

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF SEDLESCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL TO PARISH ASSEMBLY 1980

Ladies and Gentlemen

I have pleasure in submitting to you a report of your Council's work over the past year and look forward to the opportunity of discussing items from this report which you may wish to raise at the Assembly.

- 1 PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS. At the end of May 1979 the following were elected to serve on the Parish Council for a four-year period: M Drury, D Woodman, L Barter, N Hodges, W Beaney, Mrs R Farley, Mrs J Keeling, E Messetter, David Thomas. In December, Mr Drury resigned and in January 1980 Mrs P Fisher was co-opted to the Council to fill the vacancy. Council members and the Clerk presented Michael Drury with an inscribed silver tray to thank him for his work for the Village.
- 2 PLANNING. The Planning Committee of the Parish Council has met and considered each planning application for the Parish of Sedlescombe and has sent its comments to the District Council. The Committee has also referred other planning matters to the District Council. The District Council adopted a policy for the future development of Churchland Lane and the Parish Council and affected residents were involved at the consultation stage.
- 3 FOOTPATHS. 5 walks have been arranged to take place between October and March led by the Committee. Various problems encountered have been taken up with the appropriate persons. Although the District Council has so far been unable to appoint a Footpaths Officer, the Parish Council has received some help from the County Council, particularly on the removal of obstructions. However, several problems remain outstanding and your Council will continue to press for solutions either directly with landowners or through the County Council. Four of the footpath leaflets have continued to sell very well in the Post Office. Leaflet No.2 (Spilsted Walk) has been temporarily withdrawn from sale because of difficulties on the walk but it is hoped its sale can be resumed in the near future. The Council has resolved to place stone footpath markers where footpaths mentioned in the leaflets leave the roads. Some have been in place for years but the Council has placed a further four this year and will place another three in the near future. The Council has expressed its thanks to Claverham Community College for the excellent bridge and handrail which was erected by the College on the Reservoir Walk replacing a rusty girder which was difficult to cross.
- 4 REPRESENTATIVES. The Council has appointed councillors to be representatives on the Village Hall Management Committee, the Sports Association, the Rother District Association of Town and Parish Councils and the Board of Managers of Sedlescombe School.
- 5 BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 1979. We were all pleased and proud when Sedlescombe was declared the winner of the small East Sussex Village section of this competition. In November a short ceremony was held on the Village Green when the Best Kept Village sign was unveiled by a Brownie and a Cub and the plaque which is to be held in perpetuity by the Village was presented to the Council together with a £25 cheque from the Men of Trees. After the ceremony, those present were invited to share in a glass of sherry provided by Mr Michael Drury who was then Chairman of the Council. The Council plan to plant trees on the verge of Brede Lane. This year Sedlescombe will automatically be entered for the Two Counties Championship against Ewhurst, Battle, Rogate and Walberton.
- 6 NEW SCHOOL. The building of the new primary school continues and it is hoped that the children will be able to start the new school year in September 1980 in the new building.

Chairman's Report continued

- 7 SWIMMING POOL FUND. The Council has resolved that an annual grant of £300 will be made to the School Swimming Pool Fund until the completion of the project or 5 years, whichever is the shorter time. However, the Council has asked for the safeguard that the money will be returned to the Council in the event of the project not materialising. The first grant will be made in May 1980.
- 8 USE OF STREAM LANE BY HEAVY LORRIES. The Council has made a request to the County Council for a weight restriction to be placed on this lane, but because of the high cost of undertaking a survey together with the likelihood that the traffic will not meet the County Council criterion of 10 lorries a day using the lane as a short cut, this has been refused.
- 9 BUS STOPPING PLACES, BAKERY HOUSE ANTIQUES, COACH & HORSES. The Council, at the request of a resident, attempted unsuccessfully to obtain approval for the moving of the northbound bus stop further up The Street.
- 10 DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY AN AMBULANCE ANSWERING A CALL IN CHAPEL HILL. The Council wrote to the Ambulance Service requesting comments on the statement that an ambulance answering a call in Chapel Hill took the wrong turning and called at a house in Harts Green. No complaint was made on the attendance time which was 20 minutes from Hastings. However the Council was concerned that perhaps an ambulance could be delayed if addresses were not easily found. It is suggested that people calling an ambulance give as precise directions as possible, bearing in mind that the ambulance driver may not be local.
- 11 SEATS IN MEMORY OF SIR JOHN KEELING. Seats in memory of Sir John Keeling were presented to the Village by Lady Keeling and placed on the top part of the Green.
- 12 EAST VIEW TERRACE PLAYGROUND - BALL GAMES. The new Council elected in May 1979 gave consideration to the terms of the East View Terrace playground agreement with Rother District Council. Members of the Parish Council met Rother's Housing Officer in August and requested amendment to certain clauses as well as the erection of a high fence bordering 61 East View Terrace. It was not until February that the Parish Council was informed that the District Council is unwilling to agree to the requests. It is now hoped that fencing can be supplied by the Parish Council plus a generous grant from the Sedlescombe Societies Association and, using labour from East View Terrace parents, the fence erected.
- 13 REPAIR OF SLIDE AT EAST VIEW TERRACE PLAYGROUND. After a regular inspection, Charles Wicksteed & Co., the equipment manufacturers, recommended urgent replacement of the slide liners. Although the work was not in the Council's 1979/80 budget, it was agreed that the work should be carried out even though the faults were not obviously apparent. However, the repair was carried out very unsatisfactorily and the Council eventually requested that the new liners were removed and a further set replaced. The work was at last completed satisfactorily in November.
- 14 REPAINTING OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT. The roundabout at the playground by the river and swings' frame and the rocking rocket at East View Terrace have been repainted. It is planned to repaint the remainder of the equipment in 1980.
- 15 INSPECTION OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT. Councillors made regular detailed inspections of playground equipment, in accordance with recognised safety standards. Because the plastic swing seats seem to break easily, the Council has decided to fit, as a trial, two rubber belt-type seats at the playground by the river.
- 16 TENNIS COURTS' RESURFACING. The Tennis Club approached the Council requesting financial assistance for a major resurfacing of the tennis courts and a scheme has been agreed to resurface both courts in the Spring of 1980. The Tennis Club has to obtain loans which together with existing funds and a Parish Council donation will finance the project. The Council has agreed to make a donation for a further five years (1981-5) to help repay these loans.

The Council is to grant a new 5-year licence to the Tennis Club with the intention at the end of this period of granting a lease, possibly to the Sports Association. This would comply with the Council's policy of bringing all sports in the Village under one management.

- 17 TRANSPORT OF SCHOOLCHILDREN. In 1979, the Council supported Claverham Community College's representations against the imposition of a charge for the transport to school for those living less than 3 miles away whilst retaining free transport for other children. The Council would prefer all children to pay towards the cost of travel to school according to distance.  
In February this year, it was announced that most secondary schoolchildren in E. Sussex will have to contribute towards the cost of school transport from April if the new Education Bill becomes law.
- 18 GIPSY SITE, PLAIN 3 WOOD, BREDE. Despite protests from Sedlescombe and Brede Parish Councils and from Rother District Council, the County Council has approved the plan to establish a small permanent gipsy site at Plains Wood.
- 19 COMPLAINTS TO THE POLICE. The Parish Council has from time to time been called on to pass complaints onto the Police. However, the Council has been asked to request complainants to contact the Police direct at the time of the incident.
- 20 FIRE SERVICE REDUCTIONS. The Council obtained further details from the County Secretary of the effect on Sedlescombe of the reduction in the number of full-time firemen at Battle Fire Station: "Between 0900 and 1700 each day an additional 4 or 5 minutes may be added to an attendance time. However for the rest of the day cover for the area is and will continue to be provided on the present basis of using retained firemen."....."Sedlescombe Village lies within an area where the fire risk is such that in accordance with national standards of fire cover it is necessary to ensure that one appliance should be capable of attending within a maximum of 20 minutes."..... "For all calls to fires in property, other than chimney fires, a normal attendance consists of two fire appliances. A call to a fire in Sedlescombe will normally be attended by 1 appliance from Broad Oak and 1 appliance from Battle Fire Station. Additional assistance, if necessary, will be drawn initially from fire stations in Battle, Hastings, Rye, Burwash and Bexhill."
- 21 POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF BATTLE HOSPITAL. The Council wrote to the Area Administrator of the East Sussex Health Authority expressing concern at the possibility of the closure of Battle Hospital and has been informed that the Hospital will now remain open.
- 22 CLAVERHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE COUNCIL. The Council nominated Mrs Brenda Beeching to Claverham Community College Council (a sub-committee of Claverham Governors) and at the public meeting she was elected to represent the Villages. Another Sedlescombe resident, Mrs McMath, was also elected to represent adult students.
- 23 BUS SERVICE TO BATTLE. In February, the County Council issued details of the cuts in the bus service to Battle. Time given for comment was very short, but the Clerk received many comments which have been passed to the County Council following publication of the details in the Parish News and on the noticeboard. The bus times suggested by the company were 11.54 and 13.54 from Sedlescombe to Battle and 11.27 and 13.27 from Battle to Sedlescombe. It is hoped that the County Council/Bus Company will be able to supply at least one bus each way at a time when Sedlescombe residents want to use it ie in the morning so that visits can be made to the doctor, dentist, optician, Friday market etc. as well as for shopping. The remainder of the services will be reviewed later in the year.

D. WOODMAN

Chairman of the Parish Council.

March 1980.