

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO PARISH ASSEMBLY 2000

Last May, at the time of the parish council elections, we said goodbye to David Fisher and Maurice Viney who have both moved to live in Battle. They each contributed a great deal to the life of our village over many years and we are grateful to them. Jenny Mitchell and Mike O'Dowd joined the remaining councillors and all nine were elected unopposed.

It has been a busy year for the Parish Council with plenty to discuss regarding not only domestic village matters but also more general topics. The Parish Council's consultation role is certain to increase as all local authorities and other major bodies are being required to consult with the people.

My report to you concentrates on village affairs and is necessarily brief. Please bring any questions on these subjects or on any others that affect the life of our village to the Assembly in the Village Hall on 25 April or to the Open Forum which is held before each monthly Council meeting. You will be assured of a sympathetic hearing.

## Village Hall

At last we can be quietly confident that Sedlescombe will have its new village hall at Red Barn Field soon. I have asked the Village Hall Management Committee to give an up-to-date report at the Assembly.

The Parish Council is consulting with the County Council about extending the 30mph speed limit so that the entrance to Red Barn Field is included. The cost of about £800 will have to be met by the Parish Council.

## Sportsfield

This time last year, the plan was for a joint new village hall and pavilion to be built at the Sportsfield. However, this scheme was abandoned when the opportunity arose to build the hall on Red Barn Field. Here there will be parking for 50 cars with a much safer access than that into the Sportsfield at the bottom of Chapel Hill. Other advantages of the change to Red Barn Field included no need for expensive piling, no need to encroach onto the Sportsfield and no need for land to be purchased or leased from the Pestalozzi Trust.

Having made this change, there is now an urgent need for the pavilion at the Sportsfield to be rebuilt. The Sports Association and the clubs that make it up have been working hard to produce a Sports Development Plan. Once complete, this will form the basis of applications for funding. The Parish Council expects to make substantial contributions towards both projects.

## Tennis courts

The refurbishment of the tennis courts has been a major project undertaken this Spring. Both courts have been resurfaced and the fencing has been renewed. Since the last resurfacing,

money received annually from the Tennis Club and income from public and coaching hire has been deposited in a separate Parish Council Fund. This money, together with the interest earned, has been sufficient to pay for the resurfacing and contribute towards the acrylic spray. The Tennis Club has financed the fencing itself.

The courts are open to the public at the cost of £2/court/hour at all times other than on Sunday afternoons and during

## Youth

A meeting for young people is planned in Sedlescombe. We hope you will come along to put forward YOUR views on what YOU think YOU need in the Village  
**DON'T MISS THIS GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE YOUR SAY**

**SEDLSCOMBE VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 16 MAY 2000 AT 7PM**

coaching sessions.

## Playground

Some maintenance work has been undertaken at the Riverside playground. Apart from damage to the tennis hut, there appears to have been less vandalism this year and we hope that the improvement will continue.

## Pumphouse

Repairs to the Pumphouse and replacement of the ceiling are to be undertaken this year. This is a Grade II Listed Building and we are grateful to Rother District Council for their Conservation Grant towards the work.

## Post Office

The Parish Council has given its support to John and Jenny Mainwood's planning application to extend the shop. This support will continue as there will be an appeal against Rother District Council's refusal because of the shop's listed building status.

The interior alterations to the shop that have already been completed are much appreciated by the Village. We thank John and Jenny for breathing new life into our last remaining shop whose survival the Council considers is vital for the future of our community.

If introduced, the Government's proposal to stop the payment of benefits in post offices would be a blow to rural post offices who receive a percentage of their income from carrying out this work. It would also cause considerable problems for many who rely on collecting their money locally. These are worrying times for village life and I would urge everyone to do what they can to support our shop. Write to Charles Wardle MP, House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA

## Doctors/Police

We are fortunate to have a surgery with easy access to caring doctors and staff and in P C Kempster a policeman always ready to help.

## Proposed industrial estate

Last year's proposal to build a huge 25-acre industrial estate at the edge of our parish in Marley Lane has now been withdrawn. However, an application for a smaller development on the Blackman, Pavie & Ladden site that could be extended in due course to the same 25 acres is under

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consideration at Rother. Both developments would create a large amount of additional traffic. Two other business parks have been approved in close proximity to the site but have not yet been developed. The Parish Council has opposed this application.

### **Landraise site**

The possibility that land at Marley Farm in Marley Lane could be included as a Landraise site in the County Council's Waste Local Plan was also opposed by the Council. This proposal brought a storm of protest from people living all around the area and it was eventually omitted from the Plan. East Sussex County Council have the difficult task of finding sites for waste disposal and are currently proposing that a waste incinerator is built at Mountfield.

### **Parish Boundary Review**

When Rother District Council asked parishes for their opinions on their parish boundaries, Ewhurst Parish Council proposed that the northern part of Sedlescombe parish should be transferred to it. This did not receive support from the people who would be affected and Rother are to take no action. If this proposal had been approved, Sedlescombe would have lost 43 properties, making up 8% of its electorate.

### **A21/Moat Lane junction**

We all know that there have been too many accidents at this junction and so the Highways Agency's plans to put in a right-turn lane were welcomed. However, a formal objection was raised by the Beauport Park Estate who suggested that a roundabout should be constructed instead and that they would be prepared to contribute towards the cost. Consequently, the Highways Agency withdrew its plans for the right turn and is exploring the feasibility of a roundabout. The Parish Council does not agree that a roundabout is the best solution to this problem and has objected to the idea.

### **East Sussex housing numbers**

The possibility of 1.1 million new houses being built in the South East up to 2016 appalled most people and

many letters of objection were sent to John Prescott. The number has been reduced but will still mean that sites for thousands of new houses will have to be found by the Planning Authorities either on the preferred brownfield sites or on greenfields.

### **Pestalozzi Trust**

Patricia Rogers has been appointed Director at Pestalozzi following Maurice Phillips' retirement. The Council and Mrs Rogers have met to discuss matters of mutual concern and both are hopeful of increased contact in the future. There have been significant changes in Pestalozzi's work recently and Mrs Rogers and Pestalozzi's Ecologist, Rebecca Barrett, have agreed to talk briefly about them at the Assembly.

Pestalozzi has received a temporary three-year planning permission to use some of its buildings as commercial workshops. During the three years, Pestalozzi has been requested to draw up a comprehensive management plan.

### **Northside Yard, Cripps Corner**

The Council has lodged an objection to the change of use to allow temporary storage of 30 road traffic accident or abandoned light vehicles at the Yard. It is considered that the business is growing too large for this location and that it should be situated on an industrial estate. The disturbance that will be caused day and night, throughout the year, to people living nearby is of great concern. To this can be added concern about the erection of a telecommunication mast at the same place.

### **Grass cutting**

This year, for the first time, the Parish Council will be arranging to cut all the grass in the central part of the parish. Some reimbursement will be received from East Sussex County Council and Rother District Council. The increase in the number of cuts from 5 to 10 a season on the estates should result in tidier verges. The Village Green and recreation grounds will continue to be cut about 20 times a year.

### **East View Terrace kickabout area**

Unfortunately, as the Residents' Association now appears to be defunct, following the disappearance of its Chairman, the Parish Council has, for the time being, taken over the kickabout area.

Chairman

Sedlescombe Parish Council

April 2000