

# **Hunton Parish Council**

## **Report for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

### **Parish Councillors**

Hunton Parish Council elections took place in May 2024. Jean Fuller stood down, after two years as a parish councillor, due to a move out of the area. The uncontested election resulted in 6 of the 7 seats being filled, with the Parish Council now needing to fill the vacancy by co-option.

At the Annual Meeting in May 2024, the Parish Council elected Cllr David Heaton as Chairman and Cllr Mike Summersgill as Vice Chairman. At the same 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 Goddard (secondary)
- Road conditions and speed limits – Cllr Goddard (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 £81.21 for a Band “D” property.

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) provided Parish Services Scheme funding of £1,728 to assist with maintenance of the recreation ground and play area.

The Parish Council also received £2,389 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 £1,948, primarily for tree inspections and tree surgery.

The Parish Council also assisted the Village Hall with a contribution of £872 towards insurance costs and £1,000 towards running costs (as certain village events and activities take place at no charge, and with priority over private hires).

£5,253 was spent on highways, mainly on new kerbing outside the school and new signage.

An afternoon tea to celebrate the King’s Coronation was held at a cost of £756, enjoyed by many in the community.

The income and expenditure figures for 2023/24 and comparative figures for 2022/23 are shown on page 3.

### **Activities**

Highways issues remain high on the agenda. The Traffic & Road Safety Working Party takes an active role in identifying areas of concern on the roads and is committed to making improvements to ensure the safety of all road users throughout the village. The Parish Council has funded recommendations from the Working Party, including kerbing outside the school and new signage. A Street Improvements Project is underway to make Hunton’s streets and lanes safer and more effective, aiming to obtain views from residents and create a whole village proposal which can be

submitted to KCC Highways. Speedwatch has been resurrected in the village, with regular sessions undertaken by volunteers outside the Village Club and Village Hall. The Parish Council has devolved powers (from KCC) to close roads in the event of flooding and has been given the necessary signage.

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 carried out on all trees for which the Parish Council has responsibility; remedial action has been taken on the trees near the Village Hall. Work will be undertaken on several trees on the field now the ground is drier.

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. Pond surveys have been undertaken in two stages, in April 2023 and April 2024, to survey ponds for Great Crested Newts, utilising some of the CIL Neighbourhood Receipts received from MBC.

An additional defibrillator, funded by the Parish Council, will soon be installed in the telephone box outside the Village Club. There is an existing defibrillator outside the Village Hall.

## **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.org.uk](http://www.huntonparishcouncil.org.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.org.uk](http://www.huntonparishcouncil.org.uk).

Councillors:	Cllr David Heaton (Chairman)	01622 820678
	Cllr Annette Trought	01622 820448
	Cllr Tony Stanbridge	01622 820721
	Cllr Jonny Goddard	01622 820096
	Cllr Mike Summersgill	01622 820429
	Cllr Iain Simmons	01622 820875
Clerk:	Mrs Sharon Goodwin	01622 681238

**Hunton Parish Council**  
**Summary of Receipts and Payments**  
**2023/24**

<b>2022/23</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
26,338	Parish Precept	26,338
1,677	Parish Services Scheme funding	1,728
6,107	CIL Neighbourhood Receipts	0
2,048	Solar panels FIT receipts	2,389
4,247	Entertainment fund (previously Fete Committee funds)	0
10,185	South East Water Community Fund grant	0
0	Bank interest	123
0	Other income	60
1,712	VAT reimbursement from HMRC	876
<u>52,314</u>	<b>Total receipts</b>	<u>31,514</u>
<b>2022/23</b>	<b>Payments</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
	General administration	
	Running expenses	
618	Chairman's Allowance	546
480	Clerk's office allowance	440
164	Clerk's travel expenses	173
35	Data Protection fee	35
27	Postage	19
23	Stationery & office expenses	77
522	Subscriptions	459
90	Telephone	0
5,627	Salaries	5,564
290	Audit fees	405
72	Bank service charges	72
950	Insurance	1,171
	Recreation ground	
5,750	Annual contribution	7,000
993	Open spaces	1,948
500	Footpath maintenance	1,020
53	Highways costs	5,253
	Village Hall	
814	Insurance contribution	872
1,000	Running costs contribution	1,000
4,000	Grant towards refurbishment of toilets	0
2,500	Grant towards infrared heaters	0
70	Street lighting	87
258	CCTV maintenance contract	265
135	Training	150
0	s137	0
200	Website	200
72	Annual Parish Meeting	53
48	Defibrillator maintenance	0
0	Projects to utilise CIL Neighbourhood Receipts	416
0	King's Coronation event	756
0	Cricket pavilion electrical checks	400
0	History of Hunton booklets	560
10,185	South East Water Community Fund payments to sports clubs/hall	0
3,600	Football Club changing rooms rewire/other work	0
642	s145 Queen's Platinum Jubilee	0
877	VAT on payments	567
<u>40,595</u>	<b>Total payments</b>	<u>29,508</u>

