

Council June 2025

Item 4.2 Items Completed and Outstanding

Actions outstanding from previous minutes (prior to May meeting)

Minute no.	Who	Item	Deadline by which to complete	Update
Pg.3100	Finance Committee	Consider Members Allowances at updated levels, travel and subsistence rates and costs for child/dependants' care in 2026/27 budget setting	Autumn	
<u>Actions from these Minutes</u>				

Minute no.	Who	Item	Deadline by which to complete	Update
Pg 3180	Clerks & Councillors	On 8 th September Planning to be at 6pm, Council 6.30pm and Unsung Helpers event at 7.30pm	September	Councillor to note timings and to attend Unsung Helpers event please
Pg 3180	Assistant Clerk	Send invitations for Unsung Helpers event 8 th September	August	
Pg 3180	Clerk	Seek SVR agreement to use the platform on 8 th September	July	Email sent to SVR
Pg 3180	Cllr Gordon-James	Become link councillor with WPCIC rather than a Director after a replacement Director is identified	TBC	
002928	Clerk	Adopt the Memorandum of Understanding for WPC and WPCIC and arrange signatures	June	Done
002929	Clerk	Dispose of Blackham bus shelter to BETSI on the agreed terms	June	Emma Bowers emailed and asked to share with BETSI
002930	Clerk/ Chair	Approve the Annual Return Governance Statement	May	Submitted
002931	Clerk/ Chair	Approve the Accounting Statements (end of year accounts to 31 st March 2025)	May	Submitted

Pg 3182	Clerk	Publicise the Notice of Electors' Rights	May	Publicised
002932	Clerk	Transfer of £34,235 from HSBC Current Account to the Unity Trust Account	May	Done
002933-002938	Clerk	Adopt the Committees' Terms of Reference	June	Done
Pg 3185	Clerk	Defer Withyham/Blackham Ward Chair until Cllrs Bowers and Skinner return to meetings	July	
Pg 3186	Clerk	Clarify Cllr Fane's position	June	In progress
002939-002953	Clerk	Adopt the agreed Policies	June	Done
Pg 3187	Clerk	Add the Chair's gavel to the Asset Register	May	Done
002954	Clerk	Accept insurance quote from The Clear Group	May	Done
Pg 3188	Clerk	Recirculate updated calendar of meeting dates	June	Done
Pg 3188	Clerk	Circulate training opportunities to Councillors	May	Done – emailed 21 st May
Pg 3188	Clerk	Invite residents to meet regarding the playground	June	Meeting not arranged due to differing expectations re attendance
Pg 3189	Clerk	Remind Groombridge Cricket Club that the vehicle gate should be kept closed on match days	June	Email sent, response received from GCC that they "will do [their] best but its not very easy to manage, cars come and go"

Council June 2025

Item 7b Ward Reports – Withyham/Blackham

A Blackham resident had contacted the Clerk to raise some issues in Blackham.
The Clerk would ask 2 councillors to arrange to meet with the resident to look at the issues (1-4) and then report back to the Clerk on the items that are felt to be with WPC's remit to take forwards.
The Clerk also seeks agreement for item 5.

1. Blackham Substation: In 2019 a company called Freedom undertook works in the area behind 'Tommy Corner'. Residents notified the Clerk of several issues that had been caused by heavy plant machinery, welfare facilities etc to Teasley Mead recreation ground and the land where residents were creating 'Tommy Corner'.

The Clerk followed this up with Freedom and, after delays due to COVID, they did return to top soil and seed the area affected on Teasley Mead recreation ground, where the Tommy and bench were intended to go they top soiled and seeded the area and the site manager personally provided/sited some large stones to prevent people driving up onto the grass. Temporary heras fencing was removed and horse proof fencing put in.

Residents had also notified the Clerk that the contractors had left gaps in the hedge, which the Clerk notified Freedom of but were not followed up. In 2021 the resident contacted the Clerk again with photos showing the gaps in the hedgerow surrounding the new substation, which the Clerk notified Freedom of but were not followed up. The resident had raised the gap in the hedge again and asked the Clerk if there is anything the Clerk can do. The land is not WPC land and after this amount of time the channels that WPC has with Freedom are probably exhausted.

The Clerk would ask the 2 councillors to visit the site with the resident to see the extent of the issue, check if there is any reason why WPC would have a remit, and notify the Clerk if there are any actions that WPC needs to undertake.

2. Water pooling near Tommy Corner: the resident thinks that this has got worse since recent nearby works on a property. When it rains there is a lot of surface water and in the winter this becomes ice.

The Clerk would ask the 2 councillors to visit the site with the resident, if it is in evidence at the time take photos and provide to the Clerks/Highways Coordinator to report to ES Highways. Also to recommend that the resident reports it to ES Highways themselves (and if it isn't in evidence at the time ask the resident to get photos and make a report, and provide the Clerks with the photos/details so that WPC can also make a report).

3. New telegraph poles have been installed on Willetts Lane down to the farm track. This required some of the road to be dug up and there is a dip where the road has sunk.

The Clerk would ask the 2 councillors to visit the site with the resident, take photos and provide to the Clerks/Highways Coordinator to report to ES

Highways. Also to recommend that the resident reports it to ES Highways themselves.

4. Dog poo bin on Teasley Mead recreation ground: the resident reported that the dog poo bin is leaning and the bottom is held with tape. They have asked if it needs replacement and, if so, they would prefer a green bin.

The Clerk would ask the 2 councillors to visit the site with the resident, take photos/check the condition of the bin and let the Clerk know so that costings can be obtained for purchase and installation.

By way of background, the residents have previously asked the bin to be moved away from the view of the houses to the other side of the hedge, however that is ES Highways land and WPC would have to apply for a licence at cost.

5. Permissions to use Teasley Mead recreation ground: BETSI has started using the ground more frequently for Community events and have asked if, rather than seeking permissions for each individual event, they could have blanket permission.

The Clerk recommends that permission is granted for a period of a year with the usual requirements on BETSI (insurances, risk assessments, making good etc) and a request the BETSI notified the Clerk of any events at least 7 days before. Council is asked to confirm agreement

Teasley Mead Recreation Ground



**Withyham Parish Council
Quote/Report for consideration**

Report By	For Committee	Date	Agenda Item
D Siddle	Council	9.6.24	9

Confidential	Not Confidential	Exempt	Not Exempt
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Consider Response to Urban Grass Cutting Consultation

Background

At its November 2024 meeting Council considered whether or not to supplement the 2 'urban' grass cuts provided by ESH per year with an additional 4 in 2025/26.

An extract from the November 2024 paper to Council is attached as Appendix 2, it contains information provided by CEAG and the Highways Coordinator on the pros and cons of cutting/not cutting. The roads which are classified for Urban cuts are shown in Appendix 3.

November 2024 agreed to fund the additional urban cuts at a cost of £1,607.86 for the year but to undertake a public consultation on the approach for 2026/27.

The February 2025 Council meeting agreed the Consultation timeline/methodology:

- March church and village magazines to introduce survey to residents
- Our Newsletter advertised the survey
- APA surveys available
- Social media
- Closing date 31 May (after APA)

Appendix 1 shows the results of the consultation.

Recommendations

Council to consider the results of the Consultation and decide whether WPC should continue to pay ESH to provide additional urban verge cuts after the current financial year.

Reasons for recommendations

Council requested that a consultation is held before making a decision on future urban grass cutting regime.

Staffing Implications

- Messaging to residents about the outcome of the consultation (church and village magazines, social media)
- Confirming to ESH WPC's requirements for 2026/27 when they email in the autumn.

Councillor Involvement

Decision making

Budgetary Implications

The decision will inform budgeting for 2026/27

How does this meet our Parish Plan?

"Review the effectiveness of current verge cutting in the Parish and its impact on local ecology and safety"

Sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity impacts

(refer to Biodiversity Policy)

In the November paper on Urban Grass cuts, CEAG encouraged Council to not supplement the additional cuts because of environmental impacts. Appendix 2 contains the information provided by CEAG

How does the proposed action reduce crime and disorder?

n/a

How does the proposed action seek to eliminate discrimination and advance equalities

We publicised the survey in as many formats as possible (our newsletter goes to every household) and made it available both electronically and in paper form.

Health & Safety Implications

In the November paper on Urban Grass cuts, the Highways Coordinator provided comments on sight lines and road safety. Appendix 2 contains the information provided by the Highways Coordinator

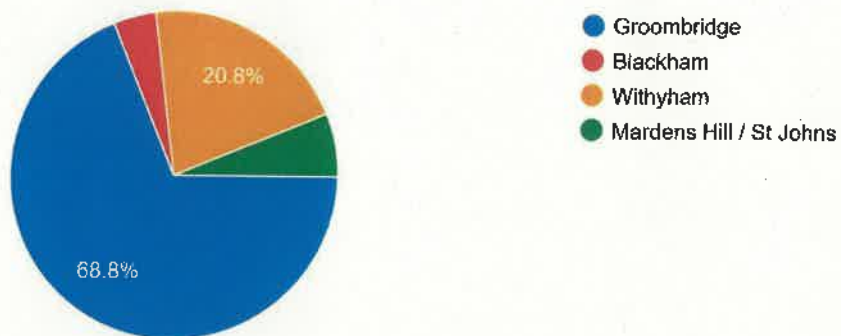
Persons consulted

- March church and village magazines to introduce survey to residents
- Our Newsletter (goes to every household) advertised the survey (April)
- May APA surveys available
- Social media (repeated)

Appendix 1 – Results of consultation

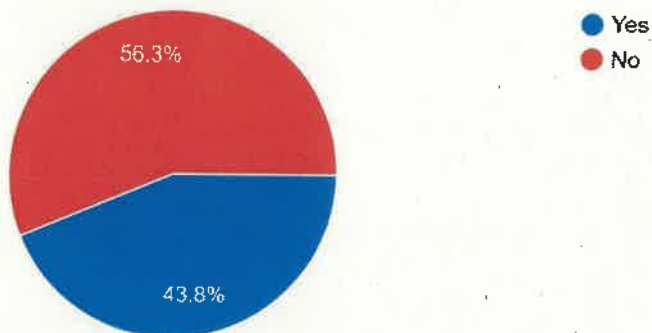
What area of the Parish are you from?

48 responses



Do you think the Parish Council should fund an extra 4 urban grass cuts for 2026

48 responses



Appendix 2- Extract from November 2024 paper to Council

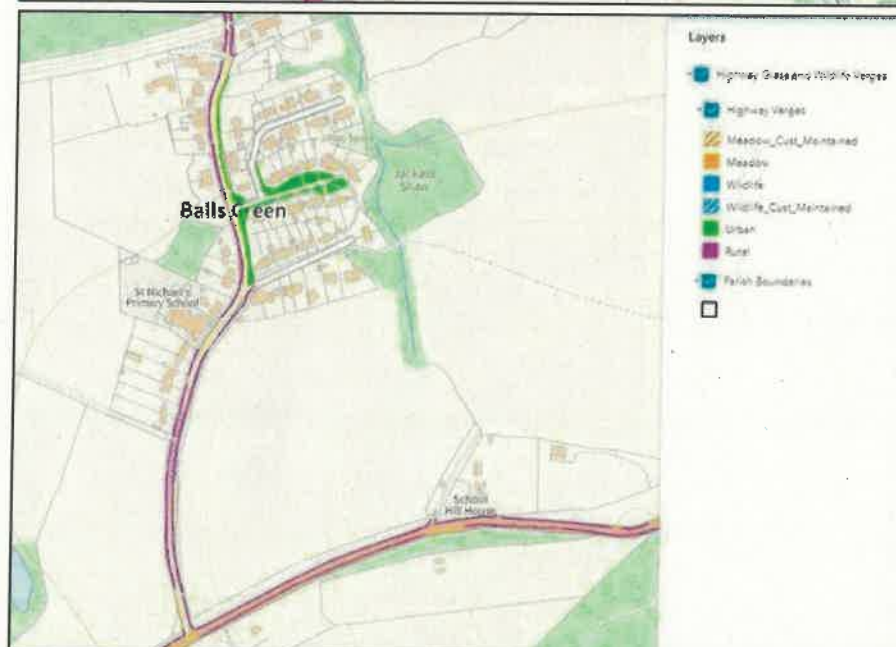
Reasons for Recommendation from CEAG to NOT undertake the additional cuts

- Meeting key objectives and action points in the Parish Plan.
- Meeting objectives in the WPC Biodiversity Policy.
- Consistency in WPC approach between rural and urban areas- Reduced rural verge cuts already agreed.
- Cost saving to the Council of £1,607.86
- To ensure WPC is addressing the steep decline in the UK's species as required by the 2021 Environment Act/Government guidance.
- Be part of the national shift in approach to managing verges for wildlife and biodiversity.
- In line with recommendations from national charities mitigating climate change and building biodiversity.
- Providing essential connective corridors for wildlife across the UK.
- Benefits include carbon storage and air quality.

Reasons for Recommendation from Highways Coordinator to undertake the additional cuts

- Footpath Encroachment: Grass narrows footpaths, creating hazards with minimal ESCC maintenance.
- Visibility Hazards: Overgrown verges reduce visibility for pedestrians, drivers, and cyclists, with inconsistent ESH response.
- Lack of Clear Standards: ESH vegetation management lacks clear safety criteria, making hazard decisions subjective.
- Inconsistent Resident Effort: Resident-maintained verges lead to visual inconsistency with unmanaged areas, causing potential resident discontent and a disordered appearance.
- Weed Spread: Overgrown areas may spread weeds to nearby properties.
- Post-Cutting Hazards: Greater level of cuttings poses fire risks, covers paths, creating slip/trip hazards, blocks drains, increasing flood risks

Appendix 3 - The Areas that receive Urban Cuts (In Green) in Our Parish



10.

Withyham Parish Council
Quote/Report for consideration

Report By	For Committee	Date	Agenda Item
D Siddle	Council	9 June 2025	10

Confidential	Not Confidential	Exempt	Not Exempt
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**RECEIVE RESULTS OF CONSULTATION ON PURCHASE OF GROOMBRIDGE
OLD STATION**

Background

The survey was launched on 14 April with a closing date of 31 May 2025.

It was advertised...

- through our newsletter which went to every household in the parish
- through the Groombridge and Withyham/Blackham magazines
- hard copies were available at Groombridge Post Office, the Parish Office and at the APA
- Councillors notified their networks (local clubs and societies).
- On the Parish Council Facebook page and shared to local community pages
- On our website

It asked residents:

- a) where in the parish they lived
- b) if they agree that securing the parish office as a permanent base is important to the community
- c) did they support WPC applying for a Public Works Loan to secure the office if needed.

There were 330 responses. The attached summary shows the results:

- b) 96.7% of respondents said yes
- c) 97.6% of respondents said yes

Recommendations

Council is asked to receive the results and make any observations.

Reasons for recommendations

The minutes will record that Council received the results of the consultation and notes any observations.

These results will influence discussions under item 16 on the agenda and any decisions about applying for a Public Works Loan.

Staffing Implications

n/a

Councillor Involvement
n/a
Budgetary Implications
n/a
How does this meet our Parish Plan?
Long term: Ensure that the Council occupies a fit for purpose building that provides space for its own staff and activities as well as providing a community hub
Sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity impacts (refer to Biodiversity Policy)
n/a
How does the proposed action reduce crime and disorder?
n/a
How does the proposed action seek to eliminate discrimination and advance equalities
n/a
Health & Safety Implications
n/a
Persons consulted
All residents received our newsletter which went to every household.

Consultation on Securing the Parish Office

Consultation run by Withyham Parish Council from 14.4.25 to 31.5.25

Shared via Website, social media, Newsletter to every household in the Parish, Annual Parish Assembly.

Responses accepted by post, phone, email and online.

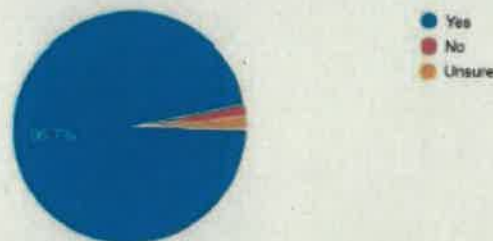
In which area of the Parish do you live?

330 responses



Do you agree that securing the Parish Office as a permanent base is important for the community? The Parish Office is a vital community...use and the Council a base to serve to community.

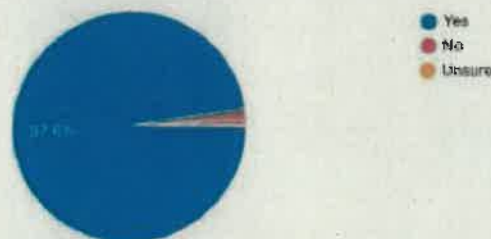
330 responses



96.7% Agreed that securing the Parish Office as a permanent base was important

Do you support the Parish Council applying for a public works loan to secure the office if it is needed? The Parish Council aims to ensure that L...roach. This would NOT increase your Council Tax.

331 responses



97.6% Supported Withyham Parish Council applying for a Public Works Loan

COUNCIL JUNE 2025

Item 11 Update Park Corner Drover's Pond

The wonderful team at Wild Groombridge have put together the attached report of their findings at the Park Corner Drover's Pond Habitat Project from their Spring 2025 surveys, it's great reading and gives a real flavour of what's been happening up at the Drover's Pond, as well as the next steps in helping the wildlife thrive up there.

They have, as always, been checking in for the most up to date advice with the experts at Sussex Wildlife Trust and the High Lund – and we'd like to thank you so much for all the time, care and the level of detail you bring to this project, it is incredible!

Unfortunately, we've also had repeated instances of green waste being dumped at the pond, mostly grass cuttings* – but most recently a mix of oak, hazel, yew and laurel hedge cuttings, and this is particularly bad news with the laurel which is a highly invasive species.

We have put together the attached leaflet sharing about the survey and the green waste problem, which will be going out to residents local to the Drover's Pond next week.

We've also had one instance of a trees being cut down / back - and during nesting season, which I have flagged to Eridge Estate (who own the land).

Any ideas on next steps to protect the pond and keep it as clear and safe for wildlife as possible are much appreciated, feel free to ping me an email or give me a call if you have ideas, or any information about the dumping at the Drover's Pond.

As always, more information about the Park Corner Drover's Pond Habitat Project can be found on our website: <https://withyhamparishcouncil.gov.uk/community-information/volunteers/park-corner-drovers-pond-habitat-project/> and more information about the *many* projects Wild Groombridge are running within the parish can be found on their website: <https://wildgroombridge.org/> - and do download iNaturalist to share your nature findings!

Stephanie Chapman

Community Engagement Coordinator

* grass cuttings have an adverse effect on the water and for wildlife, as they'll raise the nutrient levels in the pond and surrounding area, which will promote certain plants over others, so the balance of the ecosystem is upset. This could mean some plants are lost, and with them the animals (large and small) that depend on them for habitat or food.



Dear Residents,



WITHYHAM PARISH COUNCIL ARE FACILITATING A PROJECT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WILD GROOMBRIDGE, TAKING CARE OF PARK CORNER DROVER'S POND FOR THE LOCAL WILDLIFE.

**** THE NEW 2025 DROVER'S POND REPORT IS NOW LIVE! ****

YOU CAN FIND IT ON OUR WEBSITE AT:

WWW.WITHYHAMPARISHCOUNCIL.ORG.UK

HELP KEEP THE POND HEALTHY

SOMEONE HAS BEEN DUMPING GREEN WASTE AT THE SITE, INCLUDING LAUREL



GREEN WASTE IS HIGHLY IMPACTFUL AT THE POND. FOR EXAMPLE LAUREL - IS VERY SLOW TO DECOMPOSE. HAS LOW NITROGEN CONTENT, IS ACIDIC. THE LEAVES CONTAIN LAURIC ACID WHICH REPELS INSECTS. AND IT CONTAINS CYANIDE THAT KILLS BUGS.

**** PLEASE SHARE ANY REPORTS OF DUMPING ****



STEPHANIE@WITHYHAMPARISHCOUNCIL.ORG.UK



01892 864 557

THE LAND IS OWNED BY ERIDGE ESTATE
IT IS LICENCED TO WITHYHAM PARISH COUNCIL
IT IS MAINTAINED FOR NATURE BY WILD GROOMBRIDGE



**LOVE YOUR LOCAL WILDLIFE
DROVER'S POND!**





Wild Groombridge



Join us to explore the wildlife in Groombridge!

Help us build a picture of the wild plants, birds, trees, insects, mammals, fish and fungi around us, find the richest habitats, and see how well our biodiversity is thriving.

Park Corner (Drovers) Pond – Birdlife, Plant and Invertebrate Surveys

Surveyors: Sarah, Jane, Ian and Philip, (wildgroombridge.org). Area of survey: see project area map
Dates of surveys: 4/5th March morning, 8th March early and 26th March.

Weather: ideal early spring conditions mainly fine and dry 10/12 degrees with very little wind.

Why monitor birdlife? "Birds are excellent indicators of the health and sustainability of natural environments. They are also practical indicators, in that they are typically easy to find, count and identify, and are sensitive to changes in land use and climate".

Pan European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme.



Water Analysis: Salifert test kit.

Nitrates: 0 - 2 ppm
 Phosphates: 0 ppm
 PH 8.15 (slightly alkaline)
 (Ave of 8.5, 8.14, 8.06, 7.9)
Water Temp: 10C



Parameter	Safe / Ideal Level	Concern Threshold
Dissolved Oxygen (DO)	6–10 mg/L	Below 3 mg/L is harmful
pH	6.5 – 8.5	Below 6 or above 9 is problematic
Phosphate (PO_4^{3-})	<0.1 ppm	Above 0.2 ppm may cause algal blooms
Nitrate (NO_3^-)	<5 ppm	Above 10 ppm may indicate pollution
Nitrite (NO_2^-)	<0.2 ppm	Above 0.5 ppm is toxic
Ammonia ($\text{NH}_3/\text{NH}_4^+$)	<0.1 ppm	Above 0.2 ppm is dangerous

Results: Ideal non polluted conditions

Survey results - (H: Heard only, F Flying over) Recorded roughly in the order observed. An estimate of the numbers observed simultaneously in brackets. Unusual observations in **bold**. We use the Merlin bird recognition app. indicatively as it will often highlight a bird to look out or listen for. Overall **32 bird species** were observed in 4 hours over 3 days

Species list 4 March : Magpie, Wood Pigeon (2), **Redwing (2)**, Stock Dove (H), Robin, Blackbird, **Sparrow Hawk**, Great Tit, Wren, Carrion Crow (5+), Blue Tit (2), Goldcrest (H) , Green Woodpecker (H), Greenfinch (H), Long Tailed Tit (2), Coal Tit, Rook (F 2), **Marsh Tit (H)**, Jackdaw (F 15+), Raven (F), Chaffinch (H) Great Spotted Woodpecker (H), Nuthatch (H), Buzzard (F 2) , **Grey Wagtail (H)**, Song Thrush (H), **5 March**: Add Pheasant (H), House Sparrow, **Jay (3)**
8th March: Add Dunnock, Greylag Geese (F), **Skylark (H)**

Highlights of the surveys:

Almost immediately on arriving I was surprised to hear Redwings chattering (also picked up by Merlin – see screenshots at the end). Later a pair flew in together stopping off on a large holly bush – very few berries left so they didn't stay long and I couldn't get a photo. However a Nuthatch in the adjacent Oak tree seemed to object to their presence alarming continuously – I did manage the shot below. The redwings should be returning very soon to their summer breeding grounds in Scandinavia, Iceland and Russia. We never hear them sing in the UK just contact calls often in flight.



On the second day three very noisy Jays appeared. There were often large groups of other corvids circling overhead. Jackdaws, Carrion Crows then occasional Rooks. I assumed they were reacting to buzzards but was surprised when a rarer raptor made an appearance.

The most surprising visitor was this marauding Sparrow Hawk which stopped off briefly, but just long enough to snap a photo before it darted through the trees across the pond.



This is a mature male . Juveniles have yellow eyes which become orange or deep red as they mature. Females are much larger with pale underparts and camouflaged plumage with dark brown barring . Sparrowhawks are agile, stealthy hunters that rely on speed, surprise, and manoeuvrability, often using hedges and trees as cover to get close to their prey before launching a short, rapid chase. Their broad, rounded wings and long tail help them weave through dense vegetation with precision. They ambush prey from concealed perches or low, fast flights, bursting out at high speed. Males typically hunt smaller birds, sparrows, tits or finches while females can take larger species like thrushes, pigeons, or even magpies.



A pair of buzzards appeared several times circling above.



Robins were singing much of the time and often shadowing us.



This Magpie was looking for insects turning over the moss on the derelict barn next to the pond.



Here is a Bluetit excavating a nest in a rotten stump dropping wood shavings over the side.



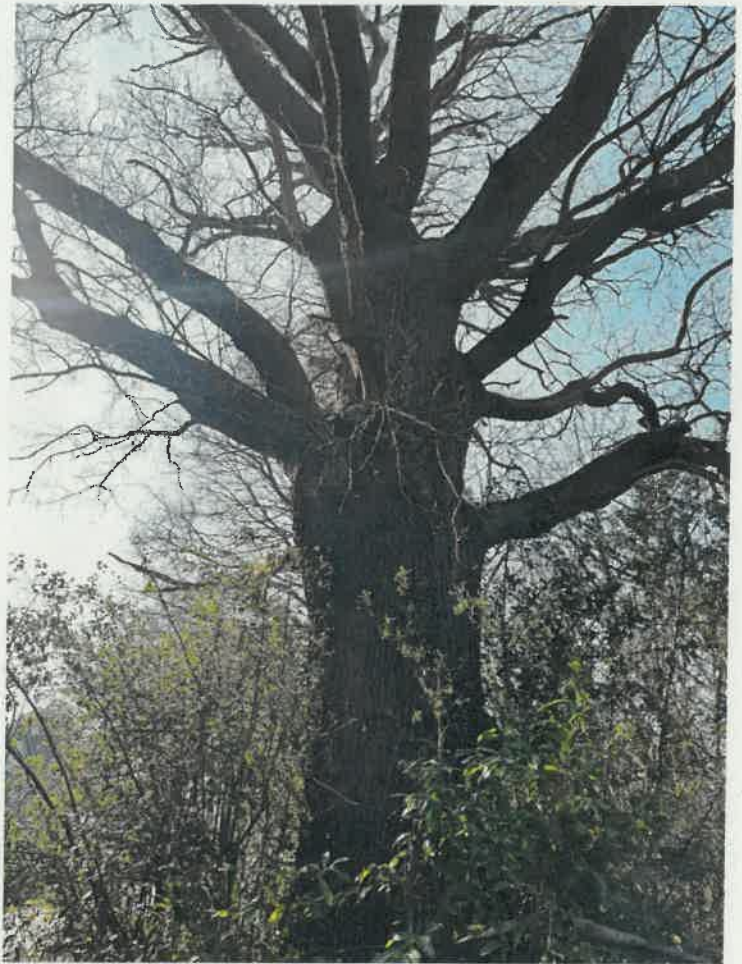
Wildlife Nest Box Considerations.

Dormice: definitely potential for Dormice along the continuous hedgerows leading up to park corner pond and around the pond area. Suggest we install a dormouse detection tunnel to check. If Dormice are present then 3 or 4 boxes to be installed.

Bats: Ideal location. suggest three double boxes facing south 3 -5 metres height

Birds: an abundance of natural nest sites are available particularly on the many oak trees and two pines – see photo below of the northern boundary. However, suggest 1 kestrel box at minimum 5 m overlooking the adjacent field which looks ideal for voles. 1 Spotted Flycatcher Box and 1 wagtail box . 1 Nuthatch box on the Oak tree (see photo right) . All bird boxes facing north /north east.

Note: Cherry Laurel or similar present in three areas . Consider DNA analysis for amphibians in the future.



Other wildlife.

Grey squirrels.

A herd of two dozen Fallow deer approached the pond rapidly and turned tail when they saw me.



12:11 4G

4 Mar - Tunbridge Wells, England

BEST MATCHES

- Carion Crow
Corvus corone
- Redwing
Turdus iliacus
- Common Woodpigeon
Columba palumbus
- Common Magpie
Pica pica
- Great Spotted Woodpecker
Dendrocopos major
- Eurasian Blackbird
Turdus merula
- Long-tailed Tit
Aegithalos caudatus

13:11 4G

4 Mar - Tunbridge Wells, England

BEST MATCHES

- Goldcrest**
Regulus regulus
- Eurasian Jackdaw
Corvus monedula
- Common Chaffinch
Fringilla coelebs
- Common Raven
Corvus corax
- Common Buzzard
Buteo buteo
- Grey Wagtail
Motacilla cinerea
- Eurasian Nuthatch
Sitta europaea

12:10 4G

4 Mar - Tunbridge Wells, England

BEST MATCHES

- European Robin
Erithacus rubecula
- Eurasian Wren
Troglodytes troglodytes
- Great Tit
Parus major
- Coal Tit
Periparus ater
- Eurasian Blue Tit
Cyanistes caeruleus
- European Greenfinch
Chloris chloris

13:12 4G

4 Mar - Tunbridge Wells, England

BEST MATCHES

- Eurasian Blackbird
Turdus merula
- Long-tailed Tit
Aegithalos caudatus
- Goldcrest
Regulus regulus
- Eurasian Jackdaw
Corvus monedula
- Common Chaffinch
Fringilla coelebs



06:13.91

Invertebrates: Some of the Wild Groombridge team have been surveying invertebrates in the rivers and ponds in our Groombridge project area (Ripple Effect project) and are developing invertebrate survey techniques suitable for ponds . Records for the Park Corner area are logged on iNaturalist and include plants and birds.



A few photos from the survey:



Two spotted water slater

Fresh water snail



Mosquito Larvae



Lumbriculus variegatus – freshwater worm



Wild Groombridge is an unincorporated, not for profit, organisation supported and funded by Withyham Parish Council , High Weald National Landscape and many local volunteers and supporters for the benefit of the community.

COUNCIL JUNE 2025

Item 12.1 - Safer In Sussex Survey

Have your say in Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne's survey.

Sussex PCC Katy Bourne has launched her annual survey seeking the views of residents across the county.

The Safer In Sussex Survey seeks to understand if residents have experienced crime and looks at what measures would make them feel safer in their communities.

Responses to the survey will help Commissioner Bourne to understand where resources within Sussex Police may be better placed, where increased partnership working could help to drive down local issues and to scrutinise the force on areas requiring improvement.

The survey is open now and will close at 23:00 30th October 2025.

Launching the survey, Mrs Bourne said: "As your elected voice within policing, the survey helps me understand your concerns and informs how I can effectively hold our Chief Constable to account for the performance of her force.

"Please take a moment to give me your feedback. You can also opt in to being contacted in the future to have a more detailed say in a focus group run by my office."

You can complete PCC Katy Bourne's survey here: <https://forms.office.com/e/iXZt8BCssv>

Residents are invited to have your say in Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne's survey which seeks to understand if residents have experienced crime and looks at what measures would make them feel safer in their communities.

This takes a few minutes to complete online, here: <https://forms.office.com/e/iXZt8BCssv>

Social tags:

Facebook: @SussexPCC

X (Twitter): @SussexPCC

LinkedIn: @Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner

Website: www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk

Questions:

Questions relating to the survey from partners can be directed to Isabel.fitzgibbon@sussex-pcc.gov.uk

Questions to the Commissioner/her office must be directed to pcc@sussex-pcc.gov.uk

COUNCIL JUNE 2025

Item 12.2 East Sussex Rail Consultation

Freight and Rail Strategies - Have your say

We are consulting on both the draft East Sussex Freight Strategy and the draft East Sussex Rail Strategy.

The closing date for both consultations is Monday 30 June 2025.

Draft East Sussex Freight Strategy 2025-2050

The draft East Sussex Freight Strategy 2025 - 2050 sets out the future vision for the delivery of improvements to the movement of freight in East Sussex, as it is critical to people's everyday lives through the movement of goods to shops and businesses, our doors and local collection points. The strategy focuses on four priority investment areas:

- Priority Investment Area 1 – Strategic freight movements
- Priority Investment Area 2 – Decarbonisation
- Priority Investment Area 3 – Last mile logistics
- Priority Investment Area 4 – Planning & policy

Documents

- [Draft Freight Strategy](#)
- [Equalities Impact Assessment for the draft Freight Strategy](#)
- [Preview of draft Freight Strategy consultation questions](#)

Have your say

- [Draft Freight Strategy online consultation](#) (contact the Local Transport Plan Team for a paper copy)

Draft East Sussex Rail Strategy 2025-2050

The draft East Sussex Rail Strategy 2025-2050 sets out the future vision for the delivery of improvements to rail travel in East Sussex, specifically on passenger journeys. It focuses on:

- Priority Investment Area 1 – Accessibility of the rail network
- Priority Investment Area 2 – Integration with other modes
- Priority Investment Area 3 – Reliability and resilience

- Priority Investment Area 4 – Decarbonisation
- Priority Investment Area 5 – Journey time competitiveness
- Priority Investment Area 6 – Customer experience

Documents

- [Draft Rail Strategy](#)
- [Equalities Impact Assessment for the draft Rail Strategy](#)
- [Preview of draft Rail Strategy consultation questions](#)

Have your say

- [Draft Rail Strategy online consultation](#) (contact the Local Transport Plan Team for a paper copy)

Contact us

- Email: LocalTransportPlan@EastSussex.gov.uk
- Telephone: 0345 608 0190 ask for the Local Transport Plan team.



WITHYHAM PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Responsibility: Staff/Full Council

Review Cycle: At least every three years, or earlier in the event of legislative changes

Date of Adoption/Renewal	Date for review
May 2022 May 2025	May 2025 May 2028

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The council recognises that training and development for staff and councillors is a major investment in its ability to deliver effective services, and will seek to create a culture of continuing development.
- 1.2 The council will comply with the principles of the National Training Strategy for Town and Parish Councils and will subscribe to the Sussex and Surrey Association of Local Councils and Society of Local Council Clerks to ensure staff and councillors may attend their training.

2. Policy Commitments

- 2.1 The council commits to ensuring staff and councillors are trained to the highest standard and are kept up to date with new legislation.
- 2.2 To support this commitment, funds will be allocated in the annual budget to enable staff and councillors to attend appropriate training and conferences relevant to their office.

3. Training Plan

- 3.1 The Parish Council will be responsible for determining, meeting and monitoring the training needs of staff and councillors, and managing the allocated budget.
- 3.2 Records of all training of staff and councillors will be kept by the Clerk.
- 3.3 A training schedule for staff will be drawn up by the Clerk for approval by the Staff Committee to ensure all training is relevant, fit for purpose and is carried out in a cost effective manner. This schedule will be informed by training needs of staff identified through the staff appraisal system. Particular consideration will be given to carrying out training locally possibly in liaison with other local councils.

3.4 All new councillors will receive an induction pack prepared by the Clerk and invited to attend an induction meeting with the clerk of council following co-option or the parish elections every four years, where basic information relating to the council's organisation and responsibilities will be provided. Re-elected councillors will be invited to this meeting.

3.5 All new councillors will be encouraged to attend a councillor briefing organised by SSALC after co-option.

3.6 All councillors will be encouraged to attend a councillor briefing organised by SSALC after the parish elections every four years.

3.7 Chairs of committees will be encouraged to attend chairmanship training organised by SSALC after the parish elections every four years, or when they take chairmanship if between elections

4. Professional Qualifications

4.1 All staff members will be encouraged to pursue professional qualifications, such as the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) or equivalent. It will be a requirement of the Clerk and Assistant Clerk role for the job holders to hold the qualification, or commit to achieving it within 12 months of appointment.

4.2 The council will meet the financial cost of registering for and submitting the CiLCA portfolio. If a candidate is unsuccessful, the cost of any re-submission will be agreed by the candidate and Council.

4.3 Additional higher level qualifications or specific qualifications relevant to the role will be discussed as part of the annual appraisal. The council may agree to meet the cost, or part thereof, of a qualification which will be of mutual benefit to both the council and staff member.

5. Staff Personal Development

5.1 The council recognises that training and development for staff often provides continuous professional development for the staff member, while enhancing specific skills. Training courses for personal development are motivational for staff members and consistently leads to improved performance in their current role.

5.2 Where there is clear benefit to the council, payment for any personal development training will be made by the council, and the staff member will be expected to use their new or improved skills in their existing role within the council.

5.3 Where the cost of a personal development training course exceeds £1,500, the staff member will repay to the council the full cost of the training if they leave the employment of

the council within 12 months of completion of the training. Agreement to this condition will be recorded in the staff member's file.

- 5.4 The provisions within part 5 of this policy do not apply to any training course deemed compulsory for the staff member to carry out their existing role, for example due to a change of regulations or insistence on particular qualifications.

Withyham Parish Council Consultation Procedure

Responsibility: Full Council
Review Cycle: Every 3 years or earlier in the event of legislative changes

Date of Adoption/Renewal	Date for review
June 2025	June 2028

Consultations are integral to the decision-making process of the Withyham Parish Council. The following policy outlines the procedures and standards for conducting consultations:

- 1. Initiation of Consultations:**
 - Consultations will be initiated following agreement at a Council meeting, where the need for public input is identified.
- 2. Duration:**
 - Consultations will run for a minimum period of two weeks and a maximum period of eight weeks, ensuring adequate time for residents to participate.
- 3. Scope of Consultation**
 - The scope of the consultees will be agreed by council. This could range from the whole Parish to a single settlement, a group of users or a specific area.
- 4. Public Notification:**
 - Consultations will be prominently listed on the official Withyham Parish Council website, ensuring easy access to all relevant information and the consultation.
- 5. Social Media Engagement:**
 - The consultation details will be posted a minimum of three times on the Withyham Parish Council social media platform (Facebook) to reach a wider audience.
 - At least one of these posts will be shared within the Facebook community groups for each settlement within the parish.
- 6. Additional Community Engagement (subject to any time sensitivity):**
 - Details of the consultation will be made available at a community cafe, providing an accessible venue for residents to obtain information and provide feedback.
 - Information will be added to the Parish Notes published in the Village magazines (Groombridge and Withyham)
- 7. Accessibility:**
 - The consultation process will ensure accessibility through multiple channels:
 - Online participation will be hosted through an easily accessible link which will be shown on all communications.
 - Paper copies of relevant documents will be made available at the parish office and, when possible, community cafe.
 - Contact details will be provided for residents to engage via telephone or email.

8. Collation and Reporting:

- The results of the consultation will be collated by the Clerk of the Council.
- A comprehensive report summarising the feedback received will be presented to the Council at an appropriate Council meeting for deliberation and decision-making.

9. Additional requirements for consultations that are used for evidence of a Public Works loan.

- In addition to the standard levels of engagement a leaflet/bulletin/newsletter containing the consultation will be delivered to every household in the Parish.

10. Additional Considerations:

- Previous consultation feedback and best practices will inform the design and implementation of this policy, ensuring continuous improvement in engagement and decision-making processes.

This policy aims to uphold transparency, accessibility, and effective community engagement in the decision-making processes of the Withyham Parish Council.

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 05/06/2025

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>100 Receipts</u>							
1000 Misc Receipts	0	2,000	2,000			0.0%	
1010 Wealden Rail/SVR rent	400	4,800	4,400			8.3%	
1011 WRC/SVR rebate utilities	0	800	800			0.0%	
1020 Meeting room income	0	400	400			0.0%	
1040 Community Cafe receipts	0	550	550			0.0%	
1050 Groombridge Play area fundrais	610	0	(610)			0.0%	610
1062 Gbridge PO Rent	1,650	16,800	15,150			9.8%	
1063 Post office/Phoenix Hse Rebate	181	3,000	2,819			6.0%	
1070 Tanyard grass cutting contribu	0	321	321			0.0%	
1076 Precept	117,838	235,675	117,838			50.0%	
1090 Bank Interest	0	120	120			0.0%	
<u>101 Administration</u>							
4000 Staff Salary	(9,153)	(54,705)	45,552		45,552	16.7%	
4001 Staff on-costs	(1,010)	(15,000)	13,990		13,990	6.7%	
4003 Parish Maintenance Contract	(766)	(4,550)	3,784		3,784	16.8%	
4005 Clerical Support & overtime	0	(2,000)	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
4006 Neighbourhood Plan expenditure	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
4007 Training	(164)	(2,000)	1,836		1,836	8.2%	
4008 Annual Subs inc SALC/NALC	(858)	(1,600)	742		742	53.7%	
4009 Conferences& Networking	0	(1,000)	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4010 Chairman's Allowance	0	(1,300)	1,300		1,300	0.0%	
4011 Councillors' Allowances	0	(1,000)	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4012 Parish Office rent	(2,667)	(16,000)	13,333		13,333	16.7%	
4013 Telephone/Broadband	(104)	(1,600)	1,496		1,496	6.5%	
4015 Stationery & non-electric equi	(134)	(1,500)	1,366		1,366	8.9%	
4016 Computer Software/Hardware	(242)	(1,500)	1,258		1,258	16.1%	
4017 Photocopier Lease/Maintenance	(284)	(1,300)	1,016		1,016	21.8%	
4018 Website	(44)	(700)	656		656	6.3%	
4019 Community Communication	(766)	(1,500)	734		734	51.0%	
4020 APA expenditure	(125)	(1,225)	1,100		1,100	10.2%	
4021 IT Support	(642)	(3,806)	3,164		3,164	16.9%	
4030 Hire of Halls	0	(100)	100		100	0.0%	
4038 Insurance	0	(2,200)	2,200		2,200	0.0%	
4040 Payroll, audit & legal Fees	(153)	(2,000)	1,847		1,847	7.7%	
4041 Staff Committee	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
4051 Community Resilience	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
4060 Election Expenses	0	(1,200)	1,200		1,200	0.0%	
4061 Parish Action Plan & Projects	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
4062 Withyham Parish Volunteers	0	(100)	100		100	0.0%	

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 05/06/2025

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4064 Community Cafe expenditure	(140)	(550)	410		410	25.5%	
4065 Climate & Ecology Working Group	0	(800)	800		800	0.0%	
4500 Office associated repairs	(113)	(4,500)	4,387		4,387	2.5%	
4501 New Office equipment electronics	(42)	(400)	358		358	10.6%	
4502 Office utilities	(345)	(2,400)	2,055		2,055	14.4%	
4503 Office maintenance contracts &	(128)	(1,200)	1,072		1,072	10.7%	
4506 Office waste	(140)	(1,000)	860		860	14.0%	
4510 Meeting Room catering	(41)	(400)	359		359	10.2%	
4600 Bank charges	(24)	(200)	176		176	12.0%	
<u>102 Grants & Donations</u>							
4101 Grants	(4,000)	(10,000)	6,000		6,000	40.0%	
4106 Youth Act/Facilities	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
<u>201 Groombridge</u>							
4200 Recreation Ground Rent	(302)	(320)	18		18	94.4%	
4201 Recreation Ground Purchases	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
4202 Recreation Ground Repairs	0	(2,000)	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
4205 Mowing Groombridge Rec & Newto	(0)	(5,650)	5,650		5,650	0.0%	
4206 Mowing Tanyard	0	(1,068)	1,068		1,068	0.0%	
4211 Waste Collection Service	0	(1,500)	1,500		1,500	0.0%	
4213 Dog Waste Collection	0	(2,100)	2,100		2,100	0.0%	
4219 Groombridge Playground PWLB rep	(2,831)	(5,663)	2,832		2,832	50.0%	
4220 Groombridge Play Area maintena	0	(1,000)	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4225 Park Corner Pond	0	(100)	100		100	0.0%	
4230 Trees	0	(4,000)	4,000		4,000	0.0%	
4231 Station Rd Fenceline/hedge	0	(2,000)	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
<u>202 St Johns</u>							
4240 Maintenance of Reading Rm Land	0	(651)	651		651	0.0%	
4241 Maintenance of Manor Pound	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
<u>203 Withyham/Blackham</u>							
4260 Mowing & hedge Teasley Mead	0	(1,550)	1,550		1,550	0.0%	
4261 Mowing Balis Green	0	(430)	430		430	0.0%	
4265 Rental Teasley Mead	(63)	(65)	2		2	96.9%	
4266 Rental Balls Green	(63)	(65)	2		2	96.9%	
4267 Teasley Mead Rec Equipment rep	0	(300)	300		300	0.0%	
4268 BG Playground - Repairs	0	(300)	300		300	0.0%	
4270 Play Inspection BGrn & TMead	0	(200)	200		200	0.0%	
<u>401 Highways/Footways/Transport</u>							
4226 ESCC Devolution (grass)	0	(1,608)	1,608		1,608	0.0%	
4401 Wealdlink Bus Service	(164)	(660)	496		496	24.9%	

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 05/06/2025

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4402 External Furniture Repairs	0	(200)	200		200	0.0%	
4403 Roadside Shelters	0	(300)	300		300	0.0%	
4405 Telephone boxes (adopted)	0	(150)	150		150	0.0%	
4406 Defibrillators	0	(400)	400		400	0.0%	
4407 Parish maintenance works/equip	(95)	(700)	605		605	13.5%	
4410 Notice Boards	0	(100)	100		100	0.0%	
4415 Rights of Way	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
4420 Finger Posts and signs	0	(1,000)	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4421 Highways	(25)	(1,500)	1,475		1,475	1.7%	
4426 GB Village Sign Maintenance	0	(300)	300		300	0.0%	
4428 Grit Bins	0	(350)	350		350	0.0%	
4429 Salt Spreaders/Salt	0	(600)	600		600	0.0%	
<u>402 Lighting</u>							
4450 Energy & Maintenance 39 lights	(628)	(2,500)	1,872		1,872	25.1%	
4451 Repairs & Renewals	(108)	(2,000)	1,893		1,893	5.4%	
4452 New Columns	0	(3,000)	3,000		3,000	0.0%	
<u>500 Post office</u>							
5001 CIC Subsidy/Grant	0	(12,000)	12,000		12,000	0.0%	
5100 PO Building Annual PWLB repay	(8,389)	(16,800)	8,411		8,411	49.9%	
5101 PO building utilities repaymen	(361)	(3,000)	2,639		2,639	12.0%	
5200 Phoenix Hse maintenance	0	(10,000)	10,000		10,000	0.0%	
<u>901 Earmarked Reserves</u>							
9037 EMR Parish Assets	0	(35,000)	35,000		35,000	0.0%	
Grand Totals:- Income	120,679	264,466	143,787			45.6%	
Expenditure	35,116	264,466	229,350	0	229,350	13.3%	
Net Income over Expenditure	85,563	0	(85,563)				
less Transfer to EMR	610	0	(610)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	84,953	0	(84,953)				

Earmarked Reserves

Account	Opening Balance	Net Transfers	Closing Balance
327 EMR Groombridge Play Area	2,368.08	610.00	2,978.08
329 EMR Road Safety Projects	3,000.00		3,000.00
332 EMR Withyham Parish Volunteers	1,940.10		1,940.10
333 EMR Office Associated Repairs	3,000.00		3,000.00
336 EMR CiL (use £5163 by Oct23 &	22,738.42		22,738.42
337 EMR Parish Assets	33,535.94	35,000.00	68,535.94
338 EMR Environmental Improvements	3,916.17		3,916.17
340 EMR Streetlights	3,000.00		3,000.00
341 EMR Post Office/Ph Hse Mainten	-9,324.15	9,324.15	0.00
342 EMR Elections	6,768.39		6,768.39
	70,942.95	44,934.15	115,877.10

14.2.

Date: 05/06/2025

Withyham Parish Council

Page 1

Time: 17:30

Cashbook 1

User: DS

Current Bank A/c (HSBC)

Payments made between 01/06/2025 and 11/06/2025

Nominal Ledger Analysis

Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Details
10/06/2025	WMA Electrics	BACS40	157.87		26.31	5200	500	131.56	outside light Phoenix Hse PAID
10/06/2025	A.Chenchyk	BACS41	15.50		2.58	4407	401	12.92	PMP screws and brushes PAID
10/06/2025	Volunteer	BACS42	28.49			4064	101	28.49	Tea bags C Cafe PAID
10/06/2025	Society - Local Council Clerks	BACS43	202.00			4008	101	202.00	membership fee - CEC
10/06/2025	E.S.C.C.	BACS44	1,929.43		321.57	4226	401	1,607.86	Urban grass cuts 25/26
10/06/2025	Mulberry and Co.	BACS45	54.00		9.00	4007	101	45.00	Cltr training 1Jul RG.
10/06/2025	STREETLIGHTS.CO.UK	BACS46	238.50		39.75	4451	402	198.75	2xLED repairs
10/06/2025	Groombridge Village Hall	BACS47	190.08			4020	101	190.08	APA hall hire
10/06/2025	Lawrence & Taylor LP	BACS48	3,000.00			4040	101	3,000.00	Survey & Valuation reports
						337		-3,000.00	Survey & Valuation reports
						6000	101	3,000.00	Survey & Valuation reports
10/06/2025	Viking Direct	BACS49	96.81		16.14	4510	101	19.76	tea and coffee
						4064	101	24.99	C Cafe items
						4015	101	35.92	stationery
10/06/2025	NALC	BACS50	42.00		7.00	4007	101	35.00	Training Beyond the Precept
10/06/2025	Crowborough Community First Re	BACS51	84.00			4406	401	84.00	Defib pads replacements
10/06/2025	SME IT Solutions	BACS52	1,133.47		188.91	4013	101	105.95	Phone & Bband
						4021	101	331.17	IT support
						4018	101	507.44	Domain & website charges
10/06/2025	Staff member	BACS53	24.36			4009	101	12.96	Mileage ESALC Con
						4020	101	11.40	APA exp
10/06/2025	Various	BACS54	5,121.72			4003	101	379.17	Salary
						4005	101	230.40	o/t
						4000	101	4,512.15	Salaries
10/06/2025	HMRC	BACS55	3,527.64			4001	101	3,527.64	Tax & NI Qtr1
10/06/2025	Staff member	BACS56	23.40			4407	401	23.40	Mileage
10/06/2025	Clear Councils	BACS57	1,622.85			4038	101	1,622.85	Insurance inc of IPT
10/06/2025	Prepaid card	CB1 PPC 06	104.67			203		104.67	CB1 to PPCard June
10/06/2025	British Gas	DDBG0625	65.25			5101	500	65.25	PO/Ph Hse Elec Mai to May
10/06/2025	Everflow	DDEFOS625	82.89			4502	101	82.89	Parish Office water charges
10/06/2025	NEST pensions	DDNEST0625	528.25			4001	101	528.25	pension contributions
10/06/2025	Octopus energy	DDOCTOS62	79.46			4502	101	79.46	Office energy May

Subtotal Carried Forward:

18,352.64

0.00

611.26

17,741.38

Date: 05/06/2025

Withyham Parish Council

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Cashbook 1

User: DS

Current Bank A/c (HSBC)

Payments made between 01/06/2025 and 11/06/2025

Nominal Ledger Analysis									
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Details</u>
10/06/2025	HSBC	HSBC0625	8.00			4600	101	8.00	Bank charges Apr-May
10/06/2025	The Premier Trust N A Houghton	SONH0625	666.67			4012	101	666.67	Rent June
10/06/2025	The Premier Trust T J Newman	SOTN0625	666.66			4012	101	666.66	Rent June
Total Payments:			19,693.97	0.00	611.26			19,082.71	

Date: 05/06/2025

Withyham Parish Council

Page 1

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Cashbook 3

User: DS

Prepaid card

Payments made between 01/06/2025 and 11/06/2025

Nominal Ledger Analysis									
Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Details
10/06/2025	AmazonUK	PP11	14.89		2.48	4407	401	12.41	Paint
10/06/2025	Milk & More	PP12	14.10			4510	101	14.10	Office milk
10/06/2025	Canva	PP13	13.00			4016	101	13.00	software
10/06/2025	Samba	PP14	17.93		2.99	4267	203	14.94	Parts broken goal
10/06/2025	Cheeky Panda	PP15	29.16			4015	101	29.16	Toilet roll
10/06/2025	Zoom Video Comms Ltd	PP16	15.59		2.60	4016	101	12.99	Zoom subs
Total Payments:			104.67	0.00	8.07			96.60	