

Rogate Parish Council Chairman's letter

The start of the year has been generally cold, wet and decidedly horrible, we can but hope April brings a little more sunshine. As for the Parish Council, well things are moving along doing what we can to help in the village.

A big thank you to Laura Craven for organising the annual litter pick. We had a very good response and a lot of litter was collected, clearing the verges before the vegetation starts to grow in the spring. A great and worthwhile effort. Also, a big thank you to Rachel West who has been regularly checking the condition of our playgrounds and outdoor gym for many years but sadly has to stop. This task will now be undertaken by parish councillors.

You can't have failed to notice the colour around the village – the daffodils are really brightening up the roadside. Thanks to all involved in the planting – a worthwhile result and lasting memento of the Kings Coronation (the bulbs were purchased with a grant from Chichester District Council).

The SDNP hosted a meeting to discuss the provision of social housing. Two councillors attended the meeting together with a Hyde representative and local parish councillors from small villages across the downs. Whilst it is recognised current provisions are inadequate the builders and planners face difficulties with the provision of new sites and the cost of land. Hyde had identified a limited number of sites within their current estates; in Rogate this would be on the Parsonage.

With council tax bills having landed on your door mats you may wonder about the 7.6% rise in the precept which equates to £2.74 per year for a band D property. Our budget for the year amounted to increase of 5% (to cover rising fixed costs and to ensure funds held in reserve were restored to the right level). However, the number of households liable to pay council tax in the village has reduced since last year by 20 due to the number of full exemptions being awarded to properties in the parish and additional awards for council tax reductions. This resulted in an increase over the 5% for those paying full council tax.

Rogate Village 20mph zone Community Highways Scheme.. A meeting has been held with highways and they are now drawing up plans for consultation. If they are available we will share them at our Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 18th April. Several people have mentioned concerns about the junction with Fyning Lane, while this has been raised as a concern it is unlikely to warrant any changes at the moment.

Bus stop signs in the village – we received some complaints about the height of the new poles but since then electronic flags have been fitted to the top which show the wait time for the next bus. Whilst these might not be attractive it is very useful.

The three SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices) in the Parish rely on volunteers to manage their operation. We know they help to calm traffic and we are all very grateful to the volunteers in the work they do to ensure they are operational. The two SID locations at the bottom of the hill in Rake were managed by Peter Bloxhall (proprietor of Citroen Car Car) until his recent retirement. If you would like to help the community in this very practical way and want to know more about what it involves, please get in touch.

A final reminder, you now have to book a visit to the tip. And a subject many people have commented on, please keep reporting those potholes.

Max
Chairman, Rogate Parish Council