

Rogate Parish Council – Chairman’s letter

The October meeting was held on Monday 11th in Rogate Village Hall; it was good to finally meet in person again. Our next council meeting will be held in Rogate Village Hall at 5.00pm on Monday 8th November. To allow for members of the public to attend and speak at the meeting we will have an open slot throughout the meeting. If you cannot make the start of the meeting, you are welcome to join it at any time before it concludes at about 6.45pm.

October is the month when we plan the 2022/23 budget. Looking back, we have maintained the same budget every year since it was last increased by £8,000 in 2015/16. Keeping the same budget over these 7 years has been achieved in part, by drawing on reserves and to reduce these down to the recommended level for Parish Councils which is an amount equal to the annual budget. This has allowed us to invest in amenities for the benefit of the Parish, such as new bus shelters, speed indicator devices, fingerpost refurbishment, Hugo Platt play equipment and fence, Fyning picnic bench, the outdoor gym. Regrettably, inflation has also caught up with us. An example is the increasing cost of maintaining the play equipment. These are subject to mandatory inspections which every year, as the equipment becomes older, identifies necessary, and increasingly expensive, repair work. The cost of managing our wooded open spaces is also a major expense. We plan to maintain our ability to grant funds as deemed appropriate for church graveyards and the youth club as well as other village organisations and organisations such as the CAB and local Food bank that support parishioners. In order to maintain the same level of support to the Parish we are seeking to increase the budget by an additional £6,000. The effect of this budget to increase the precept by £7.81per year for a band D house.

Some progress with the North Street flooding, the drains have been cleared but we are at present unsure whether a survey has been carried out to investigate the state of the drains. West Sussex County Council have a grant for to help with road flooding but before we can make an application we need to plan for a survey. Hopefully more news next month.

Work is progressing well on the Rake traffic calming roadworks. When this is complete, the new speed limit speed will be reduced from 40mph to 30mph. Rogate/Rake are exceptional in having two Community Highways Schemes accepted and implemented by WSCC Highways in recent years.

On the subject of traffic calming, the residents of Rogate Road have found the speed indicator device so effective on their road they have and been inspired to take action! They have clubbed together to donate sufficient funds to cover the full cost of the Parish Council purchasing an additional device and post for use on their road. They also hope to install a village gateway if the necessary permission can be obtained from Highways. You won’t be surprised to learn there are rules governing the use of these devices, including how long and often they can operate on any particular road. This is useful as permeant signs have proven to be less effective.

The matter of the 2022 diamond jubilee has been raised. It is not the remit of the Parish Council to manage an event but some councillors, as individuals, have joined discussions and are willing to help.

We are still short a Councillor, we would be delighted to hear from you if you feel able to help out.

Max Harwood, Chairman