



Chevening Parish Council

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01 July 2020

Dear all,

The weather is, as I write, rather grey and damp, which has assisted no end in calming down recent events at the Lake, but as we move into July better weather is likely and we must anticipate further interest.

There has been significant action by various different stakeholders around the Lake over the last few days, which taken together, are likely to have a substantial impact on the hordes of visitors descending on the Village. Hats off to Kent Police for applying a Dispersal Order last Friday, and also to the farmer for the robust defence measures, fortifications almost, on the north bank. We understand that the Angling Club are also planning to reinforce the fence from the Green to the Sailing Club.

With the Sailing Club and Tri Club having employed professional security guards, the situation vis a vis closing Sailing Club Road has changed somewhat. The Parish Council discussed this possibility some weeks ago, but feel that it is inappropriate to have untrained volunteers, however spirited and well intended, attempting to control access along the road by potentially uncooperative visitors. There are significant legal implications for such a move.

We have therefore agreed to share the cost of the Security Guards with the Sailing Club, and to have them moved along Sailing Club Road, as far as Stairfoot Lane. (There is a public right of way as far as Stairfoot Lane in any case, which means it cannot be closed before that point.) The intention is to make it as difficult as possible for anyone to access the Lake, and this will be far more easily achieved at that point, than by permitting people to travel as far as the Sailing Club itself. This measure will be in place whenever the Security Guards are in place, likely three or four times a week, and will restrict access to members of the Sailing and Angling Clubs, plus visitors to Cheshire Homes. I would ask that local residents please bear with us for the time being.

The hope is that once word gets around of how difficult accessing the lake is, interest will wane. Certainly these measures should prevent the hundreds of trespassers we saw invading the Sailing Club area last week. The fact remains however, that a public footpath is a "Right" of Way, and if hundreds of people wish to walk along it, they are entitled to. There is nothing we can do to change that, however much we would like to.

We have also increased the litter collection from a Sailing Club Road and the Green to 3 times a week, which is the maximum available from S.D.C.

Wednesday 8th July sees the long awaited reopening of the Bricklayers Arms, and we have worked hard with Andy Hogg to assist him, with picnic tables and Social Distance Marking on the Green. Good luck !

These remain challenging times, testing the patience of all concerned. Well done to everyone doing their bit to help the situation. The next (virtual) Meeting of the Parish Council is at 7.30 pm on Monday 6th July, and you are all welcome to attend.

Best to you all,

Andy Clark. (Chairman, Chevening Parish Council).