

Chairs report to 2026 annual parish meeting, held 29/04/2026.

Greetings to you all. I am your Parish Chairperson, my name is Howard Briggs. Normally myself and your Councillors would sit facing you all but not at the Village meeting. So a quick introduction to your Councillors, in no particular order : Jane Thomson, Tim Gebbett, Paul MacAllister, Mark Pullen, Jules Davies, Reg Pullen, Mike Smith, Sarah Coulson, Andrew Medhurst. Ten in all , a full compliment which makes us a competent council : that's official by the way , it means we can do things we couldn't do if we weren't competent. Mainly financial stuff. Thank you to you all for the extensive work you have done during the past year.

To enable us ten volunteers to function we have office staff, who are paid and who make it all work. I would like to offer a special tribute to them because they have not had an easy year due to some long-term illness.

Jo (Tsigerides) is our Clerk , Victoria is our Deputy Clerk, Louise is the RFO and Debbie is our Temporary Clerk as both Jo and Victoria have been unwell – but hopefully will be back in harness very soon. Heartfelt thanks to you all.

Well what have we been doing this past year?

There is of course the 'normal' stuff i.e. monthly parish meetings which are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, excepting August. These are fully open to the public and you are all cordially invited to attend – we don't charge ! On top of these are the Committee meetings the main ones of which are Open Spaces, Planning, Community Facilities and F&GP. These also are open to the public.

The Parish owns various parcels of land, including football and cricket pitches, all of which require routine maintenance, plus children's playground , skate park and Bennians pavilion. (the village hall is independent and is run by the Village Hall Trustees, although it sort of belongs to the Parish Council.)

During the last year we had two encroachments by Travellers which had to be dealt with in a specific way which cost the Parish some 2 to 3 thousand pounds to get them moved.

We had a car show which was well attended and it did not rain !! Also the Village Picnic was a most enjoyable and a well attended day, in which it did

not rain either. Please note car show Sunday 31st May this year and Village Picnic Sunday 28th June.

Without doubt the thing that has taken up most of our time this year is Planning and the Bennians expansion project. Paul Mac will elaborate on Bennians a little later. He gets that privilege as the Chair of the Planning Committee. (Lucky man.) I will mention in passing that getting the funding was an interesting process that required a little bit of politics, with a small p, something we had not planned for but were able to rise to the challenge, with a help from our District Councillors.

With regards Planning as in houses , there is a queue stretching back a mile or two of developers wanting to build over Four Marks. This market is of course driven by Government directive which shows little interest in what might be titled infrastructure, only numbers of dwellings to be completed. At present in Four Marks we have three started building sites with a total of around 80 houses racing for completion. There are many more in the pipeline. The Neighbour Hood Plan Steering Group have been working on the Neighbour hood plan which if accepted would give us some control over where those houses would go but little control over the number.

Occasionally this throws up a quirky anomaly that one is tempted to doubt the sanity of those proposing it. Such a situation was that suggesting to re-organise parking around the shops and to do away with the Panda crossing, to speed up the traffic flow. We have it on good authority that that is a definite No No . It wasn't stated whether the originators of said scheme are to receive suitable help for their obvious cognitive impairment !!

Thats roughly an outline of the last year. Looking forward the emphasis will be getting Bennians completed and the development of new and needed facilities for the Parish as it grows. Having consideration for the environment in that growth will be one of our main aims. This of course is closely entwined with the concept of sustainability – something we at the local level have an understanding for but frequently is at odds with a Government that seems only concerned with numbers. How to find the happy medium one might ask. Thank you for listening .

District Councillors report 2026

Our 2025-2026 year has been dominated by 2 things:
Planning and development and Local Government Reorganisation.

Shortly after the general election of 2024 the government doubled housing targets. There have been no concessions granted for East Hants despite having only 43 % of the land in which to deliver. We currently have applications and proposals for some very large developments in this area including one for 850 houses in Medstead and 1100 at Chawton Park along with several other smaller but still significant developments.

The local government reorganisation for Hampshire which will combine county and district/boroughs into unity councils with combined joint responsibilities.

The initial criteria from government said no boundary changes.

East Hants along with Hampshire County Council put forward a proposal for joining East Hants with Basingstoke and Deane, Hart and Rushmore. This proposal was not accepted, and the government has responded with their decision.

East Hants will be combined with Winchester, Test Valley and New Forest.

Boundary changes will be applied to both New Forest and East Hants where we will lose the southern parishes of East Hants.

Unitary Elections will take place in 2027 and there will be a 1 year cutover period with both new and old structures in place.

Case Work

Throughout the year councillors receive requests from residents to assist with problems. Our details are available on the Parish Council Websites and also on East Hants District Councils website where the details of committees on which we participate and other responsibilities can be found.

Councillor Grants

For 2025-2026 East Hants increased the grants funding available to councillors. Your Four Marks, Medstead and Chawton councillors each had £6000 and we are pleased to advise that the entire £18000 was dispensed to local charities and other good causes. For 2026-2027 the ~~£6000~~ per councillor will again be available.

[illegible]

Evidence base gathering & on-going engagement with key consultees (e.g. in accordance with the duty to co-operate)
Regulation 19 - Publication of draft Local Plan
Regulation 22 - Submission of document; Regulation 24- Examination hearings; Regulation 25 - Inspector's final report
A Adoption

I am truly sorry not to be with you this evening because of severe laryngitis,

I particularly regret it because I retire at the 7 May County Council Elections after 21 years as your county councillor.

It was a particularly busy year for Four Marks.

On the home front I have been much involved in highways matters to do with planning issues and these have loomed large throughout the year.

At the turn of the year, I took a posse of Four Marks planning pressure group chairs to see the Leader of the County Council in Winchester to see if County could be more supportive in insisting that infra structure was taken very seriously on a lot of these planning permissions.

During the year, we have also helped coordinate the Four Marks/Medstead/Highways Planning Development Liaison Panel which has also tried to bring the Parish Councils' view to the attention of Highway PPP Officers on planning and many other issues.

We have also been particularly involved with hopefully a lasting plan to solve the flooding issues around the school and again I must thank the parish council for all their help in these matters.

Then there has been dealing with a host of local government reorganisation issues on your behalf to try and make sure that Four Marks was not disadvantaged by these changes, but it is too early to tell whether I have been successful.

Finally, with the dreadfully wet winter there have been a host of pothole and drainage issues to deal with.

I think you will agree it's been a busy year!

To say I will miss you will be an understatement, and I want to thank many of you for your help over the years.

I very much hope I will be in a position to support my successor if called upon for information and experienced advice - assuming they ask for it!

With my best wishes,
Mark KG"



Benians Project



Agenda

- Introduction
 - Progress since last parish meeting
 - Next steps
 - Questions
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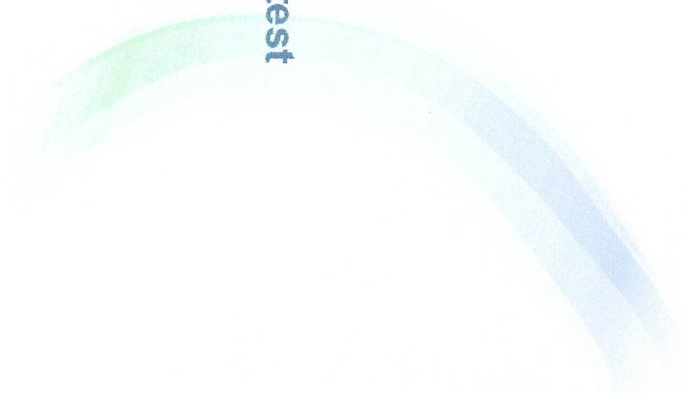


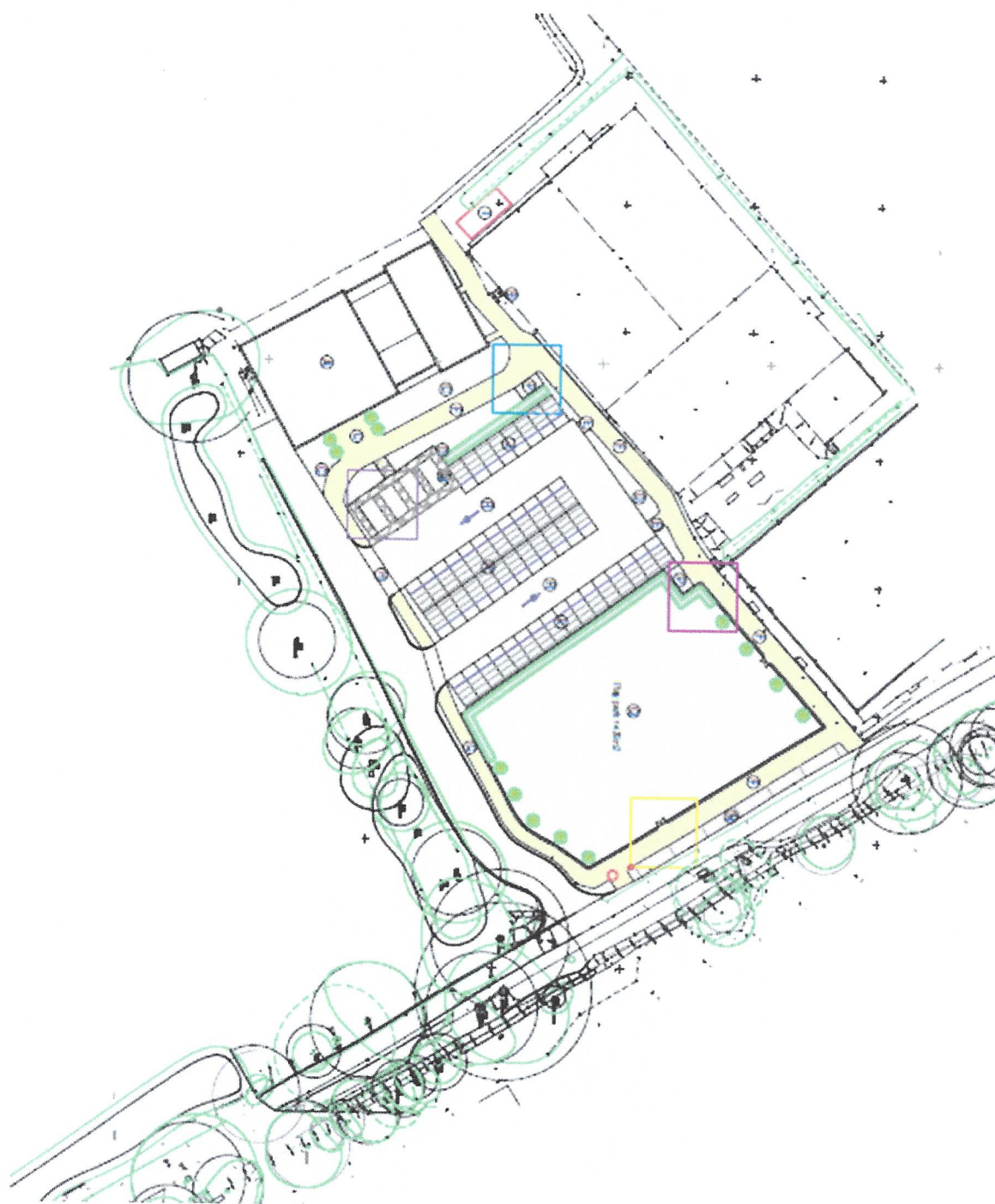
Introduction

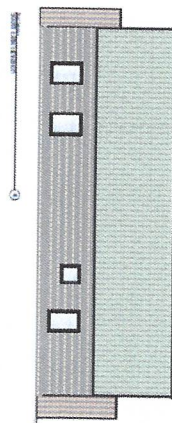
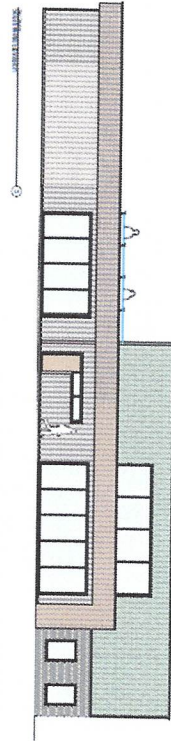
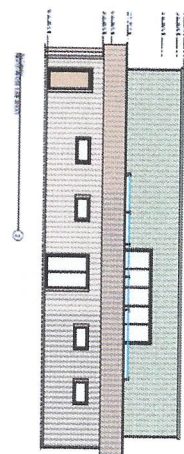
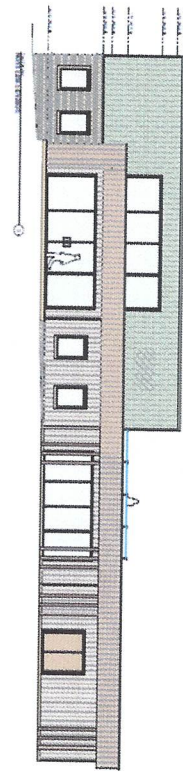
- The Benians project was initiated as a replacement for the original community building project of 2022/2023.
 - Extensive analysis undertaken to determine village needs in the future to support Youth, Sport, recreation, clubs, associations, support groups, play and nursery facilities.
 - Three projects are envisaged in order of priority:
 1. Enhance Benians Pavillion at the Recreation Ground
 2. Replace the Scout Hut with a multi-purpose building fit for the future
 3. Update the Village Hall
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Why redevelop Benians?

- Current building dated and limited in use
 - Meeting the needs of our growing village
 - 3 x 100 people function rooms
 - Community hub- supporting wellbeing/groups/social/youth
 - New bar facilities
 - Encouraging and enhancing sport - Changing rooms to cricket and football latest standards
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Timeline since 2025

- March 2025 -Strategic CIL bid to reallocate £1.25M from previous project.
 - Conditions:
 - Planning application to be submitted by end of Sept 2025 – submitted 25/9/2025
 - Full funding of the £2.9M required by end of dec 2025 - Full funding via Developers contributions, Parish reserves, and a confirmed £1M PWLB was achieved on 15/12/2025
 - Spade in Ground by July 2027
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Planning process

Dec 2025 Planning requested design changes to the front of the proposed building to enhance the arrival area. Highways requested additional traffic measurement on Uplands Lane.

Jan 2026 the design changes to the front of the proposed building were accepted. Highways still had concerns.

April 2026 After a site visit and a proposal to install priority signage on Uplands Lane, the planning application is now out for final approval by Highways expected 5/5/2026.





Next Steps

- Awaiting Planning approval
 - Appointment of an employee agent to manage the next stage.
 - Complete detailed design and instigate tender July 2026
 - Conclude Tender and appoint contractor to pre-construction service agreement sept 2026
 - Conclude pre-construction service agreement March 2027
 - Final approval of main build contract April 2027
 - Commencement on site May 2027
 - Completion May 2028
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