



Shere Parish Council Strategic 5-Year Plan 2022 – 2027



Introduction

What is the Parish Council Strategic Plan?

Shere Parish Council's Strategic Plan is being created to identify, consult, and implement the vision, key objectives and direction of the council on behalf of the villages, over the next five years.

Run the Parish, Change the Parish!

The actions of the parish council can be split into two; run the parish and change the parish. **Run the Parish** is the daily activities carried out to support and maintain the parish. **Change the Parish** is the process (via the strategic 5-year plan) to implement changes to improve and sustainably support the parish in the coming years and would include large projects and activities.

Run the Parish

Day to day running of the parish including maintenance, liaising with other agencies, governance, planning and finance will continue under the instruction of full council and through the committees – see below.

Shere Parish Council Overview and Governance

The civil Parish of Shere is the largest in the area in the Borough of Guildford, Surrey and is the first tier of local government. The Parish lies in the Green Belt, the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and an Area of Great Landscape Value. It also includes three Conservation Areas (parts of the villages of Holmbury St. Mary, Peaslake and Shere). The total population is approximately 3,500. Shere Parish Council serves the four villages of Gomshall, Holmbury St. Mary, Peaslake and Shere and a large part of Abinger Hammer (excluding the village centre).

Shere Parish Council has 13 councillors, elected every four years (next election May 2023), split into three wards:
Shere and Gomshall (North Ward) – six councillors
Peaslake (South West Ward) – four councillors
Holmbury St. Mary (South East Ward) – three councillors

Contact details for councillors can be found by [clicking here](#).

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are elected annually by the councillors at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May. Councillors are unpaid and commit their time to improving and maintaining the four villages, on behalf of its residents.

Full council meets every month except August and December ([click here](#) to see meeting dates). All meetings are open to the public and there is a period set aside for the public to address the council.

Areas of Responsibility

Shere Parish Council has many responsibilities which include:

- Tanyard Hall, Gomshall (venue for hire, the Drop-In Centre and parish office)
- Old Fire Station Public Conveniences, Shere
- Car Parks, Shere and Peaslake
- Bus shelters
- Benches
- Some bins and grit bins
- Peaslake Farm
- War memorials
- Shere Pool (leased to Shere Swimming Pool Committee)

- Shere Well
- Five play areas, skate ramp and adult fitness equipment
- Various plots of land and sports pavilions across the parish

For a full list of **ALL** assets please [click here](#)

In addition to responsibility for physical items and land, the council also represents and lobbies on behalf of residents.

Parish Council Staff and Management

The council employs four members of staff:

- The Clerk is appointed by the council and carries out all the functions required by law as the council's Proper Officer. The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the council in connection with its function as a parish council are carried out. The Clerk is also the council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).
- The Assistant Clerk supports the Clerk in all duties and stands in as Clerk during annual leave or sickness.
- The Drop-in Centre Coordinator and Drop-in Assistant runs and manages the Drop-In Centre at Tanyard Hall.

General Power of Competence

When the current Clerk is qualified, the council can agree to adopt the General Power of Competence. The Localism Act 2011 s1 (1) gives local authorities including town councils 'the power to do anything that individuals generally may do as long as they do not break any other laws.' It is a power of first resort. This enables the council to better serve the community and is less bound by the powers of parish councils. Shere Parish Council adopted the General Power of Competence in September 2020 and it is readopted by full council every subsequent May.

Financial Information

The Parish Council agreed a precept (the local tax levied by the Parish Council which is collected on its behalf by Guildford Borough Council as part of the Council Tax Bill) of £178,822 for 2023/2024. Equating to £90.08 per Band D property for the financial year.

In addition to the precept, the Parish Council receives additional funding from other sources (Guildford Borough Council, Tanyard Hall hire, land rentals, leases and occasionally private individuals/organisations).

See our website for [financial information](#) and [transparency](#).

The Parish Council aims to maintain a general reserve to cover unexpected events or emergencies and earmarked reserves for specific projects within the parish.

Change the Parish!

The Management and Strategy Working Group (M&SWG) oversees the production and implementation of the strategic plan and recommends to full council, achievable actions with timescale and budget planning. The plan is a live document and will be amended as appropriate, as the needs of the community change during this period.

Community Involvement

The parish council will undertake to communicate, consult and engage as outlined in the [Communication Engagement Policy](#). This is done through an active website and social media, notice boards and contributions to the parish magazine, to reach all residents.

Overarching Objectives of the Strategic Five-Year Plan

1. To try to mitigate the adverse effects of increased traffic and visitor numbers throughout the parish on the community and environment by:
 - addressing health and safety concerns, such as maintaining access for emergency vehicles, pavement obstruction and traffic speed dangers
 - prioritising the physical and mental wellbeing of residents
 - actively looking for additional sources of revenue to reduce the financial burden of visitors (to reduce the percentage of the parish council precept spent on visitor amenities)
2. To recognise and try to address the risks to the parish environment and residents arising from climate change and visitor activities by:
 - Lessening, where possible, the impact of adverse trends, such as flooding from heavy rainfall, trail erosion from overuse etc.
 - considering the environmental effect of every council decision
 - furthering and promoting national guidelines, to achieve change at a local level

Monitoring Progress

The Working Group and actions will be monitored by full council and the Five-Year Plan will be monitored annually and readopted by full council. A copy of the plan will be available on the parish council website.

Action Topics and Plans

Shere and Gomshall (North ward)

1. Shere Car Park, Parking and Pedestrianising part of The Square in Shere – It has been decided that there is a need to readdress the balance between residents and visitors with residents being the priority. The following proposals are being investigated:
 - Charging in the car park
 - Pedestrianising part of The Square
 - Increasing yellow lines to prevent inconsiderate parking
2. Old Fire Station Toilets – The toilets are used predominantly by visitors and need a total refurbishment with a view to charge for use in the future. The grant has been stopped by Guildford Borough Council and an alternative income source is required.

Objective	Lead	Parties Involved	Activity	Timescale	Budget	Notes
Mitigate the effect of visitors to Shere	North Ward Councillors	Residents, SPC, SRGA & Trustees, GBC & SCC	Public Consultation sent to all residents. Results to be reviewed by M&SWG.	Proposal to recommended and agreed by council May 2022		Charging in car park not yet agreed by trustees of Shere Recreation Ground – legal adjudication is ongoing. Yellow lines going for public consultation by SCC Oct/Nov 2023.

						The Square consultation by SCC in progress.
Mitigate the effect of visitors to Shere – OFS Toilets	North Ward Councillors	Residents, SPC & GBC	Grant removed by GBC – other funding source needed	Ongoing		

Peaslake (South West Ward)

1. Peaslake Farm Fields – To protect the fields for future generations and to prevent construction. To mitigate the flood risk to the village centre from climate change.
2. Peaslake Farm Yard Development - In partnership with Stonewater Housing Association (SHA) – Eight homes to be built on the farm yard at truly affordable rent in perpetuity. Four one-bed flats and four two-bed houses.

Objective	Lead	Parties Involved	Activity	Timescale	Budget	Notes
Climate Change	South West Ward	Residents, SPC, SWT, T. Metson	Peaslake Farm Fields - To pursue discussions with local residents and farmer Using funds accumulated via Biodiversity Net Gain credits, there could be improvements and maintenance on the site, for 30 years	Ongoing	Outlay for surveys and legal work to be reimbursed by the BNG	To include flood mitigation through the creation shallow basins. SPC pursuing options with SCC Flood Team and AONB
Physical and Mental Wellbeing	Peaslake Steering Committee	Residents, SPC, GHA	Peaslake Farm Yard Development - Planning permission obtained.	Completion date for occupation approximately Winter 2024		Discussions with near neighbours over potential disruption during the building phase has taken place (spreadsheet of concerns compiled and will be updated regularly). A delay due to contamination onsite and a renegotiation of terms has put back the start date. Hoped work will start early 2024

Holmbury St. Mary (South East Ward)

1. Road Safety – to ensure road safety issues are addressed by:

- Supporting the speed watch volunteers
- Identifying areas of concerns and liaising with Surrey County Council (SCC) Highways over improvements

Objective	Lead	Parties involved	Activity	Timescale	Budget	Notes
Mitigating the effect of traffic	South East Ward	Residents, SPC, SCC	Traffic Calming on Horsham Road – Pitland Street	Completed	£5,000 towards the project from EMR 328 Traffic Calming	SCC refused to complete works in parking area opposite the garage due to lack of funds
Mitigating the effect of traffic	South East Ward	Residents, SPC, SCC	Further traffic calming needed	Review six months after initial installation above		

All Wards

1. Replacement of Play Equipment – to ensure funds are available for a rolling programme of replacements and upgrades.

- Weekly inspections carried out by contractor
- Yearly inspections undertaken by a qualified play inspection company
- Works scheduled in advance with applications to Guildford Borough Council for Grant Aid – GBC now stopped grant aid due to their financial difficulties October 2023

2. Drop-In Centre – run by the Parish Council for the benefit of all residents in the parish to provide companionship, support, activities, outings, and monthly hot meals for anyone elderly, lonely or just wants to come along.

- Twice weekly sessions in Tanyard Hall
- Activities and outings run at Tanyard Hall or around the community

Objective	Lead	Parties Involved	Activity	Timescale	Budget	Notes
Prioritising Physical and Mental Wellbeing	All Councillors	Residents, SPC	Identified the next piece of play equipment most in need of upgrading– Peaslake Play Tower	New Play tower completed September 2023	Grant Aid (from GBC) available when upgrade becomes essential	Agreed some large logs for children to play on in or near the Peaslake play - Completed
Prioritising Physical and Mental Wellbeing	All Councillors	Residents, SPC	Requested assistance from The Henry Smith Fund to finance hot		Henry Smith agreed a donation of £1,000 with	Further funds could be considered in future

			meals once a month for the Drop-In Centre		attendees paying £5 per meal contribution. A further £500 has been given October 2023	
			Engage with activity providers in the parish to incorporate the drop-in	Ongoing	Limited budget – get support from charities where possible	Activities take place every month with visits, talks, meals and movie Mondays.
			Investigation into becoming a charity to obtain further funding	Report from Drop-in Coordinator Jan 2024	Three Hours extra paid work for Coordinator per week to investigate	
Physical and Mental Wellbeing	All Councillors	Residents, SPC	Village Larder at Tanyard Hall for those in need to help themselves	Ongoing	£1,000 from SCC and £500 budget from SPC	Very successful and used regularly, with donations of cash and goods from residents
Physical and Mental Wellbeing	All Councillors	Residents, SPC	Replacement of AEDs as current ones now discontinued	2023-24	Community engagement to raise funds for each village	