



Slinfold Parish Council

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ANNUAL REPORT 2010

**Mrs Rosemary Hillyard
Chairman of the Parish Council**

CONTENTS

1. Chairman's Overview and Introduction.
2. Reports on:
 - i. Finance
 - ii. Highways
 - iii. Recreation, Youth and Environment Issues
3. Reports from the Advisory Groups:
 - i. Planning
 - ii. Industrial Liaison Group
 - iii. Legal Issues
4. Consultations 2009/10
5. Acknowledgements

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The Council

Chairman: Mrs. Rosemary Hillyard

Vice Chairman: Mr. Erik Sorensen

Christopher Burke (Chairman, Planning)	69 Milton Avenue, Rustington, BN16 2PJ	01903 783922
Wendy Coad	Gate Lodge, Stane Street, Slinfold, RH13 0RE	01403 790855
Gordon Constantine	7 The Cobblers, Hayes Lane, Slinfold. RH13 0SA	01403 791138
Margaret Dunkerton	Forge House, The Street, Slinfold RH13 0RP	01403 791299
Rosemary Hillyard (Chairman)	Little Hammers, The Street, Slinfold RH13 0RR	01403 791027
Nigel Jefferys (Chairman, Finance)	Burley Edge, 1 Six Acres, Slinfold RH13 0TH	01403 791226
Fiona Jobling	1 Railway Cottages, Spring Lane, Slinfold RH13 0RT	01403 791889
Mr Erik Sorensen (Vice Chairman)	8 Six Acres, Slinfold RH13 0TH	01403 790829
Mrs Gael Stenton- Chandler	Eagle Cottage, Stane Street, Slinfold RH13 0QX	01403 790149
Mr David White (Chairman, Youth Recreation and Environment)	Chimney Corner, Park Street, Slinfold RH13 0RU	01403 790435
Vacancy		

Council Staff

Parish Clerk: Mrs Mary Burroughs

**Environmental
Cleansing
Operative:**

Mr Alan Baker

Council Structure

Committee and Advisory Group Membership and Representatives on Outside Bodies were agreed at the Annual Council Meeting on 28th May 2009. Cllr. Skeates stood down during the year and Cllr. Constantine was co-opted.

Committees

- 1. Finance and General Purposes Committee (including Miscellaneous Properties, Administration):**
N. Jefferys (Chairman), C. Burke, M. Dunkerton, R. Hillyard & E. Sorensen.
- 2. Recreation Youth & Environment (including Youth Issues, Litter, Street Lighting, and Burials):**
D. White (Chairman), W. Coad, M. Dunkerton, N. Jefferys & E. Sorensen.
- 3. Highways, Byways and Transport:**
A. Skeates (Chairman), C. Burke, R. Hillyard, G. Stenton-Chandler, & D. White.

Advisory Groups

- 4. Planning and Development:**
C. Burke (Chairman), M. Dunkerton, F. Jobling, A. Skeates, G. Stenton-Chandler & D. White.
- 5. Industrial Liaison Group:**
R. Hillyard (Chairman), A. Skeates.
- 6. Parish Action Plan:**
R. Hillyard, N. Jefferys.

Emergency Plan

R. Hillyard, N. Jefferys.

- 7. Legal Issues & Public Information:**

D. White with the support of the Parish Council as required.

Representatives on Outside Bodies

Child Memorial Village Hall – One Trustee	M Dunkerton. W Coad (Youth Club)
Parish Cottages – Two Trustees	R Hillyard, E Sorensen.
Slinfold Charities – One Trustee	R Hillyard.
Slinfold Sports Association – Two Cllrs.	E Sorensen. D White.
Horsham Association of Local Councils	R Hillyard, E Sorensen
HALC & SALC (Association of Local Councils)	R Hillyard, E Sorensen
Slinfold Village Shop Association – One Cllr.	M Dunkerton.
Police Consultative Committee	A Skeates.
CARES	E Sorensen, D White.
North Horsham CLC	R Hillyard.
GACC	C Burke
Policing Panel/Neighbourhood Watch	G Stenton-Chandler

1. Chairman's Overview and Introduction

The Parish Council became full strength (11) in November 2009 when Gordon Constantine was co-opted. Adrian Skeates resigned at the end of 2009; there is currently one vacancy. I should like to take this opportunity to thank Adrian on behalf of the Parish Council for his valuable input.

The full Council meet every month with a good attendance record. With the requirement to attend the various other meetings of Sub-Committees, Advisory Groups and meetings of outside bodies there is a reasonable amount of call on Parish Councillors' time.

There is a statutory provision for the payment of an allowance of £430 p.a. to all elected members of Parish Councils. This Council voted to keep the allowance at only £250 p.a. Currently there is no take up of the allowance, however, the option is there for Parish Councillors to claim in the future, if they so wish. It was agreed in 2008 to approve a payment of up to £200 p.a. to the Chairman for out of pocket expenses, under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1972, although during this financial year, only £51.98 has been claimed.

2. Reports from Committees:

i. Finance

The Parish Council complies with the statutory requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, in the management of its accounts and financial affairs. The appointed external auditor is Mazars of Southampton; the independent internal auditor is Mark Mulberry & Co of Epsom. The Parish Clerk is the Responsible Financial Officer and reports regularly to the Finance Committee and full Parish Council.

The Parish Council's internal audit will take place in May and the accounts will be submitted to the external auditor in June. The full accounts will be available for inspection by residents in July. The following figures are therefore unaudited balances.

Total income 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010 was £206,061, which includes precept of £49,999. We have reclaimed VAT of £1,848, grass cutting and insurance contributions for Cherry Tree of £1,100, an Environmental Cleansing Grant from HDC, interest on deposit accounts and a grant from WSCC for the Youth Club of £1,000. Taylor Wimpey transferred the land around Six Acres to the Parish Council during the year, together with S106 monies for future maintenance totalling £137,916.

Total expenditure for the same period was £53,805 on staff costs (Clerk and Litter Warden), administration, office supplies, hall hire, grass cutting, insurance, subscriptions, audit, playground upkeep and inspections, the Youth Club, publications and grants.

It is recommended that the Parish Council hold a minimum of 50% of the precept amount as a contingency. Total cash holdings and investments at 31 March 2010 are £255,201, including Six Acres and Youth Club funds and amounts held for specific budgeted projects.

The precept for 2010/11 has been set at £51,279. This equates to £54.73 (last year £53.89) per property at band D equivalent, an increase of 84p per property on 2009/10.

ii. Highways

- **Hayes Lane** – WSCC, Highways has been called out on a number of occasions this year to unblock drains in Hayes Lane and has now agreed to schedule gully clearing twice a year. There have been severe weather warnings issued by the Met Office throughout the winter months with no flooding of property reported. Steps have been taken to minimise flooding of the road and an improvement has been noted. The Parish Council has purchased flood sacks which may be collected by residents should they be concerned that their property will flood.
- **School Car Parking** – We are hoping to resurface and increase the size of the car park in the summer, using S106 monies from Slinfold Golf Club.
- **WSCC, Highways Forward Plan** – The Council submitted recommendations for work to be included in this plan; including the resurfacing of Hayes Lane and parts of Lyons Road.
- **HGV signs** – WSCC has improved the signage at the end of Lyons Road to try to prevent HGV's coming into the village. It is hoped that the County Local Committee (CLC) will approve the cost of a sign at the end of Park Street to deter HGV's from entering the village from the A29.
- **Cllr. Michael Hodgson** continues to work to secure a direct link to the bridleway along the Downs Link to connect Slinfold to a point at Christ's Hospital Railway Station. This link would make an invaluable contribution to the network of bridle and pathways connecting Slinfold to other parts of the county.
- **Footpaths and Bridleways** – The Parish Council is in liaison with WSCC Countryside and Access Rangers to keep paths and bridleways in good condition and safe to use.
- **War Memorial** – WSCC Highways will repair the post and rail fence by the War Memorial as soon as their budget permits.
- **Leaf clearing** - the Parish Council instructed Landscape Services to provide additional leaf clearing services around the school and in parts of Hayes Lane during the autumn.
- **SID (Speed Indicator Display)** – on a number of occasions this year, Councillors have used the device in Lyons Road and Park Street to record the speeds of motorists entering and leaving the village; the results are published in the Slinfold Magazine.

Many other highways issues have arisen during the year and the Clerk works closely with the appropriate authorities to ensure that corrective action is taken.

iii. Recreation, Youth & Environment Issues

- **Committee Meetings** – This committee holds public meetings twice a year and during this period they were held on 21 July 2009 and 26 January 2010. The Youth Club holds a public Annual General Meeting and this was held on 10 February 2010. Minutes of these meetings are available on the Parish Council's website.
- **Developments at King George V's Field** – The Parish Council are the trustees for King George V Field and submit an annual return to the Charity Commission.

A planning application for a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) was submitted to Horsham District Council (HDC) on 19 January 2009, by the Community Slinfold Parish Council, PO Box 315, Billingshurst RH14 9XX 01403 785864 www.slinfold-pc.gov.uk

Association for Recreation and the Environment in Slinfold (CARES), with the assistance of the Parish Council. After further clarification on the hours of use, how it will be managed/maintained, the nature of use, what sports are to be provided for and which local groups are looking to use the facility, it was eventually permitted on 3 June 2009. A meeting of CARES, to discuss the way forward, took place on 8 July 2009. As only one of the original village members was still actively involved in CARES, it was agreed that the first step was to recruit more members, and then to pursue grants for the construction. Two Parish Councillors attend the CARES meetings but applications for grants are not accepted direct from the Parish Council. To date, recruitment has proved unsuccessful, but the search continues.

- **Developments at Six Acres** – Earlier this year, the Parish Council finally adopted the land. This includes the open space and the entrance area. We also received an agreed sum for maintenance, from the developer. The toddler play area had been adopted previously.
- **Safety Inspections** – The Litter Warden continues to make a weekly inspection of the King George V field and the Six Acres toddler play area. HDC carry out monthly inspections and ROSPA carry out an annual inspection. Work continues to progress well with improvements being made to both play areas.
- **Slinfold Sports Association** – The Parish Council are leaseholders of the Flint Group for the Cherry Tree sports field and pavilion. The football and tennis clubs are sub-lease holders to the Parish Council. The 'Sports' Association meet approximately every four months. The Parish Council is represented at meetings and receives a copy of the minutes produced.
- **Youth Club** – A committee consisting of Parish Councillors and Youth Leaders manages the club. The club is affiliated to West Sussex Council Youth Services who are available for assistance if required. During 2009, one of the two Youth Leaders resigned and the process of recruiting a replacement should be completed soon. A grant of £1,000 was awarded by WSCC in 2009/10 to offset most of the running costs of the Youth Club but £400 was returned during the year. The grant application for 2010/11 has been submitted and a response is expected soon.

The club continues to meet in the Village Hall on Wednesday evenings during term time and though attendance dropped off, it is now rising again. Volunteers are an integral part of the club and without them it would not be possible to continue. Unfortunately, two left the village this year but two others have offered their services to maintain the compliment of five, and our thanks are extended to all volunteers.

- **Litter** – HDC devolves environmental cleansing to the Parish Council with an annual grant for the provision of the service. Our Litter Warden continues to provide an excellent service to the parish, by not just collecting litter but also being vigilant and reporting other issues to the Clerk, such as problems in the play areas and overflowing litterbins. During the year new litterbins were installed throughout the village.
- **Dog Litter** – the bins continue to be well used.

- **Burials** – The Parish Council has a contract with the Parochial Church Council to ensure that the graveyard is open for burials.
- **War Memorial** – The Parish Council donates £50 per annum to the Royal British Legion, Slinfold Branch for planting around the War Memorial.

3. Reports from the Advisory Groups:

i. Planning

A major change in the processing of planning applications took place in December when the Planning Advisory Group moved to paperless applications. This system is far more flexible than the previous rather cumbersome one. Councillors now examine any proposal on the HDC website and email their views to the Chairman who summarises in a report. Producing a summary is quicker and easier for inclusion in the monthly planning report. The fact that we have been able to make this change was mainly as a result of our anticipation of the District's decision to go paperless on the grounds of costs.

Since the changeover, we have had three Parish Council Meetings, one of which attracted significant public attendance. The new system is working well and in future we intend to make full use of the additional hardware installed in the Parish Room.

This year has been another busy one with 65 planning applications. Of these, the review of the application for the Golf Club was by far the most significant in terms of Councillor's time. The Advisory Group made a major input to HDC's Core Strategy Document as well as detailed consideration of the application in relation to the Land West of Horsham. Although this development is not in Slinfold, there may be significant impact on our Parish, especially with regard to traffic flow. The Advisory Group also provided detailed observations on Gatwick Airports Draft Noise Consultation, another area of environmental concern to Slinfold.

ii. Industrial Liaison Group

Members of the group met with the Flint Group and SI Group in November to discuss issues concerning their sites and other relevant matters. We thank both companies for their support and assistance.

iii. Legal Issues

There are a number of legal issues that must be complied with. The Parish Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are regularly reviewed. During the year, we worked closely with our solicitors and HDC to enforce the section 106 legal agreement to adopt the land at Six Acres.

4. Consultations 2009/10

- Local Development Framework - Land West of Horsham** – we continue to take a close interest to ensure that the impact on Slinfold is kept to the minimum.

As well as those mentioned previously, the Parish Council has also responded to a range of other consultations including:

- West Sussex Transport Plan

- West Sussex Snow Summit
- West Sussex Infrastructure Works Programme
- Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs

There continues to be a public session at every Parish Council and Committee meeting for members of the press or public to attend and address the Council or Committee. Our Clerk is always happy to receive written or emailed correspondence from residents.

5. Acknowledgements

I would now like to express the thanks of all the Parish Councillors to:

- Mary Burroughs, our Parish Clerk who has been with us for three years now. She has taken to the post of Parish Clerk with enthusiasm and to this end has, this year, obtained CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration). This was no easy task and she is to be congratulated. Mary works hard to retain the good name and efficiency of our Council. I thank her for her competence and good humour. She is an asset both to me and to the Council.

I would also like to thank:

- Mick Hodgson, our County Councillor, who despite a busy work schedule, still attends most of our meetings.
- Alan Baker, our Litter Warden, who does such an excellent job around the village.

However, I am disappointed that our District Councillors find themselves unable to attend the majority of our meetings.

Finally, and by no means least, I should like to express my thanks to the Vice Chairman, the Chairmen of the sub-committees and to all Councillors who give their time voluntarily to serve on Slinfold Parish Council. Much of their work, on Committees and Advisory Groups, goes unseen and unsung.

It has been privilege to be chosen by the Council to act as their Chairman and I should like to thank everyone for their support and hard work during what I believe has been a successful year.

Mrs Rosemary Hillyard. Chairman, Slinfold Parish Council