



SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Volume 8

Issue 3

December 2014



Dates
for
your
diary
2015

WHERE WILL OUR NEW HOUSES GO?

8th Jan	Planning Committee Youth Centre
10th Jan	Neighbourhood Plan Public Event 10am Youth Centre
19th Jan	Parish Council Meeting Robertsbridge Hall
5th Feb	Planning Committee Youth Centre
2nd Mar	Annual Assembly Robertsbridge Hall
5th Mar	Planning Committee Youth Centre
16th Mar	Parish Council Meeting Robertsbridge Hall
2nd Apr	Planning Committee Youth Centre

Robertsbridge has to find spaces to absorb at least 155 new houses over the next fourteen years (up to the year 2028). This number cannot be reduced, but over the next few months, decisions will have to be made about *where* these can go, and which areas of land will be designated for development in the statutory Rother District Local Plan. Rother District Council is currently investigating potential sites and will consult the public on these next summer.



But there is another way... local people can have a greater say in making these decisions. Under the new Localism laws, we could write our own 'Neighbourhood Plan'.

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.

Read about what the Parish Council is considering in this special issue...

* *Planning Committee Meetings will be held monthly, generally on the first Thursday in the month, provided applications have been received. See the Parish noticeboards and/or the website www.salehurst-pc.org.uk for confirmation & the agenda 3 days prior. Plans and documents can be viewed on www.rother.gov.uk, and comments can be submitted online.*

Full Parish Council Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of alternate months. See the Parish noticeboards and/or the website www.salehurst-pc.org.uk for the agenda 3 days prior.

INVITATION

Neighbourhood Plan Introductory Event

Saturday 10th January 2015

at Robertsbridge Youth Centre: 10 am to 12 noon

Everyone in the Parish is invited to come along to find out more, and get involved if they wish

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN Contd...

Neighbourhood Plans enable local communities, rather than people from outside, to take the lead in producing part of the statutory development plan for the area - when passed they become part of the legal framework, and will be used in the determination of future planning applications. Without a Neighbourhood Plan the policies set by Rother DC will apply, but local people may be better placed to take account of the specific needs of our own community, and to safeguard the things we value. For a Neighbourhood Plan to be adopted, it will have to win a majority of votes from everyone on the electoral roll (in the area covered by the plan) in a referendum, so it is important that community members have been part of creating the plan, and are happy with it.



Neighbourhood Plans must conform to the District Local Plan. So a Neighbourhood Plan for Salehurst & Robertsbridge could not reduce the 155 new houses, but could influence what sort of housing it is, what it will look like, and where it should be built. It is an opportunity to protect green and other areas, and local assets such as shops, pubs, and churches. A plan could identify what additional infrastructure the community wants, and improve facilities generally.

Local authorities receive money in various ways from developers to pay towards the cost of local infrastructure that the local authority, or local community, have identified, such as roads, schools, health centres and parks. One of these sources (the

Community Infrastructure Levy) will be introduced next year and part of the money is passed directly to the parish council to spend locally. This amount is increased when a Neighbourhood Plan is adopted.

So, clearly there are advantages but it is a serious commitment requiring careful consideration of opportunities versus time and cost implications. It is difficult to say at the moment what it would cost, except that it certainly will cost a lot of time and effort. We can benefit particularly from the experience of other local parishes that have succeeded in getting their NPs approved. Sedlescombe, the nearest parish to us who are pursuing a NP, are nearly at the end of the process, and it has cost them so far around

COULD WE AVOID NEW BUILDS ON OUR GREENFIELD SITES?

Probably not. We can only hope to minimise development on greenfield sites, as the 155 houses to be built is not negotiable, and we would not have enough brownfield sites (eg. the Mill Site) and other plots for that many. The recent Croudace proposals are based on the fact that Grove Farm was designated for some development in the 2006 Local Plan.



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS - GIVING LOCAL PEOPLE THE POWER TO:

- have a say in where new homes should go
- set the framework to judge applications in our local context
- safeguard amenities and open spaces
- influence development in our area
- create a shared vision for the community

£15,000, spread over two years.

The cost is likely to be higher for our parish as we are bigger. But not all of the costs would have to be met by the Council Tax payers of the parish, as there are grants available. If the plan was completed over a two year period, each council-tax paying household (on band D) may have to pay an extra £5 - £10 per year.

Salehurst and Robertsbridge Parish Council (SRPC) has agreed in principle to create a NP - it is likely to go ahead if there is sufficient support, not just in theory, but individuals willing to contribute time and effort. The Town or Parish Council, where there is one, has to lead in producing

a Neighbourhood Plan. There will need to be a Steering Group to take the whole process forward, and this will include representatives other than parish councillors, from the community. There are also other roles if meetings are not for you, and

we hope that everyone will respond with their views during the various stages of community consultation (questionnaires, exhibitions, public meetings etc).



NEXT STEPS - WHERE DO YOU COME IN?

If you care about our village and want to help shape this vision for the future, and to be involved with these key tasks, we want you to take part.

Please do try to come to our first public event about a NP on Saturday 10th January 2015 in Robertsbridge Youth Centre (10 am to 12 noon), even if you are merely just curious. There will be a short talk from an experienced consultant who is giving us free help and advice, and plenty of time for questions or an informal chat over coffee. We really hope you will bring some ideas to share, as well as just hearing what's involved.

If you cannot make it, but wish to get involved, then get in touch with the Parish Clerk Karen Ripley on 882066 or email her at clerk@salehurst-pc.org.uk

*We wish all
residents Seasons
Greetings and
a Happy and
Peaceful New
Year*

SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

www.salehurst-pc.org.uk
www.robertsbridge-pc.org.uk

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Robertsbridge TN32 5AP

01580 882066
email: clerk@salehurst-pc.org.uk

Clerk to the Council:
Mrs Karen Ripley
Assistant Clerk:
Mrs Angie Goodwin

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

Tuesday	2:00 to 4:00pm
Thursday	2:00 to 4:00pm

Parish Councillors	Tel:
CLlr Nick Greenfield (Chair) nick.greenfield@salehurst-pc.org.uk	880998
CLlr Sean O'Hara (Vice-Chair) sean.ohara@salehurst-pc.org.uk	881234
CLlr Ruth Augarde ruth.augarde@salehurst-pc.org.uk	860149
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CLlr Susan Prochak cllr.susan.prochak@rother.gov.uk	881309
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Rother District Council: www.rother.gov.uk

FACEBOOK & TWITTER

We have our own FACEBOOK page; we will use it to 'post' information that may be helpful to local people (we will not 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). So please look for us – **Salehurst & Robertsbridge Parish Council** - and 'like' the page to follow updates.

On TWITTER you can follow our tweets [@SRParishCouncil](https://twitter.com/SRParishCouncil)

ELECTIONS...

Hopefully this issue contained a small flyer about becoming a Parish Councillor. We hope some of you at least will consider standing for election in the spring (Thurs 7th May) when all the councillors have to stand for re-election, and there will be vacancies. There are 'packs' in the Parish office with further information, and you are very welcome to drop in (see left for times) for a friendly chat.

BUS SHELTERS

We hope you like our two new bus shelters - at Northbridge Street near Rutley Close, and George Hill.

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Please note the rather earlier date - it will be Monday 2nd March 2015 in Robertsbridge Hall as usual.

NEW SEAT

Keep an eye out for a new bench to be installed in the fenced children's play area facing the RVR railway line. This has been provided by former resident Gavin Fellows.

AGE CONCERN

Age Concern celebrated its 26th birthday this past summer. Throughout the years, the number of members and volunteers has been a case of "peaks and valleys". Currently the group is in a "valley" stage and desperately needs to increase its numbers with both members and volunteers, especially volunteers who would like to get more involved as Committee Members.

If you feel you could help to keep Age Concern a viable and important social day out in the future for Robertsbridge Seniors, please call 880511 or 880254, or stop by the Community Hall on Station Road any Monday for a free cuppa and a chat with any of the volunteers.

THANK YOU ...

To our lighting engineer Rod, of Streetlights, who very kindly allowed the use of his 'cherry-picker' and to David McGovern, who looks after our clock and did the clock-face repairs - they both did this without charge.

