

Hoo and Chattenden Parish Council

Community Connections

December 2024
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Welcome to the Hoo and Chattenden Parish Council Newsletter

What is a Parish Council?

A Parish Council is the lowest tier of local government in England. It is a civil local authority made up of elected members, forming a corporate body that works to serve and improve the local community. In our case, the Hoo and Chattenden Parish Council is dedicated to representing and supporting the residents of the parishes of Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden.

Hoo and Chattenden Parish Council meets monthly on the first Thursday of each month in either Hoo or Chattenden, with the exception of August when no meeting is held.

Meetings start at 7pm and all meetings are open to the public.

Future meeting dates are published on our website at www.hoosaintwerburgh-pc.gov.uk

Stay Updated

To keep residents informed about our activities and achievements, the Parish Council will be publishing a newsletter three times a year. We hope you enjoy this publication and that it provides you with valuable insight into how we serve you, along with updates on the positive projects we have undertaken over the past year.

Community Events

We've got plenty of exciting events lined up to bring everyone together this festive season and beyond. Here's what's coming up:

Christmas on the Green

Saturday, 14th December, Church Street, Hoo

Join us for an evening of festive fun!

- Lantern parade at 5:15 PM (bring your own or use one of our battery tea lights).
- Santa arrives at 5:30 PM with gifts from his elves.
- Enjoy performances by hand bell ringers and our signing choir, plus Christmas music
- Free tea, coffee, squash, mulled wine, and mince pies. Ice cream will also be available.

Pantomime: Jack and the Beanstalk

Friday, 12th January—Pottery Road Village Hall

Don't miss our family-friendly pantomime! Tickets will be on sale soon—keep an eye on our Facebook page and website for details.

Looking Ahead

We're already planning more great events for 2025, including VE Day celebrations, a summer fête, Harvest Tea and Christmas on the Green.

Stay tuned for more updates!

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THE PARISH COUNCIL

Council Membership and Meetings

The Parish Council is comprised of 17 elected members: 14 representing Hoo St Werburgh and 3 representing Chattenden. These individuals are committed to ensuring that the Parish Council remains a vital and responsive part of our community.

We hold regular monthly meetings, the dates and times are published on our website.

All Parish Council meetings are open to the Public.

Get Involved

Your Parish Council is here to serve you, but we also rely on input from residents to make Hoo and Chattenden a better place to live. Whether it's attending meetings, sharing your concerns, or volunteering in local initiatives, your involvement is invaluable.

We always welcome feedback from residents. If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact the Parish Clerk, Sherrie Babington, via email at clerk@hoopc.org or by calling (01634) 868855.

The Annual Community Award

The Parish Council is proud to acknowledge the incredible dedication and commitment of individuals and organisations within our community. To celebrate these efforts, we are excited to announce the establishment of the Annual Community Award.

This award aims to honour those who have made a significant difference in our parish, whether through volunteering, supporting local initiatives, or providing essential services that enhance our community's quality of life.

We invite residents to submit nominations for individuals or groups who deserve this recognition. The chosen recipients will be celebrated at our Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish in May 2025.

How to Nominate

Nominations are open until 31st March 2025. To nominate someone, visit our website for further details.

Let's come together to shine a light on the unsung heroes who make our parish a better place for all!

PLANNING MATTERS

The Parish Council is a Statutory Consultee for all planning applications within the Parish of Hoo St. Werburgh and Chattenden, as well as for large applications that may impact our area. While we do not make the final decisions on planning applications, our comments must be considered by Medway Council, which is the local planning authority. The decision to approve or refuse an application is made by Medway Council's Planning Committee or, in the case of non-contentious applications, delegated to one of their planning officers.

As part of our planning process, the Parish Council is formally notified of all planning applications within our parish by Medway Council. These applications are reviewed by our Planning Group and the full Parish Council, and any comments or objections are submitted to Medway Council for consideration.

Given the significant development pressures on the Hoo Peninsula, we are especially mindful of the impact large-scale applications may have on our local environment, community, and infrastructure. To ensure our responses are thorough and well-informed, we have engaged an expert planning consultant to assist us in addressing these larger applications. This helps us present strong, evidence-based representations to Medway Council and work toward preventing unsustainable development.

The Parish Council has also made robust representations to Medway Council's Local Plan consultation through our planning

consultant. Furthermore, with the adoption of the Hoo and Chattenden Neighbourhood Plan, we now have an additional layer of protection to help safeguard our community from inappropriate development.

We remain committed to protecting the character and sustainability of our parish and will continue to work diligently on behalf of our residents.

All planning applications for our parish can be found on the Planning tracker on our website.

www.hoosaintwerburgh-pc.gov.uk/community/hoo-st-werburgh-and-chattenden-parish-council-13487/planning-tracker/



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Support for Hoo & Chattenden Neighbourhood Plan

Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden Parish Council is delighted to announce the resounding success of the Hoo & Chattenden Neighbourhood Plan Referendum, held on 7th November 2024. An overwhelming 92.8% of voters endorsed the plan, marking a significant milestone in safeguarding our community's future.

The Hoo & Chattenden Neighbourhood Plan is the culmination of six years of dedicated work by the Hoo & Chattenden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. These volunteers have worked tirelessly to craft a robust plan, reflecting the aspirations and concerns of local residents. Their commitment and vision have been instrumental in achieving this landmark result.

Once formally adopted by Medway Council, the Neighbourhood Plan will become a legally binding document, giving the local community greater control over development. It will provide essential protection against unsustainable and inappropriate building projects, ensuring that future growth aligns with the needs and character of Hoo and Chattenden.

This plan is not only a tool for the present but a foundation for generations to come. It empowers our community to shape its own future, preserving the unique identity of our area while embracing responsible development.

The Parish Council extends its heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated in the referendum and contributed to this outstanding achievement. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient future for Hoo and Chattenden.



Memorial Garden Vicarage Lane

The Parish Council is pleased to announce that the land on Vicarage Lane has now been formally designated as a Memorial Garden. This project represents a significant step forward in creating a peaceful, reflective space for the community.

Over the coming months, new fencing will be installed to enhance the site's security and privacy.

Once completed, the Memorial Garden will offer various options for personal dedications and commemorations.

Key features of the Memorial Garden will include:

- A designated area - scattering and interment of ashes
- Benches, memorial plaques and trees available for personal dedications
- A quiet reflection area, accessible to all parish residents
- A memorial stone to honour the fallen of the Hoo and Chattenden Parish

The Parish Council is committed to making this space a serene and inclusive environment, where residents can remember loved ones and reflect in tranquillity.

We will keep the community updated on this project as it progresses.

New Community Centre

The existing Village Hall was built and opened for the use of Hoo villagers in the 1960's in Pottery Road. It has been well used for a wide range of events over the 60 plus years that it has been operating. It has come to the time where it is no longer sufficient to cope with the wide range of activities and with the increasing population of the village.

The Hall itself is in need of major repair and refurbishment in order to bring it up to the standard that represents the modern needs of a Community Centre to serve the local residents.

The Parish Council has secured funding from funds that developers of new housing have to pay towards Medway Council for necessary improvements in the area. (Known as Section 106 funds). The sum of £1.8m has been pledged for this project to date.

During the building of the new development, the existing Hall will remain open so that there will be no loss of facilities to the community.

Architects have been appointed by the Parish Council to design the new facilities and to proceed through the legal process of obtaining Planning Permission necessary for a new building. If all goes to plan, the new build should start in the spring and be completed by Summer 2026.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

The Parish Council oversees:

- Horse Trough—Village Centre
- Litter bins, and benches in Recreation Grounds
- Planters
- Church Clock
- Pottery Road Recreation Ground
- Kingshill Recreation Ground
- Hoo Common and Car Park
- Parish Allotments
- Memorial Garden on Vicarage Lane
- Play Areas at Recreation Grounds
- Christmas Lighting and Christmas Tree
- War Memorial
- Noticeboards

Ongoing and Upcoming Projects

New Noticeboards

To improve communication with residents, the Parish Council is installing new noticeboards across the Parish. These will provide updates, event notices, and other important information. This project is expected to be completed by early 2025.

Recreation Ground Security

To address past issues with unauthorised access, we have prioritised securing our Recreation Grounds:

- Pottery Road Recreation Ground: Recently completed with new fencing, access gates, and a height barrier.
- Kingshill Recreation Ground: A new security gate is being installed at the main entrance, with plans to address other access points following this project's completion.



Improved Access to Recreation Grounds

We are working to ensure that recreation facilities are accessible to all members of the community:

- Kingshill Recreation Ground: Plans are underway to enhance footpaths, aiming for completion by summer 2025.
- Pottery Road Recreation Ground: Similar footpath improvements will be addressed as part of this project.

New Play Area at Kingshill

In July 2024, a £150,000 play area was completed and opened at Kingshill Recreation Ground. This project, initiated in late 2023, has been a great success, offering modern and safe facilities for children and families.



Tree Maintenance and Woodland Management

In partnership with Medway Valley Countryside Partnership, we will commence tree maintenance at Millennium Wood, Kingshill Recreation Ground, starting February 2025. This initiative will include community volunteer opportunities. Following this, we will begin woodland management and rewilding projects at Hoo Common.

How You Can Get Involved

We encourage residents to participate in our environmental projects, particularly the tree maintenance program in early 2025.

Stay tuned for more information on how to volunteer and contribute to preserving our local green spaces.

The Parish Council remains committed to creating a safe, green, and welcoming environment for all. Thank you for your continued support in making our parish a wonderful place to live.

**The Parish Council would like to wish
you all a
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

