



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

The Council has had another excellent year. We continue to implement the Local Neighbourhood Plan (LNP), maintain the local footpath network and other assets, and support community organisations through grants that contribute to our area's well-being.

Our activities are guided by robust decision-making processes, ensuring prudent fiscal management. As a result, the Council maintains sound financial balances and has kept the Precept at the same level for the past five years.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to high standards in the coming fiscal year. We are reviewing the LNP to ensure its continued effectiveness, refining and implementing our Biodiversity Strategy, and pursuing our Planning objectives with Tandridge District Council.

Alongside our regular work, we are closely monitoring key policy changes that will significantly impact our Parish. In particular:

1. The reorganisation of local governance, with the replacement of Surrey District and Borough Councils by 2-3 unitary authorities.
2. Government policies aimed at significantly increasing housing and infrastructure development in our area, to be implemented through a new Local Plan by Tandridge District Council or its successor.

While Parish Councils are not directly affected by these changes, we anticipate some practical challenges, such as the loss of informal interaction with Tandridge District representatives. We await further details on these proposals and will adapt as needed to ensure we continue serving our community effectively.

Thanks to our co-optees, official and otherwise, who have helped the neighbourhood plan committee and other Councillors with their ongoing projects.

As you know, all the Councillors are volunteers and carry out Parish Council work in their spare time, but to undertake all the projects and tasks we aim to achieve, we often need extra help for research and implementation of our activities – large and small.

With Devolution, the role of the Parish Council is likely to become more involved and take on more responsibilities.

Councillor Sophie Kemp resigned in February. A resident of Limpsfield's rural farmland, bordering Edenbridge, she played a key role in researching and responding to the Gaywood Solar Farm application. Sophie is a highly skilled lawyer specialising in inquiries and judicial reviews, balancing her demanding career with a young family and responsibilities for her own farm. We sincerely thank her for her invaluable contribution over the past few years.

Following the notice period in February, no requests for a by-election were received, and Michael Tinker was officially co-opted onto the Council at the meeting on 10th March. We would like to extend a warm welcome to Michael and are confident he will be a great asset to the Council.

Bernie De Haldevang has announced his intention to stand down after the APM this year. We are therefore looking for a councillor to co-opt. Anyone eligible (living within 3 miles of the Limpsfield parish border and a UK Citizen) who would be interested in applying for the role should contact the clerk, with an overview of their background, specialities, credentials and what they could bring to the role.

We would also like to hear from any Parishioners who would be pleased to help with projects when needed or any other volunteering roles. Please email the Clerk if you are interested. To note, Limpsfield Parish Council prefers to focus on helping the parish without political bias and we therefore all stand as independent councillors.

Thank you for your ongoing support for the past and coming year.

**Thomas C Briggs**  
**Chair, Limpsfield Parish Council**

## REVIEWING THE LIMPSFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

We remain committed to the core principles of the Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan (LNP) and continue to work through its objectives, projects, and activities, including:

- Protecting the environment, local green spaces, and the parish's unique character and heritage by scrutinising all planning applications, including tree works (TPOs and TCAs).
- Preserving local heritage, community assets, architecture, and the Conservation Area.
- Promoting biodiversity within the parish.
- Supporting improvements to community infrastructure, such as footpaths, cycleways, traffic, parking, and support for local businesses and organisations.

We are currently reviewing the LNP, which was adopted by Tandridge District Council in 2019.

While we submit annual reports on our progress to the District Council, this review aims to:

- Assess whether any amendments to the core criteria are needed
- Evaluate completed and ongoing projects, and
- Determine which objectives remain achievable or are beyond our control

The Planning & Development aspect of the Neighbourhood Plan is particularly important, especially considering the NPPF Reforms and the potential threat to the Green Belt.

This will be a key focus of the review. Several areas, including the Limpsfield side of Red Lane, may be at risk of development, and we will continue to monitor and respond to planning applications accordingly.

We aim to submit any proposed changes to Tandridge District Council over the summer, after which the review will be published for parishioners to read.

*Thanks to our working group: Mark Wilson, Ann Osborn, Jenny Williams, John Thompson, Antony Taylor, Ted Beresford-Knox, Robin Masefield and Sophie Martin.*

## PLANNING

*Committee members: Jenny Williams (Chair), Antony Taylor, John Thompson, Mark Wilson and Ted Beresford-Knox (Co-optee)*

Since last year, a general election has taken place, bringing a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) under Labour's manifesto. This framework guides all planning decisions alongside the Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan (LNP), which we are reviewing after five years to assess any necessary updates considering national policy.

Throughout 2025, the government will refine the NPPF, including defining the "grey belt" and infrastructure delivery. Under the new NPPF, Tandridge District Council (TDC) must provide 843 new homes.

Meanwhile, Surrey is set to transition from an 11-district authority to likely two or three unitary councils (Devolution). This will shift planning decisions further from local control, making our role in reviewing applications against the LNP even more vital. Currently, Councillors Claire Blackwell and Ian Booth (OLRG) represent our parish. The impact of council consolidation will become clearer after the 2026 elections. Meanwhile TDC is working to produce an acceptable Local Plan.

Limpsfield remains vulnerable to speculative development. As a Parish Council, we are committed to preserving our beautiful parish—much of it a conservation area—while supporting sustainable, suitable housing and ensuring sensitive development.

### **Recent Planning Applications**

- The Parish Council Planning Committee reviews all planning applications in Limpsfield at its monthly meeting (or occasionally at the full council meeting if deadlines require this or if it is a major application). This year we have reviewed over 100 householder applications and raised enforcement issues where planning conditions were breached.

Below are a few of the more significant applications that were decided or are ongoing:

- Orchard Cottage Farm, Red Lane (2023/358) – Demolition of existing buildings for four dwellings. LPC objected. TDC refused (Jan 2025, under new NPPF).
- Red Land Farm Stables – Demolition of existing stables and the erection of 12 dwelling with parking, access and associated works (Outline application with all matters reserved except access, layout and scale). (Change of description). This site has previously been given permission to build one residential dwelling and has since applied for 12 dwellings. We have objected to this application due to its location in green belt, also raising further concerns about sustainability of the

location, “grey belt” and “urban sprawl”. We await the decision of the planning officer.

- Hillview Farm (2024/846) – Replacement of commercial buildings with four new units. LPC supported with comments. TDC approved. A positive outcome, given the site’s history of residential planning attempts.
- 6 Detillens Lane (2024/1523 & 2024/351)\*\* – Two applications: one for two detached dwellings, another for one. LPC objected. One house approved; the two-dwelling application is under appeal.
- Lodge Cottage, High Street (2023/1437)\*\* – First-floor extensions in a key conservation area. LPC raised concerns about tree impact. Approval granted with a Tree Report condition.

### **Updates on Significant Developments**

NB: We take an active interest in significant applications that fall just outside our parish, but potentially impact it:

- Grasshopper Inn Site – Proposed care home. Refused by TDC; owner appealing.
- Limpsfield Grange School – Expansion and new driveway - withdrawn due to funding issues.
- Land Adjacent to Chichele Road – Application for 116 houses. Refused by TDC and dismissed at appeal. LPC contributed to legal fees.
- Oxted Quarry development – Currently on appeal. LPC contributed to legal fees.
- Red Lane Farm Stables – see above.

### **AONB Boundary Review – still ongoing**

The Surrey Hills [Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty](#), now Surrey Hills National Landscapes is in the final stages of the boundary review, which will decide whether additional areas adjacent to the existing AONB boundary should also be designated.

The Planning Committee submitted the following areas for inclusion within the revised boundary: West Heath, Limpsfield Common, Searn Bank, Caxton, Swaynesland and Tenchleys - with the opinion that the whole of this area (LNP Character LCA04 - Wooded Greensand Hills) should be in the Surrey Hills AONB. The AECOM Limpsfield Heritage and Character Assessment Report, September 2016 (produced for the Neighbourhood Plan) was also submitted to support the submissions.

We are happy to say that most of the areas we proposed have been included in the consultation and await the conclusion of this project, expected in May 2024.

## **Listed Buildings and Local Listed Assets – still ongoing.**

A reminder that we generally defer to the Surrey Historic Buildings Officer for planning applications that relate to listed buildings (and the Conservation Area).

This includes not only listed buildings on the English Heritage register, but structures on the TDC Local Listings List. Assets on local lists are not protected in the same way as listed buildings but can be afforded protection through the planning system as 'non-designated heritage assets'.

We submitted 17 local structures for consideration, most of which we believe have been included in the updated list.

The Local Listings / Buildings of Character project is expected to go into the final consultation phase over the next few months. When published, you will find the list here: <https://www.tandridge.gov.uk/Planning-and-building/Conservation-and-trees/Local-heritage-list-project>

## **Assets of Community Value**

Under the activity set out in our Neighbourhood Plan, we have renewed the status for The Bull Inn, The Carpenters Arms and Memorial Stores listed as Assets of Community Value and are also applying for this status to cover The Limpsfield Royal British Legion Clubhouse, St Peter's Church Hall, and the Glebe Meadow. This does not stop development but ensures that the land or buildings may not be sold without notification to the community and giving the community 6 months to come up with a bid for the property if it wishes.

***The planning committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6pm.  
We welcome comments of concern or members of the Parish to attend.***

***Please contact the Parish Clerk in advance if you wish to attend.***  
[clerk@limpsfield.org](mailto:clerk@limpsfield.org).

***For agenda and minutes of planning meetings, please see our website:  
[www.limpsfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk/planning](http://www.limpsfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk/planning)***

## BIODIVERSITY

We are pleased to share several biodiversity initiatives from the past year, aimed at supporting birds, bees, and our local environment. We believe biodiversity starts at home, and everyone can contribute through gardens, window boxes, hanging baskets, and tubs.

Key highlights include:

- Improved communication with residents via newsletters, our website, and a biodiversity board at the end of Detillens Lane.
- Daffodil displays and wildflower planting at the top of Limpsfield High Street, enhancing the area for both people and pollinators.
- Additional trees and hedging in Limpsfield Village.
- A successful biodiversity grant scheme, supporting small local projects.
- Launch of the Community Seed Swap initiative

Looking ahead to 2025, we plan to:

- Increase wildflower planting and develop bee lines to extend pollination routes.
- Celebrate 20 years of Limpsfield in Bloom by planting abundant cosmos, creating a bee corridor from the River Eden to Limpsfield Infant School.
- Support swift conservation by raising awareness and funding swift boxes for schools and churches willing to install them.
- Keep river areas clear of Himalayan Balsam, an invasive plant threatening wetland habitats.
- Monitor local river water quality.
- Work with landowners, farmers, the National Trust, and local councils on biodiversity strategies.

We look forward to continuing these efforts and welcome new ideas to enhance our local biodiversity.

*Thanks to our Biodiversity Champions: Ann Osborn, Robin Masefield, Maggie Morgan and Jenny Williams*

# PARISH ASSETS

## Additions in 2024/25

- Small noticeboard for Station Road East Bus Shelter, Swing signs for the village (for road closures) and community events and two benches at Glebe Meadow.
- We have also just added another bin to Glebe Meadow to be installed near to the furthest bench.

A Full list of Parish Assets (Register of Assets) can be found on our website. Link on the home page.

We are currently undertaking a full review and evaluation of all parish assets.

As part of devolution, Tandridge District Council has offered the Parish Council Tidy's Green and the Stoneleigh Road Allotments as assets in the Asset Transfer programme. This is ongoing and we are awaiting further information and associated costs and responsibilities before making any decision.

## The K6 Phone Box – High Street

This phone box opposite St Peter's Church has been an integral part of Limpsfield Village for many decades. It was marked for decommissioning by BT at the end of 2024. As a listed building, BT Payphones are not allowed to remove the structure without consultation and the process allows for adoption by the community. We completed the process for adoption of the phone box in April 2025 and are soliciting ideas for its new purpose.

## Limpsfield Chart Orchard, Stoneleigh Road

We have continued to maintain this space (just off the cricket pitch) on an ongoing basis for residents and visitors to sit in peace and enjoy the orchard trees, wildflowers and birdlife. Maintenance includes mowing, hedge trimming, pruning of the trees and planting of bulbs and wildflowers.

Please make sure you pay it a visit when you are in the area. It is a lovely peaceful space.

## Limpsfield Chart Playground

- We continue to monitor the playground monthly. This is also checked weekly by the Parks & Recreation team of Tandridge District Council.
- In 2024/25, we replaced the spring of one of the spring rockers. The playground continues to be enjoyed by many on a daily basis.

## Noticeboards & Bus Shelters

- We installed a new small noticeboard at Snatts Hill/SRE noticeboard. The noticeboard area within the shelter has been renovated.
- We installed a new pin board opposite Limpsfield CofE Infant School for community posters.
- We are very happy to see that flyposting is becoming less frequent and is monitored by Councillors on a regular basis. Please note that while we encourage posters and



information for genuine local community events and local businesses to be posted onto the boards and bus shelters, you should ask for permission first from [the clerk](#).

- Posters must be attached with drawing pins and not staples please. Unapproved material and posters and flyers with staples will be removed.

**Parish Maps.** All digitised maps are housed on our website as PDFs for public access. Most of our maps are also in a secure Map cabinet in the Local History Room of the Oxted Library. Please note the maps are in a locked cabinet, the key for which must be requested from the Library Manager. We urge residents to go to the library to have a look at them.

**The Horse Trough at Detillens Lane.** Limpsfield's historic horse trough, once a landmark at Detillens Lane and the A25, was stolen in August 2024. The Council is now working to replace it with a high-quality replica and more secure installation (which would not be funded by insurance). We launched an appeal for additional funding and are very grateful for the community's enthusiasm and donations. Fundraising is now closed as we have reached the required funding, thanks to donations and a generous offer from the Drinking Fountain Association.

## GRANTS AWARDED IN 2024/25

This year, we have given financial support to the following local projects and organisations:

- Air Ambulance – donation towards funding for the local Air Ambulance service. £500.
- Chart Coffee Mornings – financial support to help the running of this very worthwhile community endeavour, organised by the Chart Fair Committee £910.
- Chart Fair – administrative support for the Chart Fair, as an official committee of the Limpsfield Parish Council, and associated activities £375.
- Christmas Tree – donation for a tree in the annual St Peter's Church Christmas Tree Parade. £50.
- Citizens Advice Bureau – Tandridge £350.
- Limpsfield in Bloom – donation towards the purchase of plants and seeds. £500
- Limpsfield Village Fete – financial support for activity and entertainment for this year's Community Summer Fete on Glebe Meadow. £800
- Limpsfield Village Stores Association – Financial support for Post Office refurbishment. Remainder of £2750 grant awarded in 2023/24.
- Oxted District First Responders - financial support for maintenance of Defibrillators located at Grub Street, Cricket Club, Carpenters Arms and St Andrews Way flats. £140.

## FINANCE & GOVERNANCE UPDATE

*Finance Committee members: Antony Taylor (Chair), Thomas Briggs, Bernie de Haldevang, Mark Wilson and John Thompson. Responsible Financial Officer - Sophie Martin.*

- Our priority is the responsible and transparent spending of our available funds on projects that will benefit the Limpsfield Community, on maintenance of Parish assets, and on ongoing improvements to our immediate natural and urban environment for the enjoyment of the community at large.
- LPC derives no income from sources such as burial grounds, community halls or allotments.
- We currently have no loans or other liabilities.
- Careful and conservative budgeting ensures we remain financially prepared while continuing to support key projects and community priorities.
- Unless already confirmed, we assume no income from CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) and assume minimal VAT returns.

### **Cash Reserves and Bank Reconciliation**

- The year-end bank reconciliation is complete and shows FY24/25 beginning with £84,371 and ending with £78,318.
- We have 5 accounts: General Spending, CIL, Chart / Playground, LNP\* and in 2024 we opened a Liquidity Account with NatWest alongside our other accounts to use our reserves to earn interest. Total interest income of £1,029 for FY24/25
- *\*We have dedicated our Limpsfield Neighbourhood Plan (LNP) account towards any expenditure for the LNP Review for this coming year.*

### **Ringfenced Reserves**

- The Parish Council maintains a prudent reserve equal to 50% of the annual precept – currently £16,658.
- In addition, the Council has reserved £10,000 in the Limpsfield Chart Account for Chart Playground repairs and decommissioning if required by the National Trust after expiry of the lease.
- The balance of the Chart account (£3610) is also ringfenced for Chart/Playground activity.
- Limpsfield Way maintenance fund - £2400 annual allocation plus carry forward

## 2024/25 BUDGET OVERVIEW

### Total income in FY24/25 – £49,516 – including:

- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds £11,141
- Interest £1,029
- Precept of £33,315
- Refunds / miscellaneous £718
- VAT refunds £3,313

For **FY24/25**, we set aside:

Biodiversity Initiatives	£8,300
Conservation Area Enhancement	£9,220
Footpaths & Bridleways	£4,000
General Running Costs	£25,262
Grants & A137	£4,000
LNP Review	£2,500
Maintenance of Parish Assets	£3,750
Security / Business Support	£3,000

Overall approved (budgeted) expenditure and expenditure approved over the course of the year: (including projects still in progress and carried over from previous year) **£76,400**

### Expenditure FY24/25

- Total actual expenditure to 31 March 2024 was £55,569
- We had £420 outstanding to pay for FY24/25 budgeted projects (Conservation Area).
- Percentage of budget spent – 73%

### VAT FY24/25

- LPC claims VAT on a quarterly basis to assist cashflow.
- The Council reclaimed £3,313 in VAT in FY24/25. NB. This includes Q4 2023/24.
- Outstanding VAT reclaim for 2024/25 is £1,166.75 (at 29 April 2025).

*Please note all figures are not yet audited by the external auditors.*

## BUDGET FOR FY25/26

- Our approved budget can be found on our website.
- We are however currently reviewing specific areas of expenditure to accommodate potential costs related to Devolution and Planning matters.

### Funds Overview:

- **Carried Over (excluding ringfenced reserves):** £49,145
- **Expected Income:**
  - Precept: £33,315
  - VAT Refunds (estimated): £2,000
  - CIL (confirmed for April 2025): £3,508
  - Other (Liquidity Account interest): £1,000
- **Total Available Funds: £88,968**

### Budgeted Expenditure for 2025/26:

- Biodiversity Initiatives: £2,000
- CAAMP Projects: £4,000
- Footpaths & Bridleways: £3,000
- General Running Costs: £26,000
- Grants / S137: £4,000
- LNP Implementation Projects: £10,000\*
- LNP Review Costs (approved 9/12/24): £7,500\*
- LW Maintenance Fund: £2,400
- Maintenance of Parish Assets: £4,000
- Security & Crime / Business Support: £3,000

**Total Planned Expenditure: £65,900** (*\*in review as noted above*)

### Transparency Code and audits

Limpsfield Parish Council voluntarily complies with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. In accordance with the Code, the Council's financial details are published on its website, and this includes a list of all payments. The Code requires a list of payments over £100. All monthly payment overviews can be found on our website.

### External Audit and the Annual Return (AGAR)

In accordance with legislation for local Councils with a turnover under £200,000, Limpsfield Parish Council submits its Annual Governance and Accounting Return (AGAR) each year for a limited assurance external audit. The external auditor is PKF Littlejohn.

### Audit dates

Local Councils must publish on their website their unaudited Annual Return (or AGAR – Annual Governance and Accountability Return) along with the Notice of Period for the Exercise of Public Rights before 31 July. Once the external audit is complete, the auditor's comments are also published on the website. The External Audit must be completed by the end of September.

## **Internal Audit**

In accordance with Audit Regulations, all Parish Councils have an internal audit for assurance that the Council is conducting its affairs lawfully and handling its public money properly. An independent and competent internal auditor is appointed by the Council each year. Our internal auditor is Mulberry & Co. Ltd, who audit many town and Parish Councils.

The internal auditor's report forms part of the Annual Return, which is published on the Council's website, and any issues raised by the internal auditor must be noted by the Council for future action before it completes its Annual Governance Statement for the Annual Return. Internal audit is the public's assurance that the Council is proceeding lawfully and effectively.

We completed another successful audit for FY2024/25 on 25<sup>th</sup> April, with no issues or major recommendations. Minor recommendations will be discussed in our July meeting.

**All enquiries on any of the above, please contact The Parish Clerk  
via email at [clerk@limpsfield.org](mailto:clerk@limpsfield.org) or via our post box at:**

**The Pound  
Wolf's Row  
Limpsfield  
Surrey  
RH8 0EB.**

**Please look out for updates on our [website](#).**

**PLEASE NOTE- we now have a new web address to comply with NALC / government recommendations that parish councils adopt a “.gov.uk” URL. Please find us at [www.limpsfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.limpsfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk)**

**You can also find us on social media @LimpsfieldParishCouncil on both Instagram and Facebook.**