

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS AND MISC. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**Miscellaneous Correspondence & Information Received**

- **NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin** – forwarded to member 13/7/23, 24/8/23, 31/8/23 7/9/23 and 14/9/23
- **RDC Members Bulletin – August 2023** – forwarded to members 31/8/23
- **County Councillor's July and August reports**– forwarded to members 11/7/23 and 7/9/23
- **Rother Valley Railway** – copy of Notice of Survey and Investigation and Copy of Deposited Plan.

Member Microsoft 365 Email accounts

In addition to the licences for the office, we now have Microsoft 365 Business Basic licences for all Members. This includes the 'Salehurst' email accounts, meaning Council email correspondence is separated from private email accounts; there is also the potential to share files and the Council Calendar at a later date. All Members have been sent the details and password to set up their accounts, however some have had difficulties authenticating them. It is very important that Members make the changeover to their 'Salehurst' addresses as soon as possible – please contact the office if you need help. Cllr Barden is very happy to assist too if needed. We have very recently identified, through the Rother Clerk's network, a company (based in Wartling) who can provide I.T. support, including managing our M365 email accounts and assisting Clerks and Members with getting set up. Investigating and potentially engaging them has been added to the PCM agenda for 18/9/23.

Station Road Resurfacing

We await a date in the Autumn for this to take place. The Clerks are liaising with East Sussex Highways on this. The Parish Council has played an important part in securing this important upgrade to the village infrastructure and we are grateful to Cllr Redstone for his support/action on this. Our next bi-yearly meeting (SLR) with Highways is on 5th October; Cllr Todd will attend with the Clerks.

Rother District Council Grants

Rother District Council launched a new community capital grant on the 1st September – The Spaces Improvement Fund. This funding comes from the [Rural England Prosperity Fund \(REPF\)](#) and looks to fund projects which create and improve community green (land) and blue (outdoor water) spaces in Rother, such as community gardens, watercourses and embankments, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces. The total funding pot is £100,000. Rother Community Grants will be opening in October and is open to all. All projects must demonstrate positive improvements for nature. The first round is opening on the 1st September, will be open for applications until the 30th September, with a second round of funding opening in Spring 2024. The maximum amount which can be applied for is £20,000 with 20% match funding in place. Further details and eligibility can be found on the Rother District Council website [Rural Community – Grant Funding Information – Rother District Council](#). Rother Community Grants will be available from October 2023.

Southeastern Ticket Office Consultation

Further to our July Clerk's Report we await for notification from Southeastern regarding the phase of their public consultation on plans to close ticket offices which specifically relates to Robertsbridge. The first phase here <https://www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/help-and-contact/get-in-touch/ticket-office-consultation> was extended to 1st September and related to plans for forty ticket offices in the London area and creation of Travel Centres (the nearest to us being Tonbridge and Hastings). All we know so far is that the consultation by Transport Focus stations, including Robertsbridge, is scheduled for the Autumn. Members need to decide how the Council publicly responds to this phase in relation to Robertsbridge Station, to ensure we represent the needs of our residents.

D-Day 80 - 6th June 2024

We wrote to Hurst Green Parish Council to ask if they will be lighting a beacon, as part of national celebrations on 6th June 2024 at 9.15pm. They have confirmed they will, at The Stage field, and they have invited our parish to join with them – they will send us details as they come available later this year. We are not currently in a position to light our own village beacon, which is sited at the Community College, although we could light one elsewhere in the parish. Members will need to decide whether we wish to arrange our own celebrations, or join Hurst Green. Bonfire Societies have been encouraged nationally to take part by lighting beacons – and we do have an active B.S. There are other things planned for the day, including a proclamation, fish-and-chip dinners, Lamp Light of Peace etc. All information can be found here: [D-DAY 80 BEACONS](#) This will be on the agenda for the PCM 18/9/23.

Call for Sites for Gypsy and Traveller Sites

As part of the new Rother Local Plan, RDC is required by Government to seek to identify land that is suitable for use for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople accommodation. They have launched a Call for Sites, writing to landowners, agents, developers and site managers to invite them to submit sites for consideration. The call runs from 7th August to 6th October 2023, but sites may still be accepted after that date. Once sites are submitted, officers will consider whether they are suitable, available and achievable, in accordance with the national Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. Details of the sites, and officers' assessments of them, will be included in the forthcoming public consultation on the new Local Plan, currently programmed for early 2024.

Further details can be found at <https://www.rother.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/emerging-local-plan/gypsy-traveller-and-travelling-showpeople-accommodation-needs/>

Recreation Ground

Showtime Amusements Funfair returned in August. A member of the public raised a concern about public safety on one of the rides and we followed this up with her and the Funfair owner. We were satisfied that the equipment was safe and notified the community via social media. Gavin our Village Steward undertook maintenance work in our Pavilion and around the Recreation Ground ahead of the Funfair and the Cricket Club's Cooper Cup in August. There was no damage to the field from the fair being present. They made a donation of £300 to the PC.

Closure of Robertsbridge Recycling Point

The Station recycling point is due to close at the end of September. It is the last of Rother's community recycling points to close and means residents need to use their household bins or visit Mountfield Household Waste Recycling Centre if they have too much recycling. RDC is negotiating for the Salvation Army bins for clothes and bins to remain.

Village Steward

Gavin has worked throughout the Summer, keeping to his 12 hours a week contract. He has focused on cutting back overgrown pathways both in Salehurst and Robertsbridge High Street and Station Road, as well as repairing amenities including the broken bench at the bus stop on George Hill and a door at the gents toilets in Station Road. He has provided the Clerks with his risk assessments. His list of tasks for July and August will be included with the agenda for PCM 8/9/23.

Salehurst Cemetery

Activity - since the last meeting (10th July) - there have been two ashes interments, and two further arranged, pending dates (from families). There has been one burial and one purchase of Exclusive Rights. Three applications have been received/approved for new memorials and three new memorials have been fitted, including one on the previously unrecorded baby grave at the bottom of the Cemetery. Cllrs Palamarczuk and Todd have treated the cemetery pavilion.



Environment Agency Flood Barrier/Gate Exercise

The next Robertsbridge flood barrier deployment exercise will take place on **Tuesday 17th October 2023 from 09:30**. As usual, they will be using traffic management and starting from Station Road and working their way round to Northbridge Street.

Members Training / Briefings / Conferences

Keeping up to date is an important aspect of being a Members and the organised courses are a valuable way of keeping up with current issues and changes, as well as meeting other Members and hearing different views and news.

ESALC can commission courses for a new Members or chairmanship training, or bespoke for a whole council, via Trevor Leggo, who will discuss specific needs and deliver the session. The dates for general briefing/training sessions (open to all/any parish) can be found on the ESALC website at [ESALC](#).

ESALC have announced Breakthrough Communications are working with them to provide a new programme of communications and compliance-focused training courses for parish and town councils across East Sussex. The details can be found here <https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/calc-training-events/>

If you are interested in any training, please let us know, so we can book you in. It is important that new Councillors take up training and that others periodically attend update sessions.

Events attended:

RALC Quarterly Meeting 12/7/23 – David Todd and Karen Ripley

Community Energy South Climate Literacy Course 20/7/23 – Gill Colquhoun

Rialtus Asset Inventory Demo 3/8/23 – Karen Ripley

ESALC New Councillor Training 10/8/23– Francesca Dulley

ESALC Finance meeting 6/9/23 (aborted due to technical issues - to be repeated) – David Todd and Karen Ripley

RIALTAS Cemetery Software demonstration - 7/9/23 – Karen Ripley

ESALC New Councillor Training 12/9/23 - Dawn Hill, Kirsty Barden and Natalie Bishiop

Rother Clerks Network Meeting 14/9/23 – Karen Ripley and Gill Colquhoun

Karen

Gill

Karen Ripley
Parish Clerk

Gill Colquhoun
Assistant Clerk