

Rogate Parish Council – Chairman's letter

I am staggered that this letter is being written for the November R&T and we are so close to Christmas again. It seems so much happened at the time and when you look back it seems so little. On to the highlight this month.

Back in the spring a number of residents were surprised at the feeling of some trees in the village. Consent had been given but Forestry England had failed to carry out the checks. We now have in place a system where we regularly check felling licence applications to allow us to comment on them. We also have the help of Philip Lymbery as the Tree warden and he has written an excellent paper on what to do if you spot suspected illegal felling. The document is available on the Parish Council website. We have also shared it with the neighbouring parishes. Thank you, Philip.

The proposed transfer of Rogate and Terwick Housing Association to PHA Homes Ltd has not gone through and the Board plan to hold a third vote on the transfer. As I write this, we have only received notice of this vote via other shareholders - if you are a shareholder and haven't received advice of the special general meeting please chase R&THA. Unfortunately, the explanation letter only states that the vote is a formality. It would be nice if a wider explanation were given.

We are working with the Village Hall committees of Rake and Rogate on a couple of projects. The first is to explore the viability of using the hall(s) as a warm space during the winter. We are also considering using the hall in cases of emergency. We are only in the preliminary stages, if you feel you can help please give myself or the clerk a ring. It is early days and this feels like success hinges on it being a group effort.

You may know that we have a defibrillator bolted to the wall outside Rogate Village Hall. What maybe less clear is that the defibrillator requires regular attention. For a long time now this attention has been under the watchful eye of Marcus Batty, thank you Marcus. He is now moving and Cathy Robinson is taking on the role of guardian. Thank you, Cathy. In the event that you should need a defibrillator please note Rake Hall has one as well.

We have a group known as the 'West Sussex Volunteers', who work on a voluntary basis to help with the smaller projects around the county, for example they built many of the bus shelters in the village and cleared a stretch of footpath along the A272 below the garage. A while back they offered to build a shelter by the Flying Bull for the Bohunt school children. For 2 years they have been helping refurbish properties for refugees and covid support but they are now back and we have a new shelter in Rake. Thank you guys a fantastic job and just in time for winter.

As winter arrives the vegetation starts to die back it exposes the rubbish that has been discarded. We will be holding a litter pick in the spring but if in the meantime you should feel inclined please help to clear some of the exposed items. It also helps the wildlife as well. On a similar theme we are due a visit from the West Sussex team that clears footpaths - if you are aware of any paths that need attention please let us know.

A closing note. The news is constantly reminding us that bills are rising rapidly. The Parish Council has very limited resource but we have been considering how we can help. Several schemes appear to be available and we are coordinating an information sheet for the village. If you need help please contact Citizens Advice line on 0808 278 7901 or our local West Sussex Midhurst hub (one stop local shop) – 07758 581208.

Max
Chairman, Rogate Parish Council