



# LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

June 2013

**Parish Office :**

**Clock Tower House  
Lindfield Enterprise Park  
Lewes Road  
Lindfield  
West Sussex  
RH16 2LH**

**Tel: 01444 484115**

**Opening hours: Tuesdays 1.00 – 4.00 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays 10.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.  
or by appointment**

**Chairman: Cllr. Mr. William Blunden  
Parish Clerk: Mrs. Christine Irwin  
Deputy Parish Clerk: Mr. Iain McLean  
Responsible Financial Officer: Mrs. Sue Kolien**

**email: [clerks@lindfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerks@lindfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
website: [lindfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://lindfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk)**

## MEMBERS OF LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL 2012 / 13

Mike Allen	Jane Chatfield	Margaret Hersey	Ron Plass
Michael Amor	Alan Gomme	Simon Hodgson	Christopher Snowling
William Blunden (Chairman)	Stephen Henton	Roger Pickett	Valerie Upton (Vice Chairman)

Members can all be contacted via the Parish Office in the first instance.

## CHAIRMAN'S OVERVIEW (Councillor William Blunden)

In this report we aim to give a brief account of the Parish Council and what we have been doing on behalf of the community over the last financial year.

Last June we said goodbye to Pieter Hemsley when he retired, having served the Council well as our Deputy Clerk for three years. Recruiting a replacement was a high priority and with a high calibre of applicants we were pleased to welcome Iain McLean as our new Deputy Clerk. Iain brings a wealth of legal knowledge to the Council, which has already been put to good use; he has become a valued member of our team.

After many years of looking for larger premises, the Parish Council purchased the Clock Tower House on the Lindfield Enterprise Park and we moved in at the beginning of March. The extra office space enables us to provide better and more comfortable facilities for our residents when they visit the Parish Office, and it is now easier to talk in confidence, if necessary, to a Councillor or a member of staff. Another benefit for our residents is a separate area where we have a large table to view plans and a computer for those who do not have a home computer and wish to look up "dotgov sites" and download forms etc. These facilities are for your benefit, so please make sure you use them!

The Parish Council, through the Environment and Amenities Committee, provided a generous grant to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Committee which enabled the Village to celebrate the Jubilee in Lindfield's traditional way.

The challenges arising from the Localism Act have continued to exercise the minds of members of all the local councils over the past year. We have held meetings with representatives of West Sussex County Council, Haywards Heath Town Council and neighbouring Parish Councils seeking agreement on ways we can work together to deliver services at local level such as the High Street grass cutting, temporary repairs to potholes, weed killing, hedge cutting and the cleaning of street furniture.

Localism has also led to the introduction of Neighbourhood Planning which is meant to give the community a say in the local planning policies. Lindfield Parish Council has joined up with Lindfield Rural Parish Council to produce a joint Neighbourhood Plan for our area.

I would like to thank all those people, including our Pond and Tree Wardens, our Directory delivery team and those who volunteer for the Annual Spring Clean, maintain flower beds, clear snow etc., and all who help in many capacities behind the scenes. Without this help, there is no doubt that the Parish Council alone would be unable to carry out the huge amount of work that it does and it is a credit to Lindfield that we have so many willing volunteers. However we can always do with more, so if you are able to help in any way, please contact the Parish Office on 01444 484115. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Councillors, who willingly give their time voluntarily and work hard to maintain and improve the Village for the benefit of all residents, and the Parish Council Staff for their dedication in serving the Council and local residents.

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### **PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE (Chairman: Councillor Alan Gomme)**

The Planning Committee has met every three weeks during the last year when we have considered 155 applications, including the applications for the Buxshalls and Wates sites which are both within Lindfield Rural Parish. Of these 29 were tree related and we are always grateful for the comments on these that we receive from our tree wardens and for the remainder, the Parish Council raised objections in respect of 15 and offered comments on a further 23 others.

We considered sensitive applications in respect of the Blackthorns Nursing Home site, the Witch Public House garden appeal and the enlargement of Lindfield Primary School.

The major application for new housing was the Wates application for development in Gravelye Lane and for this the Council retained the services of Richard Walker, a planning consultant, to advise ourselves and Lindfield Rural Parish Council on how we should respond to the application which was later approved by Mid Sussex District Council in May of this year.

### **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.**

The Steering Group consists of Councillors from both Lindfield parish councils and has been progressing the development of our own neighbourhood plan as quickly as possible during the year. In September a questionnaire was distributed to every household in the two parishes to gather information from our residents and in support of this we held exhibitions in the King Edward Hall in Lindfield and the Millennium Centre in Scaynes Hill. We had a very good return rate for the Questionnaires and we commissioned Action in Rural Sussex (AirS) to analyse the responses.

We subsequently retained the services of AirS to support the further development of our neighbourhood plan to the draft plan stage. We were very fortunate that more than 30 local residents responded to our appeals for volunteers for our four Focus Groups. These groups had the challenge of researching a wide range of current and possible future issues within our area and to gather evidence to support our eventual draft plan. They started their tasks in February and that phase of the project has now been completed.

For more information about the progress of our plan please visit our web site:

[www.lindfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.lindfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** **(Chairman: Councillor Will Blunden)**

The Environment and Amenities Committee is responsible for providing and maintaining the Denmans Lane Allotment Site, the public toilets, some of the Village street lighting, litter bins, bus shelters and other items of street furniture. The committee also liaises with MSDC regarding management of the Common, the Pond and Hickmans Lane Playing Field and with WSCC on various highway matters. This has been a busy year for this committee and a great deal has been achieved.

Having published our Winter Management Plan in 2010 which we update each year, we considered how this could be improved on and have now purchased an additional grit spreader, snow shovels and extra grit bins.

On our behalf, Haywards Heath Town Council's ground staff team have continued to cut the High Street verges to a high standard. We have now also instructed them to maintain the triangle garden area at the top of Sunte Avenue.

The wrought iron bus stop poles have been refurbished and other street furniture maintenance has been carried out. In partnership with MSDC, new wooden posts and chain link fencing has been installed alongside the footpath by the pond and two new pond aerators have been installed to improve the water quality. Following an unauthorised incursion at Hickmans Lane playing field in September, the Parish Council discussed with MSDC how this could be avoided in the future as and we contributed 50% towards the wooden posts around the field which were considered to be the best solution for this location.

Direct Technical Services have continued to look after our 45 street lamps and have been busy upgrading the lanterns to comply with current standards and enable savings on energy consumption.

Paul Frost employed by the Parish Council as the Village Orderly, is doing an excellent job providing an extra service to complement the street sweeping arrangements carried out by SERCO on behalf of MSDC.

There is still a huge demand for allotments and we have implemented a policy of subdividing larger plots as they become vacant to give more people the opportunity to have an allotment. Another new policy being implemented is that in future only residents of the Parish of Lindfield will be able to rent an allotment.

The Parish Council, through the Environment and Amenities Committee, was pleased to provide the main financial support to the committee organising the Queens Diamond Jubilee celebrations in the Village.

The Christmas Lights which had been a thorny issue for the last few years was finally resolved by the purchase of new festive lighting. Fixed around the trees and with garlands lighting from tree to tree this completely transformed the High Street and gave many a real "feel good factor". A lighting scheme for the Pond Islands was purchased and installed and has been used during the Christmas period and other special occasions throughout the year.

One other project, running over into next year, is the provision of street maps in the two main village car parks.

The Committee continues to organise the Annual Village Spring Clean and Christmas Festival Night; to provide six visits a year by the refuse freighter to the Tollgate car park; and to carry out regular and occasional maintenance of flower beds and footpaths.

Building on the relationship with Haywards Heath Town Council that started with grass cutting in the High Street, this Council, along with Ardingly and Lindfield Rural Parish Councils, has entered into a clustering arrangement whereby the Town Council, by agreement with West Sussex County Council, will undertake devolved minor highway works on behalf of the partner parishes. This work will include: weed spraying; temporary and permanent cold fill pot hole repairs; highway sign cleaning; vegetation removal; gully inspection and clearance; graffiti removal; fly tipping removal; management of highway defects; flood warnings; damage to highways, loose slabs, street furniture and chevrons.

Problems can be reported to the Parish Office or direct to Haywards Heath Town Community Interest Company c/o the Town Hall, 40 Boltro Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1BA tel: 01444 455694, email: hhtowncic@gmail.com. Highway problems can also be reported to: <http://love.westsussex.gov.uk/Help>.

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## **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** **(Chairman: Councillor Stephen Henton)**

The Finance and General Purposes Committee is responsible for overseeing and reviewing the day to day financial matters of Lindfield Parish Council and to recommend to the Council the annual budget and the precept to be levied for the Parish. Staffing and the Parish Office accommodation also come under the remit of this Committee as well as governance, insurance, risk assessment, production of the Lindfield Parish Directory and Year Book and any matters of policy which do not fall clearly within the responsibilities of the other Committees, or where there is conflict between them.

Putting together the annual budget is a major task. As Lindfield Parish Council has very little income from other sources, most of its funds have to come from the annual precept (£152,000 for 2012/13). If the Committee underestimates the amount required, it is unable to obtain any further sums from other sources, other than loans for particular capital projects, so it is essential that reserves are held. The Council has several designated reserves “earmarked” for specific purposes as well as a general reserve which is a safeguard in case of unexpected but necessary expenditure. A breakdown of the budget for 2013/14 is enclosed with this report, together with an abbreviated version of the receipts and payments for 2012/13. Full copies of the accounts are available from the Parish Office. After careful consideration of the budget for 2013/14, notwithstanding rising costs and our new premises, we were pleased to be able to keep the precept at £152,000 for the second year running.

The on-going work of the Committee includes reviewing monthly income & expenditure against the budget, carrying out periodic checks on the financial records and reporting to Council annually on the effectiveness of the internal audit and internal control procedures. The finances of the Council are subject to both external and internal audit – to date no significant problems have been identified and some helpful suggestions have been followed up.

The main task during the year was the purchase of the Clock Tower House, with the help of a loan from the Public Works Loan Board, and setting it up as the new Parish Office. Acquiring additional or alternative accommodation has been one of the Council’s objectives for several years and the new premises provide better facilities for the staff, Councillors and visiting members of the public.

A working group is looking into the feasibility of reinstating public toilets on the Common and we have engaged the services of a company of chartered surveyors to draw up plans for public consultation.

Each year the Council sets aside an amount of money in the F&GP Committee’s budget for grants/donations, either to local village based groups or to organisations whose activities benefit residents of Lindfield. In 2012/13 a total of £1,450 was paid in grants to the following organisations: 4Sight (£100); West Sussex Mediation Service (£100); Victim Support (£50); Lindfield Arts Festival (£500); Haywards Heath Food Bank (£500); West Downs Neighbourhood Watch Search Team (£100) and Outset Youth Action (£100).

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013

2011/12			2012/13
£			£
		<b>RECEIPTS</b>	
158,000.00		Precept	152,000.00
105.24		Interest Received	113.41
634.32		Allotments: Rents and Licence Fee	707.60
3,910.00		Village Directory: Advertising	3,970.00
887.40		Village Directory: Donations	6.00
330.00		Christmas Festival Night	217.50
208.50		Grants and Donations	1,512.75
		Public Works Loan Board	299,895.00
		Rent Clock Tower House	1,275.47
2,804.67		Other Income	1,035.57
8,319.57	<b>175,199.70</b>	VAT re-imbursements	7,976.49
			<b>468,709.79</b>
		<b>PAYMENTS</b>	
67,755.02		Administration:	69,933.85
479.44		Capital - purchase of Clock Tower House and associated costs	319,277.64
8,415.44		Other Expenditure on Parish Office	7,015.00
11,125.96		Finance and General Purposes Committee	9,701.83
50,919.20		Environment and Amenities Committee	55,142.55
		Planning and Traffic Committee	1,590.29
9,543.99		VAT on Payments	15,293.02
	<b>148,239.05</b>		<b>477,954.18</b>
	<b>26,960.65</b>		<b>- 9,244.39</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>			
Opening Balance		179,988.78	Payments
Receipts		<u>468,709.79</u>	Closing Balance
		<b><u>648,698.57</u></b>	<b><u>170,744.39</u></b>
<b>BANK RECONCILIATION</b>			
Current Account	- 8,824.40		
Business Saver Account	179,457.37		
	<b>170,632.97</b>		
Petty Cash in Hand	111.42		
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£ 170,744.39</b>		

## BUDGET 2013 / 14 (Precept £148,600 + Council Tax Support Grant of £3,400)

		BUDGET 2013/2014
<b>Finance and General Purposes Committee</b>		
A	Administration	104,675.00
B	Chairman's Fund	500.00
C	Grants/Donations	1,500.00
D	Annual Memberships/Subscriptions	2,500.00
E	Village Directory	6,000.00
F	Newsletter/Annual Report	2,000.00
G	Members' Allowances	2,500.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>119,675.00</b>
<b>Capital Projects</b>		
H	Repairs and remedial work to Clock Tower House	18,000.00
I	Toilets on Lindfield Common	20,000.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>38,000.00</b>
<b>Environment and Amenities Committee</b>		
1a	Street Lighting - Energy/maintenance costs	3,500.00
1b	- Upgrading Street lights	6,000.00
1c	- Christmas lights	6,000.00
2	Maintenance	5,000.00
3	Allotments	3,500.00
4	Gardening	500.00
5	Christmas Festival Night	1,000.00
6	Village Archives	300.00
7	Mobile Civic Amenity Freighter	2,000.00
8	Denmans Lane toilets - running costs	12,000.00
9	Street map of Lindfield	5,000.00
10	Replacement of litter bins	2,000.00
11	Digital mapping	250.00
12	Joint Project with MSDC/WSCC - Post and rail fencing - Pond and Common	2,000.00
13	Tree Pollarding	2,500.00
14	Removal of epicormic growth	600.00
15	Grass cutting (High Street)	2,000.00
16	Emergency Equipment	1,500.00
17	Joint Project with MSDC: Posts around MSDC open spaces	5,000.00
18	Joint Project with WSCC: Dropped kerbs	2,500.00
19	Joint project with MSDC: Replacement of floating islands on Pond	1,000.00
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>64,150.00</b>
<b>Planning and Traffic Committee</b>		
(i)	Miscellaneous	200.00
(ii)	Professional Fees/Neighbourhood Plan	20,000.00
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>20,200.00</b>
<b>Budget Total spent to date</b>		<b>£ 242,025.00</b>
<b>Outstanding Projects - To be confirmed</b>		
Street map of Lindfield		3,816.25
Bus Stop Poles refurbishment		2,500.00
<b>Total:</b>		<b>6,316.25</b>
<b>Reserves</b>		
General Reserve		<b>50,000.00</b>
<b>Designated Reserves - To be confirmed</b>		
Sinking Fund - Denmans Lane		3,600.00
New Premises		20,000.00
Election		3,121.00
Street Lighting		7,404.88
Allotments		500.00
Denmans Lane toilets - maintenance sinking fund		5,000.00
Capital Project: Toilets on Common		30,000.00
Public Toilets on Common: Sinking Fund		20,000.00
Repair/maintenance of community assets - sinking fund		3,000.00
Maintenance of King Edward Hall clock		900.00
Christmas Lights		2,100.00
Replacement of Litter Bins		2,831.00
Tree Pollarding		2,500.00
Professional Fees/Neighbourhood Plan		28,603.71
<b>Total</b>		<b>129,560.59</b>
<b>Total: Outstanding Projects and Reserves</b>		<b>185,876.84</b>