



Rotherfield Parish Council Newsletter Spring 2026



Early Spring is here and a lot has happened on the Parish Council since the last newsletter, I want to take this opportunity to use my message to thank one of our County Councillors.

As well as the day-to-day business of a parish council, there are always expected and unexpected issues which come along. It is not always easy to resolve them, and despite the depth of knowledge which exists among fellow councillors and our Clerk, we often turn for help to our District and County Councillors. One of these is Bob Standley: Bob is the County Councillor for Wealden North-East division, which includes a large part of Rotherfield.

His present title is the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability. Throughout all the years that I have known him, he has held many important roles in local government, so has vast experience and Knowledge. Bob is soon to stand down as our County Councillor, and I feel I should take this opportunity to thank him for all the work and help he has provided to our parish council and parishioners over the years.

Bob has regularly attended and reported to our Parish Monthly meetings for more years than I care to recall. He has always represented us in an honest, diligent way and helped to resolve many issues.

Bob would not be offended if I was to say he is "Old School". When he reports at our monthly meetings, it's always been with a piece of paper with prompt notes and the other side of that paper to make a note of any issues we want him to help with. I don't think I have ever seen him with a mobile phone or laptop. Bob has been a fine example of what public service is about, and Rotherfield has been lucky to have had his dedication and commitment over the years. He will be missed. I am sure that Bob will be copied into this newsletter, so on behalf of Rotherfield Parish Council and the community, I would like to thank you for all your support and hard work and wish you well in the future.



Chair of the Council, Rob Harris



Councillor Bob Standley

Hello and welcome to your Spring 2026 Newsletter from Rotherfield Parish Council.

While our surroundings are somewhat soggy, it's not raining as I write and there is just a hint in the air that Spring might, if we all cross our fingers, pay us a visit. Spring is also the time when we have our Annual Parish Get Together (May 9th, 10am-12 noon at the Village Hall), but what exactly is that, and why might you be interested? Well, "The Parish Get Together – the Annual Parish Meeting" is an opportunity for you to meet us, your Parish Councillors, and talk about things that are important to you.

With best regards, this season's editor,

Councillor Paul Snelling



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What is a Parish – and Why It Matters?

The parish is the smallest unit of local government in England. For many of us, the word “parish” is closely associated with the Church—and quite rightly so, as there remains a strong and important connection between the two, though the Parish Council is entirely independent of the Church.

Join us at the Parish Get Together

We'd love to see as many of you as possible at the meeting. There's something for everyone, including:

- A welcome from the Parish Council Chair
- Creative competitions for our younger parishioners – including Art, Writing, and Photography (with prizes!)
 - Parents: do encourage your budding artists, writers, and photographers to take part
 - Each category will be judged by a local expert
- A model railway display from the Eridge and Tunbridge Wells Model Railway Society
- Meet the Rotherfield Players, who will be sharing details of their upcoming production of *The Sound of Music*
- A special presentation of “The Freedom of the Parish”, recognising individuals who have made a valuable contribution to our community
- Your feedback matters – we'll be inviting you to share your thoughts and ideas for future events
- Free tea and coffee, delicious bacon sandwiches and a tempting cake stall

Stay Connected

The Get Together isn't your only opportunity to speak with us—we genuinely want to hear your views so we can represent the Parish effectively.

All Parish Council meetings are open to the public, and you're always welcome to attend. You can also contact us via the Parish Clerk.

You may spot us out and about in the Parish too—though as many councillors have full-time jobs, we may sometimes need to arrange a convenient time to talk in more detail.

As your Parish Council, we are responsible for managing a wide range of community services and events. We are also statutory consultees on matters such as planning and the environment, which are ultimately determined by district and county councils.

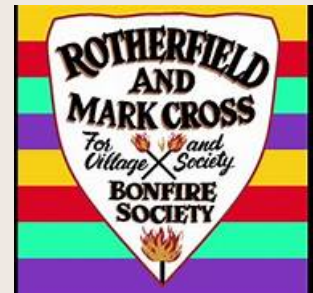
Although councillors are elected, we do not represent political parties. Like you, we are proud to live and work in — and to serve — our beautiful and friendly parish.

So far this year, your Parish Council has:

- Responded to Wealden's Local Plan, particularly about sections relevant to Rotherfield
- Your Parish Council has submitted more than 20 responses to planning applications
- Reaffirmed support for local businesses
- Given grants totalling £8,000 to local charities and supported other community projects
- Arranged repairs to the surgery in Rotherfield following significant vehicle damage on 1 March
- Continued to address road and traffic concerns across the parish
- Received a presentation from the new A272/A267 Road Safety Group
- Secured a commitment from East Sussex Highways for regular drain cleaning on New Road

- Lobbied Highways regarding repainting junction lines at the top of New Road
- Participated in weekly stakeholder meetings on the A267 gas main works
- Surveyed additional sites for speed indicator devices
- Supported the community in developing plans for a cycle pump track
- Agreed to take over management of the parish allotments
- Taken on responsibility for the red telephone box outside Eridge Station
- Committed to maintaining our twinning with St Chéron, including a new planter and commemorative plaque

We look forward to seeing you — and having a chat — at the upcoming Parish Assembly, if not before.



This year we have supported..



This year, so far, in pictures



What has Doug been up to?

(Life of a Parish Councillor)



The Gas Works

I was miles away, contemplating a particularly troublesome piece of computer code, on the afternoon of Tuesday 13th of January when a knock at the door caused our extensive collection of dogs to erupt from their spots on the sofa or nice, warm, comfy beds in a frenzy of barking. Once I'd put my skin back on (having been frightened out of it by the unexpected excitement) I answered the door to a young gentleman in a high vis jacket who had some bad news for me.

Contractors working to fix some long running drainage problems had, it seems, bashed through the gas main outside and filled it with about four tons of dirty water and silt. Because of this, the young man apologised, he would need to disconnect the gas at our meter, otherwise our kitchen would have a new water feature where the cooker used to be. He couldn't tell me how long it would be before we were reconnected. I count myself as lucky, I spoke to one neighbour who was at his own wedding reception at the time and was a bit disturbed to see on his doorbell camera that someone was trying to pick the lock and get into his house. He had to take an hour or so out to come home, let the gas man in to disconnect the meter and then toddle back to his own party!

In all, seventy properties in Rotherfield and Mayfield parishes (depends which side of the road you live) were affected, thirty or so of which are on the vulnerable register, and without gas for three or four days while the engineers worked hard to flush out the main and get us all reconnected. While the supply was off SGN sent its "Safe and Warm" team to the vulnerable folk to ensure that they had heaters and hot-plates so they could stay warm and cook food.

Since there were already traffic lights in place for the drainage works (and had been since the start of the year), this will all have gone pretty much un-noticed to any passing traffic. The folk from SGN were great, keeping us informed at all times on progress – but, in an awful case of badly mixed metaphors, there was to be a sting in the tail waiting in the wings...

The gas main on this stretch of road is made of metal, and somewhere between seventy and ninety years old. It would have needed replacing soon enough, but the trauma hadn't helped matters. The integrity of the main had been compromised and it needed replacing immediately. In fact, we were told, had it not been the middle of winter, we probably would not have been reconnected until after the replacement.

As it was, SGN had reluctantly reconnected all seventy properties and were monitoring the main every day or so in case of failures and leaks. The rest as the say is history but, of course, at the time of writing it's actually current affairs, even making its way on to the 6pm news on the BBC.

A significant stretch of the gas main is in the middle of the road, so the A267 is very firmly closed at Trulls Hatch and again in Mark Cross and there are many diversions in place – this situation is expected to last for about eight weeks.

It's fair to say there were some considerable 'teething troubles' when the diversions were first put in place (mostly when drivers, especially HGVs, refuse to take the correct diversions), and they aren't exactly ideal, but the best that can be managed under the circumstances.

The aim is that from mid-April the A267 will be open, but with traffic lights as work continues on the main which is now on one side of the road.

The final phase of the work, with traffic lights at the junction of Bicycle Arms Road (B2102) and the A267. The B2101 itself will be closed at this time.

Please rest assured that Rotherfield and Mayfield Parish Councils are in regular contact with SGN and East Sussex County Council, and everyone is working to minimise the disruption while this urgent and necessary work is carried out. We have lobbied hard to improve traffic management on the various road diversions, and have made strong representations about the damage done to Sherriffs Lane in particular.



Rotherfield Parish Council - Working for the
Community in Rotherfield, Mark Cross, Eridge
Green, Boarshead and surrounding areas.



The Parish Get Together

The Annual Parish Meeting

What's happening locally?

How is your money spent?

Kids' competitions

A fun morning for you and your family

Cake and savouries

Save the Date!

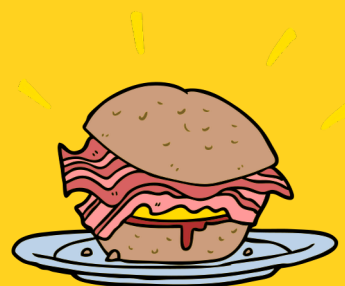
SATURDAY 9TH MAY

Rotherfield Village Hall

10:00am - 12:00pm

Be entertained and stimulated!

More information: clerk@rotherfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk



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This Spring and for the first time, we have a runner taking part in the London Marathon on behalf of RSM, Alex, a local lad who has been volunteering with us since 2020. In that time, he has visited older people at home to offer companionship, set up phones and various devices, helped on trips, made and served toasted sandwiches, mowed lawns, and even poured wine and gravy at our Christmas Lunch (in very unequal measures!)

Now, Alex has laced up his trainers to run the London Marathon for RSM. Many of you will have seen him out training around the village — he has already clocked up more than 160 miles in preparation.

If you'd like to cheer him on and support our work to combat loneliness, please sponsor Alex using the QR code or by popping into RSM HQ. Every single pound genuinely makes a difference and helps transform someone's life right here in our community. Thank you for being part of it. ❤️



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Sponsor Alex Cheeseman
Running The London Marathon For RSM
26 April 2026