

# Our Hailsham

JUNE 2023



## MAYOR & CHAIRMAN ELECTED AT ANNUAL MEETING

Long-serving local councillor Paul Holbrook has been voted to serve as Town Mayor and Chairman at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held at the James West Community Centre on Wednesday 17th May.

The Annual Meeting also elected Councillor Cllr Anne Marie Ricketts as Deputy Town Mayor and Vice-Chairman, as well as various representatives for local community organisations. On accepting the chain of office, Councillor Holbrook, representing Hailsham Central Ward, said that his long-term vision is for a town that is community-driven and stated that it will be another busy year ahead for the Town Council.

"As Town Mayor and Chairman for another term, I look forward to continuing in my contribution to the Council's future achievements, including continuing to work hard for our residents to make further significant improvements to our services, finding more efficient ways to carry out our activities and make front-line operations as efficient as possible."

"As we all know, due to the cost-of-living crisis, a number of key changes have affected the Town Council, and we have all had to work hard - and under greater constraint than usual. These changes include a significant increase in the cost of utilities across most of our sites which we maintain for residents, in addition to an increase in other running costs across the board."

"Throughout the course of the next year, myself, my fellow town councillors and council staff will continue to work meticulously to ensure that we provide value for money for residents and make further improvements to our services."

Cllr Holbrook added: "In terms of my role as Town Mayor, I feel honoured to represent the people of Hailsham and hope to meet members of the local community at future civic engagements, whilst helping to raise the profile of local charities, community groups and voluntary organisations - all of which work selflessly to help others and make individuals lives just that much better and brighter."

"A lot can be achieved in our town and, as mayor, I will endeavour to work with different groups of people to overcome the challenges we face, especially moving forward and seeing us through the cost-of-living crisis. Hailsham is a special place, and I will work hard to ensure that it remains so."

"In closing, I would like residents to know that the Town Council is here for you. If you have any issues about the town, you should let us know. While we can't promise to be able to have a solution to every problem, we will always do our best to attempt to get some sort of positive outcome."

# NEW TOWN COUNCILLORS ELECTED

The following town councillors for Hailsham were elected on Thursday 4th May:

## WEST WARD

Cllr Kelly-Marie Blundell (Liberal Democrats): **420 votes**

Cllr Nathalie Hayes (Conservative): **306 votes**

Cllr Stephen Potts (Conservative): **296 votes**

## EAST WARD

Cllr Gavin Blake-Coggins (Liberal Democrats): **497 votes**

Cllr Alexa Clarke (Liberal Democrats): **418 votes**

Cllr Frankie Clarke (Liberal Democrats): **444 votes**

## NORTH WARD

Cllr Barbara Holbrook (Liberal Democrats): **506 votes**

Cllr Mary Laxton (Independent): **254 votes**

Cllr Colin Mitchell (Independent): **389 votes**

## NORTH WEST WARD

Cllr Anne Marie Ricketts (Independent): **410 votes**

Cllr Glynn White (Liberal Democrats): **468 votes**

## SOUTH WARD

Cllr Anne Blake-Coggins (Liberal Democrats): **451 votes**

Cllr Karen Nicholls (Independent): **388 votes**

## MAGHAM DOWN WARD

Cllr Chris Bryant (Conservative): **83 votes**

## CENTRAL WARD

Cllr Paul Holbrook (Liberal Democrats): 0 votes (uncontested)

Cllr Jo Crittenden (Liberal Democrats): 0 votes (uncontested)

Cllr Doina Rusu (Conservative): 0 votes (uncontested)

Town Clerk John Harrison, welcoming all members on to the Town Council, said: "I'm delighted our members, new or re-elected, have been elected to represent Hailsham. They were all good candidates and I'm confident that they will get involved in the local community and promote close links between the Council and residents."

All members will hold office until the normal election of all town councillors which will take place in May 2027.

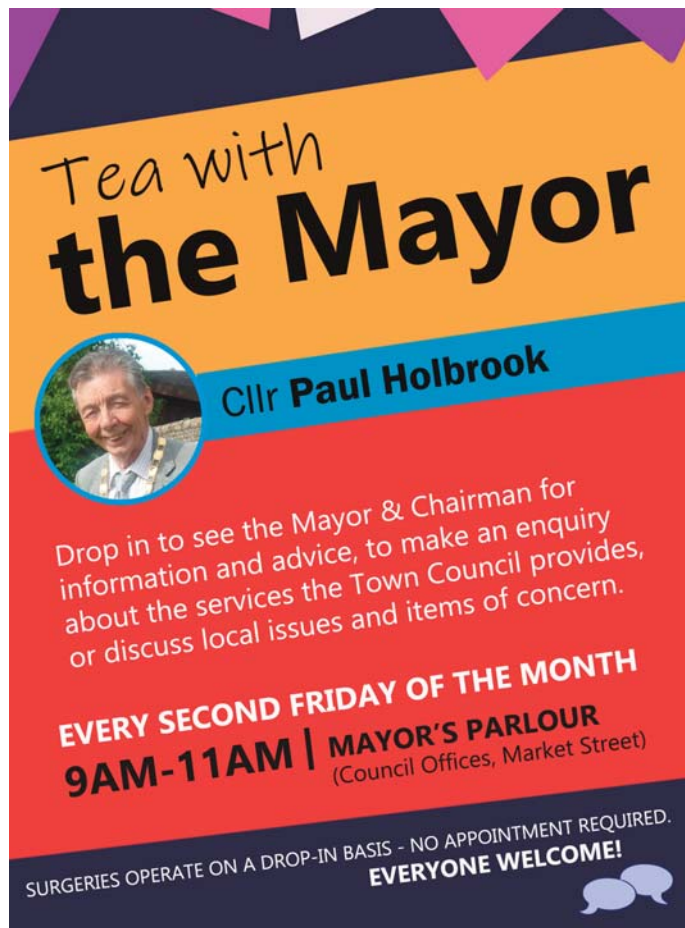
The political make up of Hailsham Town Council since the election:

**9 Liberal Democrat councillors**


**4 Conservative councillors**

**4 Independent councillors**

**(1 vacancy)**



Tea with  
**the Mayor**



**Cllr Paul Holbrook**

Drop in to see the Mayor & Chairman for information and advice, to make an enquiry about the services the Town Council provides, or discuss local issues and items of concern.

**EVERY SECOND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH**  
**9AM-11AM | MAYOR'S PARLOUR**  
(Council Offices, Market Street)

SURGERIES OPERATE ON A DROP-IN BASIS - NO APPOINTMENT REQUIRED.  
**EVERYONE WELCOME!**



# MEETING ROOM HIRE

Ideal for group meetings and training sessions

## Fleur de Lys Meeting Room



Includes access to small kitchen, use of garden and free Wi-fi facility



**£10** per hour  
for commercial and private hire

**from £20** per session for community groups and voluntary organisations

**BOOKING & MORE INFORMATION:**  
**01323 841702**  
enquiries@hailsham-tc.gov.uk



# COMMITTEE STRUCTURE FOR NEXT MUNICIPAL YEAR

Following on from proposals made at the Annual Meeting of Hailsham Town Council held recently, the Council's Committee structure for the next year has been put in place.

Six Standing Committees have been appointed for the 2023/24 municipal year, these being:

- ASSETS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
- COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
- FINANCE, BUDGET, RESOURCES & STAFFING COMMITTEE
- PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
- NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING COMMITTEE
- STAFFING COMMITTEE
- STRATEGY COMMITTEE



Please refer to our website for details of individual committee responsibilities and remits: [hailsham-tc.gov.uk](http://hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

# COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION IN THE COMMUNITY

At the Annual Council Meeting held last month, members agreed to councillor representation on the following external bodies as proposed:

**Wealden District Association of Local Councils:**

Cllr Paul Holbrook and Cllr Steve Potts

**Hailsham Aspires Board:** Cllr Mary Laxton

**Hailsham Forward (Executive):** Cllr Alexa Clarke and Cllr Steve Potts

**Cuckmere Buses Stakeholder Group:** Cllr Paul Holbrook

**Environment Hailsham (Board):** Cllr Chris Bryant

**Wealden & District Citizens' Advice Bureau (Board):**  
Cllr Anne Blake-Coggins

**Hailsham Active:** Cllr Kelly-Marie Blundell

**Wealden Dementia Action Alliance:** Cllr Anne Blake-Coggins

**Movement & Access Strategy for Hailsham and Hellingly (MASHH) Steering Group:** Cllr Steve Potts and Cllr Glynn White

**Hailsham Community Safety Action Group (CSAG):**  
Cllr Paul Holbrook and Cllr Anne Marie Ricketts

**PCC Liaison Focus Group:** Cllr Kelly-Marie Blundell and Cllr Anne Marie Ricketts

**Community Halls:** Cllr Barbara Holbrook

**Save the DGH Campaign group:** Cllr Gavin Blake-Coggins

Hailsham Town Council has Council Representatives on a variety of outside bodies within the local area, for example, where the Council has a commitment with the organisation and/or its function or where the organisation provides an opportunity to liaise with other external companies or authorities in the interest of the town or residents.

"There are several organisations which are independent from the Town Council but have an impact on its service areas and benefit from maintaining effective partnerships with us," said Town Clerk John Harrison. "Town Council representatives attend as many meetings of an outside body as they are reasonably able and, at these meetings, allows the organisation to gain access to the expertise and knowledge of the Council - and also help to make sure that the Council is kept up to date with the actions and future plans of the organisation."



# JAMES WEST COMMUNITY CENTRE: FIVE YEARS AS ASSET TO THE COMMUNITY

The James West Community Centre will celebrate five years this summer since it first launched and opened to the public in 2018.

A valuable asset to the local community, the centre, located in Brunel Drive in north Hailsham, currently has a wide range of local groups and people of all ages using the space and facilities on a regular basis.

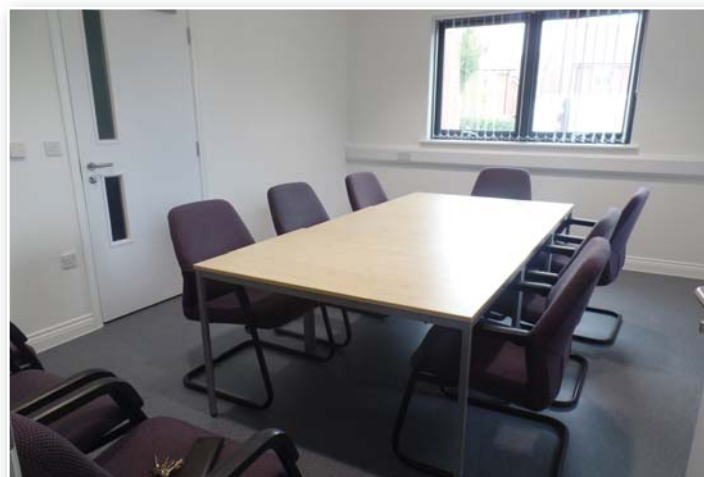
The provision of a community hall and sports facility was made as part of the initial planning agreement between Hailsham Town Council and Welbury Farm developer Taylor Wimpey in 2018 and has since become an integral part of the local community for people to socialise, stay fit and take part in various activities.

"Over the last five years, the James West Community Centre has been on quite a journey," said Deputy Town Clerk & Business Enterprise Manager, Mickey Caira. "The centre has played host to sports training sessions and tournaments, wellness workshops, keep fit classes and more - even baby ballet classes!"

"Since opening, this purpose-built centre has already begun to play a key role in enabling Hailsham to fulfil its potential as a vibrant and inclusive town. I'm delighted that the centre has had a good first five years with the different groups and services working together to provide a high-quality facility for local people and has become such a positive asset to Hailsham."

The Centre consists of an 18m x 11.7m hall, able to accommodate an audience of around 200 seated, in addition to two meeting rooms. The facility also includes a modern kitchen, storerooms, toilets, changing rooms and a P.A. system.

Hirers can use the James West Community Centre for social clubs and activities, sports and games, dancing and exercise, pre-school and toddler groups, craft exhibits,



after-school clubs, family functions, quiz nights and fundraising events, as well as seminars, conferences, business meetings and public consultation events.

Current regular hirers include Hailsham Table Tennis Club, Monday Youth Hub, Hailsham Active, Hailsham Voices Pop Choir, FLeXercise, Elements Yoga, PW Performers and Baby Ballet. The centre also hosts meetings provided by the AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) and Hailsham Parkinsons Society.

**For further information or to make a booking, contact Hailsham Town Council on 01323 841702 or by email.**





## POST OFFICE BANKING: A BOOM FOR HAILSHAM RESIDENTS

The Town Council is taking action to raise awareness of the availability of post office banking services for residents and businesses, as more bank branches close nationally and a recent survey highlights the continued preference for in-person banking by many people.

According to a survey conducted by professional services company Accenture in March, around a third of people would rather carry out all their banking in person and many people still prefer to attend their local bank branch in person to obtain financial advice and financial services amid cost-of-living pressures, despite increasingly being able to access them online.

Although over 40% of people aged 55 and over would rather visit a branch in-person, the survey of more than 2,400 banking customers concluded that it is not just the older generations who are reluctant to switch to mobile or online banking. Around 20% of 18 to 34-year-olds stated that they prefer to carry out their banking in person according to the survey.

Interestingly, more cash was handled by the Post Office in March than any month since last September (excluding Christmas) and recent figures showed cash deposits and withdrawals over the counter reached well over £3 billion during March, across its 11,500 branches.

People are increasingly accessing their local post office to manage money due to some banks closing branches, which, in some towns, can make it "the only location where consumers can do their banking," the survey stated.

The Town Council wishes to assure residents that normal bank transactions can be carried out in branch at the town centre Post Office located at 10 High Street, including business deposits.

Residents can access their high street bank accounts at the post office - this service is free of charge and, provided customers have their debit card with them, they can check your balance and withdraw or deposit cash. If you don't have a debit card, some banks will still allow you to deposit cash via the Post Office, if you have a deposit slip.

The Post Office's free everyday banking service is available to both businesses and individuals.

"An increasing number of people bank online and consequently make far fewer visits to branches," said John Harrison, Town Clerk and Postmaster of the Hailsham High Street Post Office. "Whilst we fully understand the considerable uptake in the use of online banking in recent years, there is still a significant number of people, particularly the elderly, who like to visit their branches and bank in person."

"This is where we continue to help, with transactions for customers of other banks and building societies too.

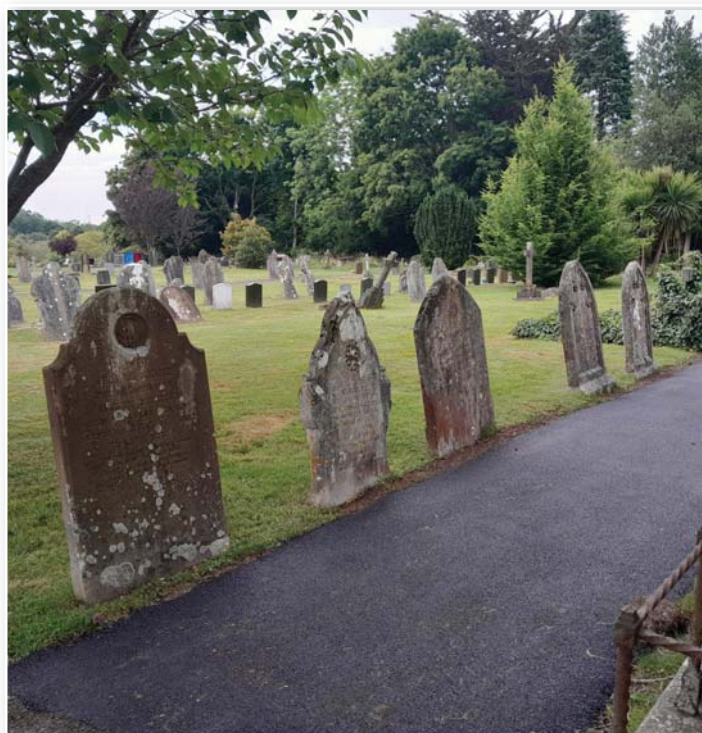
# ADDITIONAL BURIAL SPACE TO BE CREATED AT CEMETERY

Work will get under way on further improvements to Hailsham Cemetery with the refurbishment of the Old Garden of Remembrance and creation of additional ashes burial plots, scheduled to commence soon.

Following recent discussions by the Assets Management Committee, councillors agreed to refurbish the Old Garden of Remembrance area of the cemetery in Ersham Road, work which will include the removal of the existing beech perimeter hedge which has caused problems in the past due to heavy leaf drop.

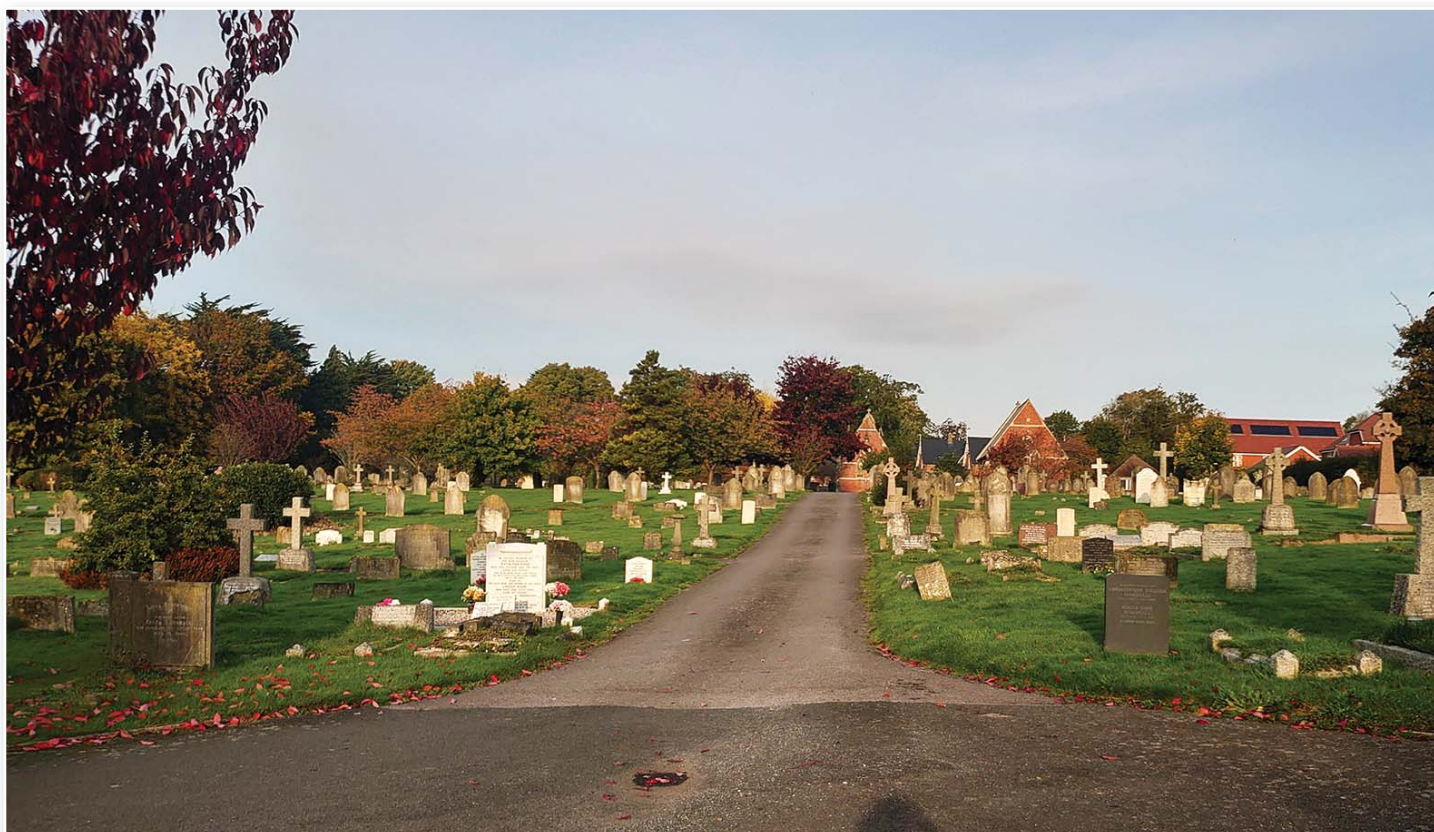
All existing paths in the area will be re-laid using existing materials and the area of grass in the middle of the garden will be removed and offered to the community as new ashes interment plots. The burial area gained will release up to 100 ashes plots.

"Hailsham Cemetery is a quiet, secluded burial ground run by the Town Council and maintained for maximum peace for those visiting loved ones," said Town Clerk, John Harrison. "We



want to ensure that our cemetery provides a fitting and appropriate place for people to visit their loved ones which is why we continue make improvements by carrying out any upgrades and repair work necessary on site. By doing this, we can ensure that the cemetery remains a place the community can be truly proud of."

"The refurbishment of the Old Garden of Remembrance will go a considerable way in terms of providing additional interment space for the local community."



# WORK COMPLETED ON PLAY AREA UPGRADES

Major work has finished on improvements to some of the town's children's play areas, delivering an exciting upgrade to play equipment.

With the success of the upgraded play area in Western Road, the Town Council has taken this opportunity to bring the playground located on the Maurice Thornton Playing Field - in addition to those located in Stroma Gardens and Battle Road up to optimum standard, offering excellent play value for all users.

The project has been funded by using the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money and will future proof the play areas for the next 10-15 years.

The upgrade to the Maurice Thornton Playing Field play area saw the installation of a 30-metre aerial zipwire, replacement of the broken inclusive roundabout and complete overlaying of the wet-pour in the area.

Work was also carried out on the play area situated in Stroma Gardens and included the installation of new pieces of toddler equipment, as well as the removal of the large slide and replacement with a toddler multi-play unit. A 4-person springy seesaw and inclusive toddler springy was also installed.

The third phase of the project, which is nearing completion at the time of writing, sees the replacement of swings on the Battle Road play area, in addition to the replacement of the Whirly Bird roundabout with an inclusive one and complete overlaying of the wet-pour surface.

"The revamp of some of our play areas is part of the Town Council's continued commitment to improve local parks and open spaces," said Works Manager Richard Gillett. "The Town Council's play areas strike a balance between providing play and meeting current safety requirements, which is why we pride ourselves in maintaining our facilities to the highest standards and undertaking regular inspections, repairs and replacements where necessary, as well as upgrades such as these."



"The Battle Road, Stroma Gardens and Maurice Thornton play facilities are well-used, and the improvement works to these sites will see the installation of new and more inclusive equipment - plus it will also help the Town Council tackle the challenge of a growing number of families with children in the Hailsham area."

In addition to Battle Road, Stroma Gardens and Maurice Thornton, the Town Council currently manages play areas in Western Road and Quinnell Drive, plus two outdoor gym sites and a children's skate park.

**James West Community Centre**  
BRUNEL DRIVE • HAILSHAM • BN27 3FY

A multi-purpose venue for residents, businesses and community groups in Hailsham.

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[www.jameswestcommunitycentre.org](http://www.jameswestcommunitycentre.org)



# RUN-AWAY SUCCESS FOR HAILSHAM ACTIVE RUN

Hailsham was filled with runners on 21st May, as over 500 people laced up their running shoes and took to the streets for the first-ever Hailsham Active Run, a community-focused event which welcomed people participating in 10k, 5k, 3k or all-inclusive 1-mile runs.

The Town Council, which provided funding for the event, partnered with Hailsham Active and specialist management company, Sport Systems, to promote the races - of which the public turned up in their droves to support to runners on the day.

Commencing in Hailsham High Street in the morning, the route followed along through Bell Banks Road, Station Road, Old Swan Lane, Mill Road, Archery Walk, St Mary's Avenue and Marshfoot Lane, before finishing back on the High Street in the early afternoon.

Whilst the main sponsor of the run was the Town Council, sponsorship was also raised from businesses in the community, funds of which went towards the event's overall expenses.

"We are delighted to have co-organised the event and contributed to its resounding success, complementing our mission to create a healthier Hailsham community," said town councillor and Hailsham Active representative, Mary Laxton. "The success of the event further demonstrates our objectives to help make Hailsham fully inclusive as a community and it was pleasing to see residents with any form of disability or special need participating in the 1-mile inclusive run especially."

Cllr Laxton added: "The event took two years to organise and come together, will help put Hailsham on the sporting map and hopefully become annual event in the town which everyone can look forward to."

"Once again, a big thank you to everyone who lined the route and cheered runners on at the start and finish line to show their support. It was wonderful to see so many people, from fun runners to the more serious athletes, really enjoying themselves and making such a fantastic effort!"

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**facebook**



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**[facebook.com/hailsham.towncouncil.3](https://facebook.com/hailsham.towncouncil.3)**

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Twitter updates:  
**[hailshamtowncouncil \(HailshamTC\)](https://twitter.com/hailshamtowncouncil)**



# ENJOY HAILSHAM COUNTRY PARK DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS

Do you enjoy the outside life? The Town Council has launched another campaign to encourage residents to visit Hailsham Country Park and enjoy the beauty of the upcoming spring season.

The Council-maintained Country Park, situated off Gleneagles Drive, covers approximately 22 acres and incorporates woodland, a recreational grass area, two ponds and a lake. A water course skirts the open field area and all-weather footpaths can be found throughout the park to encourage people of all ages to enjoy this precious open space area.

"Offering a peaceful and relaxing environment and with so much to offer, the Country Park is an ideal place to get away from it all," said Karen Giddings, Environment & Planning Officer at Hailsham Town Council.

"Residents and visitors can bring their family and a picnic, do a spot of fishing at the Gleneagles lake, jog, spot wildlife, exercise their dog or encourage their children to let off steam using the open space to have a run around!"

Hailsham Town Council is proud of its many improvements to the site in recent years, including the construction of a new path around Wentworth Pond and other area-specific projects such as the more upgrading and resurfacing of the pathway around the lake, making it more accessible for disabled users.

Additionally, the Town Council has planted additional trees at the Country Park, as part of a plan to implement its environmental objectives over the course of the next few years.

The park's high level of maintenance by Town Council works staff, together with regular monitoring of the area by two Water Bailiffs, has ensured that the site remains a safe and clean public green space for the whole community to enjoy.



## TOWN CENTRE RETAIL UNIT VACANCIES: LATEST FIGURES

Latest figures show that Hailsham town centre falls well below the current regional and national averages of vacant ground floor commercial units.

According to a recent vacancy rate survey conducted by Springboard, the percentage of vacant ground floor units in Hailsham currently stands at 6.7%, recorded in April 2023. This also compares to a current regional/Southeast average of 9.9% and national average of 11%.

During the past few years, the town centre has welcomed a range of new businesses, including those which have expanded and subsequently relocated to larger premises and retail spaces.

Deputy Town Clerk and Business Enterprise Manager Mickey Cairn said: "The percentage of vacant commercial units in Hailsham has decreased considerably in recent years and

still falls below the current regional and national averages, which is excellent news for Hailsham. Hailsham is definitely the place to be for all shopping needs."

"The Town Council and Hailsham Forward have key priorities to work with local businesses to deliver plans to help address the issue of empty shops further and work towards a 100% occupancy rate for retail and business units."



# LAND & PROPERTY

MANAGED/MAINTAINED BY HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL



## PUBLIC OPEN SPACES & PARKS

Land at Butts Field; Land at rear of Retail Park (Diplocks Way); Land at Arlington Road East; Land at Blacksmith's Copse; Common Pond; Land at Ersham Road Triangle; Land on west side of Solway; Land to the south side of Quinnell Drive; Dennis King Memorial Sensory Garden; Cameron Close public open space; Orchard Park and land adjacent to Grovelands Barn

## RECREATION LAND & PLAY AREAS

Hailsham Country Park (including lake and ponds); Western Road Recreation Ground (including Beaconsfield and tennis courts); Maurice Thornton Playing Fields; Carpenters Way play area; Stroma Gardens play area; Battle Road play area; Maurice Thornton play area; Quinnell Drive play area; Maurice Thornton skate park

## ALLOTMENT SITES

Station Road; Battle Road; Harold Avenue

## CEMETERY LAND

Cemetery site at Ersham Road

## PREMISES MANAGED

1 Market Square (Square Youth Cafe/SafeHub/The Foyer); Cemetery Lodge (Ersham Road); Cemetery buildings inc. chapel; 3 Market Street; Inglenook & Fleur de Lys (Market Street); 4 Market Street; James West Community Centre; Union Corner Hall and car park; Maurice Thornton Pavilion, Grovelands Barn; 2 North Street building (inc. public toilets)

## OTHER

War Memorial (Vicarage Field); Victoria Gate (High Street)

## POST OFFICE

10 High Street

**FOR A MORE DETAILED LIST OF LAND & PROPERTIES MANAGED BY HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL, PLEASE CALL 01323 841702.**

# Your Hailsham Town Councillors

**ANNE BLAKE-COGGINS, SOUTH WARD**

Telephone: 07590 478881 Email: [cllr.anne.blake-coggins@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.anne.blake-coggins@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**GAVIN BLAKE-COGGINS, EAST WARD**

Telephone: 07766 077398 Email: [cllr.gavin.blake-coggins@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.gavin.blake-coggins@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**KELLY-MARIE BLUNDELL, WEST WARD**

Telephone: 07904 282823 Email: [cllr.kelly-marie.blundell@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.kelly-marie.blundell@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**CHRIS BRYANT, MAGHAM DOWN WARD,**

Telephone: 07865 357846 Email: [cllr.anne.chris.bryant@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.anne.chris.bryant@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**ALEXA CLARKE, EAST WARD**

Telephone: 07725 027613 Email: [cllr.alex.clarke@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.alex.clarke@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**FRANKIE CLARKE, EAST WARD**

Telephone: 07919 960381 Email: [cllr.frankie.clarke@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.frankie.clarke@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**JO CRITTENDEN, CENTRAL WARD**

Telephone: 07434 943501 Email: [cllr.jo.crittenden@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.jo.crittenden@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**NATHALIE HAYES, WEST WARD**

Telephone: 07713 196561 Email: [cllr.nathalie.hayes@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.nathalie.hayes@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**Barbara Holbrook, North Ward**

Telephone: 01323 841978

**PAUL HOLBROOK, CENTRAL WARD**

Telephone: 07767 296279

**MARY LAXTON, NORTH WARD**

Telephone: 07723 444209 Email: [cllr.mary.laxton@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.mary.laxton@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**COLIN MITCHELL, NORTH WARD**

Telephone: 07976 457047 Email: [cllr.colin.mitchell@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.colin.mitchell@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**KAREN NICHOLLS, SOUTH WARD**

Telephone: 01323 841702 Email: [cllr.karen.nicholls@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.karen.nicholls@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**STEPHEN POTTS, WEST WARD**

Telephone: 01323 846460 Email: [cllr.stephen.potts@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.stephen.potts@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**ANNE MARIE RICKETTS, NORTH WEST WARD**

Telephone: 07837 208877 Email: [cllr.annemarie.ricketts@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.annemarie.ricketts@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**DOINA RUSU, SOUTH WARD**

Telephone: 07849 522949 Email: [cllr.doina.rusu@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.doina.rusu@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

**GLYNN WHITE, NORTH WEST WARD**

Telephone: 07843 16079 Email: [cllr.glynn.white@hailsham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.glynn.white@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

1 x VACANCY

# Hailsham Youth Service



Hailsham Youth Service (HYS), managed by Hailsham Town Council, provides youth work, support services and opportunities for young people in the local area. As well as running clubs and centres, HYS provides support services for young people, in addition to organising a range of recreational outings and activities.

Regardless of background, gender or culture, young people can expect a safe, supportive and non-judgmental environment at all our centres and through our various activities and service provision.



**SQUARE YOUTH CAFE** (Market Square, Monday-Friday)  
3.15pm-5.15pm (Yrs 6-8) | 6.15pm-8.30pm (Yrs 9-12)



**HELLINGLY YOUTH HUB** (Hellingly Hub, Wednesday)  
6.15pm-7.30pm (Yrs 6-8) | 7.45pm-9pm (Yrs 9-11)



**MONDAY YOUTH HUB** (James West Centre, Monday)  
6.15pm-7.30pm (Yrs 6-8) | 7.45pm-9pm (Yrs 9-11)



**EASTSIDE YOUTH HUB** (Hailsham East Ctr, Thursday)  
6.15pm-7.30pm (Yrs 6-8) | 7.45pm-9pm (Yrs 9-11)



**FRIDAY NIGHT PROJECT** (Term-time only)  
Yrs 7-11 | Times and venues vary - visit [hailshamyouthservice.org](http://hailshamyouthservice.org)



**SAFEHUB** (1 Market Square, Weekdays: 3pm-6pm)  
Incorporating Sexual Health Service & Detached/Outreach

**07546 388180** | [info@hailshamyouthservice.org](mailto:info@hailshamyouthservice.org)

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