

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Our January meeting was dominated by traffic issues – both speeds and parking.

We had received further emails about the speed of traffic approaching Rogate village especially through the 40mph section from the Renault Garage and through Fyning. We had attempted to get this section reduced to 30mph as part of the village traffic scheme but WSCC refused the application and so there is little point in trying again at the moment. We had previously considered a portable speed-awareness/-indicator sign and one is going to be part of the traffic scheme in Hillbrow and Rake (more on that later). Consequently, we resolved to pursue with WSCC Highways the possibility of locating this sign along that stretch of A272 and on other approaches to Rogate village.

We also had a complaint about traffic speeds on Habin Hill near to Nyewood with a request that the speed limit be reduced to 30 or 40 mph. We have passed that request on to WSCC Highways through its www.love.westsussex.gov.uk website.

It is worth noting that any incidents, issues and problems relating to roads and traffic can and should be reported to WSCC using that website.

The parking issue related to the Rogate Downhill site at Coombe Hill between Rogate and Rake. The admirable facility has become so popular, especially at weekends and even more so over Christmas and New Year, that there is a serious parking problem that is generating major safety concerns both for the passing traffic and for the participants. In addition, the verges are being severely damaged resulting in mud on the road. We have previously been in contact with WSCC Highways but their suggested solutions were considered inappropriate for the rural location. The parish council fully supports the actual recreation facility but wants the parking and road safety concerns addressed. It was agreed that we would meet with the landowners Forestry Commission, the Rogate Downhill organisers, WSCC Highways and Milland Parish councillors (who are also concerned) in order to seek a practical solution.

We also agreed to develop a code of conduct for events generating major traffic and parking demand in conjunction with WSCC Highways and Police in order to head-off problems at any future events there or elsewhere.

On the plus side we heard that the Rake & Hillbrow Community Highways Scheme has been accepted by WSCC Highways for design and planning in the coming financial year (2020/21) with the work hopefully starting in the following financial year. Although the proposed WSCC scheme does not include all elements that were on the community's wish list, it will be a major step forward for the villages to reduce the speed limits and remove the old A3 elements in order to return the road to a village street. The project includes community funding for a speed indicator sign, Rake and Hillbrow entrance gateways, trees and other planting.

WSCC has relaunched a public consultation exercise about plans to create a second sand extraction quarry at West Heath Common which is just south of A272 off the lane from Durford Mill to West Harting. The new site at Down Park is just outside Rogate parish but all the resultant HGV traffic will come into the parish over a weak and ancient bridge over the River Rother and join the A272 adding to the already significant HGV problem on the A272 road through Rogate. The Parish Council will be objecting to this proposal and if you are at all concerned about it you can find out more and how to comment at:
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/13870/ssr_reg19_procedure.pdf.

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