



Ryarsh PC Chairman's report May 2021 – May 2022

Another year as Chairman of Ryarsh Parish Council and it has been a mixture of good and bad news. It has been good to return to face-to-face meetings we did eventually get used to using Zoom but won't miss it! We are back in the Village Hall and look forward to having more people in the audience.

The Play Area continues to improve and we have been replacing some of the worn out equipment. The overgrown vegetation has been dealt with and the whole area looks good. As your Parish council we continue to maintain and repair streetlights, contribute to grass cutting in the Churchyard and the Recreation Ground. We have made donations to help the Village Hall and support the Christmas Tree and Leybourne Grange Riding Centre for the Disabled

The Highways improvement Plan has not progressed very far apart from some new signs to prevent inappropriate traffic down Old School Lane.

The number of planning applications for the village continues to decrease during the year but planning continues to be a topic of major importance. The Tonbridge and Malling Local Plan has been rejected by the Inspectors and TMBC are back at square one We spent a good deal of time reviewing the now rejected plan since, although it did not propose many changes to the village, the impact of district development on the A20 and local roads would have been considerable.

On the transport front, the number 58 bus is under threat as part of the KCC savings plan. We have protested and wait to hear what will result.

Not such good news on flooding in the village. Properties in Birling Road and the School have suffered again this year. With the help of KCC and local landowners we hope to resolve these problems. Councillor Martin and I have undertaken training as Flood Wardens for the village. In this role we will act as information centres rather than drainage engineers!

KCC and TMBC are facing shortfalls in funding for the year, we are grateful to County Councillor Sarah Hohler and District Councillors Kemp and Montague for keeping us informed and passing on our views on the topic to the discussions.

Refuse has been a major issue, we are recycling more than was ever anticipated. The new centre off the A20 on the outskirts of Maidstone is due to open shortly.

We have had many examples of fly-tipping over the last year. It was suggested that this was a consequence of increased cost and access to the Recycling Centres. Research has demonstrated that there is not a link but the Rural Police are working with KCC and TMBC to catch the culprits.

Fly-tipping has not been the only local crime. There have been many local examples of shed break-ins and burglaries together with stealing of catalytic converters. I know that you have been concerned about these and we have brought the matter to the attention of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Senior Police. Police patrols are being increased and we did have a day in the Village Hall when the PCSOs came to encourage us to take measures to protect our property,

As a result of the pandemic, many events have been missed, but this year the Remembrance Day Service was held and we were able to place a wreath from the PC. We are working with the Church and preparing the celebrations for the Platinum Jubilee which will include a prizegiving ceremony for some village awards. The school children will all be receiving a commemorative water bottle for the event. Many thanks to Mr Dennis whose generous donation has made this possible.

Sadly Councillor David Storey left the Council after many years, thank you Dave for all that you have done. We are happy to see you still managing the Village Hall and you and Ba did tremendous work to ensure safety during the pandemic.

My final item is to thank all the Ryarsh Councillors for their support and hard work. We are all willing to help. Our names can be found on the new Village website, Please have a look.

Mary Mckinlay

Chairman Ryarsh PC May 2022