



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 19 March 2025, at 7pm.

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. They must give their name.

**G.C. Burt**  
**Clerk to the Council**

12 March 2025

## **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 15 January 2025, previously circulated, to confirm and sign the minutes as a correct record.
5. Clerk's Report
6. Public Session. 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 the meeting, at the discretion of the Chairman. They must give their name.
7. Presentation by Dis Cllr Sam Bateman on work being done at HDC to improve play area design. (*Safer Parks Guidance* on website alongside this agenda.)
8. To receive update on provision of new pathway at Station Road Community Gardens - Appendix A.
9. To consider improvement of link between Manor Fields and Bypass Path - Appendix B.
10. To consider extensive repairs to play area at Cherry Tree Close Appendix C.
11. To consider future of play area Land at Cranham Avenue – Appendix D.
12. To approve assignment of new sublease at Billingshurst Children's and Family Centre (C4C) Appendix E.
13. To receive property updates, for information only - Appendix F.

14. Next Meeting: 14 May 2025

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

**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**

**19 MARCH 2025**

**NEW PATH AT STATION ROAD COMMUNITY GARDENS**

**REPORT BY CLERK**

**FOR INFORMATION**

The Council has been trying to progress the creation of a new pathway to the rear of Station Road Community Gardens for some time.

Regrettably it had not been possible to undertake this scheme with the Council's original choice of contractor.

On 13 November 2024 the Committee *RESOLVED* that the Clerk seek up to date quotes from the remaining contractors (to the original specification) and the Clerk be delegated to appoint the most competitively priced contractor following liaison with the Chairman of the Committee. (Min 64/25 refers)

Contractors submitted revised quotes as per follows.

<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Original Quote</b>	<b>Revised Quote</b>
Arbour Landscapes	29,100	30,550
Leith Hill Plant Ltd	34,800	37,200
Tidey & Webb	32,260	33,395

Following liaison with the Chairman of the Committee, Arbour Landscapes have been appointed accordingly, subject to additional funds being secured from WSCC.

The Committee is invited to note this report.

**APPENDIX B**  
**BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**PROPERTY COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH 2025**

**PATHWAY LINKING MANOR FIELD AND BYPASS PATH**

**FOR INFORMATION**

**REPORT BY CLERK**

A resident has asked the Council to improve the footway linking Manor Fields and adjoining Bypass Path. We believe the link was created by usage rather than design but we recognise it to be useful and well used by residents.

As it is in a dip, it tends to get very soggy in bad weather with the public adding their own wood chippings or pallets to improve the crossing!

I have had one indicative quote in the sum of £2,586 but have invited HDC to share the cost as one side of the link is their land. They have responded to say that they are happy to look at the issue with us.

The Committee is invited to note this report.

## APPENDIX C

### BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

#### PROPERTY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH 2025

### CHERRY TREE CLOSE PLAY AREA

#### FOR DECISION

#### REPORT BY OFFICE MANAGER

The play equipment at Cherry Tree Close was installed by Sutcliffe Play in 2014/2015 and the area is very popular and well used. Sutcliffe Play have proved to be very reliable over the past 10/11 years and their customer service is excellent at answering emails and sending out items rapidly.

In autumn 2024, officers arranged for the annual inspection of play equipment to be carried out by a Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) Inspector. This ensures that Council play equipment is inspected by an accredited inspector who is certified as competent to carry out annual and post installation inspections. The inspector picked up a number of problems with the equipment and this included some more involved works which are unable to be carried out by our own Environmental Operatives (EOs) who in the interim have disabled several pieces.

Two options have been received to repair/replace equipment as necessary from Sutcliffe Play.

The quotations include the cost for HERAS fencing to protect members of the public whilst works take place, a post-installation inspection and it has been confirmed by Sutcliffe Play that all timber equipment supplied now are naturally provided with metal feet which will help the wooden elements of equipment last longer.

#### Option 1

- Remove and replace Ropewalk Tangle like for like, patch brown rubber mulch over grass.
- Remove and replace 2 x timber legs of Nest Swing
- Replace nest and chains of nest swing
- Replace 3 x timber legs on 1.8m tall swing
- Replace 2 x Pod seats and chains
- Patch 300mm x 300mm brown mulch
- Replace small post on multiplay and patch rubber mulch
- Replace 2 x Ropes on Baby Mammoth
- Carry Out Independent Post Installation Inspection

Equipment	£7,667.27
Installation	£12,102
Total	<b>£19,769.27 + VAT</b>

#### Option 2

- Remove and replace Ropewalk Tangle like for like, patch brown rubber mulch over grass.
- Remove and replace 2 x timber legs of Nest Swing
- Replace nest and chains of nest swing
- Replace 1.8M High swing with pod seats and chains like for like.
- Patch 300mm x 300mm brown mulch
- Replace small post on multiplay and patch rubber mulch

- Replace 2 x Ropes on Baby Mammoth
- Carry Out Independent Post Installation Inspection

Equipment	£7,905
Installation	£14,944
Total	<b>£22,849 + VAT</b>

Members are invited to

A. RECOMMEND to Council the appointment Sutcliffe Play accordingly, given that only one supplier can undertake this work (as they supplied it!) to undertake this work (without the need for other quotations) as permitted by Financial Regulation 11.1d

d) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.

B. Consider which quotation to accept.

[Note this can be accommodated within the enhanced repairs budget.]

**APPENDIX D**  
**BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**PROPERTY COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH 2025**

**CRANHAM AVENUE PLAY AREA**

**FOR DECISION**

**REPORT BY CLERK**

The Parish Council owns and maintains a very small play area at Cranham Avenue which was transferred to the Council as part of the development.

The site is little used, as evidenced by the green algae over much of the safety surfacing which would ordinarily be worn away by users' shoes.

The adjoining resident has a *licence to occupy* an elevated strip of land to the rear which is at the same level as their garden and would not be able to be used to extend the play area.

Whilst the facility is kept safe and operable, officers have for some time been considering whether the facility, by virtue of size, limited offering and low usage should be retained.

The adjoining neighbour has recently expressed an interest in acquiring the site should it be no longer required by the Council, for enclosure within their property.

Should the site be disposed of (which would have to follow certain procedures: change of use; variance of planning condition and disposal of open space etc) the Council could invest the proceeds in other larger nearby play facilities to help mitigate the loss.

The Committee is invited to authorise officers to survey residents of Cranham Avenue to see if they wish the facility to be retained or would support its removal.

**APPENDIX E**  
**BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**PROPERTY COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH 2025**

**CHILDREN AND FAMILY CENTRE – REQUEST TO APPROVE NEW SUB LEASE  
FOR DECISION  
REPORT BY CLERK**

The Parish Council leased land at Station Road to West Sussex County Council (WSSC) for the purposes of erecting a Children & Family Centre.

They sub-let (with landlord's consent) part of the building to WAKOOS Centre4Children (C4C) who run a day nursery, preschool, breakfast club, after school club and holiday club.

Due to reduced budgets, WSSC closed the Centre, leaving WAKOOS Centre4Children as part occupants.

WSSC had been looking at assigning the whole lease to the tenant, however this would contravene a condition attached to the fens which they acquired to provide the facility initially.

Thus, WSSC now propose to sublet the whole building to WAKOOS Centre4Children and seek landlord's consent.

This does not change in any way the lease between the Parish and County Councils, with the latter still responsible for maintaining the building and paying ground rent.

The Committee is invited to raise no objection to the assignment of a new sub lease to the sub tenant accordingly.



## APPENDIX F

### BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

#### PROPERTY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH 2025

#### PROPERTY UPDATES

#### FOR INFORMATION

#### REPORT BY OFFICE MANAGER

1. **ENVIRONMENTAL OPERATIVES (EOs) & GARAGE**
  - EOs are due to attend a LANTRA Basic Tree Inspection course at the South of England Showground this month.
  - EOs have been booked on a play inspection course in July which will qualify them all to carry out the Play Inspection Checks. Currently only two staff members are qualified.
  - EOs spent some time in early February clearing out blocked grilles at Jengers Mead.
  - A member of Billigreen contacted the Council to let us know that one of the 'No Mow' signs had come adrift on site. EOs dealt with the issue accordingly.
  - EOs were asked to help clear an area of water at the dip by the twitten leading from Church Path through to Dell Lane. Upon checking, it was noted that the drain in the location was badly blocked; this was reported to West Sussex County Council for action and officers will keep an eye on this to ensure that it is actioned.
2. **MANOR FIELDS**
  - The fencing has now been finalised on site and the raised beds within the allotment site are due to be completed in the next few weeks.
  - The Office Manager is looking into further the possibility of s106 funding to replace the aging mower for Allotments Society.
  - There was an issue with some dangerous ash trees on site; a tree surgeon has met with representatives of the Allotments Society on site and works to make safe have been actioned.
3. **LOWER STATION ROAD RECREATION GROUND**
  - Environmental Operatives have fixed the gate nearest the Parbrook bridge.
  - A piece of damaged play equipment on site was unrepairable so after consultation with the Clerk, EOs removed the item and made safe.
  - There will be a sleepover at the Scout & Guide hut in early April, and permission has been sought (and agreed) for cars to be parked on the hardstanding overnight.
4. **JUBILEE FIELDS**
  - Budgetary provision will be required to replace remaining pontoons over the next 3+ years.
  - A detailed update report has been received from BSRA detailing the progress they are making on drainage issues and the potential for extra funding from the Football Foundation. A meeting was held earlier this month with Sussex County FA and BSRA;

a report is awaited along with recommendations; these discussions could be incredibly helpful to progress some long-awaited improvements and projects on site. One of the comments that has been made is that an extension of the lease between BSRA and the Parish Council may be required in order to qualify for grants.

- Yet again the padlock went missing at Jubilee Fields presumably having been left unlocked at some point. Keys have been provided to new Neighbourhood Wardens and our newest EO who will all shut and lock the height barrier if they find it open.
- Fishing Pontoon check sheets are being completed each week making it easier to keep an eye on damage/vandalism before it becomes a problem or deteriorates further.
- It seems that when the ponds were first created, the more invasive Norfolk Reeds were planted. These are now clogging up the ponds. Several quotes have been sourced by the Council and tenant and have been sent to HDC for possible consideration for funding through s106 or the *Better Billingshurst Fund*.
- A large number of trees have been cut back on the island at Jubilee Fields Lake; work was organised and paid for by the Angling Society.
- A resident made contact with the office trying to find out details of what they needed to do to fish at Jubilee Fields Lake, officers put the resident in touch with the Billingshurst Angling Society.
- Attendees at the Annual Parish Meeting heard from Jack Thompson of Sussex Wildlife Trust who spoke about swifts and how to encourage them into our gardens. Given that it is hoped to hold another Family Activity Day at Jubilee Fields this summer, officers have written to Mr Thompson asking whether he would like to attend and bring a hands-on activity for participants to take part in on the day. Officers also asked for some promotional literature about swifts and swift boxes/bricks which the Council could help advertise.
- In early March damage was caused to a fence at Jubilee Fields by antisocial driving; Sussex Land Services were asked to make the necessary repairs. The new Neighbourhood Wardens Maria & Louisa have helpfully included late evening shifts in their new rota which is a change from previous rotas; they have been advised about the issues on site and are making a point of visiting Jubilee Fields in the evenings when the majority of the antisocial behaviour appears to be taking place.
- In early January, the Council was made aware of an altercation with a local female driving instructor and someone behaving in an aggressive manner claiming they were a parish councillor. The person concerned advised the lady instructor that Jubilee Fields car park should not be used for parking practice, that he was fed up with instructors using the area. The person had filmed the instructor and her pupil (who is a minor) and this made the instructor very concerned especially as he was behaving in an aggressive manner. Officers checked and established that no current Parish Councillor had been involved with this altercation. For the record, the Council has never banned instructors from using the car park, which is often very quiet during the week and has been grateful on occasion when driving instructors practicing at Jubilee Fields have made the Council aware of issues such as antisocial behaviour around the car park/Burnt Row Wood or the Fishing Lake or of fallen tree branches or vandalism. Evidence of a vehicle and numberplate has been obtained in case this happens again in the future. The instructor has reported the aggressive behaviour towards her and her pupil to the Police and Neighbourhood Wardens are aware of the situation too.

- EOs reported a situation with potholes on Jubilee Fields access road and photographs were provided to the Clerk who has instructed a contractor.
- The Council has an owl box available which is going to be put up at Jubilee Fields in the next couple of months. It had been made some time ago, but a previously suggested location was not considered suitable by Sussex Wildlife Trust, so the owl box has been waiting for a new home ever since. One of the ladies involved with Billigreen is arranging for the Council's owl box (and another which Billigreen has commissioned Men's Shed to create), to be erected in a suitable location on site after taking advice from relevant sources. The person who will be installing the owl boxes has a very tall ladder but more importantly, the necessary licence to fix/check the owl boxes.

#### 5. STATION ROAD COMMUNITY GARDENS

- Replacement of train roofing due to vandalism taking place.
- Officers have been investigating a self-close gate for the train sand pit area as this area is specifically for very young children and self-close gates are thought to be safer. Two quotes have been obtained and once we have third, we will seek s106 funds from HDC. A suggestion for self-closing gates fronting Station Rd is being looked at.
- The Clerk made contact with Billingshurst Men's Shed to remind them that their members should not be parking at any time on the access road which leads from the Leisure Centre car park around to the rear of the Weald School. A response has been received advising that the message will be passed on to all members.
- The newest EO will be helping with tidying and weeding on site as of 1<sup>st</sup> April and has been put in touch with Cllr. Duck in her position as Council Representative to the FOG.
- Officers are helping to advertise details of the next Community Gardening Day at Station Road Gardens which is due to be held on Saturday 12 April. All are welcome and participation is encouraged.

#### 6. PUBLIC TOILETS

- The Council's certificate for the Platinum Award in the *Loo of the Year Awards* and stickers for each cubicle have arrived and have been displayed at the premises.
- Further *nightlatches* for the disabled toilet door have been ordered from Healthmatic.

#### 7. CHERRY TREE CLOSE

- Some areas on site were highlighted as a concern on the recently commissioned Annual Play Inspection Report. A piece of equipment was taken out of service and a report has been received from Sutcliffe Play (the original installer) on some repairs/replacement parts. The Office Manager has provided a report which forms an agenda item for this meeting.

#### 8. BILLINGSHURST IN BLOOM

- In the end last year there were a large number of entries after all, and to tweak things slightly this year, Officers have tweaked the competition so there are fewer categories and an overall '*Best In Show*' winner chosen by Billingshurst Horticultural Society judges. This is due to be advertised shortly.

#### 9. TREES

- The Annual Tree Survey of Council tree stock was received in early November and the majority of works have been completed. Some works, of a non-urgent nature are being

left until late summer so as not to interfere with the bird nesting season and because the works are located in areas where ground conditions are not currently suitable for heavy vehicles to drive upon.

- A resident of a property backing onto Church Path raised some concerns with a tree which was resting on their fence. Tree surgeons were dispatched to check and remedy the situation.

10. **LONGHURST DRIVE**

- Sussex Land Services are keeping an eye on the new fencing/planting on site to ensure all are growing well and in good health.

11. **MISCELLANEOUS**

- An application is in the process of being submitted to ENERVEO for the extension to the Christmas lighting scheme to include the southern end of village.
- There has still been no response from HDC with regards to funding lines which may be able to be applied for towards future tech/multi-media opportunities at the Billingshurst Centre.
- A resident has made contact asking to use a metal detector on council land. A signed agreement has now been received.
- WSCC carried out some works to pollard trees outside Park & Brown Optometrists; action is still awaited from them on the uneven paving around the tree.
- Sussex Land Services have been put on standby to prepare the beacon for lighting on 8<sup>th</sup> May to commemorate 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. Staff hope to arrange an Afternoon Tea at the Billingshurst Centre; more news on this as time progresses.
- The Public Liability Insurance Certificate has finally been received from Connected Kerb for the EV points in the Centre car park. This brings all PLI Certificates up to date for the early 2025 annual check.
- Officers continue to report various instances of fly tipping to HDC depot at Hop Oast for action.
- Some road junctions in the village namely Silver Lane (schools end) and Forge Way (school end) have deteriorated badly, and the road markings are more or less non-existent, so officers have reported these to West Sussex County Council for action. A response has been received re. Forge Way advising that there is a job in their system to refresh the line marking at the junctions, but they are unable to give a definite timeframe for the works to be completed.
- Officers have reported a number of street lights which were not functioning correctly to the Love West Sussex Enerveo website.
- Officers were contacted by the site manager at Jubilee Court which backs on to the Church Path wishing to know about the possibility of improving the edges of the church path where their gate is located. Advice and contact details were provided.
- The Asst Clerk is working with some community groups to increase usage of The Depot; a full report will go to March F&GP.
- The Forestry Commission made contact with councils in early February advising of a pest which targets spruce trees. Details were sent to councillors and added to social media channels and the Council's website to help increase awareness.

- Billingshurst Neighbourhood Wardens noticed a damaged seat in Coombe Hill and have made contact with Saxon Weald to get the item repaired.
- In late February the Council sadly learned of the death of ex-councillor Barry Barnes who had chaired the Council's Property committee for decades, whilst serving an astonishing 55 years of unbroken service as a councillor. Cllr Barnes has been dearly missed since stepping back from the Council in 2023 and his contribution particularly to the Property Committee over the years was immense. The Committee sends its deepest condolences to Barry's family at this sad time.

The Committee is invited to note this report.