

Maria Caulfield's

Update for Ringmer Parish Council

July 2023

Please accept my apologies that I am unable to join you at your meeting this week. I do however have the following updates for the parish.

1.Chancellor Agrees New Support Measures for Mortgage Holders

Under the plans, anyone worried about their mortgage repayments can call their lender for information and support, without any impact on their credit score.

Moreover, if you change your mortgage to interest only or extend the term of your mortgage and want to go back to your original deal, within six months, you will be able to do so – with no impact on your credit score. For people who are at risk of losing their home, mortgage lenders have agreed to a minimum 12-month period before any repossession without consent. I hope that these measures offer comfort to those who are anxious about their mortgage in light of recent interest rate rises.

2.Major Broadband Boost for Rural Homes and Businesses

The government has pledged an additional seven million pounds to bring reliable high-speed internet to rural businesses. This new scheme seeks to enable farmers to take advantage of new technologies through improved connectivity. To help rural tourism with high-speed connections, rural businesses establish a strong online presence.

3. Meeting with the Housing Secretary

I have been asking the councils for years to create local plans, with no luck. This month I met with Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Housing, to encourage him to put Lewes District and Wealden Councils into special measures. Only with a local plan in place can we protect our green field sites from being concreted over.

4. Opening 'Rampion Bridge' on A27

I was thrilled to join National Highways recently to celebrate the scheme's completion on the A27 East of Lewes. The shared cycle/pathway will make a huge difference for local cyclists, horse riders and walkers. Residents can be happy knowing that they are safe and can enjoy the stretch between Firle and Polegate whilst motorists can benefit from a reduction in traffic.

I know residents are still keen on further improvements to the A27 and there are plans to consult further as to whether to dual the road at certain points so do look out for the survey to submit your thoughts and ideas.

5. Improvements to Local Walking and Cycling Routes

I welcome the government's investment of **200 million pounds** into creating new walking and cycling routes across the country. This new scheme will help the environment and ease congestion during the school rush. Locally East Sussex County Council have secured 1,223,826 for improvements aimed at increasing the safety and accessibility for all immediately outside of schools.

6. Gleeson's Development Appeal

I recently spoke at the Ringer Planning enquiry where I put questions to the planning inspector as to why I feel this is an inappropriate development.

It is my belief that Ringer cannot take any more housing (over 1000 new homes recently). This is not the correct type of affordable housing for residents and risks further erosion of the rural settlement.

I am hoping the planning inspector listens to the concerns of residents and understands the impact on the village and surrounding area that this development poses. The government is looking to stop planning inspectors overturning local decisions. We must ensure that it is the right type of housing, for the appropriate location.