

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

We had a long meeting in February as there are a number of on-going issues that we needed to discuss.

Firstly, there was the outcome of a meeting about the Downhill Rogate bike operations we held with the operators, B1KE, the landowners, Forestry England, and Milland PC. The principle concern is the unsafe roadside parking. A short-term solution was proposed: to address the road drainage in the dip, to re-enforce the damaged verges with scalplings/hogging and to open a temporary car park on the north side of Milland Road. In the longer term we proposed a permanent carpark in the woods to the west of the site between Milland Road and the footpath which forms part of the Serpent Trail. Forestry England agreed to consider the temporary and permanent carpark solutions and B1KE will pursue the remedying the verges with WSCC Highways who have already been on site to clear the blocked drain in the dip. An additional concern we do not want to lose sight of is the conflict between the bikers and walkers on the Serpent Trail.

Our second discussion regarded our response to the WSCC consultation exercise on 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 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. The consultation closes on 2 March.

Our wish to establish an outdoor gym in Rogate village is making progress with meetings with the Rogate Village Hall Committee. We will also be pursuing the proposal for a Trim Trail linking equipment at Rake, Fyning and Rogate Recreation Grounds.

Following the successful operation last year, we will be having a Litter Picking Day on Saturday 28 March. We will be co-ordinating with Chichester District Council who will supply the equipment and collect the bags, and it will be part of the national Great British Spring Clean. Parish councillor Zoe MacLehose will be co-ordinating our efforts. Please support this local initiative by volunteering and contacting Zoe at zoemaclehose@yahoo.co.uk.

With the dreadful weather recently, flooding has been on everyone's mind. The parish Council has been taking advantage of the WSCC Operation Watershed project to undertake a number of flood alleviation works over the past few years. Currently we are concentrating on solving the flooding at Sandhill Farm House in Habin. There have already been two attempts to solve the problem but they have only provided short-term gains and so a larger scheme is being considered that would take the water across adjacent land to a drainage ditch. I hope to report that this has been agreed in the near future.

If you know of any bad flooding issues on our roads and footpaths, please let me know but importantly register the problem on the WSCC Highways website www.love.westsussex.gov.uk.

Finally, we agreed to provide a bus shelter in the centre of Rake and to replace the rotting fence around the Hugo Platt Children's Playground.

Sadly, Clare Jardine Paterson has resigned as parish councillor for personal reasons and the council thanks her for her many contributions. We therefore have a vacancy and so if you or someone you know is interested please get in touch with me or our Clerk Debbie (clerk@rogateparishcouncil.gov.uk).

Steve Williamson
21 February 2020

01730 890225 or steve@thestepsrake.co.uk