

REPORT OF SEDLESCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL TO THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PARISH MEETING 1989

1. CAR PARK, BREDE LANE. Encouraging drivers to park in the car park has been, as expected, difficult. However, in recent months, there has been an improvement and most people visiting the morning surgeries have been co-operative in response to the request to park in the car park. The Council is grateful to Mr Pollio for his efforts to encourage Brickwall Hotel patrons to park there also but, unfortunately, this has not been so successful. With the only light over the public conveniences at night, the car park is not clearly visible and this may have caused a few problems. At the request of the Parish Council, Rother District Council is considering installing an illuminated car park sign. There has been pressure from locals for and against the introduction of yellow lines in Brede Lane and the Parish Council has, on two occasions, voted against requesting the County Council to consider this matter.

The Parish Council has received complaints about youngsters skateboarding, cycling and playing ball games in the car park and a notice prohibiting these activities has been erected. The siting of this notice, and another on the verge, also caused complaints.

The District Council has agreed to erect and empty a litter bin in the car park and has, at last, landscaped the grass verge bordering Brede Lane.

2. CAR PARK AT THE SPORTSFIELD. The Parish Council arranged for the doubling of the size of this car park. The work was undertaken by Bexhill Community Programme Team and finished during the summer. New posts and gate have also been erected.

3. DOGS. One of the unexpected disadvantages of the Sportsfield Car Park has been its convenience for parking by dog owners who allow their animals to foul the Sportsfield. The Sports Association, on behalf of sports players and the person responsible for mowing, complain bitterly about the mess. The Parish Council has appealed to dog owners, has put up notices and arranged free "poop-scoops" without any appreciable improvement and has therefore decided to apply to the Home Office for the imposition of a dog ban in the Sportsfield. Such a ban is planned in other parishes as well and is supported by the District Council.

4. REPAYMENT OF LOAN. It is now five years since the Parish Council took out a Barclays Bank loan in order to pay for the purchase of the Sportsfield for the parish. The Parish Council plans to finish repayment of the loan during the coming financial year.

5. TREES. The planting of six trees at the Sportsfield in November finalised the Parish Council planting plan following the hurricane of October 1987. A total of £379 was donated by villagers towards the cost and grants were received from the Men of Trees and Task Force Trees. This work included removal of all the old silver birch trees at the Riverside Playground which were showing signs of age. A very generous donation was made by a resident, Mr Michael Bell who, on hearing of the vandalism to some of the small trees the Parish Council had planted at the playground, offered to replace them with thirty mixed deciduous standard trees. These are now planted and thriving.

6. TENNIS COURTS. The courts will be resurfaced in October of this year paid for by funds set aside by the Tennis Club and the Parish Council. It had been hoped that an all-weather surface could be laid and used by a re-formed Bowls Club as well as by the Tennis Club but, with insufficient interest from bowlers, this idea has been scrapped and a tarmacadam surface will be installed. The Council and the Tennis Club are very concerned about the limited use of the courts by local people and the Tennis Club is still finding it difficult to attract Sedlescombe members. With the building of new and attractive all-weather courts in other towns and villages, the membership has been reduced and the Parish Council and the Tennis Club will be thinking very hard about their plans for the next ten years when resurfacing will be needed again. The capital outlay for an all-weather surface is too great for a small parish and loans are only available if there is a thriving Club.

7. VANDALISM. An annoying and expensive spate of vandalism around Christmas has meant the putting out of action of the roundabout at the Riverside Playground and the

rebuilding of a gate which was only a couple of months old. The roundabout will be repaired this time but the Parish Council may not always be able to pay for similar repairs. This is a shame as this playground is popular and well used by residents and visitors with their small children. The Parish Council asks for your co-operation in "keeping an eye" on areas such as this and reporting damage as it occurs to the local police or the Clerk.

8. VOLUNTEERS. The Parish Council made an appeal during the year for volunteers to become involved in Village organisations by serving on committees and helping on a voluntary basis with small maintenance tasks at, for example, the Village Hall. This appeal has had some success but more residents can always be used so please consider volunteering when you see appeals by local organisations.

9. TELEPHONE KIOSKS. The Parish Council was pleasantly surprised to receive British Telecom's agreement to the erection of two telephone kiosks at the junction of the A21 and A229.

10. CHURCH HILL SEAT. During the year the seat, which had been situated halfway up Church Hill before it was damaged in the 1987 storm, was installed in a new position near the Parish Church. The Council hopes this position is acceptable to most people as the old site could not be used because of disturbance of the ground and the large tree stump which the County Council was reluctant to remove.

11. REVIEW OF THE COUNTY STRUCTURE PLAN. In November, the County Council published its Draft Policies for development of this area in the 1990s. In January, the Parish Council called a public meeting in the Village Hall which was well attended and was addressed by a County Council strategic planner. On the subjects of housing and employment, the Parish Council commented that all local housing needs should be met by the proposed major developments north of Hastings and Bexhill resulting in no housing development being necessary in Sedlescombe parish between now and the year 2000 apart from that already approved and that no noticeable increase in employment-producing light industry could be envisaged. With the concern about the traffic, particularly heavy lorries, through the Village centre, the Council requested that proposals for a bypass to run north of Sedlescombe Village from the A229 to the A21 are included. The other comment concerned tourism suggesting that improvement of the standard of facilities for tourists, such as caravan sites, should be encouraged. The Council welcomed improvement of facilities and the entertainment on offer at the White Rock Theatre in Hastings.

12. PLANNING. During the year, in excess of thirty planning applications have been made in the parish and considered by the Sedlescombe Planning Committee. These included several extensions, conversions and dwellings, two new bungalows in Churchland Lane which were contrary to the policy for the area and have been refused by Rother, a large charcoal store in Marley Lane, additional car parking and sales area at Blackbrooks Garden Centre, six industrial units at Sedlescombe Sawmills and an extension to the Brickwall Hotel. Approval has been given for demolition of Sedlescombe Service Station and redevelopment with houses.

13. HOME DEFENCE. The Council continues to update the Home Defence Plan as appropriate and would like to make a list of properties in the Parish that are entirely dependent on electricity for heat and cooking so that help could be supplied in the event of a long-term power failure as occurred following the 1987 hurricane. Please let the Clerk (Sed.508) know now if you are in this position.

14. FOOTPATHS. Landowners have complained to the Parish Council that people have not been keeping to the correct route of public rights of way, have been using their fields for recreation such as playing football and flying model aircraft and allowing their dogs to foul fields and farm roads. The Council is designing a sign which could be erected by landowners welcoming walkers but asking that they adopt a responsible attitude.

15. PUBLICATIONS. During the year both the footpath leaflet "Walks around Sedlescombe" and the "walk order" list have been revised. "Walks around Sedlescombe" is available in Sedlescombe Post Office, price 50p.

16. VILLAGE APPRAISAL. The Council is anxious to hear how Sedlescombe residents would like their Village to develop in the future and hopes for a good response so that a worthwhile picture can be built up.

W BEANEY, CHAIRMAN  
MARCH 1989