

Environmental Services Committee Report 2022/23

The ESC meeting covers a wide variety of topics within our excellent Parish.

I would like to thank Mel, Lee, the staff and all Cllrs for their continued support in all aspects of the committee.

Below are some highlights over the last year.

Upper Bell Slip Road, Blue Bell Hill

Thanks to Cllr Sullivan, Cllr Smith and all other Cllrs who have been pressing for signage to discourage lorries parking in the emergency slip road by Blue Bell Hill.

Our constant lobbying has meant that KCC put in signs which appear to have had a good effect in the area.

Whilst you will always get a lorry or two ignoring the rules, I often drive past an empty slip road which would have previously been full of lorries.

The A229 by Blue Bell Hill is a dangerous piece of road, and it is essential that this emergency access is clear.

Tunbury Avenue, Walderslade

I would like to thank Cllr Oyewusi and all other Cllrs who have been involved with engaging local authorities regarding the traffic and speeding issues around school times.

This lobbying has resulted in a mini-warden project which will be starting soon, prevention is always better than cure, and Tunbury Avenue is a place which needs improved traffic calming measures before a severe accident occurs.

Bus Services

The bus service within Aylesford and Eccles continues to be highly disappointing.

With help from local Cllrs and our MP, we managed to secure both a school service and a twice-weekly limited service.

This is not good enough and not fit for purpose. Local residents cannot get to medical appointments, work, shop or socialise due to the lack of regular bus services in the area.

It is important that we continue to press local authorities so that we can get a daily bus service reinstated as soon as possible.

Climate Change

I would like to thank Cllr Sharp and Shelley for the beginnings of a working group over the course of the last year focusing on climate change.

Climate change continues to have a big effect on the world, and I'm not just talking about it globally. Over the last year, not only have we had local flooding, but also experienced 40-degree temperatures for the first time.

It is very easy to dismiss this and say, 'we are only a small parish council; what can we do?' but it is essential that we all do our bit, and as a local authority need to set an example to our communities.

Future Aylesford Parish Cllrs will thank Cllr Sharp and Shelley for starting the ball rolling within our Parish.

Other

We also need to ensure that we deliver for the community of Walderslade by making safe the recreation ground from anti-social behaviour so that they can get similar facilities to the rest of the parish.

Of course, there are lots of other things going on; the inspections of the play equipment across the Parish, adding a tennis table to Forstal Road, thanks to Gallagher for re-tarmacking the car park and the cemetery extension and the 5G pitch which is looking excellent – to name but a few.

And finally,

I write this Annual Report before the result of the upcoming Parish Council election in Eccles.

I firmly believe that an elected council is stronger than a co-opted one, as it shows essential community engagement.

If this is my last Annual report, I would like to thank all Cllrs for the faith put in me to be Chairman, and I wish the Council the best in the future.

We need to continue to engage the community through events and surgeries – we are here for them, after all. Community engagement is key.

Aaron Ludlow
Chairman
Environmental Services Committee