

NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

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Message from the Chairman

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is with pleasure that, as Chairman of North Horsham Parish Council, I introduce the Annual Report for the year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

When we began this last year, back in the Spring of 2022, we looked forward to the pageantry and splendour of celebrating the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

From concerts around Buckingham Palace and parades through the streets of London to Big Jubilee Lunches and local street parties, the entire country came together to mark the extraordinary milestone of Her Majesty's reign.

The Parish Council chose to mark the event by joining in the Queen's Green Canopy - a national initiative led by Her Majesty to plant trees across the country. Throughout her reign, the Queen planted more than 1500 trees all over the world and had spoken alongside Sir David Attenborough on the importance of trees in the Earth's future. The Queen herself planted the first Jubilee tree in the grounds of Windsor Castle in early 2021 to mark the launch of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative.



Parish Council Chairman Cllr Alan Britten with HDC Councillors Peter Burgess and Christian Mitchell

The Council was able to apply for 90 hedgerow saplings from the Woodlands Trust which have been planted at Earles Meadow. In addition, the Parish Council was delighted to receive a donated specimen tree from Horsham District Council which was planted at Holbrook Tythe Barn back in November last year, with representatives from HDC also in attendance.

However, as we all know, by the Autumn the country was mourning the passing of our Monarch and on September 19th, people travelled to the capital or watched their televisions as the streets of London were once again filled, but this time with a sombre rather than celebratory tone.

We now look to the future and the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III on Saturday 8th May and the events that will be held in streets and green spaces to mark this occasion.

On a more local level, the Parish Council has continued to hold liaison meetings with key stakeholders for both the former Novartis site on Parsonage Road and the Mowbray development to the north of Horsham, to try and get positive outcomes for local residents.

The Novartis site now has applications submitted to HDC Planning but there is no clear timeline as to how long these will take to be determined due to the implications of the Water Neutrality situation that the area is subjected to.

Similarly with the Mowbray development, whilst development was fully approved for a portion of the 2,750 homes prior to the Water Neutrality pause, no further Reserved Matter approvals have been issued and again there is no definitive timeline for this to happen. The next meeting of the Liaison Group is scheduled for the summer by which time it is hoped that there will be more news on when further building will commence.

The pandemic, combined with the recent cost of living increase, has impacted the Parish Council's finances as they have for everyone. However, I am delighted that through careful financial management, the Council has been able to weather the storm and now looks to continue the recovery into 2023 to 2024.

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. 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.

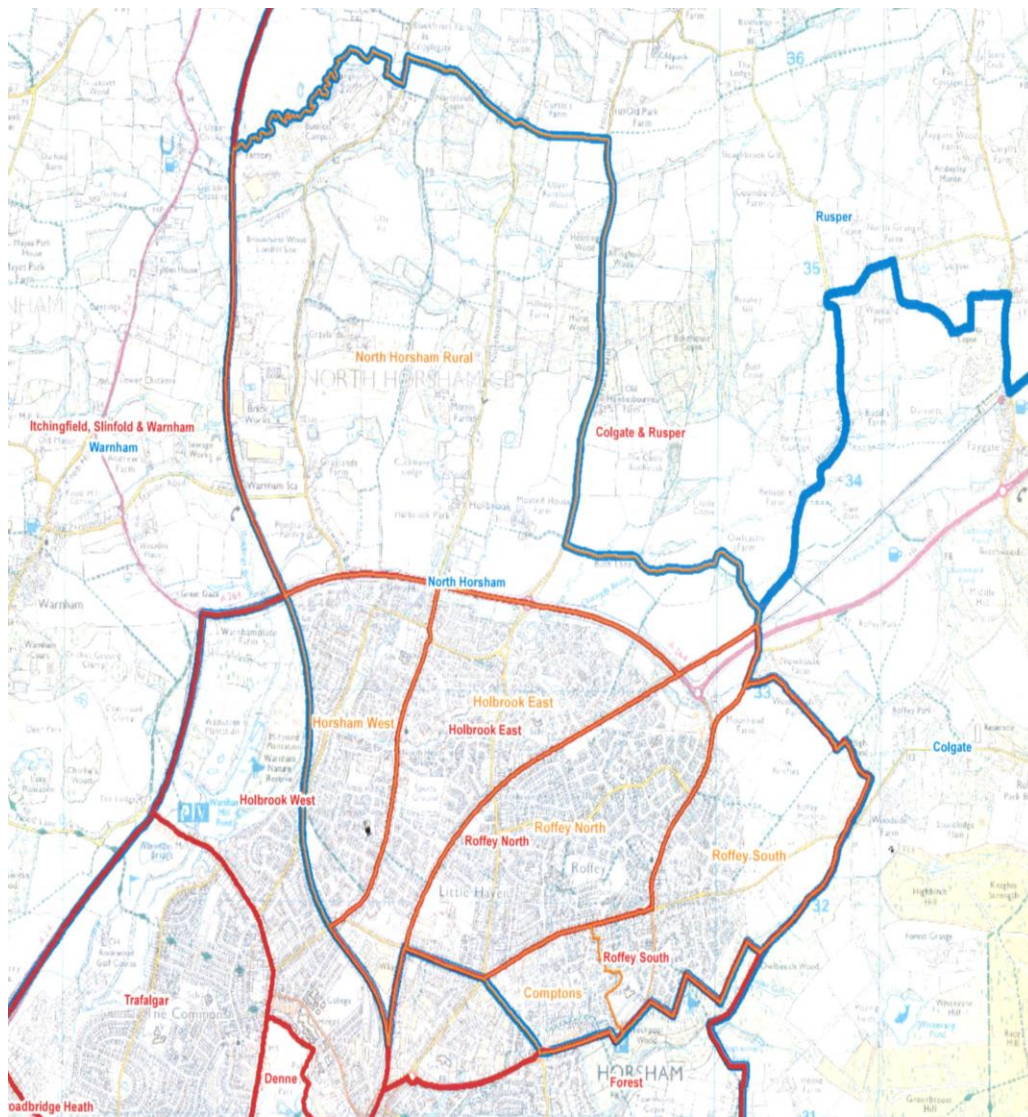
The 2023 Parish Elections are due to be held on Thursday 4th May and my thanks to all those who have put themselves forward for Election to serve the wonderful residents in our local community.

Finally, earlier this year the Council was saddened to hear of the passing of the Parish Council's previous Clerk, Pauline Whitehead, after a short battle with cancer. As the Chairman of the Council, I had the pleasure of serving in this capacity for the majority of Pauline's time here at the Council; she was a wonderful lady and a joy to work alongside. Pauline left the Council back in 2021 to pursue her passion for tutoring as part of the team at SLCC and it is a tragedy that this time was cut so short. She will be sorely missed by staff and Councillors alike.

*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 April 2022 there are 16,917 electors and with the results of the 2021 Census continuing to be published over the coming months we will have an updated figure for the population and number of households. The majority of housing in the parish is concentrated to the south of the A264, but the Mowbray development of 2,750 houses, a business park, schools, community buildings and green spaces on the land north of the A264 is progressing, with the first of the homes already occupied.

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 and is usually open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. 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.

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 & Transport, and Property. In addition to the Committees, several working parties have held meetings including the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Party to review and recommend ways in which CIL money from local development should be spent to benefit the North Horsham community. The North of Horsham and Novartis Parish Liaison Groups, which include key stakeholders and residents, have also met during the year and reported to the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee.

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, working together to bring local issues to the attention of the Council and make decisions on behalf of the local community.

North Horsham Parish Council has seats for nineteen Councillors. The May 2023 election has been uncontested and therefore the Council begins the 2023/24 municipal year with 14 Councillors. There remain five vacancies; two in Holbrook East ward, one in Comptons ward, one in Horsham Rural ward and one in Roffey North ward.

The Parish Council operates an independently reviewed Scheme of Members' Allowances whereby an annual Allowance of £514 was payable in 2022/23 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 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 West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC) and Horsham District Council.

VOLUNTEERS

The Parish Council is grateful to local volunteers who have been involved in the activities of the Community Land Trust for North Horsham parish and those who are involved in the North of Horsham Parish Liaison.

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, three full time and eight part time. Two members of staff hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) qualification. 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.

Back in May the Council wished the Deputy Clerk, Vivien Edwards, a wonderful retirement as she left the Council. The new Deputy Clerk, Lisa Underwood, took up her post after a handover period, and she has demonstrated her ability to seamlessly take up the reins and is proving to be a wonderful asset to the team. In the summer, the Council also bid farewell to the Committee Clerk, Ross McCartney, who left to further his career at the District Council. After a vigorous recruitment process, the Council has welcomed Kirsty Tickner to the team as the new Committee Clerk. Kirsty has settled well into her new role and is serving the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee as well as dealing with the bookings for our three venues. Finally, the Council also bid a happy retirement to one of the faithful caretakers of Roffey Millennium Hall, David Beaken. Over the years, many users of the hall have been met by David's smiling face and his ever helpful disposition. The Council wishes him well in his retirement.

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 delighted that the North Horsham Friendship Club has been going from strength to strength since it restarted after the COVID closedown and now has over 30 regular members. The Club usually meets once a fortnight at Roffey Millennium Hall and has activities ranging from sing-a-longs to quizzes, talks from other organisations to entertainment. 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.

FINANCE

The Parish Council is funded by the Precept 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 2023/24.

Income

	2020/21 actual	2021/22 actual	2022/23 actual	2023/24 budget
Precept	335,194	338,600	349,011	365,346
Environmental Grant	10,234	10,356	10,677	10,678
Community Infrastructure Levy funding	2,395	26,163	11,805	0
Compensation from HDC	0	0	23,072	0
Covid 19 grant from HDC	25,000	0	0	0
Job Retention Scheme grant funding (HMRC)	16,466	0	0	0
Administration	1,286	187	1,860	200
Allotments	928	948	983	995
North Heath Hall	27,749	54,086	64,492	71,000
Holbrook Tythe Barn	6,140	24,181	36,771	38,000
Multi Court Lettings	7,378	19,883	21,991	26,600
Roffey Millennium Hall	3,613	54,867	55,093	45,000
Total income	436,383	529,271	575,755	557,819

Expenditure

	2020/21 actual	2021/22 actual	2022/23 actual	2023/24 budget
Administration	45,171	45,023	51,341	54,570
Grants	4,585	6,785	5,780	10,000
Burial contributions	7,150	7,461	7,461	7,460
Personnel	276,322	285,727	322,782	349,650
Planning Environment and Transport	0	0	0	1,500
Allotments	1,376	928	950	1,560
Amenity, Recs and Open Spaces	27,464	31,844	36,698	56,485
North Heath Hall	14,245	30,776	25,685	30,778
Holbrook Tythe Barn	15,869	14,855	19,445	28,095
Roffey Millennium Hall	19,962	37,739	34,025	42,840
Total expenditure	412,144	461,138	504,167	582,938

Reserves

On 1st April 2022 the General Reserve stood at £250,373 and Earmarked Reserves at £237,082. A total of £37,546 was transferred during the year from the General Reserve to the Earmarked Reserves for the Roffey Millennium Hall (RMH) Boiler (£5,000), Tree Management works (£5,000), Playground Upgrade (£25,000) and for projects that could not be completed before the year end (£2,546). A total of £54,131 was spent from Earmarked Reserves during 2022/23, mainly on activities identified by the CIL Working Group including replacement fencing at the Birches Road play area, new benches and

bins in the Parish and also a Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) unit at the Crawley Road bus stop. At the 31st March 2023, there was £ 232,303 in Earmarked Reserves and a General Reserve of £272,609.

Summary

The Council expected an annual spend of £537,591 when the precept was set in January 2022, with the final figure being is £504,167 - a saving of £33,424.

When setting the precept for the 2022/23 year, the Council was aiming at a General Reserve of around £170,461. The final General Reserve is £272,609 which is more than £100,000 in excess of the sum expected. A total of £49,000 of these General Reserves will be used to increase the Earmarked Reserves for the RMH Boiler (£5,000). Playground Upgrade (£25,000), NHH Refurbishment (£15,000) and Tree works (£4,000). In addition, an element of the General Reserves has been budgeted to fund the expected 2023/24 expenditure. The result is that the Council is now anticipating General Reserves at 31st March 2024 of £172,000.

Earmarked Reserves

Reserve	Purpose	Balance at 31.3.2023
Repairs & Renewals	For ongoing maintenance work at the Community venues.	£68,588
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 RMH	Replacement	£30,000
Tree Management	To respond to tree inspection and urgent remedial work.	£965
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	£50,000
CIL 2021/22	Money received from development	£1,835
CIL 2022/23	Money received from development	£11,805
EMR 2023	Funding from 2022/23 Budgets for projects not completed by 31.03.23	£2,546
North Horsham Community Land Trust	The Parish Council pledged up to £1,000.	£3
	TOTAL Earmarked Reserves	£232,303

GRANTS

The Parish Council is pleased to have supported activities which benefited the local community during 2022/23

Details of grants made during 2022/23 are shown below: -

Grant awarded to	Amount	Purpose
Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance Trust	£300	Ongoing work
Victim Support	£500	Ongoing work
Home Start Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex	£1,100	Ongoing work
West Sussex Mediation Service	£600	Ongoing work
Earles Meadow Community Group	£880	Ongoing work
Hope Charity Project	£2,000	Ongoing work
Friendship Club	£400	Supplementals to subscriptions i.e. transport for trips, speakers, entertainment

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.

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES DURING 2022/23

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 Parish Council will continue to work collaboratively with key stakeholders on the Mowbray 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, Amberley open space and Playground, Earles Meadow open space and Playground, Birches Road and Holbrook Tythe Barn Playgrounds. During the pandemic there was a pause on some work with activities restricted to only those required due to Health & Safety. However, as hirers have returned to the halls following the removal of all restrictions, much of the usual work to ensure that the buildings are in a good state of repair has recommenced.

The Council has made use of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding that has been made available to improve facilities in the Parish including new benches, the erection of a Real Time Passenger Information display on the bus stop on Crawley Road, the installation of automatic doors at Roffey Millennium Hall and new replacement fencing for the play area at Birches Road.

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 2 people on the waiting list. The allotments are inspected regularly.



Play area at Holbrook Tythe Barn

During 2022/23 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.

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 - 23 in various locations Seats Litter bins</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.