

Hunton Parish Council

Report for the year to 31st March 2017

Parish Councillors

This is the first year of the four-year term of the Parish Council.

Helen Ward and Roger Lee were co-opted on to the Parish Council in November 2016 to fill a vacancy left after the election in May 2016 and as a result of the resignation of Steve Wyles in August 2016.

At the Annual Meeting in May 2017, the Parish Council re-elected Cllr Gary Thomas as Chairman and Cllr David Heaton as Vice Chairman. At the same meeting, the parish councillors agreed to take responsibility for specific parish matters to ensure that focus is given to these areas and to provide a good service to parishioners. These roles are as follows:

- Footpaths and ditches – Cllr Heaton (primary) and Cllr Goddard (secondary)
- Road conditions and speed limits – Cllr Goddard (primary) and Cllr Lee (secondary)
- Speedwatch – Cllr Ward
- Hunton Parish Plan/Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Trought
- Events and communications – Cllr Ward
- Planning issues and consultations – Cllr Thomas
- Liaison with KALC, MBC and other external bodies – Cllr Thomas
- Utilities (broadband, water, electricity) – Cllr Stanbridge

Hunton parish councillors have all undertaken to act in accordance with a Code of Conduct and there have been no complaints to the local monitoring officer about their individual or collective activities.

Income

The Parish Council was mainly financed by a precept of £25,000, which was raised on local householders, collected with the council tax. This amounted to £80.13 for a Band “D” property. Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) also passed on funding from local council tax support of £623 and provided Parish Services Scheme funding of £1,874 to assist with maintenance of the recreation ground and play area. The Parish Council has also received £2,044 in Feed-in Tariffs from the Village Hall’s energy supplier, following the investment in solar panels on the Hall roof in 2012. The Hall benefits from reduced energy bills.

Expenditure

A large part of the Parish Council’s expenditure was on a donation of £5,800 to the King George V Playing Field Committee for the maintenance of the playing field. The Parish Council also assisted the Village Hall with a contribution of £1,165 towards the insurance costs and £1,000 towards the running costs (following agreement that certain village events and activities should take place at no charge, and with priority over private hires). A total of £1,158 was spent as the Parish Council’s remaining contribution towards the new cricket pavilion. An assessment of trees on Parish Council owned land and subsequent remedial works to the trees cost £875.

The income and expenditure figures for 2016/17 and comparative figures for 2015/16 are shown on page 4. Copies of audited annual returns are available under the Publication Scheme.

Activities

The Parish Council continues to maintain the permissive footpath between Bensted Close and the Village Hall, through a maintenance contract to ensure the hedge running alongside the footpath and the path verges are kept tidy, and by filling in any holes when they develop. A plan to extend the footpath up through the

recreation field and the land beyond to Lughorse Lane did not come to fruition as permission was not granted by the landowner.

Parish councillors have been working hard to ensure action is taken on a number of local highways issues:

- Reporting potholes and flooding on roads to KCC Highways;
- Engagement with South East Water regarding the water main on Hunton Hill;
- Engagement with local farms to discuss HGV and other farm vehicles' movements in the village;
- Objecting to planning applications, such as the Wares Farm expansion and Vicarage Road housing development, which will increase the amount of traffic on Hunton's roads if permitted;
- Setting up the Lorrywatch scheme in Hunton to monitor HGVs.

Looking to the future:

- Kerb stones are to be installed outside the school to prevent the verge from being eroded – to be funded by the Parish Council;
- Action is being taken to move the 7.5T sign at the bottom of Hunton Hill to the outside of Amsbury Farm to create a HGV corridor down Hunton Hill to the farm – to be funded by the Parish Council;
- Hunton Hill is to be micro-surfaced;
- The Parish Council is to consider commissioning a survey to consider possible solutions to reduce speed outside the school.

The Speedwatch equipment bought by the Parish Council in 2013 is being used by the Hunton Speedwatch team, with reports being made to the police where necessary.

Parish councillors attend the Joint Parishes Flood Group. They have also met with representatives from the National Flood Forum and Environment Agency to discuss flooding issues. Very little progress has been made by the Environment Agency to mitigate flood risk in the area; their focus is now predominantly on individual property resilience, rather than a wider-reaching flood prevention scheme.

Planning

The Parish Council responded to 19 planning applications during the year. It meets when required to consider new planning applications and details of these meetings can be found on the notice boards and website or by contacting the Clerk. In considering its views on planning applications, the parish councillors continue to put forward recommendations that they feel best represent the interests of local parishioners.

The Chairman of the Parish Council has been heavily involved in liaison with other parishes to object to the MBC Draft Local Plan and has attended the Planning Inspector's examination hearings.

Meetings

The Parish Council meets bi-monthly at the Village Hall, usually on the third Monday of January, March, May, July, September and November and parishioners are welcome to attend. Parishioners are given an opportunity to raise matters at the start of every meeting.

Extracts of minutes of meetings are reported in the Hunton Herald and can be viewed in full on the website at www.hunton.org.uk. The Parish Council also has a Publication Scheme required under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, whereby copies of particular documentation are available upon request.

Contacts

Councillors or the Clerk can be contacted directly when more urgent issues arise. Contact details appear on the village notice boards, in the Hunton Herald and on the website at www.hunton.org.uk.

Councillors:	Cllr Gary Thomas (Chairman)	01622 820691
	Cllr David Heaton	01622 820678
	Cllr Tony Stanbridge	01622 820721
	Cllr Annette Trought	01622 820448
	Cllr Jonny Goddard	01622 820096
	Cllr Helen Ward	01622 820810
	Cllr Roger Lee	01622 820210
Clerk:	Mrs Sharon Goodwin	01622 681238

Hunton Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments 2016/17

2015/16	Receipts	2016/17
£		£
20,000	Parish Precept	25,000
842	Local Council Tax Support	623
1,874	Parish Services Scheme funding	1,874
1,909	Solar panels FIT receipts	2,044
37	Bank interest	9
2,623	VAT reimbursement from HMRC	0
977	Reimbursement from Village Hall Committee for intruder alarm	0
23,437	Sport England grant for new cricket pavilion	0
414	Tree Council grant for Community Orchard	0
100	Hunton Herald contribution to defibrillator cabinet	0
100	Playing Field Committee contribution to defibrillator cabinet	0
<u>52,313</u>	Total receipts	<u>29,550</u>
2015/16	Payments	2016/17
£		£
	General administration	
	Running expenses	
73	Chairman's Allowance	172
480	Clerk's office allowance	480
165	Clerk's travel expenses	180
35	Data Protection fee	35
53	Postage	54
177	Stationery & office expenses	126
518	Subscriptions	494
0	Telephone	0
1,500	Running expenses total	1,541
4,653	Salaries	4,699
375	Audit fees	375
0	Bank service charges	54
1,228	Insurance	892
60	Open spaces	875
2,086	Village Hall insurance contribution	1,165
0	Village Hall running costs contribution	1,000
5,800	Recreation ground - donation to KGF	5,800
30	Street lighting	34
190	Training	390
150	s137	150
0	Annual Parish Meeting expenses	32
3,451	Parish Council contribution to new cricket pavilion	1,158
486	Footpath maintenance	591
395	Defibrillator cabinet/installation	78
3,875	VAT - on payments	377
22,344	New cricket pavilion	0
213	Car park repairs	0
50	Loan to Community Orchard Group	0
788	Contribution to Hunton Parish Plan work	0
7,597	Installation of CCTV & intruder alarm	0
<u>55,270</u>	Total payments	<u>19,211</u>