

NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is with pleasure that, as Chairman of North Horsham Parish Council, I introduce the Annual Report for 2019/20.

When I wrote in April 2019, I spoke about the significant changes that were facing North Horsham parish as the development north of Horsham got underway. Who would have thought that only twelve months later, the biggest change that we will probably see in our lifetimes would be introduced? At the end of March 2020, the government brought in restrictions to reduce the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) making our daily lives almost unrecognisable. Some basic activities, such as meeting with friends and family, children going to school (except those of key workers) and visiting shops and cafes that we had taken for granted in the past were no longer allowed. The Parish Council had to close its community halls and playgrounds, meetings were cancelled, and staff worked from home where possible. 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.

We were invited to come out of our homes every Thursday evening at 8pm and Clap for our Carers to say thank you for NHS staff and all key workers in recognition of the intense pressure that they and other front line key workers are under. The Parish Council would like to express appreciation to all of those within the parish that deliver front line services and provide care and support for those not only within our parish but far beyond; to all of those who are helping their neighbours and volunteering to help and support the most vulnerable in our community and to those who give selflessly to helping others. These people are our inspiration and people to whom we should be eternally grateful. We hope that the situation soon passes and that we can look forward to brighter days.

In May 2019 local elections were held. Stepping down was Martin Loates, who had been an active member of the Council since 2007 and Francis Haigh who is now a Horsham District Councillor. I would like to thank both residents for their valued contribution to the Parish Council.

During 2019 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. Hedgerows have now been cleared to enable

highway alterations and work on the new secondary school (Bohunt School) will be started soon. The planning application for a **Recovery, Recycling and Renewable Energy facility on Langhurstwood Road** has been approved despite a fierce and well supported fight by No incinerator 4 Horsham group. The Parish Council had grave concerns about many aspects of the incinerator, including air quality, the intrusion of the stack into the landscape and the increase in the volume of associated traffic and these issues still remain. The large application for 300 houses at the former Novartis site off Parsonage Road has also been approved despite concerns about the increased volume of traffic the development will inevitably produce.

In June 2019 the Council planted a lilac tree at Holbrook Tythe Barn in memory of Roger Wilton who was the Chairman of the Council for many years. The tree is currently in blossom and is a great reminder of a man who gave so much to the parish.

Several residents have worked together to set up the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) which aims to provide some truly affordable homes in perpetuity for people in North Horsham. The Parish Council fully supports the Land Trust and 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. It was disappointing to learn that Legal and General were not able to work with the NHCLT to provide affordable housing in the first phase of the development north of Horsham, but I hope other land becomes available for this venture.

In 2019 Horsham District Council launched a Year of Culture. This Parish Council focused on “North Horsham Now and Then” asking for a photographic record of North Horsham on 6th July 2019 and providing a venue for residents to get together and talk about the parish in the past. A small photographic record is available on the Parish Council website along with some reminiscences from local residents. If anyone wishes to add to our records, please get in touch.

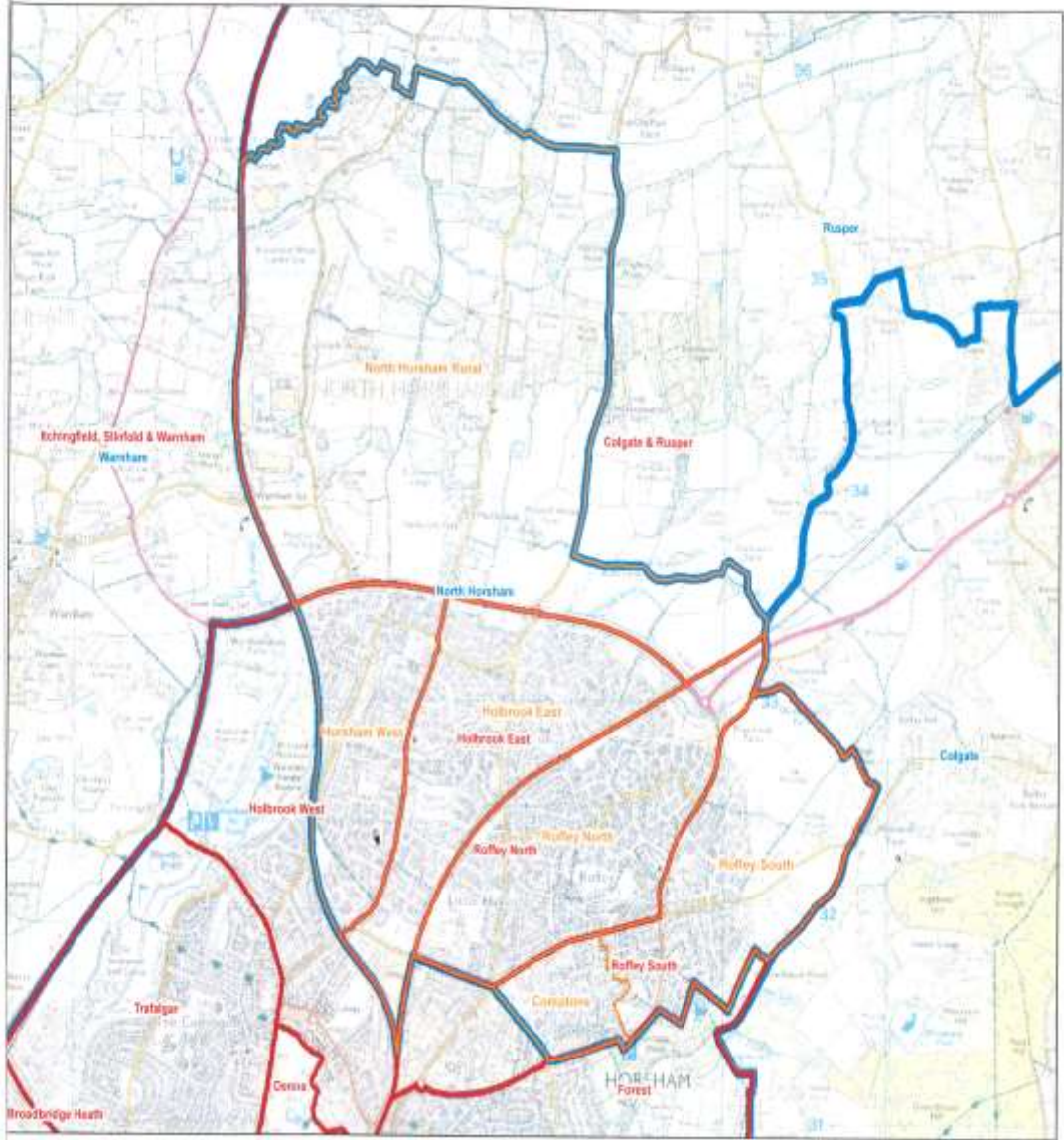
I would like to express appreciation for the hard work of councillors, staff, volunteers and residents who have worked for their local community over the last year. If anyone would like to become a Councillor, there is still a vacancy in Comptons ward which is the Oak Tree Way/ Comptons Lane/ Manor Fields 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. 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. There is an opportunity for small amounts of photocopying to be done for a modest charge.

The full Parish Council as a corporate body 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. During 2019/20 working parties have met to form responses to Horsham District's Local Plan and large planning applications and appeals relating to the Recovery, Recycling and Renewable Energy facility on Langhurstwood Road and the development on the former Novartis site on Parsonage Road. The Parish Council initially formed a working party to explore the formation of a Community Land Trust for North Horsham and were grateful to local residents who expressed an interest and joined the working party, taking it to a legal entity in its own right. A small working party provided the background research to ensure that the Parish Council's website is compliant with new accessibility laws and another small group explored opportunities for the purchase of equipment using money received from new development in the parish. (Community Infrastructure Levy payments). The north of Horsham development Parish Liaison group reports to the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee and

includes key stakeholders including residents. An Internal Controls Working Party reports to the Finance and Administration Committee. North Horsham Parish Council leases land for allotments on Harwood Road from West Sussex County Council. The Harwood Road Allotment Association take responsibility for the running of the allotments and the Parish Council has worked with the association this year to clarify responsibility for the trees on the site (West Sussex County Council) and the perimeter fence (Harwood Road Allotment Association).

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 £477 was payable in 2019/20 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 and Horsham District Council. Both provide training events which this year has included planning, Local Government finance and the Code of Conduct. During the current Coronavirus outbreak temporary legislation to May 2021 has been brought in to hold remote meetings of the Parish Council. To date this council hasn't taken up the opportunity, favouring the opportunity to meet face to face and provide easy access for residents, but this may be a consideration should the outbreak prevent actual meetings to take place for any length of time.

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 are volunteer Tree Wardens. Sadly, one of the Tree Wardens who had been on board since 2017 has stepped down this year due to other commitments. The Parish Council is very appreciative of all that Mr Smith had done on behalf of the parish. The Tree Warden Scheme, which is overseen by WSCC, supports local Tree Wardens who are appointed by the Parish Council and offers advice and some training. North Horsham's Tree Wardens report back to the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee on a six-monthly basis. They are valuable for reporting any concerns with trees that they may notice as they walk around the parish.

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. The three full time staff hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) qualification. The Parish Council promotes a strong team culture despite some members of staff 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 supports the North Horsham Friendship Club that meets once a fortnight on a Thursday afternoon at Roffey Millennium Hall from 2pm to 4pm. 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 provides the use of a hall and a staff member to co-ordinate the meetings as well as a small amount of grant funding. A programme of events is organised and for a pay as you go subscription of £2 per session there is an opportunity to meet together, have tea and refreshments and join in. Recent activities have included an afternoon of art led by a local artist, a tai chi taster session, a sing-along with Jon, an afternoon of horse racing and bingo and a visit by the Sundown Ukulele Band. In 2019 the Friendship Club visited the Bluebell Railway and enjoyed a great day out together. New members are welcome to join this friendly group as long as they live in the parish and are over 60 years of age. The main focus is to make new friendships with a cup of tea and a chat.



Christmas crackers made by members of the North Horsham Friendship Group

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 2019/20

Income

	2017/18 actual	2018/19 actual	2019/20 actual	2020/21 budget
Precept	293,551	319,943	327,769	335,194
Council Tax Benefit	1,403	0	0	0
Environmental Grant	9,691	9836	9,984	9,984
Community Infrastructure Levy funding	0	0	11,053	0
Amenity Misc. income	0	150	0	0
Administration	879	421	(38)	200
Allotments	1,015	539	816	875
North Heath Hall	62,013	64,471	63,943	65,625
Holbrook Tythe Barn	35,098	36,425	39,229	37,800
Multi Court Lettings	22,318	24,270	22,571	23,140
Roffey Millennium Hall	74,222	85,141	80,816	85,200
Total income	500,190	541,195	556,143	558,018

Expenditure

	2017/18 actual	2018/19 actual	2019/20 actual	2020/21 budget
Administration	52,327	45,766	46,290	51,670
Grants	8,800	5,660	4,160	10,000
Burial contributions	9,183	6,730	6,730	6,750
Personnel	275,645	287,705	299,981	311,250
Planning Environment and Transport	2,000	737	278	2,250
Allotments	1,009	1,589	1,123	1,575
Amenity, Recs and Open Spaces	42,712	34,481	41,713	52,085
North Heath Hall	23,303	23,180	22,921	27,854
Holbrook Tythe Barn	20,777	21,164	16,934	23,757
Roffey Millennium Hall	33,200	34,546	33,340	41,567
Total expenditure	468,954	461,558	473,470	528,758

The Parish Council started the financial year with a General Reserve of £186,151. £20,770 from the General Reserve was set aside into the Repair and Renewal Ear Marked Reserve to provide money to upgrade street lighting owned by the Parish Council, repair board walks at Earles Meadow and allow decorating at Holbrook Tythe Barn. £6,000 was taken from the General Reserve to set up an Ear Marked Reserve to cover Tree Management costs.

At 31st March 2020 the General Reserve had risen to £230,057. The Parish Council has agreed to move £64,260 into Ear Marked Reserves in the financial period 2020/21. The Parish Council also holds Earmarked Reserves for identified purposes as shown below.

Earmarked Reserves

Reserve	Purpose	Balance at 31.3.2020
Repairs & Renewals	For ongoing maintenance work at the Community venues.	117,568
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	10,000
Tree Management	To respond to tree inspection and urgent remedial work.	4,250
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
CiL 2019/20	Money received from development at Peary Close	10,434
North Horsham Community Land Trust	The Parish Council pledged up to £1,000. £277 has been spent	722
TOTAL Ear Marked Reserves		209,535

GRANTS

The Parish Council is pleased to have supported activities which benefited the local community during 2019/2020.

Details of grants made during 2019/2020 are shown below: -

Grant awarded to	Amount	Purpose
Horsham Town Community Partnership	£180	Transport as part of the Riverside Walk event.
Horsham in Bloom	£350	The allotment challenge
Victim Support	£500	Ongoing work
Asperger's Voice	£1,000	Autism Awareness event in North Horsham.
Home Start Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex	£700	Ongoing work.
Earles Meadow Community Group	£630	Ongoing work
North Horsham Friendship Group	£300	Entertainment and transport.
Friends of North Heath Community Primary School	£500	Outdoor furniture to provide a quiet area.

In addition to the grants given above, North Horsham Parish Council gives a room free of charge to the Citizens Advice to enable their outreach sessions to take place every Monday morning. The annual cost for this facility is around £1,000. In addition, the Parish Council allows the North Horsham Community Land Trust to hold its meetings at Roffey Millennium Hall. The annual cost is around £600, but as the Land Trust only formed in January 2019, the cost for this financial year has been around £150.

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 2019/20

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 hopes to submit 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 to try to get the best for existing residents and those moving into the new housing. The working group includes representatives from HDC, the developers, local organisations, residents, Action in Rural Sussex, Parish Council Tree Wardens and those from Education, Health, and Business as required. The Parish Council is also exploring how best to integrate the new development with the existing community.

Over the past twelve months the Parish Council has been asked to comment on several significant consultations and planning applications. The Parish Council objected to the appeal against the West Sussex County Council's decision not to allow the Recovery, Recycling and Renewable Energy facility on Langhurstwood Road having listened closely to residents' concerns. Cllr Rickett B.E.M. spoke at the inquiry and councillors were present for the whole process, for which the Parish Council is very appreciative. The Parish Council supported housing on the former Novartis site on Parsonage Road and well as employment opportunities however, there are concerns that the changes to the road infrastructure are not sufficient to reduce the impact on Horsham in general and in particular those living in close vicinity. The Parish Council will continue to represent the views of local people on local issues.

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 2019/20 there has been the usual ongoing work to ensure that the buildings are in a good state of repair and compliant with legislation. The buildings continue to be used for a variety of activities including dance and keep fit classes, children's parties, martial arts, painting classes, one to one consultation, Citizens Advice Bureau surgeries and corporate events. The Parish Council is pleased to report that when asked for feedback there is a high level of satisfaction from the hirers of the halls. The Parish Council has worked hard to increase the use of its facilities with success, especially at Holbrook Tythe Barn. The Parish Council is always willing to discuss ways in which we can help to provide a space for an event or activity.

The playgrounds continue to be popular and there is an ongoing schedule of maintenance and inspection. The 28 Parish Council owned allotments are all occupied and there are 12 people on the waiting list. This has increased significantly over the last year. Four plot holders who currently have half sized plots would like to be considered for full plots in the future, but those without a plot will be allocated with an allotment first. The allotments are inspected regularly.

During 2019/20 work continued on a Tree Management Scheme. An inspection of the large number of trees on Parish Council land was undertaken and a schedule of work was produced. Work was categorised according to priority and the most urgent work required has been completed. Work according to priority will continue in the coming financial year. Schedules of work and inspection regimes are in place for all Parish Council owned assets including Street lighting, bus shelters, litter bins, dog bins and notice boards. Repairs or remedial action is taken as a result of inspections.



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. Overleaf is an overview of which authority provides each service.

NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL	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.	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 For more details on North Horsham Parish Council visit our website: - www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk
HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL	Refuse collections Waste and Recycling Litter Dog fouling Housing Environmental Health Business Rates	Open spaces (some) Tourist Information Planning Services Economic Redevelopment Car Parks Council Tax Some Play areas For more details on HDC visit their website: - www.horsham.gov.uk
WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL	Libraries Highways Footpaths Road conditions Street Lighting Education	Social Services Trees Trading Standards Health Children's Services For more details on WSCC visit their website: - www.westsussex.gov.uk

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS AT APRIL 2020

		ADDRESS	PHONE
HOLBROOK EAST	Karen Burgess	27, Haybarn Drive, RH12 5JF	273533
	Rita Ginn	17, Rusper Road, RH12 4BA	264109
	Donald Mahon	10, Winterbourne. RH12 5QW	07463537079
	Tony Rickett BEM	33, Bluebell Close, RH12 5WB	217003
	John Smithurst	1, Quail Close, RH12 5ZJ	262535
HOLBROOK WEST	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	Alan Britten	32, Brushwood Road, RH12 4PE	272226
	James Davidson	4, Littlehaven Lane, RH12 4JA	07771 515281
	Michael Cockerill	14, Garden Pl, Hawthorn Cl. RH12 2BD	750809
	David Searle	7, Earles Meadow, RH12 4HP	256267
	Simon Torn	9, Shepherds Way, RH12 4LT	07748 332774
ROFFEY SOUTH	Joy Gough	9 St. Christophers Close RH12 2EH	261800
	Ray Turner	8, Conifers Close, RH12 4QH	259612
	Sally Wilton	54, Beech Road, RH12 4TU	269126
HORSHAM RURAL	Alex Shine	C/o Roffey Millennium Hall, Crawley Rd RH12 4DT	07432 740274
COMPTONS	VACANCY		



Riverside Walk near North Heath Hall

PROPOSED FORTHCOMING SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

Due to the current Coronavirus outbreak meetings of the Parish Council have been cancelled to the end of May 2020 and it is not clear when meetings will resume. The Annual Parish Council Meeting has been postponed and it is hoped to schedule it prior to the end of August 2020. The dates below are those scheduled from June 2020 to September 2020 and it is hoped to return to the usual calendar as soon as possible. Please check on the Parish Council notice boards or website for an agenda for the meeting which will indicate if it is taking place.

JULY 2020 Thursday 2nd Thursday 23 rd Thursday 30 th	COUNCIL Personnel Planning Environment & Transport.
AUGUST 2020 Thursday 27 th	Planning, Environment & Transport.
SEPTEMBER 2020 Thursday 3rd Thursday 10 th Thursday 24 th Tuesday 29 th	COUNCIL. Property. (Budget) Planning Environment & Transport. (Budget) Internal Controls WP

The Annual meeting of the electors scheduled for 20th April 2020 had to be cancelled and it is hoped to re-schedule that during the forthcoming year. Again, please look for notices on the website, Facebook and the notice boards.

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.