

East Sussex County Council report to Mountfield Parish Assembly

1. The County Council will raise Council Tax by 4.99%. This is 2.99% which is allowed without the need for a referendum + 2% Adult Social Care precept.
2. The budget was balanced by taking £12m from reserves
3. In spite of the ASC precept, cuts have been made. Service users who are Care Act eligible will still receive a service but differently. Discretionary services are being stopped or cut severely. The cessation of day car services at Linden Court in Eastbourne have been referred back to full council for further financial analysis.
4. Many County Councillors are concerned about the Highways Contract. In spite of several million pounds being spent on potholes many of us see no visible signs of improvement. An exception is North Trade Road in Battle which has been resurfaced BUT within a very few weeks Southern Gas Networks dug it up, twice. This happened before the Lane Rental Scheme was operational. This scheme allows a Highway Authority to charge by the day for non highway work on the highway. I am constantly astonished that utilities often do not know the exact location of their services.
5. Due to Local Government Reorganisation this year's County Council elections have been cancelled. The opposition asked for £1.5 m of the £1.65 m saved from reserves by not having to pay for elections to be spent on saving the cuts to ASC. It was acknowledged that this was a short term measure but it was thought that it would pay for a breathing space while services were being redesigned for the new Unitary Authority. The request was rejected.

Kathryn Field

March 2025

Rother District Council Annual Parish Report 2024



Housing Development Conference

We held our first conference with a focus on promoting new development projects in Rother, bringing together local partners and key parties.



Council Tax e-billing campaign

We launched an online campaign that has seen 462 households sign up to our electronic Council Tax bills.



JANUARY

FEBRUARY

Local Plan consultation

Our Planning team ran a series of workshops as part of the consultation on our new draft Local Plan, which went on to receive 3,708 comments!

Increased funding for Temporary Accommodation

Cabinet agreed an extra £12 million of budget to invest in Temporary Accommodation.



Levelling Up confirmed

£19 million was awarded to Rother to fund exciting projects that aim to address inequalities and support the local economy.

APRIL

MARCH

Rother Community Lottery celebrates its second anniversary

Since its launch in April 2022, over £60,000 has been distributed to local charities, not-for-profit community organisations, and voluntary groups.



We celebrated our 50th birthday!

RVA hub approval

Members supported the allocation of funding for a new Community Hub, to be delivered by Rother Voluntary Action.

Budget formalised

Council approved the 24-25 budget, with more than £15 million to be spent on services across our district.

MAY

JUNE

Improved park facilities

New accessible play equipment was installed in Fair Salts, Rye, and the renovated tennis courts in Egerton Park were opened.



Police and Crime Commissioner Election

Following a count over the Bank Holiday weekend, Katy Bourne was re-elected as the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner.

80th Anniversary of D-Day

Organised by Wealden District Council with contributions from authorities including Rother, Members and officers attended a memorial event at Pevensey Castle.

General Election

We processed 47,938 ballot papers and at 4.30am on Friday 5 July, Dr Kieran Mullan was declared the new MP for the Bexhill and Battle constituency.



Affordable homes at Blackfriars, Battle

The Council supported a new option for the development of affordable homes at Blackfriars, Battle to provide quality housing for residents in need.



JULY

AUGUST

We received Bronze Carbon Literacy status, in recognition of our training to help reduce carbon emissions.

Pension Credit campaign

We highlighted the importance of checking Pension Credit eligibility in a series of articles, and our Customer Services team used Lift tracker software to contact those eligible.

Launch of Rother Business Crime Partnership (BCP)

We held a launch event for the new Rother BCP scheme, bringing together local businesses and the police to help tackle shoplifting crime.



Sidley scheme progression

Cabinet approved proposals to lease the Sidley football pitch and new Community Hub to the Heart of Sidley Community Association, enabling the community benefits of Levelling Up funding to be fully realised.

OCTOBER

SEPTEMBER

Parish Conference

We invited reps from Rother's 34 parishes to our annual Parish Conference, where we updated on our budget and Planning.



Budget consultation opened

Residents were asked for their views on the budget for 25/26, which outlines proposals to address the financial challenges we face.

Adoption of key strategies

Council agreed the adoption of a new Council Plan, which sets our strategic direction for the next 4 years, as well as our new Digital and Customer Services Strategy.

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER


All Staff Event fundraising

We held our annual staff event and raised £150 for Bexhill & Battle Foodbank, thanks to the generosity of our colleagues.



Northeys announcement

The Council Leader welcomed an announcement that plans to use the former Northeys site in Bexhill to house asylum seekers will not be progressed.



2025 and beyond...

2024 was a busy year for Rother, as we continued to operate in an extremely challenging economic environment while experiencing increased demand on our services. That said, we achieved so much in the past 12 months thanks to the support of our colleagues and partners across all tiers of local government.

As we look ahead to 2025, we recognise that the Government's White Paper proposals will hugely impact the way in which we work. Although it's too early to say how Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation will affect Rother, we are committed to working with town and parish councils to ensure our voice is heard.

Financial challenges will also continue to affect our work. To address these issues, and to support a culture of openness, we will monitor and report key information through our Committees, including updates on risks, performance data, and our financial position.

We have exciting milestones to mark in the coming year, as we hope to develop and adopt new strategies that will shape our work across Housing Development, Economic Development, and Homelessness & Rough Sleeping. We are also progressing our key projects across the district, including development at Blackfriars, Battle and the new Welcome Centre at Camber.

In this period of change and uncertainty, our focus is on delivering a brighter and more resilient future for Rother. We look forward to sharing updates with you as they unfold over the next 12 months.

MOUNTFIELD VILLAGE HALL

The Container!



Thank you to Mountfield Parish Council for the huge grant!
THE major step in improving the organisation and management of
the Hall

The new sign



Very big "thank you" to British Gypsum Mountfield

Rubicol!!!



- A huge success!
- Very well attended, real community event
- Thank you – Trish Jones and very special thanks to Dave Craven!!



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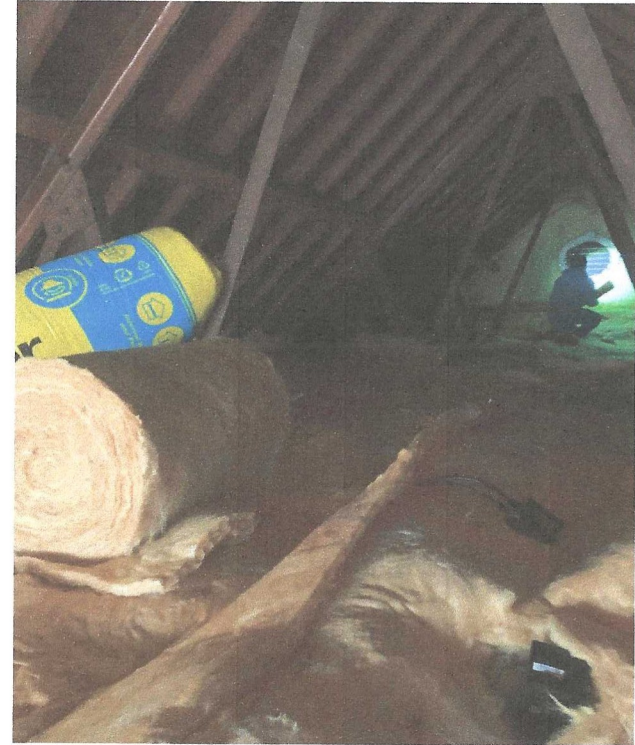
Second Friday Drop-in

- Regularly hitting 21-24 attendees
- "Younger" villagers yet to be tempted by chat, coffee and excellent cake!



Heating and Insulation improvements

- just look up (but most of it is invisible now)!!



Improved insulation and more energy efficient heating makes Hall more "user" and "environmentally friendly"

- Thank you to British Gypsum and RDC for grants and donations

And, of course

Fireworks



And The Childrens' Christmas Party

**MOUNTFIELD'S
CHILDREN'S
CHRISTMAS PARTY**

SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER
3PM-5PM @ MOUNTFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Please contact Lorna Martin on 07737 462669 to book your child's place. Please do this by 30th November at the latest, so that we can be sure of numbers being catered for.

0-12 years

Open to all residents of Mountfield or with a connection to Mountfield. It is free, supported by profits from the annual Bonfire event and Mountfield Parish Council

MOUNTFIELD VILLAGE HALL

2024/25 was a year of steady development:

Small surplus made in 24/25 year, thanks to donations

Risk of closure avoided – but not out of the woods yet!

Events delivered

Hall improvements for the 21st century "all around you"

thanks to Rother DC Village Halls Energy Project

But

Maintenance backlog needs addressing

Little Bluebells not operating due to lack of volunteers

Committee needs a couple of additions to spread load and ensure sustainability

THE MESSENGER MAGAZINE

The Messenger magazine is published 10 times per year (monthly with combined December/January and July/August issues). It is for the 4 villages of Brightling, Dallington, Mountfield and Netherfield.

The print run is approximately 400. It is distributed to people's letter-boxes by a small army of volunteers. The magazine combines "Village pages" - specific news for each of the 4 villages - with more general features of local interest.

People occasionally complain about the amount of advertising but (a) advertising pays for the magazine; without it the price paid by subscribers would have to rise by 200%; (b) some people find the adverts very useful for finding local services.

For the year ending 31st March 2025, the magazine is predicted to roughly break even; neither a profit nor a loss to speak of. The magazine has a healthy bank balance and continues to be a going concern.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who helps produce the magazine and also to the distributors who deliver the magazines and collect the subscriptions - often a thankless task!

If the magazine has a weakness, it is that it is over-reliant on a small number of dedicated people to produce and manage the magazine. We would really like to get more people involved. There are many ways in which people can help.

- Send your news and announcements to the appropriate village editor: brightling.messenger@gmail.com, dallington.messenger@gmail.com, mountfield.messenger@gmail.com, or netherfield.messenger@gmail.com
- Write a more general article on matters of local interest: email it to darwell.messenger@gmail.com. We are particularly keen to get articles on local history; also on gardening.
- Volunteer to join the committee. We have a number of vacant roles and it will only require a few hours per month of your time
- If you don't already get the magazine, take out a subscription (£10 for 10 issues). Contact darwell.messenger@gmail.com for details

Andrew Wedmore
Hon. Chair, Darwell Messenger magazine
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From: June Simpson <juneesimpson@yahoo.com>
Sent: 28 March 2025 12:31
To: clerk mountfield.org.uk
Cc: Lynne George
Subject: Mountfield Foot Path Wardens Report

Hello Irene,
Hope you are well and been enjoying the recent sunshine.
Below our Footpath Wardens report for April 2025.
Hopefully we will be able to join you for the Parish meeting on the 11th April.

Mountfield Footpath Wardens Report April 2025

We continue, along with local ramblers groups - Battle, Rother & Bexhill - to walk the Parish paths regularly. As ramblers we usually clear and cut back as we go to keep the footpaths from getting too overgrown and report back to Sussex Rights of way team any problems we find eg - broken Stiles, gates, footbridges ,fallen trees etc.

Earlier in the year we were asked to go and check on Mountfield Footpath 11b code MOU/11/2 This path goes past The Banks and up to Baldwins Farm. The contractors had started on the demolition of the old greenhouse and left quite a lot of debris across the footpath but the path was still passable with care.

We checked out a possible footpath diversion in an adjacent field in case it became necessary to redirect. The Contractors/ builders had left a Keep Out sign (building unsafe)directly over the footpath which could put people off from using it.

We've been up recently and although there's still no sign of any building works the whole area has been tidied up leaving the Footpath clear for all to use, but the Keep Out sign is still there .

The field leading up to Banks Farm has temporary deer fencing blocking the footpath with a sign saying' new trees being planted'. This fencing can be opened to allow passage. There wasn't anyone around to ask any details but I'm sure the Parish Council must-be aware of the planting.

The footpath runs parallel to the fencing and has been churned up by heavy machinery but should recover quite quickly.

We are unaware of any other issues within the Parish but if anyone finds a problem please let us know and we will go and check it out.

We have noticed that some stiles have been replaced by metal gates in fields where animals are not involved, these are a welcome addition to footpath accessibility.

Mountfield is a lovely Parish to enjoy a peaceful ramble and we enjoy helping to keep it that way.

Regards

June Simpson (07837769192)

Lynne George (07900942886)

Mountfield Footpath Wardens

Sent from my iPad

MOUNTFIELD FOOTBALL CLUB

clerk mountfield.org.uk

From: Nigel McDonagh <nigeldougal@gmail.com>
Sent: 01 April 2025 20:14
To: clerk mountfield.org.uk
Subject: Mountfield United Football Club Report 2024/2025

This season Mountfield United football club competed in Division 3 of the East Sussex Football League. We also competed in 3 different Cup competitions.

The team has enjoyed one of its best seasons for several years. To date we have only lost one game in Division 3 and expect to finish either 2nd or 3rd in the Division.

Our results so far this season are Played 14 Won 9 Drawn 4 Lost 1 with 4 games to play, gaining 31 points, much improved from last season when we finished bottom with only 12 points.

In our Cup competitions we had mixed results. In the Sussex Junior Challenge Cup we were drawn away to Preston Manor Royals first team who play at the University of Sussex sports centre at Brighton and lost 9-1 against a very young and fit team used to playing on an artificial pitch. A long way to travel and loose.

In the Macron Store Hastings Vase Cup 2nd round we lost to the Junior Club Tackleway 111 team 5-4, unfortunately halfway through the match we had our goalkeeper sent off for a foul, leaving our team with only ten players on the pitch and luckily we only lost by one goal.

In the E.S.F.L. Challenge Cup Divisions three/ four Cup we had much better success and in the semifinal we beat Northiam 75 2nd team 3-0 at the Bexhill College Sports Centre. We are now in the final to be played on the Pilot field at Hastings.

The very wet weather also once again forced us to cancel or rearrange our matches due to a waterlogged pitch, reducing the amount of games played on our pitch at Mountfield.

This season we had 31 players registered to play for Mountfield F.C. with training on a Wednesday evening at Robertsbridge Community College.

Win or loose we have a good atmosphere in the club amongst the players and after a game we enjoy a pint in a local pub and discuss what went right or wrong in the game.

We hope to continue to have a team next season and look forward to the football. At the moment we won't know until later in the year what Division we will be playing in, this will depend on results and Football League decision. We would welcome anybody who enjoys football to come and join the club.

The Club are also planning to give the changing rooms a makeover before the start of next season, .

Nigel McDonagh
Mountfield F.C.

Sent from my iPad

MOUNTFIELD CRICKET CLUB

2024 Chairmans Speech – MCC

On the field of play, 2024 started with huge excitement that a new season would be underway with a raft of top fixtures and inclusion in the Village tournament... however as is seeming to be the norm, weather intervened, and the first 3 games were cancelled.... We did get underway with playing the Salehurst strokers albeit with a loss, but fortunes were changing for the MCC over the season, with our final stats being:

Our final stats for the season were:

Played	13
Won	8
Lost	4
Draw	1
Weather Cancellation	8
Cancelled for our availability	1
Cancelled for other availability	1

MCC are lucky in the fact they have a wide player base to call on to fulfil fixtures throughout the season, and I would like to thank all for their participation throughout... There were lots of great performances which I will pick up upon at the MCC dinner on the 28th March here at the halt, but if I was to pick just one, it would be the catch Andy Fryer took at Burwash to remove their opener whilst at gully.. truly amazing and enabled us to win a closely fought contest.... Clubwise I would like to thank Mike & Wiggy for their continued support of the club, Bash as our President, Jimbo for his help on the field and Duster in his new role of Secretary for the MCC.

EOS renovations could not be undertaken at the ned of the season due to the rain, however we are planning to get some done for the start of the season, ironically when it dries out a little....

This year was our first full outing into the Village tournament where we played competitive games against Catsfield, Crowhurst, Ashburnham & Brightling..... I am proud to say that we were lucky enough to win the tournament (cup to be picked up from Bernie).. there were some top performances here and this even relied on a well fought draw at Ashburnham...

Off the Pitch

Things were a little more difficult for the MCC off the field, as we lost our friend, player, MCC Stalwart, committee member, Dave Weekes... Dave has been part of the club for years and will be sadly missed by us all... I truly cannot write the words which would do him justice, and I would like the club to remember him in a manner which would be fitting to the man..... The club did him proud at the Jubilee game, as we remembered Dave and Tubby..... it was great to see old friends back at the club to watch some cricket... We also celebrated Tubby with the presentation of a bench in his honour at the club with his family and friends.....

I do hope this year will be easier as I personally found it quite tough, especially with events towards the end of the year, so please 2025, be a kinder, warmer, drier year for us...!

I have caught up with the Parish Council for the season around maintenance, toilet block replacement (Quotes incoming), Rubbish bins, So I will be at the meeting with them in March to discuss. Many thanks again to all at MPC for thir continued support, it is greatly appreciated

by all to have a fantastic cricket ground to use. I will arrange a day at the MCG when conditions allow for us all to help with getting the ground ready for the season.

Many thanks for your support in 2024, and I am looking forward to what 2025 will bring us..!



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Report from B.A.C.T. - March 2025

1. Buses & costs. Thanks in large part to a generous £15,000 grant from Battle Town Council, we have been able to purchase a 2019 Peugeot Boxer 16-seater, enabling us to sell our oldest (2005) Treka-built Mercedes Sprinter minibus. And we continue to operate our two remaining Treka-built Mercedes Sprinter minibuses, although these are now around 16 years old. We recently had a £2,500 bill to get one of them through its MOT.
2. Passenger numbers. In the first seven months of 2024, we recorded over 3,300 single passenger journeys, not including our private hire numbers. Our Hail & Ride (B67-B79) services are still being affected by both unexpected roadworks/closures. We continue to run our Eastbourne flexible bus services (B81, B82 & B88), but services into Rye & Kent remain suspended pending a decision on their future.
3. Drivers & recruitment. This summer, one of our original drivers decided to retire after 25 years of service. However, we have successfully recruited three new drivers, one of whom is the Town Mayor for Battle.
4. Roadworks/closures. We are still having issues with roadworks/road closures impacting our services. We still get conflicting information from ESCC, East Sussex Highways and the on-site contractors. The "one.network" website does not always reflect the current situation.
5. Office & Administration. Our office manager is having to do more work remotely due to both family and health circumstances. However, we continue to manage passenger enquiries/bookings along with all required data returns.
6. Timetables & Fares. We are looking into revising both our timetables and fare structure, as these have remained largely unchanged over the past 10 years. A letter has been drafted to the parishes we operate in to gain their input.

Battle Area Community Transport