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14th May 2026

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

Parish Council Members May 2025 – May 2026

The Parish Council Election took place on 1st May 2025. Four candidates stood for the six vacancies, Councillors Barry, Hattersley, Hull and Wilson were elected unopposed. To bring the council up to full strength Councillors Gauntlet and Lyons, both of whom had previously served on the council, were co-opted. Councillor Barry was elected Chairman with Councillor Hull as Deputy.

In February 2026 Councillor Hull stood down from the council. The resulting vacancy will be filled by co-opting a volunteer at the Parish Council Annual General Meeting.

Parish Council Finance

Whilst inflation has impacted on all costs, prudent financial management has kept spending under control and within budget. Inevitably the 2026/7 Parish Precept will have to rise slightly to keep pace with inflation. The planned budget requires only a 1.7% uplift, an additional £0.86p annual increase per household.

Reserves remain consistent with the policy of retaining sufficient to meet 3 months of expenditure and also to ensure that any unexpected commitments can be met. We are mindful that the replacement of recreation ground play equipment may become necessary at some point and that this will not be cheap.

Our Parish Clerk will present the annual financial statement later in the meeting.

Grants

Section 137 of the Local Government Act allows the council to award grants that will bring benefit to our area and residents. During this year the following grants have been awarded:

Community Centre	£300 (for the community association / Garden)
National Reading Project	£900 each to Binstead and Newchurch Schools.
Remembrance Day Wreaths	£75 (St Peters Church, The Shrine, Ashey War Memorial)

Havenstreet Bus Service Campaign

Local residents told the council that Havenstreet needed a bus service, having been without one since 2015. During the summer a survey was launched which produced evidence that a bus service was wanted and would be used. A report was produced and circulated to stakeholders including IW Councillors, council officers and Southern Vectis. A meeting with the General Manager of Southern Vectis was arranged, the outcome of which was an agreement that a trial service would be provided at some point in 2026. Whilst the ideal would be a service that allowed residents to travel to work and school, it is likely that the trial buses will run during the mid morning to mid afternoon periods. This is due to the availability of buses to resource the route. Details of the service are yet to be announced, a progress check with Southern Vectis during April confirmed that planning is underway and that a bus service will return to Havenstreet in the near future.

Details of the proposed service will be distributed as soon as they are known. It's going to be very important that people do make use of the trial service, it really is going to be use it or lose it.

Island Roads

Once again, roadworks and traffic management have been issues throughout the year. Planned and unplanned emergency works have caused disruption and inconvenience across the whole parish.

Councillors and the Parish Clerk have had numerous engagements with Island Roads staff when problems have been anticipated or have occurred, often due to poor planning and signage of diversions. It is not always easy to get the results that we would like but we will continue to put pressure on Island Roads whenever it is needed.

The planning and coordination of roadworks has become an issue affecting all parts of our Island, Councillors from all areas are determined to work with Island Roads to drive improvement in their processes.

Speeding

Residents continue to raise concerns over speeding in all areas. The Isle of Wight Council's Speed Reduction Plan proposes traffic calming and a possible speed limit through Havenstreet village and speed limit reductions in the Ashe and Combley Road areas. A project manager has been appointed to deliver the plan, the next stage will be a consultation phase which will involve this council.

Havenstreet Recreation Ground

The maintenance of the recreation ground is the Council's responsibility. It became clear that an unofficial entrance onto Church Road had been created, putting users at risk of slipping down a steep bank onto the road, possibly into the path of an oncoming vehicle. In order to remove the risk, the fencing in the area was reinforced. Unfortunately the fence has been intentionally broken down with repairs carried out at a cost the local taxpayer. A permanent solution, which could possibly include creating a safe entrance in the area, is being investigated. Safety is the prime concern and advice is being sought from Island Roads Development Control as to the best and safest way forward. The cost of any proposed solution will also be a consideration.

The proposal to install football goalposts in the recreation ground is making slow progress but is still active, further quotes for the cost of installation are still awaited.

Looking Forward

The ways in which the council communicates need to be improved. A new Parish Council Website is due to go live, it will give users a much better experience with more information available and easily accessible. The Havenstreet Times and Ashey & Haylands Community Facebook pages are useful means of communication but not everybody uses social media. The loss of the more traditional parish newsletter, produced in conjunction with St Peter's Church, has left an information vacuum. More thought on how our communications can be developed is needed.

In the coming year your Parish Council will continue to represent all residents interests on road safety and traffic management issues, both with Island Roads and the Isle of Wight Council.

We will continue to work with Southern Vectis to ensure that Havenstreet gets a trial bus service, and encourage as many people as possible to use it.

Residents of the parish are encouraged to raise their concerns about local issues with any Parish Councillor or the Parish Clerk.

A J Barry

Chairman

Havenstreet & Ashey Parish Council