

Hunton Parish Council

Report for the year to 31st March 2025

Parish Councillors

At the Annual Meeting in May 2025, the Parish Council elected Cllr David Heaton as Chairman and Cllr Mike Summersgill as Vice Chairman.

Simon Webb was co-opted on to the Parish Council in September 2024. Following the resignation of Jonny Goddard in March 2025, there are now only six parish councillors once again, so a co-option will need to take place to fill the vacancy.

At the Annual Meeting, the parish councillors agreed to continue to take responsibility for specific parish matters to ensure that focus is given to these areas and to provide a good service to parishioners. These roles are as follows:

- Footpaths and ditches – Cllr Heaton (primary) and Cllr Summersgill (secondary)
- Road conditions and speed limits – Cllr Summersgill (primary) and Cllr Simmons (secondary)
- Events and communications – Cllr Trought
- Planning issues and consultations – Cllr Summersgill
- Liaison with KALC, MBC and other external bodies – Cllr Summersgill (primary) and Cllr Heaton (secondary)
- Utilities (broadband, water, electricity) – Cllr Stanbridge (primary) and Cllr Summersgill (secondary)
- Speedwatch – Cllr Summersgill

Hunton parish councillors have all undertaken to act in accordance with a Code of Conduct and there have been no complaints to the local monitoring officer about their individual or collective activities.

Income

The Parish Council was mainly financed by a precept of £26,338, which was raised on local householders, collected with the council tax. This amounted to £80.32 for a Band “D” property.

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) provided Parish Services Scheme funding of £1,655 to assist with maintenance of the recreation ground and play area.

The Parish Council also received £2,576 in Feed-in Tariffs from the Village Hall’s energy supplier, following the investment in solar panels on the Hall roof in 2012.

Expenditure

A large part of the Parish Council’s expenditure was a donation of £7,000 to the King George V Playing Field Committee for the maintenance of the playing field. Expenditure on open spaces amounted to £1,592, primarily for tree inspection and surgery.

The Parish Council also assisted the Village Hall with a contribution of £665 towards the buildings insurance cost, £1,500 towards running costs (as certain village events and activities take place at no charge and with priority over private hires) and a grant of £5,981 for external renovations.

Two new defibrillators have been purchased at a cost of £3,525. One of the defibrillators is located at the Village Hall and the other is to be installed outside the Village Club.

The income and expenditure figures for 2024/25 and comparative figures for 2023/24 are shown on page 3.

Activities

The Traffic & Road Safety Working Party has been active in identifying areas of concern on the roads and making improvements to ensure the safety of all road users throughout the village. The Hunton Safer Streets & Lanes Steering Group has consulted with parishioners for their views on how to make Hunton’s roads safer and more effective. Speedwatch has been active in the village, with regular sessions undertaken by volunteers. The Parish Council has

devolved powers (from KCC) to close roads in the event of flooding and has been given the necessary signage, which has been used during the year by the Flood Wardens.

The Parish Council continues to maintain the permissive footpath between Bensted Close and the Village Hall through a maintenance contract, to ensure the hedge running alongside the footpath and the path verges are kept tidy. A tree inspection has been conducted recently on all trees for which the Parish Council has responsibility, including on the Clapper Green site. Following research, as a result of historic documents found by a resident, it was established that Clapper Green had been registered as a village green in 1972 and is owned by the Parish Council.

Following the introduction of a new waste collection contractor by MBC last year, there were teething problems initially, with numerous missed bin collections in Hunton. The Parish Council set up an email address for residents to contact with details of missed bins and worked with the borough councillors and MBC officers to resolve the problems.

The Parish Council wants to protect the environment and biodiversity of Hunton. In responses to planning applications for new dwellings and major extensions, recommendations are made to request that environmental and sustainability elements are incorporated into the development. There is also a standing agenda item for climate change, biodiversity and sustainability, to ensure it is considered at each meeting. Further pond surveys were undertaken in May 2025, with evidence found of Great Crested Newts. This will utilise more of the CIL Neighbourhood Receipts received from MBC.

Looking forward, the Parish Council is keen to help resolve an issue affecting most households in Hunton - poor broadband service. The Parish Council currently has a significant level of reserves, so it has earmarked a sizeable proportion of those reserves for the project, to improve broadband reliability and speed.

The telephone box outside the Village Club is being transferred into the ownership of the Parish Council, so if anyone has any suggestions for its future use, please let the Clerk or parish councillors know.

Planning

The Parish Council responded to 25 planning applications during the year, putting recommendations forward to MBC on applications received. In considering its views on planning applications, the parish councillors continue to put forward recommendations that they feel best represent the interests of local parishioners. The Parish Council meets when required to consider new planning applications and details of these meetings can be found on the notice boards and website.

Meetings

The Parish Council meets bi-monthly at the Village Hall, usually on the third Monday of January, March, May, July, September and November and parishioners are welcome to attend. Parishioners are given an opportunity to raise matters at the start of every meeting.

Articles on Parish Council meetings are reported in the Hunton Herald and the meeting minutes can be viewed in full on the website at www.huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk. The Parish Council also has a Publication Scheme required under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, whereby copies of particular documents are available upon request.

Contacts

Councillors or the Clerk can be contacted directly when more urgent issues arise. Contact details appear in the Hunton Herald and on the website at www.huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Councillors:	Cllr David Heaton (Chairman)	01622 820678
	Cllr Annette Trought	01622 820448
	Cllr Tony Stanbridge	01622 820721
	Cllr Mike Summersgill	01622 820429
	Cllr Iain Simmons	01622 820875
Clerk:	Mrs Sharon Goodwin	01622 681238

Hunton Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments 2024/25

2023/24	Receipts	2024/25
£		£
26,338	Parish Precept	26,338
1,728	Parish Services Scheme funding	1,655
2,389	Solar panels FIT receipts	2,576
123	Bank interest	1,429
60	Other income	80
876	VAT reimbursement from HMRC	590
31,514	Total receipts	32,668
2023/24	Payments	2024/25
£		£
	General administration	
546	Chairman's Allowance	631
440	Clerk's office allowance	520
173	Clerk's travel expenses	172
35	Data Protection fee	35
19	Postage	0
77	Stationery & office expenses	154
459	Subscriptions	507
0	Telephone	60
5,564	Salaries	6,872
405	Audit fees	315
72	Bank service charges	71
1,171	Insurance	1,187
200	Website	392
7,000	King George V Playing Field grant	7,000
1,948	Open spaces	1,592
1,020	Footpath maintenance	510
5,253	Highways costs	0
	Village Hall	
872	Insurance contribution	665
1,000	Running costs contribution	1,500
0	Grant for external renovations	5,981
87	Street lighting	123
265	CCTV maintenance contract	272
150	Training	103
416	s137 expenditure (pond surveys)	625
53	Annual Parish Meeting	65
0	New defibrillators	3,525
400	Cricket pavilion electrical checks	428
0	New laptop and software	441
756	King's Coronation event	0
560	History of Hunton booklets	0
567	VAT on payments	1,375
29,508	Total payments	35,121