

# RINGMER PARISH COUNCIL

## September 2008 Newsletter

Chairman  
Mr. A. R. Peters, MBE  
Plashett Park Farm,  
Ringmer BN8 5SJ

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### **Proposed Clayhill Reservoir**

On 25 June two exhibitions were presented at the village hall. South East Water, as part of a formal consultation on its Draft Water Resources Management Plan, presented various proposals for water supply in South East England including a new winter-storage reservoir in Ringmer. This was accompanied by an exhibition by local residents opposed to the reservoir proposal. Both were quite well attended.

The Council asked people attending the exhibitions to complete a short opinion survey to determine if in principle they supported or opposed the reservoir proposal. Most did so and a total of 268 responses were received. These showed 23 people supporting it, 230 against and 15 undecided.

Against this background the Council has formally notified the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of its objections to the proposal. It has stressed the value of the landscape, the inadequate case that has been made for a reservoir at this location and has cited a number of detailed arguments against the proposal. It is hoped that these comments together with any observations made by the District and County Councils will persuade the Secretary of State to change the draft plan.

### **Quality Council Status**

The Council submitted its application for Quality Parish Status in September. If it is successful it will be indicative of the competence and standard of its services; lead to improved consultation/influence on services provided locally by principal local authorities and other bodies; and offer increased opportunities to manage and deliver services as agents of other authorities or on its own behalf. The Council may also receive financial assistance to fund initiatives in support of it being a Quality Council.

### **Grave of the Rev. Edward Palmer, dated 1748**

This is first recorded grave of a Ringmer clergyman in the old churchyard and work has just been completed on renovating the memorial stone, which had been split into three pieces, and re-seating it. The work was funded by donations from the History Group and the Friends of St. Mary's Church and the newly cleaned stone can be seen to the left of the path leading up from the village green. The restoration work was kept to a minimum in recognition of the

tomb's historical interest and was undertaken by a memorial mason.

### **Kissing Gates/Path to Mill Post**

Council has finished installing four kissing gates from the Gote Lane end of the path. The good news is that the South Downs Joint Committee, responsible for the top section of the path, have undertaken to replace the remaining stiles with gates, possibly by the end of this year.



### **No Cold Calling Zone**

In July the Council received a presentation from the County Council Trading Standards Office about the procedure for establishing a no cold calling zone. The idea is to deter door to door sales people who call without appointment and whose presence can in some circumstances be unwelcome and sometimes intimidating. Basically a whole community, or even a street, can be designated a zone and this involves erecting notices making it clear that cold callers are not welcome and also providing householders with information, door stickers and advice on what to do if a salesman ignores the signs. Although such schemes cannot be legally enforced Trading Standards support them by taking complaints from householders and following them up individually with the people and companies concerned. Experience to date suggests that schemes significantly reduce the number of callers and give residents greater confidence to turn them away.

At its last meeting the Council received a number of letters from residents supporting the principle of establishing a no cold calling zone for the whole village. As a result of this it

will now be contacting Trading Standards to discuss the next phase which will be a village wide consultation. To date the main concern that has been expressed is that bona fide charity callers would be severely disadvantaged. This has been raised with Trading Standards who have advised that one of the main aims is to empower consumers to say 'no' at the door and if, for example, people are happy to accept poppy sellers there will be no complaints and therefore no Trading Standards follow up. Whether this is considered a sufficient safeguard for charity collectors is something that will need consideration when the village wide survey is undertaken.

### **Bus Service 129 to Lewes & Uckfield**

As identified in the last newsletter this service which is routed via Springett Avenue, Mill Road, Shepherds Way and Harrisons Lane will only continue if it is well used. The operators and the County Council indicated that a significant increase in passengers was needed over the summer to justify its continuation. To promote usage they issued a new leaflet, including a timetable for the service, and it is to be hoped that this will have helped to boost passenger numbers.

### **Annual Inspection of Play Areas**

In addition to weekly inspections conducted by the District Council all our play areas are subject to an annual inspection. This year it was conducted by RoSPA and their very comprehensive report confirmed the safety of our facilities. Very little remedial work was recommended and this has been put in hand. It remains the case that however thorough the inspection process constant vigilance is still needed to ensure any hazards are immediately addressed. If you see for instance glass or broken equipment please report it to the Clerk.

### **Vehicle Activated Signs & Light Controlled Crossing**

## **RINGMER'S CURRENT COUNCILLORS**

PARISH COUNCILLORS: Chairman : Mr. A. R. Peters - Plashett Park Farm

Vice-Chairman & Chairman of Planning Committee: Dr. J. E. Kay - "Fair Meadow", Rushey Green.

Chairman of General Purposes Committee: Mr. P. Longhurst – Dart Cottage, The Elms

Chairman of Greens Committee: Mr R. Wilcox – 5 Gote Lane

Mrs E Pitts – Chanctonbury, Broyle Lane

Mr. R.B. Truman – 1 Cheyney Cottages, Lewes Road

Mr. A. J. Grindley - 25 Springett Avenue.

Ms. P. Lewis – 3 East View Cottages, Harrisons Lane

Mrs. V. C. Humphrey - 26 Oakmede Way.

Mr. K. White – Celandines, Bishops Lane.

Mrs. J. Fordham – 53 Broyleside Cottages, Broyle Lane

Mrs. J. Woollons – 36 Christie Avenue.

Mr I Wilson – Dorian, Rushey Green

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: Mr C A Bowers, Mr P Gander, Mr P Gardiner;

COUNTY COUNCILLOR: Mrs R St. Pierre

## **COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Full Council and Planning Meetings are held respectively on the second and fourth Thursdays of most months at 7.30 p.m. in the St. Mary's Room, Ringmer Village Hall and Committee Meetings on some other Thursdays. The Clerk can provide full details.

**Council Office:** please note that the Office is open to members of the public from 10am – 12 noon on Tuesdays and Wednesdays

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At last both signs are now working and through RADAR's regular monitoring of traffic speeds it will be possible to see what effect they have had on reducing speed. The primary purpose of the signs was to make crossing the road to the Community College and Primary School safer but it has remained Council's aim to get the County Council to install a light controlled crossing near the Old Forge. The installation of the signs has not changed this and it has recently been confirmed that the proposed crossing has moved from 21<sup>st</sup> place to 14<sup>th</sup> on the County Council's priority list. The Council is continuing to investigate ways in which it can bring this forward.

### **Funfair**

Many of you will no doubt have missed the annual September visit of the fair this year. Unfortunately the weather conditions and the state of the ground meant that it had to be cancelled. The good news, however, is that the fair plans to return next year so the cheery sight and sound of the fair brightening up some September evenings is only lost temporarily.

### **Retirement of Clerk**

Our current Clerk, Nick Hall, who joined the Council in 2002 will be retiring at the end of 2008. The recruitment of a new Clerk is well underway and it is hoped to have someone in post in time to allow a handover period.

### **Dog Fouling**

This continues to be a problem, particularly on the village green. Owners are asked either to use the bins provided for dog faeces or to carry bags so that they can dispose of it at home. Please do not use the ordinary litter bins as this makes it very unpleasant for the person that empties them.