

Working for Pembury People

Annual Report 2024-25



Pembury Parish Council operates and maintains a range of facilities including Lower Green Recreation Ground, tennis courts, football pitches, allotments, the Village Green and other open spaces, bus shelters, benches, some streetlights and burial grounds. We also publish our quarterly newsletter, the PVN and run community events including the annual Fireworks Display, Pembury in the Park and Carols on the Green. We are mainly funded by the Precept collected by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council as part of your Council Tax. Other income is received from burials, allotments, event tickets and advertising in the PVN.

The Parish Council has set a precept of £297,500 for 2025-26. This equates to an increase of 11.5% to our element of your council tax bills. This is an extra 25 pence per week per Band D property. The increase reflects inflationary pressures on the cost of services, increased employment costs due to increases in employer national insurance and the national minimum wage as well as the maintenance of aging infrastructure .

Some of the functions and facilities the Parish Council provides



Consultation on Planning & highways issues



Children's Playground & recreation ground



Burials and management of 3 Burial Grounds



Woodside Allotment

Christmas Tree
Christmas Lights

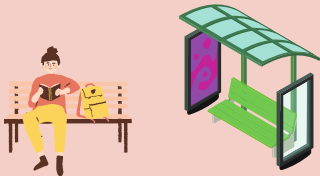
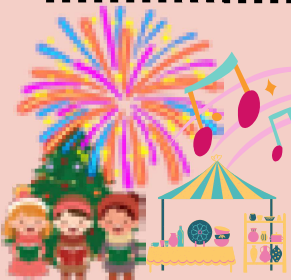


Sports Pitches & tennis courts

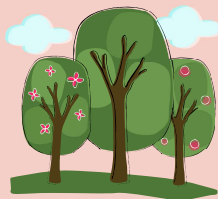
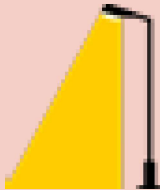


Events

Pembury in the Park
Fireworks
Carols on the Green



Benches, bus shelters & streetlights



Open Spaces

Average Band D home contributes

£125.97

per annum
£2.42 per week



Where does the £344,395 Parish Council budget come from?

ANNUAL PRECEPT £297,500 86.3% of the budget	INCOME FROM SERVICES £29,900 8.75% of the budget	INCOME FROM COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS £16,995 5% of the budget
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2025/26 Expenditure

SERVICES £40.7K	COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATION £127.10K	OPEN SPACES £149.9K	COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS £26.8K
Cemetery & Burials £32.4k	Council Admin & buildings £121.2k	Open Spaces & playgrounds £126.4k	Newsletter £8k
Allotments £1.1k	Loan & bank charges £4.2k	Dog bin emptying £3.2k	Events £11.3k
Streetlights & street furniture £7.2k	Grants & Donations £1.7k	Reserves £20.3k	Christmas Display £7.5k

Committee and Working Group Chairs' Reports



Katy



Nigel





Christine



Astra

Parish Council

We've had another busy year at the Parish Council, and welcomed Patrick back to the Council - he didn't manage to stay away long! We have also welcomed Paul, Lester and Brian to the Council. We work closely with our County and Borough Councillors Paul, Astra, David and Hugh to represent Pembury . Sadly, Jon, David and Martin left the Council, but we thank them for all their hard work and effort they put into the role.

Another year of successful events, although Pembury in the Park did tail off a bit early, there was some football match on I believe.... we're looking forward to it being a bigger event this year - our Events Group are busy working on the preparations. The Fireworks was its usual brilliant display, and we even had people coming down from London as they had heard how good they are! The Remembrance Service was moving as always, and it was lovely to hear the roll call read out by children, who did a fantastic job.

The Carols on the Green was wonderful, and a big thank you to all the hard work the children and teachers put into their performance.

Looking forward to this year's events already!

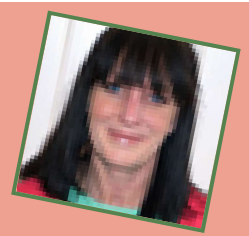
Committee Chair





Planning & Highways Committee

Katy
Committee Chair



Pembury Parish Council are statutory consultees on all Planning applications, but the final decision is made by the Borough Council who will consider all comments made from us and people / organisations via their planning portal. Any big or potentially contentious applications are asked to be “called in” by one of our Borough Councillors, which means that the application has to be heard by the whole Borough Council Planning Committee, and not a decision made by one Planning Officer.

So far this financial year, we have considered 64 planning applications, most of which are just for simple side extensions, a porch, or turning a front garden into a drive. We get quite a lot of applications regarding tree crowning, pruning, or removal if the tree is unsafe or diseased.

We have had some major applications recently, and due to their impact, these are given consideration by our Full Council, and we then work in conjunction with our Planning Consultant to ensure our response is as robust as possible, and references all the legislation that TWBC need to pay heed to when considering. For one of the last big applications, we had a 17 page response outlining all the reason that we objected to the application with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework and our village Neighbourhood Development Plan.

We work with TWBC to ensure that enforcement notices issued when applications are refused (quite often retrospective) are enforced, and follow up with them on a regular basis to ensure “wheels are in motion”.

Planning meetings are held once a month in the Parish Council office, all members of the public are welcome to attend, and there is an agenda item for them to address the Council about any planning applications they are concerned about. The best way to have your say is always on the planning portal <https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/planning/applications/search> as TWBC will read all comments made.

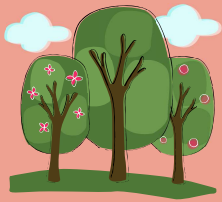


Community Events Working Group

Astra
Working Group Chair



The working group oversaw the organisation of the community events in the village, including the annual fireworks, our summer event on the recreation ground 'Pembury in the Park' and the Christmas lights switch on 'Carols on The Green'. We are starting to work on this year's programme of events and we will share details of progress via social media and our website. We appreciate all the help of the volunteers to make these events possible!



Open Spaces Committee



Committee Chair
Christine



The Parish Council has been given developer funds from the Sturgeons development, for a new climbing frame for the Lower Green Recreation Ground. The committee has met with a representative from a playground company for guidance and advice. There will be a face-to-face consultation in March to allow children and families from the village to attend to give their opinions on various types of climbing frames. See page 18 for information about this event.

We held another successful Village Litter Pick on the 28th September 2024 and another Litter Pick is scheduled for the 29th March. Our very grateful thanks as always to We Waste and the Rapid Relief Team. We Waste provide equipment for the volunteers and take away all of the collected litter free of charge. The Rapid Relief Team kindly provide drinks and food for the volunteers, again all free of charge.

Cleaning the new tennis courts has just been carried out to keep them in good condition. It is so nice to see the tennis courts being used, which gives pleasure and exercise to so many residents.

We will be installing a handrail next to the steps at the War Memorial. We hope this will enable anyone with mobility issues to access the War Memorial more easily.

The Open Spaces Committee would like to thank our groundsmen Ryan and Darrell for their continued hard work and dedication to keeping our Village Green, recreation areas and cemeteries in such good condition.

Finance & HR Committee



During the year we have:

- Reviewed many Council's policies including Tree Management, Bee Keeping Policy, CCTV and the Metal Detecting Policies.
- Reviewed the Risk Register, and assessments for individual events such as Fireworks.
- Taken part in the recruitment process for new staff and reviewed their terms of service.
- Investigated and implemented Sickness Protection insurance to protect the Council against prolonged staff absence.
- Carried out a review of the Local Government Pension Scheme and started to assess the financial implications of the scheme for the future.
- Considered opening a further bank account to spread the financial risk especially at the time of receiving the half-yearly precept monies.
- Recommended to Full Council the Budget for 2025-2026 and the increases needed to sustain the current level of services provided to the Parish.
- Reviewed the Reports of the Internal Auditor and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- Regularly reviewed expenditure and income against budget.
- Updated the Financial Regulations.

Nigel

Committee Chair





Here's a few things we've been working on:

- Further investigative work on Solar Energy electricity supply for our offices
- Planted small saplings and "whips" in a spare allotment plot to grow on until ready to plant out
- Activities undertaken for "Great Big Green" week, including organising:
 - Nature walk in Snipe and Bassett Wood and the Old Orchard led by Jon Webster supported by the High Weald Project
 - Talk by Dr Yi Wang, Reader in Climate Sciences at the University of Sussex
 - Litter Pick around the parish
 - Wild Pembury" Photographic competition which received 50 entries with winners announced in the 3 age categories
- Walking tour of "Twittens" in Pembury to raise awareness of them.
- Preparatory work to install a further 12 "Twitten" signs to encourage residents to walk around the village.
- Considering the future use of "Coronation Gardens" and agreeing to retain it in its natural state with paths cut through for access.
- Agreeing the aims of the working group and a new name for the group of "Green Pembury"
- Work on a list of trees to be put forward for Tree Preservation orders.
- Considering a proposal for a 20-mph speed limit in the village.

Nigel



Working Group Chair

MEET YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Thursday 8 May 2025

7:00pm to 8:30pm

Baptist Church

Romford Road, Pembury



Committees will have representatives available to discuss their work with you at the drop-in session.

Please join us to chat to them about the work of their committee over the last year and what's happening in 2025!

Light refreshments provided.

Please check our social media channels, website and notice boards for more details