

Briefly

THE prize in a raffle organised by the Save Hawkinge Aerodrome Appeal is to be a flight in a Second World War aircraft. The £5 tickets are available at the Battle of Britain Museum, Hawkinge and WH Smith, Folkestone.

THEATRE in Education will perform Why Did The Chicken Cross The Road? for 800 Kent children as part of the county council's road safety education programme.

A FORD Orion was stolen from Safeway car park, Bank Street, Hythe.

TWO windows were broken during a break-in attempt at a basement flat in Earls Avenue, Folkestone.

REINFORCED safety glass in a JCB was smashed when it was left at Lympe Mill, Hythe.

RAIDERS took a television, stereo, microwave and keyboard during a £2,500 haul from a home in Littlestone Road, New Romney.

A GRANADA video cassette recorder was stolen from 60-year-old John Wilkinson's flat in Bouverie Road West, Folkestone.

THIEVES smashed the window of a Peugeot 305 left in Marine Terrace, Folkestone and stole 15 cassettes.

A DATSUN Bluebird saloon stolen from Peter Street, Folkestone, was later found at the Warren near its engine.

A CLINT Eastwood poster and its display unit have been stolen from outside the Silver Screen cinema, Guildhall Street, Folkestone.

TERRY James, 25, has had his bike, worth £410, taken from outside JGs Amusements in Tontine Street, Folkestone.

A F-REG Ford Sierra, belonging to William Blight of Victoria Road, Hythe and worth £5,000, was stolen from outside his home.

A SECURITY video camera in Debenhams, Folkestone, has recorded a man stealing a coat. The thief is seen putting on a mustard coat and walking out of the store.

A GERMAN woman's

A 'diabolical' place to park

by JANE BARLOW

A GOVERNMENT inspector has described the traffic and parking situation in Sandgate High Street as "diabolical" and "grotesque."

Alan Rowland, an inspector for the Department of Transport, said the situation was one of the worst in the country and that there should be more off-street parking.

The comments were made in a report following a planning inquiry in the town. Wimpey Homes Holdings, which is building homes on Embrook Estate, wanted parking restrictions in Sandgate High Street altered.

The inspector agreed to delete waiting restrictions on part of the south side of Sandgate High Street and to relax waiting restrictions throughout the length of the street between 6pm and 8am.

But he also criticised the road. Mr Rowland said: "There is a widespread feeling among the Sandgate community that their

problems arising from lack of parking facilities are not properly understood by those responsible, or if understood, are not being given adequate priority. I agree with them.

"I consider the parking situation in Sandgate is grotesque."

His comments have been welcomed by the Sandgate Society.

Chairman Geoffrey Edmunds said: "We would like to see Shepway council spend more money on off-street parking.

"The shops have really suffered as there is nowhere for cars to park. There's a small car park on the seafront but drivers don't like using it when the weather's rough."

"The other car park is in Wilberforce Road, where there is

frequent vandalism."

Robin Lloyd, of the Sandgate Antique Dealers Association, was also pleased with the report.

Mr Lloyd, joint owner of Freeman and Lloyd Antiques in the town, said: "It was a very damning report as far as Shepway council is concerned and I just hope they take some notice of it."

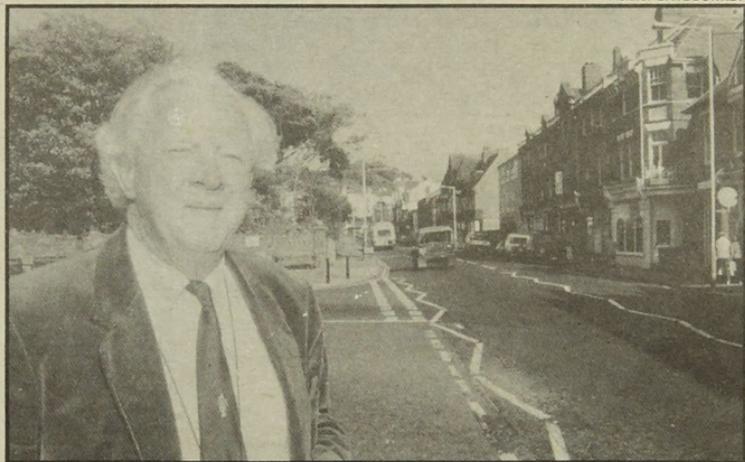
"In a small town like Sandgate traders rely on short stay, casual shoppers. Most people want to stop for a few minutes outside one or two shops."

Steve Goulet, assistant director of environmental services at Shepway council, agreed there was a parking problem in Sandgate.

He said: "What the inspector has highlighted was already identified in 1991 in the Shepway and Hythe local plan."

"We have given the inspector our assurance that we will pursue a review of existing restrictions on parking in Sandgate."

Picture: DAVE DOWNEY



Sandgate Society chairman Geoffrey Edmunds in the High Street

Euro MPs visit Tunnel

FIFTY MEPs have visited Folkestone to look at the Channel Tunnel.

The invitation was given by East Kent MEP Christopher Jackson to show how progression on this side of the Tunnel compares with France.

Eurotunnel spokesman John Nolton said: "They visited the Folkestone terminal site and the Eurotunnel Exhibition Centre.

"The MEPs were from the European People's Party — made up of the various Conservative parties — and they will be familiarising themselves with the project and looking at the progress made.

"The visit was organised as the Tunnel is rapidly nearing completion."

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Book records a Scouting life

Picture: DAVE DOWNEY



Fred Moore in his shop

A HISTORY of Scouting in Sandgate has been written by one of the village's best known characters.

Scouting in Sandgate 1908-1988 by Fred Moore has been published with the help of greetings card manufacturer, Andrew Brownsword, himself a former Scout.

Mr Moore, 74, who runs a shoe repair shop in Sandgate High Street, was Scout leader with the 2nd Sandgate Scouts for 45 years.

When he retired from the movement in 1982 he wrote the history of the four Scout groups that once flourished in Sandgate.

Mr Moore said: "I wrote during the winter evenings and in the five years it took to write I filled 25 exercise books.

"Andrew saw the book and asked if he could take one to look at.

"Nine months later he called

by LUNED JAMES

and said it should be published. Now after three years it has with Andrew's help.

"Originally we were going to split the cost but he has paid for it all and told me to give the proceeds to charity and some to the 2nd Sandgate Scouts.

"I decided to give the lion's share to the Canterbury Hospice."

Mr Moore joined the 2nd Sandgate Scouts as a founder member in 1928 becoming Scout leader in 1937 then group leader. He was given the movement's highest award, the silver wolf, and a BEM for his services to scouting.

Scouting in Sandgate 1908-1988 costs £9.99 plus £1.50 p&p and can be obtained from Mr Moore's shop at 72 High Street, Sandgate, or from his home 188 Seabrook Road, Hythe.

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Babies voted top of the tots



A FRAMED certificate and a £20 voucher to spend with Parasol Portrait Photography were the prizes in a baby and toddler competition at Debenhams, Folkestone.

The winner in the under two years category was Danica Tate, of Firs Lane, Cheriton.

The winner in the two to five years competition was Matthew Reeves, of Martello Road, Folkestone.

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DAYS OUT TO FRANCE BELGIUM & HOLLAND
 September

Battle to save car parking spaces hots up

SANDGATE residents are preparing to fight to retain High Street parking spaces.

A battle team of four is organising petitions to present at a public inquiry in Folkestone on Tuesday.

The inquiry will decide whether or not Wimpey homes can proceed with a development at the Folkestone end of the High Street.

If it is approved the High Street will lose 40 parking spaces.

Robin Lloyd who runs an antiques business in the High Street said: "We have only 74 parking spaces the entire

by DOUGLAS WYTHE

length of the High Street and we can't afford to lose one, let alone 40.

"Sandgate is not like anywhere else where you can yellow line a High Street and put car parks all around.

"Sandgate has the sea on one side and the hills on the other. There is just nowhere to put in extra parking.

"Retaining these parking spaces is crucial to the survival of Sandgate."

Mr Lloyd said an action committee of four was formed following a public meeting at

the Chichester Hall in Sandgate.

Other committee members are Anji Barnes, Tony Murless and Geoffrey Edmonds.

The are raising petitions at the newsagent's, Post Office, baker's, Providence Inn and the Ship Inn.

High street resident Suzanne Northam said: "I agree with Mr Lloyd. The situation is bad enough without losing any more parking spaces.

"It is no better in the evenings. Locals have to vie with visitors for the few spaces just to park close to our homes."



Robin Lloyd is preparing to put up a fight

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CHRISTMAS is traditionally a time for good cheer. For eating, drinking and making merry!

So why don't all you revellers spare a thought for poor old Father Christmas?

While you're out enjoying yourselves, he's busy dishing out all those presents on a cold Christmas Eve. It's thirsty work slithering down chimneys — and getting stuck!

You can help make Santa's life easier by leaving a cup of hot, steaming coffee (as well as a plate of mince pies, of course), on the hearth.

The winner of our caption competition will receive an extra Christmas present, a year's supply of Cafe Mountain and a 'his and hers' designer T-shirt.

It comes courtesy of Cafe Mountain, the

smooth coffee granules from Brooke Bond.

To win a year's supply, simply write a suitable caption for the picture on the entry form provided and send it, together with your name and address, to:

Cafe Mountain
Christmas caption offer,

Extra Offices, Pea Assurance House, Station Road, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PT by November 22.

Four runners-up will each receive four jars of Cafe Mountain and a T-shirt each.

Normal KM Group competition rules apply.

ENTRY FORM

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....

Caption.....



Unite now to save village

THE Folkestone - Honiton trunk road passes right through the bustling village of Sandgate and traffic calming measures are now desperately needed.

Reg Turnill, editor of the Sandgate Society Newsletter comments : "Detrunking of the A259 has slipped from April to April for many years past. The continuing arguments between Shepway District Council, KCC and the Highways Agency about who does what and who pays have resulted in yet another postponement."

As our traffic calming proposals cannot be considered until detrunking has been completed, members of the Sandgate Society urge all parties to settle their differences now. This really is a matter of life and death.

**Brian Goodchild, Publicity
Officer, The Sandgate Society.**

parade by helping to make the giant figures. It has improved what was a derelict bank at The Durlocks and are now working on an area of open space behind a block of flats in Cheriton called Rowan Court.

End the cull

AN animal welfare campaigner is hoping that the issue of killing baby seals for their fur will be raised at a meeting next week.

Robert Mouland, of Folkestone-based European Animal Welfare, wants the subject discussed when the European Parliament's All Party Animal Welfare Group next meets on December 12.

Mr Mouland has asked East Kent Euro MP Mark Watts to ensure the issue is raised.

The campaigner, who has protested about the issue

A259 meeting boost

THE Sandgate Society is the latest group to throw its weight behind the *Herald's* public meeting over safety on the A259.

The civic group has campaigned tirelessly for improvements to the road and are increasingly frustrated by the lack of action.

The group has been calling for pedestrian crossings and street lights through Sandgate and along the Esplanade after several crashes, one which resulted in a tragic death.

In an article by Euan Williamson, the head of the Sandgate traffic calming campaign, to be published in the society's next newsletter, he points out that detrunking was supposed to start in April last year following pledges made at a meeting with the Highways Agency, Kent County Council and Shepway council. Mr

Williamson said Arvind Patel, from the Highways Agency, pledged to respond to their questions within three weeks but to date no reply has been received.

In his article Mr Williamson complains of a "logjam of bureaucracy and disinterest".

In an attempt to move the situation forward the society wrote to MP Michael Howard who has written to the Secretary of State for Transport pushing for action.

Mr Williamson said members of the Sandgate Society would come to the *Herald's* public meeting being held at Dymchurch village hall next Thursday at 7.30pm.

All members of the public are welcome at the meeting which will bring together representatives from the Highways Agency, parish and district councils, KCC and is chaired by Mr Howard.

Hagues' choice

EXECUTIVE director at Shepway council Stephen Hagues has been given the power to make decisions on selecting a developer for the Bouverie Place shopping centre without reference to the committee of elected members.

Cllr Robert Bliss, who has special responsibility for economic development, said councillors were still in the driving seat.

He said: "The idea is for decisions to be made quickly without having to go through official channels which could hold things up by weeks."

Mr Hagues will not have the authority to appoint a developer for the shopping centre project.

You are holding
the future in
your hands...



Next step on A259

THE de-trunking process for the A259 is likely to overcome another hurdle today when it goes before a Shepway council joint board.

The board consists of members representing the county, district and parish councils.

Cllr Terry Preston, for Shepway and Dymchurch, said: "We've been pushing this on the joint board ever since it was mooted, but it has been a question of KCC and the Highways Agency sorting out the money side.

"I'd be very surprised if the prospect of a final agreement ran into any problems at this stage."

Cllr Preston pointed out that de-trunking would not solve all problems on the A259, but it was a start.

A report by KCC's highways department earlier this month indicates a financial agreement between the council and Highways Agency is imminent, leading eventually to de-trunking on April 1.

This will include a three-month consultation period.

COMMENT

Thursday, July 25, 20

ANYONE wishing to become unpopular person (or group) in try should read the story of Josie, and take a few lessons.

It is a tale of the old testam rule book being imposed in a si unsuitable as to be almost unb Tear-jerking is not the word.

Josie was detained at the Tunnel for entering the country blood test, and is to be quarant the end of the year. By that tim have forgotten her painstaking and be no use to her blind owner.

Josie is too old to be retrained been refused home quarantine; a seeing eye dog is over.

The Department of the Env Food and Rural Affairs (DEFI doubt still twitchy after foot a and no-one denies the impo keeping rabies out, but ask she'd probably suggest the re are a bit Draconian here.

It is hard to believe there is way they can bend those rules, new ones designed specifically dogs. As someone said in the means Josie's owner has lost h a second time.

Even if you are able put aside t nature of this canine encour bureaucracy, the sheer waste taking. Even taken on its own s is genuinely upsetting.

THE future of the A259 is still up in the air after KCC bosses admitted there is still no resolution with the Highways Agency over de-trunking.

The Highways Agency has responsibility for the A259 but has been in protracted talks over giving its care to the county council.

In a letter to the *Herald*, Alex King, the KCC cabinet member for regeneration, said: "The response to current safety issues must come from them. The county council may take over the road at some time if there is a positive outcome from the ongoing discussions on de-trunking.

"I expect this to be discussed by the county's highways advisory board in July, but the county council needs to ensure that a heavy burden of maintenance or improvements does not come with the road."

Cllr King was responding after missing the deadline to respond to questions raised at the *Herald's* public meeting over the A259.

Mark Kumar, from the Highways Agency, also attended the meeting chaired by MP Michael Howard in February.

He responded to criticism that de-trunking talks are taking too long.

Mr Kumar said: "The statutory procedures for de-trunking are complex and time consuming. It was expected that the KCC committee would consider details in March 2002 and de-trunking would take place by March 2003. However the Highways Agency could not provide all the detailed costings required in time for the March committee meeting.

"They have now been provided and will go forward to the committee to consider at the July meeting."

He added that the two groups were still on target to complete the de-trunking process by March 2003.

Mr Kumar also pledged to take action on points raised by the public including:

- Looking at ways to reduce the number of accidents between Burmarsh Road and the Martello Tower

- Improving the visibility of white lines at the new signal junction at Station Road, New Romney

- Offering to meet the Sandgate Society to answer its particular safety concerns

- Keeping Dymchurch parish council informed on progress in its study on more pedestrian crossings in the village

Recycle costs

IT has never been a better time to recycle your waste paper - and it could save your business thousands of pounds.

Capacity at landfill sites is critical and other options such as incineration are vastly unpopular with the public.

In Shepway the picture is alarming. More than 500 tonnes of business waste is produced a week, almost all of which goes to landfill.

Local businesses spend around £20,000 a week to have their rubbish taken away and the price is going to rise.

Some firms might try to dodge paying for business waste collection by putting out their rubbish

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++ TAME THE A259 - A HERALD CAMPAIGN ++

First victory for the A259 heroes

THE first blow has been struck to tame the A259, thanks to lobbying of Dymchurch parish council, and one councillor in particular.

Joyce Cockerill has been fighting for a slow down zone between the national speed limit approaching Dymchurch from New Romney, before the high street's 30mph.

A police recommendation last week means the Highways Agency has agreed to make the half mile into Dymchurch a 40mph zone.

Clr Cockerill said: "It's excellent news. People speed into the approaches to the high street. I feel a real start has been made."

Meanwhile the fight to get safety measures on other parts of the A259 continues.

Four veteran campaigners told us about their frustration with getting action on the A259.

Sharon Tinklin of Hythe Road Dymchurch wants a speed camera or some other kind of traffic calming measure.

She said: "I have been watching the traffic get faster and faster, have written dozens of letters and made umpteen phone calls. I've seen three ducks run over, even sea gulls are not safe on this road and it's just a matter of time before someone else gets killed.

before anyone else has to die."

Sandgate ward councillor Joy MacMillan has been trying since March to get action after two people were knocked over.

She said: "I organised a meeting with everyone I could think of, including the Highways Agency. There are frequent accidents and the bottom of Military Road is a menace. I was told I would have a response in three weeks, and after many letters and calls here we are nearly nine months on without any kind of resolution."

New Romney mayor Barbara Palmer, has seen the issue of safety on the road batted to and fro for decades.

"The accidents are just horrendous. When you add up Hammonds Corner, Old Romney, the new lights in the high street, the roundabout outside Sainsbury's and the stretch between New Romney and Dymchurch you have a vicious bit of roadway. De-trunking won't solve everything but it is definitely the place to start."

Dymchurch parish council chairman, Tom Gibbs, has seen many letters and complaints concerning the A259 but he feels that things might be changing.

"The speed restriction into Dymchurch being lowered is a



STRUGGLE: Sharon Tinklin



ATTEMPTS: Joy MacMillan



DEBATE: New Romney mayor Barbara Palmer



ON THE WRITE: Tom Gibbs and Joyce Cockerill

Hot spots - your call

FLOODS of people have called the *Herald* to report their own crash hot-spots after we published the official list from the Highways Agency.

Annette Edgar from St Mary's Bay highlighted the stretch from Warren Farm, New Romney to Taylors Lane, St Mary's Bay, particularly the railway bridge.

Mrs Edgar had her own tale to

beach the road was completely clear. I had just reached the path on the beachside but my dog, who's only little, hadn't. A motorbike with a pillion passenger roared up and knocked him right off his feet."

Mrs Edgar's suggestion for when the A259 is de-trunked is for speed ramps to be placed regularly along the entire stretch of road to slow drivers down. What

ANSWERS!

THE Highways Agency has, a week and a half after being asked, responded to the five questions we faxed them on November 11. The questions were intended to cut through the cloud of generalities we had so far received when we asked why de-trunking the A259 was taking so long.

1. Q: What specifically are the issues under discussion, and how far have these discussions progressed? i.e. exactly what bridges, street furniture, boundaries are sticking points?

A: The A259 is an older road than the A2070; therefore the make up of the road has a shorter life span and takes more maintenance. This is an issue that is being discussed between KCC and the HA.

2. Q: Who holds ultimate responsibility for making the decision to de-trunk?

A: The Secretary of State, Stephen Byers.

3. Q: A report by the County Transport Officer to the Transport Operations Board at KCC in 2000, says: "The Highways Agency propose the de-trunking/trunking should come into effect on 1 April 2001". What has happened to delay that?

A: It became clear that more work was going to be involved. The district councils also needed to be consulted.

4. Q: In the light of yet another death on the A259, do you not agree that the process of "extensive negotiations" should be speeded up? Is it not possible to put more resources into coming to a conclusion?

A: The death of Mrs Addy was not a case connected with the road itself. This was a case of dangerous driving.

5. Q: At the present pace of investigation and negotiation when do you think de-

A life's music celebrated

A LARGE audience gathered at St Paul's, Sandgate, to listen to a concert celebrating the life of James Fehr, a former organist at the church.

Well respected in music circles through Kent and beyond Mr Fehr was also music master at Ashford school. The selection of music played on Sunday was presented by Mr Fehr's friends, colleagues and pupils last Sunday.

The choir Cantores Dominicae, directed by Julia Cleobury, opened and ended the programme with music played at Mr Fehr's funeral and presented two lighter pieces.

Other items included music for organ, piano, oboe, flute, violin and harpsichord.

Pupils from Ashford School performed duets and local artists Tessa Fineman and June Armon sang Duetto Buffo di due Gatti by Rossini. Ashford guitar ensemble, the Norton Knatchbull jazz band and professional tenor Hurdis Grandison all performed.

Michael Foad and June Armon arranged the programme and acted as narrators, indicating how each performer or piece related to Mr Fehr's life. Proceeds from the evening, more than £1,200, went to the Pilgrims Hospice.

A CAROL service will be held for Folkestone's school children next Thursday at the Holy Trinity Church, Sandgate Road, at 10.30am.

THE Elham Lions Santa and his reindeer float will be doing the rounds of these villages:

Friday December 7, Etchinghill, 5.30pm and Postling at 6.30pm. Sunday December 9, Sellindge, at 4.30pm. Monday December 10, Stanford/Newingreen at 5.30pm. Friday December 14, Stelling Minnis and Bossingham at 5.30pm. Saturday December 15, Rarham at 4.30pm.

Groups' calls for safer roads get first results

Safety ideas in - but there's a long way to go

STEPS are being taken to make a busy route to school safer as thoughtless drivers continue to put lives at risk.

A working group of primary school, parish council and local authority representatives has been formed to resolve peak traffic problems in School Road, Saltwood.

The through road narrows to one lane when vehicles are parked bumper to bumper before

By JANE SULSH

and after school. Cars approaching too fast frequently drive on the pavement as oncoming traffic builds up. This causes a hazard to walking children and parents.

But after a "constructive" first meeting of the working group Cllr Neil Matthews, chairman of Saltwood parish council, says the bid for a package of safety improvement measures is moving forward. Suggestions include

traffic calming and lowering the speed limits at village entrances.

Cllr Matthews said: "Lots of ideas" were put forward and Shepway's Highways Officer will report back to us at a second meeting planned for January. We hope money will be set aside for a safety scheme to be implemented in 2002 to 2003."

Primary school head Jon Wild said traffic problems are a frequent subject of school newsletters. Parents are regularly reminded not to drive on the

pavement or park on double yellow lines.

There are frequent requests to park in side roads and walk the remaining distance where possible.

Mr Wild added: "We have been given permission from Kent County Council to employ a lollipop person. The exact site of the crossing patrol has still to be decided but will be in School Road. We are working with parish and district councils and road safety experts to promote safer routes to schools."



PUPILS from the Channel School got stuck in to making a huge head representing writer HG Wells for this year's Wishing Fish parade.

An extra dimension of next month's popular procession...

THE SANDGATE SOCIETY

THE NEED FOR TRAFFIC CALMING IN SANDGATE

BACKGROUND

1. Many members of the Sandgate Society and other residents of Sandgate have been expressing concern about the dangerous speed at which traffic travels along the Sandgate Esplanade and through the village centre. Numerous instances have been cited of actual incidents and 'near misses' involving pedestrians. In the light of these concerns, the Chairman of the Society has asked for a survey of and report on the current situation.

AIM

2. The aim of this survey is to document the current traffic situation along the Sandgate Esplanade and in the village centre. In particular, the survey will:

- a. Summarise the concerns of residents.
- b. Consider the current provision and effectiveness, or otherwise, of signage, road markings, pedestrian crossings and speed detection equipment.

The survey will draw conclusions and make recommendations to the Chairman as to what formal representation the Society could make to the local authorities requesting specific improvements to improve the safety of the residents of and visitors to Sandgate.

SURVEY

RESIDENTS' CONCERNS

3. The residents' main concern is the excessive speed at which traffic travels along the Sandgate Esplanade and through the village centre. Complainants of all ages, but particularly the more elderly ones, say that it is becoming increasingly difficult to cross the road safely anywhere along this stretch of the A259. When complainants were questioned more closely, the following points emerged:

- a. Virtually every complainant quoted incidents in which either he or she, or someone whom they have witnessed, narrowly avoided being hit by a speeding vehicle whilst trying to cross the road.
- b. Several complainants drew attention to the 3 pedestrians who have been knocked down on this stretch of road in recent years, one of whom was killed.

THE SANDGATE SOCIETY

c. Several complainants had been involved in incidents or seen incidents along this stretch where cars have collided and the excessive speed of one of the vehicles has been a contributory factor to the incident.

d. Every driver complainant quoted incidents where he or she had been overtaken whilst obeying the 30 m.p.h. speed limit by another driver travelling at excessive speed.

4. Putting the very best interpretation upon drivers' behaviour on this stretch of road, local residents feel that the situation is confusing for drivers and should be clarified by effective signage and road markings (this will be dealt with under those headings below). They also feel that it is confusing enough that a seriously irresponsible driver could use it as a defence in court if charged with a motoring offence on this stretch of road .

5. There are, of course, some drivers who will intentionally ignore all signage and road markings. Local residents feel that some sort of speed detection equipment should be installed to detect and deter such drivers (this will be dealt with under that heading below).

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS

6. The Sandgate Society has been urging the authorities for many years to improve the safety of pedestrians in Sandgate with no success whatsoever. The Society's newsletters and Committee meeting minutes going back over 10 years articulate the society's efforts and frustrations at what seems to be inertia and lack of interest in the problem on the part of the Highways Agency, the County Council, the Local Authority, the Police and politicians at all levels and of all parties including our local Councillors.

7. As far back as April 1991, the newsletter talks of "the hoary old response that nothing can be done until the A259 through Sandgate is de-trunked" and of "the need for a light controlled pedestrian crossing at the Western end of Sandgate High Street".

8. In May 1997, the newsletter lamented the cancellation "with hardly a whimper from the Local and County Authorities" of "the final phase of the overall planning of the South East Kent road network". This phase would, evidently, have resulted in the coastal resorts and villages (including Sandgate) being by-passed and that section of the A259 being de-trunked. Action by Ward and County councillors was urged.

9. In the Spring of 1998, the newsletter, reporting on the lack of progress towards the de-trunking of the A259, mentioned that "in view of the volume of traffic and increase in accidents, particularly to pedestrians, it is understood that a Pelican crossing will be provided early in the new financial year". Nothing has yet come of this despite the fact that a Shepway resident was killed in a hit and run accident whilst trying to cross the A259 on the Esplanade later that year.

THE SANDGATE SOCIETY

10. In October 2000, the newsletter reported that a lady resident of Homevale House had been knocked down and injured actually on the zebra crossing outside the home. This incident occurred only shortly after a previous narrow escape by another lady resident of Homevale House on this crossing when one car stopped to let her cross only to be overtaken by another car following behind.

11. Our President, Reginald Turnill, then sent off a flurry of letters to the Telegraph, the Kentish Express and the Folkestone Herald in which he neatly summed up the problem thus:

“Last week’s report about the demand for traffic lights on Sandgate’s pedestrian crossing and our local KCC councillor’s promise to ‘raise the matter’ is no solution to our main problem: the fact that cars enter the village from both ends at speeds ranging from 40 to 60 mph. Given some support from our elected representatives, we have at last a golden opportunity to make Sandgate a civilised village worth living in once more. All that is needed is a 20 mph speed limit with warning rumble strips and “Slow Down” notices at both ends.

KCC are negotiating with the Transport Ministry’s Highways Agency to take over control of the A259 through Sandgate in return for giving Highways control of the A2070 from Brenzett to Ashford. This will enable through traffic to be routed along the A2070 instead of the A259 and at last end the tiresome argument that because it’s a trunk road passing through Sandgate, motorists must have priority.”

12. Simultaneously, the Housemanager of Homevale House organised a petition to call for the provision of a pelican (light-controlled) crossing to replace the zebra crossing close to the entrance to Homevale House. The petition attracted 93 signatures and was handed to Kent County Councillor Linda Cuffley.

13. Clearly, in the light of a fatality on the esplanade, one serious injury and a very near miss (both actually on a pedestrian crossing) and the serious concerns expressed in paragraph 3 above, something very definitely needs to be done to break the logjam of bureaucracy and disinterest in the problem on the part of those who should be ensuring that a safe road runs through the village of Sandgate.

THE GOVERNMENT’S STATED POSITION ON ROAD SAFETY

14. In its ‘Transport 2010’ Plan, the Government has pledged to spend £180bn improving all forms of transport in the next 10 years. One of the overall aims that it lists in the plan is to “make roads safer”. What the residents of Sandgate want for that stretch of the A259 running through the village would seem to be a perfect example of making a road safer. So, what needs to be

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done? The next four sections will discuss the current situation and suggest improvements under the headings of signage, road markings, pedestrian crossings and speed detection equipment.

SIGNAGE

15. The consensus of opinion amongst local residents is that:

a. When travelling Eastwards on the A259, drivers who have come either through Hythe or down Horn Street or Hospital Hill will have seen their last 30 m.p.h. sign as much as 2.8 miles back on the west side of Hythe and at least 1.9 miles back on the south side of the Tesco roundabout. They pass the Murco garage at the junction with Princes Parade and then are greeted by 2 signs – one saying “Folkestone, District of Shepway” and one beneath it saying “Sandgate”. These signs, together with the fact that the road widens and straightens out onto the Esplanade, give drivers the impression that they have left the Hythe 30 m.p.h. limit, so they accelerate away. Again, some may even think that, because there are no 40 m.p.h. signs at regular intervals, they have failed to notice a de-restrict sign somewhere near the “Folkestone District” and “Sandgate” signs and that the Esplanade is therefore a de-restricted area.

b. When travelling Westwards on the A259, drivers who have come either through Folkestone or down Military Road will have seen their last 30 m.p.h. sign as much as 2.0 miles back on the east side of Folkestone and at least 1.0 mile back on the south side of the Tesco roundabout. There are no signs at the top of Sandgate Hill or on Military Road to indicate entry into the village. After negotiating the bottleneck in Sandgate High Street at the junction with Military Road, drivers get the impression, as the road widens out again and passes out onto the Esplanade, that they have left the 30 m.p.h. limit so they accelerate away. Some may even think that, because there are no 40 m.p.h. signs at regular intervals, they have failed to notice a de-restrict sign on the way out of the High Street and that the Esplanade is therefore a de-restricted area.

16. There are no 30 mph limit signs on these 3 main routes into Sandgate at the entry to the village. Nor are there any repeat 30 mph signs anywhere within the village.

17. Local residents would like to see this confusing situation resolved for drivers by the provision as a matter of urgency of :

a. Proper signs at the entry to the village on all 3 main entry routes (A259 eastwards and westwards and Military Road) that read “SANDGATE Please drive carefully through our village” and which also incorporate a 30mph sign. This would be in line with best practice seen elsewhere at the entrances to many villages throughout Kent.

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b. Repeat small 30 mph signs at regular intervals on lampposts or poles already in place and bearing no parking or limited parking signs in support of double yellow and single yellow line road markings. This would be in line with best practice seen elsewhere in villages in Kent (e.g. Sissinghurst).

c. Ideally, a 20 mph speed limit along the narrowest and most heavily parked upon stretch of the High Street from the bus stop at Wilberforce Road to the bus stop just East of the Saga entrance.

ROAD MARKINGS

18. There are no road markings designed to assist in the limiting of speed anywhere within Sandgate.

19. Local residents would like 'rumble' strips and different coloured tarmac strips with the 30 mph limit incorporated in them across the road where they have called for the 3 "SANDGATE" signs (see sub-paragraph 17a above). This would be in line with best practice seen elsewhere at the entrances to many villages along the A259 and throughout Kent.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

20. There are 2 zebra crossings in Sandgate High Street (one at the western end close to the entrance of Homevale House, and one immediately to the west of the A259 / Military Road junction). The problems with these 2 crossings have already been covered in paragraphs 10 to 13 above.

21. There are no pedestrian crossings on the Esplanade despite the presence of the Sandgate Hotel and the Bar Vassa, which are both on the opposite side of the road from that on which parking is permitted thus forcing customers to cross the road to reach their cars. Likewise, because all housing, and the hotel and bar, are on the opposite side of the road from the beach, local residents and holiday visitors have to cross the road to reach it. Because of the speed at which many vehicles travel along the esplanade, this is now becoming increasingly hazardous (see paragraphs 3 to 5 above) and there has already been one fatality (see paragraph 9 above).

22. Local residents would like to see the zebra crossings in the High Street converted into pelican (light-controlled) crossings. They would also like to see a pelican crossing on the Esplanade near to the Sandgate Hotel (say at the foot of Brewer's Hill). The presence of this 2 crossing would also help to calm the traffic along the esplanade.

SPEED DETECTION EQUIPMENT

23. Although there are speed camera warning signs at 3 points along the Esplanade, there is no camera. To deter and detect drivers who wilfully ignore the speed limit, a camera should be installed along the Esplanade.

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CONCLUSIONS

24. It is concluded that:

- a. The residents of Sandgate are concerned at the excessive speed at which traffic travels along the Sandgate Esplanade and through the village centre.
- b. They have been voicing these concerns and urging action for over 10 years to no avail.
- c. Their concerns are real and justified and are increasing as traffic density increases.
- d. The reasons for the driving behaviour complained of are a lack of adequate signage, road markings, pedestrian crossings and speed detection equipment.
- e. The Government's 'Transport 2010' Plan has been noted and the residents wish to see the following improvements made to the safety of the section of the A259 which runs through Sandgate:
 - (i) Provide proper signs at the entry to the village on all 3 main entry routes (A259 eastwards and westwards and Military Road) that read "SANDGATE Please drive carefully through our village" and which also incorporate a 30mph sign.
 - (ii) Provide repeat small 30 mph signs at regular intervals on lampposts or poles already in place and bearing no parking or limited parking signs in support of double and single yellow line road markings.
 - (iii) Provide 'Rumble' strips and different coloured tarmac strips with the 30 mph limit incorporated in them across the road on all 3 main entry routes to the village where the signs called for at 24e(i) above are located.
 - (iv) Ideally, provide a 20 mph speed limit along the High Street between the bus stops at Wilberforce Road and just East of the Saga entrance.
 - (v) Convert the zebra crossings in the High Street into pelican (light-controlled) crossings.
 - (vi) Provide a pelican crossing on the Esplanade near to the Sandgate Hotel (say at the foot of Brewer's Hill).
 - (vii) Install a speed camera somewhere along the Esplanade.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

25. It is recommended that the Chairman of the Sandgate Society notes the contents and conclusions of this paper and considers sending copies of it to:

- a. Our local MP.
- b. The Chief Executive of Kent County Council.
- c. The Chief Constable of the Kent Constabulary.
- d. The Chief Executive of Shepway District Council.
- e. County Councillor Linda Cuffley.
- f. Our Ward Councillors.
- g. The Editor of the Kentish Express.
- h. The Editor of the Folkestone Herald.