



SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Volume 11

Issue 2

December 2017

Dates for your diary 2018

Planning Committee Youth Centre	4th Jan
Parish Council Meeting Robertsbridge Hall	15th Jan
Planning Committee Youth Centre	1st Feb
Planning Committee Youth Centre	1st Mar
Parish Council Meeting Robertsbridge Hall	19th Mar
Planning Committee Youth Centre	5th Apr
Annual Parish Meeting (Assembly) Robertsbridge Hall	16th Apr

Full Parish Council Meetings take place on the 3rd Monday of alternate months. Planning Committee meetings are held monthly, generally on the first Thursday, if applications have been received.

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 website at least 3 days before the meeting - planning applications are on the Rother District Council web site - www.rother.gov.uk and comments on planning applications can be submitted on-line.

ROBERTSBRIDGE DOES...

three very different events, all very well supported locally – and all made possible by our very own, dedicated and hard-working residents....

Remembrance Day ceremony (right), Sunday 12th November – well done British Legion, Reverend Annette Hawkins and all the organisations that took part.



Photo by John Powell

Xmas Capers (right) Friday 1st December – well done Robertsbridge Enterprise Group and groups, traders etc. that took part.

And a huge thank you to Robertsbridge Enterprise Group plus many extra volunteers who worked so hard on the Christmas trees and decorations (ribbons) – a massive 95 trees this year; and to the householders who each pay for their own tree and lights, helping to make the village look truly festive.

We wish all
Residents a
Happy Christmas
and a Peaceful
New Year



Photo by Anne Cooke

Robertsbridge
Annual Guy Fawkes
Celebrations (left),
Saturday 18th
November – well
done Robertsbridge
Bonfire Society.

Photo by Sally Pitman





Volunteers getting the Christmas trees ready to go up in the High Street.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: UPDATE

Has this really been 'in progress' since 2015? Sadly, the answer is yes, but we really hope the end is now in sight!

Whilst the process is very long, time consuming for many, and costly, the Parish Council still considers that it is in the best interests of residents to have our own Neighbourhood Plan (NP). The reasons for deciding to do it back in 2015 remain relevant. The village had to find space for 155 new dwellings and it was felt that local people should have some input into where they would go. The process has given a wide opportunity for residents to work together, be involved in the process and to have their voices heard.

In relation to costs to the council (residents), although over the three years this will be in the region of £27,000 (grants so far have covered £8,000 of the total £35,000), we will gain a larger percentage of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charged on new dwellings, by having a NP. The actual amount of CIL due is difficult to estimate, as it is based on the number of qualifying dwellings and their size, but on very rough calculations, the *additional* funds payable to the Parish Council once a NP is in place, is likely to be in excess of £100,000. This is a huge amount of extra money, which can be spent on infrastructure, or other projects that benefit our residents directly.

Because there have been delays in Rother District Council handing over responsibility for the Station Road car park and toilets (which we had budgeted for), we have managed to find the funds for the NP without any direct raise in the precept (parish element of the Council Tax).



Following widespread consultation and involvement from the village, the Plan was submitted to the Independent Examiner in May. He subsequently held a Public Hearing – a slightly misleading title as, although held in public, only invited individuals were asked to answer very specific questions, on topics the Examiner wished to explore in further detail. As a result, he allowed an opportunity for additional documentation to be submitted by the end of November (following further consultation). He hopes to have his report to us by Christmas. We will then know whether the sites chosen (by the village) to be designated for development, alongside the rest of the policies, can progress to referendum.

VILLAGE STEWARD:

Peter has been very busy over the last few months and we hope you will agree that the village is looking better for it. Apart from the regular litter picking around the village (ably assisted by his wife, Susan), these are just *some* of the tasks undertaken:

- Regular hedge cutting / strimming and pruning around the Recreation Ground car park and play areas
- Cut back vegetation around bench seats and the bus shelter on George Hill and various signs
- Strimmed grass behind the bus shelter in Northbridge Street and renovated and refitted litter bin
- Installed new litter bin on Northbridge Street (northbound side at bus stop)
- Installed new (replacement) dog waste bins at the Recreation Ground and Bishops Meadow
- Washed both bus shelters, various road traffic signs and fingerposts plus various bollards
- Repainted various bollards (more to be done in due course)
- Sided back the verge along the Clappers, adjacent to the newly cut cricket ground hedge
- Installed a newly donated memorial bench in the cemetery



ROBERTSBRIDGE TWINNING ASSOCIATION:

Dear villagers,

As you may remember, a while back the committee of the Robertsbridge Twinning Association reluctantly decided that the association should cease operating. The reasons for this were that our membership was dwindling, and that the majority of the events we organized for the village in support of the association were not well attended. The main purposes of our twinning are the development of friendships and the mutual interest in understanding, embracing and enjoying the different cultures of the two communities; central to these purposes are trips by our villagers to St. Brice, and vice versa, but such trips are expensive. It is the income from events and membership fees that have had to cover the costs of these. On 10th November Marilyn and I met in France with the St. Brice twinning committee to explore ways in which we might be able to re-think and re-launch our association. We came up with five ideas:

- **MUSIC - A joint band/mini-orchestra**
Musicians would get together here, and likewise in St. Brice; rehearse agreed pieces and put together a programme, and then come together alternately for a joint concert.
- **ARTS - A joint exhibition of arts & crafts**
Painters, sculptors, photographers, ceramicists ... in both villages would produce work for a joint exhibition, held alternately here and in St. Brice.
- **SPORT - Sports Fixtures**
Players from the two villages coming together for annual matches, alternately here and in St. Brice. Both villages have well established and high-level clubs, so this might be best done at a junior level.
- **FOOD & DRINK - French & British wine tasting clubs**
The best of British wine here; the finest of French wine there! Appropriately matched with edible accompaniments.
- **SCHOOLS LINK-UP**
We would want to look again at liaisons between our schools. A good start might be to set up a private website/blog for the schools, where pupils could communicate, share work, share ideas and generally get to know one another.

All these ideas are preliminary. Some may simply prove to be impractical or too expensive to run. We may even end up ripping this all to shreds and starting again. There is much to discuss; but the most important input to this process must come from you – the people who live in our parish. It is *your* Twinning Association, and it must be what *you* want. That is why included in this Parish Newsletter is a very short Questionnaire, which is asking for your help. We want your views on the ideas we have written about here. Please do take a few minutes to fill out the questionnaire and return it to me. I hope to be able to present the results of the questionnaire at the next meeting in St. Brice, which will hopefully take place in late January, and I will keep the village informed on progress.

Thanking you in advance for your help.

With best wishes, David Faithfull (Chairman, Robertsbridge Twinning Association)

SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

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www.robertsbridge-pc.org.uk

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

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

Rother District Council

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FOOTPATH GROUP: *Under New Management !*

Our volunteer footpath group has a new co-ordinator. So a welcome to Andrew Bonnett who is taking over, and a big thank you to Martin Bates who has worked tirelessly to improve the condition of our footpaths and bridleways since 2013. Martin is not leaving the group but wants a break from the paperwork!

The group seeks to improve the rights of way network in our parish, facilitate access to it and promote its use by all and would welcome further volunteers either to help directly with maintenance tasks or in other less strenuous ways.

If you would like to get involved or simply find out more you can email us at robertsbridgepaths@gmail.com or call in at the Parish Office for other means of contact.



FORTHCOMING ROADWORKS:

Highways England are planning to carry out some resurfacing works on the A21 early next year, which will involve full closure (both directions) **overnight on weeknights only (8pm to 6am)** - these are the details they have provided...

Phase 1: Closing Forstal Farm Roundabout to Flimwell.

Diversion through Goudhurst & Hawkhurst. Specific works at:

8 Jan - 2 Feb A21 Lamberhurst
5 Feb - 7 Feb A21 Flimwell Junction with B2079
8 Feb - 17 Feb A21 Stonecrouch Combwell Lodge to Bewl Bridge

Phase 2: Closing Flimwell to John's Cross Roundabout.

Diversion through Sandhurst & A28. Specific works at:

19 Feb - 27 Feb A21 Swiftsden to Coopers Corner
28 Feb - 10 Mar A21 Silver Hill to Silverdale
12 Mar - 17 Mar A21 Redlands Lane to Poppinghole Lane

Phase 3: Closing John's Cross Roundabout to junction with Marley Lane.

Diversion through Battle: Specific works at:

19 Mar - 24 Mar A21 Vinehall Farm - Whatlington Junction

The above schedule could be subject to change due to weather or unforeseen circumstances.

You can find out more from www.highways.gov.uk
0300 123 5000 or email info@highwaysengland.co.uk