



WISBOROUGH GREEN
PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Report

The Parish Council Year from May 2025 to April 2026

Chair's Report

Well, I don't know about you, but the last twelve months have been busy – on a global scale, national scale but also much closer to home, namely in Wisborough Green.

The Parish Council (PC) has certainly been beavering away and a summary of our work and the expense involved is included in this booklet. On the village website (the old one still at this stage) there is the full report and may I suggest that it's perhaps worth a read to understand what the PC does and the decisions members make. Meeting minutes are also published and we are delighted to know that these are being regularly reviewed by residents.

One aspect of our work has been the resurrection of the Neighbourhood Plan process and I'm sure I don't need to reiterate how important it is for us collectively to have a Neighbourhood Plan in place, and to encourage you all to be involved in the process. Without it Chichester District Council will decide where future development will be located and we as a village have the best knowledge at our fingertips to know how and where our village is to grow. We have some legal processes to go through but hopefully by the Autumn we will be able to present to the village those areas deemed, by the village, to be the most appropriate for future housing. I would like to stress, despite identifying suitable locations, this doesn't mean houses will be erected overnight on these sites ... obtaining planning permission and then the construction is a lengthy process and could take several years to reach fruition.

Despite being, on the outside, a sleepy rural West Sussex village, you only need to flick through Ad Vincula to see just how active we all are. Obviously, we have the Church and despite not having a resident vicar, there are still regular church services, Xpresso every Friday and regular bell ringing practice, which, I personally love to hear. There is also Lunch Club, the History Society, the Glee Choir, short mat bowls, table tennis, the WI, WG Sports and even trips out of the village on the minibus. Who knew there was so much to get involved in?

Speaking of getting involved, warning, incoming nag alert, all the above activities and several more (litter picks, the annual Fete and even Community Speedwatch) all require volunteers to keep them going and keep our village "running". From a personal point of view, when I moved back to the village nearly seven years ago now, I was "shoehorned" onto the Fete Committee and I can honestly say, I would not have met, worked alongside and had a giggle with such a great bunch of people, and the bonus is our monthly meetings are in the pub! All our village organisations welcome new members, so get in touch and be part of this wonderful village.

Sophie Winship, Chair

Your Parish Council



Sophie Winship
(Chair) T: 700783



Andy Burbridge
T: 07967 711549



Peter Drummond
T: 01798 865546



Mike Foster
T: 07974 202730



Dave Hill
T: 07545 531193



Andrew Jackson
T: 01403 700574



Francis Vickery
T: 01403 701006



Martin Watson
T: 07836 700923



Tim Worrall
T: 01403 700100

Wisborough Green Parish Council
PO Box 255, WG, Billingshurst, RH14 0WT
T: 01403 701102
E: clerk@wisboroughgreen-pc.gov.uk

Louise Davies
PC Clerk



Some High and Low Moments from the Year

- We welcomed new residents to Barnfield Shaw. As a result of this development, the PC received £79,430 CIL funding.
- The PC has agreed to use some of this funding to replace the failing black surfacing in our well used playground.
- The Neighbourhood Plan review process resumed and the first consultation was held in February 2026.
- The PC is supportive of a replacement Pavilion but needs to ensure the proposed size and use is lawful on a Registered Village Green. Legal advice has been sought and being discussed with WG Sports.
- The Durbans Road speed limit was finally changed to 30mph.
- The Kirdford Road footway on the Green, linking the Stable Field open space and new developments, has been delayed due to the implications of building on a Registered Village Green.
- The WSCC Operation Watershed scheme for drainage improvements in School Road was completed but it didn't go as smoothly as planned. It has however worked.
- Annual inspections identified maintenance items around the village which were undertaken.
- Two community litter picking sessions held; great turnout.
- Dog fouling at Songhurst Meadow has been a significant problem in the past, but have we turned a corner, let's hope so.
- Road safety, parking, speeding and pedestrian crossing incidents have continued to be a concern and are being addressed with WG Sports, the School and WSCC.
- New double yellow lines will hopefully keep junctions clear and improve visibility. One directly affected resident has raised concerns which are being considered.
- Act of vandalism: one of the pavement figures, put out at the start of school terms to warn drivers of the presence of children, was removed and another damaged.
- One declining Horse Chestnut was removed. The large tree by the public toilets has also failed health & safety testing and will shortly be removed.
- 28 residents benefitted from free Defibrillator and CPR training.

The Parish Council's Year at a Glance

FIRST LEVEL OF DEMOCRACY PROVIDING LOCAL VOICE ON LOCAL AFFAIRS. PROTECTING THE VILLAGE FOR US AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

- In law, a council is a single corporate body & the decisions it takes are the responsibility of the council as a whole
- Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and policy documents for governance

COUNCILLORS

- 9 unpaid Councillors
- Chair (Sophie Winship) elected in May
- No Vice-Chair was elected
- Members are elected every 4 years
- The next election is May 2027

PARISH COUNCIL CLERK

- Only Council employee – 24 hours per week
- Undertakes Council's instructions
- Offers advice in relation to law & policy
- Provides information for effective decisions
- Responsible for financial records

MEETINGS

- Third Tuesday of most months at the Village Hall at 7.45 pm (not August and December) although 12 meetings held
- Public are welcome to attend
- Public section included on the agenda
- Agenda published - notice boards & website

PRECEPT

- Collected by CDC through the Council Tax
- £89,000 for Financial Year to 31 March 26
- Allows the Parish Council to undertake its functions and maintain its property

PROPERTY / ASSETS
Owns, maintains and insures

VILLAGE GREEN

- Registered owner
- Considered and granted approval for events
- Maintains – grass cutting, grass surface repairs, litter/ dog waste collection
- Tree inspections & work

SONGHURST MEADOW

- Registered owner
- Maintains

PUBLIC TOILETS

- Registered owner
- Maintains

STABLE FIELD OPEN SPACE

- Registered owner
- Developer funds grass cuts

ALLOTMENTS

- Priority to WG residents
- Tenancies managed
- Inspections & maintenance

PLAYGROUND

- Weekly inspection
- Annual RoSPA inspection
- Maintenance as identified

OTHER ASSETS

- Inspection & maintenance

OTHER ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

PLANNING

- Full Council or Planning Committee comment on applications
- Reviewed a total of 37 applications (47 the previous year)
- The Planning Committee met 5 times.
- Referred several enforcement matters to CDC

COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS

- **Finance:** Met once for in-depth discussion, and scrutiny of the PC's budget, objectives, and long-term financial planning
- **Working Groups (involving other non-councillors):** Neighbourhood Plan Review, Green Coordination Group, New Pavilion Lease

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- As the qualifying body responsible for making the Plan, liaises with the Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group

CONSULTATIONS

- Responds to consultations that might affect the village; Local Plan, Gatwick Airport

DEVELOPER CONTACT

- Met with developers to be fully informed

REPRESENTATION

Attended meetings with CDC, WSCC, Local Council Associations and other parishes

TRAINING

- The Clerk attended regular briefing sessions
- One councillor attended new councillor training
- Clerk undertook playground inspection and Legionella training
- Councillors & the Clerk attended planning updates

COMMUNICATION

- Three newsletters and an Annual report to all households via the Parish magazine
- Notices/news in the Parish magazine

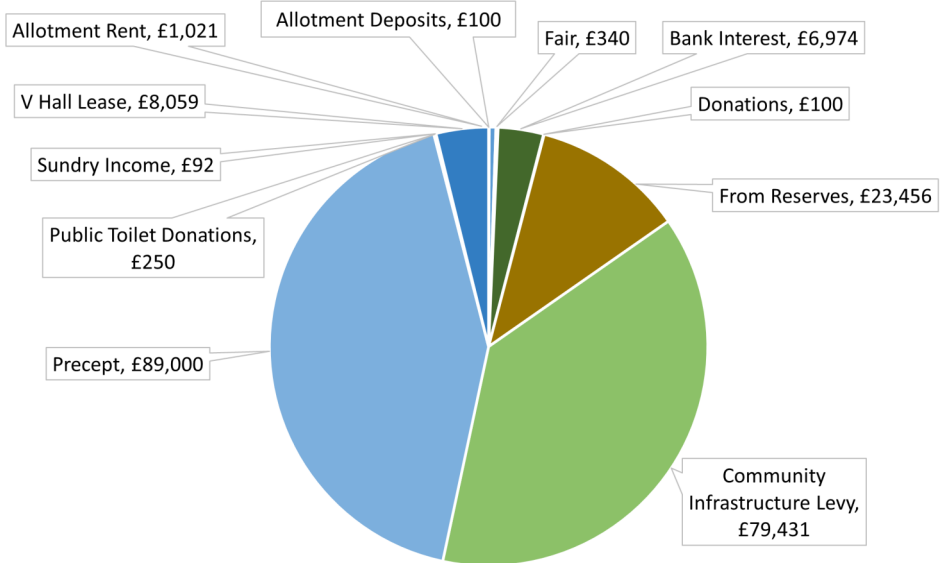
RISK ASSESSMENTS

- Undertaken annually for PC management and property
- Identified repairs undertaken

SUPPORT TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

- Donations to outside village charities which benefit village residents
- Donations to village groups

Money Matters - Income for year ending 31st March 2026



Total Income: Total income for the year, excluding transfers from reserve funds, was £185,367.45. The Precept was set at £89,000 (an increase of £4,000 on the previous year). Income was significantly boosted by £79,430 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding received for the Barnfield Shaw development.

Allotments: The division of larger plots over previous years has created additional opportunities. Plots were charged at 40p per square metre for the year, with an annual review to reflect rising water costs. A £50 deposit is taken to encourage plots to be left in a reasonable condition when vacated.

Reserve Funds: The PC has created reserves to fund future projects or unexpected expenditure, drawing on them as required. The main transfer related to the Operation Watershed grant of £20,950, received during the previous financial year, with works completed in May. Funds from reserves also covered allotment deposit refunds, outstanding tree work, and the purchase of the pavement figures using CIL funding.

Donations: A single donation of £100 was received from a contractor following damage to the Village Green; he was caught by the Clerk!

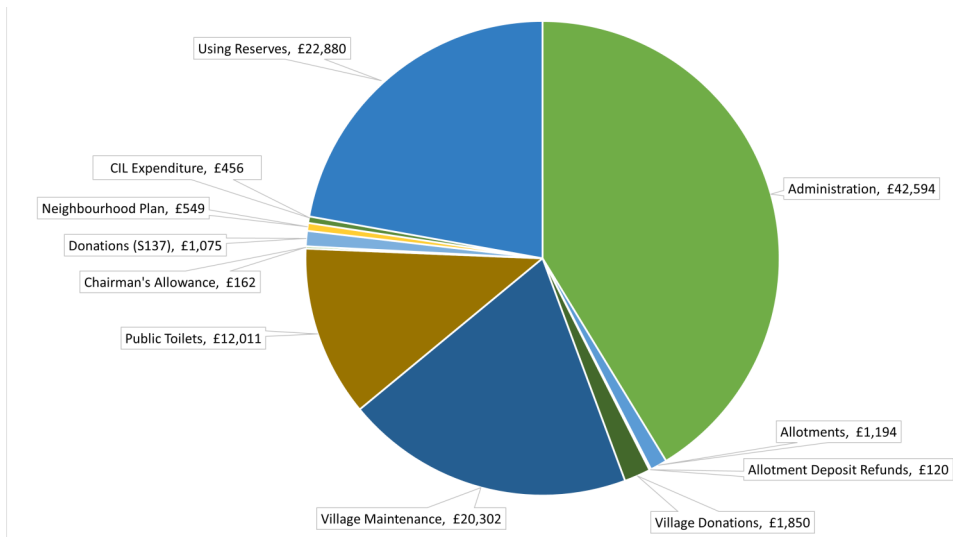
Bank Interest: The PC continued to ensure funds were managed prudently, with earmarked reserves protected. Funds were invested in a series of smaller one-year fixed-rate bonds, alongside 31- and 35-day notice accounts. These are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, and the interest generated supports the village. Total interest received was £6,973.

Public Toilet Donations: The PC was pleased to receive a donation towards the upkeep from the Fete Society.

Sundry Income: This related to peppercorn rents for access across the Green, the Fete Society garage rent and a small refund.

Village Hall Lease: Lease payments are made twice in the year and represent 40% of the Old Workhouse residential income.

Money Matters - Expenditure for year ending 31st March



Total Expenditure - £103,193 (£85,278 in the last financial year)

Administration: Total annual administrative costs, including the Clerk's salary and all operational expenses required for the Council to function effectively, amounted to £43,668.55 (£39,312 for year end 2025).

Clerk's Salary: A pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services from 1 April 2025 was applied, with corresponding increases to National Insurance and pension contributions.

Legal & Professional Fees: Costs included planning advice on Tree Preservation Orders to respond to CDC, fees for the preparation of a new Pavilion Lease, and settlement of legal costs relating to the acquisition of Songhurst Meadow open space.

Section 137: Grants were made to organisations demonstrating community benefit, including: St Catherine's Hospice (£80), Kent Surrey Sussex Air Ambulance (£275), Chichester & Arun Citizens Advice (£100), 4Sight Vision (£80), Billingshurst Emergency Assistance Team (£100), Tyler's Trust (£200), Sussex Heart Charity (£140) for CPR and defibrillator training, and Royal British Legion (£100) for Remembrance Day wreaths.

Subscriptions: Annual subscriptions were paid to the West Sussex Association of Local Councils, Open Spaces Society, Society of Local Council Clerks, Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign, and the Association of Parish Councils Aviation Group.

Telephone/Broadband: Costs covered broadband provision for the Village Hall and the Council's telephone and broadband services. Broadband at the Hall supports the review of planning applications during meetings; a new contract meant that the first year, January 2025 to January 2026, was free of charge.

Training Courses: The Clerk completed playground inspection, Legionella and Code of Conduct training. New councillors attend training and other councillors and the Clerk attended planning update briefings.

Allotments: The PC continues to maintain the allotment hedge and addresses general upkeep. Rising water costs remain a pressure; tenants are encouraged to conserve water, and rents are reviewed annually to cover this cost.

Money Matters - Expenditure Continued

Chairman's Allowance: Used to fund the Annual Parish Meeting costs.

Village Maintenance: The PC is responsible for general village maintenance to preserve its appearance. Total expenditure was £36,313.61, below the overall budget.

- **CDC Litter Collection:** Sixteen litter bins within the Conservation Area and two at Songhurst Meadow were emptied weekly by CDC, at a cost of £1,853.
- **General Maintenance:** Includes tree surgery, verge posts, verge repair, provision of dog bags, and general maintenance items to retain the village's appearance. This was well under budget due to tree work yet to be completed and planned work not undertaken. The underspend has been transferred to the Reserve and outstanding projects will be completed this coming year.
- **Grass Cutting:** Covered maintenance of the Green and Songhurst Meadow. Weekly cutting of the southern field at Songhurst Meadow was undertaken to deter dog fouling and appears to have worked— fingers crossed!
- **Green Maintenance:** Includes upkeep of the grass surface to support general recreation; sports-related repairs were funded separately by WG Sports.
- **Public Toilets:** The PC met all costs for cleaning, utilities, and maintenance, totalling £12,011. Electricity and water costs continued to rise.
- **Songhurst Meadow Open Space:** Expenditure of £757 covered hedge cutting, weed control, tree work, rolling, and fencing.

Neighbourhood Plan: Printing and advertising for the February consultation event cost £549. The remaining budget has been transferred to reserves in anticipation of future significant costs.

Paths & Roads Projects: The allocated budget has been transferred to reserves to support future repairs to the upper section of Harsfold Lane.

Projects Using Reserves: The main expenditure of £20,950 related to the Operation Watershed drainage improvements in School Road and the Little Green carried out in May, the funding having been received from WSCC in the previous financial year. A further £1,930 funded tree work, budgeted but not completed in the previous year.

Transfer to Reserves: At the year-end it is necessary for the PC to zero the budget by making transfers to Reserves. The transfers totalled £105,630, made to: General Reserve - £7,149, Community Infrastructure Levy - £79,431, Village Maintenance / Projects - £17,000, Neighbourhood Plan - £1,950, Allotment Deposits - £100.

A full version of this report and financial details, including the Internal & External Auditors' Reports, are published on the village website www.wisboroughgreen.org

Please note that to meet accessibility requirements, the website will shortly be updated and the address will change to
www.wisboroughgreen-pc.gov.uk

The Parish Council's email has now been changed to:
clerk@wisboroughgreen-pc.gov.uk