



To All Councillors on the Property Committee,

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the Property Committee to be held in the Billingshurst Centre, Roman Way, Billingshurst, on Wednesday 11 October 2023, at 7.30pm.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting and speak for a maximum of three minutes about an item on the agenda for this meeting during the Public Session at the discretion of the Chairman.

G.C. Burt
Clerk to the Council

5 October 2023

AGENDA

1. Chairman's Announcements
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. To receive Declarations of Interest and notification of change to members' interests.
4. Approval of the Minutes of the Property Committee meeting held on 31 May 2023, previously circulated, to confirm and sign the minutes as a correct record.
5. Clerk's Report
6. Public Session
(Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman)
7. To ratify consent to allow Billingshurst Allotment Society to plant fruit trees at Manor Fields allotments - Appendix A.
8. To consider suggestion from Neighbourhood Wardens to restrict ball games at Manor Fields allotments - Appendix B.
9. To receive an update on proposed new path at SRCG - Appendix C.
10. To consider request to move steel container at Jubilee Fields - Appendix D.
11. Adoption of steps between Village Green and 71 High - Appendix E.
12. To receive results of entry into South & South East in Bloom competition - Appendix F.
13. To receive property updates, for information only - Appendix G.
14. Next Meeting: **14 January 2024**

Committee Members: EB, PB, PD, SD, CG, RM, ST

Members of the public should be aware that being present at a meeting of the Council or one of its Committees or Sub-Committees will be deemed as the person having given consent to being recorded (photograph, film or audio recording) at the meeting, by any person present.

APPENDIX A
BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL
PROPERTY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2023

FRUIT TREES ON ALLOTMENTS

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR DECISION

Some time ago, the Property Cttee agreed to renew the occupation of land at Manor Fields by Billingshurst Allotment Society.

This is progressing but the Society came back and asked if the following could be varied to allow fruit trees as there is an unused area they would like to plant some, possibly funded by a grant. (See attached plan.)

Ensure that Licensees shall not plant trees on the land other than in removable pots;

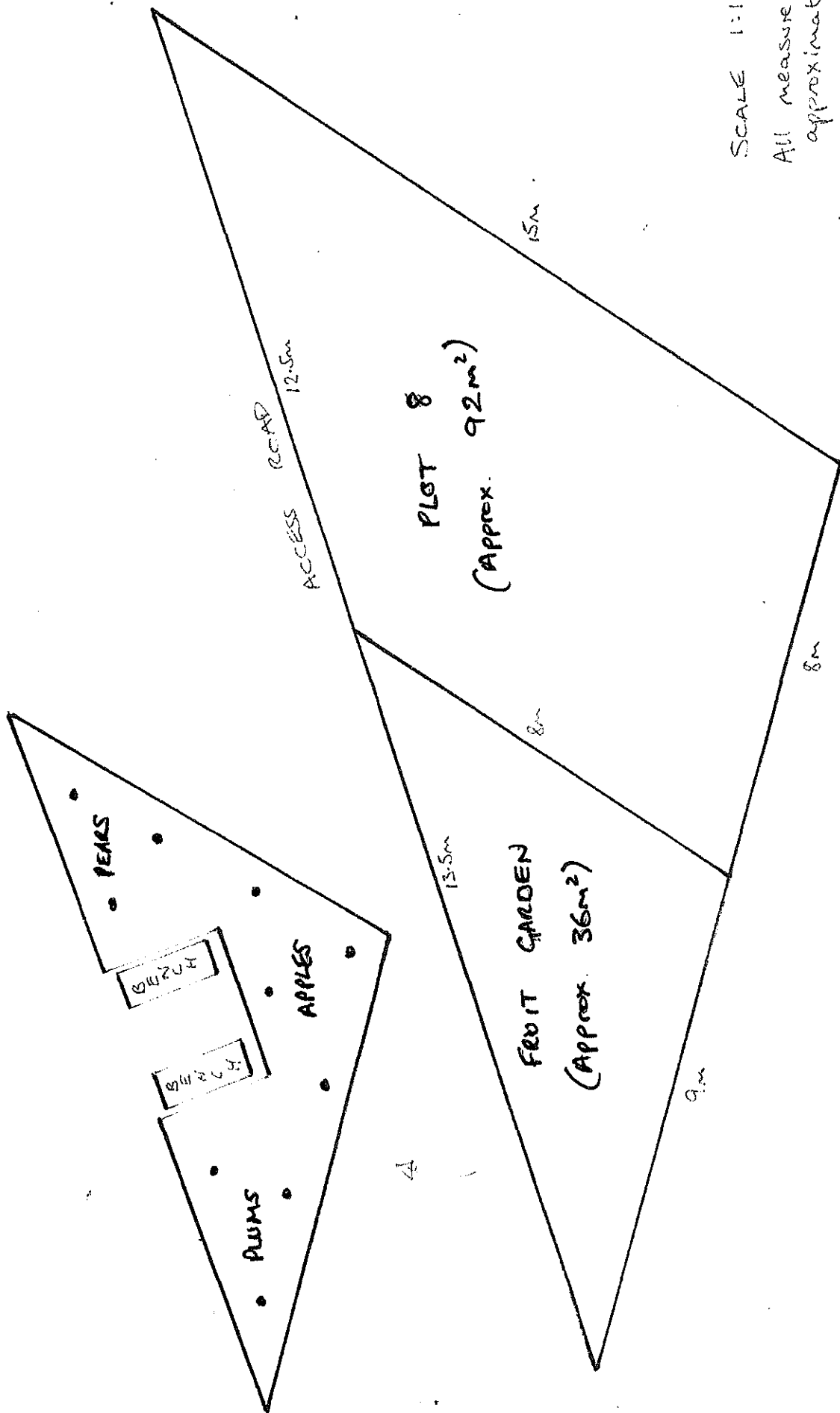
I imagine that the original intention was to prevent oak trees being planted, but planting fruit trees does seem to be the vogue. I suggested that if the Council did permit this, that the trees must not be higher than 6' which they would be happy with. (I understand that it is the Society itself planting the trees and not individual tenants.)

As the Society wished to progress a grant application in advance of this meeting, I asked Cllrs via e-mail if they were happy with this and a majority that responded were positive.

Therefore, the Committee is invited to confirm that is happy for the Society to plant fruit trees as indicated.

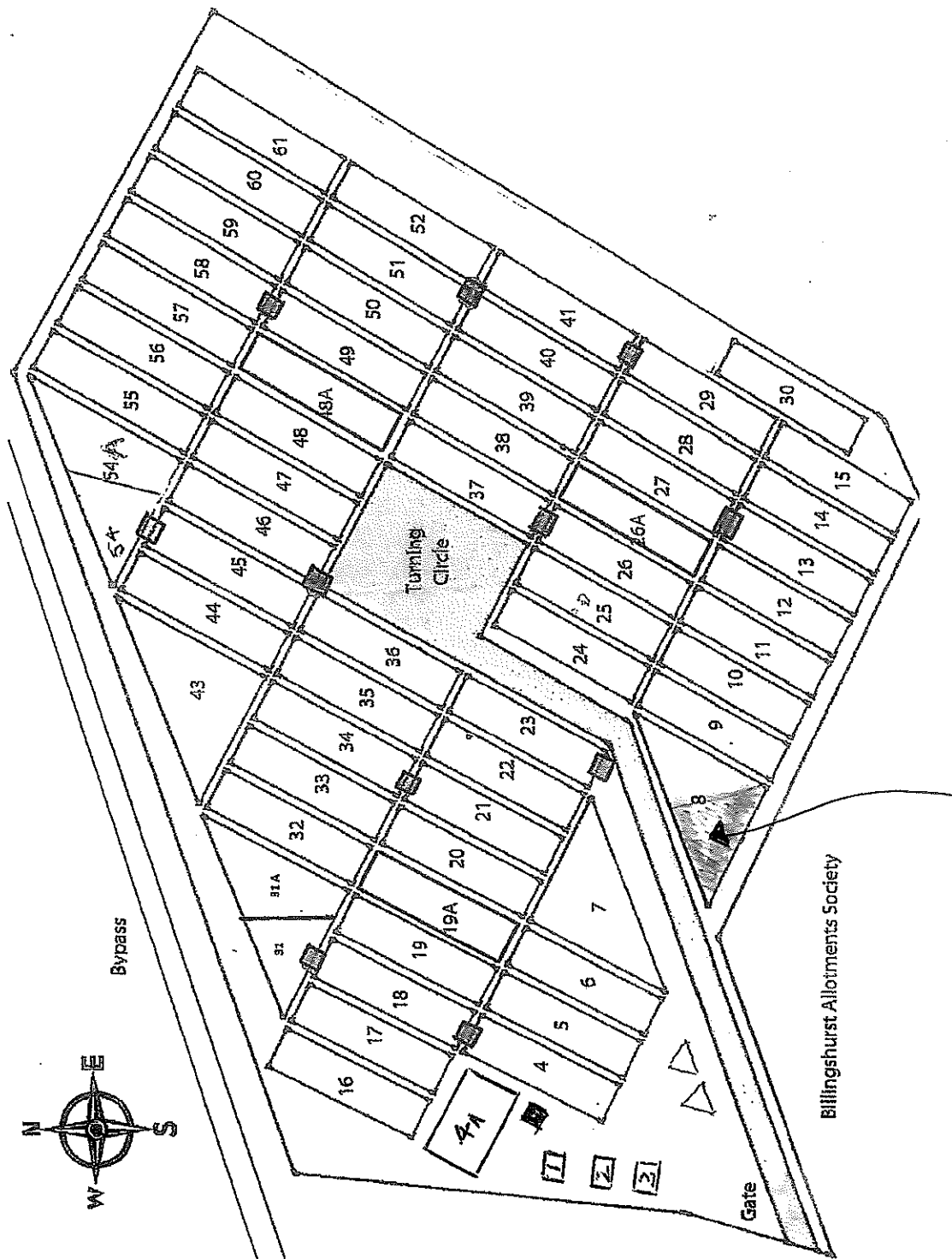
B. A. S. 10th ANNIVERSARY FRUIT GARDEN
- 10 cordon fruit trees with seating area

B. A. S. 10th ANNIVERSARY FRUIT GARDEN
- 10 cordon fruit trees with seating area



SCALE 1:100

All measurements approximate



Play
area
x
car
park

APPENDIX B
BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL
PROPERTY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2023

BALL GAMES AT MANOR FIELDS

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR DECISION

Following considerable vandalism and theft from the allotmentS at Manor Fields, a wooden post and rail fence between the allotment site and adjoining play area was replaced with a 6' high weld-mesh type fence approximately two years ago.

A further length of fencing was installed a few months ago on another side, to stop thieves entering from the north, via the bypass running track.

These measures have greatly reduced cases of vandalism and theft.

However, whereas before, those losing footballs over the fence could gain easy access over the ranch fencing, this is now not possible, and people are either climbing over the double gates to retrieve balls, or as in the most recent case, using bolt cutters to take out a section of one of the new panels to gain access.

The Neighbourhood Wardens and the Allotment Society have both asked the Council to install *NO BALL GAMES* signs along the fence. They believe that having such signs would not only discourage ball games, but could also be used to *reinforce* challenges to those playing football.

The Council is informed that games of football also cause a nuisance to young families and children enjoying the play equipment.

The area of Manor Fields outside the allotment site is clearly not big enough for adult football and other more suitable sites can be found at Jubilee Fields.

The Committee is invited to consider the suggestion of NO BALL GAMES signs.

APPENDIX C

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

NEW PATH AT STATION ROAD COMMUNITY GARDENS

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR INFORMATION

For sometime, the Council has had on its *do list* a project to provide a new footpath across the rear of Station Road Community Gardens.

A specification was devised many years ago by a contractor with whom The Friends of Station Road Gardens had worked before, but on the two occasions that the Council has sought tenders, only that particular company has quoted. In order to draw down S106 funds, three quotes should be obtained, hence this project has not moved forward.

One of the purposes of the scheme is to improve access to The Weald School from the Natts Lane area to the south. However, whilst the alley from Natts Lane to Myrtle Lane is a Public Right of Way (PROW) and maintained by WSCC, the final leg from Myrtle Lane has no designation, floods heavily and has been identified as belonging to The Weald School. The school and WSCC have been asked to address this flooding issue

Where the path would exit to the north of SRCG there is already a gate, leading to the Leisure Centre and The Weald School. In conjunction with the development of the Men's Shed adjoining, I am seeking a quote to tarmac this entrance to Gardens, as it gets very muddy, despite several loads of wood chippings over the years.

Some lighting to the rear of the gardens has also been mentioned in the past, but it follows that this would be best installed after the laying of any new path.

The Committee is invited to note this update.

APPENDIX D
BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL
PROPERTY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2023

STEEL CONTAINER AT JUBILEE FIELDS

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR DECISION

Th Council has received the following request from the BSRA, who lease land from the Council at Jubilee Fields:

We have an issue with the storage container on the top field as it continuously gets broken into and we've found a couple making out in there as well as a gang of youths smoking weed inside. We'd like to move it back down near the tractor shed as we're running out of room in there for storage. We plan to put the big wicket roller in there as this is the largest bit of machinery we have and it's the least used. One potential site is at the end of the garage, pitch and nets. It could straddle the ditch and we'd trim back the tree that's overgrown and when it's sited, paint it green to blend in. We have a guy with a hiab truck who could lift it and re-site it and we'd prepare the ground beforehand and sit it on blocks. Would you have any objection to this?

See maps below showing the existing and proposed locations.

The Committee is invited to consider the request.

From here.

To here.



APPENDIX E
BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL
PROPERTY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2023

STEPS BETWEEN VILLAGE GREEN AND 71 HIGH STREET

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR DECISION

The Council owns and maintains the freehold of the Village Green in the centre of the village.

The demise is bordered on the south side by a flight of stone steps, shown red on the attached plan.

These steps are not being maintained and some of the stones are loose and present a hazard; fortunately they are little used.

Land Registry searches confirm these to be neither the Parish Councils or the owner of 71 High Street on the other side of the steps. Nor are they owned by either WSCC or HDC and are not part of either the Rights of Way (ROW) or adopted highway network.

In the absence of anyone taking responsibility for the steps, the Committee is invited to consider assuming responsibility for the steps in the public interest and seeking formal ownership in due course.



APPENDIX F
BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL
PROPERTY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2023

BILLINGSHURST IN BLOOM

REPORT BY CLERK & OFFICE MANAGER

FOR INFORMATION

The Council entered Station Road Community Gardens and the Village into the South & South East in Bloom competition this year, in the Small Park and Small Town categories respectively.

Judging took place on 30 June and staff shifts were altered to accommodate the visit and ensure that the route looked as good as it possibly could on the morning.

The judge met a variety of individuals along the route, representative of the many groups who are active in the village, helping it to look nice or championing a better environment.

Litter Wardens Colin Ellis and John Bicknell and Parish Clerk Greg Burt representing the Council, along with Cllr Sandy Duck representing the Friends of Station Road Gardens (FOG) attended the awards ceremony at RHS Wisley on 29 September for the annual South & South East in Bloom Awards.

Station Road Community Gardens retained their previous standing of Silver Gilt and the village went up a level to Silver Gilt.

Thanks to all Council staff, contractors and volunteers, particularly those from Billigreen and FOG, who help make the village and Station Road Community Gardens look so good not just on the day but all year round.

On the 4 October, entrants into our own local Billingshurst in Bloom competition received certificates from the Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Ken Peters at a ceremony held at the Billingshurst Centre.

The Committee is invited to note this report.



South & South East in Bloom Small Park/Park/Large Park of the Year Award 2023

Billingshurst in Bloom - Station Road Community Gardens, Billingshurst

SECTION A – Making Way for People		Max Points	Actual Points
Access for all- Fit for purpose, appropriateness and practicality of accesses and path network.		15	13
Signage and visitor information		15	9
SECTION B– Design		Max Points	Actual Points
Appearance and practicality of layout		20	17
SECTION C– Welfare of Park Users		Max Points	Actual Points
Staff/voluntary presence *		10	0
Control of dog fouling		10	9
SECTION D– Facilities (Appropriate provision, accessibility and appearance of facilities)		Max Points	Actual Points
Maintenance of facilities *		25	16
SECTION E – Maintenance (Quality of horticultural and sports turf maintenance)		Max Points	Actual Points
Judges should ascertain if there is evidence of concern, checks and solutions for Armillaria, Ash Die Back, Phytophthora, Box Blight etc.			
Trees, shrubs, herbaceous, seasonal planting, ponds & lakes and sports areas especially tree health.		25	15
SECTION F –Maintenance of hard landscape features		Max Points	Actual Points
Paths, benches, bins, play areas and artificial surfaces		10	6
Control of litter, graffiti & vandalism		10	8
SECTION G– Environmental sustainability (Management of natural resources)		Max Points	Actual Points
Planting schemes which are achieving sustainability, reducing the use of scarce resources such as water and peat *		20	0
SECTION H–Conservation		Max Points	Actual Points

SECTION I – Community Involvement	Max Points	Actual Points
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Volunteering & promotion of the park as a community resource

20

14

Maximum Points Available	200
Total Points Awarded	142
Award Nomination	Silver-Gilt

Assessors General Comments & Award Justification

There is good access into the park with level paths with an information board at the entrance to the park. The perspex in this board is broken and awaiting repair. The layout of the paths is good and encourages people to walk round the whole park. The edges of the pathways need some attention. The whole Park cannot be seen from the gate so you need to walk around the pathways to see the full extent of the park. The park has a wide range of trees and are in various states with some needing maintenance carried out. It would help especially with the dry conditions we experience to place a thick layer of mulch around the bases. No full time presence of staff on the site but a community service worker is present 4 days a week at present and make a tremendous difference. This person is supervised by the Friends Group. The Friends Group is not an active group although they have a number of members. A lot of the time the area is unmanned but activities are taking place within the area. Dog waste is now put into general waste and the Park seemed to be clean. Perhaps dog fouling is not too much of a problem but some signs encouraging dog walkers to bin it would be useful. The herb garden was looking good at the time of the visit and was a credit to Keith who mainly looks after it. Also at the rear of the garden Keith has planted courgettes for the Wacco day nursery to come and watch grow and pick. Horticultural expertise is in short supply and Keith seems to be responsible for this and when necessary call for help. The smaller fruit trees need the grass and weed growth removed from around their bases and mulched to stop this happening. 2 dead fruit trees need removing. Keith at some stage will need help when he is no longer able to take the lead. I was told a new chairperson is in place but is away quite a lot. A Mens shed is now up and running. The hollyhocks were looking great as you enter the park and certainly draws you in. No seasonal planting is now taking place with herbaceous plants at the entrance that were in good condition. Benches were in good condition with 3 new recycled benches installed. A number of litter bins are on site and there was no evidence of litter, graffiti or vandalism. Around the perimeter next to a housing estate is an unmown area and is a great wildlife haven. At some stage it will need cutting back from the main grassed area especially the brambles. The volunteers do an excellent job keeping the park in a good condition but new blood is needed within the Friends Group. It would be good if the noticeboard was used to advertise the Friends Group and had a list of dates with organised activities. An event was held in the Park to celebrate the Coronation.

Results

Level	Description	Points
	Certificate	0 - 77
	Bronze	78 - 108
	Silver	109 - 138
	Silver-Gilt	139 - 169
	Gold	170 - 200



Name of Entry: Billingshurst in Bloom										
Judges: Kevin Taitt										
Date of Assessment: 30/06/2023										
Standard Marking Sheet										
Category: Village / Large Village / Small Town / Large Town / Small City / City / Small Coastal / Large Coastal (Indicate appropriate level in Sections A, B & C)										
MAXIMUM OF 10 POINTS PER SUB SECTION										
A Horticulture 40%	A1	8	A2	8	A3	7	A4	8	Total Marks in Sections A, B & C	Medal Level in Sections A, B & C
B Environment 30%	B1	7	B2	8	B3	8				
C Community 30%	C1	7	C2	7	C3	8				
Total Score out of 100:		76		Overall Medal Awarded: Silver-Gilt						
Medal Guide: Gold, Excellent 85-100 Points; Silver Gilt, Very Good 75-84 Points; Silver, Good 60-74 Points; Bronze, Satisfactory 50-59 Points. 49 Points and below – no medal awarded.										

Introduction and Overall Impression:

An appropriate route was followed on the day and took in a good amount of the Town. A good itinerary was followed and timings were good. It was good to meet different community representatives on the day. Billingshurst was looking good on the day and with the railway line running through is obviously a good place to live. The Parish Council, ably led by the Clerk, Greg makes a real difference to the Village and was recognised often on our tour. Many residential gardens were looking well kept on the day of the visit. As has been mentioned before the Friends Group of the Station Road Community Garden really is in need of revamping to take it forward.

Judges Feedback Section A – Horticulture:

On the route our first visit was to the "Dauxwood" pre school and for the children a garden area has been developed and the raised bed had peas and carrots in it as well as another bed with pumpkins in. The staff had also got the pupils to pick up some acorns from around the large oak in the playground and planted them in the centre of an old tyre and watched them starting to grow. Once large enough the Parish Council will replant them around Billingshurst. Strawberries would be a good crop to grow as they would be picked before the school breaks for summer. Station Road Community Garden is a great open space for the village with a good variety of trees but all the trees would benefit with a thick layer of mulch around their bases to hold in the moisture and keep the weeds down. The entrance to the Gardens has a superb display of hollyhocks with a variety of colours. In the Town centre on the village green some seasonal bedding was seen using double marigolds, it would be better to use single flowers where possible to encourage pollinators. A crown had also been formed using bedding on the green and was looking good. All the street planters were looking and maintained by the Council. The Kings Head floral display was looking good as was the 2 new tower planters in the Private shopping area. At the railway station planters and hanging baskets were looking good and were provided by Aldingbourne Country Centre which helps adults with additional needs.

Judges Feedback Section B – Environment:

Billagreen is an active environmental group working in conjunction with the Parish Council and is looking after Cleveland Gardens. It was good to meet Helen from Billagreen who explained what they are doing as a group. Margins to Cleveland Gardens previously mown are now left to grow and providing habitats for a wide range of insects and hedgehogs. Also planted on the margins are now some small areas containing ox eye daisy and others and will only get better given time. Perhaps in the wooded area some bluebells could be planted for Spring interest. Their is a plan to increase these planted areas. No mow May in this area was very successful but around the large oak trees strimming has damaged some of the trunks and an area needs to be left around them for insects, no need to trim so close to these trees. At the Parish Church a great project was underway to help Swifts nest in the tower and was going well and on cue Swifts were seen. Some areas within the Cemetery were left to go wild and wildflowers were growing well. Signage was in place to let the public know this was happening. We then went into the High Street and met Clive Cobie who has made an area to rewild. This area was previously just an area of basically scrub. Clive has converted this into a very interesting area with two large stumps and around 20 different species of plants around it. Clive is a very enthusiastic person and is to be commended on what he is achieving. Their is a sign on the street in front of this area to explain what is happening. We finally visited an area being the Rocking Horse shop and met by Kevin known as the Bee Man. It is an amazing area with a lot of colourful plants and so many bee boxes of different sizes. Kevin oversees this area and is really knowledgeable about the species of bees that he has in the garden and was told that he has around 30 species of bees within the garden. Some of the planters are in need of painting.

Judges Feedback Section C – Community:

A good community effort comes across when you visit Billingshurst and speak to residents. What is needed now is for the Parish Council to form a Community Group consisting of community, couple of Councillors, businesses and the Chairperson not to be a Councillor. By forming this group you can ensure the way forward and make sure funding is in place for the future. I am sure the Community effort is greater than was seen on the day of the visit. For instance the Pets Corner business had painted the two planters outside the shop. If this group can be formed it will take the entry forward.

APPENDIX G

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2023

PROPERTY UPDATES

FOR INFORMATION

REPORT BY OFFICE MANAGER

1. **MANOR FIELDS**

- The boundary fencing project is now complete, and officers have drawn down the S106 funding that was secured in the sum of £3,064.28 to meet the entire cost of the project.
- A specification is still needed for the replacement disabled beds and surfacing. Despite enquiries online, and with a contractor, this is still outstanding. If councillors are aware of a contractor who could provide a specification for a raised bed along with a quotation for works to fit a specific area, please let the Office Manager know.

2. **LOWER STATION ROAD RECREATION GROUND**

- Alun Blow of ABMH Structures Ltd carried out a site visit/survey and structural assessment report on the concrete skate ramp at the end of March. The report was comprehensive and following the info contained within, officers arranged for a monitoring scheme to be set up on a four monthly basis over the next year. The first check was carried out in the middle of July to take into account the summer holidays, but results (suggesting radical action), was unfortunately not communicated to the Council until a month later. Officers arranged for an accredited playground inspector to carry out an urgent report on the safety of the ramp. The inspector also recommended a company he has had dealings with to inspect the ramp and some works were recommended to make the ramp safer to use. The instruction to carry out works was given in the middle of September, and it is hoped it will be completed by the time of the meeting. Officers have also asked the inspector to do an extra check on the skate ramp in March 2024 so that it is being checked more regularly for safety.
- Assistance was given to the Billingshurst Tennis Club (BTC) in advertising their Open Day at the end of May.
- A resident reported damage to one of the gates on site and Litter Wardens were sent to deal with this.
- Permission had been given for 'Tomahawk Axe Throwing' on site for the Billingshurst Scouts & Guides. Appropriate risk assessments and insurances were obtained, and the activity location was moved towards the centre of the rec ground, so as to not interfere with BTC activities.
- A member of the BTC committee contacted the parish office in the middle of August to report some concerns with an increase in antisocial behaviour of youngsters hanging around the bench area and bin (along the railway embankment boundary), by courts 3 and the public access court 4. They reported that the groups varied in size from 3 to 20+ at various times of the day. They advised that the problem had always existed but had become noticeably more disruptive and threatening recently. Some instances of antisocial behaviour were described along with details of verbal abuse and stones being thrown into one of the courts. The BTC requested the removal of the bench and bin

alongside the railway embankment down towards the lower end of the Rec Ground near the Parbrook stream. Given that the instances described were clearly issues of antisocial behaviour and drug taking, officers asked the BTC to confirm Police Reference numbers that would have been given when the issues were reported. Officers put BTC in contact with the Neighbourhood Wardens and they are communicating directly to find a solution to the problem.

3. **JUBILEE FIELDS**

- Assistance continues to be offered to the Billingshurst Football Club in raising awareness of their sponsorship opportunities and weekly matches. Where possible, advertising events for the Cricket Club are also promoted.
- Contact was received from a lady keen to provide refreshments at Jubilee Fields; her details were passed on to the BSRA for their consideration and to make contact directly.
- A S106 application was submitted for the proposed new wooden skate ramp in the sum of £155,000; this figure includes the supply and installation of the ramp plus professional fees associated with the project. At a recent meeting with HDC Officers relating to funding and investment in Billingshurst, it was confirmed that s106 funding had been set aside towards the project which is great news. HDC asked for further information on the planning front but as the ramp is going to be in the same location and occupying the same footprint as the one which had to be removed, it wasn't felt that planning permission would be required again. Unfortunately, HDC has specified that planning permission is required, and an application has now been submitted by our consultant. Once permission has been obtained, work can start. If the price has gone up, the F&GP Cttee may need to consider funding any difference.
- In August, the padlock for the new height barrier at Jubilee Fields was damaged and a replacement was put in place.
- A resident contacted the office to say that she was disappointed to see that contractors had strimmed an area on site rich with wildflowers. Contact was made with the contractors concerned and they were asked to be mindful of this for the future.
- Members of Billigreen have been hard at work looking after the Wildflower Meadow at Jubilee Fields. They are due to meet the Council's garden contractor on site shortly to discuss some works to help improve the area from next year onwards. It is hoped to include the site in the SSEiB (South & Southeast in Bloom) application for 2024.
- The *Heave Beam* on the trim trail has been damaged and officers are awaiting a quotation to replace the equipment shortly.
- Cllr Berry has raised a concern about the potholes in the access drive to site as he fears these could cause damage to cars as they are deep. The Clerk is arranging for these to be infilled shortly.
- Three of the fishing pontoons on site have been replaced. One of them has been fixed by our staff and two were replaced by Playsafe at the end of September.

4. **STATION ROAD COMMUNITY GARDENS**

- Sadly, earlier in the summer, the Billingshurst Men's Shed was badly vandalised and it was necessary to get security fencing erected as a matter of urgency. The windows and doors have now been fitted and painting the building inside and out is currently in progress. The Parish Council has supported a S106 bid from the group to HDC to fund electrical works inside the building.
- A local resident reported a concern he had with an area of pavement near Station Road Gardens. As this area is adjacent to a tree looked after by the Parish Council, the Council's Tree Consultant was asked to make a special visit to see if any works were

required. The consultant visited in late August and have recommended some works be carried out to the trees adjacent to the green railings across the front of the site. The Council's tree surgeon G. Nye has been actioned to complete the works and these should be completed by the time of the meeting. As a matter of courtesy, even though the trees are not protected with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), officers contacted the arboricultural department at HDC to forewarn them that works are due to take place just in case they were contacted by a concerned resident. Before the works could be carried out, Stuart Sexton, Chairman of the FOG Group contacted the Clerk to report a broken branch. This was passed on to the tree surgeons for their information.

- A resident complained about some overhanging brambles from bushes along Station Road Gardens; Litter Wardens were asked to remove these and a check has been added to weekly timesheets to try and prevent the situation happening again.
- There were concerns raised by the same resident about fading white lining for the cycle route in the car park by the Leisure Centre. The Clerk has established that the area in question is the responsibility of HDC and this has been passed on to them accordingly for action.
- The Billingshurst Family Church held a Family Picnic on site in early July which was well attended.
- There have been various instances of graffiti at the youth shelter during the past few months, (some of which has been classed as offensive) and HDC have been actioned to remove these.

5. **PUBLIC TOILETS**

- The facility continues to be closed at 4.00pm on weekdays and this has had some positive effect on reducing instances of vandalism.
- Vandalism does still take place unfortunately and one such instance left the new toilet roll holders badly damaged. Luckily, Litter Wardens were able to fix the issue and take measures to hopefully stop the same thing happening again.
- Very disappointingly, the Council's application to have the public toilet building designation as an Asset of Community Value, was rejected by Horsham District Council (HDC), despite being renewed only 5 years ago. [HDC advised that only one of our three then district councillors responded to officer's request for a response.] We appealed the decision in May.
- The Council entered the Loo of the Year Award (LOYA) again this year and the LOYA were contacted to alter a map which showed the public toilets in the incorrect place. This was altered immediately, and everything is now as it should be.

6. **LITTER WARDEN TEAM & GARAGE**

- A quote is awaited to *tank* the garage as an added line of defence to reduce future flooding
- Staff weeded around the tree outside McColl's and painted the railing surrounds. It looks wonderful and much improved from the shabby state it had got into.
- A report was received in early summer from Horsham District Council (HDC) confirming that a bin outside Lloyds Pharmacy in the village was broken. Colin was sent along to check and mend.

- A request has been put forward for funds to be set aside in the 2024/2025 budget for the provision of a vehicle for staff to travel to and from council sites when carrying out certain jobs. The Snr. Litter Warden is looking into the costs for a vehicle.
- Some repairs were due to the sweeper, and these were carried out in the middle of August. Prices for a replacement machine have been requested from Tennant, the council's current supplier, and similar suppliers to consider for budgetary purposes in the future. These arrived in good time for the Budget Workshop.
- Litter Wardens have made conscious efforts to use hedge cutting equipment in local areas during the past few weeks to cut back around signposts and along public footpaths from Rowan Drive to Coombe Hill and the Coombe Hill to Jengers Mead. If there are any signposts which members feel require special attention, please report these to the Office Manager and safety permitting, we will see what can be done.
- The Annual Inspection of Council play equipment has been booked for October. On this occasion, due to a couple of areas of the last report where there was some confusion, the inspector will be accompanied by the Snr. Litter Warden Colin.
- Unfortunately, the third Litter Warden employed earlier this year did not work out and recruitment has recommenced.

7. **BILLINGSHURST IN BLOOM**
(Plus see separate agenda item.)

- The summer hanging baskets did very well and given the extreme heat of the last few years, officers arranged for geraniums to be planted which are drought tolerant. As it was, with the changeable weather conditions, it wasn't much of an issue this year! The baskets are due to be removed at the end of October and given back to the contractor *Baskets in Bloom* ready for next spring/summer planting.
- All of the planters in the High Street have been painted this year with several of them being repaired by our Litter Wardens. Over the next couple of years, officers will be looking at costs and hopefully available funding options for replacement planters.
- Cllr. Peters mentioned about having some further floral planters and baskets etc at the Billingshurst Centre. The Centre Manager is looking into this further ready for spring/summer 2024.
- One of the large canna lily plants in one of the planters outside Truffles was stolen as soon as it had been planted; a replacement was sourced and planted back up soon after. Officers have received a significant number of positive comments from the public about the floral displays this year, including the Coronation Crown bed on the Village Green.
- A new fuel pump was purchased to assist Litter Wardens using the water bowser; this has made life much simpler for them with the increased floral displays around the village. It has also cut down on the amount of time it takes to do the watering.
- The 'no mow' signage arrived and was installed by Litter Wardens in early August. Unfortunately, within the first week of fitting, one of the signs was broken and snapped and later fixed by Colin.

8. **MISCELLANEOUS**

- The Coronation Poster Competition with Billingshurst Primary School children was very well supported, and a huge number of entries were received. Judging was undertaken by Cllrs. Peters & Wilson and as a result, Book Tokens were awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd places of the two categories (ages 4 – 7 and 8 – 11) just before the May

half term; it was a very popular competition and a lovely way to involve younger residents in the Coronation celebrations. Officers are in the process of investigating where the winning entries might be displayed locally.

- Dunmoore Ltd have been approached to see if they will sponsor the Christmas tree on the Village Green for the third year in a row. Despite repeated attempts at contact, it doesn't look as though anyone will be responding from Dunmoore so we may have to look elsewhere for sponsorship.
- Long term member of the Property Committee, ex-councillor Barry Barnes, was honoured by the Parish Council at a special awards evening at the end of May. At the event, it was announced that Committee Room 2 here at the Centre, has been renamed 'The Barnes Room' in honour of Barry and in recognition of his huge commitment and dedication to the people of Billingshurst over his 55 years continuous service.
- Members of Billigreen together with St. Mary's Church and Sussex Green Living held an Activity Day in August at St. Mary's Churchyard. The late summer grass cut of the rewinding areas was held off to enable the Activity Day to take place.
- A resident of Carpenters contacted the office about some trees at the rear of his garden which were very overgrown. These were part of a TPO submitted last year so works were actioned.
- Keen & Co, the Council's Arboricultural Consultants will be carrying out annual tree inspections of the Council's tree stock from now on; the next inspection is imminent. The Council is responsible for a significant number of trees locally, the majority being in high footfall areas so along with those trees, plus several ash trees which require regular inspection, officers have asked Keen & Co to provide annual inspections from now on. Using Keen & Co on a regular basis assists, as they are familiar with the Council's stock, and using the same inspector with detailed knowledge and experience of the individual trees and a good awareness of the areas concerned. Keen & Co also confirm that carrying out annual inspections is likely to have the effect of reducing the amount of tree work year in and year out so smoothing the workload and making it easier to budget. Autumn is also a good time to undertake tree inspections as the trees have lost some leaf, and the signs of any significant pathogens are normally visible.
- The garden contractor has been asked to carry out the harsh grass cuts of all 'No Mow' areas this autumn. As the contractor has not had to mow these areas over the summer months, he has been asked to do the grass cut immediately followed by the collection of the arisings/debris from each site.
- A resident contacted the office to enquire about an overgrown footpath; the resident was sent a map and full contact details to report directly.
- Two areas of concern on the A29 were reported to WSCC Highways on their new reporting website. These included an extremely overgrown hedge and a broken drain cover; both areas are being regularly monitored by a local resident and in mid-August, both issues were signed off as having been dealt with.
- A further report on the A272 at Rosier bridge was submitted to WSCC and the case closed as it stated the report was a duplicate. Officers have asked WSCC to advise when the works are due to take place as the road surface is in a very poor state. A temporary repair looks to have been done but we still await a response from WSCC.
- Officers dealt with an enquiry from a resident of Longhurst Drive with regards to grass cutting services. Officers ensured that Council contractors completed the works

required on site but as some of the areas in the original enquiry appear to be the responsibility of First Port, the management company for Longhurst Drive, a local resident is trying to obtain a map to assist Officers before further enquiries can be made.

- Correspondence has been received from a local resident about the retaining wall in St. Mary's Churchyard. Enquiries are ongoing and a full report will be brought to a future meeting.
- A drain at the end of Church Path near Station Road has once again become blocked by silt. This has been re-reported to the WSCC Online system with accompanying photos.
- A resident local to the Church Path asked for some brambles (at face height) to be cut back, Litter Wardens carried this out in early August.
- An email was received in the middle of August that the RTPI displays for selected Bus Stops in Billingshurst would be installed this summer. A further update was received in the middle of last month confirming that all 14 displays had been installed and were working. They also advised that there are three displays being provided by a developer and these are also due to be configured/commissioned shortly.
- Members of Billigreen and Sussex Wildlife Trust took part in a Bat Walk during August. There were a few places available, so Officers made a point of helping the group advertise the event.
- Officers were asked to promote another Sussex Wildlife Event being held in Pulborough in November.
- Following concerns raised by staff and a local resident, officers reported a tree in the High Street whose roots are pushing up paving slabs and causing a trip hazard; the tree is also very overgrown. WSCC has responded saying that the tree has been passed on to Arboricultural Officers for inspection.
- Council Contractors Light Angels kindly left the bunting up in the High Street which was put up in time for the Coronation of King Charles III in June. It wasn't removed until the middle of August, but the Parish Council was only charged for one month's hire charge.
- An application to place Christmas lighting motifs on to the strengthened columns in the High Street was submitted in early September and immediately approved! This process usually takes some weeks, and several chasers are required before we hear anything back. A very positive meeting was held with the Council's contractor Light Angels at the end of September to discuss the coming 2023/2024 season.
- The Clerk noticed that HDC had incorrect information on their website relating to parks in Billingshurst parish. An email was sent back in the summer to get this altered; nothing was received early in September, so a further chaser email was sent.
- The Billingshurst Neighbourhood Wardens have been in discussion with a company called Whistlestop Arts about a Public Arts display (similar to the very successful Mystery Trails project), which they anticipate developing for Billingshurst. As funding would be required for the project, officers have put the group in touch with the correct department at HDC to get the project looked into further. Whistlestop Arts (WSA) contacted the Office Manager again in late September as they had heard nothing further from HDC so had been unable to progress the project as they hoped. The Officer Manager contacted HDC again to see if a meeting could be arranged between WSA and HDC directly; an update is awaited.

The Committee is invited to note this report.