



Hamsey Parish Council – Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19th May 2025 at 7pm – Beechwood Hall & Rural Park

Present : Cllr Minty Cadwallader, Cllr Carolyn Henry, Cllr David Bush, Cllr Neil Osborne, Cllr Leith McKenzie, Cllr Tom Gaydon. County Cllr Charlotte Keenan

Marie Owen – Parish Clerk & RFO

There were no members of the public.

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1. Welcome – Chair of Hamsey Parish Council – Minty Cadwallader.

Cllr Cadwallader welcomed all to the meeting.

2. Apologies.

There were apologies from Cllr Kate McBrown.

3. Agreement to the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 29th May 2025.

The minutes of the meeting held 29th May 2025 were signed and agreed.

4. Matters arising from last Annual Parish Meeting.

There were no matters arising.

5. Reports from East Sussex County Councillor, Charlotte Keenan.

Cllr Keenan introduced herself to the parish council, noting that she is currently in training for her new role. She highlighted road safety and highways as her key areas of interest.

6. Annual reports for year ending 31 March 2026.

The annual reports of the Parish Councillors are attached to these minutes and were read out at the meeting by the Councillors. Cllr Gaydon expressed his pleasure at joining the Council and looks forward to becoming more actively involved as his health improves. The rest of the Council wished him well.

7. Financial summary for Year ending 31 March 2026

This is attached to these minutes

8. Questions from the floor

There were no questions from the floor

The Annual Parish Council meeting ended at 7:34pm

For details of the attachments please see the website or request from the Parish Clerk at clerk@hamseyparish.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Annual Reports of Councillors

AGM Parish Meeting Speech – Summer 2026

Delivered by Cllr Minty Cadwallader, Chair of Hamsey Parish Council

Good evening everyone, and thank you all for being here.

It is a real pleasure to welcome you to this year's Annual Parish Meeting and to reflect on what has been a full and important year for Hamsey Parish Council.

On paper, parish council work can look like a long list of meetings, minutes, consultations, potholes and budgets. But really, it is about something much more simple and important.

What we are really doing is helping shape the kind of place people want to live in: a place where children grow up with happy memories, where they feel safe walking down the road, where neighbours wave at one another, and where, when life becomes difficult, people are not left to face things alone.

That does not happen by accident. It takes practical work, persistence, and a great many people quietly giving their time.

So, I'd like to reflect not just on what we have done between May 2025 and April 2026, but what it has all meant.

We had the Easter Trail, the VE Day community gathering, Meet Up With Minis, theatre evenings, community days and Beechwood Hall events. These moments give people a reason to come out, meet neighbours, laugh together, and feel part of something.

I want to begin with Carolyn, my vice chair, because, quite honestly, so much of what has happened this year simply would not have happened without her. Carolyn, quite simply, you are an absolute superstar.

The energy, creativity, organisation and enthusiasm you bring to this parish is remarkable. From the Easter Trail and Christmas Light Trail to theatre evenings, Meet Up With Minis, vision workshops, community events and Beechwood activities, you have a rare talent for turning good ideas into reality.

And then, of course, there is your grant-writing superpower. "Carolyn strikes again.!" you create joy, connection, and momentum, and we are enormously lucky to have you.

Beechwood Hall has continued to go from strength to strength. It is far more than a building; it is a place where community happens.

Behind the scenes, a great deal of work has gone into improving the systems, bookings, website and overall community offering. At the same time, the team has been working carefully to keep the hall financially sustainable, especially as maintenance and grounds costs continue to rise.

Marie, you are the calm centre of a very busy wheel. At Beechwood, and across the Parish Council, you are our organiser, our anchor, and the person who somehow keeps the rest of us functioning.

Your patience, diligence and professionalism keep this council moving, and we simply could not do this without you.

Thank you also to Rachel Clifford, Bernie Smith-Jones, Ella Clifford-Wilson and Jim Edwards for all the support that helps keep Beechwood thriving.

Planning has, without question, been one of the defining issues of this year.

The CALA Homes application and wider Local Plan pressures have caused understandable concern, because this has never simply been about numbers. It has been about infrastructure, road safety, the environment, school places, water, drainage, transport, and the future of the place we all care about.

We have worked hard to make sure Hamsey's voice has been properly heard. That has meant meetings, responses, difficult conversations, and more hours spent reading planning documents than any sane person should endure.

Councillors met Lewes District Council planning officers and CALA Homes representatives, making clear that engagement should not be mistaken for support. We raised concerns about infrastructure, road safety, walking and cycling links, community space, allotments and design.

Thank you to the many residents who engaged with that process, and especially to Susanne Yule and the Don't Urbanise Hamsey group for the extraordinary amount of work they have put in.

And then there is Leith.

Leith, you have been an absolute legend.

When these planning challenges emerged, you stepped forward and became a driving force. Your professional expertise, strategic thinking and determination have given this parish real strength. Planning consultations can feel deliberately impenetrable, but you met them head on.

From scrutinising proposals to shaping responses and helping us think strategically, you have been instrumental. As well as taking on, potholes, Roads, more potholes and chasing planning applications! Thank you so so much.

The challenge has now grown. Alongside the CALA Homes proposal, the Draft Local Plan has raised the possibility of hundreds more houses around Cooksbridge and Hamsey.

The Local Plan is not just another consultation. It will shape where development goes for years to come, and if sites are included, future applications become much harder to resist.

That is why we agreed this year to seek specialist planning advice. We recognised that something of this scale needs technical support, and that our community deserves the strongest possible response.

We are also looking beyond individual applications by revisiting our Neighbourhood Plan and Rural Design Code. The aim is simple: to set out clearly what matters here, what should be protected, and what good rural design should look like in Hamsey. Thank you again Leith and Carolyn for all your work on the Draft Local plan proposal.

Road safety remains another major concern. We have seen too many accidents and near misses, and councillors have continued to report potholes, flooding, overhanging trees, fallen barriers, dangerous school parking, road marking concerns and issues around Bevernbridge, Hamsey Lane, Beechwood Lane, Chandlers Mead and the A275.

By March, the council agreed that a formal complaint should be prepared to East Sussex Highways because the level of service simply has not been good enough.

Kate, thank you for the many years you have devoted to highways and transport issues, and for the persistence this sort of work requires. These are not always easy areas. They often involve chasing slow systems, filling in forms, following up reports, and trying not to lose the will to live somewhere between "case closed" and "no defect found".

Your persistence matters.

And on a personal note, thank you for always managing to authorise bank transfers, as I seem entirely incapable of doing so in time.

Thank you also to District Councillors Mark Slater and Joa Saunders for their continued support on planning, road safety, and protecting the landscape and green spaces, championing the protection of our new found 'Sussex tiger'. You really are our Parish champions. Many congratulations to Councillor Charlotte Keenan and good luck on your tenure.

Transport this year has not only meant roads. Thank you to Robert Baughan, the Hamsey Parish Rail Group and the Cooksbridge Station Partnership for their continued work with Network Rail and GTR, including station gardening, grant ideas, station improvements and practical safety issues.

The environment has also remained central to our work. We supported the Rights of River Charter for the River Ouse, responded to the Sussex Nature Recovery Consultation, and began looking at tree protection, local river ecology and the long-term legacy of the oaks on Hamsey Lane.

We also planted daffodils and snowdrops around Cooksbridge not only to make the parish more beautiful, but to help make that area more visible and cared for.

It was nice to see a burst of yellow through all that winter rain.

And yes, don't worry, I am still firmly campaigning for more flowers.

My highlight this year has been youth provision. If we care about the future of Hamsey, we need to care about what it feels like to be young here now.

Neil, we are incredibly proud of what you have created with the youth club. Seeing young people enjoying themselves, building friendships and having fun (breaking equipment) is exactly what we hoped for. It has also been genuinely lovely to see you thrive and find your own place through this work

Neil, you are also the person who quietly fixes things when they are broken, brings fun and enthusiasm to everything you do, and genuinely boosts morale for everyone around you. You are dependable in the best possible way, and honestly, we couldn't be without you.

Thank you to Leith and David for supporting the youth club too.

David, thank you for being such a steady and dependable presence. You have stepped in where needed, including becoming a signatory for Beechwood Hall, joining the Rail Group, supporting youth provision and taking forward practical work around solar energy and future improvements, including applying for CIL funding.

Much of what you do is quiet, practical and unfussy, but that is exactly the sort of contribution that keeps a parish council grounded and functioning. So thank you so much.

Tom, thank you too. Joining during a planning battle was certainly a lively introduction. You have already brought a thoughtful and useful perspective. Your local ties, property experience and commitment to protecting Hamsey's character are especially valuable at a time when planning pressures are so significant. Thank you for taking on communications, supporting planning work, helping with guidance for residents, and bringing a practical eye to Beechwood Hall and the Hamsey Parish WhatsApp message board.

We wish you all the strength and love for a speedy recovery, and will pile on the work as soon as you are able.

Communication has also moved forward with the Hamsey Parish Message Board on WhatsApp, a broadcast-style group for parish news, events and urgent updates. We have also started the village sign project, which is really about identity: what represents Hamsey, and how do we create something that reflects the river, landscape, school, wildlife, history and community?

There have also been changes within the council, and we still miss Natalie and Amanda and wish them all the best.

I also want to acknowledge the many people who quietly make parish life richer: Pete Langley for organising litter picks; Sarah Hughes, Miki Brightmore, Alice Barling Gasson and Martin Blackmore for the bulb planting; Helen Clegg and all the Hamsey News contributors and deliverers; Peter Schueler for his wonderful photography; Circus Kinetica, Howard Eaton, and everyone who throws themselves into the Christmas festivities and Santa sleigh with such enthusiasm.

And to everyone who bakes, helps, lifts, stacks, tidies, plans, plants, picks litter, and simply turns up, thank you.

And if I have missed anyone, it is a failure of memory, not gratitude.

This year has shown how important community support is:

We are trying to help maintain a parish where kindness feels normal.

Looking ahead, there is still so much to do.

Planning pressures remain. Road safety remains a concern. We want Beechwood Hall to continue thriving, build on our youth work, improve communication, support environmental projects, develop a Rural Design Code, progress the village sign, and use CIL funding wisely.

Most of all, we want to keep protecting the river, the trees, the fields, the lanes, and the feeling of Hamsey itself.

So thank you for your time, your ideas, your energy, and your commitment to this parish.

It is a genuine privilege to serve Hamsey, and to do it alongside people who give so much.

Thank you.

Hamsey Parish Council – Annual Report (2025–2026)

Cllr Carolyn Henry, Vice Chair

This year has been one of continued collaboration, community spirit, and commitment to protecting the unique environment and character of Hamsey Parish. I am proud to share a summary of our work, which reflects both the energy of our residents and the Parish Council's dedication to representing their voices and enhancing wellbeing across the parish.

Community and Events

Community connection remains at the heart of everything we do. Over the past year, we have delivered a wide range of inclusive and accessible events designed to bring residents together across all ages.

Highlights include a successful Halloween celebration attended by around 50 children, alongside craft activities, games and fundraising for Hamsey Community School initiatives. Seasonal activities such as the Christmas Light Trail and festive events with local groups helped create a warm and inclusive atmosphere for families.

I have also run events such as the Easter Trail, a summer community day, theatre performances, with all planned again for the year coming as well as a school "play date" to support new starters and their families in building connections early on.

These events are free or low-cost to attend wherever possible, ensuring accessibility for all residents, and are supported through careful planning, partnerships, and strong local communication via Hamsey News and social media.

Supporting Young People and Families

A key priority this year has been strengthening opportunities for young people and families.

The development of the Youth Club has been a significant achievement, supported by grant funding, including a £2,000 award from the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner to promote community safety and engagement

Alongside this, we have been developing baby and toddler activities and seeking further funding opportunities through initiatives such as the Tesco community schemes.

These initiatives help ensure that Hamsey remains a supportive, welcoming place for young families, providing opportunities for connection, play, and development.

Beechwood Hall and Community Facilities

Beechwood Hall continues to be a vital hub for parish life and a focal point for many of our activities.

This year, we have maintained a strong focus on ensuring the Hall is financially sustainable, well-managed, and accessible. Working closely with the Hall team, we have overseen governance, maintenance, and long-term planning, while continuing to adapt to financial pressures.

We have also explored improvements to facilities and outdoor spaces, including the installation of cycle racks (pending planning resolution) and the ongoing enhancement of the surrounding grounds.

Protecting and Enhancing Our Environment

As a parish within the South Downs National Park, protecting our natural environment is central to our work.

Efforts this year have included applying for funding to improve and maintain the park's perimeter trail, encouraging walking, running, and greater use of green space.

While not all grant applications have been successful, we continue to seek opportunities to invest in sustainable projects, promote biodiversity, and mitigate environmental impacts such as traffic-related carbon emissions.

Planning and Representation

Ensuring that the voices of our community are heard in planning matters remains a core responsibility.

Over the past year, we have actively contributed to responses on major developments, including housing proposals and the Local Plan, working with planning consultants and encouraging residents to share their views.

We have also begun building stronger links with neighbouring councils to promote a more coordinated and effective approach to planning across the area.

Access, Transport and Road Safety

We recognise the importance of safe and equitable access for all residents.

Work this year has included advocating for improved road safety measures such as updated speed signage in Cooksbridge and clearer warnings for pedestrian crossings.

We have also supported initiatives to improve accessibility, including proposals for a dropped kerb at the Offham bus stop, helping ensure better public transport access for residents with mobility needs.

While progress can be slow due to external processes, we remain committed to pursuing these improvements on behalf of the community.

Communication and Community Voice

This year we launched a village WhatsApp group as an additional communication channel, complementing the quarterly Hamsey News and social media updates. The group has grown steadily and provides a valuable noticeboard for residents.

Working with Hamsey Community School

Our relationship with Hamsey Community School has continued to develop, with regular engagement with the Head Teacher and support for initiatives such as road safety, community integration, and the village identity project.

By working together, we aim to strengthen the connection between the school and the wider community, benefiting both current and future generations.

Looking Ahead

As we move into the next year, my focus will remain on:

- Strengthening community connections through inclusive events
- Collaborating with local businesses through the events.
- Supporting young people and families through fundraising and organising events
- Maintaining and enhancing Beechwood Hall and shared spaces
- Supporting and collaborating with other councillors on their projects and areas of work.

Thank you to all councillors, volunteers, and residents who contribute their time, energy, and ideas that have supported all the work above.

Cllr Neil Osborne

April 2025 – April 2026

Areas of work

I have set up the youth club with the help of the grant. I have spoken with the children to find out what equipment and activities they would like, and this has guided what we have chosen to provide. I have arranged the purchases and have also bought items for the tuck shop. We are looking to provide other one off events such as learning how to DJ for the children. I have very much enjoyed this and hope that it grows from strength to strength.

I have joined the Rail Committee on behalf of the parish council.

I have been involved with many of the community events. I organised the football at the community day in the summer. Ran the bar at the theatre performance, helped with the Christmas light trail and was again Grinch on Santa's sleigh. I helped set up for the Easter trail and ran the café. I enjoy meeting and speaking with members of the parish.

I was involved with the parish council's response to the Lewes District Council Local Plan and filmed videos of the traffic at the level crossing for the council's response.

I also help with the distribution of the Hamsey News newsletter.

I have reported pot holes to East Sussex Highways when I helped someone that had come off their motorbike due to a pot hole.

Cllr Leith Mckenzie - Councillor Annual Report – 2025-2026

- Reviewed planning applications - Holters Green, Beechwood Road, Cooksbridge – reviewed documents – No Objections
- Bretts Farm – visited site from roadway with Cllr Cadwallader - No Objections.

- Old Church Lane, Hamsey – reviewed documents - No Objections.
- The Orchard North End Lane – visited property with Cllr Cadwallader and discussed with owners – no objections.
- Resting Oak Hill - Dropped Kerb – reviewed documents - No comment.
- Land North of Cooksbridge. Reviewed all documents, submitted co-ordinated PC objection tracked public comments, meeting with Cllrs Cadwallader and Henry to work through developer requirements. Meeting with developers to discuss requirements & further consultation in Jan/Feb 2026 on additional information.
- Former Hamsey Brickworks – Lakeside – reviewed documents, met with developers with Cllrs – No objections.
- Bank Cottages, Offham – reviewed documents. - No Objections.
- Offham Farm – visited site with Cllr Cadwallader – No Objections.
- Coombe Lodge, Offham – reviewed documents, visited site from road but no access – no comments.
- Perseverance studio – Reviewed Documents visited with Cllr Cadwallader and spoke with owners - No Objections.
- 1&2 Hamsey Place Cottages – reviewed documents & visited – No objections.
- Hamsey Place – Garden Studio – No Objections
- Eton New Town Scoping Opinion – Response prepared for final HCP review.
- McBeans Conditions Applications – Awaiting validation from February.
- Took drone footage and photos of fields and traffic for co-ordination with DUH objections.
- With Cllr Cadwallader & Cllr Joa Saunders visited Bevernbridge development and community building to discuss handover plans. Full drawing and specification pack requested. Visited extent of further site, lake side and current works and now awaiting further feedback/response on contractual agreements, a lease has been proposed to which we have requested full ownership.
- With Cllr Cadwallader & Cllr Joa Saunders visited a number of Wivelsfield Cala developments with their parish councillors to look at all the issues and quality.
- Liaised on multiple occasions with Don't Urbanise Hamsey team on co-ordinated responses to both local plan and CALA planning application, including recent meeting with James Smith Planning officer for CALA application to present Sea Trout information.
- Co-ordinated with others and consultant and finalised HPC Local Plan Reg 18 response.
- Meeting with Cllrs Cadwallader and Henry to work through initial Rural Design code objectives – Still ongoing.
- Compiling research on rural housing design and rural design codes – Still ongoing.
- Attended a number of Youth club events to assist but intend to do more here.
- Liaised with Highways re a number of potholes in Cooksbridge and further back and forth including with Joa about general poor condition of roadway for resurfacing, trying to arrange for them to visit and see for themselves the noise and vibration impact. Prepared an in-depth formal complaint letter to ESCC in relation to Overall road condition from Offham to Barcombe and received a basic response which we need to respond back to – ONGOING
- Attempted to contact highways and parking team to open a conversation about school drop off parking ideas sent to them but no actionable response as they await decision on CALA application. - ONGOING

This has been my first full year as a member of the parish council, and I am proud to be part of a team whose main goal is to support and improve our community and parish. The council works hard to look after our fantastic hall and park, while also organising events throughout the year, from Christmas to Easter, always putting the community first and bringing happiness to local children.

This year, the youth club was launched after receiving a £2,000 grant after the hard work of Cllr Henry winning this money. Councillor Osbourne has successfully developed it into a monthly event, with around 15 teenagers attending most sessions. I have also helped at many of the evenings.

I have become a member of the Cooksbridge Station Partnership and attended my first meeting this year. During the summer months, we meet on the first Saturday of each month to carry out gardening and maintenance around the station platforms and attend regular quarterly meeting.

My main project this year has been working to restore Beechwood Hall's green credentials. Following the loss of the windmill, I have been seeking quotes for solar panels and have submitted an application to the South Downs National Park for grant funding to help cover the costs. We hope to hear later this year whether the application has been successful.

Detailed below is the expenditure and income for the period 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026

Expenditure	£	Notes
Audit	655.00	
Capital Expenses	-	
Grants	1,305.00	
Grounds Maintenance	1,817.91	
Office Expenses/administration	10,573.01	Includes clerk's salary
Other Expenses	7,497.82	
Premises	7,672.78	
Subscriptions	904.68	
Total	30,426.18	

Income	£	Notes
Precept	21,000.00	
Lottery Grant		
VAT Reclaim	1617.92	
CIL Payment	59,818.92	
Bank Interest	815.90	
Other Payments	1000	
Total	84,252.74	

Balance per bank statement as at: 31st March 2026	£
Unity Trust - current account	26,087.78
Unity Trust - savings account	63,597.17
Total	89,684.95