



## Betchworth Village Annual Parish Report

Betchworth Parish Council would like to thank the local organisation's who have contributed to the update which follows. Each group has written their own update.

Contributions by:

Re-Betchworth

The Hamilton Room

Betchworth Village War Memorial Hall

Betchworth Parish Magazine

Barley Mow Residents Association

Betchworth United Charities

Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society

Betchworth & Buckland Society

The Arts Society

Pebblecombe WI

The Betchworth & Buckland Children's Nursery

Betchworth Operatic and Dramatic Society (BODS)

Betchworth Village Archives

Hartsfield Manor Hotel

Betchworth Towers

St Michaels Church

The Pillars of St Michaels

North Downs Primary School - Betchworth

Betchworth Parish Council

# Re-Betchworth

## Progress for 2025/6

- The £1300 grant from the Parish Council, together with the surplus from the Applefest enabled us to consolidate a number of activities, and expand our 4Bs biodiversity operations.
- In its 3<sup>rd</sup> year, our Forest Camp finally took off with sell out days in the spring half term and summer holidays.
- To continue our learning about rewilding, we took a group on a walking safari on the Knepp Estate south of Horsham.
- We built and installed a trial group of 12 Swift boxes, with added sound to attract new residents.
- With help from a team in Dorking, we organised a second successful pop-up Repair Café.
- To coincide with that, we produced a small booklet for inclusion in the Parish Magazine listing local waste reduction and material reuse initiatives.
- Our 4<sup>th</sup> AppleFest was a record breaker, with over 1.4 tonnes of apples pressed into juice. It attracted families from well beyond Betchworth.
- We continued our management of the Goulburn Green apple orchard, and our 'Wassail' provided a couple of hours of sociable fun in February.
- We promoted and reported on these and other local sustainable living operations through our occasional e-Newsletter, and on our website.
- Our 4Bs Biodiversity Initiative expanded our reach to support nature across Betchworth, Buckland, Brockham and Boxhill the 4Bs. Our community WhatsApp Nature Group grew to 110 members. We organised 3 well attended nature talks, a bird spotting walk and a wildflower wander. We organised two campaigns – more wildlife ponds and more wildlife flowers and provided starter pond kits to 15 residents and added another 1000 sq metres of new wild flower cultivation. We produced 2 issues of our Nature Magazine and numerous short videos celebrating local wildlife which are available through our well-maintained website <https://www.biodiversitypark.uk/>

## Plans for 2026/7

- Re-invest in Forest Camp equipment to help bed in its success.
- Monitor arrivals in the Swift Boxes, and extend the scheme if signs are positive
- Continue to build our own team of skilled volunteers to staff more frequent Repair Cafés; work with Brockham to build awareness.
- Support and finance the 4B's Biodiversity initiative's work in Betchworth and establish a Nature Trail through the parishes of Betchworth & Buckland.
- Take a second group to Knepp.
- Organise a second scything workshop.
- Reseed a large section of the Goulburn Green wildflower strip where grasses have started to predominate.
- Add to the educational aspects of AppleFest, and keep it growing.
- Continue to promote and report through our quarterly e-Newsletter, and on our website.

## Contact Details

Email: [admin@re-betchworth.org](mailto:admin@re-betchworth.org) Website: <https://www.re-betchworth.org>

## Hamilton Room

We are delighted that we continue to hire out the Hamilton Room to such loyal regular users and attract new users for meetings or family get togethers.

We plan to continue our programme of improvements particularly to the kitchen to keep this local facility up to standards.

We continue to offer affordable comfortable accommodation for smaller groups in an ideal location in the heart of Betchworth village with nearby parking. Facilities include a well equipped kitchen, WC, carpeting, Wifi, comfortable seating and a projector screen.

Please get in touch to see what we can offer.

### Contact Details

Email: [d.fitchett@gmail.com](mailto:d.fitchett@gmail.com) - Diana Fitchett

## Betchworth Village War Memorial Hall

### Progress for 2025

- It was a busy year for the hall as usual, and pleasingly, the hall has remained a venue of choice for our regular hirers. This means the venue remains relevant and competitive in the face of local competition, which is very gratifying.
- However, in spite of a packed schedule, there were still opportunities for new hirers to experience the hall and the ability to offer two halls, the main hall and the GB room, has given us a distinct advantage.
- The hall featured a Repair Café for the first time which encouraged locals to bring along anything that needed repairing and proved very popular. Already the event has been repeated in early 2026.
- The GB Room proved the perfect venue for a group of musicians to practice and they are now a firm fixture throughout the year.
- The resurfacing of the main hall floor enabled us to establish a pickleball court which has proved popular and hopefully the number of players will grow. A big thank-you to Ed and Sian Winter who suggested the idea in the first place. Both Ed and Sian have really got behind the sport and I know the players have appreciated the additional opportunity to mix with and get to know other villagers.
- The hall Trustees thank all users of the hall from our regular users to the more ad-hoc users. It is their regular usage of the hall that allows it to flourish and remain such a great asset for the village of Betchworth.

### Plans for 2026

- The new projection and sound system at the hall has been greatly simplified and is much more user-friendly.
- We are still grappling with the challenge of minimising our heating loss at the hall. Cavity wall insulation has been completed and we are investigating our very high roof space in terms of installing better quality insulation.
- We have redecorated both the main hall and GB Room over the Christmas period.

- The Trustees look forward to a busy year and hope that we will be able to report more new users to the hall over the course of 2026.
- As ever, we are conscious that the time the Trustees give is purely on a voluntary basis. As a charity, the Charity Commission requires a certain number of trustees to govern the hall, and right now we need to recruit an additional trustee to act as Secretary. With only 4 or 5 meetings a year, each lasting about 1-1.5 hours, the role is not onerous. If you know anyone who might be willing to help, then please do get in touch.

### Contact Details

Phone: 07977439943 - Paul Ellison, Chair.

Email: [paulellison2014@gmail.com](mailto:paulellison2014@gmail.com)

Website: [betchworthvh@gmail.com](mailto:betchworthvh@gmail.com)

## Betchworth Parish Magazine

There has been a Parish Magazine in Betchworth since 1892! Beautifully bound copies of all these magazines can be viewed in the Hamilton Room. Parishioners and their helpers have always run the collating of articles, editing and publishing the magazine on a voluntary basis. Printing has always been done by an outside firm.

The magazine's aim is to give information to and about the whole village. As well as Church matters we report on village activities such as the Parish Council, WI, North Downs Primary School and the Betchworth and Buckland Society. It also embraces any local, non-political news, events and activities that it is felt might be of interest to the readers. The magazine is delivered to every house in the village by an invaluable team of 32 people headed by Susie Redburn. We are always delighted to receive articles, including photos if relevant, which would be of interest to parishioners for possible inclusion in the magazine.

Articles for the magazine now arrive exclusively by email to [betchworthmag@outlook.com](mailto:betchworthmag@outlook.com). We also will publish appropriate small ads from parishioners at a nominal cost for a limited number of issues, proceeds going to church funds.

In May we launch our "New Look" magazine. We felt that the old format was too out of date and that the magazine needed to attract more readers. So far we have received very positive feedback, we'd love to know what you think of it.

The editors, Ros Rokison, Sian Winter, Tim Warren and Chris Humphreys have the task of collating, editing and sometimes retyping all the various articles, putting everything into the correct format and font.

The articles are then numbered in the correct appropriate order before sending them to the Desk Top Publishers. Their job is to put them all into the magazine template. This is a lengthy process as articles have to fit exactly into the correct number of pages and we try where possible not split articles over the page. This work is done by Ros Rokison, Sian Winter, Alison Higgins and Tim Warren.

If anyone is interested in joining the team we would be delighted to hear from you. We would be particularly interested to hear from anyone who would like to join the team of desktop publishers. The more people involved in the production of the magazine the easier it is for everyone involved.

Training will be given if anyone is interested in joining us, we would love to have you. It's a great way of keeping up your computer skills and being involved in our wonderful village community.

#### **Contact Details**

Email: [betchworthmag@outlook.com](mailto:betchworthmag@outlook.com)

Which is also the place to send any articles, photos, information of what's going on in the village etc. we would love to hear from you.

## Barley Mow Court Residents Association

#### **Progress for 2025/2026**

- We unanimously opposed the application for the building of 6 houses on the site of the former Barley Mow pub. The owner had to submit an appeal. He was granted Planning in Principle.

#### **Plans for 2026/27**

- Continue to appeal against the building of 6 houses. We are happy with 4 maximum as we are concerned about the lack of parking if more houses than that are built. We are overstretched at the moment as it is.
- We are also planning on "making over" the plot of land where upon the Barley Mow Court name wall stands, planting a range of shade loving plants to make it look more attractive.

#### **Contact Details**

Email: [juliebarella@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:juliebarella@yahoo.co.uk) – Julie Barella

## Betchworth United Charities

#### **Progress for 2025**

- 16 Beneficiaries each received two cost of living payments throughout the year
- North Downs School received a grant to help children in need with school trips/uniform/breakfast after school clubs etc.
- Groceries/food vouchers purchased for local resident in need with severe health issues
- Grant given to help towards the purchase of a new cooker to local resident
- Washing machine purchased for resident in need poorly with cancer
- Three Trustee meetings during 2025 to discuss special grants and ways we can help
- Advertising our charity locally so that more people can access our help

#### **Plans for 2026**

- To continue to support families of school children in need by giving a grant to the North Downs School in Brockham. This will assist schools to help with families with costs including uniform, school trips, lunch and breakfast clubs etc.
- We will be giving our usual bi-annual grants to local people in the Brockham and Betchworth area who are in need due to cost of living price increases
- To continue exploring how to best make contact with those in need in our two villages

#### **Contact Details**

Phone: 07788 194 972 - Andrea Brown (Clerk)

Phone: 07771 568 862 - Camilla Peterken (Chair)

# Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society

## Progress for 2025/26

- Competed in Leith Hill Music Festival at Dorking Halls. Sadly no silverware this year. Sang with combined choirs for the evening concert of Will Todd's Jazz Missa Brevis and Passion Music with soloist Shaneeka Simon.
- Summer concert at St. Michael's Betchworth; Songs from the British Isles, conducted by our music director, George Inscoe and accompanied by Anna Tetsuya followed by tea.
- Autumn concert; Mozart Requiem at St. Paul's Dorking with soloists and small orchestra of young professional musicians. Conducted by George Inscoe. We had a retiring collection for The Orpheus Centre Trust.
- Christmas Carol concert at St. Michael's Betchworth conducted by George Inscoe with Joshua Simoes accompanying us on the organ. We had a retiring collection for Home-Start East Surrey.
- We are very grateful for financial support from Betchworth Parish Council, The Betchworth and Buckland Society and The Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust.

## Plans for 2026/27

- Summer concert at St. Michael's Betchworth on Saturday June 20th; 'A Summer's Afternoon'. Conducted by George Inscoe and accompanied by Anna Tetsuya, followed by tea.
- Term starts September 2<sup>nd</sup> 7.45 at Betchworth Village Hall. New members welcomed.
- Autumn concert; Saturday November 14<sup>th</sup>; Haydn's Nelson Mass at St. Mark's Church Reigate with soloists and orchestra.
- Christmas Carol Concert; Wednesday December 9th at St. Michael's Betchworth
- Quiz night in Spring Term
- Leith Hill Music Festival April 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

# Buckland & Betchworth Society

## Progress for 2025/26

- Membership has now grown to **over 120 households** in Betchworth & Buckland.
- As a result of the membership fees, together with the social events & activities listed below, we have been able to **donate more than £3,000** to various local worthy causes.
- This includes support and funding for the Re Betchworth 4B's programme of Biodiversity Initiatives, support for the Loveworks Food Bank, a donation to the Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society and a further donation to Stipey Stork, a baby bank supporting families in Surrey
- Our social activities continue to be very well supported – these included;
- Our BBQ event was held in August on Goulburn Green, with excellent food provided by Sarah from the Plough at Leigh. The event had over sixty attendees, who were entertained by a group of musicians & a singer. The weather was atrocious, but our local people are hardy souls!
- Our Annual Christmas Dinner held at the Hartsfield in late November - with a super dinner, drinks and some light entertainment in the form of a music quiz and heads & tails.

- Our pre-Christmas drinks at the Reading Room – a very relaxed way to ease our way into the Christmas period.
- The New Year Quiz in January – this was again extremely well supported, with over one hundred enthusiastic attendees. Sarah from the Plough at Leigh provided a half time supper. There was a competitive atmosphere, with some group singing towards the end of the evening!
- Finally in March, we held our wine tasting event, again supported by the Vine King in Reigate.

#### **Plans for 2026/27**

- Our next BBQ is set for Sunday 28th June on Buckland Green.
- The Annual Christmas Dinner is scheduled for Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at the Hartsfield.
- Our Pre Christmas drinks are set for Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December in the Reading Room in Buckland

#### **Contact Details**

Email: [betchworthandbucklandsociety@gmail.com](mailto:betchworthandbucklandsociety@gmail.com)

Website: [www.betchworthandbucklandsociety.org.uk](http://www.betchworthandbucklandsociety.org.uk)

## Arts Society Betchworth

#### **Progress for 2025/26**

- Lectures on varied subjects including: Gilded Glories – The History of Gilding; The City of Siena and its Art; Art Nouveau Architecture around the World; The Healing Power of Plants; Carpet Weaving in Uzbekistan; Monopoly.
- Visit to Mottisfont for Rose Garden Festival in June 2025
- 6 Day Tour to Sicily in September 2025
- Visit to Glyndebourne for a performance of La Boheme in October 2025
- Visit to Marie Antoinette Style Exhibition at Victoria & Albert Museum in March 2026

#### **Plans for 2026/27**

- Lectures on varied subjects including: Art of the Chalk Landscapes; Notre Dame de Paris – Its Iconic Status in French History; The Late Queen Mother’s Lifelong Love of Jewellery; Pompeii & Herculaneum – Reconstructing the Final Day; Big Whigs – Art & Fashion in the Age of Samuel Pepys
- Special Interest Morning (two lectures and lunch): The Brilliance of British Architecture – May 2026
- Visit to Kew Gardens for Rose Garden Festival in June 2026
- Visit to Glyndebourne for a performance of The Barber of Seville in October 2026
- Charity Lecture ‘The Dancing Faun’ by Bertie Pearce in December 2026
- 5 Day Tour to Norfolk in April 2027

#### **Contact Details**

Contact Details: [info@asbetchworth.co.uk](mailto:info@asbetchworth.co.uk)

Website address: [www.theartsocietybetchworth.org.uk](http://www.theartsocietybetchworth.org.uk)

## Pebblecoombe WI

**2025** has been a quiet year, we discussed the Resolution – regarding the lack of CPR training, particularly on Women, and availability of Defibrillators nationally. We are fortunate in Betchworth to have 2. We enjoyed our time at the Annual Parish Council Meeting, and will be repeating this. Our major Speaker, at an open meeting, was from Wild About Britain, a small charity in Sussex, caring for British wild-life unable to be released back into their natural habitat. Connie brought a smooth snake (Wren), Buttercup a hedgehog and Freddie a Tawny Owl. Seeing these creatures up close and hearing about them was inspiring, encouraging us to make our gardens more nature friendly. The Sun Flower seeds planted in spring had varying results, but interesting to watch them grow (or not – some eaten by our ‘friendly’ garden visitors).

**2026** has started with a talk from a Member of volunteering in the Dorking based Patchwork Garden, followed by a cookery evening. We look forward to hearing later about Paper and a visit from Brockham hand-bell ringers. This together with discussing this year’s Resolutions on the lack of Accommodation for Homeless Women, and limited availability of Public toilets, brings us a varied programme. Do come and chat with us at the Annual meeting if you are interested in joining the WI.

### Contact Details

Phone: 01737 842 098 - Margaret Miller (Secretary)

## The Betchworth and Buckland Children’s Nursery

### Progress for 2025/26

- Another busy year, with local children attending the setting
- Nurseries interior and exterior being painted

### Plans for 2026/27

- Recruiting local people to join our committee
- Strengthening relationships in the local community
- More advertising to make families aware of the wonderful nursery

### Contact Details

Email: [info@betchworthandbucklandchildrensnursery.com](mailto:info@betchworthandbucklandchildrensnursery.com)

Website: <https://betchworthandbucklandchildrensnursery.com>

## Betchworth Operatic and Dramatic Society (BODS)

### Progress for 2025/26

- NODA South East Accolade of Excellence for 2025 play ‘The Enchanted April’
- Successful production of Terence Rattigan’s ‘ Separate Tables’ in May 2025

- Equally successful production of a musical farce called 'Lucky Stiff' by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty and saw us performing for the first time at Betchworth Village Hall 'in the round'

### **Plans for 2026/27**

- We are celebrating our 90th birthday – 90 years of performing in Betchworth.
- We have a 90th birthday celebration show called 'BITS and BODS' reviving many of our musical and dramatic performances over the years
- We plan to perform a version of 'A Xmas Carol' by Charles Dickens in St Michaels' Church in Betchworth in the first week of December. Another first for our society to perform in Betchworth's Parish Church.
- We plan a summer garden party and further celebrations of our 90th birthday

### **Chairs Report AGM**

Looking back over the last year I feel an immense pride in all that BODS has achieved. The quality, the work ethic, the sense of support and enthusiasm we have amongst us and that is down to everyone here. The Directors, the Musical Directors, the backstage crew.. lighting, set design, publicity, ticket sales, front of house and of course the cast.

I was talking to a few people and still feel our USP is small and quality and ensuring the whole process is enjoyable for the people involved and the performance is worthy to our audiences. I hope we have achieved that in all we've done.

Of course there are still things we can improve upon and we are always thinking about how we can improve and do things better and forever open to feedback, so please if you have ideas/suggestions for the future do not hold back.

I would like to thank the committee for their input and dedication throughout the year. We are losing one member Trish Finch who sadly, due to home circumstances, hasn't been able to contribute as much as she'd wanted to, but we wish her well and hope to see her in the future if circumstances change. As ever, if you feel you'd like to join us please do let us know. We meet on average every 8 weeks so its not that onerous – honestly!

2025 started with our festival entry at the Southern Counties Festival, with the play 'Anger Management', Directed by Stephen Tickell. The cast enjoyed the play and there was a nomination of Best Actor for Neil Mayall. The festival is always challenging and not an easy task on the night, it was well managed and staged by cast and crew and always a learning experience!

This was followed by our May drama production 'Separate Tables' by Terence Rattigan. Directed by Diane Mayall. We welcomed some new acting members to BODS and the final production was very well received by our audiences and NODA critic alike. Diana and team did not have much time to turn this out but in a short time they produced a very thought-provoking and accomplished production. Congratulations.

Around this time Diane and Jane Hogg went to receive a very well deserved 'Accolade of Excellence' at the NODA South East Awards for our previous 2024 May production of The Enchanted April.

After the summer we went into rehearsal for what was a stretch and new direction for us in the launch of our November musical 'Lucky Stiff'. Directed by Fiona Kuhn-Thomson and musically directed by her sibling Paul Thomson, this musical saw us perform 'in the round' and set up a huge challenge for lighting and seating, but luckily not for props and scenery. Fiona and Paul brought vision, expertise and talent to inspire us and the whole show was a joy to rehearse and perform. Thankfully it again was enthusiastically received by our audiences, selling out three performances and likewise to our NODA representative with another glowing and positive review.

Finally in October was our annual 'Teas on the Green' which 'serves' to promote our November show and is a fun afternoon. Thanks to Kelly Cross for expertly organising everyone and to those who baked cakes, served, washed up or took money. A great profit was once again made to bolster our coffers and promote BODS.

During the year we were very happy to welcome back Alison Cooper as our president, after the death of her beloved husband, and when she felt ready and willing, we were honoured to have

her presence, expertise and support once more. Brian also gave a lot of support to BODS and we acknowledge and thank him for this. I also believe they met performing – was it with BODS?

On the celebration side, there were a couple of post-production parties – one for Separate Tables and a Xmas one for Lucky Stiff. Thank you to Diane and Neil for hosting the first and Joanne and Paul for hosting the second. At both there was fun, song, games and laughter and great food and drink

So overall I feel, and I hope you do too, 2025 was a good year for BODS. I hope that 2026 continues in the same vein as we look ahead to celebrating our 90th birthday with a nostalgic and celebratory show 'BITS and BODS' featuring a special G and S story by Alison Cooper, a snippet of one of BODS first dramas 'The Ghost Train' led by Stephen Tickell and the 'history of drama' produced by Gail Lowe.

Already we have held a very successful 'acting' workshop organised by Stephen Tickell (thank you) and hope to hold more of these. Later in the year we hope to have a 90th birthday party, more news to follow on this. Plus a special production of 'A Xmas Carol' at Betchworth Church in the first week of December. As well as Teas on the Green, of course.

Early this year we heard of the death of John Bryant, a stalwart member, kind and generous gentleman who had served as Business Manager and Chair on the committee and been on stage numerous times, which many of us fondly remembered. Diane and I were honoured to attend his funeral and hear about his many other interests and family life. Rest in peace John.

Despite life's ups and downs, there is lots to look forward to and lots to celebrate. We, the committee, thank you all for your enthusiasm and dedication. I also thank my fellow committee members returning and those leaving. We can't do it without any of you. Thank you.

**Julie Bickerdike**

**Contact Details**

Email: [info@bodsweb.com](mailto:info@bodsweb.com) – Julie Bickerdike (Chair)

Website: <https://www.bodsweb.com>

# Betchworth Village Archives

## Progress for 2025/26

- Having ten years of Parish magazines bound with the help of a generous grant from the Parish Council.
- Creating information cards and maps for the war graves in St. Michael's churchyard which are now in the church, and a display for Heritage Open Days.
- Contributing a display for AppleFest day.
- Researching information in the WW1 Parish Magazines for the Remembrance Sunday service.

## Plans for 2026/27

- Continue recording the monument inscriptions in the churchyard.
- Prepare for our next exhibition.
- Continue sorting and cataloguing new acquisitions.
- Start work on a new church guide.

## Contact Details

Email: [betchworthvillagearchives@gmail.com](mailto:betchworthvillagearchives@gmail.com)

Website: <https://www.betchworth-pc.gov.uk/betchworth-village-archives>

# Hartsfield Manor Hotel

Update from the consulting group & Hotel Manager on plans for the Hotel

Thank you to everyone who shared their views on the future of Hartsfield Manor.

We are pleased to confirm that an outline planning application has now been submitted to Mole Valley District Council and we are awaiting validation. The Council will shortly carry out its own formal consultation as part of the planning process before a decision is made. Since the consultation, the team has undertaken further technical work and refined the proposals in response to local feedback. Key updates include:

Enhancing biodiversity and landscape planting, with additional wildflower meadows, native woodland planting and strengthened screening along sensitive boundaries to improve privacy, soften views, and deliver long-term ecological benefits.

Improving screening for light and noise, whilst the buildings proposed have been designed to better contain noise and light, as well as low-level and wildlife-friendly lighting across the site, and clear operational controls to reduce impacts on neighbouring homes, additional planting has been positioned to help further buffer noise and light from the site.

Adjusting some buildings to avoid key pipelines and protect important trees, while keeping the development in line with the natural slope so it sits comfortably below the Manor and fits the rural setting.

Managing traffic, parking and construction activity, informed by detailed technical assessments and in line with resident feedback, the main car park on site is to remain as it is currently. The team has also refined measures to manage arrivals, servicing and parking more effectively, and

a Construction Logistics Plan has been provided which seeks to minimise disruption during the build phase.

These updates are intended to respond directly to feedback received, while securing the long-term future of Hartsfield Manor as a well-managed hotel within its countryside setting. A full account of the feedback received and how this has been reflected in the scheme is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement submitted with the application.

We will be updating our website shortly with the key documents submitted as part of the planning application, including the Planning Statement; Design and Access Statement; Statement of Community Engagement; Transport statement; Construction Logistics Plan (CLP); and BNG report. We will also be uploading some FAQs, which will hopefully answer any queries.

### **Contact Details**

Email: [hartsfieldmanor@kandaconsulting.co.uk](mailto:hartsfieldmanor@kandaconsulting.co.uk)

Website: [www.futurehartsfieldmanor.co.uk](http://www.futurehartsfieldmanor.co.uk)

## **Betchworth Tower Report**

2025 was a lively and interesting year for Betchworth Bellringers, kicking off in March 2025 with an enjoyable Annual Dinner at Gomshall Mill, incorporating a new much-loved local tradition - the Betchworth & Buckland Bellringers Quiz which, much like a curates egg, was good in parts. Later in March the annual Tour took our ringers out to darkest Kent and Surrey to visit towers in Hartfield, Cowden, Hever, Edenbridge and Limpsfield Chart, with an exceptional afternoon tea in Edenbridge, nicely rounded off with Supper in Buckland. The ringers enjoyed participating in many Association events during the year, fielding a knowledgeable and versatile team at the Surrey Bellringers Association quiz night, finishing in a respectable 5th place and skilfully kicking up our heels at the Association Barn Dance.

An especially deep clean on Tower maintenance day yielded a variety of long forgotten treasures - some delightful, some not so much; a large number of vintage paint tins were ejected from corners and cubbyholes, carpets were shampooed, and cupboards emptied, cleaned and usefully repurposed. Cameras were installed in the Belfry in June, enabling over 200 visitors to the tower during Heritage weekend to see the bells in action, and September brought an excellent summer BBQ kindly hosted by Sarah & Alan Webb in their beautiful garden.

Autumn saw the Betchworth band say goodbye to one striking competition trophy after seven long years, deciding it was time to give someone else a go, and was promptly awarded another - the Sid Saban trophy for accurate striking. During the year we successfully rang for all Sunday church services and many other events: VE Day, three Quarter-Peals, two weddings, a funeral, a grand village memorial service, and in December we rang the old year out before ringing the new one in.

This month (March 2026) we celebrate 40 years of ringing since the refurbishment and re-hanging of the bells of St. Michael's in 1986, and in particular the 80th year of the man who made it happen - the legendary Bernard Hawkins, who has been ringing bells for more than six decades. A Quarter-Peal of 1260 plain Bob doubles was rung at St. Michael's in his honour by a band with more than 240 years of combined ringing experience between them. Special mention of Andrew Oliphant (over 50 years of ringing) and Martin Higgins, 30 years Captain of the bells, also celebrating 50 years of ringing, mentoring, teaching, inspiring and supporting new ringers.

Grateful thanks to Pru, the Church wardens, the verger and all who work to support St. Michaels and keep the noble traditional of bell ringing alive and well in the village. We are a friendly, welcoming bunch, always looking for new recruits, so if anyone would like to have a go, please do drop Captain of the Bells Hugh Frayling an email ([frayhugh1920@gmail.com](mailto:frayhugh1920@gmail.com)) or simply come along to the tower on any Tuesday evening at 8pm - our regular practice night. You don't have to be religious or need any particular skills, it's fun, all tuition is provided free of charge and You will be welcomed with open arms.

## St Michael's Church

### **Rector's Report 2025**

This has been a difficult year for this church. Not everything has been easy, and at times the strain has been felt. And yet, the life of the church has continued, people have continued to show up, to serve, to give, and to pray. That quiet faithfulness has held things together.

### **Thanks**

My thanks go to all who continue to sustain the life of St Michael's. To those who open and close the church, who welcome, read, lead prayers, sing, arrange flowers, clean, ring bells, serve at the altar, make coffee, sit on the PCC, deanery synod and committees, and support the many practical and pastoral aspects of church life—thank you. Your commitment to your church and its worship is deeply appreciated. I would particularly like to thank Linda, who, despite stepping down as warden last year, has continued to be the representative for the PCC. She carries out this work with the same commitment as when she was church warden and we are fortunate to have her.

Thank you to Richard for his musical leadership and all he brings to the richness and beauty of our worship.

Thank you to the Pillars for their generous financial support of St Michael's. Your fundraising efforts make a real and tangible difference in sustaining the building for future generations. The west end glass doors are the latest example of this thanks to the generosity Paul Tanner's family. I am also deeply grateful to those individuals and families who have given privately to support the church they love. Much of this generosity is unseen, but it has sustained us in very real ways. Finally thank you to the congregation, for your loyalty, your presence, and your continued commitment to being a worshipping community.

### **Finances**

Financially, this has been another challenging year. Rising costs, limited fundraising, and largely static giving have meant that we have relied on our reserves. Those reserves are now gradually diminishing. This is not sustainable in the long term.

### **Looking Ahead: A Shared Responsibility**

St Michael's is a small and ageing worshipping community. We can't avoid that fact and this brings both strengths and challenges. There is a closeness here that larger churches often lack, but it also means that responsibility falls on a relatively small number of people. The question before us is how we share that responsibility more widely. The future of St Michael's will depend on this. It will require:

- People willing to step into leadership roles, including churchwarden
- A renewed commitment to regular giving where possible
- Rebuilding sustainable fundraising
- A willingness to reflect on how we worship, how we welcome new people, and how we reach and serve the aging community in the parish.

For a small community, this may feel demanding. But it is possible if we are willing to move from being observers to participants. If we are not, then we will also need to reflect honestly on what that may mean for the future of this church.

### **Hope**

Even so, we are not without hope.

The church is sustained not by ease or certainty, but by faithfulness, by those who continue to pray, to gather, and to trust that God is at work, even when the way ahead is unclear.

God's promise remains: a future shaped not by fear, but by hope. Our task is to respond with honesty, courage, and grace.

What happens next for St Michael's will depend not only on what we hope for, but on what we are each able to offer and commit as we look to the future together..

### **Contact Details:**

Website: <https://www.stmichaels-betchworth.uk/contact-us/>

## **The Pillars of St. Michael's**

### **Progress 25/26**

The biggest project this year has been the refurbishment of the outer doors in the West and South Porches of St. Michael's and the installation of the beautiful glass doors in the West Porch.

This was enabled by a bequest from Paul Tanner.

The old flower arranging cupboard in the West Porch is currently being restored by Derek Hughes

Money raised last year which was to be for the glass doors has now been re allocated towards a new heating system in church.

2025 the Pillars held:

- June: A concert by the Imperial Male Voice Choir
- October : A Bridge afternoon with a cream tea
- November: We launched the wonderful Betchworth Cook Book where people from the village were able to taste recipes from the book
- December: We held 'Carols in Betchworth House'

### **Our Plans for 2026/27**

- June: We are holding a Derby Day summer lunch in Betchworth House
- September: A supper and entertainments by magician Bertie Pearce( and others)
- October: A Bridge Afternoon with Cream Tea

- December: Carols in Betchworth House

#### **In 2027**

- In March : We are planning a pre loved designer clothes sale
- In May: A Swing Band in Church
- And other things

#### **Contact Details**

Email: [pillarsbetchworth@gmail.com](mailto:pillarsbetchworth@gmail.com)

## **Northdowns Primary School – Betchworth Site**

#### **Progress for 2025/26**

- Installed new forest school equipment which has enhanced the outside development through play area. This included a kitchen, outside seating and table, outside storage cupboard, new equipment such as spades and forks
- Transferred to be part of Every Child Partnership Trust academy group
- Owls Class of 2025 successfully progressed to academic year end completing their early years curriculum in readiness for Year 1
- Visited Betchworth Church,
- Held nativity carols in both Church and carehome,
- Maypole dancing,
- Advent calendar at Post Office
- Farm visit and talk from Martin
- Vehicles day including the local fire engine visit.

#### **Plans for 2026/27**

- Install outside writing area to enhance handwriting skills for pupils who prefer to be outside
- Install outside maths area to enhance handwriting skills for pupils who prefer to be outside
- Continue to develop Wild area in conjunction with Norman Jackson
- Visit Betchworth Church
- Make links with Betchworth Post Office – start visits again in Summer term
- Owls Class of 2026 to join in September

#### **Contact Details:**

**Telephone: 01737 843384**

**Email: [info@northdowns.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:info@northdowns.surrey.sch.uk)**

**Website address: [North Downs Primary School - Home](#)**

# Betchworth Parish Council Clerk & RFO Financials

Since the last APM the accounts for 2024/25 have been fully audited and approved and are displayed on our website with previous years.

Our draft Accounts for 2025/26 were internally audited in April by Mulberry and Co, and following approval at full Council last Monday, will be sent to our external auditors PKF Littlejohn.

Income: We receive income from a number of areas so taking each one in turn:

We receive a Precept from MVDC which makes up part of your Council tax, this is to cover the running costs of the council and includes items such as salary, insurance for the council and amenities, amenity maintenance, subscriptions and basically anything that is needed to keep the Parish Council running. As raised at last years meeting and reported by Council again in January of this year, the precept has been set based on the Councils guiding principle, that aim to ensure that the Parish Precept covers not only direct staff costs but also the running costs associated with maintaining local services and facilities like Goulburn Green. The 2026/27 precept will still fall short of covering these running costs so to ensure the Parish can continue to provide and maintain the facilities it is responsible for to a high standard; Council will continue to raise the precept gradually in future years to reach a point where the running costs are fully covered.

Although at risk due to the Unification of Councils, we still receive a couple of grants from MVDC that help with our Green Spaces and running costs. We believe we will lose these grants in 2027/28 which is another reason for ensuring we continue to budget carefully and monitor running costs against Precept income.

We also receive money from the allotments and the burial ground. We are pleased to have kept the allotment charges the same for 2025/26 but have advised tenants of a small increase from 2027 to help with increases in running costs. The Burial Ground charges were increased to align with other sites in the area and ensure space and pricing can remain competitive for Betchworth residents. The burial ground exceeded predicted income and has been the main factor in ensuring income was greater than expenditure. This income has secured grants to local organisations for a 5th consecutive year.

Although slightly down on the previous year, bank interest is another source of income which we have been able to benefit from by ensuring that we hold our reserve in the savings account.

And finally, we received some money for our litter picking duties. MVDC allows us £1 a bag for all bags collected up to a cap of £90.

Expenditure, Council managed 2025/26 budgets extremely well with only some very minor overspends against a few of the budget lines.

Internal Auditors Mulberry and Co were very thorough when auditing our accounts last year, and as such Council have approved to retain their services for 2026/27. We continue to be very grateful for their support.

## Contact Details

Email: [clerk@betchworth-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@betchworth-pc.gov.uk) - Julie Vear (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

Website: <https://www.betchworth-pc.gov.uk>

RECEIPTS	Code	2025/2026			2024/2025			Diff (£)	Diff (%)
		Actual	Budget	YTD %	Actual				
Allotment Income	INC001	£ 210.00	£ 240.00	88%	£ 240.00	-£ 30.00	-13%		
Bank Interest	INC002	£ 680.35	£ 800.00	85%	£ 793.58	-£ 113.23	-14%		
Burial ground Income	INC003	£ 21,680.00	£ 12,500.00	173%	£ 38,292.00	-£ 16,612.00	-43%		
CIL Payments	INC004	£ -		0%	£ 4,540.46	-£ 4,540.46	-100%		
Concurrent Service Payment	INC005	£ 2,429.00	£ 2,429.00	100%	£ 2,429.00	£ -	0%		
CT Support Scheme Payment	INC006	£ 676.00	£ 676.00	100%	£ 676.00	£ -	0%		
Other Receipts	INC007	£ 90.00		0%	£ 126.00	-£ 36.00	-29%		
Precept	INC008	£ 22,652.84	£ 22,652.84	100%	£ 17,425.26	£ 5,227.58	30%		
VAT Reclaim	INC009	£ 4,590.92	£ 500.00	918%	£ 1,923.06	£ 2,667.86	139%		
<b>Total - Precept</b>		£ 30,356.27	£ 17,145.00	177%	£ 49,020.10	-£ 18,663.83	-38%		
<b>Total</b>		£ 53,009.11	£ 39,797.84	133%	£ 66,427.36	-£ 13,418.25	-20%		
<b>PAYMENTS</b>									
<b>Clerk Running Costs</b>									
Clerks Salary	CL000	£ 14,221.06	£ 18,457.92	77%	£ 17,253.58	-£ 3,032.52	-18%		
Employee's Tax	CL014	£ 2,859.20	£ 2,859.20	100%	£ 964.72	£ 1,894.48	196%		
Employee's NI	CL001	£ 269.53	£ 553.40	49%	£ 964.72	£ 695.19	-72%		
Employers NI	CL002	£ 1,700.86	£ 1,878.29	91%	£ 964.72	£ 736.14	76%		
Pension Employer	PL001	£ 309.79	£ 553.40	56%	£ 272.78	£ 37.01	14%		
Pension Employee	PL002	£ 390.38	£ 390.38	100%	£ 272.78	£ 117.60	43%		
<b>Total Clerk Running Costs</b>		£ 19,750.82	£ 24,692.59	80%	£ 20,693.30	-£ 942.48	-5%		
<b>General Council Running Costs</b>									
Clerk Mileage	CL007	£ 1,194.30	£ 1,200.00	100%	£ 1,075.95	£ 118.35	11%		
Payroll admin expenses (external supplier)	CL011	£ 211.00	£ 250.00	84%	£ 237.50	-£ 26.50	-11%		
Office Expenses - Stationery	CL009	£ 163.24	£ 200.00	82%	£ 281.74	-£ 118.50	-42%		
Office Expenses - Postage	CL008	£ 6.80	£ 10.00	68%	£ 2.90	£ 3.90	134%		
Office Expenses - webhosting & email	CL012	£ 131.57	£ 200.00	66%	£ 151.28	-£ 19.71	-13%		
Clerk Mobile	CL006	£ 79.36	£ 150.00	53%	£ 160.35	-£ 80.99	-51%		
Office Expenses - Software	WE003	£ 35.00	£ 200.00	18%	£ 101.52	-£ 66.52	-66%		
Office Expenses - IT Support (PC & Website)	WE004	£ 408.14	£ 500.00	82%	£ 159.96	£ 248.18	155%		
Training	CL003	£ 255.00	£ 250.00	102%	£ 60.00	£ 195.00	325%		
Audit	CL004	£ 724.00	£ 750.00	97%	£ 661.55	£ 62.45	9%		
Bank Charges	BA002	£ 44.00	£ 150.00	29%	£ 149.40	-£ 105.40	-71%		
Room Hire & Expenses	CL005	£ 502.50	£ 500.00	101%	£ 333.47	£ 169.03	51%		
Insurance	BA001	£ 333.09	£ 500.00	67%	£ 413.31	-£ 80.22	-19%		
<b>Total Council Running Costs</b>		£ 4,088.00	£ 4,860.00	84%	£ 3,788.93	£ 299.07	8%		
<b>Revenue Expenditure</b>									
<b>Burial Ground &amp; Allotments</b>									
Grass	BG001	£ 2,956.00	£ 3,000.00	99%	£ 3,923.00	-£ 967.00	-25%		
Pruning	BG002	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	100%	£ 400.00	£ -	0%		
Fencing / Boundaries	BG005	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	100%	£ 400.00	£ -	0%		
Annual Path Clearing & Weedkilling	BG004	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	100%	£ 300.00	£ -	0%		
General Maint	BG003	£ 163.75	£ 350.00	47%	£ 250.00	-£ 86.25	-35%		
<b>Total Burial Ground &amp; Allotments</b>		£ 4,219.75	£ 4,450.00	95%	£ 5,273.00	-£ 1,053.25	-20%		
<b>Parish Amenities</b>									
Goulburn Green Grass	GG001	£ 2,754.00	£ 2,700.00	102%	£ 3,442.50	-£ 688.50	-20%		
Goulburn Green Water	GG002	£ 39.38	£ 45.00	88%	£ 32.23	£ 7.15	22%		
Pruning & Maint (Hedgerows/other)	MA001	£ 137.63	£ 300.00	46%	£ 300.00	-£ 162.37	-54%		
Footpath & Adhoc Maint	MA002	£ 1,074.60	£ 1,500.00	72%	£ 330.00	£ 744.60	226%		
Defib Maint	MA005	£ 135.00	£ 150.00	90%	£ 163.78	-£ 28.78	-18%		
Village Store / Bus Shelter / Planting Maint	MA007	£ 180.00	£ 350.00	51%	£ -	£ 180.00	0%		
<b>Total Parish Amenities</b>		£ 4,320.61	£ 5,045.00	86%	£ 4,268.51	£ 52.10	1%		
<b>Discretionary</b>									
Subscriptions General	CL010	£ 192.00	£ 150.00	128%	£ 319.16	-£ 127.16	-40%		
SALC & NALC	CL013	£ 412.38	£ 411.46	100%	£ 403.89	£ 8.49	2%		
Grant Awards	OT15	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	100%	£ 4,871.00	£ 129.00	3%		
Litter Pick Support	OT003	£ 87.50	£ 150.00	58%	£ 593.32	-£ 505.82	-85%		
Community Events	CO001	£ 61.00	£ 500.00	12%	£ -	£ 61.00	0%		
Local support (s137)	S137	£ -	£ 200.00	0%	£ 6.00	-£ 6.00	-100%		
Additional Training CILCA & Burial Ground	AD250	£ 1,231.50	£ 1,500.00	82%	£ -	£ 1,231.50	0%		
<b>Total Discretionary</b>		£ 6,984.38	£ 7,911.46	88%	£ 6,193.37	£ 791.01	13%		
<b>CIL / Projects</b>									
Fencing & Facilities Improvements	OT005	£ -	£ 3,000.00	0%	£ -	£ -	0%		
Burial Ground Expansion	AD251	£ -	£ 5,000.00	0%	£ -	£ -	0%		
Traffic Calming	AD252	£ -	£ 3,000.00	0%	£ -	£ -	0%		
Footpath Resurfacing	AD253	£ 4,350.00		0%	£ 12,937.67	-£ 8,587.67	-66%		
Professional Fees	AD254	£ 3,540.00		0%	£ -	£ 3,540.00	0%		
<b>Total CIL Projects</b>		£ 7,890.00	£ 11,000.00	72%	£ 12,937.67	-£ 5,047.67	-39%		
<b>VAT</b>									
<b>Total Payments</b>		£ 2,020.76	£ 2,000.00	101%	£ 4,463.06	-£ 2,442.30	-7%		
<b>Total Payments Less Clerk Salary</b>		£ 49,274.32	£ 59,959.05	82%	£ 53,154.78	-£ 3,880.46	-7%		
<b>Receipts Less Payments</b>		£ 29,523.50	£ 35,266.46	84%	£ 32,461.48	-£ 2,937.98	-9%		
<b>Receipts Less Payments</b>		£ 3,734.79	-£ 20,161.21	0%	£ 13,272.58	-£ 9,537.79	-72%		
<b>Balance B/F 31/03/2026</b>									
Ring Fenced Elections & Deposits		£ 126,258.96							
Ring Fenced Legal & Professional Costs		£ 15,000.00							
Ring Fenced IT / Defibrillators		£ 5,000.00							
Ring Fenced CIL Balance		£ 2,000.00							
Ring Fenced CIL Balance		£ 56,853.17							
<b>Total Ring fenced</b>		£ 78,853.17							
<b>General Reserve</b>		£ 47,405.79							