



# NEWSLETTER

Volume 4 Issue 3

August 2009

**Do you have something you want to say about your group?**

**We are happy to try to publicise it for you - send to the Clerk or Chairman or via our web site.**

### Dates for your diary 2009

Planning Meeting Youth Centre	6th August 2009
Planning Meeting Youth Centre	3rd September 2009
Parish Council Meeting Robertsbridge Hall	14th September 2009
Planning Meeting Youth Centre	1st October 2009
Planning Meeting Youth Centre	5th November 2009
Parish Council Meeting Robertsbridge Hall	9th November 2009

All meetings start at 7.30 pm and a period of up to 15 minutes is allowed at the start of the meeting for public comment or questions if required. Agendas for meetings are posted on the parish notice boards and web site at least 3 days before the meeting—planning applications are available for inspection at the parish office during normal opening times or on the Rother District Council web site - [www.rother.gov.uk](http://www.rother.gov.uk) and you can comment on planning applications on-line



### ROBERTSBRIDGE MID SUMMER EVENT SUNDAY 21ST JUNE - were you there?

If not, you missed a great event! This was organised by the Parish Local Action Plan Summer Events Committee and was self funded from the proceeds of the Barn Dance fund raiser held at the village hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> May this year and the sale of Pimm's on the day. Attendance was high and the event was deemed a great success by all those who came.

There was live entertainment from the primary school, thanks to the support of Andrew McGregor, a professional singer and the Youth Club band. A professional MC did an excellent job introducing performers and events. To coincide with National Bike Week a series of bike games suitable for a whole range of ages proved very popular. At one point there were 72 bikes on the recreation ground! Thanks to Alan from the cycle shop for helping with the bike events and to Peter Crofts for providing a bike pit stop!

Feedback suggests that people appreciated the fact that everything (barring the optional Pimm's and refreshments on sale by The Village Store) was free. As a result people found it a relaxing and easy going event.



The Committee would like to thank The Village Store for sponsoring the 1,000 flyers which were delivered to households by volunteers and RAP for their contribution to the fees for professional entertainers. Thanks also to Rother District Council for providing a community play coordinator who ran a craft tent for non bikers young and old.



A major contributing factor to the overall success of the day was the teamwork that pulled it all together. From the very beginning Roger Palamarczuk, on behalf of both the Robertsbridge Club and the Bonfire Society, was most generous with resources and expertise. The Robertsbridge Enterprise Group has always been on hand too.

The committee worked extremely hard to make this event happen and thanks are due in no small measure to Ian Clark, who did a fantastic job as Lead Organiser, Denise Lomas, Hugh Kirby (and not forgetting Kate, Michaela and James Kirby for running the Pimm's tent). Karen Ripley (Parish Clerk), Jo Rainsbury (thanks too for the photos, Jo!), Simon Longhurst, Stephen Hardy (REG) and Sue Prochak (RAP).

It is hoped that the success of this event will encourage others to join the committee or become involved in other ways and if you feel you would like to get involved please contact me at [christine.kimberley@salehurst-pc.org.uk](mailto:christine.kimberley@salehurst-pc.org.uk)

Future events include a Kite Flying Day on Bishops Meadow this autumn. *Date TBA.* A Summer Ball - 26<sup>th</sup> June 2010 and a Summer picnic - August 2010 *date TBA*

The Summer Events Committee is asking all other groups in the village to please avoid booking any of their events on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2010. This will be a big event which we trust will be very well attended. Fund raising is already in progress. *Christine Kimberley*

**What is the Parish Council doing about.....?** In each issue of the newsletter we try to focus on one aspect of the parish council's responsibilities.



Why has the Parish Council resolved that dogs must be kept on leads throughout the area of the children's play equipment from the entrance gate to the western end of the boundary fence of the cricket field?

About 2 years ago, Rother DC introduced a Dog Control Order under the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act requiring dog faeces to be removed, dogs kept on a lead and dogs prohibited from certain areas including children's play grounds. This Order covered the whole of Rother and applied to all land to which the public had access with a few exceptions where parish councils had asked for them. Our parish decided to exempt our public areas from the requirement to exclude dogs but, of course, the requirement to clean up after their dogs and keep them under control remained.

Unfortunately, a few irresponsible dog owners are ignoring these orders and there have been complaints from other users of the recreation ground about dog mess and these complaints have increased since the installation of the new play equipment and there have once again been requests to ban dogs from the entire recreation ground.

The Council is reluctant to ban dogs or require them to be on leads throughout the entire area without wider public consultation because it feels that most dog owners are responsible and do respect the area. The field is widely used by older dog owners unable to walk long distances and also families who happen to call in when they have their dogs with them. Also, the fact that people walk through the ground with their dog means that the field is constantly used and not isolated and therefore provides a useful monitoring function which may well help to keep children safer. However, there is no Public Right of Way through the recreation ground - the public footpath runs alongside the disused rail line - and if irresponsible dog owners continue to allow their dogs to foul the area and do not clean up after them, or fail to keep their dogs under control, then it may become necessary to bring in a complete ban and bring the ground into line with the rest of Rother.

Responsible dog owners can help by observing the *Dogs on Leads* rule - which applies at **ALL** times not just when children are present because then you are more aware of what your dog is doing! - and by reporting to the Clerk anyone they see failing to clean after their dog or keep it under control. It would be a great pity if the irresponsible behaviour of a few individuals caused the loss of this amenity to all dog owners.

**Street Lights** - Towards the end of last year, EDF gave notice that they were terminating their contract with parish councils to provide regular maintenance of street lights from 31st March 2009 which left the Council, along with other parishes, with the problem of seeking a new contractor. The County Council contractor was not prepared to take on the contract but the engineer who had worked for EDF, and who had always personally given us good service, together with colleagues set up a new company and along with several other parishes we have contracted with them to provide regular maintenance. So far, we have received better service and at a slightly lower price than we had from EDF.

One of the improvements is that the engineer has now labelled each of the street lights in the parish with a specific number so, if you notice problems with a light please contact the Clerk or one of the Lead Councillors and give them the number as this makes it easy for the engineer to locate. A reminder again, **ALL** street lights in the parish with the exception of those on the A21 are the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The new contract applies only to the regular maintenance, we are still dependent on EDF for problems of mains cables and supplies.

**Anyone for tennis?** - Mountfield Tennis Club, which meets on courts at Vinehall School every Wednesday and Friday at 5.30pm and on Sunday mornings, is looking for new members from Robertsbridge.

If you are interested please contact Meg Beckett on 01424 772556 or email [mbeckett2@toucansurf.com](mailto:mbeckett2@toucansurf.com)



**Mill Site update** - Having been unsuccessful in their appeal against Rother DC refusal to grant planning permission, the site owners, PREM (Rooster) Ltd, sought a judicial review to have the Inspector's decision overturned and order the Government to have the matter re-considered. They argued that the Inspector's decision was unreasonable and that he failed to give adequate reasons for refusing permission.

However, the High Court judge rejected their bid and stated that "This was one of the decisions where the Inspector did not have to explain himself any more fully than he did for his reasoning to be intelligible and clear. The decision was in no way perverse or irrational"

The results of the parish council Local Action Plan survey showed that the majority of residents wanted the bulk of this site to be retained for commercial development - as does Rother DC - and we hope that there will now be some progress along these lines.

This is the 5<sup>th</sup> and final part of our occasional series about the area in which we live - the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which covers parts of 4 counties – East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and Surrey and is a nationally important landscape. With an area of 570 square miles (1,457 sq km) it is the 4th largest AONB in the UK. It is also the largest AONB in South East England. It was designated by Government in 1983 to conserve and enhance its historic character of rolling hills draped with small irregular fields, abundant woods and hedges, scattered farmsteads and sunken lanes.

The story of the High Weald's landscape is inseparably tied to the people who lived in it. The future conservation and evolution of this landscape is dependent upon safeguarding the traditional interactions between people and nature.

### **The Story of the High Weald's Settlement**

#### ***The first permanent settlers in your parish were probably pig drovers from the Downs!***

The High Weald has many small, isolated farmsteads, hamlets and dwellings dotted across the countryside. This characteristic, dispersed settlement pattern supports the highest population of any protected landscape in the UK. The ancient woodland pig pastures of the High Weald - used by farmers from the Downs and coastal plains - were known as *dens*. These can still be identified and are the key to understanding how the High Weald first became colonized by human settlers - and why it has such a dispersed pattern of settlement today.

As dens were mostly used during the late summer and early autumn, the farmers would have built temporary shelters in which to keep warm while watching their pigs. Over time, the dens became more permanent places of settlement. From them, the first pioneer High Weald farmers began slowly clearing the surrounding woods for animal pastures.

Eventually the dens became settlements in their own right - separate from their 'parent' villages. The isolated, scattered nature of the original dens developed into a pattern of isolated, individual farmsteads dotted across the countryside. This pattern of settlement is very different to that of Central England, which was settled and communally farmed by large village communities, using shared open-field systems.

In the High Weald, villages developed relatively late - not until medieval times – and as centres for trade, not agriculture. Many sprang up around trading points on the high, dry ridge top routes.

Look at a detailed, modern map of the High Weald and - particularly in Kent - you will see what remains of the dens: many villages, farms, fields and woodland with names ending in '-den'. Most dens have remained small, but a few have expanded to become larger settlements. Tenterden, for example, means "The den of the men of Thanet".

Text provided by the High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee's staff Unit. This is a specialist team that advises on the management of the AONB; furthers understanding of its special qualities and enables action to conserve it. To find out more, please visit [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)

*The previous articles can be found on the parish web site [www.salehurst-pc.org.uk](http://www.salehurst-pc.org.uk) under 'Newsletter' in Volume 3 Issue 1, 3 and 4 and Volume 4 Issue 1.*

## SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

### Clerk to the Council:

Mrs Karen Ripley

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Web address:

[www.salehurst-pc.org.uk](http://www.salehurst-pc.org.uk) or  
[www.robertsbridge-pc.org.uk](http://www.robertsbridge-pc.org.uk)

The Parish Office is open to the public at the following times:

Tuesday	9am to 11am
Thursday	2pm to 4pm

Rother District Council

Web address:

[www.rother.gov.uk](http://www.rother.gov.uk)

### Parish Councillors

Tel:

Cllr David Allen (Chairman) 881056  
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Cllr Tamara Strapp (vice-Chair) 881291  
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### East Sussex County Councillor

Cllr Peter Jones  
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### Rother District Councillors

Cllr George Hearn 819233  
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Cllr Susan Prochak 881309  
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### Your Councillors and their responsibilities

#### Committees

**Planning (Delegated powers)** - Chairman or vice-Chairman and Cllrs. Beeden; Clymo; Davies and Smith.

**Cemetery (Delegated powers)** - Chairman or vice-Chairman and Cllrs. Barden and Smith.

**Local Action Plan Project Group (Advisory)** - Cllrs. Kimberley; Longhurst, Strapp and the Clerk.

**Finance Working Group (No powers)** - Cllrs. Clymo, Davies and Longhurst.

**Friends of Robertsbridge Working Group (No powers)** - Cllr. Kimberley

#### Lead Councillors

**Bishop's Meadow** - Cllrs. Allen, Barden and Kimberley plus Tree Warden as appropriate.

**Crime & Disorder** - Cllrs. Allen and Beeden.

**Economic Regeneration** - Cllrs. Longhurst and Strapp

**Footpaths/Bridleways** - Cllrs. Allen, Beeden and Strapp.

**General Purposes** - Chairman, vice-Chairman and Cllrs. Clymo and Longhurst.

**Lighting** - Cllrs. Barden and Smith.

**Recreation Ground/Pavilion** - Cllrs. Davies and Longhurst.

**Pocket park** - Cllrs. Allen and Kimberley

#### Planning

The Council has decided that planning applications will no longer be considered at full Council meetings. Instead, the Planning Committee (with delegated powers) will meet monthly to consider applications and if a decision is required by Rother DC before a planning meeting then the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman or vice-Chairman, is delegated to make the decision. This will speed up the planning process and help to shorten the length of full Council meetings.

If a decision is required outside of a normal planning meeting on a controversial application then the Council will schedule an additional meeting.

All Planning meetings will be held at the Youth Centre on the 1st Thursday of each month - this is a more convenient venue as there is access to internet connection and maps etc. are more accessible. if required. The meetings are, of course, open to the public and will be advertised as normal.

**Seen in a parish magazine (not ours, of course!)** - 'Weight Watchers meets every Wednesday in the church hall at 7.30pm - please use the side entrance double doors'