



## NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL



## ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

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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 my Annual Report for the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. I was re-elected as Chairman of the Council in May last year and have been delighted to serve my local community in this capacity for a second year.

Following the elections back in May 2023, we had several Parish Councillor vacancies. In addition, during the last year we bid a fond farewell to Alan Britten and Glenn Turner whilst welcoming Jonathan Dancer following a by-election in July 2025.



It was with great sadness that the Council announced the death of Peter Burgess in August last year. Peter had been a Member of the Parish Council since 1996, serving four terms as Chairman of the Council and holding various other Committee positions over his long tenure. Peter had also served on Horsham District Council for 12 years, serving as the Chairman in 2018.

Peter was a major part of the Parish Council and the local community during the last 30 years, and his insight and knowledge will be missed by all.

The Parish Council therefore continues to have 4 vacancies, and anyone interested in applying to be co-opted as a Councillor should contact the Parish Clerk or refer to the Councillor vacancy page on the Parish Council website, which includes eligibility information together with an application form.

During the last year, the Parish Council also bid farewell to Neil Smith and Alan Randall, known to many as the helpful and welcoming caretakers at Roffey Millennium Hall and Holbrook Tythe Barn respectively. All at the Parish Council wish Neil and Alan long and restful retirements. We are pleased to welcome Neil and Alan's replacements, Philip Vidal and Tom Fishburn who are both great additions to the team.

On a local level, the Parish Council has continued to hold the Liaison Group meetings for North of Horsham (Mowbray), with a particular focus on the new Community Building which will eventually be passed to the Parish Council.

The cost-of-living increases have continued to impact 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 continued to invest in its assets through the upgrades to playground equipment at Holbrook Tythe Barn.

The Council has also held two Litter Picks, in partnership with St Mark's Church, Holbrook, at which dozens of black sacks of litter were collected from the roads and verges. Our thanks go to St Mark's Church and all those that joined us in this important community initiative. The Council is planning to extend this initiative into Roffey during 2026 so keep an eye on the social media and noticeboards for more information.

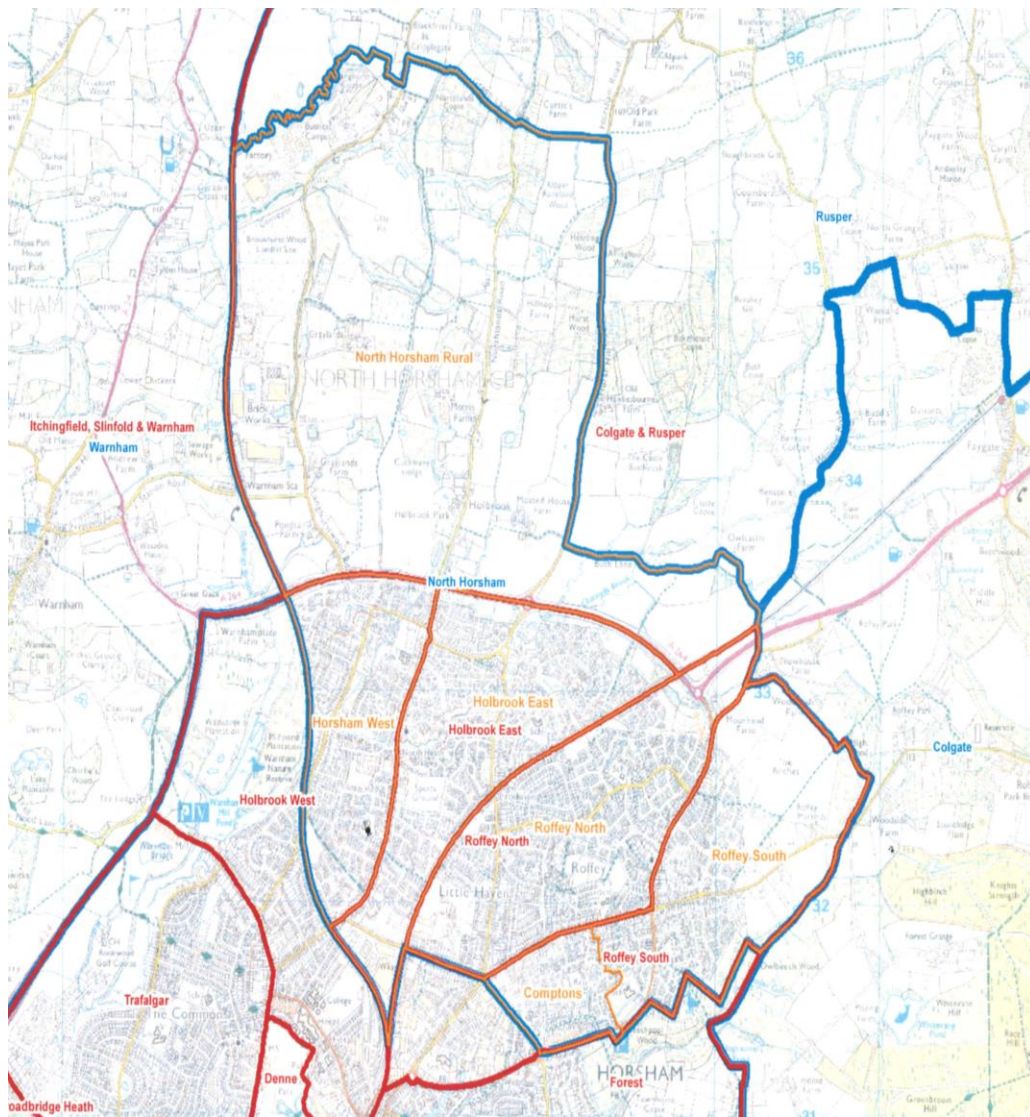
Looking to the future, the landscape of local government is facing its largest shakeup since 1974 with the potential creation in Sussex of Unitary Authorities together with a Strategic Mayoral Authority. Whilst Parish and Town Councils are not directly affected by these changes, NHPC is actively working with HDC and WSCC to ensure that regardless of any changes to the tiers of government above, the residents of North Horsham are not disadvantaged by this overarching reorganisation.

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.

*Councillor James Davidson  
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 which incorporates approx. 9,800 properties and, as at the May 2023 election, an electorate of 16,913. 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 several hundred homes already occupied.

North Horsham Parish is currently neighbour to Trafalgar, Forest and Denne Neighbourhood Councils but with effect from April 2026, these Neighbourhood Councils are to be replaced by a Parish Council specifically for Horsham Town. Whilst this will be called Horsham Parish Council initially, it is very likely that the new Council will agree to rename themselves Horsham Town Council. Our neighbours to the north include 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, Chennells Brook 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 Thursday from 9am to 5pm and to 4.30pm on Fridays. 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.

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 or make a statement about items on the Agenda.

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 seats for nineteen Councillors. The May 2023 election was uncontested and therefore the Council comprised of 14 Councillors. With the co-options that have taken place since the last election, there still remain four vacancies; one in each of Holbrook East, Holbrook West, Roffey North and Comptons wards.

The Parish Council operates an independently reviewed Scheme of Members' Allowances whereby an annual Allowance of £514 was payable in 2024/25 to those elected Parish Councillors who wished 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 Warnham Brickworks Community Liaison Committee 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.

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 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 65 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.

In addition, the Club receives grant funding from the Parish Council and this year, some of the grant was used to subsidise a garden party at North Heath Hall with entertainment provided by Rob Lee.

## 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 (excluding spending from Earmarked Reserves) over the last three years and the budget for 2026/27.

### Income

	<b>2023/24 actual</b>	<b>2024/25 actual</b>	<b>2025/26 actual</b>	<b>2026/27 budget</b>
Precept	365,346	380,247	401,537	416,789
Environmental Grant	11,745	12,274	12,752	12,752
Donation	0	0	927	0
Community Infrastructure Levy funding	0	0	90	0
S106 Funding	17,909	2,805	0	0
HDC Climate Change Grant	2,076	5,000	0	0
Administration	27,590	28,849	23,877	20,000
Allotments	982	1,108	1,111	1,150
North Heath Hall	67,539	76,339	80,532	88,000
Holbrook Tythe Barn	39,936	42,774	41,851	44,000
Multi Court Lettings	26,696	28,089	27,504	26,000
Roffey Millennium Hall	71,452	77,695	76,820	78,000
<b>Total income</b>	<b>631,272</b>	<b>655,180</b>	<b>667,001</b>	<b>686,691</b>

### Expenditure

	<b>2023/24 actual</b>	<b>2024/25 actual</b>	<b>2025/26 actual</b>	<b>2026/27 budget</b>
Administration	67,310	78,099	49,926	63,890
Grants	6,531	7,711	8,344	12,000
Burial contributions	7,461	7,461	7,461	7,900
Personnel	334,053	352,267	367,211	389,200
Allotments	731	870	1,360	2,005
Amenity, Recs and Open Spaces	38,127	43,410	53,005	71,913
North Heath Hall	27,755	32,154	28,979	43,210
Holbrook Tythe Barn	24,325	18,655	20,621	32,286
Roffey Millennium Hall	40,088	47,642	46,275	57,968
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>546,381</b>	<b>588,269</b>	<b>583,182</b>	<b>680,372</b>

### Reserves

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 the General Reserve stood at £279,893 and Earmarked Reserves at £239,180. A total of £39,000 was transferred at the start of the year from the General Reserve to the Earmarked Reserves for Tree Management works (£4,000), Playground Upgrade (£5,000), replenishment of the Repairs and Renewals EMR (£5,000), NHH Heating (£5,000), RMH Lift (£5,000), Mowbray Community Facility (£5,000) and replenishment of the VAT Contingency (£10,000) due to the anticipated exceeding of the De Minimus Limit in 2024/25. A total of £82,516 was spent from Earmarked Reserves during 2025/26, including £30,242 on general repairs and improvements to the Parish Council owned buildings and amenities but also a £21,026 for the upgrade of

playgrounds and £14,643 on VAT due to the breach of the De Minimus limit in 2024/25 and £11,776 on Election costs for the contested Holbrook East Ward election in July 2025. At the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026, there was £195,754 in Earmarked Reserves and a General Reserve of £324,623.

## Summary

The Council expected an annual revenue spend of £651,030 when the precept was set in January 2025, with the final figure being £583,182 - a saving of £67,848.

When setting the precept for the 2025/26 year, the Council was aiming at a General Reserve of around £200,000. The final General Reserve as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 is £324,623 which is more than £ 124,000 in excess of the sum expected. A total of £60,000 of these General Reserves will be used to increase the Earmarked Reserves for Mowbray Community Facility (£10,000), NHH Heating (£5,000), RMH lift replacement fund (£5,000), replenishment of the VAT EMR (£5,000), replenishment of the Elections EMR (£6,000) and replenishment of the Repair and Renewals EMR (£29,000). In addition, an element of the General Reserves has been budgeted to fund the expected 2026/27 expenditure. The result is that the Council is now anticipating General Reserves at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027 of £210,000.

## Earmarked Reserves

<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Balance at 31.3.2026</b>
Repairs & Renewals	For ongoing maintenance work at the Community venues.	£48,032
Election Reserve	For Parish election costs.	£8,174
Revenue Reserve – VAT contingency.	To cover the Council should it exceed the de-minimus value of VAT.	£3,312
Boiler at RMH	Replacement	£40,000
Tree Management	To respond to tree inspection and urgent remedial work.	£9,230
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.	£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	£21,032
CIL 2022/23	Money received from development	£10,996
CIL 2025/26	Money received from development	£90
NHH Heating	Money set aside to upgrade the heating at NHH	£6,232
RMH Lift	Money set aside to upgrade/replace the lift	£10,000
	<b>TOTAL Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>£190,754</b>

## GRANTS

The Parish Council is pleased to have supported activities which benefited the local community during 2025/26

Details of grants made during 2025/26 are shown below: -

<b>Grant awarded to</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
4 The Youth	£5,000	Ongoing work
Southwater Bridge Club	£1,000	Ongoing club activities
Friendship Club	£969	Supplementals to subscriptions i.e. transport for trips, speakers, entertainment
4Sight Vision	£1,400	Ongoing work
Earles Meadow Community Group	£1,100	Ongoing work
Juno Project	£975.40	Ongoing work
Citizens Advice Bureau	£500	Ongoing work
Home Start Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex	£1,100	Ongoing work
Sussex Green Living	£500	Pollinator Education Stations at 2 local schools
St Catherine's Hospice	£300	Ongoing work
Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance	£500	Ongoing work

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 2025/26

The Planning, Environment and Transport (PET) Committee has commented on over 150 Planning applications over the year, an increase of more than 15% on the previous year. 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. In addition to the usual maintenance schedule to ensure that the buildings stay in great condition for our hirers, during the 2025/26 year the Committee has replaced the very old curtains/blinds at North Heath Hall, re-laid the patio and improved the surface of the car park at Holbrook Tythe Barn that was extremely uneven, replaced an out of service boiler and carried out major refurbishments at the play area at Holbrook Tythe Barn.

During the year, the restrictions arising from the Statement by Natural England regarding Water Neutrality were lifted, as demonstrated by the increase in applications considered by the PET Committee. Due to the increase in the number of applications that have been able to progress, a small amount of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding was received during the 2025/26 year, totalling £90. The Working Party has met twice and as a result funds have been awarded to Holbrook Primary School for their Thinking Garden and cycle racks have been installed at Roffey Millennium to offer secure storage to promote alternative transport to users of the hall.

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.



Play area at Holbrook Tythe Barn

During 2025/26, 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.

<b>NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roffey Millennium Hall</li> <li>• North Heath Hall</li> <li>• Holbrook Tythe Barn</li> <li>• Amberley Road Allotments</li> <li>• Holbrook Tythe Barn Play Area</li> <li>• Birches Road Play Area</li> <li>• Amberley Close Play Area</li> <li>• Multi Courts</li> <li>• Open spaces at Amberley Road, Birches Road and Holbrook Tythe Barn.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earles Meadow Play Area</li> <li>• Earles Meadow open space</li> <li>• Bus shelters - 9 in various locations</li> <li>• Notice Boards - 9 in various locations</li> <li>• Street Lighting - 23 in various locations</li> <li>• Seats</li> <li>• Litter bins</li> </ul> <p>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>.</p>
<b>HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refuse collections</li> <li>• Waste and Recycling</li> <li>• Litter</li> <li>• Dog fouling</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Environmental Health</li> <li>• Business Rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open spaces (some)</li> <li>• Tourist Information</li> <li>• Planning Services</li> <li>• Economic Redevelopment</li> <li>• Car Parks</li> <li>• Council Tax</li> <li>• Some Play areas</li> </ul> <p>For more details on HDC visit their website: - <a href="http://www.horsham.gov.uk">www.horsham.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• Highways</li> <li>• Footpaths</li> <li>• Road conditions</li> <li>• Street Lighting</li> <li>• Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Services</li> <li>• Trees</li> <li>• Trading Standards</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Children's Services</li> </ul> <p>For more details on WSCC visit their website: - <a href="http://www.westsussex.gov.uk">www.westsussex.gov.uk</a></p>

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.