

# RINGMER PARISH COUNCIL

## December 2009 Newsletter

Chairman :  
Bob Peters, MBE  
Plashett Park Farm,  
Ringmer BN8 5SJ

*Published by* **Ringmer Parish Council**

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### MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL!



No, it's not a garden gnome or some of Santa's helpers but your Parish Clerk & his son planting a tree as part of this month's national world record tree planting attempt!

### East Sussex Landraising Proposals Return

"Landraising" is a concept that means disposing of waste by dumping it onto our unspoilt countryside to create new hills. This idea was discarded as unacceptable a decade ago in favour of the giant incinerator (sorry: Energy from Waste facility) currently under construction in Newhaven. However, "landraising" is now back on the agenda in the latest ESCC Waste & Minerals Strategy, under consultation to 15 January. The new draft strategy tackles a wide range of issues. There are commendable intentions to improve the amount and range of recycling undertaken. A range of new recovery facilities may be required, and areas of search for such facilities are broadly defined. However, the section of the strategy likely to attract the greatest controversy is the search for suitable areas of countryside for "landraising". The criteria set, that the sites selected should have access from the A-road network and avoid protected landscapes and communities of more than a thousand people, are similar to those used previously, so it is not surprising that several of the same sites appear at the top of the list.

Unsurprisingly, no entirely suitable East Sussex sites could be located for "landraising". No sites were found anywhere close to Brighton & Hove, the largest creator of waste. A long list of potential countryside sites has been reduced to a short-list

of five, with locational difficulties that it is felt "might be resolved". All five are in the Low Weald section of Wealden District, though three border Lewes District. Of these three lie along the A22, at the former Halland deer park near East Hoathly and close to Shortgate; south of the B2124 at Golden Cross; and north of Lower Dicker near the Boship roundabout. Another is the southern half of the Laughton Levels, north of Firle, running up to Glynde Reach and in full view of walkers along South Downs Way near Firle Beacon. In the draft strategy the "landraising" sites to be used are as yet only broadly defined. Actual sites will come forward normally through the planning process but the presumption will be in favour of any sites within the areas chosen. They must be at least 25 hectares in extent. The amount by which they will be raised is not defined, but clearly added heights of many metres would be necessary. While SSSIs are protected, inadequate attention has been given to ancient woodland and the wildlife communities that it supports. The Weald has a scattered settlement pattern, but no protection has been given to communities of below 1,000 people and the financial loss to householders living near a chosen site is "not a planning consideration".

The overall approach is that, since incineration will not fully resolve the problem and it is too difficult to meet or exceed recycling and recovery targets, "landraising" is regrettable but necessary. Should we accept the assumptions on which this conclusion is based? Dumping our rubbish on unspoilt countryside, at the expense of the wildlife communities there, the impact on the landscape and local roads, and the interests of those East Sussex residents unfortunate enough to live near the chosen sites, is simply unacceptable, so we consider that the emphasis of any respectable strategy should be focused on avoiding the need for such a course of action.

The full strategy is available on the ESCC website for which there is a link on our website & noticeboard. There will be a public meeting at 10 am on Sat 9 January in Hailsham Community Hall. And if you wish to comment, please ensure that your views are made known to ESCC before 15 January.

### S E Water – Water Resources Management Plan Inquiry

We have been advised that this will be held over about 10 days between 10 May and 3 June and have confirmed that we wish to attend the Inquiry. We have also asked that at least part of the Inquiry be held locally in view of the many local objections raised against the proposal to inundate Plashett Park Farm to create a reservoir.

### **Play area safety**

Health and safety is always a priority for the Council, especially where children's play areas are concerned. All play equipment is subject to a weekly safety check and in addition to this a rigorous annual inspection has recently been completed. The report concludes that there are no serious areas of concern and it has provided us with a list of low priority work which will be undertaken in due course. Quotations are being sought to repair or replace various play area safety surfaces around the village.

### **Broyle Lane play area**

Plans are now in place to install a goal post at the northern end as requested by local youngsters. The roadside fence and gate which are in a poor condition will also be replaced.

### **Footpaths**

New permissive access until 2019 has been allowed between footpaths 5 & 10 which reduces the extent to which walkers would need to use the A26 for part of their route. We are still considering making some improvements to footpath 22 between Bishops Lane and Norlington Lane.

### **Dog Bins**

Dog Bins have been an issue and substantial amounts have already been spent and we would like to know whether these bins are situated in the most appropriate locations so as to get the best possible use out of the limited resources available. Your comments would be very much appreciated.

### **Pedestrian Crossing for Lewes Road**

We have held a meeting with ESCC concerning a possible pedestrian crossing near the Community College and Primary School.-we understand that we are still 11<sup>th</sup> on the list of priority sites and would need to get into the 'top 3' to stand any chance of provision. To achieve this facility in the near future, it would therefore seem necessary to provide local funding.

### **RADAR and Road Safety**

RADAR held a recruitment campaign in the shopping precinct in November and at the Church Christmas Fair and has gained some new members. They also supported the

BRAKE campaign again this year and continue to monitor the traffic through the village. We are pleased that the 40mph limit has been moved further up The Broyle which should encourage motorists to slow down earlier.

### **Parking**

The two hour parking restrictions near the shops seems to be working well and we still continue to monitor this together with other parking issues, road junctions, grass cutting and looking at a 20mph speed limit suggested by RADAR for part of Harrisons Lane.

### **Trees**

Next summer we will be taking part in Lewes District Council's tree survey to inspect 'public' trees in our area and advise on any safety or remedial work required.

### **Village pond**

We are investigating options for some remedial work to the banks of the pond by grading and planting and to undertake some water treatment. We will also look at cutting and clearing some of the untidy overgrowth.

### **Harvard House**

We are delighted to announce that ESCC has now approved the detailed proposals for this 44 bed care home rebuilding.

### **Problems with December's snow and ice**

Several complaints have been made that ESCC have not gritted in key and vulnerable locations. It may be that if we can identify these spots then grit boxes might be forthcoming – which would at least allow residents to take a DIY approach. Please provide suggestions that we could forward on for their consideration.

Finally, in this icy weather please spare a thought for the Parish Clerk who is attempting training for the Brighton Marathon in April! Please contact him if happy to be a sponsor, in aid of **St Peter & St James Hospice**.

## **RINGMER'S COUNCILLORS**

PARISH COUNCILLORS: Chairman: Bob Peters, MBE - Plashett Park Farm

Vice-Chairman & Chairman of Planning Committee: John Kay - Fair Meadow, Rushey Green.

Chairman of General Purposes Committee: Julia Fordham – 53 Broyleside Cottages, Broyle Lane

Chairman of Greens Committee: Ron Wilcox – 5 Gote Lane

Richard Booth – The Old Cottage, Lewes Road \* Alan Grindley - 25 Springett Avenue \* Jenny Hill – 39 The Forges \* Veronica Humphrey – 45 Springett Avenue \* Bob Truman – 1 Cheyney Cottages, Lewes Road \* Martin Whitlock – 16 Hayes Close \* Ken White – Celandines, Bishops Lane \* Ian Wilson – Dorian, Rushey Green \* Jan Woollons – 36 Christie Avenue

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: Chris Bowers, Paul Gander, Peter Gardiner COUNTY COUNCILLOR: Rosalyn St. Pierre

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

Full Council and Planning Committee 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 or see our website.

**Council Office:** This is almost invariably open to members of the public from 10am – 12 noon on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. On other weekday mornings there is usually someone available to receive your telephone call or email.

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