

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019 UPDATE



Over the past few months Ryarsh Protection Group (RPG) have been in contact with organisations and experts in the best interests of our communities, including working closely with our Parish Council. This update is a summary of what we have been working on. If there's something extra you think we could or should be doing, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

As we move into 2019 let us take this opportunity to send you and your families very best wishes for the coming year.

A huge thank you to all our residents, family and friends for your incredible support last year – especially for the **1,299 individual objection letters** to Kent County Council (KCC) earlier in the year, joining the community photograph and our petition received an almost **unprecedented 3,615 signatures** from Ryarsh and surrounding communities including West Malling, which demonstrated the unanimous objection to the proposed M8 site in Ryarsh, West Malling.

RECENT ACTIVITY:

- During late November and early December 2018 - KCC Planning officers made their draft 'pre-submission' Minerals and Waste Local Plan report available to the public. **We were pleased that the draft plan concluded that site M8, Ryarsh had been deemed inappropriate and not included within the proposed plan. The Plan was agreed and approved by KCC via the following procedures:** on 28th November by Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee (despite the quarry operator submitting a last minute legal opinion against KCC's recommendation); on 3rd December by KCC Cabinet Committee and on 13 December **all KCC's 81 Council Members voted to approve the Minerals and Waste Local Plan which excludes the Ryarsh site.** (Three councillors objected relating to other sites not Ryarsh).
- Prior to the above meetings RPG sent 88 hand written cards and over 90 individual emails to all the members of KCC and the planning team – encouraging them to consider the hugely negative impact the quarry would have on our community. See website for copy of the cards.

NEXT STEPS:

- KCC issued notice of the Early Partial Review with guidance notes for making representation to The Planning Inspector – which you may have received. This relates to the Mineral Sites Plan and Draft Local Plan which now excludes the Ryarsh site and is currently out for public consultation until **8 March 2019.**

- Tom Tugendhat MP – may also have sent you an email or letter encouraging you to submit comments to KCC as part of the consultation.

HOW TO RESPOND TO THE KCC CONSULTATION LETTER & WHY:

- **It is very important that you respond to show that you support the KCC draft Plan**, which does not include the West Malling sandpit site in Ryarsh, and that you believe it is legally compliant and sound.
- **The RPG is currently seeking clarification on an appropriate response** to the KCC consultation and also working with our Parish Council – we will provide you with suggested responses shortly.
- **We are holding a public meeting Tuesday 12 February at 7.30 – Ryarsh Church Hall, everyone is very welcome** - by which time we will be in a position to share guidelines and provide draft responses, in order to save and protect our community.
- The responses to KCC can be very short and simple – it's does not require a long letter with different points like last year, as Ryarsh is not included in the plan.
- The responses received will be included in a recap report that KCC present to the Public Inspector – who must determine the KCC Local Plan's legal compliance and soundness.
- The RPG are also working on additional background data that may be required by the Public Inspector in order to prove why Ryarsh is an inappropriate location for a Quarry – should any changes occur regarding KCC procedures or otherwise.

COMING SOON

- **Public Meeting – Tuesday 12 February at 7.30 – Ryarsh Church Hall, Church Rd**
- Fundraising activity – chance to win amazing prizes
- Annual Community photograph

The Ryarsh Protection Group will continue to campaign for Ryarsh to be declared an inappropriate location for a quarry. As the process continues there is still a great deal of work to be done – your support is required as much as ever.

Thank you everyone for your continued support.

STAY CONNECTED...

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