



Liss Parish Council Annual Parish Report 2026

Chair's Report

The 2025/26 Civic Year has once again been a busy and productive one for Liss Parish Council, of which more in a moment. As has become our established practice, we have published our proposed plan for the coming year, which is attached to this report.

Community Engagement

The Parish Council remains committed to encouraging effective community engagement and strengthening relationships between the Council, residents, and the many voluntary and community groups that serve Liss.

The Parish Office continues to open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. We use our website - lissparishcouncil.gov.uk - as the primary means of communicating Council business, and we maintain an active presence on Facebook, X and Instagram to help keep parishioners informed.

Our monthly councillor surgery, held on the third Monday of each month at the Triangle Centre (the same evening as our Full Council meeting), provides a regular opportunity for residents to speak directly with councillors.

Parish Councillors represent the Council on a variety of local bodies, including the Newman Collard Playing Fields Trust, The Triangle Centre, Crossover, the Liss Forest Residents Association and the Hills to Harbour Rail Partnership. We have also continued to support the work done by Liss in Bloom Liss Men's Shed, and the now disbanded Liss Speed Watch.

Each year we provide grant funding to local initiatives. This year grants have been awarded to East Hants CAB, Liss Area Historical Society, Crossover Youth Centre, 1st Liss Scouts, Home Start Butser, Rake Village Hall, LUPIN, St Mary's Church, Liss Community Association (Triangle Centre) and the Liss Heart Charity Trust .

We would encourage any local organisation requiring additional funding to submit a grant application.

Facilities

The Village Hall and Pavilion continue to be well used by community groups and for private bookings covering a wide range of activities and events.

We have taken further steps to improve energy efficiency, including installing solar panels at the Pavilion and upgrading roof insulation at the Village Hall and Parish Office. A programme of further planned improvements to the Village Hall is scheduled for the coming year.

Our allotments remain highly popular, with strong occupancy rates. Improvements this year include the provision of mains water at Riverside allotments, new signage across the allotment sites and at Lower Green a new roof on the shed, thanks to the excellent work of Liss Men's Shed.

All recreation grounds continue to be well used by parishioners and visitors of all ages. West Liss Pavilion car park now hosts an extended parcel locker and a wider range of visiting food vans.

We have also continued our environmental initiatives, including the installation of bug houses in all our green spaces around the Village.

The Multi-Use Games Area at Newman Collard Playing Fields has now secured planning permission following a successful appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. However, due to delays in obtaining permission, some pledged grants have expired, and work is underway to secure replacement funding.

The Mill Road recreation area is now fully in use, including the community orchard.

I would like to thank Men's Shed for their continued practical support across the village and Liss in Bloom for their tremendous work keeping flower beds and hanging baskets so vibrant - they truly enhance the village centre.

We continue to work with EHDC on the management of the Riverside Walk, including the control of Himalayan Balsam and other invasive species along the Riverside Walk and at the Andlers Ash allotment site. We are pleased this year to have reestablished the Riverside Walk volunteers to help with maintenance tasks along the Walk.

Roads and Traffic

Traffic through the village remains a consistent concern. The Parish Council has promoted measures including the use of Speed Indicator Devices to help address this.

We are aware of ongoing issues along Forest Road and Andlers Ash Road and will continue working with Hampshire County Council to explore possible solutions and funding opportunities. These matters take time and partnership working; unfortunately, there is no immediate solution.

Village Centre Improvements

Our work with Hampshire County Council continues to establish final designs for the proposed redesign of the village centre, taking into account the public feedback received.

It is important to stress that this remains an early stage in what will be a significant long-term project for the village.

Planning and Development

We continue to provide detailed feedback to the South Downs National Park Authority on planning applications across the Parish. In the majority of cases our views are taken into account, though sadly not in every instance.

In the coming year we anticipate further proposals for development areas identified within the Liss Neighbourhood Plan, alongside planning considerations arising from the village centre proposals. We will also be positively contributing to the Regulation 19 consultation on the South Downs National Park Local Plan. This consultation is expected to begin in late Spring/early Summer of 2026 and we encourage all residents to take part.

Commemorations

Remembrance Sunday 2025 was very well attended, and Liss continues to mark the occasion with dignity and respect.

The 80th anniversary of VE Day was also commemorated, and I was honoured to plant a tree on behalf of the Parish to mark that important milestone.

Changes to Councillors

This year saw one change to our membership, and we welcome Dan Turner to the Council.

Paddy Payne continues as Vice-Chair. Clayre Williams remains Chair of the Finance Committee. Clive Olley chairs the Facilities and Charities Committees. Andy Smith continues as Chair of Highways, and I continue to chair Planning.

My thanks also to Sue Halstead and Roger Hargreaves for agreeing to be co-opted onto committees to assist the Council in fulfilling its duties.

District and County Representation

We are grateful to our District Councillors, Roger Mullenger and Ian James, for their continued work for the village and their regular attendance at Full Council meetings.

At County level, Russell Oppenheimer has represented Liss diligently. Russell will not be standing for re-election in May, and I thank him for his hard work and consistent engagement.

While I am talking about the County Council elections on 7th May this year, due to a change in ownership of the church in Liss Forest, the polling station for people from Liss Forest wishing to vote will be at the Triangle Centre in Liss. If you will have difficulty accessing the Triangle Centre, I strongly advise you to apply for a postal vote.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

When I addressed you last year, we anticipated elections this May for a Mayor of Hampshire and the Solent. Since then, the Government has postponed those elections until May 2028.

However, the Hampshire and Solent Combined Authority will still commence operations this May. Its board will consist of two representatives from Hampshire County Council and one representative each from Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and the Isle of Wight Council.

It is hoped that representatives from District and Borough Councils will be permitted to attend meetings, though without voting rights.

The Government has determined that any spending decision by the Combined Authority must be unanimous. This safeguard ensures that funding cannot be directed solely to the three existing unitary areas at the expense of the wider county.

The Combined Authority will initially have a budget of £17.8 million per year, rising to £46.6 million per year from 2028/29 when the Mayor is elected. An additional £1.95 million per year will be provided in 2026/27 and 2027/28 to cover operational costs. All funding will be provided by central Government.

In relation to Local Government Reorganisation, we await the Secretary of State's decision, expected before Easter, on the preferred model for new Unitary Authorities covering Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Running the Council

The work of the Parish Council depends entirely on our officers.

Our Parish Clerk, Sarah Smith, continues to lead the team with professionalism and commitment. She is supported by Rebecca Lawrence (Assistant Clerk), Katrina Burns (Projects and Funding Officer) and Hannah McIntyre (Administration Officer).

I would like to record my sincere thanks to them all for their hard work and dedication throughout the year.

They are supported operationally by caretaker of the Village Hall, and groundsman, Jed Deane, Julie Ryan, one of the caretakers of Liss Pavilion, Pete Ryan, the other caretaker of Liss Pavilion and assistant groundsman, and Michael Jarman, our valued village litter-picker.

We are fortunate in Liss to have such a capable and committed team of councillors, officers and volunteers working together for the benefit of the community.

In conclusion, it has been another full and active year for your Parish Council.

Cllr Keith Budden - Chair, Liss Parish Council

Liss Parish Council Draft Action Plan for 2026/27

During the Council year 2026/27 Liss Parish Council (LPC) will undertake the following actions:

- Maintain, improve and promote the use of recreation grounds, open spaces, the Village Hall and Liss Pavilion.
- Maximise income through increased rental from hirers, In Post and food vans.
- Comment on all planning applications which fall within, or impact on the Parish.
- Represent the views and promote the interests of the parish of Liss, particularly in relation to East Hampshire District Council, the South Downs National Park Authority, Hampshire County Council and local government reorganisation.
- Engage with the community (parishioners, local businesses, community groups and organisations in Liss), and maintain an up-to-date website and social media presence in the village, in line with the Liss Parish Council Community Engagement Policy.
- Listen, investigate and respond to issues identified by the parish of Liss and, if appropriate, signpost to the correct person/organisation for resolution/further progression.
- Work with and support local groups to improve facilities, the local environment, and the social and economic wellbeing of the community.
- Deliver speedy and transparent decisions through full meetings of the Council, supported by appropriate committees and working groups.
- Maintain good financial practices, ensuring transparency and value for money.
- Identify and secure sources of funding to advance LPC priorities.
- Promote training, induction and ongoing support for staff and councillors.
- Maintain good governance, including adhering to relevant Silver (previously Quality) benchmarks and striving towards Gold Status of the Local Council Award Scheme.
- Fulfil responsibilities as sole trustee to three Charities: (West) Liss Recreation Ground (Charity number 301871), Village Hall (Charity number 301872) and Parish Allotments (Charity number 237190).
- Compile, review and update LPC policies as and when necessary, in line with legislative requirements.
- Decide priorities for the use of CIL funds allocated directly to LPC, drawing on previous and future community engagement, and accessing other sources of investment, including SDNPA CIL.

Key projects for 2026/2027 include:

Highways priorities

- Explore options for highways improvements with HCC, in particular on Andlers Ash Road and Forest Road.
- Secure a replacement speed indicator device and implement a deployment schedule.

Facilities priorities

Recreation

- Install a table tennis table at Newman Collard Park and Liss Forest Recreation Ground.

Environmental

- Contribute to nature recovery through green space projects to enhance biodiversity and protect the environment, including:
 - the installation of 27 bird and 15 bat boxes across LPC managed sites.
 - clearance works to the woodland to the rear of Liss Forest Recreation Ground.
 - working with EHDC under license to enable the Riverside Walk volunteer group to assist with the general management of the Riverside Walk.

Charities priorities

Buildings

- Complete all 'urgent' works to the Village Hall and Pavilion in line with the Building Condition surveys carried out in September 2025. Start work on 'necessary' areas.
- Carry out the re-decoration of the interior of the Pavilion.
- Consider further actions to work towards achieving Net Zero in the Village Hall and Pavilion, improving the quality and performance of the buildings by making them more environmentally friendly, e.g. through glazing improvements.

Allotments

- Continue the improvement programme to enhance the allotment sites by re-marking plots at Kelseys and Lower Green.

Environmental

- Contribute to nature recovery through green space projects to enhance bio-diversity and protect the environment, including:
 - the move towards rewilding Fernhills East allotment site and returning Princes Bridge allotment site to wetland.

Governance

- Agree supplementary governing documents with the Charity Commission.

Village Centre Enhancement

- Engage with partners (e.g. Hampshire County Council, East Hampshire District Council, the South Downs National Park Authority and Network Rail) and residents regarding the enhancement of the village centre.
- Pursue funding for the railway platform extension.

Update on Village Centre Improvement

The main focus of the village centre improvement work in the last year has been technical feasibility studies and costing works. A report with preliminary drawings has been just been received from Hampshire Services. This will be shared with LPC councillors prior to a public engagement event which will be held after the May elections. The event will inform parishioners on latest developments and how views from the public engagement event last year had been taken into account. There may also be an opportunity for parishioners to input into the design of certain items relating to street furniture.

Cllr A Smith, Chair of LPC Highways Committee

Report from the Chair of the Finance Committee

Budget 2025-2026

The precept for 2025-2026 was £270,623 or £10.38 per band D dwelling.

Expenditure for the year is expected to be largely in line with budget.

Local organisations and associations supported through Parish Council grant funding during 2025-2026 include:

- East Hants Area CAB
- Liss Youth Centre (The Crossover)
- Liss Area Historical Society
- Liss Scouts
- Home Start Butser
- Rake Village Hall
- LUPIN
- St Mary's Church
- Liss Community Association (The Triangle)
- Liss Heart Charity
- Liss Luncheon Club

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is funding generated from new development in the parish. A proportion of the levy paid by developers is allocated to the Parish Council and can be used to support local infrastructure, facilities or projects that help address the impact of development and benefit the community.

The Parish Council must spend these funds in accordance with CIL regulations and report annually on how the money has been used.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts and allocations to date are as follows:

CIL Funding

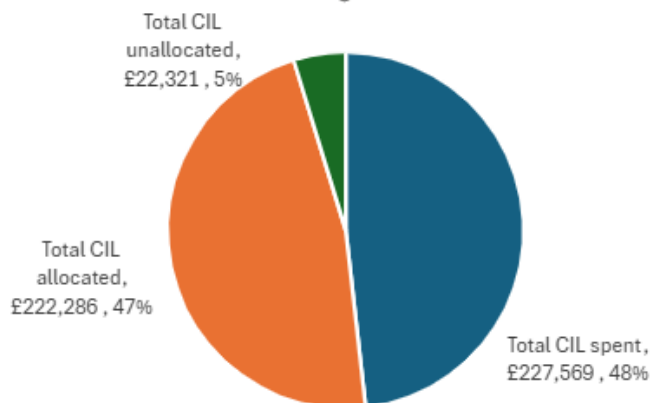
Total CIL received	£ 472,175
Total CIL spent	£ 227,569
Total CIL allocated	£ 222,286
Total CIL unallocated	£ 22,321

Spent

Liss pavilion - construction and fit out	£ 6,281
Path to new pentanque terrain	£ 2,970
Watering system for village centre	£ 445
Village Hall building maintenance	£ 5,033
Mill Road Community Garden	£ 7,411
Public notice board - village centre	£ 610
Moveable goal posts - WL and NC	£ 3,776
West Liss play area	£ 25,000
Sports wall at Newman Collard	£ 5,585
Floodlight installation fees	£ 1,151
Crossover	£ 5,206
Pump track installation	£ 56,748
Installation of gym equipment at West Liss	£ 950
Table Tennis table at West Liss	£ 5,550
Speed Indicator Device	£ 4,000
Ecological appraisal of all sites	£ 3,227
Triangle Centre - paving	£ 5,040
Newman Collard MUGA	£ 8,050
Riverside Walk improvements	£ 6,882
Village centre improvements	£ 37,572
Liss Forest recreation ground improvements	£ 34,427
Green space projects	£ 1,656

Allocated

MUGA at Newman Collard	£ 41,950
Village centre improvements	£ 142,429
Green space projects	£ 3,844
Liss Forest recreation ground improvements	£ 5,573
Table Tennis tables at Liss Forest and Newman Collard	£ 10,355
West Liss pavilion - solar	£ 1,150
Triangle Centre - LED lighting	£ 3,984
Village Hall - window replacement	£ 13,000



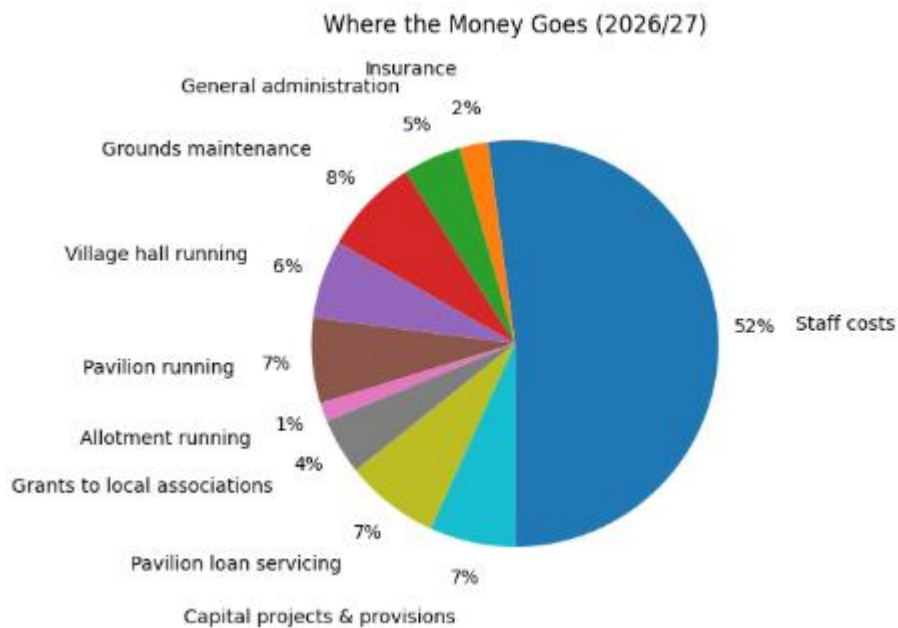
Allocations are provisional and any underspend will be released for future projects.

Budget 2026-2027

Budgeted expenditure for 2026-2027 is as follows:

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	% change
Budget:					
Staff cost	138.3	156.6	171.3	191.7	11%
Insurance	8.3	8.7	8.5	8.4	-1%
General administration	13.9	15.1	15.4	16.9	9%
Grounds maintenance	31.9	30.9	30.4	28.4	-7%
Village Hall running cost	26.3	27.1	29.9	22.9	-30%
Pavilion running cost	24.8	25.8	19.8	24.9	20%
Allotment running cost	0.7	5.2	2.0	5.5	64%
Grants to local associations	10.3	14.5	16.6	16.5	0%
Pavilion loan servicing	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	0%
Capital projects and provisions	10.0	20.0	17.0	25.0	32%
	292.0	331.3	338.4	367.7	8%
Funded by:					
Precept	254.1	263.6	270.6	280.0	3%
Interest and other receipts	0.0	20.0	22.8	25.8	12%
Charity income	37.9	43.8	45.0	61.9	27%
Transfer to/from reserves	0.0	3.9	0.0		
	292.0	331.3	338.4	367.7	

Expenditure can be further summarised as follows:



Staff costs account for 52% of the total budget and include all salary, employer National Insurance and employer pension cost. Staff costs also include an increase to salaries in accordance with national guidelines for public sector pay rates.

Contributions are expected to be made to the Liss Village Hall, Liss Recreation Ground and Parish Allotments charities. These are all registered charities, which are accounted for separately in accordance with financial regulations.

Provision is made for capital works in respect of feasibility studies, replacement play equipment and safety surfacing.

The Parish Council has set a precept of £280k for 2026-2027 and the charge per Band D dwelling will therefore be £103.92 per year compared with £100.38 in 2025-2026. This is an increase of £3.54 or 3.53% per Band D dwelling.

Committee

The audit of the 2024-2025 accounts was carried out in April 2025 by Lightatouch, the independent internal auditor and approved at the Parish Council meeting on 16 June 2025. BDO Legal Law Practitioners, the Parish Council's appointed external auditor, signed the final clearance of the accounts in September 2025.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members – Cllrs Keith Budden, Paddy Payne, Chris Mort, Clive Olley and Andy Smith - for their dedication during the year.

I'd also like to make special mention of Sarah Smith and Rebecca Lawrence for taking on the duties and responsibilities of the Responsible Finance Officer in April 2025 and for making it look effortless.

Cllr Clayre Williams, Chair of LPC Finance Committee