

RUSTINGTON PARISH MEETING

MINUTES: of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting held on 10 April 2025

PRESENT: Rustington Parish Councillors A Cooper (In the Chair), Mrs C Broomfield, M Broomfield, Mrs A Cooper, R Grevett, G Lee, Ms L Lloyd, Mrs S Partridge, Ms M Revell and D Rogers, County Councillor Dr J Walsh, District Councillor S Gunner, Mrs C Ward, Ms R Costan, Mrs C Harris and J Burch (Rustington Parish Council), D Bishop, N Helyer, S Marsden and M Warrington (Littlehampton District Lions Club), Ms C Burton (Zachary Merton League of Friends), P Cavell and Ms P Overington-Gould (Rustington Residents Association), Ms A Clarke and C Fuller (Arun Community Transport), Chief Superintendent S Hale and Sergeant D West (Sussex Police), M Jones (Hope for a Home and Arun LGBTQ Community), Mrs L May and N Taylor (Rustington Short Mat Bowls), Ms B Moody, Mrs S Marsden (Rustington Heritage Association), Ms J Parker-Smith (Blind Veterans UK), Mrs J Pickering and Mrs J Onslow (Rustington Players), K Revell, Ms P Revell and B Thomas

APOLOGIES: Rustington Parish Councillors Mrs V Allen, J Bennett, J Ceiriog-Hughes, Mrs P Gregory, Mrs C Stevens and P Warren, District Councillor Ms L Edwards, Miss A Bowers and Mrs G Elliott (Georgian Gardens Community Primary School), A Gess (Woodlands Table Tennis Club), Mrs S Meekings (Summerlea Community Primary School), Reverend N Loveless (St Peter & St Paul Parish Church), M Pollard (Arun Youth Projects) and Ms M Smailes (Rustington Community Primary School)

Prior to the formal business, West Sussex Divisional Commander, Chief Superintendent Stu Hale, addressed the Meeting and provided an overview of Policing Nationally and in Sussex. He was accompanied by Sergeant Danny West, and together they also provided information on the current work of the Arun Neighbourhood Policing Team.

During the Presentation Chief Superintendent Hale and Sergeant West, referred to/reported on the following:-

- Resourcing Challenges - As with most Public Sector Organisations
- Police Call Wait Times - Sussex best in the Country
- Policing Guarantee - Uplifted by 20,000 Police Officers - Sussex to get more, and will be in neighbourhood teams
- Devolution - Business as usual until it is implemented and 'live'
- Cyber, Fraud and Investment Investigations
- 63,000 crimes per year in West Sussex - Daily in Sussex - 2,000 plus calls a day and 312 crimes reported
- Illegal Encampments - Travellers - Police Response and Powers
- Youth Anti-Social/Nuisance Behaviour
- Shoplifting in Rustington - Only 125 Reports in the last 12 months - Any such incidents need to be reported so statistics can be more indicative of the 'true picture' and will result in more police resources.

Chief Superintendent Hale and Sergeant West then responded to a number of questions posed by those parishioners in attendance, including concerns regarding Illegal Encampments by Travellers, Shoplifting, E Bikes, Hate Crime Figures, Rape and Misogynistic Crime Statistics locally.

The Chairman then thanked Chief Superintendent Hale for his most interesting Presentation and for taking the time to attend the Meeting. He also thanked Sergeant West for accompanying Chief Superintendent Hale.

1. WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

Prior to the commencement of the formal business of the Meeting, the Chairman of the Meeting, Councillor Cooper, welcomed all present to the Meeting and thanked them for taking the time to attend.

He said that, unfortunately, the Chairman of the Council had been unable to attend due to an unavoidable work-related emergency.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting held on 11 April 2024 were approved by the Meeting and signed by the Chairman of the Meeting as a correct record.

3. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RUSTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

In the absence of the Chairman of the Council, Councillor Bennett, the Chairman of the Meeting delivered his Annual Report on the activities of the Parish Council during the preceding year. A copy of this Report is attached and forms a part of these Minutes.

4. AUDITED STATEMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Meeting received the Audited Statement of the Parish Council's Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The Clerk reported that the External Auditors, Moore East Midlands, had stated that the information contained in the Council's Annual Return was in accordance with proper practices and, apart from one very minor administrative omission, no other matters had come to their attention to give cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

The Clerk said that these Accounts were available for inspection in the Council Offices.

5. FINANCES FOR THE YEARS ENDING 31 MARCH 2025 AND 31 MARCH 2026

The Meeting received a Report from Councillor Cooper, in his capacity as Chairman of the Parish Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee, on the Council's finances for the years ending 31 March 2025 and 31 March 2026. A copy of this Report is attached and forms a part of these Minutes.

6. LOCAL SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

The Chairman of the Meeting advised the Meeting that the Governing Bodies from each of the three Primary Schools in Rustington were invited to submit a written Report to the Council prior to the Meeting, to enable them to be distributed to everyone in attendance. Representatives from the Schools could then attend the Meeting, if they so wished, to respond to any questions that might be posed 'from the floor'.

She then confirmed that written Reports had been received from Miss Amie Bowers, Headteacher and Mrs Gemma Elliott, Chair of Governors, Georgian Gardens Community Primary School, Ms Marie Smailes, Headteacher, Rustington Community Primary School and Mr Joe Todd, Headteacher and Mrs Sue Meekings, Chair of School Community Council, Summerlea Community Primary School.

Formal Transcripts of all of the aforementioned Reports are attached and form a part of these Minutes.

7. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

(a) County Councillor Mrs Alison Cooper

Councillor Mrs Cooper delivered a comprehensive Report on County Council matters as follows:-

One of the biggest issues we have faced over the past year has been the closing of Zachary Merton Community Hospital, and whilst we hope it will be temporary, the huge estimated costs of £8M-£10M has put a huge question mark on its future. In my role as Vice Chair of the Adult Social Care Committee, myself and colleagues have been putting pressure on the responsible Trust to commit to keeping it as a medical facility.

There is still work to do in this regard but I will continue to work as hard as I can to keep this pressure up.

Whilst a significant percentage of my case work as a County Councillor is highways generated this year significant progress is being made due to increased funding and changes in Service Level Agreements, new Contracts and even some AI innovations coming through. Rather than bore you all with these details, I've printed off a few notes to give you a summary of these updates and projects. This will be attached to the Minutes, but a copy has been given to everyone present tonight.

However, as far as the County Council finances are being used, the majority of the Budget is spent in two areas and that's Adult Social Care and Education.

There are significant challenges from the increase in Special Educational Needs provision as demands continue to rise year on year compounding the issue.

However, in West Sussex one main challenge and risk to budgeting pressures comes from the increasing elderly population and the rising need for care. Census and public health indicators show that in Arun specifically the increase in population of over 65s and over 85s will be the highest level in West Sussex by 2040 which will create significant issues.

As Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation commences, this will be a challenge to those who will take control.

Increased Care costs are also impacting Budgets with the new National Insurance increases and minimum wage rises compounding the pressure. I'm committed to raising and highlighting the issue at every junction possible throughout the Local Government Reorganisation that will progress this year. It is a complicated issue and one that Central Government must acknowledge is beyond the scope of most Authorities, but particularly here in West Sussex given the demographics.

West Sussex County Council produces a Monthly Economic Snapshot and when looking at the figures they are about a month behind. Looking at these figures is eye opening and in the challenging financial climate I plan to keep a close eye on the numbers.

Examples of topics included are:-

The number of Businesses closing and the number of New Businesses

Local Benefit Claimants

Local Needs

PAYE Real Time Information

Job Vacancies

Labour Market

The statistics shown are all across the Country and then down to District level. It's a very interesting snapshot of what's happening in our area and how our area is coping with the economic outlook as this changes. It also shows how we compare with other Districts within the County and nationally.

West Sussex County Council continues to produce its Newsletters and Press Releases on interesting and informative events that are happening in West Sussex and I would urge you all to sign up to these to benefit from the information that is cascaded on a regular basis.

And finally, the Lyminster-By-Pass is due to open on 30 April 2025.

(b) County Councillor Dr James Walsh

Councillor Dr Walsh then reported that he was responsible for a small section of Rustington, namely the North West corner.

He then referred to the following issues in connection with the County Council:-

- *Temporary Closure of Zachary Merton Hospital - In his capacity as a member of the Health and Services Scrutiny Committee, he said that a great deal of the Committee's time had been occupied by the temporary closure of the Hospital - Now estimated that £8M-£10M required to bring building back into use - If it were to close it would be a tragic loss to the community - If the worst scenario was to happen, he was determined to see capital receipts from the sale of the facility invested in NHS facilities in the local area, either Littlehampton or Rustington*
- *County Council's Financial Position - Similar to other County Council's across the Country, West Sussex County Council in dire straits - No national funding reform for Adult Social Care until 2028 - The 2024/2025 financial year Adult Care Budget expected to be £19M overspent and the 2025/2026 Budget expected to be overspent by £63M. Special Educational Needs (SEND) cumulative Budget deficit £131M, expected to increase to £222M by 2026, with no means of repaying it, unless written off by Government*
- *Devolution - I am personally opposed to an elected Mayor for the whole of Sussex, as too big an area, and decision making too remote. Abolition of Arun District Council and West Sussex County Council - To be replaced by Unitary Authorities - Not yet been decided how many Unitary Councils will be needed across Sussex or their shape - Hoping that Parish and Town Councils will be given more powers.*

(c) Arun District Councillor Shaun Gunner

Councillor Gunner then advised the Meeting that there were currently five District Councillors representing Rustington. He then provided an overview on casework issues and District Council matters as follows:-

- *Motorbikes (Home Deliveries), parking on pavement outside of Kentucky Fried Chicken Shop on Broadmark Parade*
- *Garages - Georgian Gardens*
- *Litter on A259 - Worthing Road - To be cleared*
- *Stopping of the introduction of additional Beach Huts on Rustington Greensward (Seafront)*
- *Stopping of proposed expansion of Little Stars Nursery in Sheepfold Avenue*
- *Zachary Merton Hospital - Working with Councillor Mrs Alison Cooper and Alison Griffiths, MP - Will do everything possible to fight to save it*
- *Lack of Local Plan across District - Effectively means that houses can be built anywhere*
- *Similar position to Councils across the country, in that Parking Charges, Service Charges and Council Tax have all increased in cost*
- *Bin Collections - Weekly refuse collection to change to two weekly, but will have weekly food waste collections - New bins to be issued for all*

- *Devolution - What it really means - Not yet known - Arun District Council and West Sussex County Council to be abolished - Parish Council more important as will be likely to take on a wider role with more responsibilities and powers - Already happened in other parts of the country*

The above-mentioned County and District Councillors then responded to a number of questions from individuals in attendance.

The Chairman of the Meeting then conveyed his thanks and appreciation to Councillors Mrs Cooper, Dr Walsh and Gunner for taking the time to attend the Meeting and for addressing the issues raised by attendees.

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- (a) *Concern expressed regarding lack of infrastructure to support new housing developments - Responses supplied by District Councillors Gunner and Cooper and County Councillor Dr Walsh*
- (b) *Concern raised regarding the height of the impressive new Outdoor Fitness Equipment on the Woodlands Recreation Ground - Too high for some people to be able to access and use - Parish Council to investigate*
- (c) *Request for both 80th Anniversaries of VE and VJ Day to be recognised - Blind Veterans representative advised that it would be recognising both Anniversaries - Parish Council would certainly be laying wreaths at the War Memorial (junction of Claigmar Road and The Street) and The Chaucery Memorial*
- (d) *Request for uneven ground at Conbar Avenue Allotment Site to be levelled - Parish Council to investigate*
- (e) *Expression of appreciation to the Parish Council for its continued support of Arun Community Transport and offer to attend a future Council Meeting to give an overview of the activities it provided for the local community - In the year ending 31 March 2025, 260 Rustington residents used the service (25% of total users - Parish with the most users marginally) - Chris Fuller, Arun Community Transport*
- (f) *Concern raised regarding the untidy and unkempt state of the 'building site' at 66 The Street - Parish Council to contact local Planning Authority to try to get Tidy-Up Order issued*

The Meeting concluded at 9.20 pm.

Chairman:

Date:

RUSTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PARISH MEETING – 10 APRIL 2025
REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL
COUNCILLOR JAMIE BENNETT

Good evening to you all and thank you for taking the time to attend this year's Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting.

I am currently approaching the end of my term as Chairman of the Parish Council, a role which, similarly to my previous two-year term from 2017 to 2019, I have enjoyed immensely. As always, in Rustington, the role of Chairman for me has been rewarding and sometimes challenging, but I have done everything possible to ensure that the wellbeing of the Parishioners of Rustington has been at the forefront of my mind at all times.

Once again, this year, I would like to thank the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Andy Cooper, who has been supported me wholeheartedly over the past almost two years. My gratitude also goes to all of the Members of the Council, who work diligently for the benefit of the Parishioners, attending many Meetings during the year and having to make many difficult and, sometimes, not so popular, decisions. Many thanks to you all.

And just as importantly, my thanks go to all members of the Council's personnel team, who work extremely hard to ensure that all of the Council's services are delivered professionally and most effectively, I would like to record my sincere appreciation. Their unceasing commitment is most certainly praiseworthy. Carole, our Clerk, heads up the Team, ably assisted by the Deputy Clerk, Rosie and Finance Manager, Caroline. They are loyally supported by Elaine (Lamb), Nicky (Cook) and Jo (Mason) respectively, together with the three personnel members at the Samuel Wickens Centre, namely Emma (Neno), Jules (Covey) and Linda (Twine). Jim (Burch), our Leisure and Amenities Officer, Bill (Phillips), the Caretaker of both the Samuel Wickens Centre and the Youth Centre, and our recently appointed Museum Manager, Tamlyn (Smithers). My thanks and appreciation go them all.

I would also like to thank all of the District Councillors who represent Rustington and, particularly, Councillor Shaun Gunner, who has regularly provided Reports for the Full Council Meetings, updating the Council on all matters, Rustington and District-Wide.

My thanks go to County Councillor Alison Cooper, who represents the majority area of the Village. She reports comprehensively on all matters pertaining to West Sussex County Council at the Parish Council's Monthly Meetings. County Councillors Roger Elkins and Dr James Walsh who, also represent smaller areas of the Village.

As always, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all of the Community Groups, Organisations, Clubs and Individuals, within the Village, who work so hard to provide such a wide variety of activities and entertainment for all to enjoy.

At this point, I would just like to make mention of a 'first time ever' Award that was made by the Council on 1 July of last year. Graham Tyler, past Chairman and long-standing (28 years) Councillor and Parishioner, was awarded the Honorary Freedom of the Parish of Rustington. The Award was made in recognition of the unceasing long-term dedication, commitment and eminent service Graham had rendered to the Village and its community – I am sure that those of you who know Graham, would agree that it was a well-deserved tribute.

And now on to the official business of the Meeting. I will only provide a broad insight into the Council's Operation, by giving you an idea of the services and facilities it provides, and touch briefly on the projects and works that have been undertaken during the past twelve months, together with details of any forthcoming noteworthy occasions and events.

I will also provide you with a summary of the roles of the Council's Committees.

I am delighted to report that following the Council's successful grant funding application to the Arun District Council, under the UK Shared Prosperity Funding Programme, the Outdoor Fitness Zone and Multi-Use Games Area/Basketball Court has recently been replaced, with far superior equipment, here on the Woodlands Recreation Ground.

The Public Toilets in the Village again received outstanding Awards in the Loo of the Year Competition, namely Platinum Plus Awards for the Churchill Car Park Unit, Broad mark Lane Mobile Toilets and the Changing Places Unit in The Street and a Platinum Award for The Woodlands Centre External Unit. Biffa's Contract as the Council's Toilet Cleansing Contractor continues most successfully, with all four Units open 7 days per week, with longer opening hours from 1 May to 30 September.

The Christmas Lighting Scheme continues to be a most welcome feature during the Festive Season in the Village Centre and beyond, with some minor enhancements/changes being made year on year.

A number of the Wooden Bus Shelters have been repainted and repaired during the year, and the Beach Shelter at the junction of Sea Road and Sea Lane is currently undergoing a much-needed major renovation.

I can also advise you that a new Stage Lighting System was successfully installed here in the Village Memorial Hall during 2024, and the floor surface was refurbished.

It is anticipated that the long awaited first Phase of the Refurbishment Project for The Woodlands Centre, which will now be including some improvement works to the Village Memorial Hall, will finally come to fruition during this financial year.

I know that Councillor Andy Cooper, in his capacity as Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, will elaborate on the financial implications when he delivers his Report later in the Meeting.

In June of last year, the 80th anniversary of D-Day was celebrated, with the Council hosting a 'themed' free entry Musical Concert, again organised by the Littlehampton Concert Band. The Proclamation was read and two Lamp Lights of Peace were lit as part of the National Commemorations by Councillor Alison Cooper and myself at the Chaucery Memorial and War Memorial respectively.

This year, in May, we will celebrate the 80th Anniversary of VE Day. The Council will again, in partnership with the Littlehampton Concert Band, be hosting a free entry Musical Concert, on the afternoon of Saturday 10 May, and the lighting of the Lamp Lights of Peace will be undertaken by the Vice-Chairman and myself on the evening of the Anniversary, namely Thursday 8 May.

Other Events will include the Littlehampton District Lions Club is hosting a 'themed' Quiz Evening here in the Village Memorial Hall on Thursday 8 May, a small Exhibition in the Museum, together with a themed Public Talk by Graeme Taylor on Wednesday 7 May, and a Rustington Heritage Association Walk on Friday 9 May. Further details of all of these Events

can be obtained from the Council Offices or the Information Centre at the Samuel Wickens Centre, as well as on the Council's Facebook Page.

The Council's Annual Civic Thanksgiving Service, Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service and the Community Carol Concert were again held in October, November and December respectively, and were all extremely successful.

And, now, moving on to the Council's Committees...

Finance and General Purposes

I would like to thank Councillor Andy Cooper, for his most important role as Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Andy will be presenting his Report in respect of the Council's finances for the years ending 31 March 2025 and 31 March 2026, to you later.

My thanks also go to the Members of this vital Committee.

Leisure and Amenities

Thank you to Councillor Alison Cooper who Chairs this very important and wide-reaching Committee, which is responsible for the majority of services provided by the Council, including the Public Toilets, Public Seats, Noticeboards, Street Maps, Beach and Bus Shelters, some Street Lighting, Grass Cutting in the centre of the Village, the Planting, Design and Maintenance of the Floral/Planted Displays plus any other associated functions.

The Youth Centre and The Woodlands Centre are also managed by this Committee, as are the Woodlands Recreation Ground and Woodland Park Sportsfield. And, finally, the Committee is responsible for the Samuel Wickens Centre (incorporating the Community Hall, Museum and the Information Centre).

A very effective and hard-working Committee. Thanks must go to all of its Members, with such a comprehensive scope of responsibility, they all have a most active and important role to play.

Planning

This Committee is consulted on all Applications within the Parish by both the Arun District Council, as the Local Planning Authority and, in certain cases, West Sussex County Council.

Much appreciation must go to Councillor Maria Revell, as she approaches the end of her first term as Chairman of the Planning Committee. The Committee continues to be ably supported by Councillor Peter Warren, who provides detailed descriptions and comprehensive observations for all Planning Applications on which the Committee is consulted, which is of invaluable assistance to the Committee in its deliberations.

Thanks to Maria, Peter and the Members of the Committee.

Allotments

I would like to thank Councillor Mrs Peggy Partridge, Chairman of the Allotments Committee, and the Committee Members, for continuing to oversee the management the three Allotment Sites in the Parish, to a very high standard.

Emergency Planning

Chaired by Councillor Ceiriog-Hughes, this Committee monitors the Council's Emergency Plan, and ensures that procedures are in place for the provision of The Woodlands Centre as a Rest Centre in the event of an emergency within the Parish.

Thank you, John, and your Committee.

The Council is also represented on a number of external Bodies, and continues to have Working Parties looking at ways of improving the way we work.

And that concludes my Report – Hopefully it hasn't been too tiresome to listen to.

Oh, and can I just invite you all to stay behind at the end of the Meeting to enjoy some light refreshments and, if you would like to, take the opportunity to chat with any of the Councillors who are here this evening.

RUSTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PARISH MEETING – 10 APRIL 2025
ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
COUNCILLOR ANDY COOPER

Thank you Chairman and Good Evening Everyone.

I can now present my Annual Report in respect of the Council's finances for the last financial year that ended on 31 March 2025 and for the current financial year ending 31 March 2026.

I would like to start by thanking Caroline Harris, our Council's Finance Manager, and her Administrative Officer, Johanna Mason, with whom, as Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, I have a close working relationship. Obviously, my thanks and appreciation also extend to every member of the Council's committed, hard-working and most loyal Personnel Team.

Before moving on, I would like to advise you of the Council's recent decision to, once again, set its 2025/2026 Precept at £786,000.00.

The upshot of this is that the annual Parish Council charge on a Band 'D' property in Rustington has decreased to approximately £125.00, thereby reducing by approximately £5.00 on the previous year, equating to a saving of 50p per month over the 10-month period.

Turning now to the major Project that the Council has been progressing since 2021, and will continue to, hopefully to a successful conclusion in the coming year, namely the first phase of the Refurbishment and Upgrading of The Woodlands Centre, covering the rear section, including the Entrance, John de Bohun Room, Roger Barwick Room, Roger Montgomeri Room, Kitchen, Toilets, Museum Storage Room. The construction of a new Table/Chair Store for the Village Memorial Hall, together with other more minor refurbishments, will also be included.

It is now anticipated that the original budget of £600,000.00 will need to be increased to approximately £700,000.00 to cover all of the additional works outside of the first phase. The Council will be able to fund £200,000.00 of this from its Capital Reserves and a Public Works Loan Board will be applied for to cover the remaining expenditure, namely £500,000.00. The electrical supply for the Centre was upgraded last year as a priority item.

Other major expenditure items during the last financial year have included £40,000.00, towards the new Outdoor Fitness Equipment, Multi-Use Games/Basketball Area, for which a grant of £48,000.00 was secured from the Arun District Council as part of its UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation from Central Government.

The much-needed refurbishment of the Beach Shelter at a cost of £11,500.00 is soon to be completed, and a number of the Wooden Bus Shelters through the Village have also been repaired and repainted.

A new Stage Lighting System has been installed here in the Village Memorial Hall, with an overhaul of the floor, at a total cost of £18,000.00.

As the majority of items of equipment in the Play Area, on the Recreation Ground, are now nearly 20 years old and in need of replacement, the Council has set up a Play Area Improvement Fund which it hopes to be able to build up over the next few years, so that all of the equipment and safety surfacing can be replaced as soon as sufficient funding is available.

Accordingly, £20,000.00 has been set aside in the current year's budget and it is anticipated that a similar amount will be earmarked on an annual basis going forward.

The Council has also continued to provide many services for its community, including:-

- The management and maintenance of The Woodlands Centre, including the Council Offices, the Youth Centre and the Recreation Ground
- Funding of the Youth Club, via a Service Agreement with Arun Youth Projects
- The management and maintenance of the Samuel Wickens Centre, incorporating the Village Information Centre and the Museum
- The management and maintenance of the Woodland Park Sportsfield
- The management and maintenance of the three Allotment Sites in the Village

During this financial year, the Council will continue to provide a wide range of local services, most of which I have already referred to. But, in addition to these, I would like to mention that the Council is also responsible for over 120 public seats, some 44 street lighting columns in private roads, and as I have already made reference to, the Beach Shelter and all of the Wooden Bus Shelters through the Village.

The Council provides the floral displays in the central shopping area and at various other locations around the Village, and in partnership with Store Property, funds to the tune of up to £10,000.00, the always impressive Christmas Lighting Scheme. It also provides grants to a number of local Clubs and Charitable Organisations, including Citizens' Advice and the Littlehampton District Lions Club.

Smaller projects and expenditure items which, it is anticipated, will be completed during the next 12 months will include:-

- Total top-dressing of the Football Pitch on the Woodlands Recreation Ground
- The purchase and installation of a new PA System here in the Village Memorial Hall and Chairs throughout this Centre
- Refurbishment of the remaining Wooden Bus Shelters throughout the Village, together with more of the Council's Public Seat Stock
- To be able to operate effectively and efficiently, the Council has to provide a central organisation which requires major expenditure, including staffing, security and sufficient insurance cover for all of its assets. In this connection, a large amount of non-supported IT Equipment for members of the Council's Personnel Team will need to be replaced

Before signing off, I would just like to convey my sincere thanks and appreciation to all of my fellow Councillors for their unceasing commitment to achieving and maintaining the objectives of, and services provided by, the Council, whilst always having the continuing financial constraints at the forefront of their minds.

The challenges for the Council will, of course, continue year on year, but I can assure you, as always, that it will meet, and strive to overcome, all of these for the benefit of its Parishioners.



Georgian Gardens CP School

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Website: www.georgiangardens.w-sussex.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Miss A Bowers

Report for Rustington Parish Council 10.4.25

It has been another fantastic year at Georgian Gardens. We hope you enjoy reading about what we have been up to!

S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths)

Last year, we reported that we were building on our vision to become a STEAM school. We are delighted that this year has allowed us to make great strides in developing this within the school. Central to this has been the development of our 'Nebula' STEAM learning zone, which sits at the heart of the school. The space incorporates sand and water play alongside large construction. We are currently developing an area to promote learning around forces and the children enjoy using this outdoor space to conduct their science experiments. Later in the year a large canopy is being installed to make the area usable in all weathers. Our PTA has been amazing at working towards fundraising for this incredible development.



We have reviewed our curriculum to ensure that it aligns with our vision for STEAM education. This includes the opportunity for all pupils to learn about and experience 3D printing and the use of virtual reality headsets. By incorporating interdisciplinary approaches and real-world applications into our teaching, we aim to continue to inspire curiosity and a passion for learning in our students. STEAM club, led by Miss Bowers has continued to be extremely successful.



Artsmark
Gold Award
Awarded by Arts
Council England



Music Provision

Music continues to flourish at the school, with over 120 children a week taking part in peripatetic music lessons. The children love to use the modern music room with all its facilities and are able to perform at a range of points during the year. One of the favourites being our end of year festival on the field, when everyone comes together to celebrate the year. Our choir have been active in the local community and have gone out and about singing Christmas carols in local nursing homes as well as taking up the opportunity to perform at the O2 in London as part of Young Voices.



Learning to Ride Bikes and Road Safety

We are very proud of our youngest pupils who now all have the opportunity to learn to ride a two wheeled bike in reception class. Through a programme called Bikeability the children are taught how to achieve this and almost every child starts year 1 being able to balance and pedal confidently. In Year 6 our pupils undertake cycling proficiency, whereby they learn about road safety on bikes in preparation for the future.

This year we also had a visit from a magic show who taught the pupils all about road safety through amazing tricks!



Artsmark
Gold Award
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Council England



Out and About!

We continue to offer a wide range of opportunities for pupils to get out and about with their learning. We visit a wide range of different venues to learn more about our local area, for example, Goodwood Farm and the Chichester Planetarium. Our eldest pupils take part in a week-long residential at Sayer's Croft in Surrey, where they have the opportunity to develop critical teamwork skills through a range of adventurous activities. We also love to be part of the local community and we hope that you enjoy seeing our pupils Artwork on display at the Angmering train station. The choir have sung at local residential homes and at our community craft fair in December.



New play equipment for Early Years

Our infants have been enjoying the new castle, bridge and mud kitchen in their playground this year.



Everyone Achieves

This year we have taken part in 'Everyone Achieves', an initiative set up by WSCC to ensure that all children, no matter their background or level of disadvantage, have access to the highest quality learning and chances of success. This has involved a variety of training for all staff around Quality First Teaching and reviewing practice within the classrooms to ensure that we have highest aspirations for every child that attends our school.

St. Peter and St. Paul's Church continue to run a regular food pantry at the school and we are very appreciative of the support they offer to our families.



Artsmark
Gold Award
Awarded by Arts
Council England



Why are we a Thrive school?

- Positive relationships are at the heart of Thrive.
- We will use these relationships, together with play and creative activities, to give children key experiences at each different stage of their development.
- Thrive teaches the understanding of children's behaviour as communication, improves learning skills and leads to greater attainment.
- It promotes productive learning for all children.
- It supports practitioners, providing them with confidence to work with more challenging and vulnerable children, and with parents and integrated teams.
- It leads to better relationships at home and in school.

We would like to thank our local community for their ongoing support and work with the school. We currently have a full Governing Body who are volunteers that support the Headteacher in making strategic decisions about the school, we also have a large army of local volunteers who help out with reading, gardening, running the library and a host of other things! If you are interested in volunteering please contact our volunteer coordinator Mr Lockwood. All volunteer roles within school are subject to safeguarding checks, but we would love to hear from you if you think that you can support our work.

Miss Amie Bowers (Headteacher) & Mrs Gemma Elliott (Chair of Governors)



**Artsmark
Gold Award**
Awarded by Arts
Council England





Rustington Community Primary Celebrates Successful Ofsted Visit



Marie Smailes, Headteacher with Rustington Community Primary pupils

Rustington Community Primary has enjoyed a successful inspection from Ofsted. The inspection confirmed that the school is Good in all areas, including the quality of education and pupil's development.

The report drew attention to the warm and supportive environment and inclusive ethos which the inspectors noted created a joyful community in which pupils feel unique, special and valued.

The inspection, which took place in February 2025, also shared that:

- Pupils are welcoming, friendly and proud of their thriving school
- Expectations and ambitions are high and pupils achieve well
- The school has designed an ambitious curriculum
- Children settle happily in the well-resourced early years environment
- Pupils are polite, respectful and kind to each other, staff and visitors
- Parents and carers speak highly of the compassion and kindness shown by everyone

Marie Smailes, Headteacher at Rustington, comments: "We are absolutely thrilled with the outcome of this inspection. The Ofsted team really got to the heart of our school and their comments about the experiences we offer the children and our focus on exceptional pastoral support and safety was warmly welcomed by our team – we all strongly feel that children can only learn successfully when they feel happy and secure. The whole experience has been really positive and we're very proud to share the report with our local community."

Cathy Williams, CEO at Schoolsworks, adds: "We are delighted that the inspectors recognised the hard work and dedication of the whole school community, and will continue to work closely with Rustington to build on this success. Schoolsworks remains focused on providing every child in the Trust the best possible start to their education."

About Rustington Community Primary

Rustington Community Primary is a three-form entry primary school supporting 540 pupils. This school is part of Schoolsworks Academy Trust, which it joined in 2013. As a local village school, Rustington Community Primary is a friendly, caring school committed to offering every pupil a secure, stimulating and happy environment where each child can do their best.

<https://rustington.academy/>

About Schoolsworks

Schoolsworks is a multi-academy trust supporting ten schools across coastal West Sussex. Established in 2012 its academy schools are Medmerry Primary School in Selsey, Rose Green Juniors and Edward Bryant School in Bognor Regis, River Beach Primary, Rustington Community Primary School and Summerlea Community Primary School in Littlehampton, East Preston Junior School in Angmering, Hawthorns Primary School in Durrington and Downsbrook Primary School and Whytemead Primary School in Worthing. The Trust's academy schools have been consistently praised by Ofsted with sixteen successive good judgements and one outstanding judgement.

www.schoolsworks.org

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Report for Parish Council April 2025

It has been a very busy year for us all here at Summerlea School. On December 1st 2024, we became the 10th member of the Schoolsworks Academy Trust and we are now partnered with them in terms of our school journey. We are very much looking forward to working with them in the future years and celebrating further successes here at Summerlea.

In addition, our roof is finally being replaced and our beautiful building is covered in scaffolding at the moment... but it will be worth it in the end! We have also recently celebrated Easter at school with two assemblies with years 1 and 5 performing brilliantly. The singing, acting and performing has been a joy to see.

We also are preparing our year 6s for their end of Key Stage tests, with the children working so hard and trying to build on our best results for some time in last years equivalent. We continue to celebrate all aspects of the school curriculum with performances at the Celebration of Song, county final performances in netball, football and cricket and work being displayed in a local art exhibition and starring in an upcoming film about the ocean.

Mr Todd
Headteacher

Sue Meekings
Chair of School Community Council

Background

Assets managed By WSCC

Roads	c4000Km
Pavements	c4000km
Gullies	c140,000
Bridges/Structures	c800

Note the A27 and A23 both managed by National Highways

Litter picking is a D/B responsibility

Budget and spend

Capital

This funds all our capital programmes to include Road treatments, Traffic lights, Drainage Structures

DfT Funding (£m)	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Main Government Grant	20.899	20,988	20.988	20.988	20.058
Additional New Fund (£7.289m)					7.289
DfT Budget 2023 - Additional Potholes Fund (£3.046m)			3.046		
Signals funding (£144k + £500k)				0.644	0.036
DfT Roads Resurfacing Fund (£4.322m)				4.322	
Total	20.899	20.899	23.945	25.865	27.373

Corporate Funding					
	9.082	8.959	11.243	19.342	13.413
Overall Total	29.981	29.858	35.188	45.207	44.559

Over £50m of extra funding over the last 4 years from us notwithstanding, the additional funding from Pothole funds from Government.

Note Road Treatments

Km's of Resurfacing taken place has doubled from 116 in 21/22 to 210 this year.

Main Capital projects such as Lyminster are government Funded Programme and excluded from these figures In total we will spend £75m on total capital schemes this year.

Revenue

We spend C£30m on Highways Maintenance and services

- Highway revenue expenditure focuses on meeting the County Council's obligations to keep the highway safe but in the last few years, we have seen an increase in more extreme weather events resulting in melting roads, wide-scale flooding, wind damage and a significant increase in the number of potholes.
- The number of safety jobs (potholes and other safety issues) raised each financial year is increasing. The five-year average for 2019/20 – 2023/24 saw an average 39,781 jobs raised. For the preceding five years before that the average was 31,348. Last year we raised 47,978 jobs and this year we are projecting that we will have raised around 50,000 jobs. In addition, we repaired approximately 21,000 defects with the Jet Patchers.
- In terms of customer enquiries and demand in the highway service, in the historical average is around. The average is normally around 50/55,000 per year. Over the last two years this is trending upwards – between 20-35%.
- Local Highway Operations, which includes the Area Highway Teams, had very little capacity/resilience and the ability to proactively deal with issues on the network and populate and manage work programmes has been limited. The issue has been exacerbated by the number of emergency incidents across the network which create extra work and affect the ability of staff to manage normal work.
- To partly redress the maintenance backlogs, an exceptional, **one-off investment of £4.5 million was included in the 2023/24 revenue budget** and this investment allowed for proactive activities in four key areas: drainage; potholes and carriageway condition; signs & road markings; and vegetation maintenance.
- In **2024/25 an additional £4 million** was secured and the focus continued to be on proactive measures to tackle drainage maintenance and investigation and pothole repairs and carriageway condition. The funding was also used to recruit staff to enable programmes of work to be effectively managed and deal with general increased work volumes.
- Extra funding was also committed in-year to provide 'further resilience' for the winter period.

Current Levels of Service

- **Our 28-day repair KPI is at 99%, Average repair time is now just under 4 days with an yearly average to date of 14.5days.**
- Nos of potholes and enquires has dropped significantly from last year
- 3rd party claims have dropped to lowest level for 4 years

Drainage

- We are continuing to respond to an increased number of flooding related emergencies and enquiries each year. In the last five years, reported emergency flooding incidents averaged 353 per year vs 131 per year over the preceding five years. The average of all flooding related enquiries over the same period has doubled.
- In terms of draining maintenance, historic budget reductions necessitated a managed reduction in routine cleansing and a broader implementation of the risk-based approach endorsed by the current version of the national Highways code of practice. The specification adopted in 2019/20 was a four-yearly cyclical cleanse based on risk e.g., assets on the high-speed network cleansed annually and some assets where historic data demonstrated silted less, being cleansed every four years.
- With increased incidents of extreme and prolonged rainfall, there is evidence that the incidence of damage, blockages and localised structural failure is increasing. Effective and well-maintained surface water drainage underpins the fabric of the highway network and ensures the road structure remains resilient and better able to withstand increasing traffic demands. Poorly maintained gullies, chambers

and carrier drains can lead to an increased risk of surface water flooding and premature failure of the road structure.

- To respond to the high number of flooding incidents across the network we have had to significantly increase our reactive jetting. This year we have five jetters on the network. For context, in 2020/21, the budget provision only allowed for one reactive jetter. This increased capacity has allowed us to tackle the higher priority sites to bolster resilience, ahead of the winter months.
- With the additional funding in 2024/25, we have undertaken additional routine cleansing of the assets which were last cleansed four years ago (additional cleanse of 21,070 assets).
- In the previous year, we undertook an additional cleanse of the asset normally cleansed on an annual basis (additional cleanses of 34,353 assets).
- With additional jetting and CCTV provision, as at end of January we have undertaken jetting at over 500 sites and committed follow-up CCTV'd at 271 sites.
- In 2024/25 we have carried out additional proactive drainage work which has included, three extra drainage gangs which allow for gully repairs, freeing jammed grids and digging grips. We have also undertaken additional ditching work – aiming for c. 3km by the end of March.

Other Initiatives

Riparian Office

Additional resources were recruited during 2024/25 which has increased capacity to focus on riparian issues, management of more complex issues and identification of programmes of work, asset condition and auditing of contractor work. Resources have also continued in the project to map drainage assets which commenced in January 2024. New leaflets and toolkit been drafted for Town and parishes

Streetworks

As in operational Highways number of permits have exploded over the last few years by over 50% to over 60,000 and despite our best efforts to engage with Statutory bodies and the successful use of Lane Rental reducing smaller works timescales by a third, we are still plagued by increasing permits. Development, upgrading of infrastructure by utilities and new infrastructure including Fibre have had a real impact along with our WSCC push to repair and resurface roads. We have successfully reduced the time of roadworks for some significant programmes of work. Changes to the team and a new Customer relationship to focus on Utilities and developers will have a greater impact.

25/26

Budget includes additional funding of £5m Revenue

This continues much of the same funding for this year:-

Small scale patching to be provided by:

- additional patching gang (5-20 sqm)
- Bobcat planer (20-100 sqm) patches

Structural Patching

Sign cleaning

Small programme of Advanced Direction Sign replacement

Staff recruited in 24/25 are providing more resilience in Local Highway Operations.

Provision for new contracts

New Contracts for highway maintenance and drainage have been procured and start in April, our new contractors are: -

Volker –Highways Maintenance . Under the new contract, contracted for 45,000 defects (fixed price +/- 10%)

‘right first-time approach’ – timely quality repairs will be the focus. New contract contains financial incentives linked to performance.

Conway – drainage – Gully cleasing has been changed to maximum of 2yearly from 4 yearly. The new gully cleansers have CCTV attached as part of the machine and thus should speed up those drains/gully issues which currently require separate jobs being raised where CCTV is required.

Additional Capital funding of over £10m

Hot off the press: -

Setting up a **pilot of AI technology** to enable automatic roads review for Highways defects including degraded white lines linking straight into our back-office software. We are also exploring its ability to check signs etc for permitting.