

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

As I write, the news has come through that the Velo South cycle race has been cancelled due to the expected bad weather. Even though this is good news for many and a reprieve for those due to be stranded along the route, the late cancellation will not avoid the damaging financial impact on local businesses and there will be none of the compensating economic uplift predicted by the organisers had the event gone ahead.

At our council meeting in September we agreed to remove the old rusting swing frame from Rake Recreation Ground in order to make the area safe. We also agreed to replace the swing in the Hugo Platt playground as the current swing supports are rotting.

We heard that a Rake and Hillbrow Traffic Calming Group has been formed which is in the process of setting up a Community Speedwatch Group that will be registered with the Police. Their aim is to use the supplied speed gun to collect data on excessive speeds and forward the registration numbers to the Police who will write to the registered owners.

It was also reported that CDC Community Governance Review had decided to approve the proposal to transfer three dwellings and some industrial units from Rogate parish to Harting parish. This was despite our council's objections that the proposal was not fully supported by those affected and there would be unnecessary costs incurred implementing the changes; not so much for the parish councils but for CDC and WSCC as well as mapping companies such as Ordnance Survey and other service companies.

In order to save money, CDC Planning Dept has decided to cease sending out printed copies of the plans associated with planning applications. These are invaluable for our Planning Committee when assessing the impact of development proposals as they are usually of A3 or larger format. Instead the plans will have to be viewed electronically but as most councillors only operate tablets this is far from satisfactory. Instead, the plans will have to be downloaded onto a laptop and projected onto a screen at the committee meeting. When questioned whether CDC would help with the extra cost as they were going to save money, we were informed that we could put up the parish precept (rates) to pay for it! Feels like an unnecessary "robbing Peter to pay Paul".

We heard that the long saga of the Neighbourhood Plan is coming to a, hopefully successful, end. Following the statutory pre-submission consultation last year, we have made some small changes to the Plan itself and assembled the two necessary supporting documents that cover relationships the Plan's policies have with other planning policies and how the Plan was developed. The aim is to submit these three documents to SDNPA (known as the Submission) when it will organise a further consultation period, employ an inspector to examine the policies and then hold a local referendum.

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