



wkps

Watch on the Weald

Newsletter of the Weald of Kent Protection Society

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Sept 2019

No: 162



What a Wonderful Weald
Help us keep it that way

TURN THAT LIGHT OUT...or better still, don't install it...



The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 identifies light pollution as one of the top five issues affecting the perceptual qualities of the AONB's natural beauty.

The Plan's Objective OQ4 seeks to promote the perceptual qualities that people value, with the rationale:

To ensure that the special qualities people value, such as tranquility, dark skies, sense of naturalness and clean air, are recognised and taken account of in AONB management.

Success of this objective would be that no loss of dark skies or tranquility occurs.

Involving public bodies and others, the recommended action is to:

Follow the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance; promoting information on dark sky-friendly lighting install outside lighting only when needed and use dark sky-friendly lighting.

In its consultation document 'Building for the High Weald' the AONB Unit sets out a design guide for the construction of new housing. DG9 Street Character & Details has this to say about lighting:

The High Weald is an intrinsically dark landscape characterised by dark skies at night, so standard street lighting is often not appropriate and would cause unacceptable light pollution to the AONB. Street lighting should only be used where it is absolutely necessary, and should conform to the Institute of Lighting Standards for AONBs and be capable of night time switch-off. Site specific solutions should be created that minimise light pollution and glare.

Where lighting is needed, the suburban impact of street 'clutter' of a proliferation of lighting columns, uncharacteristic in many of the villages in the High Weald, can be minimised through a more place-sensitive product selection; a combination of Passive Infrared lights (PIRs) on building access points (e.g. porch lights), low level bollard lighting on key public routes, and wall-mounted lighting within parking courts.

With all of the above in mind, how have new developments been lit? Let's look at a few examples...

Woodham Close, Hawkhurst

16 dwellings. 4 no. 6m high lighting columns and 2 no. 1m high bollards. Both the lighting columns and bollards are lit from dusk to dawn and are very bright.

Birchfield Grove, Hawkhurst

26 dwellings. NO lighting columns or bollards. Entry points to the houses have low level and low wattage motion sensor lights. There is no other form of external lighting.

Herschel Place, Hawkhurst

62 dwellings. No lighting columns. 15 no. 360° 1m high polar bollards, 12 no. 180° 1m high polar bollards. This is a large development; the bollards are strategically placed at bends in the road. BUT, the bollards are not activated by motion and are lit from dusk til dawn. The lights are unnecessarily bright.

Bloomsbury Gardens, Sissinghurst

60 dwellings. Numerous and very bright 1m high bollard lighting (lit from dusk to dawn) outside the sales office and show home. The main road of the development has 5m high lighting columns in black with lantern style lamps — these were not lit when I visited even though it was dark, not motion operated so must be dusk to dawn when lit. The side roads have sensor lit 1m high bollard lighting.

A development in **Benenden** of 12 dwellings has begun and the developer submitted details of a lighting scheme involving 3 no. 4m high lighting columns (on motion sensors) to light a footpath within the site boundary, and 5 no. 6m high lighting columns (no motion sensors) to light the internal roadway. Benenden has a dark skies policy and there are no street lights in the parish. The parish council submitted a strong objection to the lighting scheme, calling for entry point lighting at low level and low wattage, motion activated, on short timers only. Numerous residents registered objections as well and the developer has complied in revising the scheme.

When a full application is approved, the LPA imposes conditions that are dealt with by subsequent submissions. These applications have the suffix 'SUB' and the LPA does not consult the parish councils or the public on this type of application.

If a development has been approved near you — monitor the submission applications and keep your eyes peeled for lighting proposals.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 180 c) states: 'limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation'.



Local Plan policies may well include such protections (for example: TWBC policies exist to protect the dark skies).

Everyone can help to preserve the dark skies above our Weald — do you have an outside light? If so, make sure that it is angled downward, that it is operated by a motion sensor, and that it's on a short timer. And, please switch non-timed lights off at a reasonable time; don't leave them on all night. Restore the darkness to the nocturnal creatures...

We can all do our bit to retain, maintain or reclaim our dark skies!

Peta Grant
Planning Committee

Tenterden Museum

Tenterden & District Museum makes local history accessible to everyone.

Dip into 1,000 years of history with the help of our friendly stewards, and discover rich layers of history, architectural trends over the centuries, house or family history, all encapsulated in six rooms on two floors!

Interactive screens, an audio guide and clear interpretation of the eclectic collection means there is something for everyone.

Young people may like the 'mouse trail'; they search for mice dressed up in contemporary costume amongst the artefacts or they may be collecting badges for the Wheels of Time scheme; the steward will tell you more about this.

Opened in 1976, the museum is housed in an attractive weatherboard building originally built in 1873 as a waggon store which later became a warehouse for Mr Hooks china business. Described in the deeds as 'Plot of garden ground. Two stall stable and coach house with loft over and tool room by estimation 23 perches more or less'.

Exhibits show the history of Tenterden and the Cinque Ports, reflecting the rich history of the area.

Our most recent achievement is the 20th Century Room which features a showcase 1960s 'house' bringing back memories and is nostalgic to all our visitors. There is a mass of information, photographs, recollections and insights jostling for your attention in the new exhibition.



What you see is just the tip of the iceberg, the interactive screen and handsets next to the wallboards hold an astonishing amount of content.

The interactive screen covers every decade of the 20th Century. For example, 1920 – 1929 features the dedication of the war memorial, the floods at Wittersham and the Hales Place pageant of 1921 with photos from the Museum Archive cleverly inserted into the text.

Alongside the interactive screen are 'easy to use' audio handsets with an index of interviews. The interviews are fascinating as they were given by local people. Mr Goldsmith speaks of his childhood memories of his first sighting of an aeroplane, the May Fairs, and the Leigh Green Windmill Fire of 1913.



If you would rather browse, there are twelve large wallboards. Ten of the wallboards focus on local events from each decade and feature sport, the High Street, and Royal visits. The other two wallboards document WWI and WWII.

Situated in a quiet car park 25 yards from the pretty tree-lined High Street. The museum enjoys a convenient position near the town's cafes and boutique shops, bordering two large car parks, one of which has excellent WC facilities with a summertime coach park, and all close to the Kent and East Sussex Railway.

The Tenterden & District Museum is run entirely by volunteers and is self-funding and the £2 entrance charge - free for under 18s - goes towards the care of the collection.

For events and opening times see www.tenterdenmuseum.co.uk, sat-nav TN30 6HN. For House Histories to Genealogy, speak to our volunteer staff or email enquiries@tenterdenmuseum.co.uk

We look forward to meeting you!

Helen Whately MP

Guest Speaker at our AGM



Helen Whately MP, Faversham & Mid Kent - Conservative Party Deputy Chairman, was the Guest Speaker at WKPS' AGM on 13th June at the Weald of Kent Golf Club. Below are notes from the AGM:

1. **Housing**

- Appreciates everyone's concern at the scale of new development. Very worried at the struggle of so many to get on the housing ladder as a result of affordability.
- Housing has to be provided throughout the country and it is simply not possible to take the attitude that development must take place "somewhere else". Very concerned at our failure to provide adequate infrastructure as part of the development process and also very concerned at the poor quality of design. We have still not moved on from little red boxes along road frontages.

2. **Environment**

- Recognises the importance of the natural environment. Feels that DEFRA Secretary, Michael Gove, has carried out his job with great energy. The 25 Year Environment Plan is awaited. Green Governance is moving to the top of the political agenda and the need to see environmental net gain enshrined as a principal development objective does appear now to be accepted. She talked of a political ambition to allocate 500,000 hectares for conservation.

3. **Problems between the Settled Community and Traveller Community**

- Unauthorised development is a huge concern. The country cannot operate on the basis of one rule for one group and a different rule for another. So many of the planning issues relating to the Traveller community have to be dealt with retrospectively after serious breaches of planning law. There needs to be more power for the Police. At the heart of this issue is that the country should be run on a single agenda which applies to all. That way it will be easier to come together as a single nation and remove the divisions that are doing so much damage at the present time.

4. **Health**

- The desire for longevity is one thing, but with that there has to be quality of life. There is a greater understanding of dementia and significant advances in research.

5. Questions & Answers

There were three questions from the floor:-

- * Order of priorities seems very important. Surely infrastructure, mobile phone and broadband connectivity are vital ingredients before largescale development. The negative effect on the economy from current shortcomings must be colossal.
- * There needs to be a clearer understanding that restoration or creation of biodiversity is a long process. It is not like sowing a crop. If we are to see largescale development, biodiversity initiatives should be started before development commences and not as an afterthought, all alongside a permanent management regime.
- There needs to be clearer understanding in relation to Affordable Housing Policy. Should we not return to some form of Council Housing provision.

Helen replied as follows:-

The problem is that, for instance, Maidstone Borough Council own very little land and cannot compete with developers on acquisition. The aspiration is that, as more houses are built, a catch-up process begins to become established, leading to cheaper housing. In addition, with recent legislation, buy-to-let is far less popular with private landlords. With an ageing population, there remains a shortage of property for downsizing. There are also the disincentives of expensive Stamp Duty Land Tax. At the end of the day developers will not build unless the process is profitable.

So far as landowners are concerned, there is little ongoing responsibility to the local community. High values are realised and the landowner is able to reap the rewards without returning benefit to the community.

If Councils cannot demonstrate five year land supply, speculative applications succeed under the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- The same applies in relation to travellers in that in the absence of a five year land supply of traveller sites, applications in inappropriate areas will succeed.

The problem in provision of dedicated traveller sites is that inevitably and understandably neighbouring owners object. Nevertheless where such sites have been established, they have been generally successful.

Maidstone now have a five year land supply for the travelling community, and therefore need to be rigorous in refusing applications.

Shellina Prendergast of Maidstone Borough Council feels that the Planning Inspectorate is failing us and allowing ghettos to be created in the rural areas.

- Helen also stressed that current focus on a green agenda must not mean that our built heritage is forgotten. Maidstone Borough Council has the highest number of listed buildings of any borough in South East England. Environment, landscape and built heritage must all be taken into account in planning objectives.
- The power of Enforcement Agencies must be returned to them. They need to be able to take action where necessary and feel confident that regulatory control can be enforced. In recent years the view of the community is that the Environment Agency, for instance, has appeared to be under resourced, understaffed, and incapable of enforcement.

Vehicular Pollution in the Weald

The serious impact upon health of vehicle-caused pollution is now recognised by everybody. But by no means everybody appreciates that, quite apart from its appalling global impact, it has a real, and nasty, impact on even quite rural parts, such as the Weald of Kent. Nitrogen dioxide is the particular cause of respiratory problems.

Twice I have urged my own Borough Council (Tunbridge Wells) to publicise their measured figures for the main pollutants in the borough's probably most affected streets: answer there has been none. In Tunbridge Wells' case, it may be that the still pleasantly open TW town centre is relatively unpolluted in comparison with Maidstone or Ashford, so that officers and most councillors are not very interested; but in the remote eastern parts of the borough, such as Hawkhurst (above all), Goudhurst, Cranbrook and Sissinghurst, there may actually be more cause for concern.



Traffic congestion in Hawkhurst

The admirable Courier newspaper has helpfully shown up apparent inaction by the Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone and Ashford borough councils in comparison with neighbouring Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. Since 2010, the number of years of lives lost in Tonbridge through air pollution is estimated by Public Health England as 569 years, while the Tunbridge Wells figure is 462; Wealden council figures are actually worse.

To its considerable credit, Tonbridge and Malling BC has recently declared a 'climate emergency' and is conscious of its problems. TWBC recently adopted an 'Air Quality Action Plan', but this up to now seems to have lacked precise targets and publicised details of air quality measurements. Residents of the clearly vulnerable points such as poor Hawkhurst's and Goudhurst's centres, and Sissinghurst's High Street, should be given the information they need. Hardly less important, in judging the ceaseless new housing developments sought in proximity to them, the planning authorities must be made aware of the pollution and public health impacts.

Peter Allen

HAWKHURST GOLF COURSE HYBRID APPLICATION (19/02025)

FULL APPLICATION FOR A RELIEF ROAD AND OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR UP TO 417 DWELLINGS, etc.

This development will affect a great many people in Hawkhurst and the surrounding local area.

— HAVE YOUR SAY —

via the Tunbridge Wells BC website.

Comments can be made up to the determination date of Wednesday 16th October.

College Woods

For the last issue, I wrote about woods I know quite well - Brede Woods, whose ancient paths and secluded dells are a record of the area's history of iron smelting, smuggling and biodiversity. Now I'll write about a wood I know very little about, but treasure all the same. Knowledge is one way of getting to love a place: we see more when we know more, we notice things that we can name. But mystery in a landscape is also important, with the question of what might be around the next corner remaining one of the most compelling and propulsive reasons for pressing on.

College Woods in Wittersham are beautiful, fascinating, enigmatic and eccentric. We went there first on an early summer day when the meadow through which you approach the wood was bright with buttercups. You reach the meadow by passing through the churchyard and down a lane flanked by vineyards. The wood is a cool green cave of beech, chestnut and oak. It doesn't appear to be managed by any official body, but it is immaculately maintained, with a clearing where there is often evidence of a recent campfire, a tyre swing that arcs long and true, and all about the song of warblers, thrushes and finches.

We met a Scot on our first walk, a noble-looking man walking his sheep-dog. His voice was soft heather and peat, and he told us that the folly deep in the wood was an attempt to recreate a Scottish glen in the heart of the Weald, a marvel of ingenuity and madness. We threaded our way through thickening greenery to a series of rills and rivulets that stepped down the hillside from a deep-set tank of water at the top. The falling water was musical, uplifting, backed by the souging of the wind in the trees. We passed a heavily-scented philadelphus on our way up – another marker that this was curated wildness, a wood that was partly garden.

The wood, I later discovered, belongs to Wittersham Manor, which was previously known as Wittersham College, gifted to All Saint's College, Maidstone, by Henry IV in 1407. I have no idea who built the folly – perhaps one of our readers can enlighten me – but all I know is that this is a terribly special place, a wood of enduring beauty and extraordinary interest. Discovering a new wood is like being handed a gift – one that will continue to reveal its secrets over years to come.

Alex Preston



Iron Firebacks

There is a good chance that if you peer into the inglenook fireplace of an old pub or farmhouse you will see a fireback. In the 16th and 17th centuries firebacks were frequent products of the iron furnaces that were once found across the Weald. The fireplaces in houses in the region benefited from these iron plates, or chimney backs, as they were then called, for they protected the brick or stonework, they radiated the heat of the fire into the room and they could add embellishment to an essentially utilitarian domestic space.

Iron founders could cast firebacks using standard patterns, such as royal coats of arms, or they could make bespoke designs. Furnaces that made firebacks might hold stocks of stamps, such as pieces of carved wood from dismantled furniture, or heraldic symbols, that could be pressed into the sand mould, arranged in a design to suit the buyer's wishes. Sometimes letters and numbers were all that were needed. The fireback made for Richard Holden, a Cranbrook clothier, which bore his initials, RH, and the date 1659, still stands in the house where he lived in Sissinghurst.



People were superstitious in those days and often attributed accidents and mishaps to malevolent spirits. They attempted to protect their homes by placing collections of objects in secret places or invoking the Virgin Mary by scratching her initials on mantelpieces. The chimney was an ever-open access to the witches or demons they feared, and the fireplace a ready source of danger, both real and imagined, so a fireback with similar marks cast on its surface was believed to ward off evil influences.

Wealthier landowners might want to have a visible sign of their family's status. The Elizabethan judge William Ayloff, who lived in Essex, had to go to a Kent foundry to have a fireback cast with the shield of his arms. Years later, backs reusing the Ayloff shield stamp were produced in early 17th century Kent for anyone who wanted to aggrandise their home, even if the arms were someone else's.

Late in the seventeenth century the reign of William and Mary introduced a new style of fireback based on designs made in Germany for the Dutch market. These were intended for the smaller, narrower fireplaces that were becoming popular as coal became more widespread as a fuel instead of wood. Typically they bore pictorial images drawn from classical mythology or of allegorical subjects.

Jeremy Hodgkinson

Picture: A damaged 16th century fireback decorated with the Tudor royal shield, crosses to ward off evil, repeated figurines and a handprint, perhaps of the iron founder. This and others are on display in the tea room at Hole Park Gardens, Rolvenden.

*It is only within us that landscapes
become landscapes.*

Fernando Pessoa
1888 - 1935

A Famous Visitor to Moat Farm Long Ago?

For some months, I had been wondering how William The Conqueror got to Romney after the Battle of Hastings in October 1066. Romney had not welcomed some of his men when they landed there. Shirley Moor was tidal then and William must have passed near Woodchurch where I live. Then I was shown K.P. Witney's 1976 book *The Jutish Forest* which provided invaluable clues.

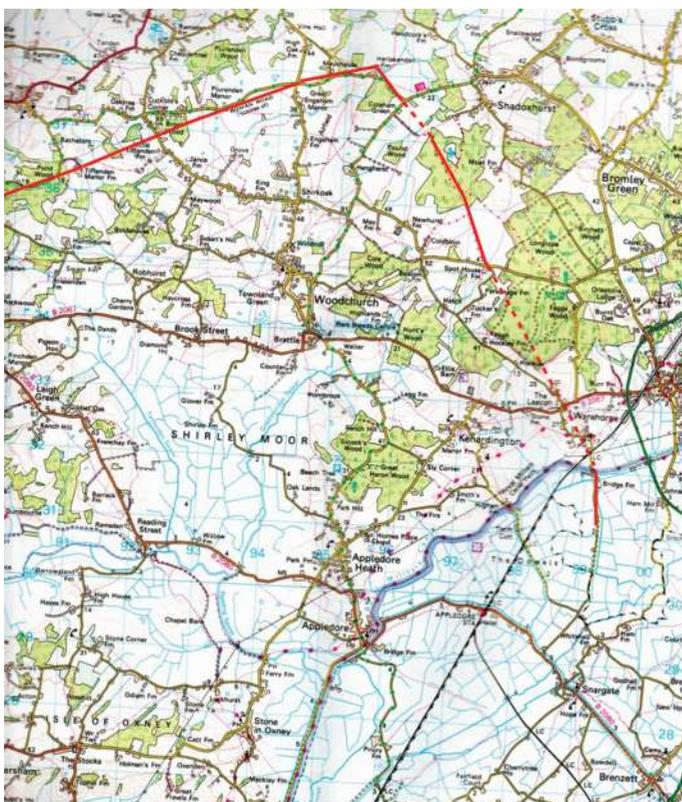
In those days the Wealden Forest stretched right across this area. Witney explains the importance of the trackways in the Forest. They were used by men driving stock around, and by iron workers to move their products, with waterways playing an important part for the latter. Long ago there was an estuary from Port Lympne up to a haven at Warehorne and Kenardington. From there, the iron could be shipped away to the Continent and beyond.

The nearest Roman road ran east/west between St. Michaels and West Hawk Farm near Ashford, passing just to the north of Woodchurch. Witney says there was a spur from this Roman route starting close to Harlackenden near Woodchurch and running down roughly south to Warehorne via Spot House Farm to the west of the modern Orlestone Forest.

On the 8th of May, a group of us went to Mike Bax's Moat Farm at Shadoxhurst to listen to nightingales. He led us into his wood and there they were, singing away. A track runs straight through this wood and at the time I did not realise where I was. Back home I looked at the OS map. The track in the wood at Moat Farm was part of the route from Harlackenden to Warehorne.

There was another more direct route that William could have used. It ran along Brook Street, the Woodchurch/Tenterden road. We will probably never know the truth for certain but William might well have passed by close to Moat Farm; it was autumn 1066 and the nightingales would have gone back to Africa.

K.P. Witney. 1976. The Jutish Forest – A Study of the Weald of Kent from 450 to 1380.



William's Possible Route from Tenterden to Romney via Moat Farm

— following existing routes or physical features no existing routes or features

Jon Chapman

Nature Notes

Elsewhere in this publication you will read the report of WKPS members' visit to Moat Farm, Shadoxhurst to hear Nightingales in full song in early May.

It is important to understand the plight of this famous bird. The problem does not necessarily relate to the Nightingale as a species, as it still summers in great numbers in Southern Europe. But, in England it is an example of how manmade pressure affects the natural world. Scientists are monitoring losses, the scale of which is difficult to understand.

The State of Nature Report of 2013 clarifies that 44 million UK breeding birds have been lost since the 1960s with a decrease of 72% in our butterfly species. In Europe, about 421 million individual birds had been lost in the previous 30 years.

Similar trends are occurring across the globe to the extent that science now refers to 'the sixth extinction'. The fifth occurred about 65 million years ago when a meteorite landed in Central America creating conditions which wiped out the dinosaurs.

In the case of the Nightingale the British Trust for Ornithology finds that a bird which was once heard up to South Yorkshire across into Wales, is now restricted to Kent, Surrey, Sussex and into East Anglia. The Trust's Spring Surveys of singing male birds gauges a population decline of about 90% since the late 1960s. Spread your hands in front of you and fold down your fingers one by one until you are left with a single thumb. That

scale of loss is catastrophic and leads the BTO to predict that the Nightingale could be extinct in Britain within the next two to three decades.

So what did we achieve at the WKPS Nightingale evening?

A few attendees had heard Nightingales before but were thrilled to be reminded of the wonderful song. I am sure they will fight for the Nightingale wherever it is threatened. The vast majority had never heard a Nightingale before. They were equally thrilled and now also will fight to hold onto the species.



Then we come to baseline theory. I grew up in the 1960s and remember butterflies 'teeming' in our garden and numerous nesting songbirds. Those who grew up in the 1950s would have been aware of an even healthier natural world.

The movers and shakers of today, in their 30s and 40s grew up in the 80s and 90s. If they were interested in butterflies they might have visited the local park with its Buddleia trees and been excited to see ten Red Admirals. Those of us who visited that park in the 50s and 60s probably saw 30. The older cohort is far more conscious

today of declining numbers than the younger cohort. They visit the park today with their children and see five Red Admirals. That feels quite comfortable against the ten they saw 30 years ago - but 50 years ago there were 30. This is the shifting baseline. We all tend to buy into this, because regardless of age, we have all been born into a time of reducing biodiversity.

This is all relevant to protection of the Weald and any other environment. We can't switch off new development, but we can press for it to take place in the right location, with a decent contribution out of the value generated to restoration of the right conditions or the recovery of nature and the protection of heritage in our towns and villages.

That is really what WKPS is all about.

We often express concern at the high average age of our members and the difficulty of recruiting the younger generation. Perhaps part of the problem is

that the older generation starts with a baseline which screams out at the effect of development pressure, whereas later generations see less damage and therefore have less concern over the depletion of our built and natural environments. A child of the 90s probably feels that everything is still about the same. But – they are switched on to climate change which goes hand in hand with species decline. So, there is hope.

Mike Bax
WKPS Chairman

I Stand Up for Trees.....

...so says the car sticker of Woodland Trust members! I joined the organisation recently and received a welcome pack consisting of: a car sticker, a swatch to identify trees by leaf and bark, the Trust's guide and directory of woodlands that they look after, and the current edition of 'Broadleaf', the Trust's quarterly magazine.

'We all need trees — they clean our air, purify our soil and they nurture rare species — they stand up for us.' I might also add to this Woodland Trust wording, that they are beautiful and majestic.

And... we need them in our landscape because they shape our landscape, as well as for their contribution to saving the planet that we humans are intent on destroying.



Ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees are protected by paragraph 175 c) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states: 'development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁵⁸ and a suitable compensation strategy exists;...' Footnote 58 gives the exceptions as including nationally significant infrastructure projects, where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat.

The Woodland Trust lobbied government for years and the above entry in the 2018 revised NPPF forbids the destruction of ancient and veteran trees.

Though the recognition afforded to ancient and veteran trees by the NPPF is a huge achievement, it ironically leaves many of our potentially best trees in jeopardy. The WT's argument is that pre-Victorian buildings are automatically listed and therefore preserved; they can't be demolished. Ancient monuments have automatic protection, and endangered animals are protected by law; ancient trees should have the same protection...

170,000 trees are recorded in the Ancient Trees Inventory (ATI) — this is thought to be less than a quarter of the actual number of ancient, veteran and notable trees out there. Visit woodlandtrust.org.uk and check whether the tree that you know and love is recorded. If it isn't, you can add it, and a WT trained verifier will assess its status.



Sadly, some local planning authorities and developers have not caught up with the revised NPPF, and are not implementing the level of protection afforded to ancient woodlands and trees. The WT has written to all heads of local authorities across England to encourage the adoption of good practice and sound policy when making key decisions for woods and trees.

We all need to stand up for trees...

Peta Grant
Planning Committee

TWBC Draft Local Plan

The TWBC Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation is expected to start on 20 September and end on 1 November 2019.

The Objectively Assessed Housing Need for the borough over the Plan period to 2036 is confirmed as 13,560 dwellings (678 per year).

Site Allocations and Numbers in Summary:

Area	No of Dwellings (approx.)	Located on number of Sites	Notes
Royal Tunbridge Wells Main Urban Area	1,222 - 1,320	17	Of which consent already granted for 100, 12, 89, and 239 dwellings on four sites.
Southborough	135 - 205	3	Of which consent already granted for 69 and 16 dwellings on two sites.
Capel (including Tudeley Village)	2,500 - 2,800		Standalone garden settlement of new dwellings, schools, etc. Approx. 1,900 dwellings to be delivered in the Plan period.
Capel and Paddock Wood	4,000		These allocations are in addition to the development under construction at Mascalls Court Farm (309 dwellings) and the development permitted at Church Farm (300 dwellings). A further 115 dwellings are proposed to be allocated at Mascalls Farm to the 309 that already have permission. These will be in addition to the 4,000 referred to in the No. of Dwellings column.
Cranbrook and Sissinghurst	718 - 803	9	Of which consent already granted for 36 and 28 dwellings on two sites allocated in Cranbrook and approx. 100-115 on five sites in Sissinghurst.

Area	No of Dwellings (approx.)	Located on number of Sites	Notes
Hawkhurst	681 - 731	7	Of which consent already granted for 25 dwellings on one site. Included in the allocations figures is the former Golf Course site for a relief road, community centre and approx. 400-450 dwellings.
Benenden	119 - 129	4	Of which consent already granted for 12 and 22 (net increase) dwellings on two sites.
Bidborough	0	0	No site allocations because of a lack of suitable sites submitted under the Call for Sites.
Brenchley & Matfield	91 - 150	4	
Frittenden	25 - 30	1	
Goudhurst	21 - 26	2	Of which consent already granted for 11 dwellings on one site.
Horsmonden	225 - 305	3	
Lamberhurst	50 - 60	2	
Pembury	294 - 304	5	Of which consent already granted for 19 dwellings on one site.
Rusthall	15	1	
Sandhurst	20 - 27	2	
Speldhurst	15 - 20	1	

Approximately 70% of the Tunbridge Wells borough is located in the High Weald AONB. An AONB has the highest status of protection in relation to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty. That said, it does not mean that the AONB is exempt from development, as we have already seen elsewhere.

The High Weald AONB covers an area of 1,461km² over four counties, 11 districts and 11 parliamentary constituencies; there are 100 parishes wholly or partly in the AONB.

TWBC's task to find land upon which to build 13,500 dwellings (as directed by Government targets) was extremely difficult because of the extent of the AONB within the borough.

Highly contentious, of course, is the former Golf Club site in Hawkhurst; the construction of a relief road and then adding 400+ dwellings, is not a solution to the congestion problems already experienced in the village centre.

We encourage you to respond to the Draft Local Plan Consultation and make your views known.

Peta Grant
Planning Committee

Roundup of Events

Boldshaves Garden Tour and Winetasting

On Friday 26th April over 30 WKPS members and friends met at Boldshaves Gardens in Woodchurch for a captivating few hours on a sunny evening. Peregrine Massey the owner of this beautiful estate and family home gave us all an amazing guided tour around the lovingly restored garden, which he himself plants and cultivates with just one gardener. Peregrine explained he has worked on redeveloping the garden over the last 25 years, a true labour of love.

The garden is part terraced, south-facing, with a walled garden containing a variety of semi-hardy and southern hemisphere plants; a Camellia dell; herbaceous borders, including the well-known Red Borders; a Flame Bed; an Italian Garden; a garden planted up in 2012 to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee; a vegetable garden; a wide variety of old-fashioned English roses; and a herb garden.



We were very lucky that the ancient woodland, which borders the garden was in full flower with the most amazing show of bluebells.

On our return to the barn we were lucky to be given a free run to taste many delicious French wines with John Brownsdon, Master of Wine. Now retired, John runs 'Boozecruzes' to France. The wines were delicious and could be ordered through John.

Many thanks to both Peregrine Massey and John Brownsdon for donating all the money raised to WKPS.

Fay Merrick

Ancient, Veteran and Notable Trees Defined

Ancient tree characteristics: depends on the species, but has three key features:

- A low, fat and squat shape because the crown has retrenched (reduced in size) through age.
- A wide trunk compared with others of the same species.
- Hollowing of the trunk (not always visible).

Veteran tree: can be of any age, but has ancient characteristics as above. These may not be due to age, but could result from natural damage, management, or the tree's environment.

Notable trees: usually a tree which is significant locally, because it is special or particularly large compared with trees around it. Notable trees are usually mature, but not always, some trees appear to be huge even when quite young.

Remember: Ancient trees are all veterans, but not all veterans are ancient.

Wealden Literary Festival

The organisers of the Wealden Literary Festival must have done something right in a previous life. There was, it is said, a brief burst of drizzle on the festival's first weekend in 2016. Since then, though, the weather has been dependably perfect, and 2019's event is already basked in a golden glow in my memory. We are so incredibly lucky to have one of the country's most unique and inspiring literary festivals on our doorstep.

Saturday started with local celebrity author Adam Nicolson, whose latest book, *The Making of Poetry*, is the story of the summer Wordsworth and Coleridge spent together in the Quantocks. Its interweaving of lyrical prose, nature writing and philosophy made it the ideal launchpad for a weekend immersed in literature and the environment. What's more, the book is beautifully illustrated by a local artist, Tom Hammick, whose illuminating words on visual art

highlighted another of the festival's great joys – the celebration of craft, of creativity.

We pitched our tents in the shaded glade reserved for campers and set off in different directions to immerse ourselves in the various activities the festival offers. I hosted a talk with one of my heroes, Julia Blackburn, whose *In Search of Doggerland* is an eccentric masterpiece. My children had their faces painted, wove wooden baskets, went to a spoon-carving demonstration. There was firemaking with a bushcraft expert, foraging walks in the woods, everywhere some new thing to learn, to help us engage more deeply with the surrounding countryside.

The talks continued, with a particular highlight being Isabella Tree's book *Wilding*, which describes her project to rewild her

Sussex estate, Knepp.

There was also a cooling discussion between Horatio Clare and Jean McNeil about their time aboard icebreaking ships, one in Finland, the other in the Antarctic. The day faded into a beautiful evening, and we gathered around the food stalls to have our supper, and then bedded down in between the whispering trees.

The next day brought more of the same – superb talks, inspiring workshops, great food. It all feels so effortless and perfectly situated within the art-and-crafts dream that is Boldshaves, within the bright glory of its garden. The Wealden Literary Festival is now a central part of our annual calendar, inked in at the beginning of every year, totally unmissable. We are already excited about 2020.

Alex Preston

Nightingale Evening at Moat Farm, Shadoxhurst

This popular event saw an attendance of over 30 with a reasonably clear evening after a damp start to the day.

Mike Bax explained over drinks and nibbles that we would walk through the farm for about 1½ hours looking at the wild flower meadows and ancient woodland before arriving at the Nightingale 'hotspot' about 45 minutes before dusk.

The wildflower meadows are not at their peak until the end of May through to July, but we saw flowerheads forming on dozens of Common Spotted Orchids. Water Violets were in full flower on two ponds – an indicator species of water purity, and a wide array of grasses and sedges were establishing themselves.

In the woodlands we were shown two ancient Wild Service trees, known as Chequer Trees locally. This name reflects the fact that the paler sapwood and darker heartwood were used in the past for chequerboards.

We then found the Nightingales in Street End Wood where at least half a dozen birds were in full voice. These are the males holding territory, with the females hopefully incubating eggs in the undergrowth below.

This trip is a true insight into one of the wild places of the Weald. One fascinating statistic is that five acres of the unspoilt meadows contains approximately one tonne of insects and some forty million predatory invertebrates, many of them relatively microscopic in size. A bit like a miniature Westminster!



Dates for your Diary

Lunch at London Beach Hotel

Wednesday 30th October 2019

12.30 for 1.00pm

3 course subsidised lunch
£25 per person

Menu Options*

Soup of the Day (V)
Garlic & Herb Croutons

Char Grilled Chicken Supreme
Parsnip & Apple Puree, Honey Roasted
Carrots, Roasted New Potatoes, Cider Sauce

Roasted Vegetable Wellington (V)
Tomato & Roasted Pepper Salsa

Dark Chocolate Brownie
Passion Fruit, Raspberries & Hazelnuts

Tea/Coffee

Charity Bridge Afternoon

Friday 22nd November 2019

**at Benenden Village Hall,
The Street, Benenden TN17 4DE**

WKPS are delighted to invite you
and your friends to an afternoon of
Chicago Bridge and delicious
afternoon tea and cakes.

Bridge will commence at 2pm with
Tea being served from 3.30pm.
The cost for the afternoon is
£12.50 per person.

We would be grateful if you could bring
your own table, cloths and cards.

If you would like to join us please email
secretary@wkps.org.uk and request an
application form.

*Please note choices for the Lunch must be given to London Beach 2 weeks before the lunch, so your prompt decisions would be very much appreciated. Cheques, choices to Secretary, 5 Castle Hurst, Bodiam, East Sussex, TN32 5UW, secretary@wkps.org.uk or BACS payment to A/c 01754514 sort code 30-90-28, referencing LLB/your surname.



wkps

The Weald of Kent Protection Society

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