BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

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 November 2026, 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.

Please note that all supporting papers can be found on the Councils' website.

Gregory Burt

G.C. Burt
Clerk to the Council

5 November 2026

AGENDA

1. Chairman's Announcements
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. To receive Declarations of Interest and notification of change to members' interests.
4. 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.
5. Approval of the Minutes of the Property Committee meeting held on 9 September 2026, previously circulated, to confirm and sign the minutes as a correct record.
6. Clerk's Report
7. To consider request for landlord's consent for additional tennis court at Lower Station Road Recreation Ground - Appendix **A.**
8. To receive update on land at The Cedars and to consider suggestion for future use of former orchard - Appendix **B.**
9. To consider quotation for improved tree pit (to allow for a larger Christmas Tree) on the Village Green for Christmas 2027 and seek CIL funds accordingly - Appendix **C.**
10. To consider quotation for replacement litter bins in Station Road Community Gardens and seek CIL funds accordingly - Appendix **D.**
11. To support request to F&GP Cttee that the new tots' plays area gate in SRCG be met from the Council's CIL fund - Appendix **E.**
12. To consider replacement of remaining planters in High Street - Appendix **F.**

Council Office: Billingshurst Community & Conference Centre,
Roman Way, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9QW
Tel: 01403 782555 Email: council@billingshurst.gov.uk

13. To consider major rebuilding and possible improvement of driveway to Jubilee Fields - Appendix **G.**

14. To receive the *South & South East in Bloom* results for the parish - Appendix **H.**

15. To receive property updates, for information only - Appendix **I.**

16. Next Meeting: **Wednesday 13 January 2027**

Committee Members: **CJ, PD,** EB, PB, SD, DH, JM, DW.

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

PROPOSAL TO: BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL PROPERTY COMMITTEE ON 11th NOVEMBER 2026

Application by Billingshurst Tennis Club to Billingshurst Parish Council for a 5th court on Lower Station Road Recreation Ground, Billingshurst.

Good evening

Billingshurst Tennis Club recently submitted a supportive response to the HDC Consultation on Open Space and Play Improvements to the Lower Station Road Recreation Ground. Both the committee and members had strong support for the Alternative Path Option as we are now looking to invest in improving our facilities for current and future Tennis Club members, as well as members of the public.

We are now applying for landlord's consent for a 5th court for shared public use.

Billingshurst Tennis Club Membership Growth and Capacity

In the last 15 years the Tennis Club has invested over £350,000 in a modern Clubhouse, a new 4th court for shared Public Use and resurfaced courts 1, 2, 3 & 4 with all-weather artificial clay surface, complete with upgraded LED floodlights, funded by Grants and Loans from LTA and Sports England, backed by our Membership Subscriptions.

This has seen our total membership numbers grow in the last three years by 26.2%, from 309 members at the end of March 2024 to projected 390 total members at the end of March 2027, an average annual growth of 8.7% per annum.

LTA guidelines suggest a tennis club should plan for 60 players per floodlit court, which indicates 5 courts to support clubs with members exceeding 300 members.

Nearby Slinfold have 170 members (from their 2026 AGM last month) and 3 courts (56 per court). We understand Storrington have over 500 members with 9 courts (55 per court).

With 370 current members as at the end of September, and only 4 courts, Billingshurst Tennis Club has the equivalent of 92 members per court, excluding public bookings for the use of Court 4.

Having entered a new 25-year lease with Billingshurst Parish Council, signed on 1st March 2026 and now with the Land Registry awaiting formal confirmation of the Registration, the Club is very much committed to further investing in improving the clubhouse facilities, the existing 4 courts and planning for a 5th court for delivery within the next few years to meet future demand from a growing local population.

Public Court Usage - 4th Court - Public Usage over last 5 years

Our club leases have always stipulated that a court is made available for the Public to be able to book for 4 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Bookings by the Public of our Shared Use 4th Court regularly has 2-4 players on court and due to increasing public demand, especially in the summer months, we have increased this availability from 4 to 8 hours per day.

4th Court Usage at an average of 3 players per booking 1 hour session

2023: 157 bookings - 471 players

2024: 170 bookings - 510 players

2025: 190 bookings - 570 players

2026: 200 bookings - 600 players* estimate

As a community tennis club with no joining fee and low cost affordable membership rates we encourage use of the 4th shared public use court by the public and non-members are welcome to join our cardio tennis sessions.

As our club membership and public use of our 4th court continues to grow we now need to plan for a 5th Shared Public Use Tennis court, so the Club can continue to help serve the sporting needs of a growing population coming from both current and planned new housing developments.

Population - Statistics and Growth for Billingshurst Parish

Population Growth Forecast

Billingshurst is projected to experience a significant, housing-led population increase over the coming years, potentially adding thousands of new residents to the village.

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Census data, Billingshurst's population stood at approximately **10,600 people** in 2021. This represented a rapid 29% growth from 2011, following a 26% increase between 2001 and 2011. This upward trajectory is expected to continue through strategic housing allocations driven by local and district development strategies.

Future expansion forecasts are tied strictly to local planning and housing allocations:

- **The Local Plan Proposals:** Under the strategic planning framework, significant long-term growth is targeted directly at Billingshurst. The Regulation 18 Horsham District Local Plan highlighted proposals for two major strategic extensions to the east and west of the village totalling 2,550 to 2,950 dwellings.
-
- **New Town Potential:** The plan also noted proposals for an additional new town of 3,500 to 4,000 homes roughly 1.5km to the south. Combined, this could introduce **over 6,000 new dwellings** at or adjoining Billingshurst.

Health Benefits of playing regular tennis

Copenhagen City Heart Study: A 25-year tracking study of over 8,500 adults found that tennis ranked first among all studied sports for increasing life expectancy, offering a potential gain of up to 9.7 years compared to those leading a sedentary lifestyle.

Sport / Activity	Estimated Gain in Life Expectancy
Tennis	9.7 years
Badminton	6.2 years
Soccer	4.7 years
Cycling	3.7 years
Swimming	3.4 years
Jogging	3.2 years
Health club / Gym workouts	1.5 years

Cardiovascular Protection:

Playing tennis for about three hours a week can reduce the risk of heart disease and cardiovascular-related events by more than 50% to 56%.

Our Tennis Veterans group of 12-18 players who play regularly most Monday afternoons for up to 3 hours bear testament to this as the Club still has 4 active members regularly on court playing doubles tennis in their 80s and 90s as well as other regular players in their 60s and 70s.

Siting Options for the 5th Court

We attach two plans indicating possible locations for a 5th Court, both of which the HDC Shorter Alternative Path Option would allow.

Proposed Plan 1

This plan allows for the 5th Court to be built alongside the existing 4th Court, and is the most straightforward in terms delivery.

However it does reduce some of the central area available for other general recreation and may impact on the Billingshurst Show.

Proposed Plan 2

This plan allows for the 5th Court to be located at right angles to the end of Court 4 and has less impact on space available in the central area for the Billingshurst Show and other general recreational activity however will require removal of 2 to 3 trees.

Invitation to visit the club and review location options for 5th Tennis court

Finally, we'd be happy to extend an invitation for a visit to our Club by any members of the Parish Council Property Committee, to review the options for a future 5th Court and value your input.

We welcome your consideration and support for this proposal for landlord's consent in readiness for the Full Parish Council Meeting in January. This could enable a subsequent planning application to HDC and preparation of the detailed costings and the required loan funding arrangements backed by any possible grants.

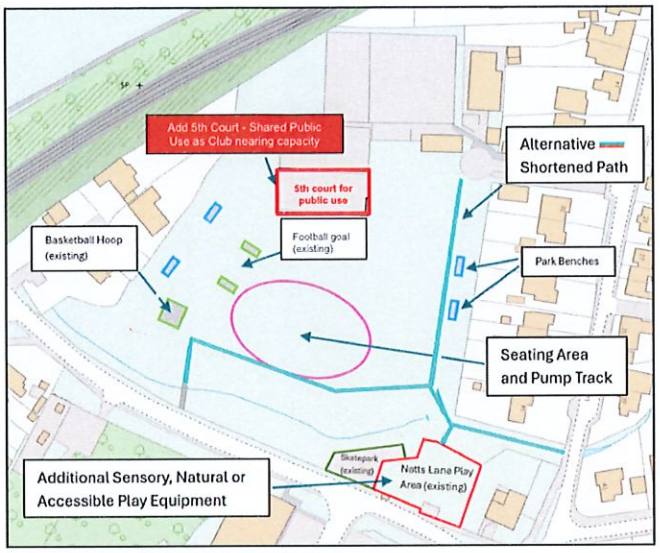
Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards

Richard Cordy
Chairman on behalf of Billingshurst Tennis Club

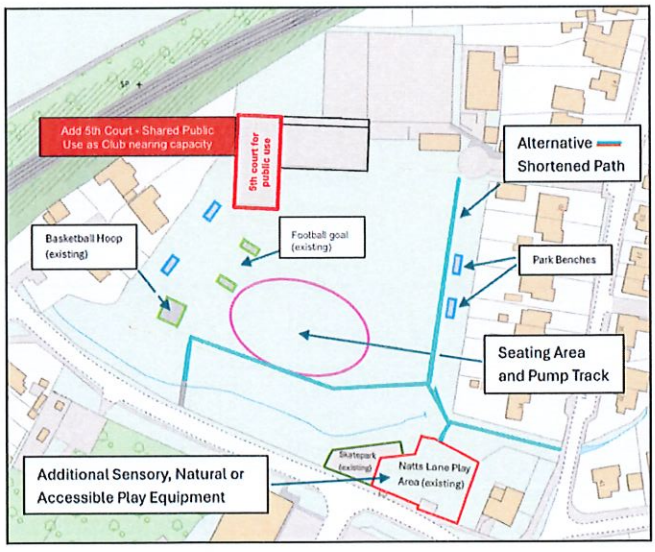
Billingshurst Tennis Club - options for position of 5th court

Proposed alternative plan 1



1) Adopt the Alternative path to provide options for potential 5th tennis court for public use
2) Add 5th Court - Shared Public Use as Club nearing capacity
3) Ideally position the pump track and Alternative path as low in the park as possible to free up the middle of the field

Proposed alternative plan 2



1) Adopt the Alternative path to provide options for potential 5th tennis court for public use
2) Add 5th Court - Shared Public Use as Club nearing capacity
3) Ideally position the pump track and Alternative path as low in the park as possible to free up the middle of the field

APPENDIX B

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2026

CEDARS POND & ORCHARD - UPDATE AND FUTURE USE

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR DECISION

Council on 3 Sep 2025 RESOLVED that officers be authorised to seek the transfer of various assets including Cedars Farm Pond + Orchard. (Min 70/25 refers) from HDC to this Council.

Horsham District Council advised that it planned to take the transfer of this particular asset to its Scrutiny Committee on 4 November and to Cabinet on the 18 November 2026.

In addition to an application form we had to generate a business plan. This was produced which cited amongst other things, increased community use and involvement, enhanced biodiversity and educational value etc.

I have since received the following suggestion from Cllr Sandy Duck:

I would like to suggest that consideration be given to a new use for the site.

For some years, residents of Billingshurst have been asking for a local burial ground, particularly now that the existing churchyards in the area are considered closed to further burials.

As a possible compromise, I wonder whether consideration could be given to transforming Cedars Orchard into a ***memorial garden****. This could provide local residents with a peaceful and tranquil place where they could have their loved ones' ashes interred, accompanied by a memorial plaque and perhaps the planting of a rose bush or other suitable memorial planting.*

Families could potentially rent or reserve an individual memorial space, giving them a permanent and local place to visit, reflect and spend quiet time remembering those they have lost.

Cedars Orchard seems particularly well suited to such a purpose. It is a beautiful, quiet and secluded location, and I believe a sensitively designed memorial garden could become a valued and much-loved place for the local community.

I hope the Parish Council might be willing to consider this suggestion as part of its discussions about the future use of the site.

Whist the actual transfer of the two sites has yet to be confirmed, officers have had some time to ponder Cllr Duck's proposals and consider it to be worth further investigation.

It delivers an objective in the Neighbourhood Plan:

POLICY BILL 5: BURIAL SPACE

Development proposals for both traditional consecrated and green/ woodland burial sites by either the local authority or private providers will be supported, provided they meet the following criteria:

i. They are appropriately sited with regard to its impact on local amenity;
ii. They will not result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land which could reasonably be used for food production;
iii. They are designed to maximise opportunities to improve and/or create new biodiversity, habitats and green infrastructure; and
iv. They will not have an unacceptable impact on groundwater and surface water.

Policy conformity: NDP Objective: 2; HDPF Policy: 39; NPPF para: 43 14 Ibid. 15 Play provision within natural environments as opposed to man-made

At this location, it will not generate any vehicular traffic and could include fruit trees in homage to its previous use.

The Committee is invited to support Cllr Ducks' suggestion and instruct officers to explore the idea further.

APPENDIX C

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2026

NEW CHRISTMAS TREE PITT ON VILLAGE GREEN

FOR DECISION

REPORT BY CLERK

The Christmas tree on the Village Green forms the centre piece of the village's annual Christmas lighting display.

However the size of the tree is constrained by the depth and width of the pitt into which the tree sits.

We have received a quotation from Leith Hill Plant to provide a bigger hole to allow for a larger tree in the sum of £1,970.

The Committee is invited to support the installation of a new Christmas tree pitt at a cost of £1,970 and RECOMMEND that the Finance & General Purposes Committee releases CIL funds accordingly.

(This would be for Christmas 2027.)

APPENDIX D

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

11 NOVEMBER 2026

LITTER BINS - STATION ROAD COMMUNITY GARDENS

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR DECISION

Station Road Community Gardens is perhaps our most high profile and well-used site.

We have four litter bins at the site. The two nearest the road just inside the pedestrian gates are emptied by Horsham District Council and our own staff empty the other two.

Every summer we have problems with bins overflowing or their contents being tipped out by vandals, despite increased emptying at high season.

Last year we replaced a bin at Cherry Tree Close Play Area with one of these, shown below, which BROXAP advise are their largest and most vandal-resistant.



The Committee is invited to support the replacement of these four bins at a cost of £1,4982.80 plus installation and RECOMMEND that the Finance & General Purposes Committee releases CIL funds accordingly.

APPENDIX E

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2026

NEW GATE AT PLAY AREA – STATION ROAD COMMUNITY GARDENS

FOR DECISION

REPORT BY CLERK

The Council receives regular complaint about gates on children's play areas across its sites. They either don't self-close or they are broken.

All such facilities should have self-closing gates to keep dogs out and children in!

The gate at the tots playground just inside Station Road Community Gardens was wooden with no self-closing mechanism and a broken latch.
Following complaints we have arranged its replacement with a steel gate with integral self-close mechanism at a cost of £2,866.

Members may recall that Horsham District Council was adamant this improvement did not qualify to be funded by s106 money..

The Committee is invited to support

APPENDIX F

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2026

REPLACEMENT OF HIGH ST PLANTERS

FOR DECISION

REPORT BY CLERK

The Council maintains six raised planters in the High St. which are planted twice yearly.

They were originally installed in 2004 as part of a wider High Street enhancement program.

They are now starting to rot and staff have done their best to patch them up with sheets of marine ply.

The planter that was leaning the most (outside Sainsbury's Local) was replaced (at a cost of £634.94) by one manufactured from recycled plastic this summer, as an *experiment* and it looks really good.

As all the remaining planters are also in need of replacement, the Committee is therefore invited to RECOMMEND that the Finance & General Purposes Committee releases CIL funds totalling £3,174.70 accordingly.

APPENDIX G

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

11 NOVEMBER 2026

JUBILEE FIELDS DRIVEWAY

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR DECISION

The Council is responsible for the driveway and car park at Jubilee Fields.

We are currently spending several hundred pounds per year filling holes mainly in response to complaints from Cllrs, the BSRA and public. These are mainly to the sides where the metalled surface meets the verge.

Over many years the Council has been asked to widen and resurface etc. and provide additional car parking for the site.

A recent influx of CIL money to the Council and a noting of significant available s106 funds prompted me to look at a wholesale rebuilding of this asset.

I recently met with Wilbars, a local highway/civil engineering consultancy to look at the driveway.

Whilst on site they commented that the crack down the middle of the carriageway was caused by a lack of kerbing to the sides to help hold the road *together.*

Mindful that the cost would be likely to be above £100,000 whatever we did, I asked them to present two design option:

1. Rebuild as is.
2. Rebuild as is with additional car parking.

I attach their initial ideas.

The Committee is invited to determine which scheme it wishes to progress, seek formal tenders, explore funding and report back accordingly.

Billingshurst Parish Clerk

From: Wilbar Associates - Design <design@wilbarassociates.co.uk>
Sent: Friday, October 2, 2026 12:59 PM
To: Billingshurst Parish Clerk
Cc: Wilbar Associates - Training; Wilbar Associates Limited
Subject: RE: J1815 Jubilee Fields, Billinghurst - Access Road spec.
Attachments: J1815-02-V1 Jubilee Fields, Billingshurst.pdf

Hi Greg, further to our site meeting we have produced a concept plan as attached. The basic elements are:-

Existing road resurfacing - Plane off 100mm and lay 60mm binder and 40mm wearing courses approx. 1,650 sqm. Lay new kerbs both sides approx. 400m the road width will stay roughly the same. The road planings would be recycled as subbase for the new parking areas.

New surfacing - Three areas of new surfacing will be added to the side of the existing roadway, CP1 area 100 sqm, CP2 320 sqm and CP3 225 sqm. All full depth construction with edge kerbing and flush kerb or setts to denote separation from the main roadway, total kerb length approx. 250m and construction to WSCC specification for local access roads.

Additional parking - Approx. 24 additional parking spaces, it's likely we could squeeze a couple more in once the layout is agreed and we do a proper marking out.

Drainage - Surface water gullies to soakaways in verge over the majority of the roadway but at CP2 we propose a pollutants interceptor system to help prevent contamination of the pond. We would need to do an investigation on these as there are several different systems but basically, they filter out lighter and heavier than water contaminates which are then emptied (sucked) out at least once a year. At this time, we only propose this at CP2 where fluids from vehicles could accumulate and then get washed into the pond where soakaways alone may be inadequate.

When it comes to detailed design, we propose using the WSCC Standard Construction S278 details which contractors will be aware of.

Estimated costs, as indicated previously we would suggest allowing £150k to £175k to resurface and edge the existing road. New sections of surfacing £75k so total for this proposal £225k to £250k. I have based this on a recent project which was under half the size so I would expect with economies of scale that quotes would within estimate at today's prices.

Once the PC have had chance to review, we can discuss any additions or amendments.

Kind Regards

Phil Henty
Wilbar Associates Ltd
design@wilbarassociates.co.uk
www.wilbarassociates.co.uk
Mob: 07973 184197
Tel: 01798 874653



wilbar associates
HIGHWAY CONSULTANTS
TRAINING PROVIDER
EVENT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
Woodbrooke Farm, Toat Lane, Pulborough
West Sussex RH20 1BX
T/Fax: 01798 874653 email: mail@wilbarassociates.co.uk
web: www.wilbarassociates.co.uk

Drawing produced by HB2 Design, Brighton

Client:-

Billingshurst Parish Council

Drawing Title:

Proposals Plan V2

Jubilee Fields, Billinghurst
RH14 9HL

Rev				
	Original release	PJH	DPD	02.10.26
	Revision details	Chkd	Appd	Date
	Drawn: PJH		Scale 1:500 @ A3	
			Print at A3	

Drawing No. J1815-03 Proposals V2

This drawing has been specifically prepared to meet the requirements of the named client and may contain design and or novative features which differ from conventional design standards.

Printed 02.10.2026 File name j1815-jubilee works



wilbar associates
HIGHWAY CONSULTANTS
TRAINING PROVIDER
EVENT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
Woodbrooke Farm, Toat Lane, Pulborough
West Sussex RH20 1BX
T/Fax: 01798 874653 email: mail@wilbarassociates.co.uk
web: www.wilbarassociates.co.uk
Drawing produced by HB2 Design, Brighton

Client:-

Billingshurst Parish Council

this drawing has been specifically prepared to meet the requirements of the named client and may contain design and innovative features which differ from conventional design standards.

Drawing Title:

Proposals Plan V1

Jubilee Fields, Billinghurst
RH14 9HL

Rev				
	Original release	PJH	DPD	30 09 26
	Revision details	Chkd	Appd	Date
Drawn: PJH		Scale 1:500 @ A3		
		Print at A3		

Drawing No. J1815-02 Proposals V1

Printed 02.10.2026 File name j1815-jubilee works

APPENDIX H

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEEBER 2026

SOUTH & SOUTH EAST / BILLINGSHURST IN BLOOM

REPORT BY CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

FOR INFORMATION

Billingshurst was represented at RHS Wisley on 25 September for the annual South & South East in Bloom Awards.

Cllrs and Officers from the Council were joined by one of the Neighbourhood Wardens and representatives from voluntary groups who supported the entry.

The village (Town), Station Road Community Gardens and St Mary's Churchyard all took Silver Gilts with scores increasing on 2025. (Score and judge's comments attached.)

The involvement of pupils from Ingfield Manor in the Chapel Corner garden project scooped a 'Gardening with Young People' award.

I want to particularly thank Office Manager Liz Berry who prepared a portfolio for the judges, showcasing our year-round efforts on all matters *in bloom* and the environment.

Thanks to all Council staff, contractors and volunteers, who helped make the village, Station Road Community Garden and Churchyard look so good over this challenging summer and for their hard work all year round.

Entrants in the Billingshurst in Bloom competition received their awards from the Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Paul Berry at the Billingshurst Centre on 7 October. Residents and businesses received certificates in a number of categories, which had been judged by Billingshurst Horticultural Society. Once again, the Judges commented that whilst judging they passed many excellent gardens which hadn't entered. Thanks again to all those who entered.

The Committee is invited to note this report.

South & South East In Bloom **Standard Marking Sheet**	**Name of Entry: Billingshurst in Bloom** **Judges: Ann Hayward** **Date of Assessment: 22/06/2026**

Category: Category: Village / Large Village / Small Town / Town / Large Town / Small City / City / Small Coastal / Large Coastal (Indicate appr

MAXIMUM OF 10 POINTS PER SUB SECTION									**Total Marks in Sections A. B & C**	**Medal Level in Sections A. B & C**
A Horticulture 40%	**A1**	8	**A2**	7	**A3**	8	**A4**	8		
B Environment 30%	**B1**	7	**B2**	8	**B3**	8				
C Community 30%	**C1**	8	**C2**	8	**C3**	8				

Total Score out of 100: 78 **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:

There is a great deal of hard work going on across Billingshurst to manage and improve green spaces of all sizes while providing habitats for pollinators and other wildlife and bringing communities together. There are long-standing community groups at Station Road Community Gardens and St Mary's Churchyard, and links with organisations such as Aldingbourne Trust and local growers as well as new projects developing like Chapel Corner Gardens and the bee garden with its hives at Billingshurst Primary School.

Judges Feedback Section A – Horticulture:

The beds and borders around the surgery which are intended to create a calming environment outside the building as well as encouraging wildlife into the area are developing well with additional bug hotels and lots of information about insects which can be seen. The new quiet seating area will provide a sheltered spot and it will be interesting to see how it develops as the plants fill the new beds. The volunteers at Station Road Community Gardens are taking advantage of the opportunity to divide and replant some of the perennials which are growing well within the beds as well as identifying the shrubs which are thriving and repeating their use. They are reaping the rewards from the time spent weeding the beds before applying a thick layer of mulch with very little weed growth in some areas. The new project at Chapel Corner Gardens is an exciting opportunity to bring more plants into the centre of Billingshurst by turning a simple grass area into beds with wildlife friendly plants, accessible paths and plenty of seating. The Neighbourhood Wardens and students from Ingfield Manor School have worked with Trinity United Reformed Church to clear some of the space ready to create a propagation area to supplement the plants donated by local businesses and the wider community. The weather conditions this year have been very tricky for gardeners and care should be taken to ensure that there is a watering schedule in place if the planting cannot be rescheduled to later in the year. Perhaps there is also scope for other community groups to donate some plants which have been propagated from other sites within Billingshurst. Billingshurst Parish Council arrange for annual bedding plants to be planted in the hanging baskets and High Street planters and it was encouraging to see that some of the annuals have been substituted with perennials which could be reused within the planters or in green spaces within the area. The photos of spring bulbs, primroses and hellebores that were included in the judge's briefing notes provided a useful guide to the year-round interest available in some of the planting schemes. Perhaps spring flowering bulbs could be included in the new planting at Chapel Corner Gardens?

Judges Feedback Section B – Environment:

The individual sites seen during the tour were clean and tidy with little evidence of litter, graffiti or dog fouling, one or two areas within the High Street would have benefited from a sweep although it is appreciated that this may be out of the control of Billingshurst Parish Council. It was a shame that the litter bins within Station Road Community Gardens were full, although the team explained that these fall within the remit of Horsham District Council. Some of the sponsored planters outside the shops on the High Street have been replaced with new ones constructed from recycled plastic, these will be low maintenance and durable as well as providing pockets of colour and opportunities to develop additional pollinator-friendly planting in a visible location. Nature and biodiversity have been considered and included in the management of many sites within Billingshurst, including the pollinator-friendly planting and bee hives within the garden area at Billingshurst Primary School, the solitary bee hotels at the surgery, and the wildflower areas at St Mary's Church, Manorfields allotments and the village green area within the High Street. The signage at the village green and Station Road Community Gardens is particularly informative and the detail included on the signs about the solitary bee nests at the surgery will hopefully encourage others to include similar structures within their own gardens. Bee and butterfly surveys are taking place at the surgery and hopefully this can be replicated at other sites to help understand how the work of these community groups is helping biodiversity within the area. This data would be useful if evidence was needed to justify support for these projects or if additional funding streams for future projects were investigated. Insect or reptile refugia were mentioned at St Mary's Churchyard although it was not clear whether these are monitored. The annual bedding plants for planters and hanging baskets are supplied by a local grower, it would be useful to know whether they are a peat-free grower and whether eliminating the use of peat is a factor in the choice of plants used at other sites. Some sites on the judging route have water butts but it was not clear whether there is an option to use rainwater for some of the High Street planters and baskets.

Judges Feedback Section C – Community:

The information within the judge's briefing notes provided details of activities taking place throughout the year, including bulb planting outside Billingshurst Centre, dates for volunteer gardening days throughout 2026 at Station Road Community Gardens as well as details of the Billingshurst in Bloom Front Garden competition and the Open Gardens Event. The Billingshurst in Bloom Awards evening provided an opportunity for entrants and volunteer groups connected to the South & South East in Bloom entries to celebrate their achievements and share their success which can only encourage everyone to keep going.

The interpretation boards and signs at locations including the surgery and village green provide detailed information about the reasons for habitat management techniques and the benefits of considering pollinators and other wildlife when gardening. The primary school's bee garden, pollinator-friendly planting and garden areas designed to encourage birds are all good examples of providing positive education about wildlife which will hopefully encourage the children to continue with these ideas as they get older. Posters, social media posts and articles in local magazines are used to engage with the local community, encourage residents to take part in competitions and provide details of how to join the various volunteer groups or working parties. It was not clear whether details of how to join the group working at St Mary's Churchyard are advertised. There may be a limit to how many volunteers could work at one time in a sensitive site like this but there may be opportunities for support with some of the more physical tasks such as gutter clearing and cutting the meadow areas.

The group at Rosehill Retirement Development work well together with some residents taking responsibility for planting and maintaining areas within the shared garden space. Ideas are discussed by the residents before being implemented so that everyone is involved regardless of whether they are physically working in the garden. Fundraising events take place to raise money for additional plants and having 6 or 7 members of the gardening group means that there is a range of planting styles for all to enjoy within the shared space.

There is other evidence of fundraising with sponsored planters and baskets within the High Street and local businesses proving support and guidance to the Chapel Court Gardens Project. Billingshurst Horticultural Society supports the Billingshurst in Bloom Front Gardens competition while the Open Garden Scheme sits under the Business Community Partnership umbrella demonstrating how different organisations are supporting aspects of the Bloom within Billingshurst. This was also demonstrated by the floral bunting on the railings along the High Street and along the path to St Mary's Church which was created by members of Billingshurst's WI groups, an excellent way to get non-gardeners involved as well as adding to the floral display within the village.

South & South East in Bloom Small Park/Park/Large Park of the Year Award 2026

Billingshurst in Bloom - Station Road Community Gardens

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	14

SECTION B– Design	Max Points	Actual Points
Appearance and practicality of layout	20	16

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	0

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	18

SECTION F –Maintenance of hard landscape features	Max Points	Actual Points
Paths, benches, bins, play areas and artificial surfaces	10	7
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	16

SECTION H–Conservation	Max Points	Actual Points

Management of natural features, wildlife and flora *	20	16

SECTION I - Community Involvement	Max Points	Actual Points
Volunteering & promotion of the park as a community resource	20	18

Maximum Points Available	**200**
Total Points Awarded	**163**
Award Nomination	**Silver-Gilt**

Areas of Achievement

There is good access throughout this site, from the paths around the beds by the open grass area through into the walled garden with its sensory planting and orchard area. The new path across the western end of the park forms part of a local safer route to school and has reduced the wear on that part of the park. The informative noticeboards at the entrances from Station Road provide lots of information about what the volunteers do within the garden, how to join them and details for the Billingshurst Men's Shed group whose building is also within the Community Gardens. It is encouraging to learn that the link between the two groups is still strong with both groups operating on the same Saturday mornings. The volunteers also described the other ways they engage with the local community and encourage other residents to join them during community events and via social media. The walled garden and orchard area has an extensive range of compost heaps at different stages of the process so there is always plenty of material for mulching the beds and around the base of trees. Wood chip was also provided by a local contractor which has been used to good effect suppressing any weeds which escaped the thorough weeding undertaken by the volunteers within the mature shrub beds. These shrubs are well maintained with some regenerative pruning taking place during the last few years. New shrubs have been planted along the Station Road boundary while existing perennials have been divided and replanted within the garden, making good use of plants which do well in the conditions. The ever-present display of hollyhocks provides a bright pop of colour at the entrance to the gardens even in the hot, dry conditions this year. A small amount of annual bedding plants were donated following a community event but the volunteers have been mindful not to plant extensive areas which would require frequent watering.

Areas for Development

The larger grass areas within the park are maintained by the Parush Council's contractors while the litter bins are emptied by Horsham District Council. Although the site was generally clean and tidy, the litter bins were full which was a shame however it is appreciated that this is possibly out of the entrant's control although hopefully HDC were aware of the judging visit. There are some benches in need of repair or replacement within the walled garden, some have been replaced already and visitors will continue to appreciate these improvements as they continue. There are a number of bee and bug hotels within the gardens and scope to carry out some wildlife surveys or monitoring projects which could feed into a wider citizen science project. This might be something that one of the local conservation charities could provide guidance or support for.

Results

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

South & South East in Bloom Churchyard of the Year 2026

Billingshurst in Bloom - St Mary's Churchyard, Billingshurst

SECTION A - General Site Assessment	Max Points	Actual Points
Is the management appropriate and respectful. Is the churchyard, open or closed, consecrated or de-consecrated, as it's status may considerably alter/or restrict the way it is managed, used and presented.		
General Layout and accessibility	20	15
Entrances & noticeboards	10	6
Infrastructure - condition of paths, walls, fences, Lych Gates etc.	10	8

SECTION B– Horticulture	Max Points	Actual Points
Overall appearance of the site - including cleanliness, trees, shrubs, grass, perennial and seasonal flowers (both ornamental and native)	30	24
Horticultural practice – cultivation and maintenance	30	24

SECTION C - The Environment & Conservation	Max Points	Actual Points
Nature Conservation Areas - including meadows, hedges, areas that encourage and support wildlife	20	15
Management of natural & scarce resources and actions to reduce pesticides	20	14
Recycling – provision of composting areas for green wastes	20	13

SECTION D –Pride of Place	Max Points	Actual Points
Local environmental quality – management of litter, graffiti, fly-posting etc	15	13
Pride of place – management and maintenance of seating, signage, and general condition of memorials, and hard landscaping	25	20

Maximum Points Available	**200**	
Total Points Awarded		**152**
Award Nomination	**Silver-Gilt**	

Areas of Achievement

The small, dedicated group of volunteers share responsibility for maintaining the beds and most of the grass areas within the churchyard as well as a host of other tasks such as cleaning the gutters and drains around the church buildings. Some of the grass areas within the closed burial ground are cut by Parish Council contractors but the memorial garden and sections closer to the church itself are tended by the volunteers on a regular basis. These tend to be closely mown grass areas and neatly edged beds and borders with a focus on weeding by hand, while some sections beyond the footpath include patches of longer grass and wildflowers such as ox-eye daisies. Closely mown

edges around these patches demonstrate intentional management and the long grass is collected into piles to form habitat piles at the end of the grass cutting season. The decorative floral bunting created by the Women's Institute groups brightens the railings leading from the High Street to the church, complementing the hydrangeas and other planting while also encouraging non-gardeners to get involved with the entry.

Areas for Development

Churchyards are often key locations for habitats within the centre of towns and villages and St Mary's Churchyard has the potential to be a haven for wildlife in the centre of Billingshurst. Part of understanding whether it is already serving as such would involve completing some wildlife surveys. The volunteers indicated that there are reptile refugia within the wider churchyard area, but it was not clear whether these are monitored and the findings recorded. These findings would also help to shape the future management of the churchyard. No information was seen about the management of the churchyard or how to join the volunteer group within the churchyard noticeboards so it is not clear how local residents or members of the congregation are encouraged to get involved. It is appreciated that many community groups struggle to recruit volunteers in a busy world but maybe the village wardens or some of the other local volunteer gardening groups will be able to provide some advice. Although some of the grass is formed into habitat piles once it is cut, it was not clear whether other green waste (including pruning's or floral tributes) is composted or whether other recycling opportunities exist within the churchyard.

Results

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

APPENDIX I

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2026

PROPERTY UPDATES

FOR INFORMATION

REPORT BY OFFICE MANAGER

1. **LOWER STATION ROAD RECREATION GROUND**
   - The slopes at either end of the Parbrook bridge have had their annual coating of non-slip paint.
   - The Council's garden contractor has carried out a cutback of the sides of the banks of the Parbrook where it runs through the Recreation Ground and is working on removing foliage and debris from the bed of the brook.
   - The farmyard wordsearch panel on the play area which had been removed by vandals has been found and re-affixed by staff.

2. **JUBILEE FIELDS**
   - There have unfortunately been issues with vandalism at the fishing lake where the Water Bailiff (WB) involved with the Billingshurst Angling Society needed to confront 4 people who he believed had interfered with the generator on site which was helping to keep the lake aerated after the very hot summer that has been experienced this year. The WB also suspected the people were poaching and fishing with set lines, (both of which are illegal), and damaging the barriers which had been torn down so he called the Police. There was a significant amount of rubbish across the site and which had also been thrown in the water; as the people became increasingly abusive, the WB upgraded the Police call to 999 and two officers arrived on site where they asked the people to leave; the people had tried to give false details but were known to the Police. Once the police officers had left the site the WB thought the people had just gone back to the lake but without a regular police presence, there was nothing further that could be done. As members are aware, the Clerk and Office Manager have recently had communications with Sussex Police and have made them aware that ongoing support in this area is necessary.
   - The BSRA are due to apply for CIL Funding for the removal of reeds in the fishing lake. They have been asked to get this to the office by early December in time for this to be considered at the December F&GP Meeting.
   - A very successful evening was had at the Fireworks Display on Friday 30th October and thankfully the weather was perfect!

3. **STATION ROAD COMMUNITY GARDENS (SRCG)**

- Vandalism and antisocial behaviour have continued to occur on site and the Clerk and Office Manager in their recent communications with Sussex Police, have requested extra police presence to try and stop this mindless behaviour.
- The Clerk and Office Manager have contacted The Weald School after staff and members of the public reported that pupils, both in and out of uniform, were involved in the antisocial behaviour. Given the continuing impact, the Clerk has asked the school to intervene, particularly following an incident where a member of our staff felt abused.

4. **PUBLIC TOILETS**

- Once again further instances of vandalism have occurred to the facility and again, the Clerk and Office Manager in recent communications with Sussex Police have requested prompt attention to help try and sort this out.
- Dashcam footage of young people coming out of the public toilets on their bikes was received and has been sent to the Neighbourhood Wardens for their information and identification purposes in case of further vandalism occurrences.
- Southern Water have at last provided more exact information about a water leak between our meter and the toilets. We have passed this to our civil engineering consultant to investigate further.
- New shelving has been installed in the storage room, making full use of the available height. Staff have found this very helpful, as it keeps the service area behind the toilets clutter-free and ensures contractors can access all services.

5. **BILLINGSHURST ALLOTMENTS**

- The Office Manager has identified a small sum of money from unallocated s106 funding which could be useful to the Billingshurst Allotments Society (BAS). The BAS has indicated that the funding would either be useful for a replacement strimmer or hedge trimmer to replace those stolen at a previous break-in, (they now have increased and improved security). There may also be some money left over to fund extra scalpings (MOT type 1), to repair and improve the driveway into the allotments site and to the raised bed areas.

6. **BILLINGSHURST IN BLOOM**

- See separate agenda item. The In Bloom Awards Evening took place on Wednesday, 7th October, and the Chairman handed out certificates to the front garden entrants. It was suggested that judges photograph each entry during next year's visits for display on the large new television in the Council Chambers at the presentation evening. Entrants could choose not to have their entry included in the photo gallery. On the evening, further certificates were presented to a number of individuals who had helped beautify the village in time for the In Bloom judges visit and this included the two Billingshurst WI Groups who got together and knitted hundreds of yarn flowers which draped all the way down to the High Street from St. Mary's Church.
- An article has been submitted to the Clerks & Council's Direct magazine with a photo of attendees on In Bloom night and a write up of achievements in Billingshurst.

- A representative of the Billingshurst Open Gardens group attended and spoke about this year's successful event. The following day, In Bloom attendees were sent a follow-up email explaining how to take part in 2027 if they wished.
- Summer flowering hanging baskets have now been retrieved by the Council's planting contractor and taken back to his premises ready for 2027 summer planting.

7. **TREES**

- A concern was raised by a resident of Jubilee Court regarding trees overhanging the Church path and the rear gardens of Jubilee Court. A tree surgeon was despatched to site to take a look and recommended some works which were undertaken in early September.
- A recently planted highway tree on Silver Lane was damaged by a vehicle. The damage has been reported to WSCC, which manages the Highway Trees Scheme and will consider replacing the tree in 2027.
- The Council and Neighbourhood Wardens were approached by the owners of Scribes as they had concerns with the tree adjacent to their premises in the Library Car Park. As the tree is the responsibility of HDC, the issue was passed to their Property Department to investigate.
- A resident of Silver Lane raised concerns with a tree on Clevelands Gardens which was he says was overhanging his boundary. The Council's tree surgeon checked the tree in question and recommended some works which again were carried out in early September.
- Regrettably, an application has been submitted to HDC to fell a deteriorating TPO-protected tree on the Church Path that poses a potential hazard. HDC has acknowledged the application, which was presented to the Planning & Environment Committee earlier this month for noting only.
- The annual Tree Survey was carried out by Keen & Co in the middle of October, and the report has just been received. As usual, works will be carried out as per the recommendations and timescale determined by the Arboricultural Consultant with the necessary permissions being submitted where appropriate.
- The Parish Council owns the bench surrounding the large tree outside Park & Brown in the High Street. As Members will be aware, the tree's roots have significantly lifted the surrounding block paving. WSCC plans to replace the paving with tarmac and has advised that the bench must be removed. Alternative locations for the bench are being considered.
- A tree branch fell on the windscreen of a car parked in a layby in Station Road under the trees. This is being dealt with by the Council's insurer.
- The ongoing issue of trees at Willow Drive has been reported separately to Full Council.

8. **FESTIVE LIGHTING**

- Enerveo has now approved the Council's Festive Lighting application and instructions have been given to Lights Angels with a request for the display to be lit week commencing 23rd November. The owners of the Scribes (formerly Whispers) in the Library Car Park have kindly agreed the use of their outdoor electricity feed for the lighting that is put on the large HDC tree adjacent to their premises.

- Judging of the Best Dressed Christmas Window Competition is due to take place week commencing Monday 7th December.

8. **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Whistlestop Arts has thanked the Council for supporting its Telephone Box project. The group has sought advice from an organisation that completed a similar project elsewhere and met with a Creative Technician to explore ways for people to dial a number in the telephone box and listen to stories. A further update will follow in due course but it has been noticed that BT has repainted the box.
- Footway lighting along the church path was found to be not working so a report was submitted to *Lights on in West Sussex*. A fault was found and has now been repaired.
- The annual inspection of play equipment has been booked for December.
- Environmental Operatives have put up the Silent Soldiers on the Billingshurst & Adversane Village Greens in time for Remembrance Sunday. A contractor has also put up the poppies on lampposts. Billingshurst Village Green is further adorned with a stunning display of knitted poppies which has been put up by the Billingshurst WI following discussion with the Clerk.
- A member of the public has requested a renewal of a Metal Detecting Agreement with the Council and has been asked to provide the necessary paperwork and information to support his application. A response is awaited.
- Officers reported the faded lines on the pathway leading down towards the Billingshurst Leisure Centre and Weald School to HDC who confirmed that the lines were due to have been repainted by early autumn. A chaser email has been sent.
- St Mary's Church office was recently contacted by a resident whose parents are interred in the churchyard; the resident was concerned about adornments which have been put on a tree overhanging the grave. Following discussion, St Mary's Church Office will be responding to the resident advising that the Diocese does not permit ornaments on graves; only flowers are permitted so a similar precedent should be applied to trees due to the welfare of the tree and the aesthetics of the graveyard so should not be encouraged.
- We have been advised that the transfer of a rear garden at Adversane Hall to the Council, is being held up by the Land Registry.

The Committee is invited to note this report.