



# HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT for 2024/25

## HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**Office** in the Henfield Hall Monday to Friday 9am to Midday  
**Telephone** 01273 492507 **Email** office@henfield.gov.uk

**Full Council** meets 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month at 7pm in the Henfield Hall.

**Members:** Elaine Goodyear (Chairman); Jane Jones (Vice-Chairman); Daryn Grossmith; David Jemmett; Andrea May; Samantha Leader; Richard Kendall; Michael Morgan; Gillian Perry; Josh Potts; Russell Shaw; Chris Simmonds; Fiona Ayres; Mark Andrews and Adrian Willard.

### Committee Structure of Council

Finance Risk & Change	Meets – 10.30am Wednesday	Monthly
Plans Advisory	Meets – 7:00pm Thursday	Monthly
Open Spaces	Meets – 9.30am Thursday	Monthly
Village Amenities	Meets – 10.30am Wednesday	Monthly
Museum	Meets – 7.30pm Wednesday	Quarterly
Joint Commons	Meets 9.30am Thursday	Quarterly
Children and Young People	Meets 6.30pm Monday	Monthly

## Individual Committee Reports

### Finance, Risk and Change Committee (FRC) Report

This Committee comprises the Chairmen of the Parish Council's standing committees and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council. FRC's remit is to deal with all matters financial and regulatory, along with change projects and items not addressed by other Council committees, such as:

- staff matters, including pay and remuneration;
- monthly reconciliation of bank accounts;
- financial decisions, including insurance and the management of bank accounts;
- approving the remit of sub-committees and working groups.

We also make recommendations to Council regarding changes to the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and other Council policies and plans. For example, this year we have updated our policy on Pre-Application Discussions with Developers and Landowners to reflect best practice in this complex field.

As part of our oversight of financial matters, we have approved expenditure from reserves and/or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds towards supporting our Youth Club, the provision of an accessible roundabout at the Kings Field, the renewal of our village signs and renovation of our Skate Park. Unfortunately, the lights on the path in the Cemetery have proved unsatisfactory, due to internal corrosion, and we are negotiating with the suppliers and installers to have these corrected without further expense to the Parish.

We are having discussions with Shermanbury Parish Council and West Sussex Highways about the possibility of installing electronic warning signs when flooding occurs at Mockbridge and also with Community Transport Sussex about the future funding of the Community Bus and Henfield Electric Car Club.

We anticipate that we will soon need to commission a new website as there are increasing numbers of problems associated with the current one. We are also considering how to create appropriate storage for the equipment which our team of Works Officers use to such good effect around the village. In addition, we will need to replace the Council van; in accordance with our policy on Carbon Reduction, we are seeking to acquire an electric vehicle.

This Council is committed to maintaining services in Henfield and Small Dole to the highest standard that our finances will allow, for the benefit of all residents and visitors. Our budget for 2025/26 needs to take into account that, amongst other factors:

- staff costs, which include National Insurance, are increasing;
- our rent for the Parish Office and the Museum have risen;
- our other costs, for fuel, materials and equipment, have also risen.

For the next financial year (2025/26) the Council precept will be increased to £373,220. This is a rise of 7% and is the equivalent of an £8.68 per year increase per household.

I hope that you feel from what you read in this year's report, and those of the Council's standing committees, that we provide a good service for your money.

**Jane Jones - Committee Chairman.**

**Committee Members:** Russell Shaw (Vice Chair); Elaine Goodyear; Michael Morgan; Josh Potts; Samantha Leader and Gill Perry.

### **Recreation and Open Spaces Committee (ROS) Report**

In 2023-4 the Recreation and Open Spaces committee have continued their work both with recreation (including links with local sports clubs) on management of the other Parish open spaces in the village like the Community Orchard.

**Sports-** It is pleasing that the Leisure Centre project to put in Padel tennis courts is underway adding to the range of sports in the village. We have liaised with the District Council sport and recreation officer and hope to use this link should the Parish Council be in a position to apply for other sports facilities as a result of any planned developments.

**Footpaths –** The ROS committee aims to arrange a walk each year and this year it was the 'Walk for Malcolm' in memory of Councillor Malcolm Eastwood. This was a lovely community event to celebrate his contribution to the village and raise money for the BrainsTrust. In addition, alongside other committees, we have been considering footpaths in the village that are important to the local people.

**Trees –** new trees with blossom for pollinators have been added at the King's Field Playground and adjacent to the car park on Kings Field. We have also arranged the required professional

three year Tree Survey to ensure trees managed by the Parish are safe and healthy, which will happen soon.

Verges- this committee has collaborated with Village Amenities committee members in considering where bulbs and some wildflowers could be encouraged whilst keeping the village look well maintained.

In our Community Orchard at the Sandpit Field, several more trees were planted. Some of these were donated by local residents in memory of their loved ones and the Committee has been very pleased to be able to assist with this. Henfield has also had a generous donation of a new bench for the orchard with a splendid view of the South Downs. Henfield Scouts and families continued their support for wildlife in the Orchard area and built a Hibernaculum, another ‘bug hotel’, and put up numerous bird-boxes made by Henfield Shed. With this help, and the skilled interventions of our works officer team, the Community Orchard is now both a thriving place for wildlife to flourish and a lovely quiet place for reflection. All this work supported community efforts during Year of Biodiversity 2024.

**Gill Perry - Committee Chairman**

**Committee Members:** Richard Kendall (Vice-Chair); Andrea May; Chris Simmonds; Daryn Grossmith; Fiona Ayres and David Jemmett.

**Plans Advisory Committee (PAC) Report**

This Committee as a ‘Statutory Consultee’ comments upon planning applications within Henfield Parish and advises the relevant planning authorities. The planning authorities with responsibility for decision-making are Horsham District Council (HDC) and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNP). Additionally, the Committee seeks to influence the Local Plan, made by Horsham District Council especially in as far as development in the Parish is concerned.

The PAC has scrutinised 82 planning applications since 1st April 2024. Each application is evaluated against the policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework; the Horsham District Council’s Planning Framework; the South Downs National Park Local Plan; the Horsham Conservation Area Management Plan for Henfield; the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (made in June 2021), and the Henfield Parish Design Statement. It has also provided commentary of the draft Local Plan.

Planning applications can only be determined against material planning considerations and, when objecting to an application, the objections will be on the grounds that the application is in conflict with the Planning Frameworks referred to above and the specific policies are referenced. Particular care is taken for applications in the Henfield Conservation Area and for work to trees with a Tree Preservation order or within the conservation area. The PAC uses the expertise of our Parish Tree Warden, John Willis, to inform our advice to Horsham on any applications concerning trees.

As well as commenting on individual planning applications, the PAC responds to district and regional consultations.

The table below summaries the work of the PAC over the period 1st April 2024 to 28th February 2025

Total Number of Planning Applications Reviewed	82 (2 withdrew)
Number Supported (No Objections)	52
Number where we Objected	23

Number deferred for further information	5
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What were the Planning Applications for?

New Houses	17 (1 Withdrew)
Extensions to existing homes	28 (1 Withdrew)
Removal or Reduction in Trees	9
Other planning matters	28

The PAC meets twice a month and residents are welcome to attend. The Horsham District Council website provides a link for all planning applications where detailed plans can be viewed and comments made, together with planning policy documents.

**Russell Shaw – Committee Chairman**

**Committee Members:** Daryn Grossmith (Vice-Chair); Jane Jones; Andrea May; Elaine Goodyear; Adrian Willard and Gillian Perry.

**Museum Committee Report**

**MUSEUM REPORT 2025**

We continue putting photos on our own Facebook page, and Stephanie Richards, our Costume Curator, also contributes.

Visitor numbers to the museum last year totalled 1710 which is an increase of 200 from the previous year.

We had evening visits from the Henfield Cubs in October when 40 came to the museum over two evenings. During the year we had two visits from U3A groups who were also given historical walks around the village. Last year we introduced a series of five guided historical walks around the village at different times and days, led by myself and Steve Robotham, the money received from all of these walks went to The Friends of Henfield Museum. Stephanie had a group of 15 fashion design students come to the museum from the University of Brighton to look at the costume collection, and also the curator of Chertsey Museum, a lecturer from the London College of Fashion, and three other ladies. Stephanie also gave a talk on our costume collection to the Bognor Regis Local History Society. I also gave a slide show talk in August on Henfield to the residents at Red Oaks.

Throughout the year there have been temporary displays on Morris Dancing, West Sussex on the Front Line, 120 yrs of Henfield Fire Brigade, and Dr Who. We also had a display of Devil’s Dyke in the Roving Display Case, and a WW2 display which was produced to coincide with the production of Goodnight Mister Tom in October, which was performed in The Henfield Hall. Stephanie put on costume displays for the Village Evening in March, and the Biodiversity event in December, and had a running display at the museum throughout the year on biodiversity in clothing materials.

We opened the museum at 6pm on the Village Evening in March but it didn’t attract any visitors. We had more luck extending the opening hours on Election Day in July when 73 people

came in the museum. We also had a pitch at the fair in the Kingsfield in June where we gave people the opportunity of throwing quoits.

The oral history project has started up again after covid, and we have an enthusiastic band of women who are keen to carry on the good work.

A forward plan covering the next five years is in place. The plan will include producing more imaginative displays, engaging with local schools, looking into providing more storage for museum objects, carrying out a survey to find out why more people are not visiting the museum, continuing with the oral history project, increase focus on natural and ecological history of Henfield, increase knowledge of Henfield's lost and tangible history, continue with the digitisation of the museum collection, continue with providing more signage to the museum around the village, continue with the disposal of objects which are not within our collections policy, continue with the 3D scanning project, continue to develop the collection outreach in the community with the Roving Display Case, and develop further the use of social media. This is an ambitious programme of aims which can only be achieved with your help, so please come forward and volunteer your services if you fancy getting involved with some of this work.

**Alan Barwick - Curator**

**Josh Potts - Committee Chairman**

**Committee Members:** (Vice-Chair); Elaine Goodyear; Michael Morgan, Alan Barwick, Leo Jago and Rob Gordon.

### **Henfield Commons Joint Committee Report**

Our three local commons: Henfield, Broadmare and Oreham, are owned by Horsham District Council but are managed through a joint committee made up of local Henfield parish councillors, local residents and Henfield Conservation Volunteers alongside relevant expert Horsham Council officers and 3 District councillors from Henfield and Bramber, Beeding and Woodmancote.

In addition to the commons, this committee guide management for the Tanyard and advises on other areas owned by Horsham, like Danny's Pond.

During is last year the committee has clarified how it will work in future. A new system where the ecologists and parks officers work out a programme of works with our local volunteers and Parish Council Works Officers has been established. So far this has been working well and has achieved some positive results such as the recent works on the Causeway across Henfield Common.

All works need to be considered in the light of Ecological Management Plans where these exist, so that we can maintain our local designated wildlife sites in the way that they need to be for maximum nature recovery.

The next Henfield Common Village Fair is going to be held in September 2025, in sympathy with this approach, so that the biodiversity gains made recently will not be impacted by use of the commons when pollinators rely on full summer flower.

A recent BN5 article has explained the Management plan for the commons which we hope has been useful. The Horsham District Council parks team have also advised the parish and community on the best approach to managing the enclosed Danny's Pond area.

**Committee members;** Gill Perry (Chairman) and Andrea May for Henfield Parish Council. Roger Noel and Josh Potts for Horsham District Council.

**Regular Committee attendees** - John Willis- Tree Warden, Dick Nye- Works Officer, Tony Baker-

Henfield Conservation Volunteers, Eddie Colgate- local resident. Officers from Horsham District Council also attend this committee. (Pete Crawford, Malin Andersson, Jacob Everett, Neal Matheson)

### **Village Amenities Committee Report (VAC)**

The purpose of this Committee is to manage and develop amenities for the benefit of the people of Henfield. We deal with, amongst other matters:

- the provision, maintenance and management of public seats, floral displays, cycle racks and shelters, public toilets, bus shelters, noticeboards, Christmas lights, litter picking, dog bins and street scene in general
- the management of the Cemetery in accordance with legislation.
- the organisation of Remembrance events.
- transport-related issues, including Community Speedwatch.

For the last couple of years we have reported that we were working with St. Peters School as to how we might encourage more walking and cycling to St. Peter's School and to make travel safer. West Sussex County Council have an Active Travel Plan and they have encouraged us to participate in this and we met with them in October 2022 with our thoughts and suggestions. However, since then we have made little progress. However we did meet with them again at the end of 2024 and we are now informed that surveys will be carried out shortly and the result of this will be available in the Spring. We await with anticipation.

We repeat what we said last year concerning the service that Community Transport Sussex provide by way electric cars for communal use. This is a sustainable asset for the village as it is community-run and used as a valuable resource. One of the main aims of the Club is to have a positive environmental impact by reducing the need for second cars and to bring the community together giving residents a tangible sense of ownership. Vehicles can be hired on a self-drive basis or with a volunteer if needed. If you are interested in finding out more about this then visit <https://www.ctsussex.org.uk/services/electric-vehicle-community-car-club> or [phone 01273 087096](tel:01273087096)

We now have car electric charging points in both of the Car Parks situated off the High Street, at the rear of the Henfield Leisure Centre and in Fabians Way. Further points are proposed at Wantley Hill Estate.

We would remind residents that there a covered cycle rack in the car park behind Sainsburys, a cycle rack at the entrance to the Library and a cycle post on the Village Square.

We have continued to improve the Cemetery with planting of more spring bulbs and this will be followed with planting of flowering shrubs. A new small memorial has been created to remember the 42 children buried between 1882 and 1903 alongside the path on the eastern side. Unfortunately, we are still having problems with the lights installed in the Cemetery and we are continuing to resolve the issue.

The new seat has been installed on the Village Square (the area in front of the veterinary surgery and dry cleaners) as Henfield's Memorial to the late Queen Elizabeth II and is being well used. The three signs at the entrances to the Village have needed to be replaced and new ones will shortly be installed.

We continue to make use of the Community Pay Back Team in Henfield on a number of projects.

The appearance of our Village lies at the top of our agenda and we strive to make this a clean, tidy and attractive place to live in and visit. We are fortunate to have a dedicated team of Litter Pickers to keep us free from litter and our works team play such an important role in keeping the Village in good condition. Our hanging baskets, tubs and flowers beds provide colour throughout the year which are followed by our new Christmas lighting in the High Street.

We continue to organise our Remembrance Day events in our village and I thank everyone who are involved in their organisation and those that take part in the Parade on the Sunday.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of this committee for their continuing hard work and support

**Michael Morgan - Committee Chairman.**

**Committee Members:** Richard Kendall (Vice-Chair); David Jemmett; Jane Jones; Russell Shaw; and Samantha Leader.

### **Children and Young People Committee Report (CYP)**

This Committee is a new standing committee of the Parish Council created in June 2022. The purpose of this Committee is to support the children and young people of Henfield from birth to adulthood and to encourage them to be healthy, safe and active participants in their community. The Committee also seeks to make appropriate recommendations to ensure children and young people have a voice and that their views are represented. This Committee also has responsibility for the playgrounds and skate park in the village.

This year the Committee has organised :

- Scoot Jam
- A display stand in the BP Guild Fair
- Installed an inclusive roundabout
- Organised a ROSPA survey and essential repairs
- Formed a working group to consult on design for the renovation and redesign of the skate park
- Organised a Skate park field trip/survey to South Water, Billinghamurst and Hassocks.
- Commissioning of a preliminary skate park design
- Facilitated access to the community bus by the football club, scouts, youth club and guides.
- Bulb planting with Sustainable Henfield 2030
- Managed a Youth Notice Board in the bus shelter/ Instagram page.
- Consulted with the Scouts, St. Peter's School and the Football club on youth matters.

The work of the committee is supported by a part time Youth Coordinator Georgina Campsey. Our plans for this coming year are to focus on the work to improve the Skate Park and engage young people in the Parish Council's Year of "Care and Wellbeing".

The committee would welcome suggestions, especially from children and young people and remind you all that you are welcome to join our monthly meetings or write to the Parish Clerk and Youth Coordinator with ideas and suggestions, especially if you are interested in running them with our support.

**Samantha Leader – Committee Chairman.**

**Committee Members:** Chris Simmonds (Vice-Chair); Elaine Goodyear; Adrian Willard; Fiona Ayres and Josh Potts.

