



Slinfold Parish Council

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ANNUAL REPORT 2012

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

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The Council

Chairman: Mrs Rosemary Hillyard
Vice Chairman: Mr David Thompson

Elected May 2011 (10 Councillors)

Hilary Bates	Suncote House, Spring Lane, Slinfold, RH13 0RT	01403 790238
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
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
David Thompson	Woodland Cottage, Guildford Road, Clemsfold, RH12 3PW	01403 791540
David White	Chimney Corner, Park Street, Slinfold, RH13 0RU	01403 790435

Council Staff

Parish Clerk: Mrs Mary Burroughs

Environmental Cleaving

Operative: Mr Tobias Mothe

Council Structure

Committee, Group Membership and Representatives on Outside Bodies were agreed at the Annual Council Meeting on 19th May 2011. Cllrs. Christopher Burke and Erik Sorenson did not stand for re-election.

Committees

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

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

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

H Bates (Chairman), G Constantine, C Gibson, P Redmond and D White. C Gibson took over as Chairman at Recreation Meeting in January 2012

3. Highways, Byways and Transport:

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

4. Planning Advisory Group:

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

Other Groups

5. Industrial Liaison Group:

R Hillyard (Chairman), G Stenton-Chandler and P Redmond

6. 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 Edmonds, (H Bates-Y Club)
Parish Cottages – Two Trustees	R Hillyard, C Gibson
Slinfold Charities – One Trustee	To be agreed
Slinfold Sports Association – Two Cllrs.	G Constantine, P Redmond
HALC & SALC (Association of Local Councils)	R Hillyard, H Bates, P Redmond
Slinfold Village Shop Association – One Cllr.	H Bates
Community 21 Steering Group	G Stenton-Chandler
CARES	G Constantine
North Horsham CLC	R Hillyard
Police Matters	G Stenton-Chandler, M Edmonds

Emergency Plan - R Hillyard, G Constantine, and N Jefferys (ex-Councillor) together with M Burroughs (Clerk)

1. Chairman's Overview and Introduction

The Parish Council has had ten Councillors since the elections in May 2011. There is currently one vacancy 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 but significant 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 £250 p.a. but 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 £102.25 was claimed, £90.10 of which was used to pay insurance for the street party.

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 appointed external auditors are 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 the full Parish Council.

The Parish Council's internal audit has taken place and the accounts will be submitted to the external auditor in a few weeks time. The full accounts will be available for inspection by residents in June/July. The following figures are therefore unaudited balances.

Total income 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 was £94,057, 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 deposit accounts and S106 monies of £23,400 from WSCC, in all totalling £42,777.

Total expenditure for the same period was £66,207 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, the Youth Club, grants to the community and a secured loan to the Slinfold Village Shop Association.

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 2012 are £298,504, including Six Acres (£141,312), Youth Club funds and amounts held for specific budgeted projects e.g. the School Car Park, a fund to replace the equipment in the play areas and a contribution towards a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) in KGV.

The precept for 2012/13 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 £55 per property at band D equivalent for the year.

ii. Highways

- **Hayes Lane and Lyons Road** – WSCC, Highways has, at the Parish Council's request, been encouraged to keep on top of possible drainage issues around certain 'hot spots'. Whilst a few drains have been noted as 'bubbling up', on the whole, the situation seems to have improved. It appears that all the hard work by the Parish Council and WSCC is now paying off.
- **Severe Weather** – Your Parish Council continues to work closely with WSCC and HDC and our requirements are considered annually.
- **School Car Park** – We are still hoping to resurface and increase the size of the car park, using S106 monies from Slinfold Golf Club. Plans have been approved by WSCC and Councillors are now working to provide further detailed information prior to arranging for the work to commence. This could still take a good while. I would like to thank Councillor White for his expertise and efforts well above the call of duty to help bring this project to a satisfactory conclusion.
- **WSCC, Highways Forward Plan** – The Council submitted recommendations for work to be included in this plan; namely the resurfacing of Lyons Road and improvements to drainage around the Duck Bends.
- **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.
- **War Memorial** – The post and rail fence by the War Memorial was repaired and, at the request of residents, a new handrail has been installed.
- **Leaf Clearing** - the Parish Council's Environmental Cleansing Officer provides additional leaf clearing services around the school and in parts of Hayes Lane during the autumn.
- **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.
- **Noticeboards** - You will have seen that there are a further two new noticeboards in the village; one in Lyons Road and one at Six Acres; these are community noticeboards and are intended for residents to post leaflets of interest to the village.

- **Tree Work - Six Acres, KGV and The Street**– work was carried out to trees on the adopted land around Six Acres, and the Parish Council has also authorised work to be carried out on trees in the KGV field. WSCC will be felling a tree outside the village stores this summer; this will be replaced at the appropriate time.

Many other highway issues have arisen during the year, including ‘pot-holes’; looking at 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 usually holds meetings twice a year but with the demise of the Youth Club, the July 2011 meeting was cancelled and another was not held till January 2012. The Youth Club had to close its doors in September 2011 due to lack of leaders and volunteers; therefore there has not been an Annual Meeting of the club this year.
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 submitted a planning application for a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to HDC on 19 January 2009. This application has been approved. CARES are working towards obtaining a grant for the MUGA as well as looking towards implementing a third stage of improvements.

3. **Six Acres & KGV Play Areas** – following safety inspections by ROSPA, HDC and our Environmental Cleansing Officer throughout the year, these areas have received a clean bill of health, with the exception of a few minor (low risk) matters, which have been or are being attended to. 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** – 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-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.
5. **Youth Club** – A committee consisting of Parish Councillors and Youth Leaders managed the club up until September 2011. A grant of £540 was awarded by WSCC in 2010/11 with a further £3,000 being secured by the Clerk for on-going costs from 2011. This money, less expenses for this year remains in reserve and it is hoped that, if a need is established, the club will reopen its doors again later this year.

6. **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.
7. **Dog Litter** – the bins continue to be well used. The bin at the end of West Way has been re-sited to Six Acres to encourage irresponsible dog owners to dispose of dog litter in that area. HDC's Community Safety Team have been asked to patrol certain areas and fine owners not picking up after their dogs.
8. **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.
9. **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 having been considered from HDC, as well applications where we are a neighbouring consultee, for example the Countryside application at Broadbridge Heath (BBH) and applications from WSCC for improvements to the school. With regard to DC/11/2059, the infrastructure application for the first phase of the new houses at BBH, the PC has objected to the proposed roundabout at Newbridge Nurseries where it is feared that the current design will not improve the flow of traffic and will lead to a rat run through our village.

Almost all applications were considered by use of the Internet, using the HDC website. The Parish Council objected to two applications subsequently refused by HDC during the year, one for Bridge House and another for Waterland Chalet.

Not only does this group look at individual applications but it also considers consultations relating to planning issues. This year the Parish Council has provided feedback on housing needs, changes to licensing, sustainability settlements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Gypsy and Traveller sites and a seismic survey as well as WSCC's proposal for a waste disposal site at Nowhurst.

Other Groups

i. Industrial Liaison Group

This group has met twice (October 2011 and March 2012) with representatives from Slinfold LLP, AJW, McLaren, 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.

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. The Localism Act will impact on our procedural issues going forward.

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 four 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:

- 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 were pleased to welcome our recently elected District Councillor Stuart Richie to our meetings.
- The PCSO Sylfan Hammond who pays regular visits to the village and responds to our concerns.

Finally, I should like to express my sincere thanks to the Vice Chairman, David Thompson, 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 successful year.

R Hillyard

Mrs Rosemary Hillyard, Chairman, Slinfold Parish Council