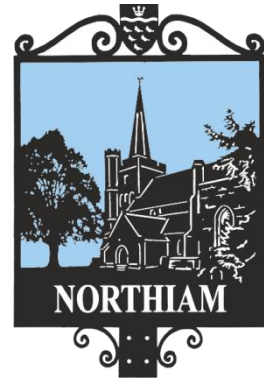


NORTHIAM PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Parish Council

Meeting held on Thursday 12th August 2021

at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

1. APOLOGIES: None

2. ATTENDEES: Councillors Jacqueline Harding (JH) Chair, Tony Biggs (TB) Vice-Chair, Penny Farmer (PF), Dean Johnson (DJ), Robert Maltby (RM), Anthony Wontner-Smith (AWS), Jon Streatfield (JS), Councillor Sue Schlesinger (SS), Councillor Tony Wadie (TW), County Cllr Mr Paul Redstone (PR), District Cllr Tony Ganly (TG), District Councillor Martin Mooney (MM), Mrs R Smolska Clerk, (BS), and 11 members of the public.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

Before the meeting commenced, the Chair made a brief announcement stating that the Parish Clerk/RFO had unfortunately resigned and would be leaving at the beginning of September. The Chair also clarified that although Pete Sargent had applied to assist with the Parish accounts, his application could not be accepted due to his past position on the Council. The Chair also confirmed that she had contacted Trevor Leggo, Chief Officer at SSALC concerning the upcoming vacancy and an advert would be placed for a new Parish Clerk/RFO with increased hours of 20 per week.

4. REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: - Maximum of 15 mins.

- Mr Ray Moone spoke to item 8 - other planning matters, concerning **RR/2021/599/P** Fernbank mentioning that they had attended the Parish Council Meeting in June to object to this application which had then been refused on the grounds of road safety. They felt the claimant had since given an incorrect statement. They also believe that the landowner has completed further unauthorised works and they have passed on their concerns to Rother District Council.
- The public footpath from Donsmead along the A28 was discussed as being dangerous as it was uneven with raised drain covers. There were also overgrown hedges and foliage hanging over the footpath. These hazards meant a local lady with sight impairment was unable to use this public footpath. It was noted that the footpath was the responsibility of ESCC and Councillor Paul Redstone confirmed that he would look into this. It was also suggested that the Jempsons footpath required attention and this was noted by PR.
- The Chair spoke on behalf of Sarah Giles of the Conservation society, concerning the pond as a report was due from the "newt man" and when this had been received councillors plan to meet up and look at the pond. To also note, that another unit on the SFF site had been rented out.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 8th JULY 2021: These were approved and signed by the Chair.

6. REPORTS BY PARISH, COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: (County and District Reports, as written, are attached).

PR – (Cllr Paul Redstone gave his report first as he had to leave the meeting early to travel to Cornwall) PR mentioned that his ESCC report had been circulated. He explained that he and AW-S had been involved with funding for lolly and an appeal letter had been sent to all local businesses but that 1 offer received (who had asked to remain confidential for now) would be exclusive and would cover all the necessary costs. AW-S would write and thank other companies that offered support. The next stage would be to ascertain where these funds would be held and the publicity requirements. PR then said that he would write a proposal, and this would come to the next PC Meeting in September. The Chair thanked both PR and A W-S for their work on this. PR left the meeting.

AW-S – No report.

SS - No report.

TB – noted that he had placed a sign on the zip-wire on the 19th of July and that a few days later this had been pulled down. It was felt that wherever this sign was placed, unfortunately it would be pulled down again. TB also mentioned that he had passed the playing field on 24th July and the gates to the entrance had been left open after the football match had ended. These gates were to be closed after all events and he noted that he had a meeting with the football club on Tuesday and would discuss this with them –

ACTION TB.

RM – the pop-up pub was proving successful, but RM felt that it would be nice to see more Councillors attending and supporting this. JS said he thought the White dog pub may be able to assist with supplies and he would discuss this with the CIC – **ACTION JS**

DJ – noted that the bus stop at anchorage was very overgrown and getting worse, the clerk would contact O’Conner’s - **ACTION CLERK**. DJ also mentioned that he thought the invoice for electricity given for the stables at SFF was too low. He had done a very basic test to see how much electricity boiling a kettle 3 times a day took and that this, with only the addition of a fridge freezer running, came to 0.92p and not the 0.50p per day currently being charged – this was for further discussion item 9 e, on the agenda.

TW – No report.

PF – confirmed that she had received 2 quotes for a gate to replace the damaged one at Goddden’s Gill and was awaiting a third quote. The clerk had been chasing Optivo about this gate and it was now felt that this land and the gate in question, was the responsibility of RDC and Martin would visit the site with PF – **ACTION PF**. PF also asked that the outside swinging Parish Council sign be re-instated – **ACTION CLERK**

JH – the Chair stated that she was trying to organise a face-to-face meeting with Amy Fern concerning a potential housing development in the village, emails had been previously circulated to all Councillors, and a date was still to be set. JH also mentioned the need to tweak the letter, which would be going out to all residents, as part of the housing survey being done by AIRS. JH would continue to insist that the letter be changed to suit our needs and the “shared ownership” needs removing as this could be misleading.

MM - Cllr Moony explained that his Rother District council report had been circulated and that it was a short report this month due to no cabinet being held in August, he also pointed out a typo in the 3rd paragraph which should read “homeless”.

7. PLANNING:

(a) RR/2020/2551/P Jempson's Local, Stonecourt Mews, Northiam TN31 6AF
Variation of condition 5 imposed on RR/2013/1754/P to allow change to opening hours from 07.00 - 20.00 Monday to Saturday to 07.00 - 21.00 Monday to Saturday – **Support approved 6:2**

(b) RR/2020/2543/P – Withdrawn Jempson's Local, Stonecourt Mews, Northiam TN31 6AF
Variation of condition 3 imposed on RR/2017/122/P to allow general delivery hours to be changed from 8.00am to 6.00pm Mon - Fri and 9.00am to 1.00pm on Saturdays to 7.30 to 6.00pm Mon - Fri and 08.00am to 1.00pm on Saturdays – **Information only**

(c) RR/2021/478/P - Amended Plans Timber Lodge, Ilex Close, Station Rd, Northiam, TN31 6DW
Erection of a replacement dwelling together with associated ancillary development – **Support approved unanimously**

(d) RR/2021/1872/T Sundowners, Ghyll Side Road, Northiam TN31 6QJ
To install fixed line broadband electronic communications apparatus – **Information only**

(e) RR/2021/1820/T 1 Cedar Close, Northiam TN31 6PL
Scots Pine (TPO248) - reduce 3 lower limbs – **Support approved unanimously**

(f) RR/2021/1274/P 5 Oak Terrace - land at, Main Street, Northiam TN31 6LX

Alterations to the low voltage (LV) overhead lines – **Information only**

(g) RR/2021/1276/O Wellington Cottages, Ewhurst Lane, Northiam TN31 6PA

Lawful development certificate for proposed removal of an aluminium garage door and replace it with a new timber window and painted brickwork to match the existing – **Support approved unanimously**

(h) RR/2021/1244/P Wykeham House, Dixter Lane, Northiam TN31 6PW

Erect single storey side extensions and two storey rear extension – **Objected unanimously, support not given.**

(i) RR/2021/1230/P 17 North Ridge, Northiam TN31 6PG

Reduction of Oak Tree - **RDC to look at this before a decision can be made, TG to get a contractor out**

(j) RR/2021/1084/P The Cedars, Station Road, Northiam TN31 6QL

Demolition of existing single storey bungalow and erection of 2 dwellings with retained access – **Objected 7:1 abstention**

(k) RR/2021/1061/O 4 Knelle View, Station Road, Northiam TN31 6QD

Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposal single storey utility room extension, attached to the rear of the existing house and existing garage – **Support approved unanimously**

All Planning decisions have been previously circulated to councillors.

8. OTHER PLANNING MATTERS:

a) RR/2021/599/P - Appealed - APP/U1430/W/21/3279247

Fernbank - Land adjacent to, Rye Road, Northiam TN31 6NJ

Relocation of vehicular access to the land and stop up existing vehicular access to the land. (Retrospective) – **PF will ask for a dismissal of appeal – this was agreed unanimously**

b) RR/2021/161/P - Appealed - APP/U1430/W/21/3279903

Newlands, Dixter Lane, Northiam TN31 6PR

Variation of condition 2 imposed on RR/2018/2282/P to provide two rear dormers to roof slopes of plots 1-3 to serve a new bedroom and en suite to each property - **PF will ask for a dismissal of appeal – this was agreed unanimously**

c) RR/2021/977/O - Refused Merrilees, Station Road, Northiam TN31 6QJ

Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed rear extension.

9. VILLAGE MATTERS:

a) Future of phone box, Dixter Road: NPC had acquired the phone box earlier in the year and the horticultural committee were keen to use the box for a seed exchange. JH would contact them to agree to this if they would maintain the phone box – this was **agreed – ACTION JH**

b) Contribution of £20 towards celebration of Peter Hayman's life organised by Karen Ayling, to be held at the Village Hall on Saturday 18th September: We would make a contribution of up to £100.00 after asking Karen what was required – this was **agreed – ACTION CLERK**

c) To purchase 2 memorial benches – It was agreed at the July meeting that a bench with 2 plaques, would be purchased in remembrance of Ray and Peter and placed on the village green but since then the PC had been approached by Pete Sargent about Rays family wanting a larger, rustic style bench which could seat all 5 daughters, to be placed in the Orchard at SFF of which Sarah Giles is aware of. It was felt that the PC should pay for 2 identical benches. Following further discussion, it was **agreed** that the PC would wait to

confirm plans for the benches until after the finance meeting where the budget would be discussed.

- d) Remembrance Day: this was to confirm that Remembrance Day service would be the same as in past years with a wreath for £20.00 being purchased and placed by the Chair and that the Chair would also attend the Church service.
- e) Installing mini meters, stable yard and field supply: It was hoped that moving forward Maloney's could take on this task and also take the meter readings as they act as agents for the bungalows and currently only collect the rent. It was also felt that all bills could be paid by individuals and not have to be paid by the Parish office on their behalf creating additional work for the clerk. It was felt this required further discussion and was unresolved.
- f) Bungalows: These are domestic dwellings, and it was noted that we have to apply to RDC every 5 years for them to remain as so. It was also noted that the long-term plan was to replace/rebuild these in the future.

10. CORRESPONDENCE OTHER THAN THAT ALREADY CIRCULATED: None

11. FINANCE: None

12. CHEQUES FOR SIGNATURE: Approved

13. PUBLIC QUESTIONS: 2 minutes each member of the public: Jackie Broad mentioned the following:

- Cleaning and repairs appear to be taking place at the muddy duck pub.
- The CIC are having a water survey done on Friday 13th August and will report back findings
- Jackie Beard asked for confirmation that the PC were paying for the housing survey - this was confirmed
- The CIC required the £1,500 emergency cheque from the PC as agreed, now the contract is signed –

ACTION CLERK

The second public question concerned the footpath that goes into the woods by the water station, this being in a poor state with overgrown brambles and trees. It was noted that maintenance was the responsibility of ESCC and they would be contacted about it, the clerk would email Matthew Harper – **ACTION CLERK**

The Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Reports, as written, from ESCC and RDC councillors are attached.

ESCC Report, August 2021

Cllr Paul Redstone, Email: Cllr.Paul.Redstone@eastsussex.gov.uk

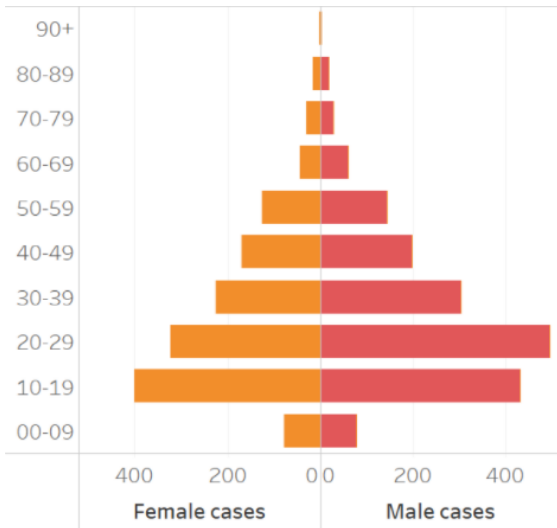
Report to Parish Councils – August 2021

This report is written in late July and for Parish Councils meeting in August. It is for all 7 parishes in Northern Rother. I may on occasion add parish-specific supplements.

COVID update

As of 26th July, East Sussex had 2033 new cases in the previous 7 days which is a major increase compared to a month ago in line with the rest of England. In terms of cases per 100,000 population, East Sussex is 365, the South East 443 and England 532. On 20th July there were a total of 16 cases in hospital which is a relatively low number. This is in line with the national trend where the rate of hospitalisations for each case is much lower, due to vaccinations, natural immunity and perhaps the younger age of people who are less likely to be vaccinated. This is illustrated by the age distribution of cases in East Sussex shown below.

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The local trend is for case numbers to decrease in line with national trends which is hopeful, but caution needs to be applied to these trends which may have been affected by factors such as school holidays.

We are all hoping that the end is in sight, though some level of COVID seems likely to be with us for many years.

Council Meetings

The first full council meeting of ESCC was held on Friday 23rd July. (The previous one in May was very short and just to appoint membership of various committees). Key business was to review the priorities for the current year and the report from the cabinet. There were also two motions:

- To make 20 mph the default speed limit through the county
- To commit to making the operations of ESCC carbon neutral by 2030 instead of the current plan of 'before 2050'

I voted against each and they were defeated. Although I support 20mph in selected areas, a blanket limit would not actually reduce speeds in many areas. Experience shows that if typical road speeds are above 24mph at a particular location, a 20mph limit requires additional traffic calming measures which have significant budget and other implications. Enforcement can help of course but only in limited ways given the limit on resources. I am in favour of selected 20 mph speed limits, particularly in some of our villages. I welcome comments and views.

On the climate motion, I voted against as there was no technical or budget plan to suggest how this could be achieved. I am a strong supporter of action to reduce carbon emissions through my personal conduct. I also donate time to developing the web site for a climate action charity, though I should disclose that the charity was founded by one of my children.

ESCC is estimated to be responsible for about 3% of CO₂e emissions across East Sussex and has a plan to reduce CO₂e emissions by 13% a year which is being delivered. Even so we have some major challenges ahead in continuing to do this. For example, cement production is responsible for about 7% of CO₂e globally. We use cement for road building, new roads and buildings. Hopefully technology will develop new ways of reducing emissions and budget support from central government will help in some of the significant expenditure this will require.

Cases

Each month I will give summaries for a sample of current cases across the Division.

- **Grass Cutting.** I reported on some dissatisfaction with grass cutting in several parishes last month and am still working on this. There is no doubt that the growing season this year has been unusual, with a wet June causing much more growth than normal, but I am looking to see how we can improve this. I am also obtaining maps of locations in each parish as it seems likely that some areas have been missed.

As a reminder, if there are urgent grass or hedge issues, in particular causing visibility or other safety issues, please let me know but also report them at <https://www.eastsussexhighways.com/report-a-problem>.

- **Northiam School Crossing Patrol.** I have been working with a Parish Councillor on an appeal to local businesses to fund this. One very generous sponsor has come forward who would fund this for at least 3 years. We expect to finalise and announce this soon.
- **Robertsbridge High Street Traffic.** There is some concern about HGVs and similar causing vibration issues in some areas and also about speeds. I am working with the Parish Council and county officials to look at this.
- **Flooding in Northbridge Street, Robertsbridge.** The long-suffering residents of several properties in this street had another incidence of flooding in December. Much of this seems to have been flow down the A21 Silverhill, into the layby and down the footpath into Northbridge Street. Huw Merriman has put pressure on Highways England who have made some curb changes and added a gully as an immediate fix, with a series of other actions planned over the next few months. His office continues to monitor this. In addition, I am working with District Councillor Sue Prochak to look at additional measures as additional lines of defence which could be considered in Northbridge Street itself, which is the responsibility of the county. I am working with county officials and Highways East Sussex on these.

I should add that I am aware of a number of other local incidents of flash flooding which occurred during the recent thunderstorms. Although sometimes this may just be bad luck, where there are systematic issues with roads, drainage or other causes please raise them with me as remedies may be possible.

Northern Rother District Councillors' Report, August 2021

Five-fold increase in Council's B & B spend

New analysis by the LGA has revealed that councils are being forced to spend more than five times as much on housing people who are homeless in bed and breakfast accommodation as they were a decade ago.

It comes as rising numbers are being placed in B&Bs because of a severe shortage of housing.

Latest figures show that councils in England spent £142 million placing homes households in B&Bs in 2019/20, compared with £26.7 million in 2010/11 – a 430 per cent increase.

Currently, there are 10,510 households in B&Bs, according to provisional data, compared with 2,310 a decade ago – an increase of more than 350 per cent.

The LGA says this underlines the desperate need to build more social housing. It wants to work even more closely with government to tackle the current housing shortage and is calling for councils to be given further powers and resources to build 100,000 social homes for rent each year.

Cllr David Renard, LGA Housing Spokesperson, said "Sadly, these figures reflect the scale of the housing challenges that our country faces. Councils will only use bed and breakfasts as a last resort, but the severe lack of suitable housing means they now have no choice.

This is hugely disruptive to families with children, and the rising demand for support has come with soaring costs for councils.

Throughout the pandemic, government has trusted councils to get on with the job of protecting the nation, supporting people and putting infrastructure in place to help with recovery".

"We want to continue this momentum and work with government to tackle the shortage of housing and build the homes the country desperately needs".

Councillors Martin Mooney & Tony Ganly Northern Levels Ward

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