



SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Volume 11

Issue 3

May 2018

REFERENDUM KEY DATES

Deadline for registering to vote in the Referendum	14 May
Deadline 5pm to apply for a postal vote	15 May
Deadline 5pm to apply for a proxy vote (someone else to vote for you)	22 May
Dispatch of postal votes	17 May
Deadline 5pm to apply for emergency proxy vote	31 May
REFERENDUM (POLLING) DAY Robertsbridge Hall 7am - 10pm	31 May
Votes will be counted immediately after the close of the polling station	31 May

Going to be away ?

You may have realised the vote is during half-term week, so some of you may be away.

YOU CAN STILL VOTE - either by post or by proxy, so you can still ensure your voice is heard.

Please see overleaf for details of how to do it.

For further information please phone Stephen Hardy on:
07831 494 028

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM

Thursday 31 MAY 2018 7am - 10pm
Robertsbridge Hall, Station Road

Background...

You will recall that the Salehurst and Robertsbridge Neighbourhood Plan has been a long time coming. It all started in January 2015, when we knew that Robertsbridge **had to have a minimum of 155 new homes by 2028**, to meet targets set by Government, and Rother District Council (RDC) in their Local Plan.

The Parish Council decided that it would be better to develop our own Neighbourhood Plan, to determine the sites that people preferred to see developed, rather than developers from outside, and RDC, deciding where the new homes should be built. A steering group of seventeen people was formed, including ten enthusiastic and willing volunteers from the community.

To establish the views of people in the parish, over the last three years we have staged three exhibitions, organised four consultation periods, two with the help of RDC, and one parish-wide questionnaire (an unprecedented 67% of households completed questionnaires). In September last year we had a day-long public hearing, organised by the Independent Examiner (all NP's have to be examined by an Independent Examiner). We received his report and recommendations in late January this year.

Final Plan...

The Examiner's report advised that measures for an emergency access in times of very serious flooding for the Mill Site were acceptable, so the site should go forward. **He also said that the parish needed more affordable homes than would be built on the three sites proposed in the draft plan (Mill Site, adjacent Heathfield Gardens and Vicarage Land) and that the next most favoured site consulted on, known as Grove Farm 1 on George Hill, should be added to the list of developable sites.** You may recall that Grove Farm 1 (approx. 30 dwellings) and GF 2 (further 35 approx.) had been put forward by a developer, so were included in the public exhibitions staged by the Steering Group. There is a current, planning application for the Grove Farm 1 site.

Following discussions with Rother District Council, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the Parish Council accepted the recommendations of the Examiner, to enable the Neighbourhood Plan in its revised form to proceed to a referendum.

Why was an extra site agreed?

The Steering Group and Parish Council agreed with the Examiner that sufficient affordable housing should be provided for.

Also, if we had decided not to accept the Independent Examiner's recommendations, it may have taken at least another year to complete the plan. With no plan or site allocations in place, we would have been vulnerable to speculative applications on all or any sites, including those not allocated in the plan.

It was agreed that it was better to include the next site preferred by residents, Grove Farm 1 (but not Grove Farm 2, which was the least favoured site in the parish).

The Referendum Question:

'Do you want Rother District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Salehurst and Robertsbridge to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'

Where can I see a copy of the final Plan?

Much more information, including the Plan, is available on the website:

www.robertsbridgeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/resources.asp

Or hard copies can be seen at:

- Parish Office
- George Inn
- Ostrich Hotel
- Robertsbridge Club
- Salehurst Halt
- Judges Bakery & Coffee Shop



**Neighbourhood
Development Plan**
— Salehurst & Robertsbridge —

Rother District Council's own report after all the negotiations, concludes as follows:

Conclusion, Implications and Referendum

22. *In light of representations on the submitted Salehurst and Robertsbridge Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Examiner, Mr. Slater, has carefully considered whether it meets the necessary 'basic conditions' and found that it does, subject to a number of modifications. Planning officers accept his conclusions, as does the Parish Council; hence, it is recommended to endorse the Examiner's recommendations and put the modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan, forward for Referendum to the residents of Salehurst and Robertsbridge Parish.*

23. If there is a majority support for the Neighbourhood Plan at Referendum, this Council will be obliged (subject to certain, limited exceptions) to formally make it part of statutory development plan. At that point, its 'development boundary' for Robertsbridge, its development allocations, as well as the Local Green Space designations, will become the primary policy references for the purpose of determining most planning applications in the Parish.

WAYS YOU CAN VOTE...

Everyone on the Electoral Register for Salehurst & Robertsbridge can vote, in one of the ways shown below

IN PERSON on polling day, Thursday 31 May, at the Village Hall, between 7am and 10pm

BY POST – the easiest way to apply for a postal vote is on-line at:
<https://www.yourvotematters.co.uk/how-do-i-vote/voting-by-post>.

You must apply by 5 pm on 15 May

BY PROXY - if you want someone else to vote on your behalf, the easiest way to apply is on-line at:

<https://www.yourvotematters.co.uk/how-do-i-vote/voting-by-proxy#proxyforms> **You must apply by 5 pm on 22 May**

**If you don't have on-line access, please telephone
Rother District Council on: 01424 787000**

IMPORTANT

If you have not yet received a polling card

This may be because you are not on the Rother Electoral Register. Perhaps you have recently moved into the village. If so, you will need to REGISTER. The simplest way to do this is online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>

The last day you can register to vote is 14 May

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