

WYE with HINXHILL PARISH COUNCIL	Agenda Item
Highways issues	Thursday 17 March 2011
Status	Information and decision

Prepared Tuesday 15 March 2011

HIGHWAYS ISSUES

a) Village Gateways project

I have not yet managed to speak to Cllr Wickham but left messages for him to ring me back. I will inform him that generally councillors want to see the best possible job done (including sorting out the speed limit on Olantigh Road) but not at the risk of the project becoming undeliverable.

I will tactfully suggest that it is entirely up to him to decide whether to push for a 'proper' job or not. As long as he is prepared to find the additional money and pressure the KHS officer concerned to prepare and publicise the TRO promptly, then there should be no problem. If he fails to find the money or fails to press the officer to act efficiently (so the TRO is late and the project slips/fails) then he will be responsible. I am sure he will try and do his best for Wye.

b) Parking Restrictions in Wye

i. To receive an update from Kent Highway Services and ABC

In response to my letter and the plans for double yellow lines, KHS replied that requests for parking restrictions such as double yellow lines are the responsibility of Ashford Borough Council. KHS therefore passed my letter on to ABC. KHS then got back to say that they had liaised with ABC who have no funds for such works.

ii. To authorise a response to the letter of complaint from Wye Business Association

WBA has written complaining about the way the Parish Council has handled the introduction of parking restrictions in Wye. The letter is reproduced on page 3. There has also been some discussion on wyeweb – reproduced on pages 4-7.

With regard to the provision of extra parking, please remember that Network Rail is not responsible for station parking. The existing station car park is simply an unmaintained piece of land owned by Network Rail which drivers use informally for parking.

Southeastern is responsible for station car parking and their car parks are managed by Meteor. The Parish Council has twice asked if Southeastern would consider providing a car park at Wye but has been told 'no'. Meteor, of course, would charge for parking.

The former railway sidings are privately owned and have an estimated 6 figure value (excluding any residential development potential).

The issue of Gregory Court car park is being pursued and will no doubt be brought to the attention of Cllr Wood and John Bunnett on 22 March.

Action: To authorise an appropriate response to WBA.

iii. To consider requesting Cllr Andrew Wickham to support the project from his Member Highway Fund.

KHS have advised that the only way forward would be if Andrew Wickham would be willing to use his Member Highway Fund. The Parish Council should therefore approach Cllr Wickham.

Action: To decide whether or not to ask Cllr Wickham to take this project on and fund it from his Highways Fund.

Wye Business Association

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10th March 2011

Dear Councilor Clifford and Parish Councilors,

Proposed Double Yellow Lines for Wye

At our meeting of 9th March 2011 members were universally dismayed at the way the Parish Council's proposal to institute a whole raft of new double yellow lines throughout the village had been handled. There has been no consultation at all with any of those members whose businesses would be most affected, directly and indirectly; no consideration has been given to where the scores of cars displaced by the proposals would go and no account taken of the short- term nature of much of the parking.

Members have requested that I seek the Parish Council's reasons for initiating these proposals and to express their strong concerns at the way in which this matter has been handled.

Also discussed at our meeting was the Parish Plan, whereby Parishioners had requested more parking spaces. In making your decision to apply for yellow lines, has the Parish Council considered this aspect of the Parish Plan?

Kind regards

Ann Sutherland

Ann Sutherland
Chairman
Wye Business Association

Some Parish News

Published by [Editor](#) at 12:51 am under [About Wye, Environment](#)

For those of our readers who neither attend the meetings of the parish council nor take the parish magazine we report that the parish council has set the parish precept for 2011/2012 at £42, 532 – an increase of £2161 over the current year. With the rate of inflation running at 4% the increase, which is 5.35%, would appear reasonable if all the expenditures are considered necessary.

However, with even major services being asked to reduce expenditures in the face of the financial crisis the question is not whether the increase is fair but whether we are getting value for money?

The parish council has also been deliberating proposals to extend restricted parking around the village and is asking Kent Highways whether a yellow line scheme is feasible. In the present climate and with outstanding repairs to our roads it is probable that yellow line schemes for Wye will not progress very far up the list of KCC priorities. Perhaps the railway, which obviously attracts a considerable number of car-using commuters, can be persuaded to purchase and develop car parking for their own customers. At the same time the school rush hours that have clearly increased traffic into the village should be more serious about restricting parental use of cars. The Naccolt road has suffered grievously from excessive wear and tear in recent years and there seems to be no enthusiasm to address the problem.

In these times of Big Society when we have passed through a period when Wye was seen as an opportunity to be exploited and during when we have witnessed serious pressures on our local services and infrastructure perhaps it would only be fair to expect a bit of “give” from Network Rail, KCC and Tesco. Why Tesco? Surely the opening of the superstore at Junction11 has been partially responsible for the increased traffic along the Wye-Hinxhill-Willesborough road? Similarly the expansion of the local school has attracted many children from not only our local rural area but also from Ashford town. The bottleneck caused by the Network Rail level-crossing is, understandably, avoided by car and lorry drivers. The result- an increased use of the back road. The very least that Network Rail could do is to create their own car parking spaces at no cost to the village. Whenever planners discuss our future they are very cavalier about our infrastructure after all for them it is a matter of our convenience and a cost that we bear, not them.

[8 responses so far](#)

8 Responses to “Some Parish News”

1. [# Dave Dubber](#) on 06 Mar 2011 at 2:11 am

Personally, I would think that providing more 'yellow lines' in the village of Wye should be the least of the priorities right now. Where are they considering restricting parking (even for a few minutes) and will this affect the local businesses in the village?

2. [# Jack Woodford](#) on 07 Mar 2011 at 5:49 pm

Just a short reply to Dave Dubber There is a problem with too many cars in Wye and not enough road space and parking space for them. The village road layout is medieval and developed when the transport was for horses, carts and Shanksy's pony – not for a population of over 2,000 and 200-300 cars. Changes in the education system now mean that pupils at the local primary school come from a wide catchment area and often arrive and depart by car. Several of which are 4x4's the consequence is, as everybody down Bridge Street knows, a gridlock between 8.45am to 9.30 am and similarly between 3.00pm and 3.45pm. Tail backs from the level crossing up to the Pharmacy are just normal at these times. Maybe mothers should be encouraged to cycle into the school with their children to alleviate the congestion. You can see this in operation in Holland and Belgium. It would be healthier and cut down on pollution.

We also have a problem with the Wye Bus, which quite a few elderly and not so elderly residents use and join from the three bus stops around Wye. Every so often the busdriver has difficulty getting through at a pinch point, due to carelessly parked cars, at the top of Bridge Street. Usually it is successful, as the bus drivers are very competent, but there is always the possibility that Stagecoach might, in order to save money, re-route along Bramble Lane, then up Harville Road. Thus avoiding the delays of both the level crossing and Bridge Street. Wye residents would then have to join at the bus stop in Harville Road.

There is no easy solution to parking. If handwritten signs were put at possible bottlenecks, asking people not to park at certain times of the day, would anybody bother to take notice? If any Wye resident has a solution, why not present it to the next meeting of Wye PC. After all the subject was on the last two agendas and no one bothered to show up to discuss it

3. [# Editor](#) on 07 Mar 2011 at 6:15 pm

It is not only Bridge Street that experiences bottle-necks and congestion arising from parking and drop-offs. Bramble Lane at peak times experiences traffic backing up beyond Wye Motors and as far as the cottages. Of course there are always clever people who try to by-pass the traffic in Harville Road and join the queue in

Harville Road. Add to the the excessive speeding along a very narrow and sinuous road and you have the ingredients of some very nasty incidents.

4. [# Mary Braithwaite](#) on 09 Mar 2011 at 6:58 pm

A more positive approach to the parking problems in Wye would be marked out parking bays indicating where cars can park. This could increase parking spaces, especially in Church Street. Businesses in Wye do not need more constraints, and reducing the parking even more by adding double yellow lines – especially where there are retail businesses – would do this. It's not a question, Jack, of people not bothering to turn up to Parish Council meetings, as if we are not interested. There are many ways in which people can be consulted outwith Council meetings. The business community in particular can be asked for their views via the Wye Business Association, which I am sure will be happy to provide feedback and suggestions on any issue of interest.

5. [# Jack Woodford](#) on 10 Mar 2011 at 9:22 am

Just a short reply to Mary. In principal I agree that a marked-out parking system in Church Street would be more appropriate, even a diagonal layout, as you have in certain Belgian towns, and the lower end blocked off with a nice flower tub arrangement. However, for the last 4 years we have been endeavouring to have Gregory Court Car Park marked out for 28 car parking spaces. The layout is there on an ABC computer but internal procedures just keep delaying it. Can you imagine the delays in trying to get a new parking scheme in Church Street! I only suggested that residents attended the PC and contribute their concerns when contentious matters, e.g. yellow lines, are on the agenda, as they are, for better or worse, the locally elected group charged with trying to tackle these local and often difficult matters. If WBA would like to organise a meeting where these concerns are raised then I'm sure all interested residents would have an opportunity to contribute their feelings on this matter and the PC would have to take note. On occasions when I walk past the Bus Stop and residents are waiting for the 662 Bus to Ashford, I ask their opinion on delays to the bus, possible re-routing, scrapping of concessionary bus fares. They are all very positive about retaining the existing service and route. We are never going to have a system that pleases everybody, but we have to try and make the best of the existing road system that exists. The whole road system is grossly overloaded and totally inadequate for the traffic. At a recent JTB meeting the total KCC allocation for repairing potholes in the Ashford District for the current year is currently £50,000. The Coalition Government is apparently going to stump up £100 million for the whole of the UK road repair bill, but how much of that will assist us driving up and down the Hinxhill Road without car damage I'm not to sure.

6. [# Mary Braithwaite](#) on 10 Mar 2011 at 9:27 pm

It is certainly true that Wye suffers from congestion and insufficient parking, but I still wonder why the Parish Council seems to have decided that more yellow lines are the solution. If the problem is primarily the occasional difficulty of buses getting down the top end of Bridge Street, might there be other solutions to this? The 2007 Parish Plan called inter alia for more public car parking and schemes to reduce car use. Has the Parish Council explored options for these, which would improve parking not make it worse? Feedback on any options does not necessarily require a specific meeting. The WBA, for example, can consult its members through its regular mailings and monthly meetings, and I am sure that other groups in Wye could do likewise. It would be very interesting to have the various options being considered by the Parish Council outlined on Wyeweb.

7. [# Dave Dubber](#) on 11 Mar 2011 at 1:52 am

Would like to comment on the repairs made to the road between Wye and The Devils Kneading Trough area of Hastingleigh. This year they have actually made an excellent repair job of the potholes and praise should be given to all concerned. However, in the interests of safety it would seem imperative that the centre white lines are repainted as when we have thick mists on this road – which is quite often – it is very difficult to remain 'on your side of the road' without them.

8. [# Jack Woodford](#) on 11 Mar 2011 at 3:17 pm

Further to Mary's comments on our parking problem in Wye, unfortunately there are no vacant available open spaces within Wye Village for additional car parking. Our only space close to the village centre is Gregory Court Car and even that is too far for many shoppers and visitors as will be seen by the number of cars that park on the Co-Op corner, in front of the Co-Op, and opposite. An open space that is not used is the car parking by Kempes Library. But would anybody want to walk all the way down Olantigh Road, past the College, across the Green then to the Co-Op or the other village shops? Even with petrol hitting over £6.00 per gallon, it has no effect on limiting car use and congestion at certain times in Wye is just as bad as it ever was. I agree that more discussion on this subject should take place and if any fellow councillors are following this on-line debate their comments would, I'm sure, be much appreciated or, come to that, any Wye resident who has an interest in this difficult matter.
