

Hanslope Community Hall and Pavilion: A new Community Centre for Hanslope

Background

Hanslope Recreation Ground (MK19 7LG), though a comparatively small footprint compared with similar grounds locally, is home to three football clubs:

- Hanslope Football Club (including 2nd teams)
- Hanslope Veterans
- Hanslope Hornets (junior football)

Additionally, it is also used by two cricket clubs:

- Hanslope Cricket Club
- Stony Stratford 5th team

It also accommodates:

- Hanslope Hawks netball team
- Multi-use Games Area
- An outdoor gym
- A children's play area
- Open space for dog walking

There is no capacity in the schedule for any extra usage.

Appendix A outlines some of the growth challenges the village has experienced in the last decade.

Current Buildings & their Problems

Pavilion Building

The current pavilion building is home to all the cricket and football teams. It has not kept pace with the expanding use by the many groups noted above and needs modernisation or even replacement with purpose-built facilities.

Some of the key issues that need to be addressed:

- The changing rooms/showers do not at present, meet Football Association (FA) requirements for the level played at by Hanslope FC
- The facilities do not provide building access for anyone with mobility issues, nor are these catered for inside
- The changing rooms are cramped for two teams to use and only accommodate one gender
- The Pavilion is in two sections: changing rooms/showers and a meeting area, and these are not internally linked

- There is no suitable space for after-match hosting/hospitality
- The entrance to the kitchen is via a very dark and unwelcoming alley that runs between the Pavilion and Community Hall buildings

Recent improvements include the installation of solar panels & battery storage

Community Hall Building

This former scout hall was taken back under parish council control in 2022 and is operated as a rentable facility. It is rented out for:

- Pilates
- Yoga
- Cubs & Sea Scouts
- Line dancing
- Parent & baby group.
- Local resident parties and family gatherings

It was also used as a warm-space at the start of the cost-of-living crisis.

Recent improvements include:

- Wheelchair accessible entry
- Adaptable toilet
- New ceiling/lighting
- Improved heating
- New tables and kitchen equipment
- Solar panels & battery storage

Some of the key issues that need to be addressed:

- It is hampered by a somewhat unwelcoming appearance on the outside and atmosphere of dark, dated spaces and frontage
- The kitchen is very small and needs updating
- The floor is MDF on concrete, so it cannot be used for dancing or sport

For these and other reasons it is a very under utilised resource.

Other Challenges

- The Pavilion and Community Hall were designed and constructed at different times. They therefore have separate entrances, toilets and kitchen facilities
- The two buildings are adjoined but not linked, making these separate spaces with no internal flow, significantly limiting flexible usage options
- There are no public toilets on site

S106 Village Consultation

At the end of 2024 the parish council setup an S106 working group (WG), initially comprising three parish councillors.

In January 2025, the parish council hosted a well-attended public meeting, with the main purpose of explaining what S106 money is, what it can fund and to ask for suggestions.

Between January-March the public submitted a wide variety of comments and suggestions via an online survey and emails sent to a dedicated email account.

The S106 WG is currently analysing this data, with a view to collating and prioritising what can be realistically achieved. The WG aims to produce a plan of projects that can be implemented over the next few years.

It is clear though, from the analysis to date, that the village view the following three related items as most important:

1. Children
2. Sport
3. Community Facilities

The Vision

We believe a well-designed integrated community centre, sporting facilities, meeting areas and function spaces, can deliver in one project, many of the ideas and wishes submitted. This could include:

- Integrate buildings and improve internal flows
- Enhanced changing room facilities; meet FA and resolving disability access issues
- Enhanced Community Hall; make more welcoming and add new facilities to open up its use to many more residents
- Make the entrances more appealing
- Community café/restaurant/bar
- Make outside more appealing
- Youth club
- Book swap facility/Mini Library
- Public toilets
- Sensory garden
- Better accessibility
- Provision for new sports, for example padel tennis, pickle ball & badminton have all been suggested
- Free Wi-Fi
- Potentially a space for public art.

These ideas have therefore formed the outline specification for the proposed new centre.

Progress to-date

The parish council have recruited an additional four local non-councillors onto the S106 WG, with expertise in civil engineering, business management, sports compliance and sport/play development. One of these members is also a governor of the local school which helps ensure the views of children and parents are fully embedded in the design from the start.

Seven architects were provided with a high-level brief and asked to come up with an example vision of how this could be developed.

The group of seven architects was reduced to three and from this group one has been chosen as our preferred architect; <https://hugohardyarchitect.com/>

We will meet on-site with the chosen provider in April 2025, to initiate a feasibility study.

Some examples of some of the 3D images for the initial vision supplied by chosen architect are shown below:





S106 Funding

The three 'new' estates provide community-based funding in their S106 agreements, tying these funds directly to the local community most in need of this infrastructure (other smaller developments also have S106 funding available):

- 16/02106/OUT: Bloor Homes 'Hanslope Fields' estate
- 16/02937/OUT: Davidsons Homes 'Wheatfields estate'
- 18/00724/FUL and 18/02421/FUL: Hayfields Homes/McCann Homes

The parish council wishes to secure as much applicable S106 funding as possible and is grateful for MKCC/Planning Obligation's support with this. It is also undertaking research into additional funding sources, as well as earmarking £50,000 from its own funds towards the project.

The WG are also keen to ascertain whether grants can be secured from other external sources, such as the Football Association (FA), England & Wales Cricket Board & Lottery funding.

Conclusion

There is great excitement in the village, that a new community centre will be built, not just to replace the aging sports pavilion but to create new facilities and extend its uses to a far wider group of residents.

The parish council sees this as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a state-of-the-art facility for Hanslope, using as much funding as can possibly be found, to support this growing and changing community into the future.

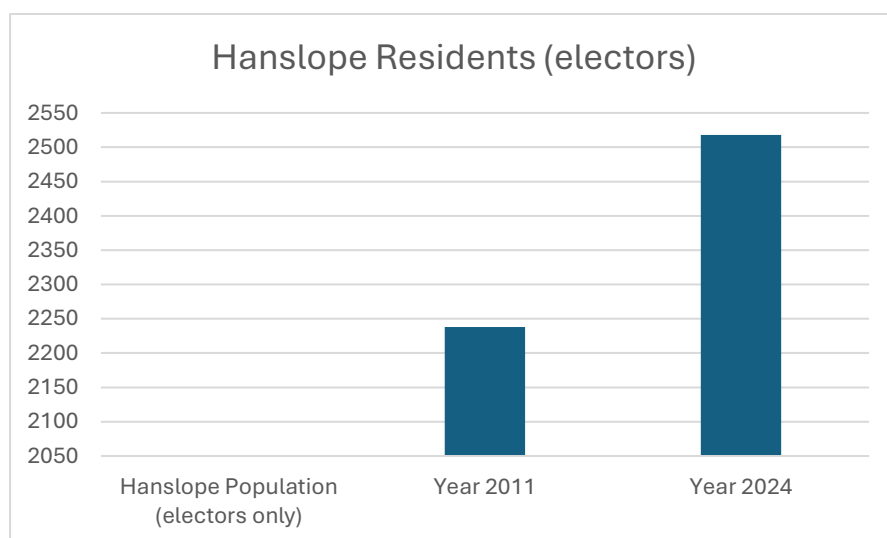
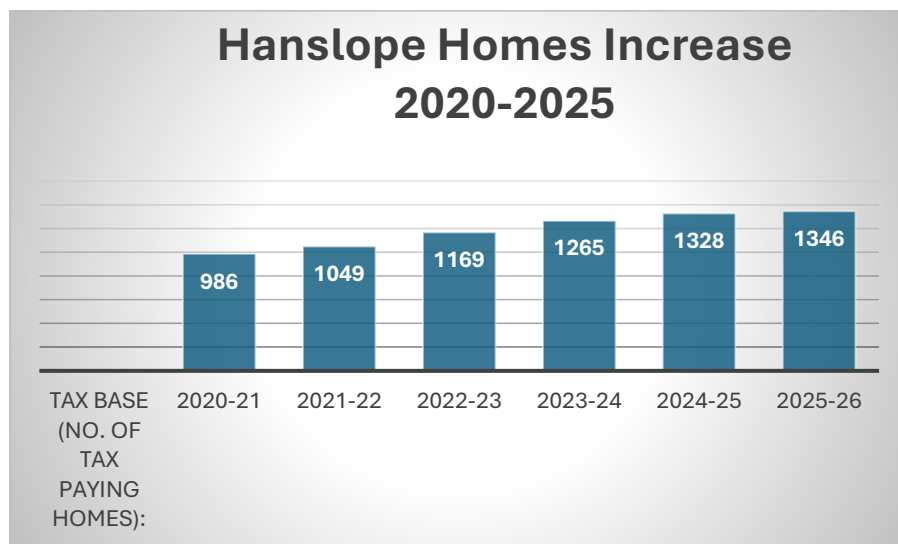
Appendix A - Growth in Hanslope

The Hanslope community, whilst a parish of Milton Keynes City, is a traditional Buckinghamshire farming village. This curious hybrid, combined with the remoteness of the location and challenging access options, has resulted in the community seeing itself as a contained entity, often looking inwards for solutions to socialisation and activities.

Residents often prefer to stay locally and there are a range of very good options, for eating, activities and walking. This is becoming more challenging however, as funding is reduced, transport links are cut and free time is challenged.

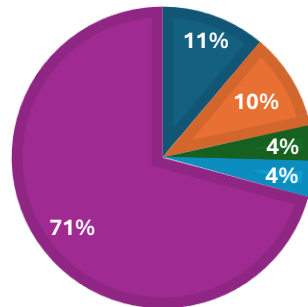
A recent example being Woodlands & Tickford Meadow Children's Centre losing their capability to fund a weekly parent/baby group in Hanslope. The group folded for one term until the parish council was able to find the funding to run it ourselves.

The PC is keen to support local initiatives, new families, grassroots sports/play and in its own small way, tackle isolation. This has been an increasing challenge however, since the significant growth of the village population over the last 5-6 years and this has largely been because of 4 new, large housing estates built since 2016: -



HANSLOPE NEW ESTATES 2016-2025

- Bloor Homes: Hanslope Fields
- Davidson's Homes: Wheatfields Estate
- Hayfield Homes 1
- Hayfield Homes 2
- Dwellings pre-2016



There now many more new and young families in the village, active retirees, as well as families housed here who may not have their own transport. The children of these 'young' families are growing up and need more activities than previously and the parish council sees its role in providing for all sectors of this growing, changing community, in facilitating sports, play, social meet ups, activities for young and old and hospitality options. From this the idea of a new community centre has developed.