

Rogate Parish Council – Chairman's letter

The transfer of all assets from Rogate and Terwick Housing Association (RTHA) to Petersfield Homes Ltd (PHA) has taken up a lot of time this month. A brief recap: RTHA want to give the freeholds for East Lodge and Hugo Platt and all the assets (over £100,000) to PHA. The rationale behind this is that PHA are a bigger housing association with the ability to handle the requirements, which are becoming increasingly difficult for RTHA to manage. PHA will take on all the liabilities that arise in the future. The Parish Council recognise the need for this move. We are asking for a delay to transfer to investigate the possibility of organising a leasing agreement with PHA. In a very broad outline, the suggestion has been put forward that RTHA continues to hold the freehold and PHA agree to a long lease. This could give the advantages above plus keep the freehold of vital affordable housing in the village. It would also provide the community with input if the site were ever to be developed in the future. This could also ensure a degree of control of the housing allocation with local families and key workers given priority. At present a pause in negotiations to investigate this option has been refused. The pause and any options decided upon would not risk any of the current tenancy agreements or the service people receive under these agreements. More detail on this elsewhere in the magazine.

Trees –there has been a lot of concern in the community about the recent felling of 14 oak trees in the village. We are aware there has been discussions and questions to the Forestry Commission who are going to report back after investigating.

North Street flooding, the drains have been cleared by WSCC Highways which has provided temporary relief. A meeting with a potential road contractor has been arranged for late February to investigate the problem and look for a longer-term solution. A work in progress.

Many of you may have noticed that the SSE site in North Street is being cleared. A welcome sight, it will be good to see the industrial looking site and associated HGV traffic gone but welcome the increased security of electricity supply.

We have received a proposal from Nick Heasman, SDNP to plant a wildflower meadow on the entrance to Parsonage. The Parish Council are supporting this as it will provide a colourful and natural gateway to the Rogate as well as being great for bees and wildlife. To achieve the goal for 2022 we need to start work soon. Later in the magazine you will find information on the project and how you can get involved in supporting it.

Finally, we have placed an oak framed display board in the glade area of Fyning Recreational Ground. This is designed to provide information on the fauna and flora and generally, for the enjoyment of this Parish owned open space.

Max Harwood, Chairman