

NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Roffey Millennium Hall, Crawley Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 4DT

Tel: 01403 750786

Email: parish.clerk@northhorsham-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/northhorshampc North Horsham Parish Council



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is with pleasure that, as Chairman of North Horsham Parish Council, I introduce the Annual Report for 2020/21.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to acknowledge the sacrifices that all residents of North Horsham have made over the last twelve months during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. For some, this has been the ultimate sacrifice and we offer our sincere condolences to the families involved.

The government restrictions to reduce the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) over the last twelve months have been challenging. Things that we have previously taken for granted, such as meeting with friends and family, children attending school and visiting shops and cafes have hung precariously in the balance and become precious moments when we have been allowed to do them. The Parish Council has been pleased that it has been able to keep its open spaces open throughout the whole pandemic and that playgrounds were only closed for a short while. Nurseries opened at North Heath Hall when it was safe to do so, and our halls re-opened for limited hires with Covid -19 controls in place throughout some months in 2020. Unfortunately they had to close again during the winter months. The Multi courts have provided some much needed recreation space for a good proportion of the year. It is at times of crisis that we look to our local community and recognise just how lucky we are to live in a parish which has so much to offer in its own right, as well as being close to and connected with Horsham Town.

During the last year, the Parish Council continued to hold proactive meetings with the developers for the land north of Horsham and other key stakeholders to try to get positive outcomes for local residents. Work is progressing well on the new secondary school (Bohunt School) which is due to open in December 2021. There have been major road works on Rusper Road south of the A264 to allow services to the new development. The Parish Council has started liaison meetings for the former Novartis site on Parsonage Road with key stakeholders to again try to get positive outcomes for local residents. This will bring its own challenges as the traffic flows in that area are already quite congested and work will soon start on a full barrier level crossing on Parsonage Road.

Work on the Recovery, Recycling and Renewable Energy facility on Langhurstwood Road has been delayed during the Coronavirus pandemic and there will be further consultation on environmental matters.

The Parish Council was delighted that the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) which aims to provide some truly affordable homes in perpetuity for people in North Horsham became an organisation in its own right in 2020 and has recently held its first Annual General Meeting to appoint directors. I am very impressed to see how much the dedicated and committed team has achieved so far in establishing contacts and networks to further their ambition.

The Parish Council recognised early on in the pandemic that 2020 would need very careful financial management as expected income from the halls significantly reduced. Staff were furloughed and have worked fewer hours in line with a reduced workload to save money. Only essential maintenance and health and safety work has been carried out. I was pleased that scheduled work on the iconic veteran oak tree has provided sufficient measures to prolong the life of this well loved local landmark.

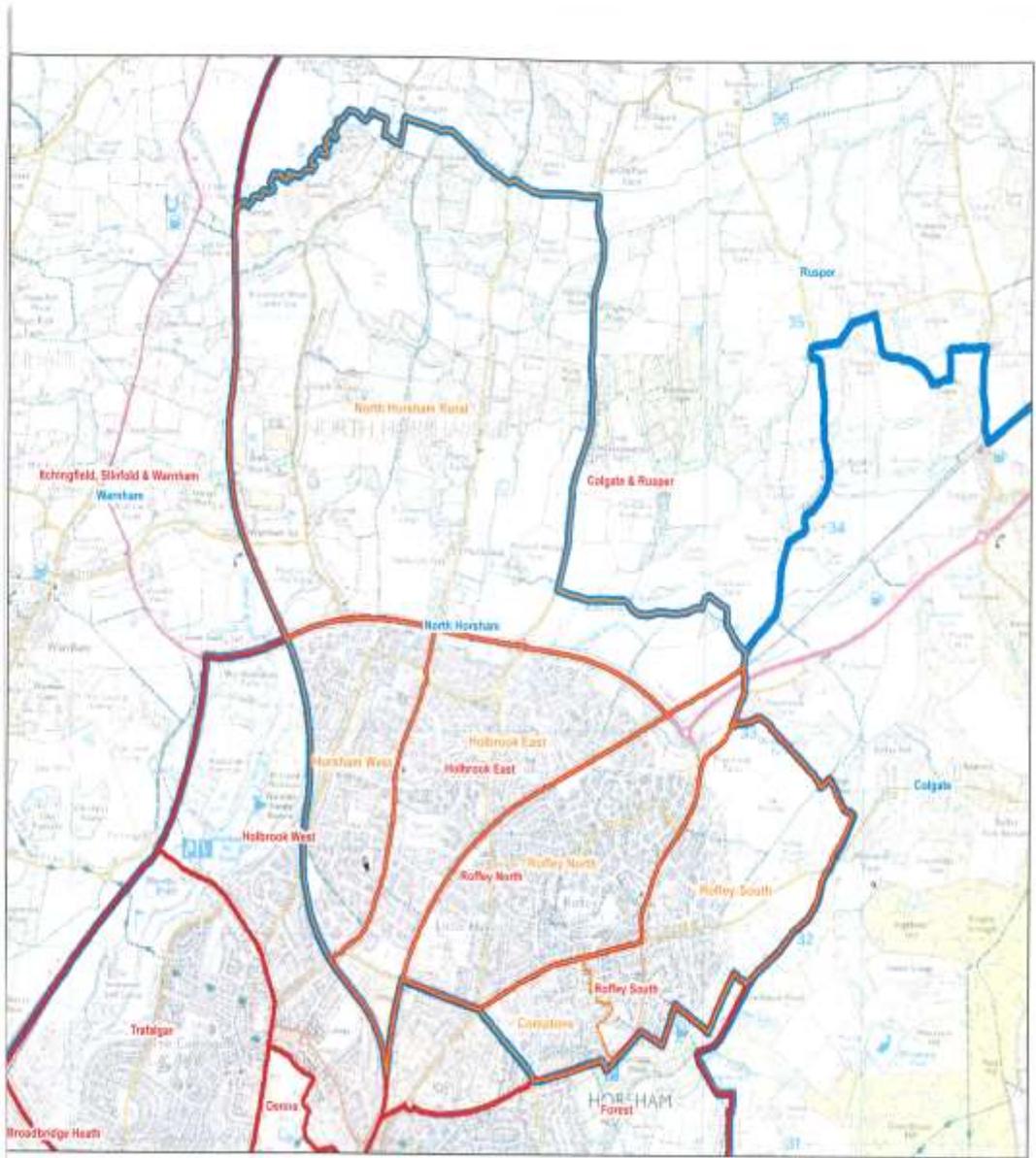
I would like to express appreciation for the hard work of councillors, staff, volunteers and residents who have worked for their local community over the last year. If anyone would like to become a Councillor, there is still a vacancy in Comptons ward which is the Oak Tree Way/ Comptons Lane/ Manor Fields area, and which remains unfilled from the May 2019 elections. The Parish Council is the layer of local government closest to its community and it is there to help local residents like you. We value the views of our local residents and welcome your comments. We look forward to hearing from you.

There is a lot of information about the Parish Council contained in this report and I hope that you enjoy reading it.

*Councillor Alan Britten
Chairman of North Horsham Parish Council*

NORTH HORSHAM

North Horsham parish is made up of six parish wards, Roffey North, Roffey South, Holbrook East, Holbrook West, Comptons and North Horsham Rural.



(Source: Boundary Commission for England 2018.)

Map to show the six wards of North Horsham parish from May 2019.

North Horsham Parish covers approximately 1,905 hectares. In 2011 the parish had a population of 24,193 living in 10,198 households. In January 2020 there were 17,294 electors. The majority of housing in the parish is concentrated to the south of the A264, but there is approval for a development of 2,750 houses, a business park, schools, community buildings and green spaces on the land north of the A264.

North Horsham Parish is neighbour to Forest and Denne Neighbourhood Councils, Warnham Parish Council, Rusper Parish Council and Colgate Parish Council. An area to the east of the parish borders the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (WAONB).

North Horsham contains a wealth of green areas used for recreation, many play areas, community buildings, health facilities, shops and small businesses. It has good bus links, a railway station, cycleways and both urban and rural footpaths. The much-loved Horsham Riverside Walk passes through some of North Horsham's unspoilt woodland and HDC's only listed ancient monument, Chennelsbrook motte and bailey castle, is situated just off Lemmington Way. Whilst there is dependence on Horsham town for some of the larger facilities, North Horsham has its own identity and sense of community with long established local organisations.

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council Office is situated in the Roffey Millennium Hall on Crawley Road. Usually, the Parish Office opens Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm and offers an opportunity to book and pay for hire of the three halls owned and maintained by the Parish Council (Roffey Millennium Hall, North Heath Hall and Holbrook Tythe Barn), the multicourts and allotments. Parish Council staff are able to signpost you to information about Parish Council facilities and there are leaflets about the local area and what's on in the halls. However, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the office has remained closed for the majority of the year and staff have worked from home in line with government guidance.

The full Parish Council as a corporate body had to delay the 2020 Annual Parish Council Meeting until July 2020 and for the first time the meeting was held remotely using Zoom. Usually the Parish Council meets at the Roffey Millennium Hall six times in the year and there are regularly scheduled meetings of the Parish Council's Committees – Finance and Administration, Personnel, Planning, Environment and Transport and Property. These were also held online. During 2020/21 the work of those elected to several working parties was put on hold, but recently the Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) working party met to review and recommend ways in which CiL money from local development could be spent to benefit the North Horsham community. The north of Horsham development Parish Liaison group and the Novartis Parish Liaison group have also met during the year, report to the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee and include key stakeholders including residents.

Meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees usually start at 7.30pm, are held in public and everyone is welcome to attend. There is fifteen minutes set aside at the beginning of all Council and Committee meetings for members of the public to ask

questions, raise issues of concern, make a statement about local issues or draw relevant matters to the Council's attention.

Details of meetings, including forthcoming meeting dates can be found on the Parish Council's notice boards which are situated across the parish and on the Parish Council's website www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk.

North Horsham Parish Council holds the General Power of Competence (GPC) which is an accreditation achieved by having two thirds elected members, a qualified clerk and a declaration issued at the first meeting of the new four-year term of office. Holding GPC allows the Parish Council greater freedom to support its community as it is not restricted by the powers bestowed on Parish Councils by government legislation.

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Parish Councillors are active in the community, work together to bring local issues to the attention of the council and work together to make decisions on behalf of the local community.

North Horsham Parish Council has nineteen Councillors. In May 2019 sixteen Councillors were elected uncontested. At the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May Cllr John Smithurst was co-opted to represent Holbrook West. Cllr Smithurst had been a Councillor in the previous term of office. In July 2019 Cllr Alex Shine joined the Parish Council representing North Horsham Rural. There is still a vacancy in Comptons ward.

The Parish Council operates an independently reviewed Scheme of Members' Allowances whereby an annual Allowance of £490 was payable in 2020/21 to those elected Parish Councillors who wish to receive it. The Allowance is not available to those who are co-opted.

The Parish Council nominates representative Parish Councillors to serve on several local voluntary, public and community organisations throughout the year. Examples of such organisations are Horsham Town Community Partnership and Horsham District Association of Local Councils.

Activities in central Government impact on local Councils and Parish Council staff and Councillors keep up to date with legislation, new opportunities and current information through close working with the Surrey and Sussex Association of Local Councils (SSALC) and Horsham District Council. SSALC ceased to exist from 31st March 2021 and now there is an individual Association of Local Councils for West Sussex. North Horsham Parish Council has played a proactive part in supporting both the West Sussex

Association of Local Councils and more local Horsham Association of Local Councils during a time of transition.

VOLUNTEERS

The Parish Council is grateful to local volunteers who have been involved in the formation of the Community Land Trust for North Horsham parish, those who are involved in the north of Horsham Parish Liaison Meetings and those who served as volunteer Tree Wardens. Sadly, the Parish Council decided to withdraw from the Tree Warden Scheme, which is overseen by WSCC due to lack of resource.

The Parish Council is appreciative of the Earles Meadow Conservation Group who support them in looking after the large open space at Earles Meadow by litter picking, planting, minor repairs and conservation work.

Whilst individual projects have been singled out above, the Parish Council would like to thank all the volunteers who work to support their community, without them, North Horsham would not be the place that we all love to live and work in.

PARISH COUNCIL STAFF

North Horsham Parish Council employs eleven members of staff, two full time and nine part time. Three members of staff hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) qualification. The strong team culture promoted by the Parish Council has been especially valuable this year with more staff members working remotely. There are five administration staff and six caretakers, two at each Hall. Two of the caretakers are also litter wardens who work to keep the main streets of North Horsham clean and tidy.

The Council is committed to developing and nurturing its staff through training and opportunities for growth. All staff are given the opportunity to attend relevant short courses to improve their skill base.

NORTH HORSHAM FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Parish Council has been especially disappointed that it wasn't able to provide the North Horsham Friendship Club that usually meets once a fortnight at Roffey Millennium Hall. The Parish Council recognises that having an opportunity for those in the parish that are over 60 to meet together locally is very important and it usually provides the use of a hall and a staff member to co-ordinate the meetings as well as a small amount of grant funding. Whilst the Friendship Club hasn't been in operation, we have kept in

contact with those who belong to the group and we hope that we will be able to provide this facility again very soon.

FINANCE

The Parish Council is funded by the Precept, a Council Tax Benefit Grant, and Environmental Cleansing Grant. Other income is from the from halls and other assets. The table below shows actual income and expenditure over the last three years and the budget for 2020/21

Income

	2018/19 actual	2019/20 actual	2020/21 actual	2021/22 budget
Precept	319,943	327,769	335,194	338,600
Environmental Grant	9,836	9,984	10,234	10,234
Community Infrastructure Levy funding	0	11,053	2,395	0
Covid 19 grant from HDC	0	0	25,000	0
Job Retention Scheme grant funding (HMRC)	0	0	16,466	0
Amenity Misc. income	150	0	0	0
Administration	421	(38)	1,286	100
Allotments	539	816	928	875
North Heath Hall	64,471	63,943	27,749	50,000
Holbrook Tythe Barn	36,425	39,229	6,140	30,000
Multi Court Lettings	24,270	22,571	7,378	20,000
Roffey Millennium Hall	85,141	80,816	3,613	60,000
Total income	541,195	556,143	436,383	509,809

Expenditure

	2018/19 actual	2019/20 actual	2020/21 budget	2021/22 budget
Administration	45,766	46,290	45,171	50,120
Grants	5,660	4,160	4,585	10,000
Burial contributions	6,730	6,730	7,150	6,750
Personnel	287,705	299,981	276,322	315,450
Planning Environment and Transport	737	278	0	2,250
Allotments	1,589	1,575	1,376	1,575
Amenity, Recs and Open Spaces	34,481	41,713	27,464	52,995
North Heath Hall	23,180	22,921	14,245	28,421
Holbrook Tythe Barn	21,164	16,934	15,869	22,196
Roffey Millennium Hall	34,546	33,340	19,962	37,888
Total expenditure	461,558	473,470	412,144	527,645

Reserves

On 1st April 2020 the General Reserve stood at £230,057 and there were Ear Marked Reserves of £209,535. £35,000 was transferred from the General Reserve to the Roffey Millennium Hall (RMH) Boiler (£10,000) and Playground Upgrade (£25,000) Ear Marked Reserves. A total of £19,903 was spent from Ear Marked Reserves during 2020/21, mainly on the ancient oak at Earles Meadow, installing fencing around the ancient oak and repairs to boardwalks at Earles Meadow.

At the 31st March 2021, there was £227,027 in Ear Marked Reserves and a General Reserve of £216,901.

Summary

The Council expected an annual spend of £396,010 when the precept was set in January 2021, but the final figure is £365,050. A saving of £30,960. Grant funding of £25,000 and money from the Job Retention Scheme of £16,644 gave additional income that wasn't budgeted for.

When setting the precept, the Council was aiming at a General Reserve of around £155,000 (allowing £5,000 to be transferred from the General Reserve to the RMH Boiler Ear Marked Reserve in 2021/22). The final General Reserve is £216,901. An increase of £61,901. Some of those reserves could be used to offset any deficit in 2021/22.

Whilst significant measures were successfully put in place to mitigate losses during 2020/21, and the overall loss to the Council was less than may have been anticipated, some of the restrictions on spending will need to continue in the coming year as the country enters a recovery stage and until there is a clearer understanding of the longer term effects of the Coronavirus pandemic on social activities.

Earmarked Reserves

Reserve	Purpose	Balance at 31.3.2021
Repairs & Renewals	For ongoing maintenance work at the Community venues.	100,693
Election Reserve	For Parish election costs.	19,950
Revenue Reserve – VAT contingency.	To cover the Council should it exceed the de-minimus value of VAT.	7,955
Boiler at Roffey Millennium Hall	Replacement	20,000
Tree Management	To respond to tree inspection and urgent remedial work.	3,825

Planning	For professional support in relation to large development.	8,035
Roffey Youth Club	Funds from 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 to be spent on capital projects from the Business Plan.	25,000
Playground upgrade	Money set aside to upgrade the Parish Council playgrounds	25,000
CiL 2019/20	Money received from development	8,551
CiL 2020/21	Money received from development	2,395
North Horsham Community Land Trust	The Parish Council pledged up to £1,000. £277 has been spent	3
TOTAL Ear Marked Reserves		227,028

GRANTS

The Parish Council is pleased to have supported activities which benefited the local community during 2020/21

Details of grants made during 2020/21 are shown below: -

Grant awarded to	Amount	Purpose
Woods for Learning CIC	£2,000	To support First Aid programme for children
Victim Support	£500	Ongoing work
Home Start Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex	£600	Ongoing work.
Earles Meadow Community Group	£415	Ongoing work
West Sussex Mediation Service	£600	To prevent and resolve disputes

The Parish Council considers grants at the Finance and Administration Committee Meetings. The grants policy and application form are available on the Parish Council website or contact the Parish Clerk.



Play area at Holbrook Tythe Barn

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES DURING 2020/21

The Planning, Environment and Transport Committee has considered over 200 Planning applications over the year and submitted comments to HDC. The Committee has also considered and responded to consultations as appropriate. The Planning, Transport and Environment Committee is pursuing a Traffic Regulation Order to paint double yellow lines at Roffey Corner to reduce the amount of damage to the grass verges on Crawley Road. The Parish Council has continued to work collaboratively with key stakeholders on the development north of the A264 and on the development at the former Novartis site on Parsonage Road to try to get the best for existing residents and those moving into the new housing.

The Property Committee oversees all the Parish Council's buildings and open spaces. There are, Roffey Millennium Hall, North Heath Hall, Holbrook Tythe Barn, Amberly Open space and Playground, Earles Meadow open space and Playground, Birches Road and Holbrook Tythe Barn Playground. During 2020/21 there has been the usual ongoing work to ensure that the buildings are in a good state of repair and compliant with legislation. The Parish Council looks forward to welcoming hirers back to their halls as soon as it is safe to do so.

The playgrounds continue to be popular and there is an ongoing schedule of maintenance and inspection. The 30 Parish Council owned allotments are all occupied and there are 9 people on the waiting list. This has increased significantly over the last year. The allotments are inspected regularly.

During 2020/21 schedules of work and inspection regimes have been undertaken at all Parish Council owned assets including all of the halls, multi courts, street lighting, bus shelters, litter bins, dog bins and notice boards. Essential maintenance and Health and Safety work has been undertaken as well as routine maintenance. Some staff have

undertaken PASMA training to enable them to use the scaffold tower and Legionella training.



Shops at Bartholomew Way.

COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES...who does what?

Municipal services within North Horsham are provided by three tiers of Local Government – West Sussex County Council, Horsham District Council and North Horsham Parish Council. All Councils work together, but each authority has its own areas of responsibility and service delivery. Below is an overview of which authority provides each service.

<p>NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL</p>	<p>Roffey Millennium Hall North Heath Hall Holbrook Tythe Barn Amberley Road Allotments Holbrook Tythe Barn Play Area Birches Road Play Area Amberley Close Play Area Multi Courts Open spaces at Amberley Road, Birches Road and Holbrook Tythe Barn.</p>	<p>Earles Meadow Play Area Earles Meadow open space Bus shelters – 9 in various locations Notice Boards – 9 in various locations Street Lighting- 27 in various locations Seats Litter bins Dog bins – 27 in various locations</p> <p>For more details on North Horsham Parish Council visit our website: - www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk</p>
<p>HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>Refuse collections Waste and Recycling Litter Dog fouling Housing Environmental Health Business Rates</p>	<p>Open spaces (some) Tourist Information Planning Services Economic Redevelopment Car Parks Council Tax Some Play areas</p> <p>For more details on HDC visit their website: - www.horsham.gov.uk</p>
<p>WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL</p>	<p>Libraries Highways Footpaths Road conditions Street Lighting Education</p>	<p>Social Services Trees Trading Standards Health Children’s Services</p> <p>For more details on WSCC visit their website: - www.westsussex.gov.uk</p>

For future meetings please see the calendar of meetings on the Parish Council website
www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk.

Hard copies of the report are available at North Horsham Parish Council Offices, Roffey
Millennium Hall, Crawley Road, Horsham.

If you have any comments about the Annual Report or you would like to know more,
please contact the Clerk.

If you have any comments that you would like the Parish Council to hear, then let the
Clerk know.