

***Representing Highbrook, Selsfield,
Sharpthorne, Tyes Cross and West Hoathly"***



The Parish Council is two members light and we are therefore again asking for volunteers to make themselves known to me and/or the Clerk, especially if you are concerned about and interested in helping with the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan, planning in general and stewardship of the Parish's assets and highways.

The Brickworks application, DM/23/0827, has two additional documents since 1st January. The first is a request from Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) for a further delay in considering the Ashill Regen application to 29th March 2024. The second is a Habitats Regulations Assessment prepared by MSDC; this is a long analysis of the mitigating impacts of the proposed SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace). One of the Parish Council's objections is to the sheer size of the SANG at 11.47 hectares. The document states that a development of 108 homes only requires a SANG of 2.11 hectares. It then suggests that at least 6 hectares of the SANG are available to act as mitigation for other new housing developments across Mid Sussex. Residents will draw their own conclusions. At the December Parish Council meeting a further revised and resubmitted planning application was considered and it was agreed to add a further objection in addition to objections already submitted. The Parish Council has major concerns about the drainage plans and the responses from Southern Water which are inadequate and do not consider the ability of the New Coombe Wastewater Treatment Plant to cater for the additional wastewater, or on surface water drainage from the application site, both of which flow in to Coombe Brook and Weirwood Reservoir.

The planning application for the 13 houses on the Cookhams site in Sharpthorne, which is in our Neighbourhood Plan, was approved in the summer but is still awaiting final legal agreement on the terms and conditions, including on Section 106 funds (Planning Gain), some of which will benefit the Parish Council.

The Annual Parish Assembly is on Monday 4th March at 7.30pm in West Hoathly Village Hall. All residents are welcome and there will be an opportunity to speak, ask questions and make suggestions in a less formal format than at an ordinary Parish Council meeting. Hopefully an external speaker will attend. Last year that was South East Water, after the disgraceful cessation of water supply for up to seven days before Christmas 2022. I said in the last Chronicle that I would refer to South East Water in this issue and that is because I did not wish to tempt fate before Christmas 2023! OFWAT, the water regulator, has launched an investigation into South East Water to consider if it has failed to develop and maintain an efficient water supply system. Also because it imposed a hosepipe ban last summer, blaming people for working at home, ramping up demand and testing its infrastructure; finally because it lost £74.2 million in the year to March 2023. The conclusions are awaited.

Parish Tidy day is set for Saturday 6th April. Volunteers are sought for an hour or two at 10am, meeting in Finche Field Car Park; also in Highbrook Church Car Park. You will be asked to tidy safe locations along the road verges and all equipment will be provided. The annual Allotment Holders' meeting will be at 10am on Saturday 23rd March 2024 in West Hoathly Village Hall.

64 is far too young to pass. Malcolm Eastwood, the Vice Chair of West Sussex Association of Local Councils, Chair of Horsham District Association and Chairman of Henfield Parish was taken just before Christmas after a short illness. The strategies and structures created by Malcolm, especially in Horsham, are a model for any District not just in West Sussex but nationally. They will live on and be followed as a lasting testament to the intelligence, integrity and goodwill that were at the heart of Malcolm's vision for successful local government, Personally I will miss his wise counsel on the West Sussex Board.

Douglas Denham St Pinnock - Chairman

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The office is open on **Tuesday** between **9am** and **noon**.
Messages can be left at all other times on the answer phone or by email.