

HATFIELD PEVEREL PARISH COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT

2023/24

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Chairman's Report

Firstly, I would like to thank all my fellow councillors for all their hard work throughout the year, I would also like to extend an invitation to any residents of Hatfield Peverel who would like to get involved with the Parish Council to contact Sarah Gaeta the Parish Clerk. There are three vacancies, and you can find Sarah's e mail address on the council's website.

Here is a quick overview of the things the Parish Council have been doing for the community and the project the councillors have been working on.

Play Equipment

Improvements to the play area in the Strutt Memorial Recreation Ground. A big thank you to all involved for the delivery of the project at the end of the summer of 2023; a special thanks goes out to the project team and the contractor, with special thanks to Sarah and Diane for the hours of work and heartache that went into the delivery of such a successful project. Also, many thanks to Kompan for the design and installation.

The Nounsley play area project will be starting in late summer with some new equipment, alongside some of the existing favourites.

Gym Equipment

The project has now been delivered and is being used. Soon, the council hopes to offer training sessions with a professional for those who are new to using this equipment.

Tennis Courts

The Parish Council took on board the consultations carried out, where it was shown residents would like tennis courts. We have consulted with the Lawn Tennis Association and plan to install two courts to be installed near the car park on the recreation ground .

We have now received the permissions needed to start work, but a start date is to be confirmed.

How can we afford to do this work?

As part of the development in our village, developers must contribute toward improvement within the village, this is done by having to pay toward improvements to amenities and improvements to our village. This money is referred to as Section 106 contributions, which every year we must to identify where the money can be spent, putting forwards projects for approval to Braintree District Council.

As a council we are involved with many different projects which we welcome involvement with:

Community Park Committee.

Community Events Committee.

Environmental Advisory Group.

Youth Services Working Party.

We also need councillors to help represent and support our community. We have a team of councillors at the Community Information Event who can talk about all the different areas the council get involved in, so please ask questions and maybe get involved.

I'd like to thank all our councillors for the time and effort they put in. It is an unpaid role so again many thanks to them and the volunteers on the working parties, committees and advisory groups.

A special thanks to Sarah and Carly for all the hard work they do for council and a welcome to our newest member of staff, Janice.

Councillor Mark Weale - Chairman of Hatfield Peverel Parish Council

Environment Advisory Group Report

The EAG is tasked to consider those environmental concerns that affect us in Hatfield Peverel and Nounsley. We meet each month to try and resolve the environmental issues that face the parish. We have been a group of councillors, the Village Wildlife Champion, and an interested member of the public. As well as myself, we have Councillors Diane Wallace, David Broddle and Marel Elliston, the Village Wildlife Champion, Donna Goddard, and the people's representative, Lesley Moxhay. Lesley is also the Tree Warden for the village. My thanks go to them all for volunteering their knowledge and services for the good of our parish.

As you can imagine, it has been another action-packed year for the team. The biggest change to the recreation ground was the installation of multi gym equipment last summer. We were fortunate in having Fatima Whitbread and Courtney Tulloch to formally open the area on a very hot day! We are hoping to get in an expert who will be able to demonstrate how these items can be used for maximum effect. The MUGA pitch has been relined. The Memorial Gate has been sanded down and given a re-spray. We were pleased to note that both the recreation ground and the Nounsley Play Area received a Silver award from the Essex Playing Field Association. You will have noticed that six young trees have been planted around the rec. These are two Field Maples, two Silver Birches, and two Copper Beeches. We have also installed tree guards to better safeguard their future. The area around the duck pond continues to require ongoing maintenance. We are pleased to see that most of the flowers that were put in last year have survived and have started to bloom again this year. Unfortunately, so have the nettles and brambles! We have had to organise working parties to try and keep them under control.

Donna Goddard's merry band of volunteers have continued to carry out remedial work in the village. They normally meet on the second Saturday and fourth Friday of the month. All are welcome. She has put forward an Environmental Policy which was adopted by the Parish Council in May last year. A large part of recent EAG meetings has been trying to fine tune her Wilder Village Plan. It is hoped to have this ready for June's P.C. meeting. The residents need to be aware that there will be less cutting of those areas looked after by the council. Although this means that certain areas will not look neat, the wild plants that will be left to grow will provide food for birds and insects.

The three fields at Stonepath Meadow continue to need our attention. The aim is to create three wildflower meadows. This means that cutting needs to be carefully managed. We have planted young whips and hedges around the site. The nettle and brambles need to be cut back until the hedge can get itself established.

We continue to tackle those day-to-day problems to ensure our village looks tidy and attractive. Areas covered during the year included:

Attending to dangerous or dying trees and the cutting back/down of encroaching vegetation. Most of the work last year was routine. Note that we can only deal with trees that are on Parish Council land! Can any owners who have hedges bordering on the footpaths within the village please ensure that surplus vegetation is kept trimmed back? This does not only apply to our country walks, but also to those hedges alongside our pavements.

Refurbishing and renovation of the playground equipment at both the rec and the Nounsley play area. This is an ongoing issue. Health and Safety must be paramount. The children's play area at the rec was upgraded with new equipment. This has made the area even more popular. Note that it will be Nounsley's turn to get fresh equipment late this summer.

Refurbishment and installation of benches. Two new benches have been purchased and are waiting to be installed. One will go on the rec, the other at the Nounsley Play area.

Purchase of both litter bins and dog mess bins.

Maintenance of the Cemetery. We have put up bat and bird boxes which were built and painted by the local Cub Scouts. A separate area has now been delineated so that the earth spoil heaps can be contained. Dead and dying trees have been removed. Bulbs have been planted in the area behind the memorial fence.

Most of the above duties are carried out by our handymen, David and Damon Wallace. We must thank them for their hard work and dedication in keeping our parish looking so pleasant. I know that they often carry out work, over and above, what is expected of them. A mention should also go out to our litter pickers. Please make their jobs easier by either taking your litter home with you, or by using the litter bins provided.

If you can think of any improvements regarding the environment, or facilities, within the parish, then please let our clerk know. Who knows, the P.C. might be able to do something about it!

Councillor Ted Munt

Traffic Advisory Group Report

The TAG has met five times during the past year, but has recently suffered the loss of one of its members and therefore needs to co-opt at least one local resident to enable it to fulfil all the tasks which it currently undertakes. In the meantime, the business of the TAG is being maintained through email and telephone discussions.

We have continued to utilise the seven Speed Indicator and Vehicle Activated signs owned by the Parish Council, moving them at intervals around the 13 approved locations within the village. We have also had the benefit of the ECC owned VAS unit which has now been at The Green for over two years. It is our intention to purchase a further unit in the near future, the funds for which funds have already been ring fenced from last year's budget. In future, it is likely that units will remain in situ for longer periods as we will have limited access to the relocation service, currently provided by the village handyman.

We remain involved in numerous traffic, speed, highway and parking issues, with varying measures of success. Additional speed warning roundels have been painted on all the access roads to the village, additional warning signage has been installed near Letch's Corner and applications have been submitted for yellow lines to be extended in two locations. We are awaiting implementation of a 20mph zone in the vicinity of the schools. Application has also been made to have the speed limit from near Does Corner to The Green reduced to 40mph.

We continue to spend much time reporting highway issues – including potholes, defective streetlights, missing road signs and broken drain covers – and have engaged directly with several County Councillors responsible for ECC Highways/Jacobs, again with varying levels of success. We constantly face the response that issues are not considered to be high priority and in some cases it has taken direct intervention by County Councillors to achieve a satisfactory solution. Whilst ECC budget constraints are recognised, on occasions we have had to report issues as a danger to life in order to achieve a result. A recent change in the approach by ECC to dealing with potholes, in particular, will – we hope – lead to an improvement in lead times for effective repairs.

We are indebted to Ron Elliston for his regular contact with Braintree District Council in respect of fly tipping issues. Through his good relationship with BDC, such issues are dealt with quickly and effectively.

ECC's Local Area Transport group meetings remain "on hold", having been suspended during the Covid crisis. Re-introduction is deferred to an unspecified date later this year.

We have held joint meetings with ECC and HPPC's footpath representative which has resulted in the long overdue repair of the footway running behind New Road. We remain in discussion over three additional lengths of footway which are in similar need of repair.

Research has recently recommenced into the possibility of installing electric vehicle charging points in either/both Hadfelda Square and Village Hall car parks and an initial meeting has been held with a third-party supplier/adviser.

Other ongoing work includes a review of the current car park layout at the village hall, the possibility of some additional lighting columns at the Strutt Memorial Ground, improvements to the zebra crossings, car park permits and additional/improved signage for the A12 slip road at Bury Lane. We also handle a myriad of traffic related issues raised by residents – and hope that – in the main – we are able to provide a satisfactory response.

Finally, the TAG has played, and will continue to play, a key role in discussions with National Highways and ECC on the proposals to widen the A12. However, at present this project is on hold following a legal challenge to the Minister’s decision to give outline planning consent – we await developments.

Thanks go to all members of the TAG over the past year, and those who have assisted with issues that have arisen. In particular, we have greatly appreciated the active support from ECC Councillor Derrick Louis who has been instrumental in many of the successes achieved in the past year.

John Cockell, Chairman of TAG

Community Park Report

The work of the committee this year has focussed on evaluation of reports commissioned to assess the nature of the existing ecology and biological status on the site.

This has helped to inform an initial Vision Statement for the future of the site which can be implemented through a management plan allowing the site to be opened to public access.

The main areas presently being investigated include:

Enabling access to the site via the existing footpath network where possible and provision of car parking facilities at the site itself.

Developing opportunities for creating an income stream to support ongoing works required to operate the site.

Sourcing grant funding available to ensure the site remains sustainable.

Layout of relevant activities and features on the site to support use as a Community Park while achieving improvements in biodiversity.

Engagement with the local community to encourage volunteer activity and enable ongoing consultation with residents on what amenities could be provided and how the site can be operated safely.

The project is a long-term venture and it is hoped that interest can be generated among local residents to achieve a successful open space which will bring benefit to both the local population and encourage an increase in habitat and local wildlife using the site.

Councillor Mike Renow, Chairman of the Community Park Committee

NDP Executive Committee Report

Over the course of this year the NDP team have completed a review of the existing NDP and in conjunction with DAC Planning Consultants and Braintree District Council completed a draft following the consultation steps required prior to submission for examination.

The examiner's report has been completed and the plan is currently being updated to accommodate the recommendations made by the examiner.

This action is expected to be completed by the end of May 2024 following which a date can be set for a referendum to take place on the revised plan.

Subject to the plan receiving support from more than 50% of those residents voting in the referendum it will then proceed to being adopted by Braintree District Council to form part of the considerations when deciding planning applications made within the parish effective until 2038.

Thanks are due to the members of the Hatfield Peverel Review Committee, DAC Planning Consultants and members of Braintree District Council planning department for the assistance in bring the NDP review to this point.

Councillor Mike Renow

Section 106 Report

The Strutt Memorial Project which included the installation of a new play area, climbing frame and outdoor gym area was completed at the end of August 2023. The Parish Council held an opening ceremony on the 9th of September 2023 (one of the hottest days of the year) and which was attended by Cllr Mark Weale Chair of Hatfield Peverel Parish Council along with Cllr Diana Garrod Chair of Braintree District Council, Ian Twinley MBE Deputy Lieutenant of Essex, Fatima Whitbread MBE and Courtney Tulloch GB gymnast who took the honour of cutting the ribbon. Representatives from Bellway Homes, Barratt/David Wilson Homes and the Doctors Surgery also attended. An enjoyable event which was very well attended despite the very hot weather. A big thank you to everyone who was involved.

The new pathway from the village hall car park leading to the gym area was installed to ensure easy and possible access for all users all year round to both the gym area and the tennis courts.

The Nounsley Playground Project which includes the upgrade of play equipment recently went out to tender and three bids were received from Kompan, Wicksteed and Proludic. Site visits were made by five playground suppliers. The Working Party evaluated each of the bids as set by the evaluation criteria in the tender documents. The company with the highest score (Kompan) was recommended by the Working Party at the Parish Council meeting held on 13th May, and which was agreed. It is anticipated that work will commence at Nounsley playing field end of August.

Planning Permission for a double tennis court facility with floodlights on the Strutt Memorial Recreation Ground was granted by Braintree District Council's Planning Committee at a meeting held on the 16th April 2024. The Decision Notice is anticipated any day now which will enable the Parish Council's consultant to finalise the documents to be able to go out to tender for construction.

Remedial work to PRoW footpath number 18 at the rear of New Road leading to the recreation ground has recently been completed to a high standard. The work has ensured the path will be long lasting which was enabled through S106 contributions.

A contractor has been appointed for PRoW footpath number 7 at the rear of the Scout Hut, and hopefully work will be carried out over the coming months.

Meanwhile members of the S106 Working Party are continuing to look at further PRoW's within the Parish where upgrades would be beneficial.

The Allotment Association project of new fencing and access gates at the Old Site adjoining the cemetery was also recently completed. The contractor does need to return to install a post and wire fence on the far boundary once harvesting of the adjoining field has been completed. Another good job was done.

Members together with the Village Hall Management Committee are considering using S106 monies at the Village Hall to remove the asbestos roof, insulate and replace with a new roof to then be able to install solar panels. Breaking down the work may make things simpler for the Committee to manage.

Solar panels will help with the running costs of the hall. A huge project, and a lot of thought and planning is needed.

The Community Park will also benefit from S106 contributions, and the Community Park Committee are working hard with members of the Working Party to prepare a Management Plan for the site to be able to open the same to the community in due course.

Regular meetings are held by the Working Party, and quarterly meetings are also held with Braintree District Council. A report is provided at each monthly Parish Council meeting to keep the community and Councillors updated on all projects.

Huge progress has been achieved over this last year seeing some projects through to completion.

A big thank you to all members of the Working Party, and to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk for all their help and continuing support.

Councillor Diane Wallace

Parish Paths Partnership representative (P3) report

This is my first full year as Path Warden for the Parish. Ken continues to provide invaluable help and support from his years of experience in this role, and as we progress Section 106 improvements.

1 Parish Paths Partnership (P3) scheme

This scheme continues to be supported by individual parishes and special interest groups like the Ramblers and a number of others. Some local parishioners and local volunteer working groups continue to take action on particular problems they identify as they see the need and are able to do so. However, support from ECC Highways is difficult to secure.

We currently have no local area ECC Footpaths Inspector, I continue to be in touch with ECC to check on progress to fulfil this role.

2 FP4 - extension of path from The Street via Bennett Way, New Road to FP18 (Cutts Close to the Rec')

As reported last year, the parish needs the entire length of this key village path to acquire permanent legal protection, and to ensure it is maintainable at public expense by ECC. Currently only the length from The Street to the northern arm of the Bennett Way cul-de-sac has this status, appearing on the county Definitive Map as FP4.

John Cockell (TAG chair) reports that Eastlight Community Housing Ltd (ECHL) has recently dedicated the remaining two sections of path for takeover by ECC, ultimately to be added to the Definitive Map.

The ongoing adoption issue of the path between 14 and 16 Laburnum Way seems to be making progress. This section is also desperate for resurfacing, and once adopted it is hoped to progress this work.

3 Public Rights of Way improvements under Section 106 agreements

Resulting from development approvals granted to developers within the parish, they entered into Section 106 agreements with Braintree District Council, covenanting to pay contributions to add to or to improve a number of our facilities. Some of this money has been allocated for public rights of way improvements. Three paths have so far been identified for attention:-

3.1 FP18 - Cutts Close to The Rec' (*for more recent residents of the village, the park*)

I am very pleased to confirm that the repairs to its crumbling 120m of ditch side edging and surface repairs at 9 locations along a total length of 150m are now completed.

(This path was upgraded to the current standard in 2009. The deteriorating edging was first reported to ECC in March 2016 then again in October 2020 but on both occasions not given a priority level requiring immediate remedial work. Not wanting to suffer continuing deterioration we determined that this was a prime candidate for repair using Section 106 funding earmarked for public rights of way improvements).

3.2 FP7 - Church Road to Sportsmans Lane

An outline solution measure for winter flooding of the section from Church Road to the lower kissing gate - a short drainage channel between the gate and an adjacent field ditch. Also, improvements to the surface towards the Scout Hut where water is draining from the adjacent field. The work has been out to tender and a contractor appointed. We are now waiting a suitable date with the landowners to carry out the work at some point over the summer.

(Winter flooding first reported to ECC in August 2015, then again in January 2016. Following an application of an amount of permeable material (road planings) to raise the surface level of the affected area ECC reported problem resolved in October 2017. In subsequent incidences of flooding in 2018 we made clear to ECC that the quantity of planings applied had not been effective in resolving the problem.

This is a popular and frequently used path for local residents so a more effective solution is required. Discussing the issue with a local land drainage contractor it was felt that a combination of a short drainage channel (installed from the lowest point of flooding into the adjacent field ditch) and greater length and level of permeable surface dressing was likely to be a more effective solution and so a candidate for Section 106 funding.)

3.3 FP34 - A12 underpass to Terling Hall Road - levelling of the surface of the length beside the railway embankment from the Ter to Terling Hall Road (*subject of a number of complaints by walkers since the diversion*). Doubts have arisen over the value of further progressing this issue. It depends in part on the money still available after that for FP18 and FP7 has been committed. This improvement is still be considered, but will depend on other priorities.

3.4 PRow Map for Sorrells Field - One portion of this funding is required to be allocated for a parish map display showing the public rights of way to be sited within the new housing on the old Sorrells Field site.

Once costs of the tasks have been established, we will know what other needs could be considered within the allocated sum.

4 Nine Walks around Hatfield Peverel

The online version in PDF format of Catherine Voysey's booklet "Nine Walks around Hatfield Peverel" is now available on the parish council's website. Anyone finding anything misleading or inaccurate is asked to refer it in the first instance to Parish Clerk Sarah Gaeta.

Richard Alston, Parish Paths Partnership (P3) representative, Hatfield Peverel

Youth Services Working Party

- A stall was used at 'Christmas in the Park' event to start the process to solicit requests from parents/young people on what they want and start the process to communicate some of our ideas. Unfortunately, few young people of the correct age range attended so only a few ideas were suggested.
- A hoped for more detailed data gathering event took place between the Christmas and New Year. Despite some considerable Facebook attention about this and lots of online discussions, no one (parents or youngsters) attended during the two-hour slot in the village hall café to give any suggestions.
- We did have two Scout leaders who visited us, and they gave an insight into working with the Scout Explorer group (14-18 years of age). They stated that most youngsters in this age bracket mostly want somewhere to meet up/hang-out with friends. They suggested a shelter in the park would be more advantageous, but no action has been taken on this suggestion so far.
- We engaged with Braintree's District Youth & Community work group and we tried to organise a Youth Bus at the Village Hall car park. Unfortunately, the weekend the vehicle was booked for, it broke down and was unable to attend.
- During a Facebook exchange regarding the event on point 2 above, there was considerable conversation about the need for a Skate Park in Hatfield Peverel. Unfortunately, S106 funds could not be used for the building of a skate park.
- There has been discussion of a 'pump track' or similar in the Community Park area but this has also not yet progressed any further.

Councillor Richard Parker

Financial Report

On 31st March 2024, the Parish Council carried over £164,350.74 into the new financial year, with reserves broken down as follows:

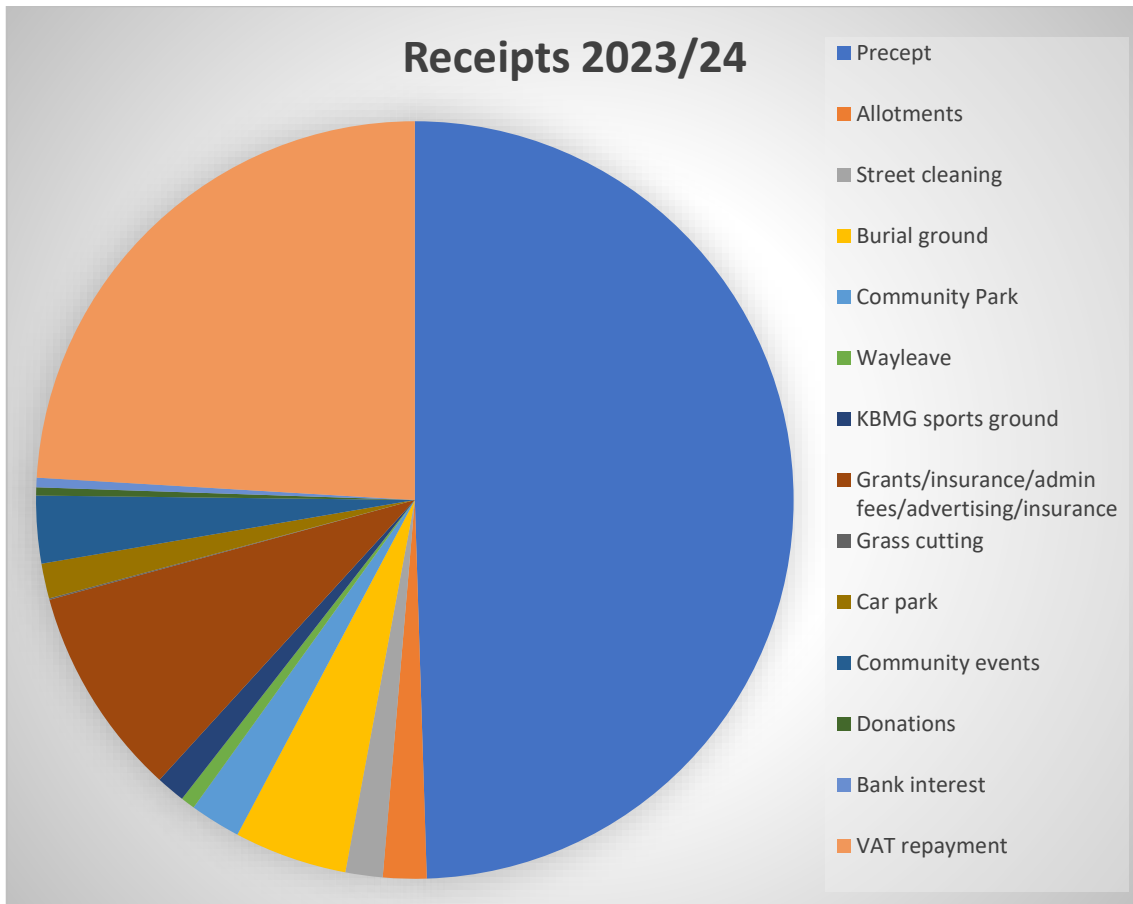
Earmarked reserves:

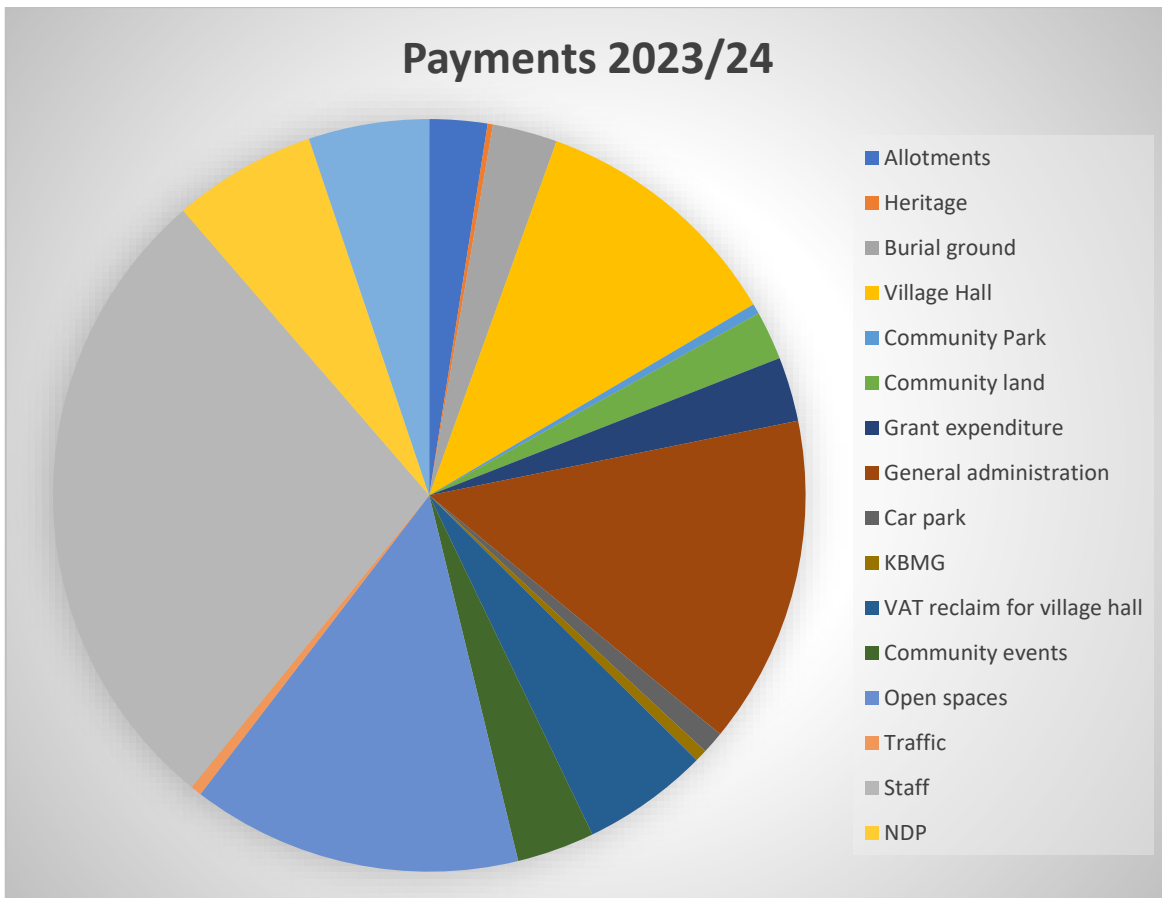
Football Club reinstatement fund	13,010.03	
MUGA pitch fund	1,184.59	
Community Events	3,718.65	
Community Park	41,081.90	
Hadfelda Square Car Park	21,226.11	
Burial Ground	6,650.38	
Traffic	5,000.00	
		92,501.66

General reserve	71,849.08	
		71,849.08

Total reserves		164,350.74
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Receipts and payments were apportioned as follows:





For further information, the **Annual Governance documents** submitted to the External Auditor can be viewed here:

<https://www.hatfieldpeverelpc.com/parish-council/finance/>

Sarah Gaeta, Responsible Financial Officer

Essex County Councillor Report

It has been a great pleasure to work with Hatfield Peverel parish Council over the past year. Below is a selection of the items that I have worked with them on:

Tackling speeding concerns

I commissioned speed surveys around the village and from these came “slow” and “30mph roundels” painted on all main entrances to the village on all. There will also be 20mph signage and lights installed outside the schools in the next few months.

Hatfield Peverel Library

I ensured that the works were completed as quickly as possible, including an LED light upgrade.

Hatfield Peverel Junior School

I have worked closely with the school to minimise the impact of RAAC, ensured a temporary 30mph speed limit was put in place and vegetation was cut back when they moved to Hatfield Place.

Highways defects

I have quickly followed up on any reported defects to ensure these have been repaired as quickly as possible.

Grant Funding

I was able to provide a new defibrillator at the Swan Inn, tree planting on the Recreation Ground (where I also joined in with the planting and much needed repairs at the Village Hall).

Essex County Councillor Derrick Louis

Member of Parliament Report

I would like to give my thanks to the Parish Council for all your work within the local community and for the constructive engagement you have with me on issues of local concern. As you will know, I have supported thousands of constituents and helped local businesses and community groups across all parts of the constituency and this engagement is vital to ensure that we work together on behalf of residents locally. Parish councils are a vital part of our local communities delivering services to residents and businesses and advocating for them. I am pleased to work with them and am providing this update for your information.

Supporting Schools

Our schools are the bedrock to the future success of youngsters across the District and the quality of their education and experiences at school are of vital importance. I continue to work closely with the primary and secondary schools across the constituency to ensure that they are providing a high-quality education to our children. As part of this, I organise regular events with our schools, such as my Get Witham Reading project, and I raise directly with central Government issues around standards and school funding. I have continually made representations for new investment for our schools and earlier this year I successfully secured commitments from the Government to put more funding into local schools, including rebuilding projects at schools affected by RAAC. This funding will make a difference in learning and enable those schools to develop plans to modernise their buildings and learning environments. The announcements made just before the start of the new school year in September that a number of schools would not be able to re-open due to structural concerns after RAAC had been identified caused understandable concerns among parents. Since the initial announcement, I have been working closely with our impacted schools including St Andrews to ensure that disruption to lessons has been kept to a minimum, and lobbied the Government to deliver the resources needed in both the short and long term to resolve the issue.

Law & Order

I have always supported our police to do their job to fight crime, support victims and keep our communities safe. During my tenure as Home Secretary, I gave the police new powers to deal effectively with criminals, including stop and search to take knives and drugs off our streets, supported increases in prison sentences for serious crimes, and put in place more support for victims of crime, including those affected by domestic abuse. I also secured new funding for our police meaning that police officer numbers across the country could rise to their highest-ever numbers, including here in Essex. Since 2016 we have seen police numbers in Essex rise by more than 900, with around half of those funded through my police uplift programme. This means Essex Police has more officers patrolling our streets, dealing with rural crime and supporting victims. I continue to campaign for robust action to be taken to tackle crime, more support for victims and liaise with the three local district commanders who cover the Witham constituency to raise local issues and concerns.

Health & Wellbeing Services

Over the past year, I have been in regular contact with the NHS over the delivery of health and wellbeing services across the Braintree District and have also raised these matters directly with

Government Ministers and in Parliament. I have been consistently clear that due to the sizeable development and growth over recent years in our part of Essex, we need investment to deliver more healthcare services locally.

Planning & Development

We continue to see significant levels of new development across the constituency, and over the past year, I have continued to campaign with local residents and community groups to oppose unsuitable developments. Too often developments take place which damage the natural environment while not providing the infrastructure and services needed to support population growth. While we need more local homes for local people, I have always been clear that the best people to decide where new residential and commercial developments should take place – and which sites should be protected from development – are local communities themselves. I continue to work with communities to identify appropriate sites to develop, to campaign for new infrastructure and services, and to protect important landscapes and habitats. I have also worked with residents across Hatfield Peverel to raise concerns about the impact of developments in the area given the scale of new developments this area has had in recent years.

Local Highways

Road safety and road maintenance matters continue to dominate my correspondence with Essex Highways and the County Council. Our local road network has faced the impact of damage caused by the winter weather and in some places needs repairs, resurfacing and maintenance. To assist constituents in raising concerns with the condition of local roads I have set up a page on my website where potholes and road defects can be reported to me and passed on to Essex County Council or National Highways:

<https://www.priti4witham.co.uk/report-a-pothole/>

A12 Widening Scheme

The A12 Widening Scheme to invest over £1 billion in transforming the A12 between the Boreham Interchange (junction 19) and Marks Tey (junction 25) was approved by the Government earlier this year. There has, however, been a legal challenge submitted to the decision and this may cause a delay in the works progressing. I continue to be in contact with the Government over this matter as it is vital that the road is widened so that safety is improved and congestion is reduced. In relation to Hatfield Peverel, the new junction proposed to the east of the village has been designed in a way that it can be future-proofed to support the development of plans for bypass. We would all like to see a bypass developed to reduce traffic through the village and I will keep on working to explore the options to get a fully-funded plan put together for this.

A120 Dualling Scheme

I am continuing to campaign for the investment to dual the A120 between Braintree and the A12. Working with Essex County Council, I secured funding for a feasibility study which led to a preferred option being announced and welcomed. That work has been taken forward by National Highways and I am pressing the Government to provide the funding for the scheme to progress further.

Backing Our Businesses

Essex is a county of entrepreneurs and throughout the Witham constituency we have many fantastic and innovative businesses. We have a strong number of small and medium sized businesses who provide the majority of local jobs. Last summer, I visited family run timber firm C J Ashby who are based in Hatfield Peverel, and discussed some of the issues facing the road haulage sector. As ever, if there are any issues or matters I can assist the Parish Council, local community groups, households, and businesses with please do let me know and get in touch with me via withammp@parliament.uk, or write to me at Priti Patel MP, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA.

Rt Hon Priti Patel**Member of Parliament for Witham**