

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN ...

It is with pleasure that, as Chairman of North Horsham Parish Council, I introduce the Annual Report of North Horsham Parish Council for 2015/2016.

People generally, whether consciously or sub-consciously, are quite resistant to change. They like the status quo. They do not like the natural order and rhythm of life being upset. Change can be perceived to mean the beginning of a journey into the unknown.

This past year has, for the Parish Council, been one of some quite significant Change but I am pleased to say that with the 'can-do' and 'no nonsense' approach of the staff that make up Team North Horsham; and the continued support of my fellow Councillors, North Horsham Parish Council has come through the year and will be even stronger – and I thank everyone for that.

Yes – there may well be 'tweaks' to the status quo and a few changes to the rhythm of the natural order but the journey ahead is looking bright and positive

I do hope that you enjoy reading about some of the highlights of the year in the Parish Council's Annual Report for 2015/2016.

*Councillor Roger Wilton
Chairman of North Horsham Parish Council*

THE PARISH COUNCIL ...

Continues a history that goes back to 1894, originally as Horsham Rural Parish Council and then, since April 1987, as North Horsham Parish Council. The Council area covers approximately 1,905 hectares with a population of 21,348 (as at 2001) and 16,418 on the Electoral Roll as at October 2015.

MEETINGS ...

The Parish Council continues to meet six times in the year, together with regularly scheduled meetings of the Parish Council's Committees – Finance and Administration, Personnel, Planning Environment and Transport and Property.

All meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees are open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend. All the Parish Council's notice boards and the Parish Council's website carry details of meetings.

PARISH COUNCILLORS ...

In May 2015, Local Government Elections took place and a number of Councillors did not stand for re-elections – Councillors Mike Brakes, Mrs Rita Ginn, Gavin Porter, Mick Senior and Ms Belinda Walters – and the Council would like to thank them for their contribution to the work of the Parish Council during their term of office.

Along with the two already existing vacancies this meant there were six vacancies – three in Holbrook East Ward; one in Holbrook West Ward; one in Roffey North Ward; and one in Roffey South Ward - out of an 'establishment of nineteen Councillors.

Immediately following the election, Mrs Rita Ginn and Mrs Frances Haigh put themselves forward - both in Holbrook East Ward – and were co-opted to the Parish Council at the May 2015 Annual Meeting of Council.

Through the year two further co-options were made - Ms Helen Ralston in June 2015, to Holbrook East Ward and Mr Richard Millington in November 2015 to Holbrook West Ward.

There are still two vacancies to be filled by co-option – one in Roffey North Ward and the other in Roffey South Ward. If anyone would like further details, these can be found on the Parish Council's website or by contacting the Parish Office.

The Parish Council operates an independently reviewed **Scheme of Members' Allowances**. This annual Allowance is payable, quarterly in arrears, to those elected Parish Councillors who wish to receive it. The Allowance is not available to those who are co-opted.

For 2015/2016, the allowance continued to be £430 per annum. Councillors are also entitled to claim for expenses that are incurred when undertaking the business of the Parish Council outside of the Parish; and again, these expenses are independently reviewed. Details of those Councillors claiming the Allowance and Councillor Expenses for the last year are shown below -

MEMBER	ALLOWANCE	EXPENSES	TOTAL
Karen Burgess	£430.00		£430.00
Peter Burgess	£430.00		£430.00
Nik Butler	£430.00		£430.00
Rita Ginn	£35.83		£35.83
Roland Knight	£430.00		£430.00
Martin Loates	£430.00		£430.00
Tony Rickett	£430.00		£430.00
	£2,615.83		£2,615.83

MEMBER	ALLOWANCE	EXPENSES	TOTAL
	£2,615.83		£2,615.83
David Searle	£430.00		£430.00
Michael Senior	£35.83		£35.83
Simon Torn	£430.00		£430.00
Ray Turner	£430.00		£430.00
Ian Wassell	£430.00		£430.00
Roger Wilton	£430.00		£430.00
Sally Wilton	£430.00		£430.00
	£5,231.66		£5,231.66

Parish Councillors are required by statute to declare their Interests by completing a **Register of Interests**. The Localism Act 2011 brought in additional information that had to be declared by Members and the Registers of Members' Interests, as before, continue to be public documents and copies are retained by both the Parish Clerk and by the Monitoring Officer at Horsham District Council, should any member of the public wish to view them.

The Parish Council nominates representative Parish Councillors to serve on a number of local voluntary, public and community organisations throughout the year. Examples of such organisations are Horsham District Burial Advisory Group, BIFFA Brookhurst Wood Landfill Site Liaison Group, Horsham District Association of Local Councils and others.

A number of Parish Councillors also serve in a voluntary capacity in their own time on other local groups and organisations and through these activities bring a wealth of expertise and knowledge to the Parish Council.

PARISH COUNCIL STAFF ...

There were a number of changes in the staffing establishment in the year. **Alex Burgess** continues to work at Holbrook Tythe Barn and he was joined in July 2015 by **Ross McCartney**. Ross then moved to a Trainee Clerk role in the Parish Office in January 2016 and new caretaker, **Robin O'Brien** came on board in April 2016. **Dee Diamond** relinquished her Casual Zero Hours Contract at the end of the year.

Mark Stoner continues to work at North Heath Hall and following a number of difficulties, was joined by **Daniel Petryszyn** in February 2016.

At Roffey Millennium Hall, **Tom Roberts** resigned in August 2015 and he was replaced by **Neil Smith**, who is working alongside **David Beaken**.

Both **Neil** and **David** continue to carry on their very important Litter Warden roles.

In the Parish Office, **Nikki Bulbeck** was joined by Debbie Lees as Facilities Officer in December 2015 and Ross McCartney, Trainee Clerk.

It is in the Parish Office that there have been the most significant changes to Team North Horsham. In September 2015, Committee Clerk **Stephen Rennie**, resigned, having been with us since July 2004 – eleven years.

At the end of October 2015, **Eamonn Flynn** our Premises Manager extraordinaire retired, having been with us since July 2001 – fourteen years.

At the beginning of December, **Sue Kemp** our Parish Clerk resigned, with her last working day being 30th June 2016, having been with us since May 2001 – fifteen years.

Despite this loss of forty years' worth of experience and knowledge in the space of three months, the Parish Council is looking forward to a new and exciting era with new Parish Clerk, **Pauline Whitehead** and her Deputy Clerk, **Vivien Edwards**, who both take up their posts on 23rd May 2016.

FINANCIAL MATTERS ...

The Council's financial administration is the responsibility of the Finance and Administration Committee. The Parish Clerk, as the Responsible Financial Officer undertakes the day-to-day financial management and regular reporting is a key feature of this aspect of the Committee's work.

THE PRECEPT ...

The Precept for 2015/2016 was set at £282,726, including Council Tax Benefit Grant at £7,006 (down from £11,678 in the previous year), again representing a 0.90% increase.

How is your contribution to the Parish Council through your Council Tax worked out? The District Council provides each Parish Council with a Tax Base figure, which is calculated by 'smoothing' all the different tax bands into Band D equivalents. Properties are banded A to H – with Band D paying 100%, H paying 200% and Band A paying 60%. The Tax Base for North Horsham for 2015/2016 was 8421.4, giving a charge at Band D of £33.57.

COMMITTEE BUDGETS ...

Each of the Parish Council's Committees has their own Budget, which are monitored on a quarterly basis. The Finance and Administration Committee monitors, its own and all Committee Budgets, on a consolidated basis, also quarterly.

The budgeted income shown for the **Property Committee** is the revenue gained from the hiring of the three Community venues (Roffey Millennium Hall, Holbrook Tythe Barn and North Heath Hall), the Multi Courts and the sale of refreshments at Roffey Millennium Hall and Allotment Rents. Also included is the Environmental Cleansing Grant from Horsham District Council, which pays for the costs of Litter Clearing and other associated costs.

The budgeted income shown for the **Finance and Administration Committee** does not include the Precept figure

The final figures for the financial year 2015/2016 are in the process of being prepared and will be, of course, subject to audit.

Basic details of the individual Committee Budgets, for the last year and next are shown below –

COMMITTEE	2015/2016		2016/2017	
	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	INCOME	EXPENDITURE
Property	174,475	140,231	179,975	155,391
Finance & Administration	900	87,735	600	90,460
Personnel	0	254,660	0	270,100
Planning, Environment & Transport	0	4,000	0	4,000

The Parish Council continues to be confident of its sound financial position.

RESERVES

General Reserves – are currently held at approximately 3 months of expenditure (2015/2016).

Earmarked Reserves continue to be maintained as follows –

RESERVE	NOTE	BALANCE AT 31.3.2016 - £
Repairs & Renewals	A contribution of £20,100 will be made for 2016/2017 towards ongoing maintenance work at the Community venues	164,372
Election Reserve	No Reserve contribution to be made in 2016/2017	19,648
Damage Reserve	This Reserve covers the replacement or repair of any items no longer insured. No planned contribution	4,000
Revenue Reserve	Previously unspent Capital Reserve monies bringing them together in one place. No planned contribution	7,955
Capital Projects	Reserve for small Capital Projects. No planned contribution	4,000
Planning	A contribution of £4,000 to be made to pay for legal advice as appropriate re north of A264 development	12,000
Youth Provision	No further contributions to be made to this Reserve. Committee to determine re-distribution of this Reserve	6,552
Roffey Youth Club	Funds passed to the Parish Council following the closure of Roffey Youth Club and the winding down of the associated Charity	5,621
Capital Receipt	Sale of land at North Heath Hall	25,000
		249,148

GRANTS ...

The Parish Council was pleased to continue with the Grant Scheme during 2015/2016, where grants were made to a number of local groups and organisations.

Details on how your local group or organisation can apply for a grant from the Parish Council are available from the Parish Clerk or from the Parish website.

Details of grants made during 2015/2016 are detailed below -

DATE 2015/2016	RECIPIENT	PURPOSE	AMOUNT £
June 2015	Age UK Horsham	Information Service	5,000
June 2015	W.S. Mediation Service	On-going work	400
June 2015	Victim Support	On-going work	500
June 2015	Horsham Town Community Partnership	Riverside Walk event	180
June 2015	Horsham in Bloom	Sponsorship	400
October 2015	Crawley and Horsham Homestart	On-going work	1,500
October 2015	Roffey Friendship Club	On-going work	300
October 2015	Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance	On-going work	2,500
February 2016	Horsham Town Community Partnership	Riverside Walk event	150
February 2016	Horsham Community Pre-School	On-going work	2,843
March 2016	Asperger's Voice	Community event funding	

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR ...

Following the refurbishment of **Holbrook Tythe Barn and the Multi Courts (also the new roof on North Heath Hall**, which came about following the 'sale' of the Bowling Green, part of the car park and a small amount of surrounding land, to Horsham Bowls Club; which in turn formed part of the re-development of Horsham Town Centre, there were two outstanding areas of work – the re-installation of the external awning at Holbrook Tythe Barn, which was undertaken at the cost of the Parish Council; and landscaping around the grasscrete carpark.

Staff had been giving their attention as to a cost effective and aesthetically pleasing solution to the landscaping issue and then lo and behold, a team of contractors appeared unannounced to undertake the work. As a result of this, the flower bed alongside the Barn has been re-planted and mulched with bark chippings, a shrub line with two ornamental trees has been planted at the front of the grasscrete car park. The Property Committee has also agreed that the long shrub bed, which is more bramble and ivy, be totally cleared and re-planted and the whole of the maintenance of the shrub beds be taken from the current grounds maintenance contract and be passed to a different contractor.

Together with the high standard of external maintenance, the Barn, together with the Multi Courts is a most attractive portion of the Parish Council's Asset Portfolio, providing greatly enhanced facilities for the local community.

Maintenance work to the Parish Council's properties has continued to be a strong feature of the Parish Council's work this year –

Roffey Millennium Hall -

- Replacement of all Emergency Light batteries
- Replacement of over door heaters in main Halls
- Improvements to the sound systems in main Halls
- Internal decorating

North Heath Hall -

- New vinyl flooring in all ground floor areas
- New roof window opening system
- Replacement guttering joints, stop ends and brackets
- Internal decorating

Holbrook Tythe Barn -

- New vinyl flooring to replace the original in the main Barn room
- Acoustic Panels in the Wallace Room
- Re-instatement of the external awning
- Completion of the Workshop
- Re-tarmacing of the footpath across the car parks
- Internal decorating

Other areas –

- Provision of side panels and a perch seat – Manor Fields Bus Shelter
- Four new notice boards – Bartholomew Way, North Heath Lane, Church Road and outside North Heath Hall
- Installation of concrete post at Earles Meadow to improve pedestrian safety

Tree works at various locations in the Parish again featured in the Council's outside work programme, including –

- Major works and rope fencing around iconic oak tree at Earles Meadow
- Various other tree works on the Earles Meadow estate

The Parish Council's four **Play Areas** undertook their annual inspection by RoSPA (the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) in July and the subsequent Report was again very positive. All of our Play Areas continue to be extremely popular and well used.

As previously reported, the Parish Council now undertakes its own in-house maintenance and management of the twenty seven **Street Lights** owned by the Council. The replacement of various light heads and time clocks is undertaken as and when problems occur and works are always greeted with much enthusiasm from residents towards contractors, when this work is being carried out.

The **Planning, Environment and Transport Committee** continues to meet monthly and in the past year, the Committee has considered some 166 planning applications.

The key issue was (and still is) the proposed development north of the A264. The Parish Council sought legal advice and was represented by Counsel at the various stages of the Public Enquiry. The Parish Council will now not be seeking a Judicial Review of Horsham District Council's Development Framework document but will now focus on working with partners to ensure that key infrastructure issues are resolved and that the development is for the benefit of North Horsham residents.

The Citizens Advice Bureau continue to hold their Outreach Service in Arundel room (on the ground floor of Roffey Millennium Hall, opposite the Parish Office) on a Monday morning.

The **Roffey Friendship Club** meets fortnightly for the older people of the Parish to socialise and make new friends and is still the 'in place' to go in Roffey. The Club is going from strength to strength and numbers continue to rise. The various activities and outings are greatly appreciated and ably managed by Nikki, our Administration Officer.

Why don't you pop in to the Parish Office to find out when the Club has its next meeting

The Parish Council's **Web Site** – www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk continues to be a valuable tool for communicating Parish Council related matters to local residents. Photographs of the Parish Council's buildings and other areas of interest are available to view on **Pinterest** via the website and have proved useful to potential hirers. There is also the Council's **Facebook** page and maybe the new Parish Clerk will take on the Clerk's Blog – 'Ramblings from the Parish Clerk's Desk' – watch this space

The Parish Council Newsletter, **NHPC News**, has continued with its long break. This has been due to extreme staff shortage problems – again the new Parish Clerk will take up the challenge

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS AT MAY 2016 ARE ...

	ADDRESS	PHONE
HOLBROOK EAST (5)		
Karen Burgess	27, Haybarn Drive, RH12 5JF	273533
Rita Ginn	17, Rusper Road, RH12 4BA	264109
Frances Haigh	27, Winterbourne, RH12 5JW	
Helen Ralston	10, Winterbourne, RH12 5JW	
Tony Rickett	33, Bluebell Close, RH12 5WB	217003
HOLBROOK WEST (4)		
Peter Burgess	27, Haybarn Drive, RH12 5JF	273533
Roland Knight	99, Pondtail Road, RH12 5HT	264072
Richard Millington	22, Keats Close, RH12 5PL	241746
Ian Wassell	21, Speedwell Way, RH12 5WA	258762
ROFFEY NORTH (6)		
Alan Britten	32, Brushwood Road, RH12 4PE	272226
Nicholas Butler	20, Farhalls Crescent, RH12 4DA	
Martin Loates	10, Bryce Close, RH12 4EF	269465
David Searle	7, Earles Meadow, RH12 4HP	256267
Simon Torn	9, Shepherds Way, RH12 4LT	07748 332774
VACANCY		
ROFFEY SOUTH (4)		
Ray Turner	8, Conifers Close, RH12 4QH	259612
Roger Wilton	54, Beech Road, RH12 4TU	269126
Sally Wilton	54, Beech Road, RH12 4TU	269126
VACANCY		

HOW TO CONTACT US ...

By contacting any Councillor directly

By contacting us through the web site – www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk

By writing to the Parish Clerk at –
Roffey Millennium Hall, Crawley Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 4DT
Tel. 01403 750786

E-mail – parish.clerk@northhorsham-pc.gov.uk

North Horsham Parish Council would welcome any comments on the content of this Report and would be pleased to hear any questions you may have.