

# NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL



## ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

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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 the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to acknowledge the sacrifices that all residents of North Horsham have made over the last two years 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 last twelve months have been challenging for all and for the Parish Council, the pandemic resulted in our buildings continuing to be closed for the first few weeks of the 2021/22 year. However, as the lockdowns and restrictions began to be lifted, the staff were delighted to welcome back the regular hirers of the facilities as we all moved to a more normal way of life. As the relaxing of rules has continued, we have been able to once again accommodate parties and one-off events, with bookings being taken for the 1<sup>st</sup> April onwards.

The Parish Council's Roffey Millennium Hall was also home to the vaccination centre from September 2021 to February 2022. I would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who, day in and day out, worked tirelessly to get as many people as possible vaccinated which has in turn contributed to us all being able to return to some sort of normality in a daily lives.

During the last year, the Parish Council continued to hold proactive meetings with the developers for the land north of Horsham, now officially named Mowbray, and other key stakeholders to try to get positive outcomes for local residents. The new Bohunt School welcomed its students on their return after the Christmas holidays and Councillors were grateful to the Headteacher for allowing tours of this new facility.

The new footbridge across the A264 has now been completed although, due to delays in the materials for the footbridge, this will not be opening until after the Easter Holidays in April. It has therefore been necessary to lay on buses to keep the students safe and ensure no children attempt to cross the A264 which has, and is still, undergoing major roadworks to form the access and a new roundabout for the development. These roadworks will be continuing for some months yet, but by October 2022 the works are scheduled to be completed and the road fully open.

The Parish Council held its first liaison meeting with key stakeholders for the former Novartis site on Parsonage Road in January 2021, again to try and get positive outcomes for local residents. Meetings have been paused until there is some clear programme and timeline for the development and will resume as soon as required. In the meantime, the Parish Council has been working with a local Residents' Association and their proposals for a West Sussex County Council Community Highways Scheme to tackle contradictions in the Regulatory Weight Limit Signage in the locality of Parsonage Road, Foundry Lane, North Heath Lane and Wimblehurst Road. These have involved meetings with the Residents' Association, the Parish Council, Horsham District Council, Neighbourhood Councils and WSCC Highways, and have been well received.

Work on the Recovery, Recycling and Renewable Energy facility on Langhurstwood Road had been delayed during the Coronavirus pandemic and further consultation on environmental matters through the Environment Agency is still ongoing.

The Parish Council has continued to support the North Horsham Community Land Trust (NHCLT) by way of a Grant and at the Council Meeting in March, Members were delighted to hear from the Chairman of NHCLT that an agreement has now been signed with a Housing Association to finance a build. The focus is now on identifying a suitable site to progress their objective to tackle the lack of locally affordable housing and to ensure local say and influence on rent policy, allocation policy and design.

The pandemic, combined with recent cost of living increase, have 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 as we fully emerge from the closures arising from the restrictions and lockdowns.

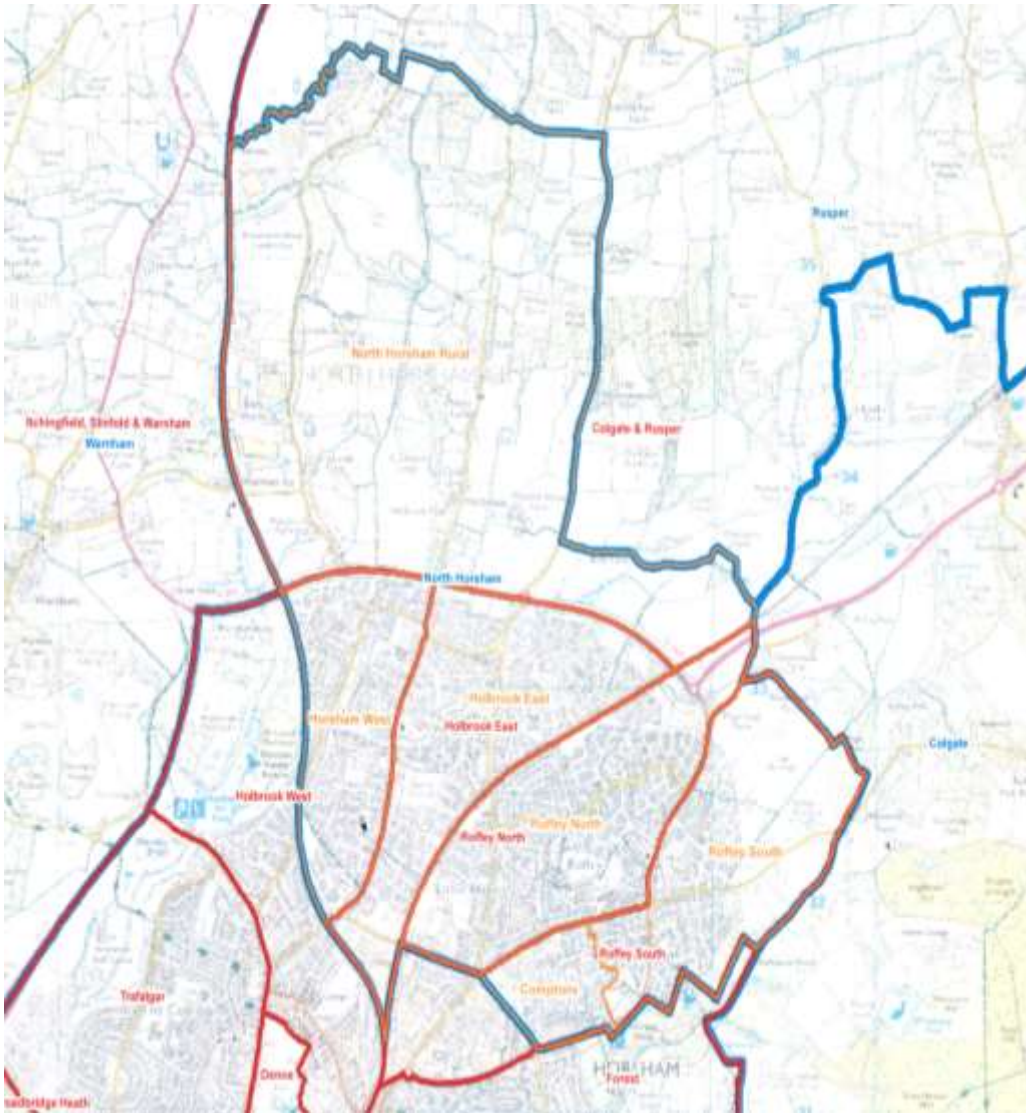
I would like to express appreciation for the hard work of councillors, staff, volunteers and residents who have worked for their local community over the last year. If anyone would like to become a Councillor, there are still vacancies in the wards of Comptons and Roffey North. The Parish Council is 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 April 2022 there are 16,917 electors and with the results of the 2021 Census to be published in 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 due for occupation later this year.

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 and the Queen's Green Canopy Working Party to recommend ways in which the Parish Council can be part of the commemorations for her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. The North of Horsham Parish Liaison Group, which includes key stakeholders and residents, has 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](http://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 nineteen Councillors. In May 2019 sixteen Councillors were elected uncontested. At the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May 2019, 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 are still two vacancies: one in Comptons ward and one in Roffey North ward.

The Parish Council operates an independently reviewed Scheme of Members' Allowances whereby an annual Allowance of £490 was payable in 2021/22 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. Back in the Autumn, the Clerk to the Council Pauline Whitehead left her position for pastures new with her replacement, Sarah Norman, joining the Council in October 2021. Three 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.

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 with the relaxation of restrictions during the last year, we have been able to restart the meetings of 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.

## **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 2022/23.

### **Income**



	<b>2019/20 actual</b>	<b>2020/21 actual</b>	<b>2021/22 actual</b>	<b>2022/23 budget</b>
Precept	327,769	335,194		349,011
Environmental Grant	9,984	10,234		10,356
Community Infrastructure Levy funding	11,053	2,395		0
Covid 19 grant from HDC	0	25,000		0
Job Retention Scheme grant funding (HMRC)	0	16,466		0
Administration	(38)	1,286		100
Allotments	816	928		900
North Heath Hall	63,943	27,749		50,000
Holbrook Tythe Barn	39,229	6,140		25,000
Multi Court Lettings	22,571	7,378		20,000
Roffey Millennium Hall	80,816	3,613		57,000
<b>Total income</b>	<b>556,143</b>	<b>436,383</b>		<b>512,367</b>

### Expenditure

	<b>2019/20 actual</b>	<b>2020/21 actual</b>	<b>2021/22 actual</b>	<b>2022/23 budget</b>
Administration	46,290	45,171		52,670
Grants	4,160	4,585		10,000
Burial contributions	6,730	7,150		7,460
Personnel	299,981	276,322		326,000
Planning Environment and Transport	278	0		1,500
Allotments	1,575	1,376		1,580
Amenity, Recs and Open Spaces	41,713	27,464		52,270
North Heath Hall	22,921	14,245		27,207
Holbrook Tythe Barn	16,934	15,869		21,830
Roffey Millennium Hall	33,340	19,962		37,074
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>473,470</b>	<b>412,144</b>		<b>537,591</b>

### Reserves

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 the General Reserve stood at £216,901 and there were Ear Marked Reserves of £227,027. £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 £???????? was spent from Ear Marked Reserves during 2021/22, mainly on ????????????

At the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, there was £???????? in Ear Marked Reserves and a General Reserve of £??????????.



## Summary

The Council expected an annual spend of £???????? when the precept was set in January 2022, but the final figure is £?????????. A saving of £?????????.

When setting the precept, the Council was aiming at a General Reserve of around £150,000. The final General Reserve is £??????. An increase of £???????

Significant measures were successfully put in place to mitigate losses during 2021/22, and the overall loss to the Council was less than may have been anticipated. However, careful management of funds is required in the coming year as the country continues to recover 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 31.3.2022
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
<b>TOTAL Ear Marked Reserves</b>		<b>227,028</b>

## GRANTS

The Parish Council is pleased to have supported activities which benefited the local community during 2021/22

Details of grants made during 2021/22 are shown below: -

<b>Grant awarded to</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Horsham Town Community Partnership	£180	2021 Riverside walk
Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance Trust	£2,000	Ongoing work
Victim Support	£500	Ongoing work
Home Start Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex	£1,100	Ongoing work
North Horsham Community Land Trust	£2,000	Professional services for assessment of sites
Earles Meadow Community Group	£525	Ongoing work
Horsham District Scouts	£180	To assist with costs for taking over of Riverside Walk event
Friendship Club	£300	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 2021/22**

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 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 the pandemic there was a pause on some work with activities restricted to only those required due to Health & Safety. However, towards the end of the financial year as hirers have returned to the halls, much of the usual work to ensure that the buildings are in a good state of repair has recommenced.

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. 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.



Play area at Holbrook Tythe Barn



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.

<b>NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL</b>	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: - <a href="http://www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk">www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk</a>
<b>HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	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: - <a href="http://www.horsham.gov.uk">www.horsham.gov.uk</a>
<b>WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	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: - <a href="http://www.westsussex.gov.uk">www.westsussex.gov.uk</a>

For future meetings please see the calendar of meetings on the Parish Council website [www.northhorsham-pc.gov.uk](http://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.