

Reports for Brightling Parish Council meeting 14 January 2026

This report covers 4 topics:

- Web site
- Broadband
- Environment – jointly with Katrina
- Messenger magazine

Katrina is reporting on the Environment Strategy generally.

This report covers the period since my previous report for the meeting on 12th November 2025.

Web site

The village website is at <https://brightling.community/>

The main contributors to the web site continue to be me, the Parish Clerk, Jane Beard, Chris Wing, Katrina Blench, and Judy Petty. If other contributors want to come forward I would be very happy to get them a logon and give any necessary training.

There continue to be about 1 “post” per week to the website. Each post triggers an email to 140 subscribers.

Guidelines for people posting, which can be seen at brightling.community/content-guidelines/

The site continues to be hosted by Rother District Council, free of charge. There is an obvious concern about what will happen when RDC ceases to exist.

Broadband

The telephone exchange building (near the entrance to Long Reach Farm) will likely become redundant some time in the early 2030s. Openreach reports “*The disused Langley Green telephone exchange in Crawley, West Sussex, is now an art gallery space.*” So perhaps the Brightling exchange could have a community use.

Every house in the parish except one now has access to full fibre broadband, with speeds of up to 900 Mbps. The exception is one house in Fonridge Lane that is connected to the Burwash exchange, which is expected to get it by the end of 2026.

Environment – water leak at Coal Bridge, Mountfield

There is currently a huge leak from below the dam. A jet of water is spraying many metres into the air. This has been going on since just before Christmas and is still on-going at the time of writing. Attempts to report it to Southern Water have been unsuccessful, but it seems inconceivable that they don’t know about it.

Environment – Park Pale solar project

This refers to the proposal by Southern Water to install a 1.2 MWp solar farm between the Darwell reservoir dam and the road (Mountfield Lane).

A new entrance way has been constructed to the field where the solar panels will be. There is no sign of other construction work yet. I would guess that they will wait for better groundwork conditions, in the spring.

Wider community benefits: establishing a circular off-road path round the reservoir. No realy progress to report. The last action was that the steering group agreed to try and obtain more details of the existing leases of land round the reservoir before deciding next steps. This is complicated by a private dispute between Southern Water and an adjoining landowner..

Environment – solar panels on the Village Hall roof

I have not had any further updates since my last report.

Messenger magazine

The AGM of the magazine was held on 26th November 2025. I continue to chair.

The magazine is in good heart, with about 96 subscribers in Brightling.

Jane Beard continues to do an excellent job collating the copy for the Brightling village pages, and Brightling resident Tom Bourne is the overall editor for the village pages and village news.

Andrew Wedmore