

Hunton Parish Council

Report for the year to 31st March 2019

Parish Councillors

This is the third year of the four-year term of the Parish Council. There have been no changes to the Parish Council in the last year.

At the Annual Meeting in May 2019, the Parish Council elected Cllr David Heaton as Chairman and Cllr Annette Trought as Vice Chairman. At the same meeting, the parish councillors agreed to continue 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)
- 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
- Speedwatch (*on hold*) – Cllr Ward
- Hunton Parish Plan/Neighbourhood Plan (*on hold*) – Cllr Trought

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 £26,000, which was raised on local householders, collected with the council tax. This amounted to £82.67 for a Band “D” property. Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) provided Parish Services Scheme funding of £1,468 to assist with maintenance of the recreation ground and play area. The Parish Council has also received £1,950 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.

A grant of £7,585 was received from MBC for fencing around the multiplay equipment and nest swing in the play area. The fencing has been installed and the grant was spent in May 2019.

Expenditure

A large part of the Parish Council’s expenditure was on a donation of £6,000 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 £1,039 towards the insurance costs and £1,075 towards the running costs (following agreement that certain village events and activities should take place at no charge, and with priority over private hires).

The Parish Council is focused on improving the safety of road users in the village. In 2018/19, £785 was spent on additional road signage and markings.

The Parish Council part funded an additional picnic table in the Community Orchard and spent £1,200 on remedial work to a Turkey Oak tree on the recreation ground.

The income and expenditure figures for 2018/19 and comparative figures for 2017/18 are shown on page 3. 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.

Parish councillors have liaised with MBC, Kent County Council (KCC) and local landowners to ensure ditches and culverts are cleared, to try and prevent flooding. In the last year, KCC has given devolved powers to the Parish Council to close roads in the event of flooding and has provided signage for this purpose.

Highways issues remain high on the agenda for the Parish Council. The Traffic & Road Safety Working Party has taken an active role in identifying areas of concern on the roads and is committed to making improvements to ensure the safety of all road users throughout the village. The Parish Council is providing funds to allow the Working Party to take positive action, including additional road signage in the last year. The Parish Council was heavily involved in liaison with South East Water, KCC Highways and local farmers to minimise traffic issues on Hunton's roads as a result of the Hunton Hill road closure last year (for the water main replacement). Parish councillors have been researching the various types of traffic calming, with a view to possibly installing some traffic calming on West Street, near the school.

An additional CCTV camera has been installed in the Village Hall car park to further improve security.

A tree inspection has been undertaken recently on all council-owned trees on the recreation ground and near the Village Hall. Recommended remedial work will be carried out in the coming months.

Planning

The Parish Council responded to 32 planning applications during the year. Councillors have spoken to applicants and the MBC Planning Department regarding certain applications, as well as putting recommendations forward on all applications received (and some additional applications not received which could potentially affect Hunton in some way). 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 Parish Council meets when required to consider new planning applications and details of these meetings can be found on the notice boards and website.

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 documents are available upon request.

Contacts

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

Councillors:	Cllr David Heaton (Chairman)	01622 820678
	Cllr Annette Trought	01622 820448
	Cllr Gary Thomas	01622 820691
	Cllr Tony Stanbridge	01622 820721
	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 2018/19

2017/18	Receipts	2018/19
£		£
25,000	Parish Precept	26,000
1,835	Parish Services Scheme funding	1,468
1,910	Solar panels FIT receipts	1,950
0	MBC SIPA grant for play area fencing	7,585
225	Funds banked on behalf of HPPSC	0
32	Funds banked for St Mary's Church	0
5,750	Awards For All grant for nest swing/resurfacing	0
1,000	KCPFA grant for nest swing/resurfacing	0
113	King George PFC grant for nest swing/resurfacing	0
4,253	VAT recovered	0
40,118	Total receipts	37,003
2017/18	Payments	2018/19
£		£
	General administration	
	Running expenses	
314	Chairman's Allowance	171
440	Clerk's office allowance	480
161	Clerk's travel expenses	175
35	Data Protection fee	35
39	Postage	56
235	Stationery & office expenses	114
515	Subscriptions	477
1,739	Running expenses total	1,508
4,351	Salaries	4,833
275	Audit fees	275
72	Bank service charges	72
926	Insurance	859
360	Open spaces	1,954
1,242	Village Hall insurance contribution	1,039
1,000	Village Hall running costs contribution	1,075
6,000	Recreation ground - donation to KGF	6,000
147	Street lighting	44
231	Training	184
100	s137	482
87	Annual Parish Meeting expenses	71
0	Clearance of container	274
1,567	Highways costs	785
990	Footpath maintenance	495
240	CCTV maintenance contract	0
6,863	New nest swing/resurfacing	0
32	Money held for St Mary's Church - paid	0
1,558	VAT on payments	549
27,780	Total payments	20,499