Reports for Brightling Parish Council meeting
11th November 2026

This report covers 4 topics:

- Messenger magazine
- Web site
- Broadband
- Environment – jointly with Katrina

Katrina is reporting on the Environment Strategy generally.

This report covers the period since my previous report for the meeting on 9th September 2026.

Messenger magazine

The AGM (billed as "Readers' Get-together") will be on Friday 20th November, starting at 7:00 pm in Brightling Village Hall. It is hoped that parish councillors will attend and encourage other villagers to come along.

Otherwise, little has changed since my last report. I continue to chair.

We could do with a new volunteer to distribute the magazine in the Willingford Lane / Worges area.

The magazine is in good heart, with about 96 subscribers in Brightling.

Jane Beard continues to do an excellent job collating the copy for the Brightling village pages, and Brightling resident Tom Bourne is the overall editor for the village pages and village news.

Probably the main threat to the magazine is that it is dependent on a small number of people working quite hard, many of whom are not particularly young.

I will be appealing at the November AGM to get some new fresh blood on the committee.

Web site

RDC IT department took swift action following the recent PHP cyber-security emergency, and the Brightling site was not compromised. See https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3qjnwye0ep5o for details of the threat.

Apart from that there has been little change since previous reports.

The village website is at https://brightling.community/

The site continues to be hosted by Rother District Council, free of charge.

There is an obvious concern about what will happen when RDC ceases to exist. My recommendation is that we take no action until the situation becomes clearer. If we do need to re-home the site, I would suggest that we follow the same path as Dallington, ie a managed Wordpress website, hosted by GoDaddy.

The main contributors to the web site continue to be me, the Parish Clerk, Jane Beard, Chris Wing, Katrina Blench, and Judy Petty. If other contributors want to come forward, I would be very happy to get them a logon and give any necessary training.

There continues to be about 1 "post" per week to the website. Each post triggers an email to 180 subscribers.

Guidelines for people posting, can be seen at brightling.community/content-guidelines/ I would particularly like to draw attention to the recommendation to space posts out in time (the "Schedule" feature can help with this) and avoid having more than one post on a given day, except for emergency announcements.

Broadband

There is very little change since my previous report. I have not had any requests for help.

The date for the analog (PSTN) phone switch-off remains at January 2027.

I think the parish council has already done all that reasonably should be done in terms of reaching out to people about the implications of the analog switch-off. If anyone in the parish has a problem with broadband or telephone service then of course they can ask the parish council for help and we will respond.

Environment: “de-mythifying the electric car”

This event took place on 1st October, in the Village Hall. It was very well-attended.

The event took the form of a question and answer session with members of the audience and a panel of 4 electric car owners, chaired by Alan Petty ("Tyre Kicker" of the Messenger magazine and motoring correspondent of The Oldie). The panel was Isabel Lloyd, Charles Everett, Doug Edworthy and Olivier Wall.

Everyone was free to say and ask anything they wanted, for or against electric cars. The first thing that became apparent was that electric car owners really really love their electric cars. They really couldn't find anything to say against them, merely that you might have to change your habits slightly (when you get home, plug it in and leave it to charge overnight).

- "Range anxiety" used to be a thing, but not any more. Our owners had driven to places such as Penzance, the far South of France etc, and soon realised that they just didn't need to worry
- The same for difficulties in finding charging points, charging points not working etc. An app on your phone makes finding a charging point very straightforward
- Can the Chinese government just turn your (Chinese) car off? No-one could say that this is impossible, but it would apply to any "smart" car (ie one with software that gets updated over the internet) - not just electric cars, and not necessarily just from China. A panel member pointed out that if the Chinese ever did that, it would kill the Chinese export market for ever, so there is a strong commercial disincentive.
- Some insurance companies may seek to increase your premium when you swap from ICE to electric. One panel member said his insurance company wanted double, but when he shopped around he found insurance of his electric car at the same price as his previous similar-sized ICE car.
- Electric cars require much less servicing than ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) cars, because they have far fewer moving parts. A Brightling resident told us that his Tesla does not have a service schedule ("There is no such thing as a 10,000 mile service. If the wiper blades wear out, you get new wiper blades")
- Fuel costs are lower. Charging points vary widely in price. If you only ever charged up at the most expensive points, your fuel costs might be the same. On the other hand if you can home charge on a cheap tariff, you will be paying far less per mil.

There were many things that we didn't have time to explore. What about people who have to park their cars on the street and can't home-charge? What about having an electric car and solar panels? What about two-way charging (using your car as a back-up battery for your home in the event of a power cut)? These are all interesting topics; perhaps we can explore them in a future event.

Environment: questions about electric car charging in East Sussex

On 19th September I emailed East Sussex County Councillor Mark Ashdown, as follows:

> Dear Mark
>
> I am writing to you as my elected County Councillor, to ask about facilities for electric car charging in East Sussex.

I have found an official ESCC web page at https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roads-transport/transport-planning/public-electric-vehicle-charging-points-east-sussex

Unfortunately this page seems to be very out of date. It appears to have been written in early 2024 and not updated since that time.

This web page makes various statements about events that were in the future when it was written, but which should have come to pass by now.

1. The web page says: "*We are currently working with OZEV and other agencies to support the procurement of an on-street chargepoint provider, and we expect to start the delivery of on-street chargepoints later in 2024/25.*" Obvious questions arising out of this are: (a) was on on-street chargepoint provider appointed? and (b) how many chargepoints have been delivered so far and (c) how many are planned / under development and (d) where are they? I appreciate that zapmap tells me where all the chargers are but it doesn't tell me which ones have been provided through ESCC's procurement and it doesn't tell me anything about future plans.

2. My second question is about lamp-post EV chargers. Has ESCC delivered any of these and /or are there any plans to do so?

Your council's web page at does urgently need updating. Its information on cross-pavement charging has been overtaken by events, including the government's recent announcement of new Permitted Development Rights for pavement gullies. The announcement can be seen at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a9fd10762ec7fe7bedf5107/changes-to-various-permitted-development-rights-ev-charging-govt-response.pdf

I look forward to hearing from you.

I received a prompt acknowledgement of this email.

Environment: Solar panels at Coal Bridge (between the dam and Mountfield Lane

Back in July, I passed on the information from Southern Water that installation was likely to start in "*towards late Summer 2026*" but that this was "*subject to the procurement timelines*"

The last time I drove past the site there was no evidence of work taking place on the ground and I have not received any further information.

Environment – solar panels on the Village Hall roof

Solar panels are now visibly in place. I have heard anecdotally that the panels and battery set-up is working well and producing benefits for the Village Hall. I do not have any details.

Andrew Wedmore