



Reports
Chair's Report 2024/25

Broadband

- Cllr Wigram's determination with the broadband was eventually rewarded and Open Reach vans were a regular feature of village life during last year.

Annual Spring Clean

- The Annual Spring clean of the village took place at the end of March, Cllr Myles gave thanks to all who helped over the weekend.
- As noted in previous years, the continued increase in litter is noticeable as traffic has increased and particularly worrying is the number of discarded alcohol bottles along the roadside.

Traffic calming

- Traffic and speeding have become an increasing concern over the last few years and there are several areas of particular concern:

The Rising Sun Crossroads and School approach:

- Meetings have been held with a Senior Highways Engineer and it was suggested that a 20mph zone could be applied to the Rising Sun Crossroads via a Community Traffic Regulation Order (TRO.)
- Highways also agreed not to repaint the central white line on the Fernhurst Road where it is safe not to do so. Instead, white lines would be painted down the sides of the same stretch as a traffic calming incentive. However none of that proved to be correct and after getting our County Councillor O' Kelly involved in discussions with Highways it appears that currently there is not a simple solution. Highways have apologised for the failure to comply with the agreed plan but there is no further action they can take at this point to remedy the situation.

Borden Wood:

- Cllr Morton has been fighting a sterling battle to introduce calming measures in Borden Wood where drivers are now zooming through a very narrow stretch of road at an alarming rate and there have been several near misses. Progress is very slow but it is happening:
- WSCC safety team provided a positive report for the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) application. The project will now be looked at by the police prior to moving forward to the public consultation stage.
- They have also supplied a map detailing the suggested location for the parameters of the 20mph location. If the 20mph is approved the Community Speed Watch (CSW) initiative could be started.

Portsmouth Road:

- A TRO application for 40mph for the Portsmouth Road has now been approved.

Milland Lane Water-related issues

- The saga of the water running down Milland land has proved particularly frustrating this year. We thought we were making progress back in April 24 by getting Operation Watershed involved, which is the West Sussex County Council scheme to address problems such as this.
- After some delays we all got very excited when they sent out a team to do a thorough survey only to have our hopes dashed in January 2025 when they decided the job was too complex for operation watershed and it would have to be added to another schedule of works that may not complete until 2027, by which time, as we will come on to talk about later, WSCC may not even exist. There is a major problem with the drainage system and this needs to be totally replaced.

Other road issues



- We have similar problems regarding road damage by Iping Churchyard where a ticket has been raised with WSCC Highways department to complete the work but they can give no indication of when the work might be done – the Council has undertaken temporary remedial work but this is not a long term solution, and a similar problem exists in Cinder Lane where there has been no progress either.

Parking on Cartersland

- Increased parking on Cartersland had become a problem and was causing damage to the wildflower meadow.
- Using a CDC grant, the PC has now installed a low fence around the permitted parking area, there are though some remedial work to the verges required.

Footpaths

- Thanks to Cllrs Wassenberg and Parker we have a detailed spreadsheet recording all of the Public Rights of Way within the Parish, so that we can keep a complete inventory of all the paths.
- As well as information on the overall condition of the path, the spreadsheet will detail on the features along each path (signposts, stiles, Kissing Gates etc.) and their condition (Good - Needing repair soon - needing repair immediately) and any other observations can be recorded.

Durrants Pond

- There was some concern about the state of Durrants Pond which, whilst being privately owned, was considered to be an amenity enjoyed by many in the village.
- A meeting was convened with SDNP rangers who we discovered had already undertaken work in and around the park to combat the invasion of Himalayan Balsam.
- The rangers stated that the issue originates from silt washing down from the higher ground. They also confirmed that currently the pond silt traps were not being maintained and this would need to be addressed before any further remedial work could take place.
- The rangers have agreed to summarise all the points in writing to allow the Council to fully understand the issues faced and enable a realistic plan to be enacted.
- It is understood that the works required will be extensive and grants will need to be applied for to fund the work.
- As it is a private pond on common land work can only commence with the property owner's permission.
 - Improvements suggested:
 1. Planting of the pond
 2. Coppicing of small copse (need landowner permission)
 - Flood mitigation –SDNPA Responsibility:
 1. Identify where the silt traps are, assess their condition and repair.
 2. Silt removal from pond (recommend only done when Balsam no longer present as otherwise it would be classed as contaminated waste).
 3. Vegetation survey and management around the pond.
 4. Will need Ordinary Watercourse Consent for any works.
 - Parish Council – Someone was looking into latest regarding Mill Farm probate.
 1. Gather historical and archaeological information.
 2. Records of what work had been done on the pond in the past.
 3. Look at sources of siltation upstream
 4. Identify where sluices are, assess their condition and repair (include Hatch Copse Pond).
 5. Identify where silt traps are, assess their condition and repair.



Defibrillator

- As we reported last year the Council is now responsible for the maintenance of the defibrillator which has now been used several times. We held another training session last year and will be holding one again next year.

Hollycombe House

- There was a lot of speculation last year about whether Hollycombe was to become a supermarket or a hotel of some such thing – especially when a large tarmac car park appeared. Although the Council had been made privy to the plans for the house, we thought it useful to invite the project manager to attend one of the Council meetings so that residents could hear about the plans first hand:

The History

- The property was purchased 3 years ago as a family Home within a commutable distance to London.
- A considerable amount of work has been undertaken to understand the history of the property including a heritage report, detailing the evolution of the building over the years. The vision is to now restore the property to the version that is felt to be most beautiful.

The Build

- The architects in charge of the plans are the best heritage consultants in the world ensuring that the build is carried out to the highest and most historically accurate standard.
- The owner is equally as interested in the land and the flora and fauna it is home to. This means that extensive work to improve the biodiversity of the area has been undertaken, with positive changes already being witnessed. Projects include restoration of the ponds, rewilding and extensive orchards.

Process

- The owner of the property holds the health and safety of all personnel working on the project as paramount. As a result, the supporting infrastructure is being implemented to the highest specification, this includes the car park and porta cabins currently visible. The temporary car park has been constructed to the highest standard to ensure the safety of all and to cause the least environmental nuisance to the surrounding area.
- The project continues to be aligned with the planning authority with regular meetings taking place.
- The project has seen a huge investment to address the climate crisis (solar panels, ground source heat pumps), with the short-term intention for the property to be net zero and the long-term intention for it to be fully off grid.
- I think the Council would say that the project management team have done everything they can to be considerate and careful whilst undertaking such a big job and that when it is completed, the building and surrounding gardens will berestore dto its former glory which can only be a good thing.

Devolution

- The Government wants to introduce “Strategic Authorities” with an elected mayor across England, so that it can hand more powers down from Whitehall. Streamlining local government is being presented as a way to enable the creation of more powerful local mayors, in an attempt to unblock infrastructure and attract greater investment.
- Strategic Authorities and elected mayors would then oversee areas representing a population of around 1.5m people. For this area this is likely to include two or more County Councils.
- Mayors will potentially be given new **strategic** powers and priorities including:
 - Housing and Planning
 - Transport



- Economic Development
- Environment
- Police & Crime Commissioners and Fire & Rescue Authorities (will fall to mayors where geographies align)
- County Councils and existing Unitary Councils that wish to join the fast track process to become a Mayoral Strategic Authority have to apply to the government by 10 January
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/sussex-and-brighton-devolution/sussex-and-brighton-devolution-consultation>

Local Government Reorganisation

- This is separate to devolution, but links with the government's overall aims. The government wants all areas to have unitary councils, with each serving a minimum of 500,000 residents.
- West Sussex covers a total population of 900,000. Chichester District Council a population of circa. 125,000. The government could decide to create one or two unitary authorities within our area. This would mean all of the existing councils merging into the new unitary council or councils.

Bonfire Committee contribution to the Recreation Field

- Once again, we would like to thank the Bonfire committee for their generous donation towards to upkeep and repair of the rec and children's play area.

Enhancing our Community

- The Council continued with its initiatives to improve life within the village including :
 - **Meet Ups:** bimonthly meetings in the shop/café for villagers to catch up with neighbours, meet Parish Councillors and share whatever is on their mind.
 - **Welcome Pack:** the welcome pack was completed and is being distributed to all that move into the area – many thanks to jeremmy and Sue for all their hard work in putting it together
 - **Tech recycle:** we had another collection of unwanted IT equipment and mobile phones is imminent. All equipment collected is sent for safe, professional and ethical recycling with secure and certified data destruction included.
- We welcome suggestions for other initiatives that help the village in the following ways.
 - Support vulnerable groups (eg elderly, carless, lonely).
 - Foster a sense of community (more activities for villagers to join in with/do together).
 - Solve specific problems (eg traffic calming).
 - Improve the village environment/sustainability.
- **Working Parties for Parish Maintenance**
 - We would also welcome any volunteers who are willing and able to assist with small projects around the Parish that could be completed by small work parties to assist the Parish and reduce its financial burden.

Graffiti

- On a less positive note back in October we had what I think is our first case of vandalism- someone spraypainted the play equipment. Fortunately, it appears to have been a one-off incident but very annoying nevertheless.

CIL Fund

- We received a Community Infrastructure grant of just over £9k which we can use to fund infrastructure projects and address local needs, such as:
 - Repairing and maintaining public footpaths and bridleways.
 - Lighting roads and public places.
 - Providing litter bins, parking places, roadside seats, and bus shelters.

If anyone has any suggestions for how we might use some of this grant, please let us know.