

BOROUGH GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

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PARISH POLL 29 MAY 2008 May Fair Flyer

There are a number of inaccuracies on the Borough Green May Fair Flyer (promoted and published by Mr F M Taylor) that you may recently have received.

POLLING HOURS

The Polling Station at Borough Green Village Hall will be open from 4pm to 9pm, NOT 7am to 10pm.

PARISH BOUNDARIES

Borough Green is the smallest parish in Kent and the most densely populated. It is a “young” parish in that it was formed from parts of the parishes of Wrotham (whose boundary came down to the train station), Platt, Plaxtol and Ightham. Borough Green Parish Council (BGPC) was formed in the mid 1930s.

Since that time, the boundaries have altered from time to time, not necessarily by huge amounts, but they have changed. Butterworths cricket field was in Plaxtol parish but moved to Borough Green. Minters Orchard now lies wholly in Platt rather than partly in Borough Green. Lingfield Road now lies wholly in Borough Green rather than partly in Platt. A large part of Valley View Estate was formerly in Ightham – hence the lack of street lights in parts of this estate. So it is not unusual for the Parish Council to ask for boundary changes.

When the opportunity arose to request further boundary changes up to the M26 in the north and along the line of the proposed bypass and Hanson's Haul Road to the west and southwest of the Parish it was not done for “empire building” but because we are built up to our boundaries to the east and west and are topped and tailed by quarries to our north and south. We would like Potters Mede to lie within Borough Green Parish rather than across the ditch and in Wrotham Parish.

As the CEMEX quarry (formerly RMC) already lies mainly within our parish it is misleading to imply that it lays outside our boundaries. It is a fact that both CEMEX and its former owners have long wanted some residential development on their land and this has been firmly resisted by the parish council. Borough Green Sandpits Ltd on the opposite side of the A227 has also wanted residential development on its land; this too has been firmly resisted by the Parish Council. The two fields lying to the east and south of the Recreation Ground are in the ownership of a developer and they too have long wanted to develop this land. Again we have taken a very firm line against any such proposal.

At Isles Quarry West, Hanson already holds Lawful Use Rights (sometimes referred to as Permitted Development Rights) on part of the site. BGPC decided that if there were to be some new housing, it would prefer any residential development to be on this site rather than on any of the other three sites within the parish boundaries. At no time did it specify how many or how few, but could not and would not agree to a “mini Milton Keynes” as bandied around by some. There has never been and there never will be, any collusion between BGPC and the potential developers of this site.

H+H Celcon/Ightham Sandpits sits in the parishes of Ightham and Wrotham with only a very small part of it in Borough Green. Until any application for a new factory is lodged with Kent County Council, we cannot speculate as to what may or may not happen to the site. It is, however, a brown field site.

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

It is grossly untrue and incorrect to state that the last Parish Council elections were held in 1991 and by implication, that the present council members are unelected.

BGPC is a Council of 11 Members, all of whom are unpaid volunteers. In 1991 more than 11 residents stood for election but in subsequent election years, 1995, 1999, 2003 and 2007, either 11 or fewer residents put themselves forward and were therefore elected “unopposed”.

Whenever vacancies have occurred in the years between elections, the Council has endeavoured to encourage residents from different areas of the village and from all walks of life to put their name forward for co-option; one volunteer being worth 10 pressed men! Sadly not everyone has either the time or the commitment to come forward.

There are many rules in place to ensure councils are transparent and accountable. Our Chairman’s Annual Reports are published as soon as possible after being presented verbally at the Annual Parish Meeting, by being either delivered to households in the parish or printed in the Voice and published on the website. Summary notes of monthly Parish Council meetings are printed in The Voice, with full Minutes available on our website. Parish Council meetings are open to all members of the public unless matters of a confidential nature are to be discussed.

By giving you this information, we hope to have corrected inaccuracies in the Borough Green May Fair Flyer as published and enabled you to make an informed choice at the Parish Poll.