someone has a slightly different front door or window? Is it necessary to be quite so restrictive and dictatorial in order to maintain the integrity of the village and preserve the vision of the architects and planners? Of course not!

I propose a slimming down of the covenants to make them fit for purpose. Allow residents greater freedom to make design choices in order that individualism can be celebrated. Ditch the obscure and irrelevant aspects that achieve little or nothing but focus on the rules that are both necessary and relevant in order to preserve the quality of life and living environment that we all desire.

As a result, we would no longer face accusations that we are not progressing with the times or that the covenants are draconian. Rather than alienating people, it will be easier to

present the benefits to new and existing residents who face ever-increasing subscriptions in addition to ever-increasing Council Tax (incidentally, what ever happened to that much heralded declaration of war on the injustice of double-taxation?)

Such an inclusive and user-friendly approach would promote greater community spirit and may even encourage more volunteers to work on the Residents Societies and increase the attendance at AGMs.

Long standing resident

VA Reply:

Thank you for your letter dated January 2009 and I am grateful for the time and consideration you have given to responding to the article. It is very much appreciated when Village residents express their interest and concerns and I will try to answer all of your points later in this letter.

Many constructive observations on the covenants made by Village residents are given in the belief that the responsibility for the enforcement of the covenants and the day to day administrations of the covenants lies solely with the Village Association. Residents have also adopted the view that the covenants can be changed. This is very much not the case and strictly speaking in accordance with the Village legal framework, the responsibility for both eventualities is the responsibility of each resident, each Resident Society and the Village Association. In practice what currently happens is that where there is a breach of covenant, residents EXPECT the Village Association to enforce the covenants and to take the appropriate action to remedy the breach.

Each Residential area comprises what is called in legal terms a 'building scheme'. In setting up each residential area the original developers of the Village created individual building schemes to ensure that each resident, the appropriate Resident Association and the Village Association would individually have the benefit of the covenants. Conversely, the building scheme only permits a variation of the covenants with the **100%** consent of persons or bodies in benefit. Here sits the dilemma with which the village has had to wrestle over the years.



OF COURSE NOT!!! -
One reply received!
Why not have your say!



The concerns of residents who wish to see more flexibility will not be satisfied by changing the covenants. Residents Societies and the Village Association will never achieve the mandatory 100% majority in support of any alteration. The key is in the level of enforcement of the covenants and an understanding of the complexity in dealing with the differing views relating to enforcement. The future of the covenants might well be assisted by identifying a method by which democracy can be exercised in regard to any decision on the enforcement of the covenants in any particular residential neighbourhood.

I believe it is fair to say that, because of residents' views that the Village Association should unilaterally seek to ENFORCE all the covenants, the Village Association has over the years been persuaded that the majority wish to see the covenants properly administered by the Village Association for the benefit of the whole Village. It is becoming more and more apparent that residents in one neighbourhood will consider that the enforcement of a particular covenant is important to their neighbourhood, whereas residents in another will take a more relaxed view. Thus it is possible that Residents Societies could take a more active part in making a decision regarding enforcement of covenants. The Village Association has needed to hear from the Residents Societies with their views, but through the process of evolution, Residents Societies have chosen to leave the Village Association to FRONT the difficulties.

In fairness to your goodself, I would like to answer the various points you have raised and will deal with them individually below:

The ability to make routine choices regarding alterations

The Village Association seeks to be fair in its interpretation of the covenants and in the instances of many minor changes it may have adopted a more relaxed view towards enforcement. The covenant which applies to alterations needs to be read in con-

junction with all of the covenants relating to matters which affect our day to day enjoyment of the Village. As identified in the article "Of Course Not" the procedures adopted by the Village Association to date have resulted in a Village that is well maintained and which is not deteriorating in ways that can be identified in many residential developments of a similar age. e.g. Thamesmead, where parts are to be demolished shortly.

Levels of tolerance

I believe this has been demonstrated by the views of the Village Association relating to dishes and any actions which the Village Association has been persuaded to take regarding the enforcement of covenants can always be changed if residents and each Residents Society wish to take a more active involvement in the procedures.

Moving with the times

I do accept your view that the Village Association should not seek to deny any resident the ability to take advantage of changes in technology, particularly when the changes result in an improvement to the environment and climate change. This may be an instance where we need to take a majority view with regard to enforcement of covenants in individually affected neighbourhoods, thus giving residents the opportunity of making their own minds up. Each situation will need to be judged on its merits and if the majority of residents believe that such a situation can be tolerated then democracy dictates that the Village Association should adopt their views and postpone any enforcement processes.

Management of more salubrious and aesthetically pleasing locations without the need for covenants

This is a more subjective point. I cannot challenge your statement, but it is important to compare the situation in the Village with a similar maturing residential development. It will be found that the majority of similar residential developments have many similar covenants to those in place in New Ash Green, but those

covenants are not enforced. However, it is interesting to note that a 'New Ash Green of its time' – the very desirable Hampstead Garden Suburb - has actively enforced covenants the better part of 100 years old, including, for example, requiring permission to cut down a tree in one's own back garden!

'Them and Us'

I hope you will understand from the explanation regarding the Village covenants given above that the Village Association to date has had little alternative but to maintain the covenants as they are set out in the Village scheme. If residents and Resident Societies would like to take a more active roll in the question of enforcement of covenants, your concerns would be minimised.

Focusing on the rules which preserve the quality of life and our living environment

To the best of its ability, bearing in mind the foregoing, this is what the Village Association has been seeking to achieve.

Not progressing with the times

I cannot add anything more to the explanation above, save to say that if there is sufficiency of interest and enough voluntary help, the Village Association will have more strength to deal more effectively with the advantages of progress, particularly in the world of technology.

An inclusive and user friendly approach

There are so many differing individual opinions that it is practically impossible to satisfy everyone's concerns. The Village Association does its best with the voluntary support available to deal with each matter as it arises but in order to show everyone that it is not being unreasonable, the Village Association cannot be seen to work otherwise than as closely as possible to the prescribed structure of the Village scheme.

Village Association



A copy of the Covenants and Bylaws can be obtained from the VA Office.

Spectacular Village Day!!!

This year's Village Day on Saturday 4 July was the biggest and best for some years with an excellent range of stalls and entertainment with everything from home grown vegetables to costume jewellery, marching bands to stilt walkers.

The village would like to say a huge thank you to the Co-op for

sponsoring the Kent Circus School and Mr Bonkers the Children's Entertainer. Additional thanks to the entire Co-op staff, in particular Alex Sophianou (Co-op Manager), for all their support and help in making the day an enormous success. In addition Pets Pantry sponsored the Dog Show, which once again proved

to be a popular event.

The day produced a healthy profit, which will be used to enhance the fireworks display to be held on the meadow on Thursday 5 November.

The sun shone and the day was a great success!



Aerial photographs are available from the VA office for a small fee



Home Security Advice

During the warm evenings we are all tempted to leave windows open. Please do not leave ground floor windows open; the burglar will take advantage of your generosity. If you have to have windows open on the ground floor then please fit a robust window restrictor.

Lock all side gates with a padlock, do not allow the burglar to get around to the back of your house. Fit trellis above your gate as this acts as an anti-climb measure. Remove all climbing aids that could assist the burglar.

Make sure your shed is secured

properly, fit a quality hasp and staple and lock it with a quality padlock. Your shed contains the tools the burglar needs to break into your home. Fit a shed alarm, these are cheap but very effective. Put up some old nets or a blind at the window so the thief cannot see the contents. Consider property marking your items so that they can be easily traced back to you.

Consider fitting outside bulkhead lights on a dusk to dawn sensor. Burglars hate to be seen and the lights will also let you stay outdoors longer during the warmer evenings.

Hide your car keys. There have been numerous thefts of vehicles where the car keys have been fished out through the letterbox from the hall table. Fit a letterbox deflector but better still change your habit and do not leave your keys on the hall table or on key hooks in view of doors and windows.

If you have a garage, then please use it.

And finally when out for the day remove all valuables from your vehicle and don't forget to lock it!

Crime Prevention Officer

Taking the lead!

A new face in the District is taking the lead when it comes to helping residents with their animal issues.

Ann-Marie Milton was recently appointed by Sevenoaks as their new Animal Welfare Officer after two years spent working for the Borough of Poole Council in a similar position.

Ann-Marie will have a number of duties including collecting stray dogs and finding them new homes, reuniting lost dogs with their owners and investigating complaints about noisy or dangerous dogs.

The Animal Welfare Officer also works closely with local PCSOs, town and parish council's and other dog owners in the District to be kept informed of dog owners who do not clean up after their dogs.

Working with animals is quite a departure from Ann-Marie's previous job though, before retraining as an Animal Welfare Officer she was a parking Civil Enforcement Officer!

"Being an animal welfare officer is certainly a bit different from being a parking warden" admits Ann-Marie. "Finding stray dogs new homes and reuniting lost dogs with their owners is very fulfilling, and I'm really looking forward to getting out and about in the District, meeting the dogs and their owners."

Ann-Marie also strongly recommends that residents make use of the Council's animal micro-chipping service. The process only takes a few moments, is virtually pain-free and is there for life.

A small micro-chip is implanted that contains a unique number

that corresponds with the dog's address and owners contact details, recorded at the same time the micro-chip is fitted. The details are stored on a central database.

If a dog is then picked up as a stray, it is scanned by a dog warden or vet for its unique number. The details are then retrieved from the database allowing the dog to be returned to its owner. Records need to be updated should you move house or transfer ownership of your pet.

The micro-chipping service costs £18 per animal and cats can also be micro-chipped.

For full details of the Council's Dog Control Service, including micro-chipping your dog, visit www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/dogwarden or call 01732 227000.

Useful Contacts:

PC Pauline Patching
07807 340040

PCSO Rachel
Rowbottom 07972
004449



No more Corgi's!!!!

No not the dogs.....

It was announced on 17 March 2009 that the CORGI register for approved gas fitters will be changed as of 1st April 2009. The new register will be called the Gas Safe Register and will be managed by Capita.

Installers will need to be registered on the scheme to operate legally.

The new Gas Safe Register brand is owned by the Health and Safety Executive and is on loan to Capita for the duration of its contract.

Capita is currently in discussion with energy companies to

get the 'Gas Safe Register' logo (as seen on left) onto customers' utility bills.

The director of public awareness at Gas Safe Register has said "our message is always to use a Gas Safe Register engineer, check their ID every time and do not give rogue traders a chance".

Let's Party..and get Sporty!!!

**DOES YOUR RESIDENT SOCIETY HAVE A SOCIAL SECRETARY?
IF NOT, THEN WHY NOT VOLUNTEER?**

The Village Hall is the hub of your village. In the past, Residents Societies have regularly used the Hall as a way of getting to know their residents through social functions from quiz nights to live music and dancing. If your Residents Society does not currently have a social secretary why not redress this and revive this tradition!

We are trying to promote the use of YOUR village hall, the Village Hall Committee is always keen to hear any ideas for development or additions to the facilities and services on offer, so please, let us know if you have any ideas or would like to get involved yourself.

Make it a Village to be PROUD of!!!

The New Ash Green Sports Pavilion has catered for families in the local area since the early 80's, it is situated in an idyllic location, spanning over 12 acres. The Pavilion is a self funding community based sports club which strives to promote and develop sports within the local community. Our unrivalled rural surroundings and function facilities provide the perfect setting for a variety of sports, events, family celebrations and corporate entertainment. At present we are home to several sports, run by dedicated volunteers in the fields of:

- **Rugby**
- **Football**
- **Tennis**
- **Petanque**

Each sport provides opportunities for skill development and we offer numerous teams to suit all ages and abilities. The Clubs provide first class coaching for youngsters and new members are always welcome.

The Pavilion is set over two floors and has three bars all of which can be hired out at very competitive rates. The Pavilion has up-to-date sports coverage via Sky Sports for all of your sporting needs.

Children welcome. No membership required. For opening hours or more information contact 871363.

The Pavilion needs YOUR support, it is YOUR club, increased use will enable us to grow and therefore invest in the future needs of all residents!!!



FREE DRINK AT THE PAVILION!!!

This is YOUR opportunity to check out YOUR club, you can watch the latest sports action and get a **FREE DRINK!!!**

When you order a round of four drinks you will get the cheapest one **FREE** on production of this voucher. Voucher must be used by 30th September 2009!

(NO PHOTOCOPIES!)



The Village Hall and Sports Pavilion are the hub of YOUR Village! Let's make sure we all make good use of their facilities!



HALL FOR HIRE

New Ash Green Village Hall

Well maintained hall for hire for all occasions

- Regular and Casual Bookings
- Reasonable Rates
- Disabled Access & Facilities

- Stage Area
- Kitchen Area
- Free Parking

For more information contact:
 New Ash Green Village Association Limited
 Centre Road
 New Ash Green Kent DA3 8HH
 Tel: 01474 872691



W.I. Get Down and Dirty!

Over fifty years ago the Keep Britain Tidy Group was founded by The Women's Institute. Now called the Big Tidy Up, the WI is working in partnership with various other like-minded organisations (CPRE, BTCV etc) in an attempt to tidy the place up. On 2nd June, a group from

local WI, Ash & Ridley, went on its first litter-picking assault. As several neighbourhoods already use the services of wombles, we concentrated on the public areas (orchard, meadow etc) and were agreeably surprised at how tidy it looked. We still managed, however, in the space

of a little over an hour to fill three large bin bags. We intend to make this a regular exercise, but it would be nice to go out litter-picking one day and return with absolutely nothing...

Protect your Property

This is a reminder for all Residents that it is possible to have your high-value shed and garage items marked by the Police for **FREE**.

This is a very quick process and can be a huge deterrent to any potential

theft of these items. You can also receive property and window stickers which is a further deterrent. Additionally, please consider having shed or garage alarms fitted to **d o o r s a s e x t r a** security.

If you would like anymore information, or would like to have your property marked up this way, please contact your Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer, Suzanne Daniell on 01322 422518.



NAG Health Walks

The New Ash Green Health walk group is running a series of evening walks this summer. They all start and finish at New Ash Green library and will last no longer than 1½ hrs. They will start at 7pm. Everyone is welcome to come along but children

must be accompanied by an adult. We hope to be going out across the fields so will be going over some stiles. Dogs are welcome but must be kept on a lead at all times. We recommend that suitable footwear and clothing is worn.

**The next date is
Tuesday 11th August**

Fly-tipping is illegal!

**If found guilty you
could be fined and/or
imprisoned!**

Woodland News

Completed Projects

The Greenland Committee's 2004-2009 Woodland Management & Regeneration Plan is now complete. The final project was the 30% thinning of approximately 3 acres of neglected woodland at the north-east end of Spring Croft Wood. Although much of the earlier work was carried out by volunteers from the Woodlands Group, the bulk of this more difficult section had to be done by a tree contractor with support by the VA's Workforce to reduce costs.. Lots of wood chip was produced as a result, which has been used by the Workforce and the Woodlands Group to improve footpaths.

The Forestry Commission's Grant for this substantial task was just £540 but we succeeded in obtaining an additional grant of £8,210 from Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust to whom we are extremely grateful. An addi-

tional £350 was raised from the sale of logs.

The next 5 years....

The Greenland Committee has started work on the next management plan for submission to the Forestry Commission under the England Woodland Grant Scheme. The first and largest task will be the regeneration of Turners Oak Shaw, the area of woodland lying between Ash Road and Colt Stead/Millfield. (A *Shaw* is a small area of woodland, usually along the least productive edge of a field, and managed by the farmer to provide timber for use on the land or for firewood. Turners Oak Shaw is clearly shown on the 1792 Fulljames Survey of Ash, which indicates this is a special, and very old, piece of managed woodland.) We are receiving professional advice on how to tackle this project. Because of the proximity of the road, houses and paths, safety must be the primary

consideration but we must also take into account the long-term health and appearance of the woodland itself. It is likely that a significant number of trees will have to be felled. Most of our native broadleaved trees re-grow from the stump, creating an endless supply of timber – which is why farmers valued them and managed them in this way over the centuries.

It may be necessary to fell potentially hazardous trees in the interim but before embarking on any major work in Turners Oak Shaw or elsewhere, we intend to arrange an Open Meeting to explain the 5 year management Plan.

Woodland Information Boards

In 2004 Information Boards were installed in Nine Horse and Spring Croft Woods, but have proved not to be weatherproof. We are planning to replace them with something more durable and visually attractive. It is hoped to meet the cost with a grant.



Foxes—friend or foe!

People sometimes have a hard time understanding what The Fox Project is about. On the one hand it's a wildlife hospital specialising in foxes, on the other, it's a fox deterrence consultancy!

So how does this square? Well, animal rescue needs no justification. It's simple compassion. And so is advising people how to deter unwelcome foxes from their gardens, providing an ethical alternative to 'pest controllers', whose response would involve capital punishment, a large invoice and the inevitability of a replacement resident fox within days.

The Fox Project has been in existence for almost twenty years. During that time it has rescued 7000 foxes and dealt with 100,000 deterrence enquiries throughout the UK.

We're in our peak period right now. The cub season. Last year we rescued 632 foxes, including around 237 cubs. Most of the adults were successfully treated and returned to their home territories. The cubs are another story.

So far this year we've received 170 cubs. 32 were reunited with their parents and, sadly, 46 didn't make it for one reason or another. Which leaves us just over 100 to get back to the wild.

Many of these arrived as infants and were bottle-fed and hand reared. Others had injuries and infections and were handled daily during treatment. So the important question is – have they bonded with people to a degree where they cannot safely go back to the wild?

Answer: No! Our programme of rehabilitating cubs back to the wild is careful, controlled and considers

the personality, needs and progress of every individual in our care. It involves a gradual estrangement of cubs from people and frequent switching of 'families' between our network of fosterers. That process breaks any residual bond between cub and human and ensures our youngsters leave their pens as sure of themselves, and as unsure of people, as a fox should be.

And when, how and where do we release them? Release always takes place between midsummer and early autumn - when wild-raised cubs are breaking away from their own families. It's the most laid back period in the fox calendar and the best time to assimilate our cubs into the wild population.

The process involves constructing a temporary pen on a rural – or edge-of-suburbia – property, onto which we've been invited for the purpose. Folk are often surprised to hear some of these release sites are on farms. Surprised, because, if one listens to the exaggerated claims of the hunting and shooting fraternity, one might believe all farmers hate foxes.

The reality is that most farmers are crop or cattle farmers, where there is no conflict and where foxes are welcomed as controllers of rats and rabbits. One of our rehabbers is a sheep farmer. Most keep chickens, but as all will tell you, if you can't look after your livestock you're in the wrong job.

Our cubs – usually a natural sized 'litter' of five - will remain in their release pens for a minimum of three weeks, giving them and the resident wildlife plenty of time to get used to the sights, sounds and smells of each other before release.

Following release, the cubs are provided with back-up feeding close to the pen, to which they'll usually return frequently to 'touch base'. Sometimes, they stick around for a few weeks. Some dig their heels in and stay for good. Others quickly move on.

Our rehabbers know their cubs. Many see them regularly after release and the feedback they provide confirms the process works. And it works despite many of these cubs having never previously hunted or foraged for themselves. It works, regardless that their parents were not there to teach them what to do. It works, because foxes are naturally intelligent, opportunistic and adaptable, and they don't need telling anything! They know, instinctively, who they are and what they must do to survive.

As we approach the point of the year when our cubs will be released, you may wonder if we're sad to see them go. We're not. We love to see them go, delighted to have given a handful of very beautiful wild animals a second chance to fulfil their potential. It's our job. Job satisfaction? Plenty of that here!

Want to help? The Fox Project always needs local rescuers and fosterers. We're always on the lookout for release sites, people who would like to fundraise for the charity and supporters who cannot get directly involved, but who want to help support us financially. Get in touch.

The Fox Project, The Lodge, Kings Toll Road, Pembury, Kent TN2 4BE

Office: 01892 824111 - Wildlife Ambulance: 07778 909092 - Fox Deterrence Helpline: 01892 826222



Can you help The Fox Project?

They are always looking for rescuers, fosterers, release sites, fundraisers and, of course, vital donations!

Thinking of Removing Rubbish?

As a householder, make sure that trades people taking away your rubbish follow the waste rules.

The law now states that if you have any of your rubbish removed and it ends up being fly-tipped, you could be held responsible and fined. When dealing with waste removal services or trade people like plumbers, builders or gardeners, always ask them for a valid waste carriers licence. If you want to dispose of the rubbish yourself take it to your local household waste recycling centre which is located at Station Road, Peppercorn.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

1. Ask the waste removal service/tradesperson for their waste carrier licence number.
2. Check their waste carrier licence number or their company name by visiting:
 * the Clean Kent website at www.cleankent.com and follow the link to the Environment Agency or call:
 * The Environment Agency on 0870 850 6506 or visit: www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk for details of businesses

vetted and approved by Trading Standards

3. Please keep a note of all the information that you receive from the contractor and a receipt for any work done. If they are not registered don't use them. Inform Clean Kent of the trader immediately by calling 0845 345 0210.

Do remember if you see someone fly-tipping call Clean Kent on 0845 3450210.

All calls are confidential.



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VA OFFICE OPENING HOURS

The VA Office is open to residents
9.00am-4.00pm Monday to Thursdays —
Closed to residents on Fridays
The office is closed for all statutory holidays

If you would like to write an article for our next Newsletter, either as a member of a Club or Society or to write an article of local interest, please provide it to VA Office no later than 14th November 2009.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2008-2009

I begin by observing how absolutely magnificent the village looks as I write this report, a view shared and expressed by the many villagers who have taken the trouble to contact the VA office on this. This is testimony to the sustained efforts of our Greenland workforce over a number of years. My hearty thanks to them on behalf of us all. As we rush about our lives, it is only too easy to lose sight of what a special environment we enjoy in the village, through the green landscaping, the architecture and the layout, the reasons that many of us choose to live here and have done for many years.

I do not pretend that there are not problems. Some are outside the direct control of the VA or Residents' Societies, such as cable TV and the Shopping Centre. The failure of successive owners of the latest cable TV network in the village has led to a rash of unauthorised satellite dishes and other aerials, particularly recently on the run up to digital terrestrial TV transmissions. We are seeking to

pressure Virgin Media into committing to upgrade the New Ash Green network to provide a digital service to village residents, carrying the full range of options. Similarly, the lack of results over regeneration of the Shopping Centre has drifted on for too long, so Sevenoaks District Council is being pressed to act.

Within the VA's control are the Sports Pavilion and Sportsfield. In common with many other licensed premises nationally, the Pavilion has not enjoyed satisfactory trading since the introduction of the smoking ban, coupled with cheap drink available at supermarkets. Recognising that both represent a valuable asset to the village, the VA has recently reviewed its policies and decided to provide a greater level of support to the Sportsfield and associated changing facilities, primarily to support sport for the young people of the village. It is intended that the licensed part of the Pavilion should be self-financing and the management arrangements of this is under review, to seek the best for

the village.

The VA has always sought to provide value for money. There is a difficult balance between doing just enough to simply maintain the infrastructure of the village and doing too much by way of improvement and addition, as well as simple maintenance. At this time of economic difficulty, it is recognised that it is inappropriate that there should be any increase in VA contributions, so expenditure budgeted for next year has been cut to the minimum, resulting in a nil increase recommendation. If adopted, it follows that there will be no funding for improvements, merely the anticipated maintenance and running costs. Though this is not an option that would be sensible in the longer term.

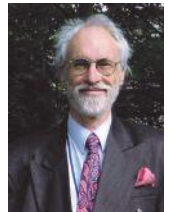
With the recent revelations of

'sleaze' at Westminster, I believe that it is important to make absolutely clear that all members of Council of Management and its sub-committees receive absolutely no payment for the considerable amount of work that they do in managing the village, nor have they received any expenses this year, though members are entitled to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses. A lesson for some others, perhaps!

I finish by thanking wholeheartedly my fellow members of Council of Management for their work, wise counsel and support over the last year, and that of our office staff and Greenlands workforce who undertake what is required of them, and more, in a quiet and professional way, often unnoticed. My thanks to them all.

Alan Pett—Chairman

May 2009



COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

The democratic process has winners and losers. Chairman of Knights Croft RS, Bob Stinton offered himself for re-election at the recent AGM of the VA but was unsuccessful. First elected to Council of Management in 2004, he was VA Treasurer for two spells, where he rationalised and simplified the VA's budgetary process. He also exerted the stringent financial control that enabled the VA to hold its contribution level for the coming year.

Bob will continue to serve on the VA's Hardland sub-committee and on the board of the Pavilion company.

Our thanks to Bob for his contribution.

Alan Pett (Consultant Member)	Chairman
Mike Rose (Capelands)	Treasurer/Finance & General Purposes Committee
Brian Hardcastle (Over Minnis and Consultant)	Amenity Committee
Bella Kirk (Punch Croft)	Greenland Committee
Terry Vivian (Consultant Member)	Hardland Committee
Keith Wale (Consultant)	Village Hall Committee
Pam Godden (Farm Holt)	Communications
Susan Heads (Consultant Member)	NAGSPL
Stuart Richardson (Consultant Member)	