ORRA NEWSLETTER

Autumn/Winter 2026



Welcome from the Chair

There is quite a lot to report from an ORRA committee perspective. Each of the respective committee members have been progressing their respective efforts in earnest and these are set out in more detail in this Newsletter.

With considerable committee progress having been made to both 'Roads and Fast Fibre (FF)'. With the latter this has been many years in planning and credit is due to both past and present committee members for working to overcome the many issues and bring this project to the present position. I am providing a fuller report on FF later in this Newsletter but while there is still work to do to enable FF availability to all households within ORRA, what has been achieved to date represents an important milestone.

With the FF (Phase 1) works now completed, I would urge all residents to consider Jan Creasy's proposed additional tree planting on ORRA front verges. This as an important ORRA resident future investment. Enclosed with this Newsletter is an Estate Tree Planting questionnaire and your feedback to Jan is very important. Please take the time to contribute.

Finally, as this may apply to you, please consider the Planning Approvals, Property Sales, and the Freehold Management Enquiries (FME1) item in this Newsletter by John Cuzick.

Clive Tomsett

Trees on the Estate: The Beauty, Change, and Care

As we move into autumn months, the estate begins one of its most striking transformations. The trees shift from deep summer greens to gold's, russet reds, and amber and the estate takes on another beautiful season. Every year, this change feels both familiar and new a reminder of how fortunate we are to live in a landscape of this kind.

Whether you're walking the grounds daily or catching glimpses from a window, the vibrancy of the autumn is impossible to ignore.

With this seasonal change, however, comes the first hint of winter. As the weather becomes more unsettled, high winds and early storms can place stress on our trees. Fallen branches, leaning trunks, or sudden changes in a tree's appearance can be early signs of damage.

If you notice anything unusual, a branch that's come down, a tree that looks unstable, or any signs of storm impact please bring it to my attention. Early reporting helps us act quickly, keeping the estate safe, healthy, and looking its best through the colder months ahead.

Autumn gives us beautiful colour but the winter tests our resilience. Please help us to ensure the trees continue to thrive through both.

As part of the ongoing commitment to maintaining and enhancing the estate's green spaces, residents will be invited to complete a short survey to register their interest in planting additional young trees on front verges, helping to preserve and enrich the estate's character for future generations.

Jan Creasy
07801857002



Road Report

As residents may have noticed all soakaways and gullies on the Estate were emptied and cleaned in September, and a limited leaf and debris clean-up of Linkway and Ratton Drive was also undertaken. This followed the very heavy rains that broke the long warm spell, and which brought much debris from the escarpment, above the Estate, down the Willingdon Hill pathway onto Linkway and beyond. The cause of much of the debris arriving in Linkway is that the 'catch pit' at the top of that road, which is Council installed, is not functioning satisfactorily, and cannot cope with the very heavy rainfall events we now see. The entrance 'system' very easily and quickly gets blocked and overwhelmed. We will be engaging with the Council in this respect but anticipate it taking some time to resolve. In the meantime, it will be an added problem with the ongoing priority to keep our roads as clear as possible (from the leaves and other 'material' that arrives) - so our drainage systems don't get so clogged up and work as efficiently as possible. A thank you is appropriate to all those residents who make a positive contribution to limiting leaves and other material on the roads, by keeping their frontages tidy and use their brown bins. For those that like to rake or blow their leaves etc. from their frontages onto the road, we are not so grateful!

Returning to the drainage system throughout the Estate, its efficiency to cope with our changed weather conditions is the focus of our road 'works plan', which we have communicated previously - and the outcome from the drainage report we commissioned and presented at this year's AGM. In respect of Phase 1 of the works plan, we have received quotes from five road contractors and have made a preferred choice, but there are still a few confirmations and clarifications to go through. The works will be carried out under the project management of French Engineering Limited, and we anticipate starting on the eight or so new gulley's in Ratton Drive and the surface water sewer link up at the bottom of Walnut Tree Walk in the coming months. Around the same time road repairs to speed humps and damaged surfaces throughout the Estate will be undertaken. All costs will be covered within the Association's 'reserves. The scale and scope of these works may develop into a Phase 2 immediately, if affordable, which could involve the installation of new soakaways adjacent to existing or new gullies / drains. There is obviously much detail in what is proposed, which cannot all be itemised in this brief report, but Phase 1 will include all catch-up works that have been in abeyance due to the wait for Full Fibre to be introduced, and to commence the proactive work required to make the Estate's drainage systems more efficient. Notices of works starting will be provided as and when - and inconvenience kept to a minimum.

Finally, ahead of Phase 1 of the works plan, all our exiting 'mishmash' of Estate signage will be replaced by new, clearer signs in a consistent style with that of the three main entrance signs – to look aesthetically much better. We will have 20 new signs in total covering road names, directional information, and incorporating necessary road traffic warnings. Ratton Garden and Ratton Court will also get six replacement entrance signs. This is both a simplification and reduction of existing signage, and all damaged or obsolete roadside signs will be removed. Manufacture is already underway and installation carried out by a specialist signage contractor.

Graham Carn



Antisocial behaviours & Inconsiderate Parking

The ORRA committee's role is to uphold the covenants on the Estate, principally maintaining the appearance and upkeep of the Estate, however there are other covenants in respect of 'behavioural' expectations upon residents which the committee is increasingly being asked to become involved in and resolve. Typically, these concern anti-social behaviours such as road noise and dog barking, or neighbour issues over fencing or garden growth. Recently also unwelcome car parking on roads - trade vehicles left overnight, non-residents parking in the day and walking their dogs, or residents parking outside another's property.

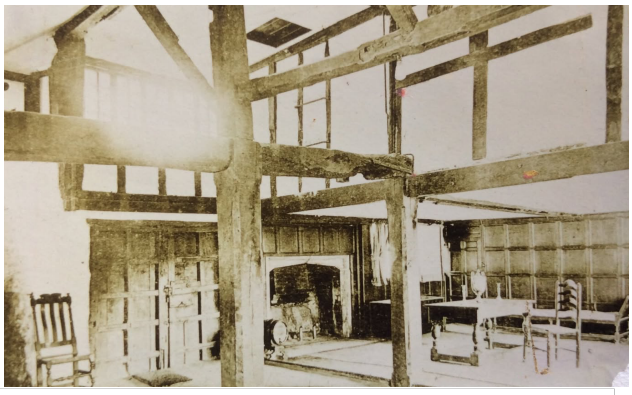
The committee recognises no-one relishes tackling awkward situations however calm, personal and reasonable dialogue between resident(s) affected and 'offending' parties, is more likely to resolve issues amicably and quickly, as opposed to the Committee being the first port of call and seen as a policing authority for the Estate, which practically and reasonably it cannot be.

With regard specifically to some recent parking issues on the road outside Ratton Court & Ratton Garden suggestions for ORRA to provide 'notices', for general resident usage to put on vehicles, have been made. The committee, however, is not keen to distribute supplies of notices able to be used in an uncontrolled way, and a standard text to cover all situations would be difficult. Historically residents encountering parking issues have placed 'personal' notes on vehicles and, that is still felt the most appropriate first action, if face-to-face approaches cannot be made. Obviously, wording used should avoid the potential for upset and care must always be taken putting anything on a vehicle to ensure no accusation of damage being caused. For the flat residents the committee have suggested, via their management group, a simple '**Courtesy Notice'** along the lines of: "**Your vehicle is parked on a 'private road' which is for the use solely of neighbouring residents, their visitors, trades working (during the day) at properties, and the emergency services. There is only limited space available so please avoid parking here in future. Thank you for your understanding."**

The committee hope the continuing use of 'courtesy notices' will help resolve car-parking issues in the vast majority of the very limited number of occasions that they are necessary. In the event however that the polite approach does not resolve matters then resident's can, of course, then refer to the committee and it will try to help.

The Committee

The Manor that Disappeared: Finding Old Ratton in Modern Eastbourne



If you drive, walk or cycle around Ratton today, it is easy to think of it simply as one of Eastbourne's residential neighbourhoods. Yet beneath the houses, roads and gardens lies a much older landscape, one that once belonged to a substantial country estate centred on Ratton Manor.

The remarkable thing about Ratton is not simply that it is old. It is that so little of the great manor house itself remains, while traces of the estate are still woven into the neighbourhood around it.

The heart of this estate was Ratton Manor. The medieval house itself has long disappeared, but one remarkable survivor remains: the old gatehouse.

Today known simply as 'The Gate House', this Grade II listed building dates from the 15th century. It is timber-framed and retains features including its overhanging first floor, substantial chimney breast, old doorway and original curved brackets. Historic England describes it as the gatehouse to the medieval Manor of Ratton; the manor house itself was demolished long ago.

Standing beside modern housing, the Gate House is therefore something of a time capsule. It belongs to a landscape that existed centuries before Ratton Drive, Manor Way and the surrounding streets were built. This is what makes Ratton particularly fascinating: it is a place where the landscape has outlived the building that once gave it meaning. Walk through Old Ratton today and the manor itself is absent. But the old gatehouse remains.

Carl Williams

Planning Approval, Property Sales, and the FME1 form

As you will know the ORRA Committee is tasked with upholding the ORRA covenants, as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding 2019. This includes maintaining an oversight of building works on the estate. ORRA Ltd acts as the management company for the shared assets of the estate. As such, solicitors acting for prospective purchasers make formal enquiries early in the conveyancing process and we provide an information pack, which provides valuable information regarding ORRA and the obligations that come with living on the estate.

Prospective buyers' solicitors also require to know whether a property has had any alterations made to it and whether these alterations have received planning approval from the ORRA Committee. This ORRA approval is separate and additional to any local authority approvals and required in ALL instances. The information is supplied by the Committee on the "FME1" form, for which we charge a small fee.

We would like to remind residents, particularly those that might be planning a move, that the onus is on them to seek approval for any alterations to their property, from larger extensions or additions to solar panels or any changes to the appearance of the property from the road. In certain circumstances the Committee is able to issue retrospective approval. However, we caution that this approval process cannot be rushed. In the event that a property sale is pending but approval for works has not yet been obtained, delays may result, causing frustrations all round and even for a buyer to reconsider.

We advise any residents who might have had unapproved works to seek retrospective approval from the Committee as soon as possible. We seek to facilitate the smooth transfer of properties, but we are bound by the covenants to register any unapproved works on the FME1 form.

Approval requests (including retrospective) should be submitted via the website, where you will find the latest planning documents.

If in doubt regarding any planning issues, please contact the Committee, we are here to help. The address is: planning@orra.online

The ORRA Committee



The Order of St Richard

As some of you may already be aware, Rhylva Holder was honoured with the Order of St Richard in recognition of her outstanding commitment and service to the community.

On 26 September 2026, Rhylva received this prestigious award from the Bishop of Lewes at Chichester Cathedral, a wonderful recognition of the time, kindness and generosity she gives so freely to others.

Alongside her valuable contributions to the wider community, Rhylva is also a dedicated supporter of St Mary the Virgin Church in Willingdon. She continues to support the Shoebox Appeal in partnership with 'Link to Hope', helping to bring comfort and practical support to families and older people experiencing hardship or isolation in Eastern Europe and Ukraine.

Last year alone, sending more than 144 shoeboxes, each one making a meaningful difference to a household or an older person in need.

Rhylva's award is a well-deserved recognition of her compassion, dedication and the many ways she continues to make a positive difference in the lives of others. We would like to congratulate her on this wonderful achievement.

Carl Williams



Fast Fibre Update

In terms of the scope of the Fast Fibre (FF) works, considerable progress has been made over the summer. While there are still outstanding Lower Ratton Drive property enablement challenges, upwards of 70% of ORRA [Ratton Estate] households, should they choose, will be able to benefit imminently from the BT Openreach FF investment.

These works, which have taken place over this summer have involved clearing existing underground conduit blockages caused by tree roots, re-routing FF cabling with the installation of poles and such civil works to verges and, in the case of The Grove, the existing road. These are now completed and tested by BT Openreach, and the committee has been informed for the 70% of households now enabled with FF, that this service will be commissioned and into use during early November 2026, at which time, respective households will then be made aware of FF connectivity through their existing [or other] Internet Service Providers (ISPs).

There remains several more complex FF enablement challenges for the 30% of the Ratton Estate, which the committee are presently working through with BT Openreach, specifically in terms of required works and timescales as these relate to FF enablement to properties at the lower end of Ratton Drive, being numbers 2 – 22. These properties have not yet been enabled in this phase of works for the following reasons. This section of the network is distributed from Willingdon Road and separate from the rest of the Ratton Estate. There are issues with the duct section between 6 Ratton Drive and at the gated entrance. There are further issues with the existing carriageway duct sections at the junction of Park Lane, and this creates a complex plan of BT Openreach, which would include temporary traffic management and intrusive excavation works on the Willingdon Road, such works requiring licensing permissions from Eastbourne Borough Council.

Adding to this complexity, 1, 3 and 5 Ratton Drive are distributed from infrastructure routed from the pathway that runs behind these properties and parallel to Ratton Drive. The existing network here is direct buried & creates further extensive work to enable. BT Openreach are presently reviewing the options to see if FF service enablement can be provided in any alternative ways and what the timescales would be for all options. This includes 'Phase 2' connectivity to enable FF for Ratton Garden residents. The committee has a continuing dialog with BT Openreach on these outstanding FF enablement issues and updates as these are made will be posted on the ORRA website www.orra.online/news-and-announcements/full-fibre-broadband/



Proposed Additional Tree Planting on Front Verges

Dear Resident,

As part of the Estate Management Committee's ongoing responsibility for the care and management of the estate's trees, we are exploring opportunities to introduce additional young trees to suitable front verges.

A number of the estate's existing trees are ageing, and carefully planned additional planting would help sustain and enhance the character of the estate for future generations. We would therefore like to invite residents to express an interest in having a young tree planted on the front verge outside their property.

Depending on the space available and the suitability of individual locations, a range of species could be considered. These might include smaller ornamental trees, flowering cherry, rowan, ornamental crab apple and, where sufficient space permits, walnut or other suitable larger-growing species. Trees could be selected to provide spring blossom, attractive autumn colour, berries for wildlife or an interesting feature throughout the year.

We would welcome your views on whether you would like a tree outside your property and whether you have any preferences regarding its characteristics or appearance.

At this stage, we are simply seeking to establish the level of interest among residents. Any future planting would be subject to a site assessment, appropriate species selection, underground services, available space and the estate's overall tree-management plan.

Please complete the enclosed short questionnaire and return it to Jan Creasy at 26 Ratton Drive or by email, janiceacreasy@gmail.com by Monday 30th November 2026.

We would be grateful for a response from all residents, including those who would prefer not to have an additional tree, as this will help us build a clear picture of residents' views across the estate.

Thank you for your assistance and for helping us protect and enhance the landscape and character of our estate.

ORRA Committee