



Ryarsh Parish Council Chairman's Report 2019-2020

I have just completed my second year as Chairman of the Parish Council and what a year it has been! The first thing I want to do is to thank all those who have supported us. The list is long and I am sure to offend someone by missing them out but I'll try. We are very lucky to have Lynne as our Clerk, she keeps us on the straight and narrow. County Councillor Sarah Hohler is very supportive, keeps us informed about KCC and has helped us with financing the improvements to the playground. Our District Councillors Ann Kemp and Piers Montague keep us up to date with the doings of TMBC. Our new councillors Caroline Martin and Tim Butler have served their first year and have made a great contribution. We have been pleased to see parishioners from Ryarsh Park coming to Council Meetings.

I also want to thank the Ryarsh Protection Group, the fight to prevent the development of another quarry in Ryarsh goes on and we now wait to hear the result of the assessment process. Last minute update! The Inspector has approved the KCC document and Ryarsh is not on the list of approved sites. Before we get too excited, there still may be opposition from the site proposers but for now, we breathe easier

Ryarsh has been affected by the work of Highways England on the M20. Our residents near to the motorway have been worst affected by the noise but the whole village is feeling the effects of the traffic problems. With the help of our MP, Tom Tugendhat Highways England has been prevailed upon to agree to replacement of the trees, but this is a long process. The diversion of traffic on to the A20 during the road works has caused a lot of problems and disruption. Tracey Crouch MP has been prominent in trying to improve the safety of the motorway. Smart Motorways are not smart from a safety perspective.

The Tonbridge and Malling Development Plan has been delayed in the external assessment phase and by the time it is approved will be totally out of date.

Meanwhile there are concerns about developers taking advantage of the delay and seeking approval for large schemes in the Borough.

The new minibus service for the 58 is running and hopefully KCC will approve its continuation later this year. Thanks to Councillor Barton who has been working on this.

We continue to work with the Head of Ryarsh School, Birling Parish Council and KCC to try to find a solution to the volumes of speeding traffic using our villages as "Rat runs" in the morning and evening. We have our proposals ready to put to the residents as soon as possible. The legislation associated with highway changes is complex and requires agreement from all parties.

We are sending out newsletters on a regular basis but please note that we only keep addresses of those who have agreed. The hosting of our website has changed and, bearing in mind that not everyone uses computers, are also putting notes of our activities in Pilgrims which goes to everyone in BART.

We took part in the Ryarsh Remembrance Day Service . Lin Barton made a very beautiful wreath to place in the Church and on behalf of the Parish Council thank her for her work.

The Recreation Ground and Play Area, like all of us, is showing it's age and we have started . The slide is due to be repainted when conditions improve. It is such a pity that we have had to close it for the time being. Councillor Storey does a grand job of checking the play area on a weekly basis. Wearing his "Village Hall Hat" David is also responsible for the letting of football pitches.

The Village Hall Lease has been renewed and the parish council were also happy to help with the replacement of the Boiler.

The changes in TMBC refuse collection with a new contractor have been completed, after some initial problems it would now be working well apart from the changes brought about by the staff shortages. The freighter will return to service to collect oversized items when possible.

Our Resource Centre continues to be an asset and the young supporters spend a lot of time looking after it

It was a shame that the proposed VE Day celebrations could not take place but the village enjoyed local activities whilst respecting social distancing!

I could write much more but just wanted to summarise events here. I and all the Councillors are here at your service.

Mary Mckinlay

Chairman Ryarsh Parish Council