



## INVITE TO ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

Thursday 19 April 7.30pm Whiteway Centre

### **Chair's introduction to 2017-18 RPC Annual Village Newsletter**

In my sixth year as Chair I am wondering what more motivational and original things I can say to Rottingdean residents? In the main your current Parish Council came together at the 2011 elections and the subsequent by-election of 2012 and has shown a remarkable degree of work ethic, energy and consistency over the years. This year Cllr Lel Meleyal and Cllr Ian Wilson have left the team to be replaced by Cllr Vicky Fenwick and we currently have a vacancy we are working to fill.

This loyal consistency and drive has brought steady predictability to our work in pursuit of development for our village and achievement of many goals. Not all I hasten to add, and a number of major challenges continue to frustrate us, but even with these there have been incremental achievements. Challenges that affect only Rottingdean have been easier to address, but Rottingdean is part of a city and on a major route junction important to more than one Council. Add to that the fact that two thirds of Rottingdean Parish is in the South Downs National Park and the scale of the challenge and communication network appears to escalate. The optimist may see this as more potential partners and funding sources, the pessimist may see this as a complex administrative nightmare.

Attempts to address traffic and air pollution, housing needs and development, parking, congestion and infrastructure continue to be our major challenges, and none of these can be addressed as a Rottingdean issue alone. We work in partnership with a number of authorities, agencies, experts and voluntary groups, but amidst such combined strength there are multiple weakest links, there are pros and cons, negotiations and compromises and virtually no example where everyone is a winner.

Ably supported by our part-time Clerk, Nicky, eight current Councillors, all Rottingdean residents, carry out this work for our village. My fellow councillors give of their experience, energies, skills, resources and time, their lives, for the village we all love. Promised nothing but worries and more grey hairs, they soldier on through good times and bad, to see meaningful gains for the people of Rottingdean.

To Anthony, Graham, Heather, John, Kieran, Sue and Vicky I owe you all a great debt of gratitude, it has been an enormous privilege to serve beside you in an active and effective team, working daily as we do for Rottingdean.

Bob Webzell, Chair,  
Rottingdean Parish Council

Please visit our website ([www.rottingdean-pc.gov.uk](http://www.rottingdean-pc.gov.uk)) - it contains information on our meetings, our structure, along with the full range of work conducted throughout the year. Outlined in this newsletter is a broad overview of the types of activity for each area for the past year

## **Finance and Standards**

*Responsible Finance Officer Cllr John Bryant, Deputy Cllr Bob Webzell. We have a legal responsibility for financial accountability including the management of the precept on behalf of residents and having the RPC accounts audited annually by an independent assessor. We provide due diligence through our governance structures and procedures and scrutinise best options when considering expenditure. The Parish Council, by carefully managing its money, has built up some reserves to fund Projects for the benefit of Rottingdean and its residents.*

This year your Parish Council has supported by way of grants/donations a number of village activities, including Rottingdean in Bloom, Beacon Hill Hub and Friends of Beacon Hill Nature Reserve. The guidance and application form for grants/donations can be found on the RPC website.

Financial plan for 2018-19

Maintain precept at same level (£28.85p for a band D property) which with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme will make a total RPC budget of £47,510. Reserves are held for major projects including street lighting improvements in the Conservation Area; improvements to Park Road toilet facilities; improvements to the Lower High Street.

## **Built Environment**

*Lead Cllr John Bryant & Cllr Kieran Fitsall for parking/highways safety. Seeks to improve the effects for those who live, work and visit the village. Aspects include road safety and parking, transport and traffic flows, street lighting. It involves ongoing liaison with BHCC and compliance with legal regulations.*

- ✓ Worked with BHCC to fund a study in 2018 to model traffic flows through the High Street aimed at improving air quality.
- ✓ Replaced old street lights in Vicarage Lane and west side of The Green with lantern/column lighting.
- ✓ Achieved repairs to Conservation Area red brick pathways.
- ✓ Sited a speed -activated sign placed within the 20mph zone on Falmer Rd for 21 days which found 59% of all 114,474 vehicles in excess of 20mph. The average recorded speed was 29.5mph.

Ongoing for 2018-19

- Two final phases of street lighting improvements to be completed.
- Ongoing consideration of improvements to Lower High Street to make it more pedestrian-friendly.

*Parking matters in the village, literally, and there have been a number of measures that have been implemented in the last 12 months following requests from residents, concerned primarily about the impact that inconsiderately parked vehicles have on safety and ease of access. Some of our activities this year include:*

- ✓ Extension of double yellows at Court Ord and Falmer Road junction to improve vehicle safety. wheelchair users, and BHCC have been requested to take enforcement action.
- ✓ Other measures to protect pedestrian access to Golden Square are also being considered.

*If you are concerned about illegally parked vehicles, contact the BHCC Parking Hotline in the first instance on 0345 603 5469 and select option 2 or use the on-line form on BHCC website.*

## Planning

*Lead Cllr Heather Butler. Planning in Rottingdean is probably one of the most contentious issues there is. Should we allow more properties to be built? How many should be built? Why do we need more houses? Planning is becoming one of those subjects rather like religion and politics that is best not discussed as it's bound to cause offence to someone! As the Planning Sub Committee for the Parish Council we review all plans for developments and decide as a group whether there are grounds for objection to planning, based on a set of planning criteria - these can be found on the website planning page. Our role is an advisory one as we cannot make decisions but we do keep in touch with BHCC Planning Officers and share our thoughts.*

With regard to the two areas, within the Parish Boundary where large-scale developments are planned.

- Meadow Vale – this development proposal of 45 houses is going to Appeal and will be examined by a Government Inspector. The Deans Preservation Group have carried out extensive ecology surveys, We will be supporting them at the appeal and will raise our concerns particularly on the need for a strategic gap between the villages and the cumulative impact of houses at Meadow Vale and St Aubyns.
- St Aubyns – at time of going to print we still await the plans to be considered by BHCC. I think we can all agree that there's a need to develop the brownfield site as it is increasingly becoming an eyesore at the centre of our village. The draft plans propose building on part of the field with around 60% left open for common usage and funds for the upkeep of the field, the Chapel and the Pavilion for a period of time. See the website to read our full report.

Given the BHCC compulsory housing target it's inevitable that more houses will be coming to Rottingdean. Perhaps we should take a more philosophical attitude to local development. Lots of small developments have grown up over the years, eg: St Aubyns Mead, Burnes Vale, at the time I am sure that people said we can't have more houses.... But in fact these developments brought new people into the village with their skills, their personalities, their children. They have shopped in the village and have enriched the village in so many ways, they are friends and colleagues .... new people coming in add to what is already a special place to live.

## Natural environment

*Lead Cllr Anthony Delow and Cllr Bob Webzell for BHLNR. Our village isn't all about pollution, parking and planning! Nestled as we are between the South Downs and the English Channel we're fortunate to have various open spaces within RPC boundary including Beacon Hill Local Nature Reserve, our seafront and terraces, the undercliff walk, the Village Green and pond. Some of our activity last year included:*

- ✓ Worked with South Downs National Park for 6 bike racks & repair station to be installed on seafront.
- ✓ Installation of telescope donated by E-On (Rampion Wind Farm) on seaward end of Quarter Deck.
- ✓ Responsible for ongoing maintenance of village pond and ducks.

Ongoing for 2018-19

- Continue to request extension of BHCC Bike Share Scheme to include Rottingdean,

### Beacon Hill Local Nature Reserve (BHLNR)

*Two years of determined action led by RPC culminated with the Beacon Hill Nature Reserve Declaration on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2017 being signed by lawyers at BHCC. On this date the extension was legally integrated into the BHLNR and our Nature Reserve, now 44% bigger, received the permanent protection in law that it deserves. Prepared and published Beacon Hill LNR Annual Report available on the website.*

- ✓ Achieved 'gold standard' in S&SE In Bloom 'large conservation area' category.

Plans for 2018-19

- Improvements to seating and signage on Beacon Hill.
- Re-branding of larger Nature Reserve

### Village community

*Lead Cllr Graham Sheppard. This aspect of the Council is wide-ranging and includes trade, tourism, arts, events, police liaison, supporting resilience within the community - in fact anything that promotes Rottingdean as a place for people to visit and enjoy. Below is only a snapshot of our work in 2017-18:*

- ✓ Liaised with BHCC for the maintenance and siting of dedicated benches.
- ✓ Supported 'Rottingdean In Bloom' with their work in the centre of the village.
- ✓ Arranged for the prompt removal of graffiti on play equipment at the Rec & in other places.
- ✓ Supported a local family to refurbish the Wishing Well on The Green.
- ✓ Worked with the Preservation Society to arrange for BHCC to prune trees and hedging.
- ✓ Planned for the maintenance and repair of railings around village pond.
- ✓ Facilitate the installation of bike racks in West Street Car Park.
- ✓ Met with local schools and organisations to promote community cohesion.

Some plans for 2018-19

- Working with BHCC to ensure that business waste bins are appropriately positioned.
- Continued involvement with local GP surgery regarding surgery provision in Rottingdean.
- Map accessibility across the village for those with mobility and sensory issues and other needs.
- Liaising with other interested groups to consider having a Christmas Tree on the Green.
- Working with BHCC to maintain the continued management of the tennis courts located in the Rec.

### Strategy & Communications

*Lead Cllr Bob Webzell, Deputy Cllr Sue John. Our strategic plans and methods of communication are included in this area of work. We consider strategic transport, all forms of media, and our draft Neighbourhood Plan, which sets a vision for the future of Rottingdean.*

#### Rottingdean Neighbourhood Plan

*Lead Cllr Sue John. We have drafted a plan for the community which came out of views of residents' consultation in summer 2013. The Neighbourhood Plan is a work-in-progress that encompasses the vision, objectives and intentions for the village, reflecting the following priorities*

- |                                     |                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ✓ Employment and Enterprise         | ✓ Character and Design    |
| ✓ Air Quality and Traffic Reduction | ✓ Housing and Development |
| ✓ Environment and Biodiversity      | ✓ Access                  |

- Next steps will be an informal consultation with you and other stakeholders before the Plan is voted on in a Local Referendum. We have an added challenge that the local authority has to test that our Plan conforms to the City Plan, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework. But you will have the ultimate say – the Plan can only be voted in by residents. If adopted it will have weight as additional local Planning Guidance and will need to be taken account of when future planning applications come forward in the Parish.

There is not sufficient room here to list all our collaborators but would like to thank them all for their contributions in the last year and we look forward to continued and productive joint working in 2018-19. If you have any comments regarding this newsletter or the work of the Parish Council please visit our website and make comment via contact page. We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Village Meeting on 19 April at 7.30pm.