

BROADBRIDGE HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Introductory Guide for Councillors

Welcome!

Congratulations on your election or co-option and welcome to Broadbridge Heath Parish Council. You are now part of the democratic framework in the district of Horsham and county of West Sussex, representing your community at the grass roots level.

This Guide is to help you through the early stages of working with council colleagues.

In order to take up council duties all parish councillors are required to complete the following forms which may be downloaded [here](#) or printed copies will be available from the Clerk:

- **Declaration of Acceptance of Office** which must be completed as soon as you are elected or at least before you take your seat at the first meeting of the Council. If you are not present for that first meeting the Council may agree to allow you to make the declaration at a later date: and
- **Register of Members' Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.**
Under the Localism Act 2011 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, member of Parish Councils are required to register their and their partner's pecuniary interests in a register held by the Monitoring Officer of Horsham District Council within 28 days of becoming a member or co-opted member. Provisions in relation to Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests are enforced by criminal sanction that came into force on 1 July 2012. A copy of the register is available from the District Council for public inspection and is published on their website.
- **Summons to Attend Meetings Consent form** – consent is required from members to issue the summons to attend meeting by email
-

1. INTRODUCTION

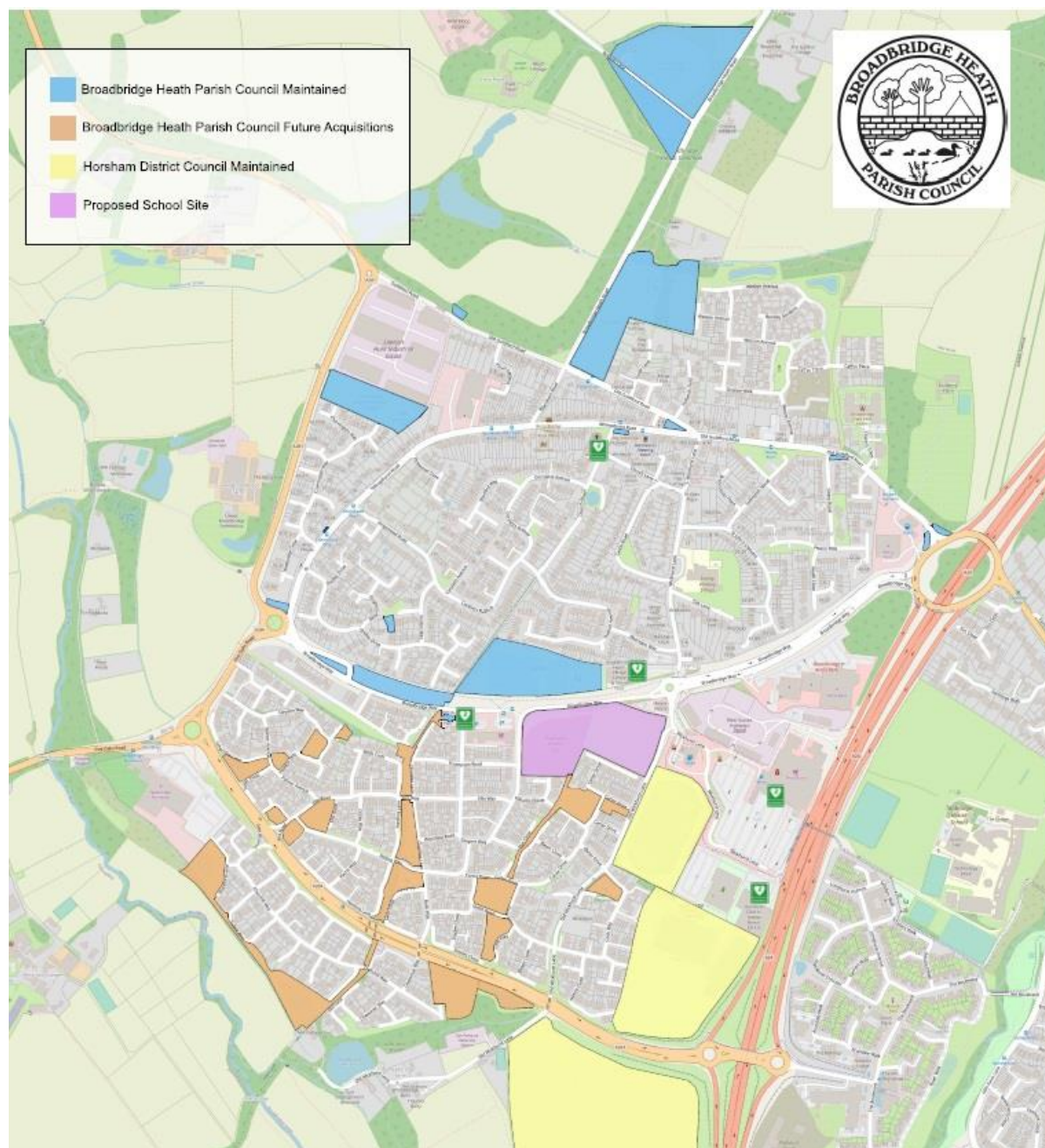
Broadbridge Heath Parish Council is made up of 13 Councillors who are elected to represent the parish of Broadbridge Heath. The total electorate of the Parish as at September 2022 is 4369.

The Council's main source of income is known as the 'precept' which is collected by Horsham District Council. For 2023/24 the precept is £137,928.

Local Councils are an essential part of local democracy acting on behalf of community they represent by:

- Giving views, on behalf of the community, on planning applications and other proposals that affect their area;
- Providing services and undertaking projects and schemes to benefit local residents;
- Working in partnership with other bodies to achieve benefits for the parish;
- Alerting relevant authorities to problems that arise or work needing to be done.

The map shows the parish boundaries. Due to housing developments over the past decade, the population/number of housing in Broadbridge Heath has doubled. The areas shaded blue are those that fall under the responsibility of the Parish Council. Areas shaded orange are the parcels of land on new developments that are due to be adopted by the Parish Council (currently in legal process). Yellow areas are the responsibility of the District Council.



2. CONTACT INFORMATION

Following the new council forming on 15th May, a full contacts list will be circulated.

The Clerk works from the Parish Office alongside the Deputy Clerk and the Community and Facilities Officer. Officers can be contacted by phone (01403 900665) Monday to Thursday between 09.00 – 15.00 or by arrangement at other times. Please note all staff work part time hours.

Officer contacts:

Lucinda Edwards – Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

clerk@broadbridgeheath-pc.gov.uk

Olivia Buck – Deputy Clerk

deputy.clerk@broadbridgeheath-pc.gov.uk

Claire Palmer – Community and Facilities Officer

community@broadbridgeheath-pc.gov.uk

3. DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

The following important documents may assist Councillors in the decision making process, and are available on the website, along with all the council's adopted policies:

- **Standing Orders**

Standing orders are **the written rules of a local council**. They are used to confirm a council's internal organisational, administrative and procurement procedures and procedural matters for meetings. They are not the same as the policies of a council but they may refer to them.

- **Financial Regulations**

The financial regulations are **an essential tool for local councils of all sizes**. They set out the framework within which the council ensures responsible and sustainable management of the council's finances

- Budget for the current year
- Minutes of previous meetings

[Policies & Other Documents - Broadbridge Heath Parish Council \(broadbridgeheath-pc.gov.uk\)](https://www.broadbridgeheath-pc.gov.uk)

4. COUNCILLOR RESOURCE HUB

Please visit the Councillor Resource area on our website – [click here](#)

Various brief Councillor Topic Notes have been added to for your reference:

CTN1- Roles and Responsibilities

CTN2 - Powers and Duties

CTN3 – Meetings

CTN4 – Finance

CTN5 – Planning

CTN6 – Handling Information

CTN7 - Risk

You will also find information on training and some useful links on this page.

5. COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct seeks to ensure Members observe the highest standards of conduct within their role.

The Parish Council, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 Section 27, adopted a Code of Conduct, last reviewed and adopted on 9th May 2022, to promote high standards of behaviour by its members whenever they conduct the business of the Council, or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Council. The Code is based on the Nolan Principles of Public Office which include selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Members are asked to familiarise themselves with their obligations under the Code, what interests to declare and how to declare them, how to apply for a dispensation (Application for Dispensation) and what to do if they are offered gifts or hospitality (Policy on Gifts and Hospitality)

The council's adopted code of conduct can be found here:

[Councillor Code of Conduct Adopted BBHPC May2022.pdf \(broadbridgeheath-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

6. MEMBERS' SERVICES

Use of the Parish Office facilities are available to members. If you require support or a meeting room, please contact the Clerk.

7. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Councillors will be informed of any available training or briefings they are expected or invited to attend. Induction Training is available via Mulberry and Co and other training events as advised by the Clerk.

Please visit [Mulberry & Co | Local Council Training Programmes \(mulberryandco.co.uk\)](#) to find a course of interest and ask the Clerk how to book.

Councillors are encouraged to attend training and development when offered to develop their knowledge and skills in carrying out their role. A training budget is available.

8. SOCIAL MEDIA

The Council currently has a Facebook page and there are several local pages. Social media posts are made to our own Facebook/Instagram pages and these are often shared to BBH Voice Facebook Page and Wickhurst Green Resident's Page by residents.

9. WEBSITE

The Council website is maintained by officers. Agendas and Minutes are regularly published together with all supporting documents. Improvements to the website are under way. Feel free to suggest when particular issues warrant further 'exposure'.