

# BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

[www.boxleyparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.boxleyparishcouncil.co.uk)

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**To All Members of the Council, press and public.**  
2011

5<sup>th</sup> December

There will be a meeting of the **Environment Committee** on **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011** at **Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade** commencing at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business;

1. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.** (7.30)  
Members are required to declare any interests or lobbying on items in this agenda.
2. **Apologies and absences** (7.31)  
To receive and accept apologies for absence.

**To adjourn to allow members of the public to address the meeting.**

3. **Minutes of the Meetings of 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November 2011.** (7:32)  
To consider the minutes of the meetings and if in order to sign as a true record (already circulated).
4. **Matters Arising From Minutes.** (7.35)
  - 4.1 Minute 2352/4.1 Boxley Road/Beechen Bank Road speed limit reduction. KCC has been instructed to proceed with the work and a date for the work has been requested. The KCC response to the query about placing roundels on the carriage way is "*We can only put roundels on the carriageway at locations where there is no street lighting. The highway code states that all roads with street lighting are subsequent to a 30 mph speed limit unless signed otherwise*".
  - 4.2 Minute 2352/4.2 Inconsiderate parking Walderslade Village/Boxley Road. Cllr Pepper has written to the Leader of Medway Council concerning the issue and lack of any action. Cllr Hinder reports that on 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> November the Police undertook a speed check on the Medway part of the road.
  - 4.3 Minute 2354/10.6 Flytipping letter Lordswood. Parish office will liaise with resident and PCSO concerning delivery of the letter.
  - 4.4 Minute 2353 proposed base station installation on highways land adjacent to A249. The company has come back stating that there will be no interference from the mast at the new hospital.

**To adjourn to allow members of the public to address the meeting.** (7.41)

5. **Consultation Neighbourhood Planning.** (7.50)  
To agree a response see report (page 4) and enclosure.
6. **Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.** (8.10)  
To consider planning applications. Members' are reminded to consider possible section 106 requests or to suggest any conditions.

MA/11/1970 – Application for an erection of a first floor side extension over existing garage at 49 Lombardy Drive. 27/12/2011

MA/11/1976 – Application for an erection of first floor rear extension at 15 Greensands, Walderslade. 26/12/2011

MA/11/1968 – Application to extend the time limit for the implementation of planning permission MA/07/0458 for the demolition of existing buildings and structures, the erection of one hundred and forty two dwellings and associated landscaping, formation of new car park at Maidstone Studios, Vinters Park, New Cut Road, Maidstone. 20/12/2011

MA/11/2000 – Advertisement consent for the installation of 4 internally illuminated fascia signs, 1 non-illuminated fascia sign, 3 flag pole signs and 3 internally illuminated free standing signs at Former Veglios Hotel Site, J6 M20, Forstal Road. Aylesford. 27/12/2011

MA/11/2022 – An application for the prior approval of the local planning authority for the installation of 15m high slim line streetworks column containing 3 antenna 2G/3G within glass reinforced plastic shroud with 2 equipment cabinets and ancillary development at Land South of J7 M20, Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone. 28/12/2011

TA/0180/11 – Application for works to trees at rear of 9 Greensands, Walderslade 16/12/11.

TA/0192/11 – Application to crown lift 1no Oak Tree up to 6m above ground level, thin canopy by 15% And remove deadwood at 3 The Covert, Walderslade 22/12/11.

APP/U2235/A/11/2165169/NWF – Erection of a new dwelling at Land off Beechen Bank, Boxley Road, Walderslade deadline for written responses 5/1/2012. It is suggested that a letter referring to the previous objections (to ensure that the Inspector knows that he has the copy) is sent with additional comments on the ecological report.

7. **Planning applications taken to Planning Committee.** (8.12)  
Planning rota – Cllr Wendy Hinder 15<sup>th</sup> December 2011, Cllr William Stead 5<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

8. **Planning Applications and appeals decisions.** (8.13)  
To note the Maidstone Borough Council's planning application decisions and Secretary of State's appeal decisions. Asterisk \* indicates decision contrary to parish council views.  
MA/11/0322 GRANTED MA/11/1623 GRANTED  
MA/11/1677 GRANTED MA/11/1701 GRANTED  
TA/0142/11 GRANTED TA/0147/11 GRANTED  
TA/0153/11 GRANTED

9. **Neighbourhood Development Plans.** (8.14)  
9.1 Sandling and Forstal NDP see report (page 4 - 8).  
9.2 Other areas. Members to consider whether they wish to have a document or statement on the North Downs AONB.  
9.3 Next stage see report (page 9).

10 **Walderslade Woods and Volunteer Group** (8.22)  
To receive a report and an update on the group.

11 **Highways and Byways.** (8.30)

- 11.1 Walderslade Woods Road reduction in speed limit see report (page 9 - 10).
- 11.2 Stopping up Order Application - Chatham Road, Sandling rear of Pilgrims View.  
Notification of the stopping up order – members previously agreed not to object to the sale of the highway verge to the resident.
- 11.3 KCC Highway Tracker Survey 2011. A volunteer is requested to complete the survey deadline 20/12/11

- 12 **Policy and procedures review.** (8.36)  
Section 106 wish list – Members asked for this to be returned to the agenda to allow further time to consider the list see report (page 10 - 11).
- 13 **Matters for information.** (8.44)  
To consider any information.
- 14 **Next Meeting.** (8.45)  
Next environment meetings 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012 (full) at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

In view of the confidential nature (personal details and data) on the Enforcement item about to be transacted, it is advisable that the public and press will be excluded from the meeting for the duration of or part of the item.

- 15. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC.** (8.46)  
To consider any update.

Clerk to Boxley Parish Council

**Item 5 Consultation Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.** *Purpose of report: to agree a response. Deadline 05/01/2012.*

The full document is available from the parish office or can be viewed at [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk). The document contains the draft regulations and many of the questions relate to this document. If members are concerned about downloading documents then they can be supplied in PDF format attached to an e-mail. A copy of the consultation document explanation is enclosed for members and where possible indications of which question relates to which paragraph has been included. Also enclosed is the Clerk's suggested responses. It has not been possible to cut and paste the questions so the Clerk's comments/explanations, if necessary, have been included in the Explanation/comment box under the questions.

**Item 9.1 Rough Draft 'NDP' Sandling and Forstal** *Purpose of report: to consider information and to identify any amendments.*

### **History/location.**

The boundary of the scope of this document is shown in appendix A.

#### Sandling Village.

Sandling Village did not exist until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and by the 1940's had developed into the linear village recognisable today.

The village exists around the old main road linking Medway and into Maidstone. Development in the 1980's included: additional housing, the A229 by-pass and the building of the M20.

A few buildings have listed status but these are scattered throughout the community. The buildings that are listed are either linked to Boxley Abbey or the agriculture heritage, see Appendix B.

The village exists in prime agricultural land and is adjacent to the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

#### Forstal.

This area is diverse consisting of open land, the Medway River, tourist/leisure facilities, industrial and residential properties. Due to the location by the river there has been a history of small scale industry (wharfs) but the explosion of industrial units was from the 1960's onwards.

### **Residential.**

#### Village.

The village has experienced 2 building periods, the original develop (generally finished by 1952) consisted of individual detached and semi-detached houses built on long narrow plots. The 1980's development (originally named Blue Bells Estates) was built on a small industrial area and is centred around Tollgate Way. These are modern detached properties built on smaller plots.

No further large scale building has taken place however the older buildings are subject to extensions and some slight remodelling. Large scale demolition and rebuilding is limited by the narrowness of the plots.

A small terrace of social housing exists off Tyland Lane but otherwise all properties are privately owned.

The creation of the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has limited any further large scale residential development.

Outlying 'pockets'.

Grange Lane and Boarley Lane.

These properties are generally large scale residential plots with more up market or older properties. A group of small terrace housing exists adjacent to Boxley Abbey (these are listed).

A denser area of residential properties exist near the southern end of Boarley Lane close to Sandling Village Hall and The Running Horse PH.

Forstal Road.

Residential properties are a mixture of terraced and detached houses. The last residential development was on the land adjacent to the Forstal Pumping Station.

Residential riverside moorings exist on the Medway River and there is a stable riverside residential community living in house boats and barges.

Cuckoo Wood Avenue.

This is a fairly large modern development of a block of flats and large detached houses. It lies immediately adjacent to Cuckoo Woods which is owned by a property developer however the trees are subject to TPOs.

***Residential.***

*Sandling Village. The Council would welcome the creation of a village envelope to stop any additional residential development. The village has young families but with no local school and a lack of facilities it is highly unlikely that low cost housing would be sustainable.*

*Village. The sizes of the plots on the older properties might encourage garden development if 4 or 5 properties are purchased but it is considered that no 'in filling' should be allowed and all the gardens within the village should be classified as greenfield sites.*

*Outlying 'pockets'. Grange Lane and Boarley Lane. To preserve the character of the area and the impact on the AONB it is considered that no 'in filling' should be allowed on larger plots and all the gardens should be classified as greenfield sites. These properties are very isolated from any services and any development will be unsustainable. The properties at the southern end of Boarley Lane are more densely packed and there is little scope for any infilling type development.*

*Forstal Road. It is unlikely, due to the location and lack of available land that any further development will occur.*

*Cuckoo Wood. The Parish Council would not support any development of the woods which are an important Site of Natural Conservation.*

**Industry and commerce.**

Sandling Village.

Two small industrial areas exist within the village.

Willow industry (off Tyland Lane) has small scale car/bike repair units.

Junction Chatham Road/Tyland Lane has an engineering site.

The headquarters of Kent Wildlife Trust is based at Tyland Barn and this is a visitor attraction. It has the offices of KWT on its site.

Abbey Court, Boarley Lane (south of village) has previously been subject to planning applications for large scale office development.

Forstal Road.

Large and small scale office, industrial and commercial units exist and Kent County Council has an office/highway depot located at Forstal. The occupying companies provide a variety of services (hiring of equipment, car sales, warehouse and distribution etc.).

A229/M20 junction.

This area has two hotels, two public houses, the Museum of Kent Life, a car sales development and an empty site (Brooklyn Yard).

Cuckoo Wood.

Has been managed as working coppice woodland.

**Industry.**

*Village. The Council considers that outside of the 2 small current areas there is little scope for developing any further industry within the village. Any development of the existing sites should be within their current foot prints. Willow industry has a very limiting (narrow and hidden) access so would not be suitable for any development that would involve additional access or access of larger vehicles.*

*Some minor cottage type industry probably exists and there is tenant farming surrounding the village.*

*An area of land at the cul de sac end of Chatham Road (adjacent to the A229) has a major gas pipe running across it and so has remained undeveloped.*

*Grange Lane and Boarley Lane. To preserve the character of the area and the impact on the AONB it is considered that industrial development should not be allowed on any of the greenfield sites. Such development would be unsustainable due to the lack of infrastructure.*

*Abbey Court. Planning applications have included access from the A229. The current entrance to the house/park is on Boarley Lane but this country lane could not cope with any large increases in traffic nor can it be improved.*

*Brooklyn Yard. The site has already been identified for development but the Parish Council considers that the entrance to the site is in an extremely poor location (adjacent to the roundabout) and this limits its suitability for the types of use.*

*Forstal Road. The various industrial units are regularly updated and changed to meet the needs of the companies. The Parish Council recognises that this area is a valuable industrial area and does not object to the improvements to individual units. There is however concern over the poor highway infrastructure and the impact that this has on the residential properties. Substantial improvement is needed to Forstal Road.*

*A229/M20. Brooklyn Yard has been considered for development but the Parish Council considers that the poor access to the site (adjacent to the roundabout) would limit the type of development.*

**Environmental.**

Village.

Within the village there are a few small areas that are semi wild but these are generally private land. KWT Tyland Barn site has a nature reserve including a pond.

Forstal Road. Cobtree Country Park and the Museum of Kent Life contribute to the environmental and wildlife opportunities. Part of the Cobtree land leased to MBC (currently leased to Museum of Kent Life) is a flood plain.

River and ponds. The Medway River is adjacent to Forstal Road. Various ponds and fishing lakes exist off of Boarley Lane.

Cuckoo Wood. Is a Site of Nature Conservation Interest and has previously been managed for coppicing.

The whole area is surrounded (north and west) by the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

***Environment.***

*The Parish Council fully supports the status of the North Downs AONB and would not support any 'down grading' of this status.*

*The Parish Council recognises the value of the riverside status of the North Downs AONB and would not support any 'down grading' of this status.*

*Cobtree Country Park. The Parish Council supports the environmental changes being made to improve this facility. It will continue to support any changes that increase the bio diversity and wildlife habitats on the site.*

*Museum of Kent Life. The Parish Council will support any changes that increase the bio diversity and wildlife habitats on the site.*

*Riverside. The Parish Council considers this is an important asset and will only support development along the bank if they enhance or increase wildlife bio diversity and habitats. The Parish Council would not support any development on the flood plain.*

*Cobtree Golf Course. The Parish Council would welcome initiatives to increase bio diversity and wildlife habitats on the site.*

*Kent Scouts site. The Parish Council would welcome initiatives to preserve (and increase) the bio diversity and wildlife habitats on the site.*

*Cuckoo Wood. Has been managed as a 'cash crop' and the Parish Council would continue to support this management.*

**Facilities and Services.**

Village.

The village does not have a shop or a public house. To the north of the village (1093 yards from the 'centre of the village) is Cossington Service station and its fore court shop serves as the local convenience store.

The headquarters of Kent Wildlife Trust is based at Tyland Barn and this has a gift shop (for KWT products) and a small café area. This facility is only open during the opening times of Tyland Barn.

There are no formal play areas for children/residents. Residents have to travel outside of the village to access open land and play facilities.

*Bus service – to be investigated and added.*

Sandling Village has a village hall but this is really only accessible by car as it is an unpleasant 1250 yards way from the centre of the village and it is a fairly isolated walk. Residents have to travel out of the village for doctors, dentist, education etc.

The village is isolated by being surrounded by 3 major transport routes (Channel Tunnel Rail Link, A229 and M20).

A229/M20. Various hotels and public houses are dotted around this area, offering leisure and food opportunities.

Forstal Road. Cobtree Country Park offers open space and a café. It attracts visitors to the area and is currently subject to an improvement programme. The Museum of Kent Life attracts visitors to the area and adjacent to this site is the landing point for river craft.

Sandling Village Hall. This serves the village, Grange Lane and Boarley Lane communities.

Kent Scouts. Land at Grange Lane is owned by the Scouts and will be used as a District Site.

***Facilities and services.***

*Village.*

*The Parish Council would like to see play facilities but has so far failed to purchase/lease land to facilitate this.*

*KWT Tyland Barn. The Parish Council considers this an important and vital attraction to the Maidstone area.*

*Cobtree Country Park. The Parish Council supports the changes being made to improve this facility.*

*Museum of Kent Life. The Parish Council considers this an important and vital attraction to the Maidstone area.*

*Riverside. The Parish Council considers this is an important asset and will only support development along the bank if conditions are in place to preserve or enhance the tow path etc. Initiatives to encourage river usage would be welcomed.*

*Cobtree Golf Course. This MBC run facility is a public Golf Course (due to restrictions in the lease) and the Council supports this facility but would not support any change to the lease agreement to make it private.*

*Tourism facilities. The Parish Council considers that the tourism industry in this area is a vital contribution to the economy of the Maidstone District it would therefore not support any 'down grading' or non-tourism development of the existing sites.*

*Kent Scouts site. The Parish Council considers that this is an extremely valuable asset to Maidstone and Kent and supports development that leads to a sustainable site offering opportunities to the scouting movement. It is recognised that for it to be sustainable some outside use (i.e. weddings) might be involved.*

*The bus service to the village and out laying areas is poor or non-existent and any development/expansion must come with improvement to the infrastructure and services.*

**Item 9.3** Next stage. *Purpose of report: to consider information and decide how to continue.*

MBC has refused to apply to apply to become part of a pilot scheme for Neighbourhood Development Plans and by doing so has stopped any parishes taking part in this scheme. Thus in April 2012 Parish Councils will be able to produce a plan and undertake all the steps to make it legal.

At present the Government is looking at whether grants to pay for referendums will be made available.

Boxley Parish Council is working towards producing Neighbourhood Development Plans but has not yet reached the position when it has to decide whether it is going to do them or not.

Once the bare bones of the current documents are agreed then members could consider bringing in an expert (the Joint Parishes Group are already doing this) to finish/polish the document or decide to continue producing the work itself and calling on MBC to advise it on specific issues.

The Clerk believes that the following work needs to be added to what is being produced:

- Add the statement (to each document) as to why this area is being proposed (i.e. why this has been identified this as a neighbourhood) and a statement that the Parish Council is a Qualifying Body under legislation.
- Identify any community asset and whether it should be 'lodged' with MBC. This is allowed so for example if it is considered that a public house is the only remaining asset by lodging this with MBC and if it is to be sold off or if an application is made to change its use then the local community has to be approached about purchasing it or taking it in.
- Even though it is still at consultation stage the MBC Local Development Framework evidence documents and Core Strategies should be checked against what the Parish Council is producing as the document will need to conform to this. PPGs and PPSs also need checking. *Clerk's note – this actually isn't as difficult as it sounds it is just a bit time consuming.*
- Members need to consider whether they wish to make any 'design statements' for instance Boxley Conservation Area might contain a statement about the need for certain materials etc.
- The Localism Bill needs careful survey to ensure relevant bits in it are referred to in the Parish Council document. *Clerk comment. At training on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012 there was an extremely good quote from the Localism Bill that could be included etc.*
- Parish Council's section 106 wish list needs to be incorporated into document. *Clerk's comment. I suggest that members consider putting something into the Downs Mail to see if residents can come up with additional ideas.*
- Agree community consultation and what to do before a referendum.

**Item 11.1 Walderslade Woods Road.** *Purpose of report: to consider information and to change or ratify Clerk's actions.*

Paul Carter has/is being approached about funding, from his members budget, the work needed on Walderslade Woods Road to allow the speed limit to be reduced. The Clerk has also suggested that if insufficient members fund is available this year that the work is done over a number of years until the tipping point is reached whereby the speed limit can be reduced. As a result of the publicity of the funding for speed reduction in Boxley Road/Beechen Bank Road 2 residents contacted the parish office concerning: why Walderslade Woods Road speed restriction was not being progressed; why wasn't the

parish council paying for the work on Walderslade Woods Road; why did the council wish to spend money On Boxley Road/Beechen Bank Road (where was the evidence that this was needed); how were the parish council's priorities set. This is being brought to members' attention as they will be considering (February 2012) whether to have a strategy for dealing with highway issues not receiving KHS funding.

**Item 12 Section 106 wish list.** *Purpose of report: to consider information and to discussion/agree any suggested amendments.*

Grove Green and surrounding area.

- Lighting for PROW KH2.
- Mini roundabout or improvements at junction Grovewood Drive South and New Cut.
- Improvements to roundabout or junction at Maidstone Studio roundabout/Grovewood Drive north (reduce height of roundabout/yellow hatching/traffic lights?).
- Additional lining to traffic approaching from Notcutts roundabout so it has to slow/stop at the television studios roundabout.
- Improvements to width of Grovewood Drive North. Including a proper pedestrian refuge.
- Vinters Valley Park Nature Reserve would always benefit from funding.
- Improvements to traffic facilities in surrounding road system to alleviate congestion problems.
- Traffic calming for Provender Way should be considered.
- Contributions towards play areas existing and new.
- Traffic lights on roundabouts around Grove Green/new cut/M20 to assist traffic flows.
- Community facilities for youth at any residential area.
- Improvements to Weaving Street to make it more pedestrian friendly.

Village Halls. Sandling, Grove Green and Weaving Village Hall could also do with some support.

Beechen Hall/parish office might benefit from development/expansion.

Walderslade/Lordswood

- Missing footway Impton Lane.
- Improvement to footway around the Boxley Road/Walderslade Woods Road roundabout (this will need investigation)
- Repair to wooden sound barrier fence at Wildfell Close.
- Walderslade Amenity Woods improvements and additions.
- Community facilities for children/youth at any residential area
- Westfield Sole Road – additional passing places and/or footway. Funding might be possible from any development on the Wards land on Westfield Sole Road and Gleamingwood Drive. Whilst this would not be possible for the total length of Westfield Sole Road it might possibly do some lengths of the road. If land is developed at Gleamingwood Drive then the request could be for a footway at the back of the development (Gleamingwood Drive already has a footway on one side).

Other.

- Land anywhere in the parish that is adjacent to Boxley, Walderslade, Lordswood and Sandling. Play areas on this land if possible as they all suffer from lack of facilities.
- Contributions to schools to improve facilities, additional spaces etc.
- Community facilities for youth at any residential area e.g. Grove Green and Walderslade.
- Dual carriageway outside Maidstone Crematorium and Nottcutts.

- Creation of a PROW across strategic gap between Bearsted Street and footbridge over M20 at Hockers Lane (14.04.08).
  - Roundabouts are to be named when replacement signs are erected. Agreed by KCC and MBC
    - Roundabout at New Cut Road/Bearsted Road - **Weaving Heath**.
    - Roundabout outside Maidstone Studios - **Grove Green**.
    - Roundabout at New Cut/Lodge Road - **Lodge Road**.
    - Roundabout on Bearsted Road/A249 - **Newnham**.
  - Upgrade/additional passing places on Tyland Lane, Boarley Lane and Grange Lane (10.11.08)
  - Provision of allotments somewhere in the parish. (20.04.09)
- Members' **agreed** that this list should be annually reviewed or earlier if necessary.