

Chairman's Report 2025/26

I'm pleased to report that the Council continues in good health; providing support to community projects and needs, and representation of Parish interests to District and County Councils.

As we enter the 2026/27 year the Parish council is seeing some significant changes with the retirements of; Jan Critchley our Parish Clerk of 40 years standing, our planning officer Brian O'Connor (19 years), and Jenny Cass. Our thanks to all of them for their years of service to the community. We are also pleased to welcome Verity Allcorn our new clerk.

The past year has been one of both significant achievements and challenges for the council. Major achievements include the following:

- Adoption of the Parish Neighbourhood plan via referendum giving the Parish some protection for the future against speculative developments.
- Refurbishment of the Village playground
- Installation of two Speed Indicator Devices around the Parish to assist with traffic speed control, led by Nick Yeo
- The instigation of a Greener Barns Green group to investigate and implement environmental projects around the Parish, led by Rob Fryatt with Jenny Cass and Elaine French
- Successful lobbying of West Sussex Highways for improvements to a number of the poor road surfaces around the Parish. This work continues and will be led by our newly formed Highways group
- Allocation of funds to support both the completion of the Sports changing room project and the installation of solar panels at the school site

We have had to deal with a number of challenging issues over the past year:

- The Sumners Fields development, now nearing completion, has caused significant concerns to local residents. The council has attempted to mediate between valid resident concerns and the developer with mixed success; our thanks to Ross Dye for all of his efforts.
- The inclusion into the HDC Strategic Housing Allocation of the field off Chapel Road opposite the shop and pub has caused understandable concerns throughout the village. The council has made its best efforts on behalf of the residents to make their objections to the development known. At time of writing, we are awaiting the conclusion of the planning consultation with HDC and will continue to represent the villages best interests in this matter.
- Continued lobbying of HDC enforcement to act on issues relating to traveller sites.

Whilst the Sumners Fields development is nearing completion we expect to have a continued strong focus on planned developments in the parish.

In summary the council continues its best efforts on behalf of our parishioners and can be proud of its achievements over the past year. Looking forward there are exciting opportunities for positive impact on environment and facilities around the parish.

I close by thanking my colleagues on the council for their support through the past year.