

Mayfield and Five Ashes Annual Report 2014–2015



Published April 2015

Chairman's Introduction

This will be the final report of this current parish council before the elections on 7 May 2015 and it gives me time to reflect on the last five years and note our more major achievements. The list below is not exhaustive but it hopefully gives a flavour of what we've been up to:

- Created overflow car park beside Memorial Hall
- Improved High Street parking with replacement parking restriction signs and working in partnership with the PCSO
- Purchased land for Love Lane car park
- Introduced accounting software thereby improving monthly reporting, accuracy and timeliness
- Acquired new more accessible office for the Council
- Purchased land for Jubilee Wood for use as a nature conservation area
- Took over running of South Street toilets thereby keeping them open as a public service
- Re-opened the South Street garden plots
- Refurbished various finger posts
- Opened up bridleway 92
- Established a bridleway / footpath maintenance team
- Developed a cost effective and 'green' street lighting strategy for the future using led lights and partial night-time lighting
- Assisted with facilitating the Post Office consultation
- Upgraded playground equipment at both Court Meadow and Five Ashes
- Court Meadow footpath re-surfaced
- Published Rights of Way booklet
- Supported and facilitated Faster Broadband to Mayfield and Five Ashes
- Reduced overall office administration costs
- Introduced hanging baskets in Mayfield High Street
- Provided funding for Mayfield Bonfire Festival
- Organised a team of volunteer litter pickers
- Upgraded the Parish Council website
- Introduced Community Speedwatch in Five Ashes
- Supported Argos Hill Windmill by becoming a trustee
- Supported and partially financed the library and community bus.

As a responsible council we are always looking at our costs. With some prudent management we have streamlined many of our procedures and embraced technology to become more efficient. We constantly check our contracts for better deals and prices and estimate we have saved over £14,000 in office costs within the last two years alone. All this enables us to put money aside for future projects

So what of plans for our next term of office?

It is likely there will be a continued tightening of budgets for the County and District Councils over the next few years which could impact on our responsibilities and the services we provide. However we have drawn up a short list of some projects that, given a favourable wind, we would like to address:

Community

- Support / encourage refurbishment of Mayfield village hall
- Support where possible appropriate village projects
- Facilitate a strategy for maintaining a thriving High Street in Mayfield
- Implement a resilience plan
- Investigate the possibility of moving the library to more appropriate premises to free up space in the primary school
- Maintain, and if possible improve, existing services including bus services, street lighting, toilet facilities, playgrounds, recreational areas etc
- Support for local green energy projects
- Continue with car park improvements

Recreation

- Upgrade play facilities on a regular basis
- Develop / manage Jubilee Wood
- Extend bridleway 92 to Rotherfield with cooperation of Rotherfield Parish Council

Tourism

- Investigate ways to support tourism
- Refurbish village sign
- Improve High Street appearance
- Support and improve Christmas lights

Local Authority

- Address planning procedures/ decisions that are contrary to local opinion
- Encourage debate on local electoral boundaries and make representations as appropriate

Corporate

- Upgrade the council office IT system

With this term of the Parish Council coming to an end I would like to express our gratitude to those who have decided to step down. Graham Playfoot has served for over 14 years representing Five Ashes while Jane Driscoll has served eight years and Warwick Child four years representing Mayfield. They have all made an enormous contribution to our community. Their dedication and commitment has been exemplary and they should be rightly proud of their time on the Parish Council.

Of course, the wheels of public life continue and we look forward to welcoming our new councillors. With that in mind I thought it appropriate to share the ten general principles of public life that we as councillors must adhere to:

1. **Selflessness** – members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
2. **Honesty and Integrity** – members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly, and may be questioned, should not behave improperly, and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behavior.
3. **Objectivity** – members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.
4. **Accountability** – members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

5. **Openness** – members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.
6. **Personal Judgment** – members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.
7. **Respect for others** – members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers and its other employees.
8. **Duty to uphold the law** – members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.
9. **Stewardship** – members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently, and in accordance with the law.
10. **Leadership** – members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

There will be challenges ahead but hope we can continue to improve our services, listen, support and work with our residents and look forward to serving the communities of Five Ashes and Mayfield for another four years.

Jerry Watkiss
Chairman Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council

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Understanding your local councils

County Councils

These are responsible for services across the whole of a county like:

Education	Planning	Libraries
Highways	Fire and public safety	Waste management
Transport	Social care	Trading standards

District Councils

These cover a smaller area than county councils and are responsible for services like:

Waste collection	Council collections	Tax	Housing
Recycling			Planning applications

Parish Councils

Parish Councils are statutory local authorities set up under the Local Government Act 1972 and are the first tier of local government closest to the people. There are 42 in the Wealden District Council area alone. They have a wide range of powers and duties which essentially relate to local matters, such as looking after community buildings, open spaces, allotments, play areas, street lighting, bus shelters, car parks and much more.

They also have the power to issue fixed penalty fines for things like:

- litter
- graffiti
- fly posting
- dog offences

Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council

Working alongside East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council and other Government bodies, Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council provides an increasing number of basic services for and on behalf of the electorate.

The Parish councillors are elected every four years by the local community to represent its views in the three Parish Council electoral wards:

- Mayfield 11 Members
- Five Ashes 3 Members
- Rushers Cross 1 Member

Decisions for the community are made at meetings of the Full Council which meets 10 times a year, generally on the second Monday of each month. Meetings are held at Mayfield Primary School Hall or at Five Ashes Village Hall at 19:30. Public Question Time is held during the first ten minutes so the public can express a view or ask a question on relevant matters on the agenda. The public are always welcome to stay and observe the rest of the meeting.

The Statutory Annual Parish Meeting must be held each year between the 1st March and the 1st of June. This is when the Parish Council and other organisations within the community report to their residents. The Parish Council's Annual Report is circulated at this meeting and provides a summary of achievements and expenditure over the last year.

Detailed work of the Parish Council is carried out by its committees:

- Planning Executive
- Finance and General Purposes Executive
- Community Development Advisory
- Rights of Way and Trees Advisory
- Community Safety and Traffic Advisory
- Governance and Risk Advisory

The Advisory Committees are assisted by no less than 13 lay members, drawn from residents of the community who give a great deal of help, advice and expertise to the successful working of the Council. There are also currently 11 representatives working with village organisations of various kinds.

The Parish Clerk is employed to provide administrative support, professional advice and financial services for the council's activities. In addition the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman ensures that all Council activities and financial transactions are conducted lawfully and meet governance requirements.

Meeting agendas, minutes and other documentation are available for viewing at the Parish Council Office and on Parish Council website: <http://www.mayfieldfiveashes.org.uk>.

The Parish Council Office opening hours are:

Monday	09:00 – 11:00am
Wednesday	09:00 – 12:00pm
Friday	09:00 – 11:00am

2014/15 Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Councillors

(Please note that these details will change after the elections on 7 May 2015)

Jerry Watkiss, Chairman & Chairman of Rights of Ways and Trees

Cherry Tree Cottage, Coggins Mill Lane, Mayfield, TN20 6UT

Tel: 01435 873844 email : jerrywatkiss@jswcreative.co.uk

Robert Fitzsimmons, Vice -Chair & Chairman of Community Safety and Traffic

6 Westfield Close, Five Ashes, TN20 6LA

Tel: 01825 830886 email: RFitzsimms@aol.com

Monica Aitken

Coldharbour, Lake Street, Mayfield, TN20 6PT

Tel: 01435 872454 email: monicaaitken@btinternet.com

Patricia Balfour , Chairman, Planning Committee

Knowle, Newick Lane, Mayfield TN20 6RD

Tel: 01435 872920 email: pfbalfour@knowlefarm.com

Andrew Burnett

1 Warren Terrace, Mayfield, TN20 6TS

Tel 07919 002139 email: andrew@burnetts-ea.com

Warwick Child

Russetts, West Street, Mayfield, TN20 6DT

Tel: 01435 873252 email: whchild@btinternet.com

Jane Driscoll

May House, The Warren, Mayfield, TN20 6UB

Tel: 01435 872700 email: driscollj55@btinternet.com

Chris Lilly, Chairman F&GP

Versyns Farm, Vale Road, Mayfield, TN20 6BD

Tel: 01435 873631 email: chrislilly@versyns.com

Rosemary Neal

Hurst Hill, Rotherfield Lane, Mayfield, TN20 6ET

Tel: 01435 872113 email: rjneal@btinternet.com

Ian Parker

Meriden, Sunny Bank Close, Mayfield, TN20 6TT

Tel 07971 979137 email: iparker@chelco.co.uk

Graham Playfoot ,

Weald View, Five Ashes, TN20 6HS

Tel: 01825 830511

Dr Deveda Redman, Chair of Community Development

Fair Meadow Farm, Fir Toll Road, Mayfield, TN20 6NA

Tel 01435 872558 email: devedaredman@mac.com

Gill Weavers

September Cottage, Fletching Street, Mayfield, TN20 6TE

Tel 01435 872547 email: gill@weavers-sussex.co.uk

Elaine Wheeler

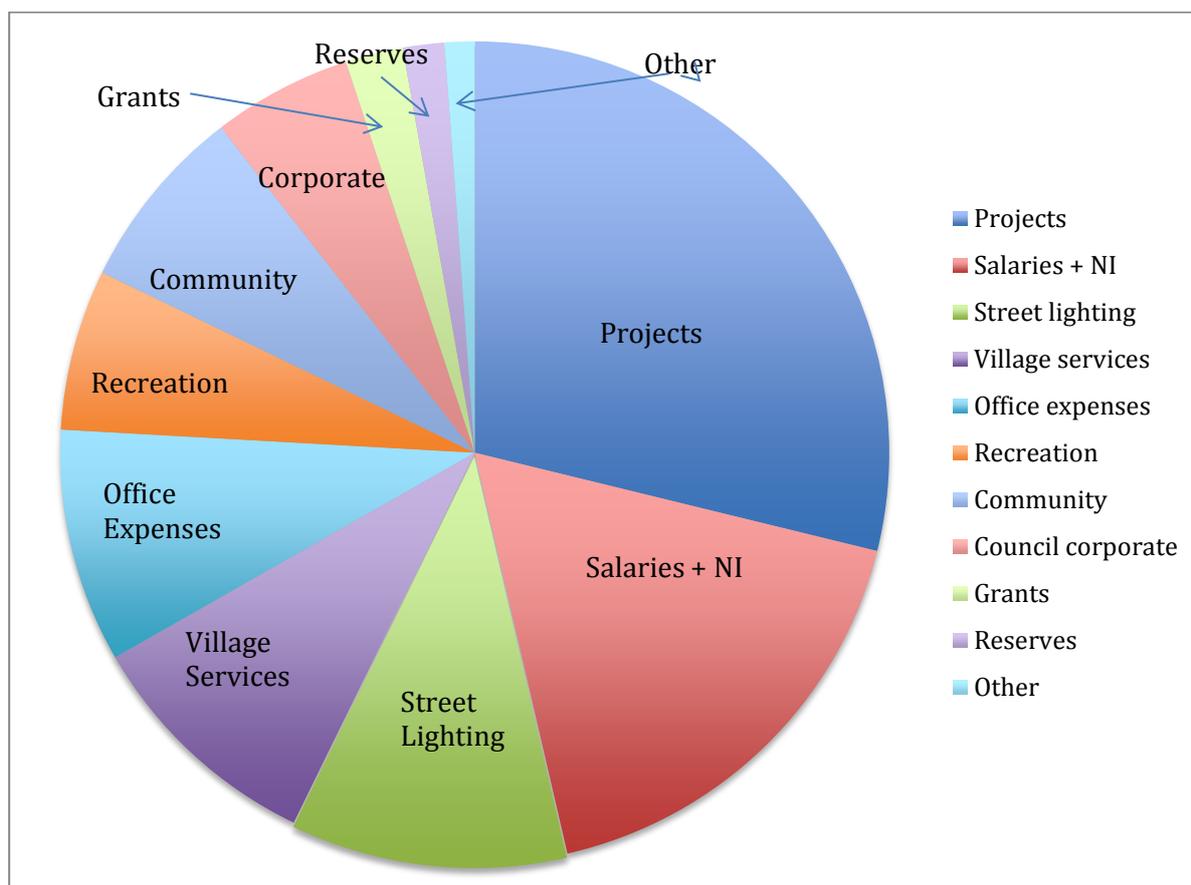
31 Queensmount, Five Ashes, TN20 6LH

Tel: 01825 830809 email: Elaine.wheeler@yahoo.co.uk

Finance

Expenditure for 2014/15 was within budget and the finances throughout the year were healthy. We continue to provide financial support for the Mayfield library, the Beacon Link bus service and run the South Street toilets to enable these valuable community services to continue. The biggest financial commitment for the year was for the Memorial Hall overflow car park.

2014/15 Funding			
	Amount (£)	Accruals (£)	Total (£)
Projects	27,114		27,114
Salaries + National Insurance	16,514		16,514
Street Lighting	10,137	2,492	12,629
Village Services	8,948	2,050	10,998
Office Expenses	8,634	70	8,704
Recreation	5,944	2,300	8,244
Community	6,860	245	7,105
Council Corporate	5,122		5,122
Grants	2,116		2,116
Reserves	1,517		1,517
Other	1,100		1,100
Total	94,006	7,157	101,163



Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council maintains a separate bank account for funds held in trust on behalf of its residents:

Funds held in trust as at 31 March 2015	
Remaining public donations for Five Ashes War Memorial refurbishment	£48.20
Remaining public donations for Mayfield War Memorial refurbishment	£1,517
Skate park upgrade project	£3,183.95
Remaining funds from Open Door – now disbanded	£593.82