



Slinfold Parish Council

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ANNUAL REPORT 2013

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

CONTENTS

1. Chairman's Overview and Introduction
2. Reports from the Committees and Advisory Groups
3. Acknowledgements

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The Council

Chairman: Mrs Rosemary Hillyard

Vice Chairman: Mrs Camilla Gibson

Councillors

Gordon Constantine	7 The Cobblers, Hayes Lane, Slinfold, RH13 0SA	01403 791138
Margaret Dunkerton	Forge House, The Street, Slinfold, RH13 0RP	01403 791299
Monica Edmonds	47 Six Acres, Slinfold, RH13 0TH	01403 791716
Camilla Gibson	Collyers, The Street, Slinfold, RH13 0RR	01403 790277
Martyn Haines	Starr Inn House, The Street, Slinfold, RH13 0RU	01403 790842
Rosemary Hillyard	Little Hammers, The Street, Slinfold, RH13 0RR	01403 791027
Paula Redmond	Jackdaws, Hayes Lane, Slinfold RH13 0SA	01403 790187
Gael Stenton-Chandler	Eagle Cottage, Stane Street, Slinfold, RH13 0QX	01403 790149

Council Staff

Parish Clerk: Mrs Mary Burroughs

Environmental Cleansing Operative: Mr Tobias Mothe

Council Structure

Committee, Group Membership and Representatives on Outside Bodies were agreed at the Annual Council Meeting on 28th May 2012 as follows:

Committees:

1. Finance and General Purposes Committee (including Miscellaneous Properties, Administration):

D Thompson (Chairman), M Dunkerton, M Edmonds, C Gibson and R Hillyard.

2. Recreation Youth & Environment (including Youth Club, Litter, Street Lighting, and Burials):

C Gibson (Chairman), H Bates, G Constantine and P Redmond (one vacancy)

A. Highways, Byways and Transport:

G Stenton-Chandler (Chairman), G Constantine, M Edmonds (one vacancy).

3. Planning and Development:

D White (Chairman), P Redmond (Vice Chairman), M Dunkerton and G Stenton -Chandler (one vacancy).

Advisory Groups:

4. **Industrial Liaison Group:** R Hillyard, G Stenton-Chandler and M Edmonds.

5. **Legal Issues & Public Information:**

M Edmonds with support from D White and D Thompson and other members of the Parish Council as required.

Representatives on Outside Bodies

Child Memorial Village Hall – One Trustee	M Dunkerton
Parish Cottages – Two Trustees	R Hillyard, C Gibson
Slinfold Charities – One Trustee	To be agreed
Slinfold Sports Association – Two Councillors	G Constantine, P Redmond
HALC & SALC (Association of Local Councils)	H Bates, P Redmond
Slinfold Village Shop Association – One Councillor	to be confirmed (H Bates in 2011)
CARES	G Constantine
North Horsham CLC	R Hillyard
Police Matters	G Stenton-Chandler, M Edmonds

Disaster Recovery/ Emergency Planning Team

R Hillyard, G Constantine and N Jefferys (ex-Councillor) together with Mary Burroughs (Parish Clerk)

1. Chairman's Overview and Introduction

The Parish Council had ten Councillors at the start of the year. There are currently four vacancies as full complement is eleven.

The Council meet every month with a good attendance record. With the requirement to attend the various other meetings of sub-committees, other 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 previously to keep the allowance at £250 p.a. but once again there was no take up of the allowance in the last financial year, however, the option is there for Parish Councillors to claim in the future. 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. During the last financial year, only £95.65 was claimed.

2. Reports from Committees:

i. Finance

The Parish Council complies with the statutory requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations, in the management of its accounts and financial affairs. The Audit Commission's appointed auditor is Littlejohn of London; 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 the full Parish Council.

The Parish Council's internal audit is scheduled for 2nd May 2013 and the annual accounts will be submitted to the external auditor by the end of May. The full accounts will be available for inspection by residents in June/July. The following figures are therefore unaudited balances.

Total income 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 was £68,291, which includes precept of £51,279. We have reclaimed VAT, grass cutting and insurance contributions for Cherry Tree Sports Fields, an Environmental Cleansing Grant from Horsham District Council (HDC), interest on bank accounts, various small contributions and refunds and received part repayment of loan to SVAL of £3,000, in all totalling £17,012.

Total expenditure for the same period was £48,116 on staff costs (Clerk and Environmental Cleansing Officer), the PWLB loan, administration, office supplies, hall hire, grass cutting, insurance, subscriptions, audit, playground upkeep and inspections, grants to the community and several Queens Diamond Jubilee projects.

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 2013 are £318,678, including Six Acres (£148,888), Youth Club funds and amounts held for specific budgeted projects e.g. the School Car Park (£19,900), a fund to replace the equipment in the play areas (£44,785) and a some new sports activity equipment in KGV.

The precept for 2013/14 has been set at £51,279, again exactly the same as last year; the Parish Council has not sought an increase. We recognise that some households may have seen a very small increase on their Council Tax demand as a result of the way Horsham District Council calculate and allocate our precept request. This should still equate to around £56 per property at band D equivalent for the year.

ii. Highways

- **Hayes Lane and Lyons Road** – we continue to encourage WSCC Highways to keep on top of possible drainage issues around certain 'hot spots'. Unfortunately there have been some drains, which have not coped with the very wet autumn and winter. Therefore we have encouraged residents to keep an eye on the drains outside their property and report any that are not clear to WSCC.

- **Severe Weather** – Your Parish Council continues to work closely with WSCC and HDC and our requirements are considered annually. This year two salt/grit bins were purchased and will be filled later this year for use by residents on the pavements and roads outside their properties. The Parish Council has also been successful in convincing WSCC to add Hayes Lane to the gritting schedule, although way down on their priority list we have seen the road gritted a few times over the winter.
- **School Car Park** – We intend to resurface and increase the size of the car park, using S106 monies from Slinfold Golf Club and AJW. The plans approved by WSCC last year are now being progressed and we are hopeful that the work will be concluded during the summer holidays. I would like to thank Mr David White for his expertise and efforts on this project.
- **WSCC, Highways Forward Plan** – The Council submitted recommendations for work to be included in this plan; namely resurfacing and a thorough investigation of drainage in Hayes Lane.
- **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. Any matters of concern should be reported to the Clerk.
- **Pavement outside the shop** – WSCC has agreed to repair the pavement with York Stone and this will be completed as their budget permits.
- **Leaf Clearing and Lawn Mowing** - the Parish Council's Environmental Cleansing Officer continues to provide additional services around the village.
- **Speed Limits** – the Parish Council continues to campaign for a 20mph speed limit in the conservation area as well as a 50mph limit on the A281 between the Clemsfold and Roman Gate roundabouts, and also in between the Slinfold Village signs on the A29. It is not an easy process but we are working with our County Councillor, Mick Hodgson and WSCC Highways, to achieve this aim.

Many other highway issues have arisen during the year, including 'pot-holes'; opportunities to cluster with other parishes; litter picking on the outskirts of the Parish etc. The Clerk works closely with the appropriate authorities to ensure that corrective action is taken.

iii. Recreation, Youth & Environment Issues

1. **Committee Meetings** – This committee met in July and October 2012 and again in January 2013. Top of the agenda was to consider youth provision for the village. The Parish Council has agreed to work with Broadbridge Heath and Warnham Parish Councils in partnership with Horsham Matters to employ a part time Community Youth Worker. It is hoped that the youth

worker will be in place by June 2013 and will soon after be linking in to the young people of our village.

2. **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.

The Community Association for Recreation and the Environment in Slinfold (CARES) with the assistance of the Parish Council was hoping to gain funding from Biffa or Sports England for a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) in the field. Unfortunately the grant applications were not successful. CARES has advised that they are unable to pursue this further and the Parish Council are looking at other options to provide some sports activity in the field.

3. **Six Acres & KGV Play Areas** – Safety inspections by ROSPA, HDC and our Environmental Cleansing Officer are carried out during the year. The annual ROSPA inspection highlighted only a few minor (low risk) matters, which have been attended to and the need to repair wet pour in KGV, which was reported as a trip hazard and of medium risk. The Parish Council continues to build up a fund to be used as and when the play equipment needs to be replaced.
4. **Slinfold Sports Association (SSA)** – The Parish Council are leaseholders of the Flint Group (now Slinfold LLP) for the Cherry Tree sports field and pavilion. The football and tennis clubs are sub-leaseholders to the Parish Council. The 'Sports' Association meet approximately every four months. The Parish Council is represented at these meetings and a representative from SSA now attends the Recreation Meeting.
5. **Litter** – HDC devolves environmental cleansing to the Parish Council with an annual grant for the provision of the service. Our Environmental Cleansing Officer provides a good service to the parish by, not just collecting litter, but also being vigilant and reporting other issues, problems in the play areas, overflowing litter and dog bins for instance.
6. **Dog Litter** – the bins continue to be well used. HDC's Community Safety Team are asked to patrol certain areas and fine owners not picking up after their dogs.
7. **Burials** – The Parish Council has a contract with the Parochial Church Council to ensure that the graveyard is open for burials. £1,000 per year is awarded to the PCC to ensure that this, and the maintenance of the area continues.
8. **War Memorial** – The Parish Council donates annually to the Royal British Legion, Slinfold Branch for planting around the War Memorial.

iv. Planning

It has been another busy year for planning with 63 applications considered from HDC for the year to 31 March, as well applications where the Parish Council is a neighbouring consultee, for example the Countryside application at Broadbridge Heath (BBH).

Almost all applications were considered by use of the Internet, using the HDC website. The Parish Council objected to a number of applications including the Builders Yard, Mead Farm, Land South of Doomsday Cottage and signage at Maydwell Avenue.

Not only does this group look at individual applications but it also considers consultations relating to planning issues and other such consultations.

This year the Parish Council has provided feedback on, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Gypsy and Traveller sites, Empty Houses and Untidy Sites, the Fire Service consultation, and road signage for the new development at Broadbridge Heath.

Other Groups

i. Industrial Liaison Group

This group meets twice a year with representatives from Slinfold LLP, AJW, Southern Cranes and G&N Medical. The meeting covers an update on the changing situation at the site, planning applications, health, safety and the environment, construction traffic and communications with residents. This year there has been an emphasis on reducing light pollution.

ii. Legal Issues

There are a number of legal issues that must be complied with. The Parish Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are annually reviewed and the Power of General Competence introduced as a result of the Localism Act has been adopted.

4. Acknowledgements

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

- Mary Burroughs, our Parish Clerk who has been with us for six years now. During this time Mary has worked with enthusiasm to assist Councillors and the residents of Slinfold. I believe that our Council is extremely efficient largely due to Mary's diligence. She is an asset both to the Council and to me.
- Tobias Mothe, our Environmental Cleansing Officer who works with energy and cheerfulness, using his eyes and ears both around our play areas and the village to good effect.

I would also like to thank:

- Hilary Bates, David Thompson and David White who stepped down during the year and Margaret Dunkerton who has been a Councillor for 11 years who is stepping down after the April Parish Council meeting.
- Mick Hodgson, our County Councillor, who despite a busy work schedule, continues to attend most of our meetings.
- Trish Youtan, our District Councillor for working on our behalf by conveying our concerns to HDC. Also we are pleased to welcome District Councillor Stuart Richie to our meetings.
- The PCSO Sylfan Hammond who regularly visited the village until he retired in March.

Finally, I should like to express my sincere thanks to the Vice Chairman, Camilla Gibson, Chairmen of the sub-committees and all Councillors who give their time voluntarily to serve Slinfold Parish Council. Much of their work, on Committees and Advisory Groups, goes unseen and unsung.

It has been a 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 yet another progressive year.

I have decided to retire as a Parish Councillor after 16 years with two spells as Vice Chairman and then Chairman for the past 6 years.

It has been an interesting and fulfilling experience and I wish those who come after me success in furthering the interests of our village - something I have always sought to do - and often succeeded.

R Hillyard

Mrs Rosemary Hillyard, Chairman, Slinfold Parish Council