



NEWSLETTER

Dates for your diary 2014

**Planning
Committee
Youth Centre** 2nd
January

**Parish Council
Meeting
Robertsbridge Hall** 20th
January

**Planning
Committee
Youth Centre** 6th
February

**Planning
Committee
Youth Centre** 6th
March

**Parish Council
Meeting
Robertsbridge Hall** 17th
March

**Planning
Committee
Youth Centre** 3rd
April

Note: Meetings of the full Council now take place on the 3rd Monday of alternate months. Planning Committee meetings are held monthly if applications are submitted.

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 and you can comment on planning applications on-line



We Wish all Residents Seasons Greetings and a Happy and Peaceful New Year

Introducing our new Assistant Clerk...

The council is delighted to announce the recent appointment of local resident, Mrs Angie Goodwin, to work alongside the Clerk, Karen Ripley.

Angie was selected from a very strong field and will be a great asset to the council and the community. She will be working from the Parish Office, on a part time basis; we welcome her and wish her well in this new post.

FACEBOOK – we will shortly be launching our FACEBOOK page, in an effort to reach a wider audience with matters of interest to the community. This will be used to ‘post’ information only and will not be used to enter into any discussion or dialogue; we prefer to do that directly via the normal channels – telephone, email or face-to-face at the Parish Office. Please look out for us and invite us to be your ‘friend’ if you would like to receive updates. We will be looking at TWITTER shortly...

Grit Bins – the grit bins throughout the village are provided for the benefit of all residents, to ensure that public roads and paths remain accessible and that we can continue to function in poor weather. Many of the bins are paid for directly by the Parish Council from the money we raise from our own residents, so it is in all our interests to ensure that the grit is used for public purposes and not taken by selfish individuals for private use. Please be community minded and, if you are able, help to spread the grit where it is intended when bad weather is forecast. And please, please keep an eye on the bin in your locality and report any misuse, as it is **you** who is being deprived by such behaviour. Grit for private use can be purchased at Culverwell’s

The Parish Council has recently approved two new grit bins; one in Langham Road and one in Rother View, at the end of the twitten path leading from Church Lane. This path is widely used by adults and children for access to the village, but is quite steeply sloped and can become treacherous in icy weather

A Short History of Bishop's Meadow - It seems that many local residents are unaware of how this lovely village amenity came into existence and there is still some misunderstanding about the inclusion of the small piece of the Meadow formerly occupied by the wood supply business. We thought it would be of interest to briefly outline the facts.

When the development of Mill Rise (Brightling Road, on the site of the former Stenning's wood yard) was being considered, an area of approximately 10 acres lying south of Bishop's Lane and formerly used by Stenning's to store wood, was offered to Rother District Council (RDC) for use as Public Open Space, in what is known as 'Planning Gain'. When the transfer took place the area was named 'Bishop's Meadow'.

A small area at the bottom of the land was occupied by a local resident to run his wood supply business but without a formal tenancy agreement and initially the developers wanted to remove him. However, RDC reached a compromise with the developers to allow him a lease, at a peppercorn rent, for 15 years until September 2009. Clearly, the developers were not going to give up 10 acres of land, for free, only to see it subsequently developed commercially and a legally binding contract was drawn up between the 3 parties (RDC, the developer and the tenant) to ensure that at the end of the period the land would be incorporated into the main meadow and become part of the 'Public Open Space'. The Parish Council was not involved in any of these discussions or agreements.

In 1995, the Parish Council asked Rother DC if they could have the meadow, in order to make better use of it for local people; it was not possible to transfer ownership but a lease of 99 years was granted. This included a legally binding requirement on the Parish Council to turn the area occupied by the wood yard into 'Public Open Space' on expiry of the lease and, **crucially**, not under any circumstances to renew or extend the lease. Any attempt to do so could have resulted in the developers claiming that the original transfer terms had been breached and the whole future of the meadow could be up for re-negotiation.

A public footpath runs diagonally uphill across the meadow from the entrance on Bishop's Lane to the Darvell drive but in 1996 by agreement with the Darvell community and the support of ESCC, a licensed footpath was created from the SE corner of the meadow, across Darvell land to connect up with the Glottenham drive, thus creating a safer route for walking than along Bishop's Lane and under the railway bridge. This required the construction of two footbridges across the petty sewers and these were constructed by volunteers from the village.

After the expiry of the tenant's lease in 2009, the Parish Council took control of the area formerly occupied by the woodyard, formed an earth bund across the entrance to prevent any unauthorised access and created a new access from the main meadow into the area. After many years of commercial use the land was in a poor condition and it would have cost a great deal to re-instate immediately. It was therefore scraped and levelled and is now being allowed to regenerate naturally, as indeed was the case with the main meadow.

Since the Parish Council took on the land in 1995 a great deal of work and many hours of volunteer time have gone in to developing the Meadow into the beautiful and significant environmental asset that it now is. If you haven't yet experienced the Meadow, do go and take a look – you may want to take your camera as it is rich with many species of flora and fauna. Or simply enjoy a walk around, or sit and relax in the lovely surroundings.

We have a wonderful volunteer group who carry out care and maintenance tasks in the meadow (and other pieces of amenity land); they work under the title FORGe (Friends of Robertsbridge Green spaces). If you would like to take part or find out more, please speak to Peter on 01580 880353 or email petemassini@btinternet.com



In case you haven't heard already **Helping Hands** is now up and running for those residents who are in particular need of some help. We have a team of volunteers willing to assist with a variety of tasks such as shopping, occasional cooking, changing a light bulb or hanging a picture. Gardening can include a one-off tidy up for someone who is physically unable to manage it alone. Transport is offered for reasonable occasional lifts, e.g. appointments or visiting a friend not on the bus route and befriending is offered on a regular or occasional basis. Volunteers do not replace local traders or professional services but are there for the benefit of all in our community, young or old, who might at some time need a helping hand.

To request help, call 07726 592739

If you would like to *volunteer* help, then please contact either Anne Wells 880832 annecwells@gmail.com or Sue Prochak 881309 cllr.susanprochak@gmail.com

Community Speedwatch

The Parish Council is pleased to support and publicise a new initiative in the village. A small group of residents has recently formed a Community Speedwatch Group, which is a locally driven initiative where members of the community join together with the support of the Police to monitor speeds of vehicles using speed detection devices. These activities should be viewed as educational initiatives and not enforcement.

Sergeant Paul Masterson, from Rother's Neighbourhood Policing Team, said: "Community Speed Watch is designed to get the community to work together with a little help from the local police. Volunteer operators have successfully been running this scheme in Rother for three years and membership is still growing. The scheme is ideal for those who care about their community where speeding is a priority. I would encourage you to make this positive step and make a real difference to your local area."

Details of speeding vehicles are entered onto the Community Speedwatch website by the volunteer coordinator and a letter is then sent to the driver. If the same driver is recorded speeding three times, the Police traffic department will seek to actively target and catch them.

This is a fantastic opportunity for you to do something positive for your community and give something back. All we need are people who care about their street and are willing to give a couple of hours of their time to carry out speed checks.

Freddie Pooke, local resident says: "Working closely with our county police service we in Robertsbridge are in the process of setting up our own Speedwatch group. Like many other villages in East Sussex we do have a problem with speeding and to make our roads safer and to help reduce speeding, many voluntary Speedwatch groups have been set up all over the UK. We are looking for more members to join the group so we can start to run speed monitoring sessions in and around the village. All volunteers have to attend a few hours training at Battle police station which includes health and safety basics and the use of speed monitoring devices".

If you'd like to know more please go to <https://www.communityspeedwatch.co.uk> If you would like to join our newly formed Speedwatch group or want to know more please email Freddie Pooke at fpooke@aol.com."

A plea for a hazard free Recreation Ground (and other open spaces!)

It seems there are still some dog owners who may not be aware that **dogs must be kept on leads** in the actual football field in the recreation ground as well as the first area with playground equipment etc. There have been more complaints about dog mess on the football field - this field is where children play ball games, run around and where football practice and matches take place. The unpleasant task of having to pick up excrement on the field before games is now commonplace. Please, please keep dogs on leads and take care of your dog's mess responsibly and we can all enjoy our shared village green spaces hazard free.

There are also a number of residents who fail to clean up after their dogs in Bishop's Meadow and Piper's Field. It is very unpleasant for other users and it is an offence to fail to clean up after your dog which carries a fine of up to £500.

Pocket Park: Parish Council supports Robertsbridge Bonfire Society supports Parish Council....

In a welcome example of joint working, the Robertsbridge Bonfire Society recently carried out some essential coppicing work in the Pocket Park; in return they were able to take away and use the coppiced wood (mainly hazel) for their very successful bonfire event on 16th November.

SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council:

Mrs Karen Ripley

Assitant Clerk

Mrs Angie Goodwin

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Robertsbridge TN32 5AP

Phone: 01580 882066

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www.robertsbridge-pc.org.uk

The Parish Office is open to the public at the following times: **(note new times)**

Tuesday 2pm to 4pm
Thursday 2pm to 4pm

Rother District Council

Web address: www.rother.gov.uk

Parish Councillors

Tel:

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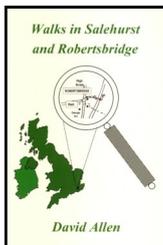
East Sussex County Councillor

Cllr Angharad Davies 831965
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Rother District Councillors

Cllr Graham Browne 860118
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Cllr Susan Prochak 881309
cldr.susan.prochak@rother.gov.uk



Back Again by Popular demand!

Copies of this book sold out some time ago and I have had many requests to put it back in print. I was reluctant to do this without re-checking the routes but I found it difficult to find time to do this. Fortunately I was rescued by the noble efforts of Anne Wells and Charlie Beeden who walked (and re-walked!) the routes to note any changes and I have now been able to get the book re-printed. It also now includes a piece about the Rother Valley Railway which will become an increasing part of the scenery of the village.

Printing has also been made possible by the Parish Council making a loan of the printing costs (to be repaid from sales) and RVR having made some advance purchases - I am grateful for their help and support.

Hopefully, the book should be on sale, price £2, in Judges Bakery and at RVR bookstall by the time this Newsletter is delivered .

David Allen

Green Waste Collections – changes from next summer...

Residents are being urged by Rother District Council to sign up for the new garden waste collection service ahead of its launch next year. From summer 2014, a fortnightly collection of garden waste is being offered to residents for an annual charge of £25 (which RDC says works out to approximately £1 per collection).

Residents will be able to register for the service online by visiting the garden waste registration page on RDC's website (www.rother.gov.uk) or calling the customer service contact centre on 0843 104 77 88 or returning the form recently distributed to all households. Those who register will receive their new brown garden waste wheelie bin shortly before the service starts and will be invoiced in spring 2014. **Those who do not register by January 6, 2014 are not guaranteed to receive a garden waste collection when the service starts.**

Thank You...

To Rother Valley Railway, who have recently carried out some much needed surfacing works under the railway bridge between the Recreation Ground and the Pocket Park. This area has become increasingly boggy over the last few years, making walking very difficult, so we are very grateful to them for their help.

To Ross, the Station Agent at Robertsbridge, who is doing a marvellous job keeping the station looking lovely. Much of the work is carried out in his own time and at his own expense; a valuable community contribution.

To Martin Bates, leader of the Volunteer Footpath Maintenance Team and all the volunteers in the group who put in many hours of hard work to help keep our footpaths passable. Martin is doing a sterling job, liaising with landowners and the County Council to tackle some important matters from surfaces, overgrown vegetation, stiles and bridges.

To Osmonds Transport, who very kindly donated a large lorry load of road planings for use on the footpaths at the rear of Bishops Meadow, and to Leon Hardy for organising and delivering (and all the volunteers, including Peter Massinni, who moved and laid it!).