

REPORT FROM THE SEDLESCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL TO THE 1996 ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SEDLESCOMBE PARISH MEETING



Membership of the Parish Council

As I reported last year, three councillors did not seek re-election in the Parish Council Elections last May. Although two local people were willing to stand to fill their places, the third place had to be filled by co-option. In October, the death of our Vice-Chairman John Giles, was a great loss. His advice and good humour are greatly missed. I should like to welcome Kaye Reader, Valerie Wright, Anthony Rand and David Fisher who have joined Bill Beaney, Pat Martin, Mary Irwin, Maurice Viney and myself as members of the Council.

It is pleasing to be able to report two major success stories for this year.

East View Kickabout Area

The play area at East View has been constructed. Our grateful thanks are due to Mr John Keeling for his generosity in donating the land to the Parish Council and congratulations to the East View Terrace Residents' Association on their wonderful effort of raising £2000 during the summer. Some of this has been put towards clearance, levelling, turfing and fencing the site. The rest of the total cost of nearly £7000 was met by the Parish Council and Rother District Council. The work was carried out for the Parish Council by Town & Country Landscapes.

Now that the work has been done, the Residents' Association will be taking over care and control of the play area and the Council hopes that they will be given the support they deserve and that parents will ensure that their children respect what has been provided.

Churchyard

The second success was the purchase of the Precious Field by the Parochial Church Council for the Churchyard extension. I should like to thank the Parochial Church Council for their work that enabled the purchase to become a reality. The Parish Council annually grant-aids the Churchyard Fund to help with the

Churchyard's maintenance. This year, an additional grant of £2150 has been made by the Parish Council to assist with the purchase of the Precious Field.

Tennis courts

A new five-year Licence has been negotiated with the Sedlescombe Tennis Club. The Club will continue to be responsible for all maintenance except resurfacing. The Parish Council will hold the Tennis Courts Fund and will pay into it all monies collected from public hire of the courts and the Tennis Club's annual fee of £250. It is planned that there will be sufficient in this Fund to pay for the next resurfacing when it is required.

Please note that car parking is not allowed on the land next to the tennis courts. Please park in the public car park that is only a short walk away in Brede Lane.

Dog owners are requested to make sure that their pets do not foul the approaches to the tennis courts and playground. This year the Council is to place a dog waste bin on this land which we hope will be used. This should also help towards solving the problem of fouling in other parts of the village including the Sportsfield.

Playgrounds

The refurbished Riverside play area was officially re-opened by Marion Poolley, Headteacher of the School, last April. This playground now has an excellent range of equipment suitable for use by age groups ranging from toddlers to teenagers. This coming summer the older equipment will be repainted.

Village Hall

Because other grants are dependent on it, the Parish Council's financial support for the new village hall project is vital. The Parish Council has for some years been building up a fund for this purpose, and is on target for a total of £30,000 in the fund by the time work is planned on the hall next year. Fund-raising has started in the

Village but substantial other grants are needed before the project can go ahead

Parish Map

Over £200 has been raised this year from the sale of the parish maps. There are still plenty of prints available from the Clerk, Tel.870508.

Sportsfield

Planning permission has been granted for demolition and rebuilding of the pavilion. The work is being undertaken by the Sports Association with the Parish Council's approval. This is the year of the 3-year rent review and the Parish Council has decided not to raise the rent charged to the Sports Association this time.

Village Green

The Parish Council has used local people to undertake work in this area.

The pictorial sign has been repainted by Mrs Julia Chapman, and the plaques painted and post renewed by Mr John Cook. Mr John Simmons's hand-carved nameboard has been put on top of the noticeboard. I hope you will agree they all look splendid.

It is planned to repaint the pump railings this summer and to rub down and stain the noticeboard. Unfortunately water has penetrated the new board; a solution is being sought.

School

The Parish Council is to give a £425 grant for new fencing around the School swimming pool.

Queen's Head to Post Office

A scheme to build a new footway to give some protection to people walking to the Post Office was initially supported by the Parish Council. However, following a considerable amount of opposition from the Village, support was withdrawn, after a very close vote.

The Parish Council would like to see footways installed on both approaches to the village centre but unfortunately, because of County

Rother's main successes during the year were in expansion of recycling schemes, concessionary bus fares and fitting of seat belts in some public transport vehicles. The major planning matter affecting both Sedlescombe and Whatlington this year had been the use of Spilstead Farm for flying activities. The application for increased flying had been refused but the fuel tank had been allowed on appeal, an appeal against the enforcement notice had been lodged and a public inquiry will be held. Mr Fisher ended by thanking Sedlescombe Parish Councillors and the Clerk.

6. **PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**. The Council Report had been circulated with the Assembly papers.

- Mrs Valerie Wright informed the meeting that it was expected that the Public Inquiry into Rother's enforcement action against flying from Spilstead Farm would be heard in mid-July and that in preparation the "Spilstead Action Group" had been formed. A meeting was planned in Sedlescombe Village Hall on 30 May. Helpers for the Group were sought.

A question was asked from the floor concerning the reasons for the approval of the fuel tank by the Inspector.

7. **POLICE SUPERINTENDENT MELVYN ELLIOTT**. Superintendent Elliott is the Senlac Division Superintendent and covers Hastings, Bexhill, Rye and Battle. He spoke of the reduction in numbers of senior police officers, the difficulties in continuing normal police duties when officers have long-term policing commitments such as currently at the Port of Shoreham, his commitment to rural policing, improving response rates, and the increased police focus on stopping burglaries and violent crime.

Superintendent Elliott was questioned on

- the difficulty in contacting an individual police officer
- the use of several officers (up to 4) at one time at a speed trap
- the use of firearms or the "long baton"
- rural policing
- Specials
- statistics

Superintendent Elliott was thanked by Mrs Betts.

8. **SEDLESCOMBE VILLAGE HALL**. In order to inform everyone living in the Village about the efforts made by the Village Hall Management Committee to find a site for a new hall, a paper had been produced by Mr David Hollis of the Management Committee and circulated with Parish Assembly papers. The latest proposal to demolish the existing hall and build another on the site, enlarged by the addition of a piece of land to the rear of the hall, was fiercely opposed by a near neighbour. The meeting was informed that the person who had been willing to sell some of his garden to the Management Committee had now decided to withdraw. Discussion continued on the relative merits of the various sites and a show of hands signified that, although there was support for a hall at the Sportsfield, this option was not entirely favoured by the Village.

9. **CONCLUSION**. Mrs Betts concluded by informing the meeting that as only eight people had stood for the nine places on the Parish Council, the other place would be filled by co-option. Three councillors, Mr Derek Davis, Mr Jeremy Blanford and Mr Leslie Barter were not standing. Mr Barter had served 19 years with the Council and in recognition of his service was presented with a silver tankard by Mrs Betts.

The meeting closed at 21.10