

RYARSH PARISH COUNCIL
CHAIRMANS REPORT 14th MAY 2018

Yet another year passes with the usual mix of, pluses and minuses, good and bad until the 19th December 2017

Notice from KCC of a proposal to open a Sandpit in Roughetts Road, the village exploded.

I will touch on this in more detail later in the report but would firstly take this opportunity to highlight a number of more normal issues that that have taken place since May 2017. I would note they are not in any particular date order

Ryarsh Park is now effectively completed with the final construction works well advanced some 80% of the properties are now occupied and talking with the new residents they are finding living in Ryarsh a very pleasant experience and getting to know their way around

The Parish Council have also been able to assist on some small issues and we are delighted the transition from derelict brickworks to park has gone so smoothly

Planning continues to be an area where we are constantly involved but usually without too many problems. Our only concern remains on the site of the old livery stables where despite opposition from ourselves and Birling PC consent was granted for a small distribution warehouse. The concern remains that a precedent has been created for further development on adjoining land

Fibre Broadband is now up and running gratefully received by most residents

The Ryarsh Resource Room (The phone box in Chapel Street) was opened by Tom Tugendhat our local MP and has proved a great success

The primary school does not meet minimum standard of accommodation and after resolving siting issues is being extended to the required level

County Highways carried out a resurfacing of Woodgate Road The Street and Birling Road the whole scheme running from Trottiscliffe Road to Bull Lane

Clearly a job carried out on a shoestring budget in these difficult economic times, but it at least filled in many cracks and potholes which in recent years were becoming a problem

Sadly, the problems of blocked drains particularly in Roughetts Road are ongoing continually blocked with leaves mud and assorted debris

As a result of the junction 4 bridge widening works in early 2017 commuters particularly travelling to Kings Hill sought short cuts one of which was through Birling and Ryarsh Despite the direct routes being fully open this rat running has continued and we are working with County Highway to hopefully dissuade the offending drivers, in parallel also seeking to reduce speeds, on Roughetts Road especially. There are some 106 monies available from Redrow's development of Ryarsh Park and we are awaiting County's proposals which are unlikely to be a complete solution with monies being limited

Highways England in mid-2017 advised the M20 junctions 3 -5 was to become a smart motorway with the hard shoulders becoming running carriageways Initial enabling works are now in hand particularly the removal of planting and grave concern has been raised particularly in terms of increased noise In respect of increased noise it has also been discovered that despite noise levels on parts of the M20 exceeding E U safe thresholds no upgrading is presently proposed

Both these issues are the subject of ongoing dialogue by the PC Ryarsh Protection Group (RPG) and local residents and seem likely to run and run

I prefaced this note by touching on the proposed Roughetts Road sandpit. and it's fair to say this proposal has got the village 100% united in its total opposition to the proposal

A public meeting was held in January at the village hall and attended by over 300 people. Subsequently strenuous efforts were made to alert residents and ensure their objections were lodged with KCC

Apart from the many technical health ecological and a host of other issues raised, RPG have done an excellent job in raising awareness and widening the local area of these concerns to the extent that KCC minerals received 1266 formal objections.

The objections are now being considered by KCC who must decide whether to move to the next stage or withdraw the proposal. Clearly, they must take account of the mass objection knowing if they proceed they will have a major fight on their hands. RPG are continuing a programme to keep the public aware of the matter during the internal consultation period and advise they have promised monies to create a very sizable fighting fund should this be required

We live in hope that common sense prevails but obviously face a period of uncertainty. I have touched on the efforts of the RPG, but the PCs involvement should not be forgotten and in particular two individuals. Lynne Mackie who collated the objections and collected a mass information to put together the PC's formal objection, and our star of the small screen Councillor Mary McKinlay, thank you both on behalf of the village

I think that's about it hopefully I have not missed anything out but if I have my apologies. Finally a big thank you to all Councillors for their input and ongoing support and yet again Lynne

Thank You All

David Storey

14th May 2018