

Rudgwick Parish Council

Weekly Clerk's Update: 16th – 28th February 2025 (Agenda March 2025)

To: Parish Councillors

c.c: Christian Mitchell (West Sussex County Councillor)
Richard Landeryou (Horsham District Councillor)

From: Anna Clayton

The weekly update provides information regarding:

- Announcements/delegated decisions by the Clerk
- Planning information
- Correspondence/communications from parishioners
- Correspondence/communications from outside organisations

List of organisations that communicate with the Council on a regular basis.

- AIRS (Action in Rural Sussex)
- APCAG (Association of Parish Councils Aviation Group)
- CAGNE (Communities Against Gatwick Noise Emission)
- CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England)
- HALC (Horsham Association of Local Councils)
- HDC (Horsham District Council)
- NALC (National Association of Local Councils)
- WSALC (West Sussex Association of Local Councils)
- WSCC (West Sussex District Council)

Clerk's announcements/delegated decisions:

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GENERAL REMINDER: If you wish to speak face to face to a member of staff, please contact the Clerk on 07927 702321 during her office working hours (Monday – Wednesday 9.30 – 15.30).

Applications for noting at Rudgwick Parish Council Meeting

Applications for noting at Rudgwick Parish Council Meeting 10 th March 2025	
Application No:	Response/Comments:

Applicant:	
Reason for Application:	
Official Response Date:	

Applications for consideration at Rudgwick Parish Council Meeting

Applications for consideration at Rudgwick Parish Council Meeting 10 th March 2025	
Application No: DC/25/0221 26.02.2025	Response/Comments:
Applicant: 12 Windacres Farm Lane, Rudgwick	
Reason for Application: Conversion of loft into habitable living space with the installation of two pitched roof dormers to the rear and two rooflights to the front.	
Official Response Date: 19.03.2025 / Determination 19.04.2025	
Application No: DISC/25/0052 18.02.2025	Response/Comments:
Applicant: Pennthorpe School, Church Street, Rudgwick	
Reason for Application: Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions 6, 7 and 8 to approved application DC/19/2573.	
Official Response Date: 19.03.2025 / Determination 15.04.2025	
Application No: DC/25/0225 13.02.2025	Response/Comments:
Applicant: 4 Pondfield Road, Rudgwick	

Reason for Application: Non Material Amendment to previously approved application DC/22/1449 (Enlargement of porch and installation of pitched roof to front. Construction of new pitched roof to existing sun room, creation of covered seating area and installation of window at first floor level to rear) Demolition of existing sun room and rebuild from ground level and change the proposed pitched roof to a flat roof construction.	
Official Response Date: Not available / Determination 13.03.2025	
Application No: DC/25/0240 18.02.2025	Response:
Applicant: Pennthorpe School, Church Street, Rudgwick	
Reason for Application: Variation of condition 12 of previously approved application reference DC/19/2573 (Removal of 2no. existing tennis courts and creation of an all-weather sports (AWS) pitch) to revise the hours during which the facility will be available for community use.	
Official Response Date: Not available / Determination 15.04.2025	

Decisions

HDC Council Decisions – Rudgwick Parish Council Meeting 10 th March 2025	
Application No: DC/24/1715	Response: Permitted / RPC - Holding objection
Applicant: Pilgrims Rest, Cox Green	
Reason for Application: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a self-build dwelling and garage.	

Official Response Date:	
Application No: DC/25/0023	Response: NO OBJECT Overhead Line / RPC – RPC response not necessary.
Applicant: Land opposite Penfold Farm, Naldretts Lane, Rudgwick	
Reason for Application: Overhead lines	
Official Response Date:	
Application No: DC/24/0104	Response: Prior Approval Not Required / RPC - The presence of asbestos is of concern here, particularly as there are some other dwellings nearby and a PROW. Therefore, as well as due care during the demolition and removal/disposal of materials, it is suggested that signage is provided during any demolition work for protection and to alert nearby residents and users of the PROW to the work being undertaken. Also, in the previous application on this site (DC/24/1834) there was concern over trees being affected by works. The HDC Arboricultural Officer referred to an Oak in particular, and so should prior approval be granted, care must be taken to protect trees and their RPAs during any demolition works.
Applicant: Little Millfields, Horsham Road, Rowhook	
Reason for Application: Prior notification for the demolition of a former stable building.	
Official Response Date:	

Applications going to Committee

Applications going to Committee – Rudgwick Parish Council Meeting 10 th March 2025	
Application No:	Response/Comments:
Applicant:	
Reason for Application:	
Official Response Date:	

Appeals Lodged / Appeals Determined

New Appeals Lodged / Determined – Rudgwick Parish Council Meeting 10 th March 2025	
Application No:	Response/Comments:
Applicant:	
Reason for Application:	
Official Response Date:	

New Planning Compliance Issues

New Planning Compliance Issues – Rudgwick Parish Council Meeting 10 th March 2025	
Application No:	Response/Comments:
Address:	
Nature of Complaint:	
Official Response Date:	

Parish Councils Website

Rudgwick Parish Council's New Website is now live!

Thank you for your ongoing patience while this was under construction.

<https://rudgwick-pc.gov.uk>

Correspondence

Email dated 19.02.2025 from WSALC

Sussex and Brighton devolution – government consultation opens

A consultation on proposals for a Mayoral Combined Authority for Sussex and Brighton is now open and everyone across the county is invited to have their say.

The government is running the consultation, which is specific to the Sussex and Brighton region, until the end of the day on Sunday 13 April.

All interested parties are welcome to have their say, including organisations as well as individuals who live and work in the region.

The consultation specifically asks about:

1. The proposed geography
2. Governance arrangements
3. Supporting the economy
4. Improving social outcomes
5. Local government services
6. Improving the local natural environment
7. Supporting the needs of local communities and reflect local identity

West Sussex County Council and neighbouring upper tier authorities in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove will be submitting our own responses to the questions.

We encourage you to consider your responses and appreciate your support in encouraging others within your own networks and communities to take part.

Full details of the consultation can be found on the gov.uk website here:

[Sussex and Brighton devolution - GOV.UK](#)

Further information is available in the government press notice here:

[Devolution Priority Programme consultations launch - GOV.UK](#)

As previously mentioned, our bid to be on the government's devolution priority programme is a positive opportunity to draw down more powers and funding for our areas from central government.

Ministers have agreed that a strategic authority for Sussex and Brighton, made up of an elected mayor, and two members of each constituent authority, offers the chance to give the people who live here more control and influence over the issues that affect them, from transport and housing to skills and employment, as well as a stronger voice in how national decisions affect them.

The decision whether or not to proceed with the proposal will be one for the government to take based on its assessment of the consultation responses. We are not able to put in place any formal steps towards setting up a combined authority for Sussex until that decision is made. However, we will look to engage you as key partners in informal discussions in the coming weeks, so that we are ready to move ahead at pace, if we do receive the green light.

Separate to this process, authorities across our region are discussing plans for local government reorganisation, with a proposal to government due to be submitted soon. We will update on this shortly.

Regards,

Paul Marshall
Leader, West Sussex County Council

Email dated 27.02.2025 from NALC
Chief Executives Bulletin

NALC celebrates excellence as it crowns its Star Council Awards winners

We held our Parliamentary Reception in the House of Lords on 25 February 2025, which included a dazzling ceremony where we announced our [Star Council Awards winners](#). Hosted by our president, Baroness Scott of Needham Market, the event brought together councillors, clerks, MPs, peers, stakeholders and leading opinion formers to honour the individuals and organisations that have demonstrated exceptional talent, innovation, and dedication in supporting their communities. In her speech, Baroness Scott expressed her strong commitment to the sector as a voice and champion in the House of Lords and beyond, highlighting the vital role parish and town councils play in communities, stressing they would be even more critical in devolution and local government reorganisation, calling for "the government to strengthen their role to ensure that devolution delivers tangible benefits for communities nationwide". She also launched our new Westminster Forum, which will bring together a larger group of MPs and peers to promote and champion parish and town councils. Local government minister Baroness Taylor of Stevenage also spoke at the reception, stating, "Events like today provide a key opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the incredible work done day in and day out, often without the recognition you truly deserve". She added, "What really impacts on people is what happens when they go out of their front door" and that "community councils are integral to developing local services that meet local needs and running important community facilities and activities and give people a real stake in their communities future". This year's award winners stood out among an impressive pool of nominees, showcasing their commitment to excellence and significant contributions to their communities. Our esteemed panel of judges had the challenge of selecting the winners, and it was great to see them at the reception. Thank you to our awards sponsors, Clear Councils Insurance, Blachere Illumination, CCLA, Cloudy IT, Facilitating the Future, Unity Trust Bank and Utility Aid, for helping make the awards happen. The winners of the Star Council Awards are:

- Council of the Year — Great Linford Parish Council, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes
- Councillor of the Year — Cllr Richard Collins, Great Braxted Parish Council, Essex
- Young Councillor of the Year — Cllr Nathan Dunbar, Polegate Town Council, East Sussex
- County Association of the Year — Suffolk Association of Local Councils
- Clerk of the Year — James Hardy, Penzance Town Council, Cornwall
- Climate Response of the Year — Exmouth Town Council, Devon

National Assembly

Ahead of the reception, our [National Assembly](#) met at the Local Government Association's offices in Smith Square to discuss the English Devolution White Paper and help inform our response to the government. Lizzy Hawkins, deputy director of communities, governance and institutions at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, joined the meeting to brief on the white paper and local government reorganisation. She confirmed that further work was underway around neighbourhood and community governance to make devolution real for people, including the role of parish and town councils.

NALC writes to the home secretary to push Martyn's Law positions

Last week, our chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, wrote to the home secretary, Yvette Cooper MP, about the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, commonly known as Martyn's Law. While welcoming the government's commitment to enhancing security at public events and venues, we have backed the increase in the standard tier threshold from 100 to 200 people. This crucial change will help ease the burden on smaller parish and town council-run halls and village spaces. However, in our letter, we raised our remaining concerns about insurance premiums and liability for events in places of worship, calling for greater clarity on these points. We also stressed the need for tailored advice, training, and staffing support to ensure parish and town councils can comply effectively. We have offered to meet with the home secretary to discuss these issues directly to keep the momentum going. As the bill moves to the House of Lords Report Stage on 4 March 2025, we remain committed to ensuring the voices of parish and town councils are heard loud and clear.

NALC urges the government to implement robust new standards regime

We have [urged the government to implement a robust new standards regime](#) for local government. In our response to the government's consultation on strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England, we urged the government to give co-opted members of local standards committees on principal authorities, where they exist, voting rights. Additionally, we called for an amendment to the Localism Act 2011 to empower local standards committees with greater authority to sanction members whose conduct falls short of criminal misconduct. We also emphasised

the need for increased training for councillors and council staff on the standards framework. Furthermore, we reiterated our call for the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to extend its jurisdiction to the parish and town council sector and reaffirmed our support for implementing the key recommendations from the [Committee on Standards in Public Life 2019 report on Local Government Ethical Standards](#).

Two influential speakers are confirmed for Power Shift 2025!

I'm delighted we have secured two more high-profile and influential speakers for [Power Shift 2025](#), the must-attend conference on devolution, which takes place in London on 23 June 2025! Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen, chair of the District Councils' Network, will explore whether devolution deals still matter, offering critical insights from a district council perspective. And Mark Sandford, senior research analyst at the Parliament and Constitution Centre, will add his expertise to the same panel, breaking down the latest developments shaping local government. With tickets disappearing fast, this is your chance to be part of our biggest in-person conference since 2019. Don't miss out and [secure your place today!](#)

Study Tour: Braunstone Town Council

I'm pleased to report that our [study tour to Braunstone Town Council has sold out!](#) The study tours are always in high demand, and it's great to see they're popular with members. The two-day visit to the Leicestershire-based council takes place between 20 and 21 May 2024. It gives attendees unparalleled access to the council's innovative sustainability programs, from cutting-edge carbon reduction measures to eco-friendly transport solutions, vibrant green spaces, dynamic community centres, and top-tier recreational facilities.

New advice note on understanding and preparing to move to a .gov.uk domain

With more council business conducted online, parish and town councils must establish a trusted digital presence. Our [latest advice note](#), written by the Government Digital Service's Parish Council Domains Helper Service, advises parish and town councils to use a .gov.uk domain for websites and emails, ensuring professionalism, transparency, and compliance. The advice note comprehensively guides transitioning to a .gov.uk domain, covering key steps like gaining council approval, selecting a registrar, and managing services. Our members can access this advice note and much more on our website.

On the blog: Town and Country Planning Association

[In this week's blog](#), Fiona Howie, chief executive of the Town and Country Planning Association, explores how planning can be a force for good — shaping healthier, more resilient, and sustainable places for everyone. While national debates often frame planning as a barrier to growth, Fiona argues it can help tackle housing, health, and climate challenges when adequately resourced and ambitious. Real change happens at the neighbourhood level, from innovative local projects to long-term stewardship of community assets. Read the blog to discover how planning can transform your community.

NALC and London School of Economics emergency planning survey

Emergency planning is one of the key roles in which parish and town councils can make a direct difference in their place in terms of community safety. Following last week's launch, just a reminder that we have collaborated with the London School of Economics and Political Science on a joint community resilience survey about parish and town councils' role in preparing for emergencies. A huge thanks to everyone who has completed the survey so far. It is much appreciated, but we need more responses! The results will help us make the case for further support for parish and town councils and enhance their role in resilience forums. So, if you haven't already, [please fill out this short survey \(20 questions\)](#) and pass it on to colleagues. If you have further questions about this research, please email chris.borg@nalc.gov.uk or e.c.page@lse.ac.uk.

And finally...

Last week, the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) published its [New Blueprint for a Modern Electoral Landscape](#) report. Alongside technical recommendations to improve how elections are run, the AEA calls for an independent commission review of core election delivery processes, a review of all existing electoral law to produce a single Electoral Administration Act, and the collaboration between the UK and devolved governments on electoral matters to limit divergence. The AEA hopes the report will support continued constructive debate and action. We will engage with the AEA on the report, particularly on the recommendation to "abolish outdated non-binding parish polls in England", as this is more radical than our current call for them to be reformed.

Email dated 25.02.2025 from WSCC
Highways, Transport and Planning - News and Updates

Highways, Transport and Planning



In this newsletter you'll read about the West Sussex Draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Consultation, the Draft Transport Strategy for South East, scheme updates and much more!

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Consultation

As the Lead Local Flood Authority, the County Council must develop, maintain, apply, and monitor a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

The strategy guides how we work with stakeholders to manage flood risk in West Sussex.

Following the data collection survey in Autumn 2024, we have drafted a new Strategy and we'd like you to share your thoughts on our proposed measures and actions for the next five years.

The survey will take around five minutes to complete and the results will be used when preparing the final Strategy for adoption.

[Complete the survey](#)

Have your say on the draft Transport Strategy for the South East

The refreshed Transport Strategy for the South East has been developed by Transport for the South East (TfSE) in response to various changes that have happened since 2020. This updated vision for our region not only supports continued transport investment in West Sussex, but across the wider south east.

TfSE have created this draft strategy in partnership with local transport authorities, including West Sussex County Council.



The new strategy identifies five missions that will address the key challenges our region faces over the next 25 years:

- Improving **strategic connectivity** between major urban areas and with international gateways (airports, ports and the Channel Tunnel).
- Improving the **resilience** of the transport network, so that it offers reliable journeys and can respond to current and future operational risks such as weather events.
- Tackling the **inclusion and integration** challenges facing communities, such as transport-related social exclusion and providing a joined-up transport network.
- **Decarbonising** the surface transport network, which is essential if we are to meet our climate change goals.
- Achieving **sustainable growth** through planned housing and employment growth, enabled by sustainable transport.

TfSE is inviting residents of the south east, organisations and interest groups to [submit their thoughts on the refreshed strategy until 7th March 2025](#).

What is the TfSE?

TfSE is one of England's eight sub-national transport bodies that partner with local transport authorities, protected landscapes and other national delivery agencies. Speaking with one voice on regional priorities, the TfSE can make a strong case to government to improve regional transport and drive economic growth.

New Contractors

West Sussex County Council are pleased to announce that we have awarded two new highways maintenance contracts that will commence on 1 April 2025. **FM Conway** will deliver drainage cleansing and **VolkerHighways** will be responsible for the Core Maintenance contract, which includes reactive service delivery and other maintenance activities. Over the coming months, our teams will be working hard to ensure a smooth

transition to the new contracts. For more information please visit [West Sussex County Council awards highways maintenance contracts - West Sussex County Council](#) and we will bring you more information in the next edition of this newsletter.

Commute Zero Hero Awards 2025 Winner



WSCC's Active Travel team are winners of [Mobilityways Commute Zero Hero 2025](#) Active Travel Champion Award!

The Commute Zero Hero Awards honour organisations and individuals driving innovative commuting solutions that reduce carbon emissions and foster a culture of sustainability.

West Sussex County Council has been recognised for its Active Travel Strategy prioritising school journeys.

"WSCC is committed to making sustainable travel journeys a safer, more convenient and more accessible option for our residents and visitors alike. A cornerstone of this commitment is our approach to Active Travel and we were proud to be awarded Level 1 Capability status by Active Travel England last autumn. The award allows us to continue building on the progress made in recent years by bidding for funding to deliver on our ambition.

A key focus for WSCC is building the habit of travelling actively from a young age. Our Active Travel to School programme involves providing site-specific improvements, such as

new or upgraded crossing points, widened footways, segregated cycle tracks and behavioural change interventions to enable children and their parents to travel actively for the school run. We have also introduced School Streets at a small number of locations as part of a pilot programme which aims to reduce traffic and make the space outside the school gate safer. By restricting traffic on roads outside schools during drop-off and pick-up times, these areas become pedestrian and cycle priority zones. Although not all locations are suitable for a School Street we are committed to delivering more of them in future.

Active Travel is much more than just an investment in new pavements, crossings and cycle paths. It's about providing our residents with the ability to choose to walk, wheel or cycle instead of using their cars for journeys to school, work and many more destinations."

- Cllr Joy Dennis, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Scheme Updates

Refurbishment of signalised crossing in Worthing with latest technology

As part of the [Halogen Bulb Replacement Programme](#), the signals equipment at Teville Road in Worthing were obsolete and has been replaced with the latest technology, including energy- efficient LED signal heads which offer improved visibility to motorists. Updated pedestrian markings, vehicle stop lines, tactile paving, improved pedestrian and vehicle detection, along with new signal poles have also been installed, making the crossing more reactive to user requirements. The controller pillar has been relocated out of the centre island; this will reduce the impact that any maintenance activity has on the public.



Improvements to the Lancing Coastal Cycle Path for Active Travel

West Sussex County Council, in partnership with Lancing Parish Council, is working to improve the existing shared use path that borders Lancing Beach Green. The works to construct a new 3-metre-wide cycle path, which will separate cyclists and pedestrians along a section of the route, are scheduled to be undertaken between 3 March and 6 May 2025. The extent of the works run from the band stand 330 metres west to Lancing Beach Green Playground. The new cycle path will improve safety, continuity and usability by separating cyclists and pedestrians outside the busy Perch café area. Access will be maintained at all times during construction with slight delays foreseen between the 27 – 28 March 2025 when the Beach Green Access Road will be resurfaced. A banksman will be stationed on the access road and will be able to provide access to drivers.

The construction phase plan can be found along with the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at [Lancing Beach Green Active Travel Improvements | Your Voice West Sussex](#) which outlines how the work will be done in phases to minimise the impact and disruption to nearby businesses.

Road safety improvements in Bognor Regis

WSCC will soon begin improvements to the shared cycleway around Orchard Way Roundabout and its connection points. The project is scheduled to take place between 24 February to 28 March 2025. This scheme originates from concerns raised following cycle collisions. Works include resurfacing, vegetation clearance, tree crown lifting and upgrading the traffic island tactile amendments and signage. These improvements will benefit pedestrians and cyclists using the roundabout.

There will be a **One-Way Road Closure from 24 Feb 2025 for 5 days** coming from the roundabout into Orchard Way – extending to Tilberg Close. Exiting from Orchard Way onto the roundabout will be unaffected. A diversion route will be in place on Orchard Way, Chichester Road and the A29. Further details can be found on [one.network](#).

Active Travel improvements on Upper Shoreham Road, Shoreham

On 3 March, 2025, WSCC will begin construction of the Upper Shoreham Active Travel Scheme. These works are to take place across two phases, with the first phase scheduled to be complete within 7 weeks.

The purpose of this scheme is to deliver improvements to cycling and pedestrian connectivity on Upper Shoreham Road, Buckingham Road and Middle Road, Shoreham-by-Sea. The works take place after extensive public consultation, carried out in June 2024.

The first phase of the scheme will include installation of a parallel crossing on Upper Shoreham Road near the junctions with The Drive and Buckingham Road. It also includes

a segregated cycle path on the northbound spur at the junction of Buckingham Road and Upper Shoreham Road, and cycle "by-passes" in the buildouts on Middle Road.

Phase 2 will focus on improving pedestrian crossings and creating a shared cycle/pedestrian footway on the approach to Buckingham Primary School. This phase is scheduled to be carried out in the school summer holidays of 2025.

West Sussex County Council will work to minimise disruption during construction. Follow [Upper Shoreham Active Travel Improvements](#) webpage for updates on the scheme.

Drainage Works in Hassocks

WSCC will be undertaking phase 2 of a two-phase drainage scheme on Clayton Hill, between New Road and Mill Lane, Hassocks. The works will upgrade and repair existing drainage assets and improve drainage capacity with the introduction of additional assets. The work will be done 24 hours a day, from March 3 to March 28, 2025, to minimize traffic disruption and enable faster completion. All work will be under 24/7 multi-phase traffic signals for the whole duration of the works, with a temporary lower speed limit to ensure a safe environment for the work force and the public using the network. Local access to properties, businesses and emergency services will be maintained at all times during the works.

Please note that these works are weather dependant and may be cancelled at short notice, but we will endeavour to inform you should there be significant changes to the programme.



Extent of drainage works on Clayton Hill, between New Road and Mill Lane, Hassocks

Update on Road Safety Programme

Each year, the Road Safety Group analyse the collision data provided by Sussex Police to identify areas where collisions are occurring in clusters across West Sussex. We are specifically looking for sites with an elevated risk of serious injury.

Identified sites are carefully studied to understand where there is a clear pattern of behaviour that could be addressed. We also study other data sources to understand driver speeds and braking patterns.

The selected sites are prioritised and programmed for design and delivery. Last year, ten safety schemes were implemented, and a further three schemes are due to be built by the end of March 2025, including:

- **A23/A2011 Tushmore Roundabout, Crawley** - installation of new road signage and reconfiguration/refreshment of carriageway line markings.
- **B2036 London Road/Victoria Way, Burgess Hill** – the second phase of a scheme to improve turning movements at the mini-roundabout, following resurfacing work carried out last year.

Four further safety schemes are currently in development and planned for construction within the next 12 months. These include:

- A259 Cathedral Way, Chichester
- A24/A283 Washington Roundabout
- A281/B2117 Poynings Crossways
- Hanlye Lane, Cuckfield

We will soon be starting our next round of cluster site and route analysis. Please watch this space for further updates on upcoming safety schemes in your area.

Follow our Road Safety Facebook page for further updates on upcoming road safety schemes

Bikeability Team Update

Bikeability cycle training in schools resumed following the Christmas break. The winter months are challenging and yet our instructors turn up ready to instruct with smiles on their faces in the wind, rain, and cold. Instructors are required to dynamically risk assess all situations, including the weather conditions, to ensure that it is OK to proceed with training. In most conditions we can proceed and use the conditions to help inform riders of how weather can affect the way we ride. On the rare occasions sessions are cancelled or cut short, our instructors work with schools and our admin team to work out how we can ensure the riders do not miss out.

Five new trainee instructors passed their final post-course assessment in January and are now fully qualified. They have been supported through their shadowing / practising period by our instructing team, to whom we are really grateful for welcoming, observing & supporting the new instructors.

Also this month, the Bikeability Instructing Team attended their in-person safeguarding training. This training is tailored to the WSCC Bikeability instructor role and is required because of their work with children.

Business As Usual with Cyclical and Jetting Operations

As the winter period is well under way with rain and icy conditions, the service to maintain WSCC drainage under the cyclical gully cleansing programme and priority

focussed ad-hoc jetting works is still in full swing and has had minimal disruption from the recent weather events.

During January and February this year we will have routinely cleansed over 12,000 gully assets across the county. In addition, we will have completed over 130 'ad hoc' jetting jobs, tackling identified problem areas and completed around 40 detailed CCTV investigations.

Please continue to raise any drainage/flooding issues you see on the network that are still visible 2hrs after rainfall to help keep the network open.

[Raise a report here](#)

Network Management Plan Now Published

During October 2024, we consulted with key stakeholders on the development of West Sussex County Council's Highway Network Management Plan (HNMP).

Feedback from the consultation was considered in updating the draft Plan and was reported to the Council's Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee (CHESC) on 25 November 2024.

The Plan has now been agreed and published on the Council's website.

The HNMP has been developed to set out the way in which the Council fulfils its duty in the Traffic Management Act (2004) to secure 'expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network'. Levels of demand on the network have been exceptional in the last few years – and will remain high and complex in response to housing and economic development and infrastructure maintenance and improvement. The Plan covers the approach taken to all aspects of highway network management in West Sussex, including the way the Highway Authority manages works and events on our network to minimise disruption.

The Plan signals the Council's commitment to develop proactive management of the highway network, including:

- Stronger partnership working and co-ordinated forward planning of all works
- Clear approaches to the co-ordination of conflicting demands for use of the network
- Improved communication of planned works

- New ways of managing the impacts on local communities
- Protecting the highway asset through greater compliance activity
- Data analysis/forecasting, and developing the use of technology for management and monitoring.

You can find the published Plan here

Electric Vehicle (Phase 3) Public Consultations Update

The results of recent public consultations held for new proposed chargepoint sites across the county have been published and are available here: [2024/2025 Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Installation Consultation | Your Voice West Sussex](#)

Follow us on BlueSky!

Updates on emergency reports are posted every day. Just search [@wshighways.bsky.social](#) if you aren't already following.

Follow us on X!

Updates on emergency reports are posted every day and project updates are posted frequently on the West Sussex Highways X account (formerly Twitter). Just search [@WSHighways](#) if you aren't already following.

Celebrating 100 years of West Sussex Library Service

[Click here to find out more](#)



Email dated 25.02.2025 from WSCC

Helping West Sussex communities unlock the potential of surplus buildings



news release

Helping West Sussex communities unlock the potential of surplus buildings

West Sussex County Council is working with community and voluntary groups to help

transform a small number of otherwise redundant public buildings into vibrant and thriving hubs for local residents to enjoy.

In the last couple of years, three surplus buildings have been handed over as part of a 'community asset transfer', and at least two more transfers are earmarked for completion this year. The buildings chosen typically have physical or legal constraints which lend themselves to community uses and have a history of community involvement.

Transforming these redundant buildings fits in with Our Council Plan in helping people and communities fulfil their potential.

A community asset transfer means suitable publicly owned land and/or buildings might be considered for community ownership or management under a lease, at less than the full market value, for the benefit of residents.

The community or voluntary group that takes over the running of the building becomes responsible for managing and maintaining the building including all associated costs.

Community asset transfers made by the county council since the end of 2023:

- **39 Youth Club, Bognor Regis** The club aims to create a safe space for young people and a thriving hub for activity to support their needs. These include help with mental health issues, loneliness and how to eat healthily. The 39 Youth Club previously occupied part of the building for many years and the transfer provided an opportunity for the organisation to expand by taking on the whole asset. Since opening, the activities have expanded and over 100 young people visit the club three times a week. Find out more: [39 Youth Club](#)
- **The Phoenix Centre, Bognor Regis.** The mission was to make the centre a great community asset by building on the strengths and voices of residents. To achieve this, the centre has been leased to United Learning Trust who are working with local voluntary and community organisations via consultation with local youth and community members, complementing other county council and partner services that operate in the area. Find out more: phoenixcentre.uk
- **The Park Centre, Burgess Hill** The Park Centre has a history of providing a community facility dating back over 150 years. The property was held by the county council under trust for the St Johns Institute Charity. In response to the offer, local community organisations and the Town Council formed a new Park Centre Burgess Hill Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to take over the property. The transfer was approved by the Charity Commission and the building is now set to become a vibrant hub providing local support for young people in Burgess Hill, working alongside other voluntary organisations and a local youth club. Find out more: [Park Centre – Bringing people together, building a stronger tomorrow.](#)

Cllr Jeremy Hunt, West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Finance and Property, said: "Community asset transfers empower our communities to ensure suitable redundant public buildings are transformed into vibrant and useful assets for residents and fits with Our Council Plan priority of helping people and communities fulfil their potential.

"Whilst the number of suitable properties is by their nature small, we are pleased that the community asset transfers that we have completed so far are going from strength to strength, and I am hopeful the two that are scheduled to complete this year will be just as valuable to local residents."

Two more community asset transfers are currently in progress, these are Guernsey Farmhouse and Garden in Middleton-on-Sea and West Grinstead Railway Carriage.

Email dated 24.02.2025 from WSCC

County council SEND Improvement Plan "achieving better outcomes for more children and young people"



news release

County council SEND Improvement Plan "achieving better outcomes for more children and young people"

West Sussex County Council has reaffirmed its commitment to improving Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services across the county, despite the challenges posed by increasing demand and budget pressures.

The council's [SEND Improvement Plan](#) is making progress and achieving better outcomes for more children and young people, and their families, across the county.

The plan was launched last year by the council in partnership with NHS Sussex and sets out a framework for improving the quality of services for children with SEND. Residents now have the chance to give their views on the long-term future of SEND support in West Sussex via a [consultation on the council's upcoming SEND and Inclusion Strategy](#).

While there is still more to be done, the plan has already helped improve the quality and efficiency of SEND services, ensuring children and young people receive the support they need to thrive.

Improvements made over the last year in the Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) process are a key area of progress. [Recently published figures](#) show that the number of assessments being carried out within 20 weeks is increasing month-on-month, and the average number of weeks taken to complete an assessment is also reducing steadily.

By the end of 2024 there were 1,565 more children in West Sussex with a finalised EHCP compared to the end of 2023.

Since 2019, the number of EHCP assessments completed in West Sussex has increased by over 60%, reflecting the growing demand for support and pressure on council services.

The council is working to strengthen SEND support in mainstream schools while also ensuring that specialist provision remains available for children who need it. In some cases, special schools will work with mainstream schools to share their expertise, helping to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Cllr Jackie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, Learning and Skills said: "I know that many families in the county are understandably feeling frustrated when it comes to SEND support. However, although there is still a long way to go, real progress *is* being made.

"One of our main goals has been to improve the EHCP assessment process so families can get the right support when they need it, and we are seeing things getting better here.

"We're also working hard to improve the support available in mainstream schools and foster collaboration with special schools. Our priority is not to cut costs, but to always do what's best for each child."

Dr James Ramsay, NHS Sussex Chief Medical Officer, said: "In response to feedback from families, and as part of our commitments in the joint SEND Improvement Plan, we're working hard to improve communications and information sharing for families while they wait for services, as well as access to support. This includes steps to develop a needs-based approach

for neurodevelopmental conditions; better assessment and post assessment processes; working with schools to build inclusive educational environments; and training more practitioners in both general practice and mental health.

“We recognise there is still a long way to go, especially in relation to waiting times for some health services, after increased demand over recent years. This is a priority area of work for us and something which our teams continue to work relentlessly on to improve.”

To build on the progress made through the SEND Improvement Plan, the council is developing a new five-year SEND & Inclusion Strategy, set to launch in September 2025. This will outline the long-term vision for SEND services in West Sussex.

To make sure this strategy reflects the needs of the community, the council are asking residents to share their views.

Families, professionals, and young people all have the chance to help shape the future of SEND services in the county by taking part in a [consultation on the council's website](#).

Rowan Westwood, CEO of the West Sussex Parent Carer Forum said: “As the DfE strategic representative for parent carers in West Sussex, we welcome the progress made so far through the SEND Improvement Plan and remain committed to working 'Together for Change' with our partners. Through this work, we aim to ensure the Plan and new Strategy will have a significant and positive impact on the lives of our SEND families.

“We strongly encourage all parent carers to take part in this important consultation, so that their lived experience helps to bring meaningful change to the future of local SEND services.”

Cllr Russell said: “We remain focused on making real, positive changes that benefit children, young people, and families across West Sussex. By working together, we can create a system that delivers the high-quality support our SEND community needs and deserves, giving everybody the opportunity to achieve their full potential.”



**Sussex
Police & Crime
Commissioner**

KATY BOURNE OBE



Last week, it was disappointing to hear the Government announcement that they will not be continuing the Safer Streets money that has been provided to PCCs over the last 4 years.

The funding was a powerful asset in helping to tackle neighbourhood crime, anti-social behaviour and violence against women and girls.

In Sussex, my office secured a total of more than £4.5 million from Safer Streets over the years which allowed us to: create specialist new victim support roles; employ night-time safety marshals; modernise CCTV; purchase advanced technology such as a night-time drone; deliver targeted projects focusing on cleaning up vandalised spaces and tackling anti-social behaviour and host safety events for young people.

The above list is by no means exhaustive and the blend of educational, engagement and robust proactive work was paramount in helping everyone across Sussex to feel safer.

It will be interesting to see if the Government will offer alternative funding in response to these recent reductions, as financial assistance like this plays a significant role in supporting victims and survivors, driving down crime and ultimately – making our towns, villages and streets safer.



Earlier this week I visited Esteem, an organisation based in Shoreham which receives money through my Safer in Sussex Community Fund.

Esteem hosts a range of activities for young people aged 14-26 including games, sports and creative sessions and they also offer 1-2-1 counselling and drop-in sessions.

The charity works closely with partners and receives referrals from Child & Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and council-led services. The staff also attend meetings with young people's schools, social workers and parents.

Charitable organisations like Esteem are extremely important in ensuring young people have a safe space where they can thrive. The charity's aim is to make lasting change in how young people view themselves, their community and wider society which in turn can reduce the risks of anti-social behaviour.

It was brilliant to meet the staff and speak to young people who had questions about policing, mental wellbeing and community safety.

We spoke about their experiences and discussed views on reporting crime, neurodiversity and they asked about aspects of training the police receive.

You can read more about the fantastic work of Esteem [on their website](#).

Katy Bourne OBE
Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner

Join the team - ICVs

My office runs an Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) scheme which has been awarded platinum status. ICVs are members of the public who volunteer to visit police stations unannounced to check on the treatment & welfare of people held in police custody.

ICV recommendations can require the police to make improvements for the welfare of detainees. We are now recruiting new volunteers in Eastbourne and Hastings. Read more and apply on my website office [on my website](#).



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