

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

We had our July Council meeting via video conferencing and managed to cover our normal wide range of topics.

The children's playgrounds at Rogate village Hall and Hugo Platt have been re-opened as has the Rake playground. Please observe the signposted restrictions.

Also on Rogate Recreation Ground, following current difficulties raising funds nationally, we agreed to enter a jointly-funded venture with the village hall and others to install the much needed outdoor gym. It will cost about £11k and the Parish Council will fund half and try and find others locally for the rest.

The off-road car park for the B1KE Rogate Downhill users continues to be used successfully despite a recent complication over planning permission which will take some time to resolve. The main thing is that it is now much safer for bikers and general traffic in the area although walkers on the Serpent Trail need to take special care when passing through.

The Community Highway Scheme for Rake and Hillbrow took a major step forward when WSCC Highways published their proposals. These were explained to a socially distanced open-air public meeting in Rake which generated a number of comments. The scheme was also explained at our meeting along with the main comments and we agreed to fully support the scheme with the suggested changes. Our support and comments along with those from the public meeting will be forwarded to WSCC Highways for consideration. Funding then needs to be secured for implementation in the year 2021/22.

On planning matters, CDC continues not to post notices of planning applications at the relevant site but asks that the applicant do so. We will try and rectify this but you can always check what applications are current in the parish by going to our website which shows the planning application locations on a map.

We heard that Fyning Common has benefitted from a tidy-up and a picnic bench has been ordered.

Traffic noise on the A272, particularly from motorbikes, continues to be a problem that we are attempting to address along with neighbouring parishes, CDC and WSCC. We heard about recent correspondence between a Rogate resident and Sussex Police which indicated that (finally) the Police will take the issue seriously and deploy technology and enforcement resources.

With traffic speed in mind, we approved the purchase of a Speed Indicator Device to be used at various sites in Rake and Hillbrow once agreements are signed to fix the SID on lampposts and signposts.

It is with sadness that two long-standing parish councillors have decided to retire. Elizabeth Brown is to retire as she now lives outside the area. She has been a councillor for a great many years including being chairman, vice chairman and chairman of the planning committee. She has worked tirelessly

for the community often undertaking tasks that others shunned. Other major roles include school governor, churchwarden, bereavement councillor, Garden Club, Lunch Club, village fete, editor of R&T News and many more - it was no surprise she was awarded the Order of St Richard medal last year. Elizabeth has always given measured judgements and sound advice and she will be sorely missed.

Also much missed will be Ann Arnold, also a councillor of long-standing and previously chairman of the planning committee. Ann has always strived to benefit the disadvantaged both through her council work but also, often quietly, through other channels. Ann was the driving force behind the Rogate Children's Playground and the setting up and running of the Youth Club as well as being a church warden and running the village shop and post office through difficult times. Ann retires due to ill health and we wish her every strength in the coming months. We shall miss her incisive mind.

As it looks likely that some form of restriction on meetings will continue, we decided that we should hold our Annual Council Meeting, postponed from April, at our August meeting - but a week later on 17 August at 7:30pm. We will elect our chairman and vice chairman and memberships of our three committees. I have decided that, after a stint as chairman of over five years, I will not be putting my name forward. It has been hugely interesting, sometimes frustrating and hopefully productive, but it is time for change. I thank current and past councillors for their support and hard work and wish the new chairman well. I will remain a councillor (there is still lots to do), but this will be my last letter as chairman to the R&T News.

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