



HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL HENFIELD PARISH MEETING

TUESDAY 5th MARCH 2024 AT 7:00pm

IN THE HENFIELD HALL

In attendance: Cllrs E Goodyear (Chairman), Fiona Ayres, G Perry, J Jones, C Simmonds, M Morgan, D Jemmett, A Willard, D Grossmith, A May, J Potts and S Leader.

Apologies were received from Cllrs R Shaw and R Kendall.

Present: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager), Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator), Ms G Campsey (Youth Coordinator), Cllr S Payne (West Sussex County Council - WSCC) and 78 members of the public.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

1. WELCOME BY CHAIRMAN OF HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The Chairman welcomed all those in attendance and ran through the agenda for the evening. The Councillors introduced themselves, including the two Horsham District Councillors for Henfield.

2. AGREEMENT TO THE MINUTES OF 2023 MEETING

These were agreed.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Some sad news this year. In June a longstanding Parish Councillor Nigel Stevens (who stood down in May 2023) had died after a long illness. He was an expert in the planning system and together with Ray Osgood was a key member of the Neighbourhood Plan team. He also wrote the Parish Design Statement. This was followed in December by the sudden death of Parish Councillor and newly elected District Councillor Malcolm Eastwood. He spent many years as Parish Council Chairman and was full of drive and enthusiasm. Both Nigel and Malcolm brought significant knowledge and experience to the Parish Council and will be greatly missed.

Some Headlines for the Last 12 months:

- In May 2023 local elections and two new Councillors were elected and then two more were co-opted.
- There was a successful family event on the Rothery Field to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III, including being part of the national celebration beacon lighting.
- Henfield welcomed a new branch of Sainsbury's in May 2023 and a new pharmacy to replace Lloyds, which has resulted in a huge improvement in services.
- The Parish Council held a popular Skateboard Jam in September which was well attended by ages from 5 to 17 years.
- The Parish Council worked with groups and organisations to seek grants to relieve the cost-of-living pressures.
- The Henfield Community Fridge was launched at the Leisure Centre.

5. HENFIELD COMMUNITY FRIDGE

Henfield's Community Fridge opened a year ago in the Leisure Centre. Its primary aim is to reduce food waste by collecting food from local stores that is on or past its 'best before' date but is still perfectly fit for consumption. They are not permitted to take or give away food past its 'use by' date. So far, the fridge has saved six tons of food from going to landfill. The volunteers collect from Sainsbury's, Truffles, Swains Farm and occasionally Cornerweighs. Everything is weighed and recorded before being handed out to residents. It was stressed that this is not a Food Bank; there is no need to register as the food is available for anyone at all with the primary aim of reducing waste. The store at the Leisure Centre is open on Tuesdays at 5pm, Friday and Saturday at 9am and it closes when the food has run out. They have 25 volunteers who help with collections and running the store. More volunteers would be welcomed. Rotas are released once a month and volunteers put their names down in the slots they can help with, varying from once a month to 2 or 3 times a week. They have a young man who is helping as part of his Duke of Edinburgh awards and it is hoped to also involve the Scouts and Guides. Finally, the King launched his Coronation Food Project this year. The volunteers wrote to him to tell him about the Henfield project and received a letter and personally signed card in response.

The Chairman added that the Leisure Centre is a key partner is the Community Fridge, they have been very helpful and it is an ideal location. The trustees were thanked for their support.

6. YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

The Chairman pointed out the rich and diverse habitat that Henfield has, such as the three Commons to the east of the village and the River Adur to the west. She introduced a local ecologist who has initiated a Henfield Nature Project to speak about the project.

As part of the Year of Biodiversity the Henfield Nature challenge has been launched using the Inaturalist app and website to map the biodiversity and habitats in Henfield and Small Dole. So far there have been 600 entries by 38 people; they have a target of 3,000 entries by 200 people. The app is easy to use and automatically logs location; information can then be added including a photograph of what you have seen. Volunteers are running events and various talks including a bioblitz at the Tanyard on the 8th June, guided walks to discover plants, insects, bats, fungi and lichen and it is hoped lots of families will also attend to help their children learn about nature and wildlife. There will also be a pesticide amnesty run by Sustainable Henfield 2030 in the summer. There is now a Henfield Nature blog tracking progress and also a Henfield Nature Instagram page.

The Chairman added that the calendar of events and more information can be found on the Parish Council website. She added that the Computer Club may be able to assist with setting up the Inaturalist app if needed.

7. UPDATE FROM THE 2023 MEETING

The Chairman reported that the Henfield Electric Car Club (HECC) had launched in June and the cars are now ready to use for short or long journeys. They can be hired with or without a volunteer driver and prices range from £5 per hour to £45 for a day. Users need to become a member, the cost being £30 per year. The project has been somewhat impeded by Horsham District Council's inability to have car charging points installed in the two main village car parks due to lack of capacity in the grid, but it is hoped this will be resolved in 2024.

The newly appointed Youth Coordinator introduced herself and gave some background on herself and her previous career as a Police Officer working in neighbourhood policing. She has

continued to work on the projects initiated by the Children and Young People Committee, such as improvements to the Skate Park, upgrading the various play areas in the village and, building on the successful Skate Jam. She is hoping to arrange a similar event for scooters hosted by a European champion. She also continues to research and develop ideas for a Youth Hub and a Youth Forum. She has been visiting various groups and organisations in the village, in order to identify any gaps in provision and hopes that she can facilitate some joint working. She is also working with other committees and has recently arranged for some more trees to be planted in the Kings Field play area to provide some much-needed shade.

8. OPEN FORUM

Questions from Members of the Public

- A resident asked if the Summer Fair would return. The Chairman replied that it would not be hosted by the Parish Council any longer due to the work and organization required; the Parish Council does not have the capacity. However, the Council has organised similar family events recently for the Jubilee and Coronation. Separately, the BP Guild are planning an event on the 15th June this year on the Kings Field to coincide with the King's birthday. All local clubs and organisations will be contacted with an invitation to attend. The Parish Council will also be organizing a beacon lighting on the Rothery on the 6th June to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D Day.
- A resident asked whether there are likely to be any improvements to public transport. Cllr Payne answered that she expects to be able to share some very good news regarding the bus service soon.
- A resident requested double yellow lines for Chestnut Way/Chestnut End, as pulling on to Church Street is difficult due to parked cars. Cllr Payne explained the TRO process and offered to assist the resident. She added that community agreement would be needed and that she and Cllr Potts would be visiting the site on Monday next week.
- A resident asked whether wood chippings from felled trees could be used to improve muddy pathways. Cllr Perry answered that this had been tried on the Common horse trail and was not successful as it just sank into the mud. However the Recreation and Open Spaces committee would consider the issue. She also added that felled trees are often left in situ by WSCC contractors as a wildlife habitat.
- A resident asked for an update on the new Scout building. Cllr Simmonds replied that the external doors and windows would be fitted next week. This will mean that the building is water-tight so further grants and funding can be released. Attention will then turn to the internal fit out. They already have promises of carpenters, electricians and internal doors and frames. More money still needs to be raised but they hope to complete the building this year.
- A resident asked whether there was any progress on the parking problems on the high street, particularly in light of the Chief Constable's promise of action. It was explained that double yellow lines are enforced by Horsham District Council and zig zags by the Police. The Parish Council continues to put pressure on both to attend more frequently. The Parish Council are also waiting to hear from WSCC on whether anything could be installed on the pavement outside One Stop to deter parking, such as railings or bollards. The Chairman encouraged all residents to take photographs of people parking on the zig zag lines and report to Operation Crackdown. CCTV at the location was rejected by Sussex Police due to data protection issues as well as the resources needed to continually monitor footage. A resident added that the Church Street junction is also impacted by this parking issue as it is directly opposite. It was suggested that residents ought to be able to purchase a discounted annual parking permit for the library car park rather than just businesses, which might deter some of the parking on Church Street.
- A resident thanked Councillors for all of their hard work throughout the year.

9. APPROVE DATE OF NEXT YEAR'S PARISH MEETING

4th March 2025.

The Chairman thanked all for attending.

Meeting Closed at 7.55pm.