



Minutes of the ANNUAL TOWN MEETING Held on TUESDAY 19 April 2022 at 7.30pm In the Lincoln Hall

The meeting was chaired by Town Council Chairman, Cllr Peter Eldridge

Minutes taken by Town Clerk – Alison Doe

23 members of the public attended the meeting including District Cllr Bendle and County Cllr Dewsbury and representatives of the Town Council

(Copies of the draft Town Council year end accounts and all reports submitted were available on the Hingham Town Council website prior to the meeting and are published on the Hingham Town Council website as Appendix A to these minutes).

1. Welcome, and to Receive Apologies for Absence

The Chairman opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Apologies for absence were received from Town Cllr Dunnett, Town Cllr Sta Ana and Hillary Hodges (Hingham and Hardingham Art Group).

2. To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 20 April 2021

The minutes were agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 20 April 2021

The Clerk advised that the Hingham Speedwatch and Hingham Road Safety Campaign group were no longer operational, and the Hingham Emergency Packages scheme had concluded their activities (with between £700 and £800 available for future funding of emergency food packages).

4. Address by Hingham Town Council Chairman including:

4.1 To receive a summary report from the Chairman on the work of the Town Council during the past year and its plans for the future.

In addition to the written Chairmans report, Cllr Eldridge advised that due to the growing concern of some residents and the Town Council that Moon Court on Hardingham Road had remained vacant since being build (approximately 4 years ago), the EDP had been contacted and had reported on this issue. It was explained that Moon Court is a facility of 17 one bedroomed specialised supported living apartments, and additional accommodation with staff and communal facilities, which was build for higher complex care and autism accommodation. The accommodation is complete with white goods and had seeming been left to rot since it's completion, with units having visible signs of neglect with dead flies and worms inside.

The Chairman explained that he had been in touch with Lifeways, who are the tenants of the property. The facility had not been utilised for its original purpose due to issues with staffing, (staffing numbers could not be achieved at local authority rates) and concerns regarding the design and location of Moon Court. Lifeways are keen to see the facility brought into use, and agree that its use for housing Ukrainian refugees would be a good idea, although it would require the support of the facility owners and the County Council.

It was also suggested that the facility could provide accommodation for the homeless or for women seeking refuge.

The Chairman asked both District and County Cllrs to try to do what they can to ensure that the facility is brought into use.

County Cllr Dewsbury advised that she had brought it to the attention of the relevant services in the County Council. District Cllr Bendle advised that it was very difficult to do anything as the facility is privately owned.

The Chairman suggested that the owners of the facility should have pressure applied to them to ensure that the facility is now used, and that this may involve contact with the local news stations.

It was queried as to whether the company accounts of the facilities owners would be publicly available to see if rent is being paid to them, Town Cllr Roberts will investigate this.

4.2 Draft accounts for the financial year 2021/22

The Clerk advised that the draft accounts needed finalising and completing, prior to submission to the internal and external auditors.

(Draft Accounts in Appendix A).

The Chairman added that although the reserves appear high, there is money ringfenced for specific purposes and projects to complete which will reduce the balances. It was also noted that for the current financial year (2022/23) Hingham Town Council had not increased the precept request, and therefore the amount for Hingham Town Council on the Council Tax bills had decreased, although with the increased price of energy, goods and services, it is unfortunately very likely that an increase in precept will be required for 2023/24.

5. Hingham Neighbourhood Plan

Town Cllr Thompson was introduced as Secretary of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Cllr Thompson explained that a Neighbourhood Plan is a planning policy document that is written through a process of community engagement. Having a neighbourhood plan cannot prevent development, but it will help to shape and influence where and what kind of development is built in Hingham over the next 20 years. The first consultation event took place on March 19th (Cllr Thompson thanked people for attending the event) , 66 people had attended the event however those attendees were mostly over the age of 55, therefore the steering group needs to find ways to engage with all ages, including the younger demographic, and this will involve getting the school children involved . Cllr Thompson explained that the steering group volunteers would be contacting businesses and community groups/organisations in Hingham and encouraged everyone to engage, take part in the process and give their views. The steering group want to know what people like about Hingham, what they don't like, what they want to preserve, and what they would like to change. People can give their views via the Placecheck website set up for Hingham. The views given will help to shape the policies for future development and form aspirations to be included in the text of the plan.

The Plan will be put to a referendum (an approximate 18 months' time scale) and a majority vote will mean that the plan is adopted. Once adopted the plan becomes a legal document, the policies within it will have to be taken into account by the planning authority when determining planning applications (whereas currently Town Council comments as a consultee seem to carry little weight).

Cllr Thompson explained the project was being assisted by the use of a paid consultant and that although the cost of producing a plan would be in the region of £20,000, funding was available to cover the majority of the costs, and once a plan is in place, the Town Council will receive a higher portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (25% with a Neighbourhood Plan, currently without a plan the Town Council receives 15%).

It was queried as to whether the plan could influence the design of development or insist on near carbon neutral development. Cllr Thompson advised that the plan could include a design code to influence development type, layout and design and gave an example of a policy that development must include pavements. Policies could be included regarding carbon neutrality, such as use of solar panels and grey water reuse systems.

District Cllr Bendle spoke to advise that it was good that the Town Council were undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan, however it would have to go through several stages before being adopted, and this included having to be passed by the planning inspectorate. Cllr Bendle also advised that carbon neutral and a desired look of housing don't always go hand in hand and the community would need to decide on the importance of each. South Norfolk Council have already defined the conservation area which will automatically be protected and therefore the Neighbourhood Plan need not duplicate that, and Hingham is mentioned in the South Norfolk Council development design document.

Cllr Thompson concluded by advising the steering group are aware of the work SNC has done regarding the conservation area and that it is already protected. He advised that many Town and Parish Council's were undertaking a neighbourhood plan in order to give a greater voice to the community regarding development planning and again encouraged everyone to engage in the plan making process and consultations.

6. Open Forum to Discuss Matters Raised by the General Public

A member of the public raised concerns regarding parked vehicles obstructing pedestrian routes in the Market Place, this occurs outside the White Hart and outside the Newsagents where there is no footway, vehicles are parking too close to the road edge line and therefore pedestrians are forced to walk in the carriageway.

A member of the public asked when the town clock would be working again. The Clerk advised that one company had assessed the clock for the work required, however due to financial regulations further quotations were needed and there were not many companies (especially locally) which maintain and repair such clocks.

A member of the public asked if the Town Council were doing anything for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The Chairman explained that the Hingham Playing Field Association and Sports and Social Club were organising several events throughout the Jubilee weekend and that they were trying to involve other organisations in the town, with the School, Lincoln Hall, church and Santa's grotto all putting on events.

The Chairman also advised that the Town Council had secured Parish Partnership funding for renovations of the Market Place bus shelter, to coincide with the Queen's jubilee (as the bus shelter was built to commemorate the Queen's Coronation).

A member of the public raised concerns that it is becoming more frequent for vehicles to be exiting Bear's Lane, contrary to the one-way system, it was suggested that this may be because drivers may be avoiding the parked cars at the top of Hall Lane and it was perceived to have better visibility out of Bears Lane now that the hedge on Norwich Road has been removed. It was suggested that Hall Lane/Bears Lane/ Mill Corner should form a one-way system.

7. To Receive Reports from Hingham Clubs, Societies, Charities and Organizations etc.

In addition to the written reports listed (appendix A), any verbal comments made at the meeting are noted below.

7.1 Hingham Primary School

Head Teacher Vickie Newrick spoke to praise the hard work of the Friends of Hingham Primary School who work hard to raise much needed funds for the school and to advise of how valuable the support of families is to the school. The Summer fete will be on 18th June.

7.2 Report from Hingham Charity

The Chairman advised that the Hingham Charity are among the organisations he has approached regarding helping families in need.

7.3 Hingham and Hardingham Art Group

7.4 Hingham Luncheon Club

The Secretary of the luncheon club advised that they are very pleased to have started up again following the Covid closure of the club. The Luncheon Club provides a 2 course meal and tea/coffee for approximately 30 people and is very much valued by its members for the social side.

7.5 Hingham Garden Club

The Chairman advised that he attends meetings when possible and they are very interesting, the Gardening Club meets on the second Tuesday evening of the month.

7.6 Santa's Grotto

A representative of the committee advised that they are funding two Circus workshops for children for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations. There will be party bags for the children and a best dressed crown competition.

7.7 Hingham Playing Field Association

Town Cllr Roberts advised that he was hoping to help get a table tennis club up and running.

It was noted that the Tennis Club are going from strength to strength. The Sports and Social Club put on a coffee morning every Friday between 10 and 11.30am, people can go and do craft, chat, just go for coffee, it was noted that people are going for support and to combat loneliness.

It was noted that Tracey was doing a brilliant job in promoting the Sports and Social Club and the facility.

7.8 Hingham Bowman

7.9 Hingham Rectory Bowls Club

The Bowls Club are always looking for new members and are having an open day where people can try bowls, on 28th May.

7.10 Hingham Christian Fellowship

A representative of The Christian Fellowship reported that they are very pleased to have the parent and toddler sessions up and running again, as well as the make do and mend sessions, and both are picking up in attendance.

7.11 St Andrews Heritage Fund

A representative of the Heritage Fund advised that it was purely to provide for the upkeep of the building, the monthly cake stalls through summer raise approximately £100 a month, but the fund does need more support. The church building is grade 1 listed with a fantastic history, and was described as everyone's heritage, there for the momentous occasions in life, such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. The church is raising funds separately to install toilets and a kitchen to enable the church to be more widely used as a community venue, (£60,000 has been raised, but another £100,000 is needed). It was noted what a great venue for concerts the church is due to the wonderful acoustics.

7.12 Community Connector

Appointments can be made to see the Community Connector at the Drs Surgery on a Thursday afternoon.

8. To receive Annual Reports from County and District Councillors

In addition to the written reports in Appendix A, the following verbal reports were made.

8.1 District Councillor Yvonne Bendle

District Cllr Bendle advised that she had kept her report brief and focused on the current pertinent things.

The South Norfolk Council tax rise was necessary to ensure that the Council could provide the Help Hub as part of its statutory duty and continue to help people and support people where needed.

The Council are undertaking home checks for those applying to house Ukrainian refugees, and this will be ongoing with follow up checks as the Council recognise that sharing a home may be difficult on both sides. SNC are also planning to set up community hubs for the refugees.

The Chairman advised that a local resident had recently had a home check and found it to be very helpful and informative and asked that this be passed on to the relevant department.

8.2 County Councillor Margaret Dewsbury

County Cllr Dewsbury advised that things were slowly getting back to normal (following Covid disruption). Norfolk County Council are doing what they can to help people when they can. The Fire service have helped the Ambulance service and have helped with provision of tools and equipment to the Ukraine.

It was queried as to whether NCC have made any decisions on what cuts will be made to services to deal with any budget deficit.

Cllr Dewsbury advised that each year the Council balances its budget, and that every service will be asked how they can make savings as the Council faces a £60 million deficit. Cllr Dewsbury advised that no decisions have been made for the 202/24 budget regarding cuts to services.

Cllr Dewsbury concluded by saying that she was available to try to help if she can.

9. To Discuss Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and invited everyone to stay for light refreshments. The meeting was closed at 8.40pm

REPORTS

Hingham Town Council - Chair's Annual Report 2021/22

One would normally write a report in some kind of chronological order but I'm afraid this one isn't as I feel there are certain issues that need reporting on in order of their importance.

Over the last few weeks you will have received your Council Tax bill for 2022/23 which shows a considerable increase from all the authorities except one and that is Hingham Town Council. By careful management of our expenditure we have been able to keep our portion of the demand at the same level as 2020. I doubt that we will be able to do this in 2023 as the costs of practically everything has or will be rising over the next 12 months.

2022 is the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and through the Parish Partnership with Norfolk County Council we have secured monies to refurbish the bus shelter in the Market Place. We saw this as the right project for this year as the shelter was originally constructed to celebrate the Queen's Coronation.

In 2020 we put in a bid for Parish Partnership funding for a feasibility study on the Fairland junction and a pedestrian crossing in the Market Place. It has taken a considerable while for the Council to get a draft plan but with the restrictions caused by Covid this was understandable. However, we have now had a first draft but on reading it we can see that it needs more work. The County Council have agreed to do this and also look at the parking situation around both the Fairland and the Market Place.

Residents will remember that following the government's requirement that all district councils have a 5 year bank of potential housing development and in South Norfolk we are part of the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP). As far as Hingham is concerned we have been allocated 100 houses mainly on the land next to the Hops. At the local consultation meeting it was clear that the majority of residents did not want that area to be developed. The Town Council developed a response to the GNLP and subsequently the Clerk represented the Council's views to the Planning Inspector. What is the result of the council and the clerk's work at present we don't know and will have to wait and see if the Planning Inspector makes any recommendations for changes to the GNLP allocations for Hingham.

Following the GNLP it became clear that the Town needs to have a Neighbourhood Plan. A consultant has been appointed and a steering group formed. Hopefully by having a plan we will have some more control over where and what type of development we have in the Parish. Please keep your eyes open for any meetings/ consultation events about the plan and please complete any surveys being undertaken to inform the development of the plan.

After the arson attack on the ladies' toilets they have finally been cleaned and painted. Unfortunately, the heat of the fire caused more damage than was first evident. There are just a few finishing touches to be completed, and then the ladies' toilets will be open and operational again.

The Skate Park is unfortunately currently closed due to a deterioration of the whole surface area of the park, we are seeking advice as to the most appropriate way to make necessary improvements to the facility to ensure that it is safe and bring it back in to use for the long term.

As you can see we have had a busy year and I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their hard work and our two employees for everything they have been doing to keep things working.

Pete Eldridge, Chair – Hingham Town Council

Hingham Town Council Draft Accounts

These accounts are DRAFT and were prepared for the Town Council meeting of 05 April 2022. The accounts will be finalised prior to submission for internal and external auditor once the Clerk is in receipt of all bank statements.

Hingham Town Council Accounts Year End 31 March 2022 DRAFT			
		RECEIPTS	
	2020/21		2021/22
	£77,000.00	PRECEPT	£77,000.00
	£61.17	BANK INTEREST	£20.94
	£3,991.00	CEMETERY FEES	£4,818.00
FOR 2019/20	£100.00	RECREATION GROUND LETTINGS	£100.00
	£0.00	CIL	£0.00
	£0.00	EVENTS	£0.00
LATE PAYMENT MADE IN 2021/22	£0.00	NCC GRASS CUTTING PAYMENT	£7,931.56
	£972.67	MISCELLANEOUS	£935.76
	£10,000.00	COVID GRANT	N/A
	N/A	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GRANT	£7,855.00
	£92,124.84	TOTAL	£98,661.26
	£0.00	RECLAIMED VAT	£14,835.86
	£92,124.84	GRAND TOTAL	£113,497.12
PAYMENTS (N.B. NET FIGURE SHOWN FOR GOODS AND SERVICES)			
	2020/21		2021/22
	£27,170.78	STAFF COSTS	£27,470.46
	£4,997.47	GENERAL ADMIN (EXCLUDING STAFF)	£5,421.01
	£678.00	S137	£905.00
	£0.00	GRANTS/DONATIONS (OTHER THAN S137 & EVENTS)	£0.00
	£14,942.46	STREET LIGHTING	£10,270.07
	£10,088.80	GRASS CUTTING	£10,290.56
	£1,665.00	TREES	£0.00
	£49.13	CEMETERY	£50.57
	£2,248.15	TOILETS (NOT STAFF)	£1,105.85
	£82.82	EVENTS	£78.17
	£5,000.00	NCC PARISH PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS	£0.00
EMPTYING, HOLIDAY COVER LITTER BINS, FAIRLAND	£1,421.16	MISCELLANEOUS	£4,471.45
	N/A	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN	£3,131.94
	£0.00	CIL (other than Parish Partnership)	£0.00
	£68,343.77	NET TOTAL	£63,195.08
	£5,471.59	VAT	£4,395.73
	£73,815.36	TOTAL INC. VAT	£67,590.81
Balance per bank statements 31 March 2022 DRAFT NOT COMPLETE			
		Current account	£20,085.90
		Tracker account	£213,246.91
		High interest account	£38,813.00
dormant account		Business reserve account (last statement available 28/03/12 called CAPITAL F	£186.80
		TOTAL	£272,332.61
		LESS Amount from Unpresented Cheques	£3,842.91 UPTO 25/03/22
		ADD any unbanked cash	£0.00
		CHEQUES PAID IN ON 29.03.22 BANK STATEMENT AWAITED	£545.00
		Net bank balances as at 31/03/2022 reconciled with the cash book	£269,034.70
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book for the 12 MONTHS - 01 April 2021-31 MARCH 2022			
CASH BOOK			
Opening Balance (as per bank reconciliation 31 March 2021)			£223,128.39
Add Receipts 01 April 21-31 MARCH 2022			£113,497.12
Less: Payments 01 April 21 - 31 MARCH 2022			£67,590.81
Closing balance per cash book as at 31 MARCH 2022			£269,034.70
OF THE BALANCE THE FOLLOWING IS DESIGNATED OR RESTRICTED FUNDS			
CIL	£21,913.44		
BUS SHELTER PLAQUE	£300.00		
CAR PARK			
DRAIN			
REPAIRS			
(FROM			
CHURCH)	£100.00	UNABLE TO UNDERTAKE AS NOT OWNERS OF LAND	
TOILET REFURB/COMMUTED	£31,929.03		
EVENTS	£2,634.78		
TOTAL	£56,877.25		
IN ADDITION TO THIS THE TOWN COUNCIL HAS A RESERVES POLICY WHICH ALLOCATES ANY REMAINING RESERVES TO A SPECIFIC PURPOSE			
These accounts were agreed by Hingham Town Council at their meeting on (TO BE AGREED)			
signed	Chairman		

Hingham Primary School, Report to the Town Council April 2022

The last year has been an extremely busy one at Hingham Primary School. The focus has been extensively on building the children back up to pre-pandemic levels of achievement and well-being. Despite the provision of excellent lockdown learning from the Hingham teachers and teaching assistants, many of the children had inevitably struggled with this type of learning. Also, we started to notice that many of the children lacked confidence and skills in the social situations of a school day.

Since Easter 2021 we have employed a "Catch Up" teacher who has focused on different groups of pupils over the year to ensure that they close the gaps with their age-related expectations. We are pleased to say that we will be continuing with this in some form for the foreseeable future.

The pastoral and well-being needs have been met in a range of ways in this academic year: teaching the children the skills of communication and restoration - vital when developing and re-establishing friendships; individual support with trusted staff including "ELSA" - Emotional Literacy Support Assistants; reintroducing the concept of restorative approaches when dealing with conflict resolution; clear expectations on behaviour reinforced by all staff - children feel safe when they know where the boundaries are; use of resources and signposting organisations like Just One Norfolk.

There continues to be a need for this kind of support in our community and we are working with our Community Focus Officer and Partner Focus Officer to try to develop more support locally for children and families.

Covid has far from gone. There have been many cases amongst children and staff since September with classes appearing to take turns. Staff absences have been an enormous challenge with few supply teachers available. The staff team have, yet again, dug deep and covered each other when necessary. There have been some tough days when a number of us have held multiple roles but thankfully, as yet, we haven't needed to close a class and have, by hook or by crook, kept the children learning.

Recently, we have been joined by our excellent new deputy headteacher, Tom Shackleton. Our strong staff team look forward to the joys and challenges of the summer term - let's hope we get to carry out all the events that we have missed over the last couple of years - particularly our end-of-year performance and Friends Summer Fete.

Vickie Newrick, Headteacher

Report from Hingham Charity for the Annual Town Meeting

The Charity has been fairly busy due to the pandemic. Allotments have been in demand as people can safely go outdoors to allotments and hopefully grow plenty of veg etc.

Christmas donations: Despite many enquiries we have had very few donations to dispense in 2021. But if you or someone you know is in need please contact me. Daphne Hughes 019583851214 or any of the Trustees.

The Turf meadows at present are still a SSSI.

Daphne Hughes
Clerk to Hingham Charity

Hingham and Hardingham Art Group Report April 2022

The Art Group has continued to be active through the ups and downs of the last year, setting and publishing fortnightly homeworks on Facebook and then meeting cautiously for painting plein air and eventually getting back to normal except for the interruption again early this year. We continue to publish our news on our Facebook site. Hardingham Hall was unfortunately damaged by an arson attack during the summer but we were invited to meet at Hardingham Church instead which proved a lovely temporary venue. After a great deal of work by the Hall Committee, Hardingham Hall is again fully functional.

We were very pleased to be able to hold our annual exhibition in the Lincoln Hall in Hingham in November, with a few adaptations because of covid. It was a great success with many art works sold and kind comments from visitors; I think everyone enjoyed feeling more normal again.

I would like to add how much we appreciate being able to use the Lincoln Hall for our annual exhibition: it's situation at the heart of the town, with good parking, is ideal; it is a lovely, well-lit space with excellent facilities for our needs and a perfect spacious size. We have already booked for next year!

Members continue to exhibit in the Doctors' Surgery and Hassingham House as well as Harrods Gallery. Many members of the Group will be participating in an exhibition called "Mixed Impressions" at the Dragonfly Gallery in Watton throughout May. Several of our number exhibit elsewhere as well.

We have more new members, which is very pleasing, but the Group is definitely now 'full' and we will have to start a waiting list. To cope with the numbers, we have started meeting weekly at Hardingham instead of fortnightly, and this is working well.

We will at last be holding an AGM and our Group lunch in early May; I will be standing down as Chairman, but we have a healthy (and very helpful Committee) and the future of the Art Group looks very promising.

Hilary Hodges

Chair Person

Hingham and Hardingham Art Group

Hingham Luncheon Club - Report to Annual Town Meeting. 19.4.2022

The Luncheon Club was started in 1984 to provide a two- course meal at a reasonable cost for older Hingham residents. Lunches are held twice monthly in the Lincoln Hall for about 30 people and the club is run entirely by volunteers. It is financially self-supporting, with help from a generous local donor who pays the Hall rent.

We are happy to say that the lunches have started again after the COVID break and we are able to welcome new diners. We know how much our members value the Club, not only for the excellent meals, but also for the opportunity to socialise.

As ever, we are very grateful to all our volunteers, cooks, helpers, drivers and committee members.

If you or a friend would like to join the Club, please ring Clare on 01953 799899 for further information

Report from Hingham Garden Club

The club is still going but with a very depleted membership.

We had a fairly good turnout in January this year when we had a meeting to chat about what people would like for speakers and I was given lots of ideas which I have set the ball in motion on.

March saw the return of David Boulton and his beautiful slides of rivers and waterfalls around the country. This also included pictures of the nearby flora and fauna.

We had a table at the Lincoln hall's Easter fair where we talked to loads of people, had information displayed and sold a few plants.

This month sees the return of Ian Bedford who has recently retired from the John Innes institute. He will be talking about 'a world without wasps.'

8th May will be a talk by Graeme Simmonds entitled 'history beneath our feet.' If you've dug anything up from your garden and can't identify it, bring it along and Graeme will try and help.

The AGM will be held in November where we'd love to welcome some new committee members and December will see the return of Simon white from Peter Beales roses who will show you how to make a Christmas wreath (he'll bring a kit for £5 so we'll just need some greenery.)

We've had a table outside on our drive all through lockdown selling plants, fruit and veg. Some of the proceeds to the garden club and some to buy more seeds and compost to grow them in. This will continue.

We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30 in the Lincoln hall - all are welcome

Carolyn Edwards
Secretary

Hingham Santa's Grotto

Hingham Santa's Grotto was established in 2014 to encourage the Christmas spirit within all generations of the community of Hingham and surrounding areas.

Each December members of the committee and town volunteers erect an interactive display on the Fairland for a few weeks. This usually consists of Santa's Grotto, Santa's Cabin, a reindeer, sleigh, Christmas gnomes and a sproftacchel. December 2020, due to Covid, we had instead a small forest of lit up trees which children were encouraged to hang their own decorations on. December 2021, alongside our Grotto display we also erected and lit up a large tree, donated to us from a resident's garden.

Santa sets up residence in his Grotto for a day (Fun Day) and children can visit for a free gift. In 2021 at the Fun Day, we also had a petting zoo, choir, food van, tombola, raffle, and a stall selling light up balloons and swords. We hope to be able to do similar in 2022.

Santa's Grotto Committee consists of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and nine other voting members.

Throughout the year the Committee raises money which goes towards the maintenance of Santa's Grotto and Cabin, public liability insurance, Christmas decorations, and a gift for every child who visits Santa. Unfortunately, over the last few years we have had some vandalism and in 2021 we had three out of our four gnomes stolen. We have been lucky to acquire another however it has made us realise that CCTV may have to be put in place- data protection laws would be adhered to.

As we did so well raising funds last year, we are putting on an extra-special event for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

2022 events:

9th April – Raffle at Lincoln Hall's Easter Fair

8th May – Organised Yard Sales around Hingham – hoping to have a cake and plant stall too

4th June – Queen's Platinum Jubilee – We are funding two Circus workshops for children of primary school age. There will be toy vouchers for the best decorated crowns, and each child will receive a Jubilee themed party bag. We are charging just £1 entry per child which will be used to buy the vouchers.

11th September – Yard Sales

6th November – Craft Fair at Lincoln Hall

3rd December – Santa's interactive display set up

11th December - Santa on the Green Fun Day

Hingham Playing Field Association Annual Report

The chairperson and committee of Hingham Playing Fields Association are delighted to present this annual report for Hingham town Council and the residents of Hingham.

In January 2021 the Covid-19 pandemic was still very challenging. We were still wearing masks, not meeting our family or friends on a regular basis, not able to worship in person and most people were working from home if they could.

The HPFA was grateful to receive government grants from South Norfolk Council to enable the sports hall and facilities to continue operating, even though we were not able to open for a considerable amount of time last year.

Once we were able to open the facilities again, we introduced strict hygiene & safety guidance and set about slowly reintroducing sporting and social activities.

The committee returned to in-person meetings in the summer of 2021 with ambitious plans to generate more opportunities for activities and events, to support the health and well-being of our local residents and communities. Some of our more senior residents told us how socially isolated and lonely they had felt during the pandemic, and as a group we wanted to address this.

Our cricket and football clubs both did exceptionally well last season and are both expanding the number of teams that they are running.

Cricket:

Hingham cricket club first team have been promoted to the premium cricket league- the Norfolk cricket alliance, with the seconds/development team still in the Norfolk cricket league. There is the reintroduction of the Hingham pirates Sunday cricket team into the Norfolk Sunday cricket league. They now have two qualified level 2 coaches. Youth All Star cricket has good numbers for this year booked on already .There has been investment in greener, more fuel efficient machinery. They have entered more midweek competitions to give more people a chance, to get involved with the club and play the game

They are working on developing women's cricket, expanding children's cricket through the All Star program and they are promoting via the school network and looking at ways to become a greener club, they are exploring possibilities for a water bore hole.

Tennis:

Junior players continue to perform well in competition locally and further afield with players getting invited to county training and to represent Norfolk in regional and national events.

They held their first Tennis holiday camps post COVID, these were very well supported and were fully booked on both days, they were very fortunate with the weather and all the children behaved and played brilliantly and were a pleasure to have on court!

They continue to have good participation in the adult coaching programme, but are always looking for more players, so if there are any new classes or sessions people would like them to run, then do get in touch.

Future Plans are very much geared towards continuing offering the current programme, but to also have more holiday sessions for juniors in the summer holidays, to run an adult tennis clinic over consecutive days, LTA Youth Start courses and to re-establish the club school/ links.

A new website was created , hinghamsportscentre.co.uk, and slowly we filled the hall with regular fun activities for all the family such as badminton, Judo, parents and toddler group, Friday social coffee mornings, yoga and line dancing, to name but a few. The hall was repainted, and new doors and windows are imminently going to be fitted. Further work planned includes essential maintenance to the roof.

At Christmas a wonderful free afternoon tea party was held for local senior residents. Local businesses kindly donated food and drinks. We had live music and a prize raffle which raised £120 for the GP Surgery in Hingham.

We have started to hold regular and popular quiz nights and prize bingo. We have live music and visiting gourmet food outlets on weekends and are hosting a tribute Take That this summer.

Our hall now regularly hosts events such as indoor sales, birthday parties and craft fairs and we can accommodate many requests such as use of the bar and refurbished kitchen.

We recently supported humanitarian efforts in Ukraine. We were a drop off point for local donations which we then forwarded on to depots for further distribution. We took a couple of vanloads and about 10 car loads of warm winter clothing, toiletries, baby food and essential medicine supplied by our wonderful community was provided this way.

We are hosting the Easter Egg trail and so far 447 tickets have been sold and £786 raised so far. There is entertainment, a bouncy castle, a petting corner, games and craft activities planned, as well as displaying all the craft eggs from the Primary School and an Easter Bunny. The money will be divided between the school and the playgroup. The HPFA is not charging for the use of the venue for the whole of the Saturday and is donating all the money raised.

We are now busy planning 2 days of family fun activities this summer to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee.

The chair and committee would like to thank everyone who supports and helps with the running of the HPFA in providing these fantastic and popular facilities for our local residents and community.

Hingham Bowmen

We are a small friendly club suitable for the whole family. Minimum age 11.

This year with the easing of Covid restrictions we were able to shoot indoors again this winter at Hingham Sports Hall from 6.30 – 9.00pm.

Due to the mild winter we have managed to shoot outdoors all year at our outdoor range in Scoulton on a Sunday morning from 10.00am – 1.00pm. Once we have lighter evenings we will also shoot on a Thursday evening from 6.00pm to dusk.

There have been two beginners course during the year, one outdoors last summer and one indoors this March from which we have welcomed some new members.

Club members have had great success in National and County competitions in both Target and Clout archery. Bringing home many medals and cups and also beaten some county records.

For more details please contact

General Enquiries (Chris)
hinghambowmen@gmail.com

Head Coach (Duffy)
Coachduffy.hinghambowmen@gmail.com

Secretary (Clare)
hinghambowmensecretary@gmail.com

HINGHAM RECTORY BOWLS CLUB

The club has been in existence since before World War Two although the exact date it started is unknown.

We have 38 playing members and 8 non-playing member. We play in four different leagues in the evenings, and the Age Concern league which plays on a Friday afternoon. Last season our Federation team finished first in their league and were promoted.

Several of our members enter each year to play in the County Competitions run by Norfolk Bowls Association.

We also run inter club tournaments and play friendlies against other local clubs.

The National governing body, Bowls England, have encouraged all clubs once again to take part in the Bowls Big Weekend, Fri 27th to Sun 29th May to entice newcomers to the sport, our event will be held on Sat 28th May.

We have our own website, www.hinghamrectorybowlsclub.com and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Hingham-Rectory-Bowls-Club-109265657321588> where you can find full details about the club, fixtures and results

HINGHAM CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

We are pleased to report that our church has, in many respects, come out of lockdown stronger than we were when we went in.

Like all other churches, we were forced into using the internet and streaming services. As a result, we not only learned valuable new skills but have been able to connect with people who were previously not in a position to attend our services in Copper Lane. Our membership has increased as we now have regular 'attenders' who do not live in the immediate vicinity.

Lockdown provided the opportunity to re-evaluate our activities. Some activities were paused, some stopped completely and others have had somewhat of a facelift. Our weekly Sunday Communion Service is an example of one activity with a facelift. Seating is now at tables and no longer in rows. This has facilitated interaction which attendees have appreciated.

The weekly Parents and Toddlers gathering has also got a fresh look with new toys, a new layout and a new coffee machine to provide espressobased drinks.

With the removal of restrictions, a new weekly group has opened. Every Monday, we have a Mend and Make group. This is an opportunity for novices to learn from those with sewing experience. Clothes that need adjusting or mending can be brought or dropped off for the team to mend.

In cooperation with the library, our retired telephone kiosk has helped provide an anonymous collection point for warm clothing, house cleaning products, and Tricky Period items supplied by N.C.C.

Lockdown also saw the start of our online Theological Course, enabling students to reach a bachelor's degree in theology. We currently have one student from Hingham, who is joined by students from Dubai, Abu Dhabi, South Africa, Australia, Greece and Downham Market.

We are also excited to report that our facilities are being used by the Hingham Writing Group (Imaginary Friends) and Hingham's Neighbourhood Planning Team.

Copper Lane, Hingham NR9 4JS - www.hingham.church - contactus@hingham.church - charity 1054418

HERITAGE FUND - St. Andrew's Hingham

Charity no. 1071172

Covid restrictions once again meant that no Heritage Fund events were held in 2021. However, the Cake Stalls, in the Market Place by the bus shelter, will be starting in April this year and will be on the 4th Saturday of each month through to September.

A number of events are planned for this year and we always welcome anyone who can help and support us, either on the Committee or at any of our events.

The guttering work has now been completed and we hope that repairs to the Ringing Floor will be in hand soon, allowing us to start regular ringing once again.

Nicola Trett, Secretary - Heritage Fund

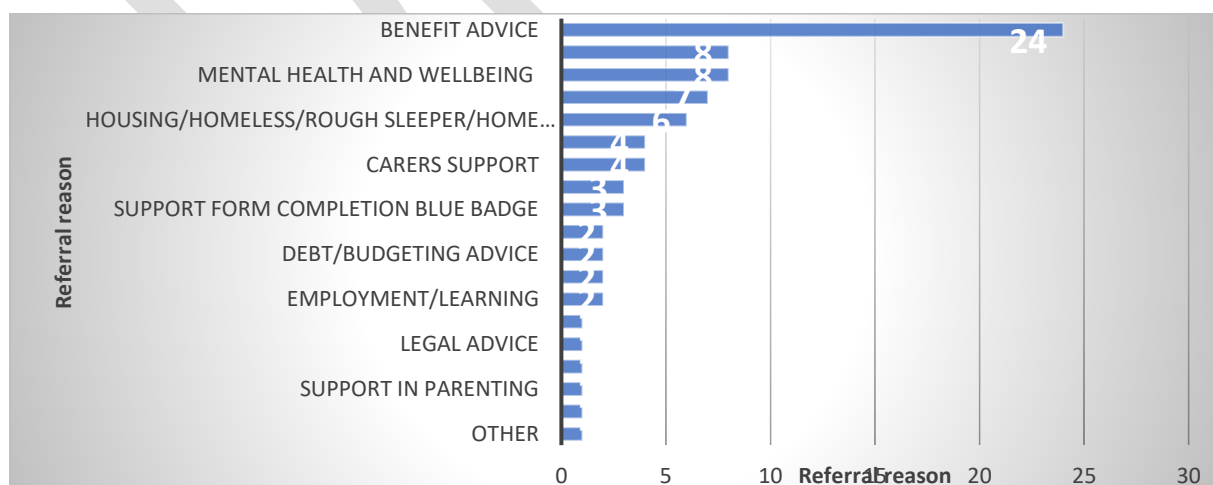
COMMUNITY CONNECTOR REPORT TO HINGHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING APRIL 2022

The role of the community connector has continued to grow over the previous year, having expanded further into Broadland, as well as being able to reach more people within South Norfolk. Patients can be referred to a community connector through a number of channels. These include (but are not limited to) a GP, Nurse, health care professional, social worker, housing officer, mental health nurse as well as self-referring. A community connector is access to non-medical and community support services to improve health and wellbeing.

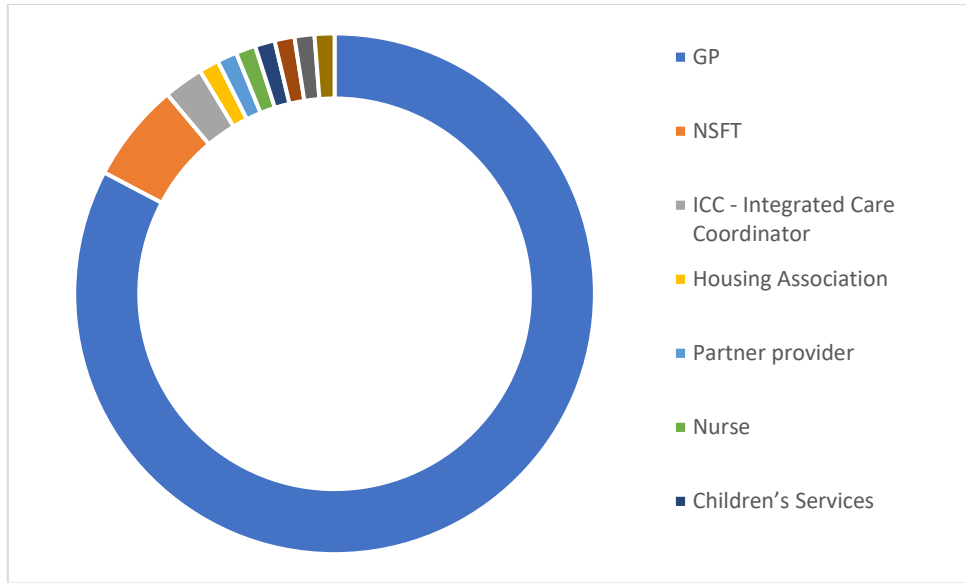
Support can be given for a huge variety of reasons. Everybody needs a bit of extra support from time to time and the Help Hub makes sure people get that help as soon as possible if they begin to experience difficulties. Below are some of the areas of support we can provide.

- Abuse/exploitation
- Benefit Advice
- Carer's support
- Employment/learning
- Debt/budgeting advice
- Health
- Home adaptation/assistive technology
- Housing
- Local opportunities for leisure interests
- Low level legal advice
- Social Isolation
- Substance misuse
- Support in parenting/childcare
- Transport
- Wellbeing

Appointments are preferred through the doctors surgery as this allows us an hour uninterrupted appointment, however I am able to organise a home visit or a telephone appointment for those that may be unable to make it to the surgery. I currently work from Hingham Surgery on Thursday afternoons between 13:00 – 17:00.



Statistics from Hingham for the reason for referral for the previous year



Statistics from Hingham for the source or referral for the previous year

If you feel you, or someone you may know, could do with some extra help or support, please ask at the doctors surgery reception to book an appointment with the community connector from the Help Hub or call the Help Hub directly on 01508 533933.

Katie Moore
Community Connector

DRAFT

SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT HINGHAM AND DEOPHAM 2021-2022

Everyone hoped that 2021-2022 would enable us to recover from an exhausting pandemic and get on with life. Whilst there were some changes, this year has been just as challenging. The staff at South Norfolk continue to provide our residents with a fantastic service and adapt to the needs of the community, however the war raging in Ukraine means we all face new challenges in the weeks and months ahead.

As our residents expect we have finished the year with a balanced budget which enables us to move forward maintain and where necessary enhance the services we provide. As we now look forward, we need to: -

- Meet the demands for our services from our vulnerable residents
- Support our businesses and the economy
- Aim to Positively prepare the District for a post carbon future
- Critically keep our Council up to date

Many of you will be concerned, as I am, about the future of the many refugees from Ukraine who are due to arrive in the District. South Norfolk residents have been magnificent in their response and we are poised to receive the largest cohort of displaced families in Norfolk. Officers are working hard visiting the homes offered to ensure that not only are they safe and secure but suit the needs of both parties. The last thing that anyone wants is for refugee placements to fail due to lack of preparation.

Many residents are also concerned about the implication of the sharp rise in the cost of living. As always, our Help Hub at Long Stratton can assist with any problems. Partners are on hand to help with housing, welfare, health and safeguarding to name a few but can also assist on any other issues however small. Residents will find the access details easily available on the South Norfolk website. In addition to all these concerns it is important that we support our economy and local businesses whilst trying to prepare for a post-carbon future. As a council we are trying to modify the buildings we have – particularly our leisure centres – with added insulation and Solar panel where appropriate. We are also reviewing together with our partners in Broadland Council whether both our head offices are fit for the future.

Whilst these are some of the long term aims, we will not forget our grass roots and continue to provide clubs and societies with much needed grant funding to enhance local facilities where we can. I urge anyone needing help with a project to talk to me about both my ward fund and the Community action fund which has been increased this year. 2022 is the year that our glorious Queen Elizabeth celebrates her magnificent 70 years on the throne. Many communities are planning special events to mark this wonderful event and we have offered Parish Councils funding to assist. These are just some of the funds available.

Hopefully the above gives you some idea of the services South Norfolk provide in addition to collecting the Bins and processing Planning Applications.

Cllr Yvonne Bendle- 01953 850306-yvonne.bendle@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Norfolk County Council highlights for 2021/22

- 70% of Norfolk streetlights converted, or work underway to convert to LED
- 96.7% of highways inspections completed within timescale
- 99.6% of dangerous highway defects dealt with within timescales set out in the Transport Asset Management Plan
- 94% of Looked after Children (LAC) with an up-to-date Personal Education Plan
- Completed 51,000 Adult Social Care Assessments for 20,700 people.

The 2022/23 Budget

A £464 million net revenue budget, a £25m increase from last year, with increased spending across key service areas and capital programmes, along with a 2.99 per cent Council Tax rise has been agreed to enable Norfolk to build back better after the pandemic.

Adult Social Services will see an additional £35.4m of investment, against savings of £10.5m, Children's Services will receive £23.2m of further investment, with a further £10m this year for the SEND School Programme, with £12m against planned savings and Community and Environmental Services will see an additional £11.2m, against savings of £3.5m.

Within Community and Environmental Services there will be the £10m pothole fund to draw upon, new recycling centres across the County, £5m on library upkeep and extension of services and £12m on the Better Broadband project.

There has been substantial Beryl Bikes and E-Scooters uptake during the past year, with the average journey being over 3.5km (taking multiple car journeys out of the City) and multiple Local Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPS) plans being developed across the County (including Greater Norwich, King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth and Dereham).

These commitments are in keeping with my Conservative Groups 2021 Manifesto pledges to deliver a better future for Norfolk through:

- Protecting valued services
- Investing in care services
- Strengthening community resilience
- Leading on economic development
- Supporting families and young people
- Caring for our environment

Protecting Valued Services

Love Norfolk, Hate Litter – boost for pickers as litter can now be accepted at recycling centres

As the national Great British Spring Clean launched on 28th May 2021, there was good news for litter pickers as the county council announces that it was able to accept litter at any of Norfolk's recycling centres.

From the 28th, anyone who picked a small amount of litter in the county was (and is still able to) bring up to three bags of the waste to a recycling centre for disposal. People looking to organise a group litter pick are still urged to contact their district council who can help provide bags, grabbers and arrange for collection of the waste collected.

£29m 'pothole prevention' work now well underway across Norfolk Pavements, cycleways and roads all benefited from the county's £29m maintenance programme taking place right across Norfolk this year. The crucial upkeep work is a key part of the £42 million budget for roads and infrastructure that was agreed in February 2021.

This year £4.5m is being spent on maintaining pavements and paths, for example a £167,000 scheme to remove the existing worn and uneven pavement surface on Kennedy Avenue in Gorleston and replace it with a new smooth asphalt surface will be getting underway in late July.

Brand new £1.9m Norwich South recycling Centre opens

Norfolk's newest recycling centre opened to the public in December. The £1.9m recycling centre is the sister site to the new Norwich North recycling centre that opened on 22nd September. Together the two sites will provide improved recycling facilities for the growing greater Norwich area.

As the new Norwich South recycling centre opens at Harford, just off the A47/A140 junction, staff bid farewell to the old site at Ketteringham that closed yesterday.

The move to a larger site allows room for a one-way traffic system to smooth traffic flow and reduce queues, low-level bins meaning people will not have to climb steps to recycle their waste, and there is plenty of parking for cars, bicycles and vehicles with trailers.

Fire and Rescue staff presented with awards

The achievements of staff across Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service have been recognised through employee awards.

A ceremony to present the awards was cancelled due to the pandemic, so senior leaders have visited some of the recipients of the 2021 awards individually and will continue to do so when Covid-19 restrictions allow.

As well as honouring staff with long service awards, categories also included fundraiser of the year, making a difference awards and leadership accolades.

Council wins national award for its work with the armed forces

Norfolk County Council has been recognised for its outstanding support of the armed forces community in Norfolk, following an announcement from the Ministry of Defence.

The local authority has been given the Gold Award, the highest honour handed out through the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.

The award is given to organisations that employ and support those who serve in the armed forces, service leavers, veterans and their families, with the Gold Award also acknowledging the Council's partnership working through the Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board.

This includes successfully addressing a significant gap in the dental service provision in the West of the County. It negotiated with the Ministry of Defence and NHS England, to ensure the opening of a new dental practice for serving and civilian families at RAF Marham and the surrounding area.

Investing in care Services

Plan to tackle adult social care's winter pressures

Plans to support Adult Social Services with the expected "winter pressures" have been unveiled.

A report was heard by Norfolk County Council's Cabinet in December saying that Adult Social Services across the country are facing unprecedented challenges. However, here in Norfolk practical solutions are being put in place.

The report said: 'Norfolk Adult Social Services face a level of unprecedented challenge in 2021/22 as a result of the pandemic, with national and local workforce shortages, rising demand in hospitals and the community and the continued infection risk posed by COVID-19 as well as other recurring respiratory viruses such as flu.'

Adult Social Services received 20,279 calls for support between April and October this year – an increase of 9,400 over four years.

Action being taken by the Council includes:

- Expanding action to support people at home or, where appropriate, in short term residential settings

- Stepping up the council's care recruitment campaign, to tackle staff shortages
- Providing wrap-around support for care settings
- Providing assistive technology, with 100 video phones sent out to homes
- Improving capacity in the Norfolk First Response service
- Supporting mental health services, with three new step down services

Norfolk to take a step closer to new integrated approach to health and care

Norfolk County Council has agreed their support for new local Health and Wellbeing Partnerships, putting local communities at the heart of health and care in their area.

Under the Health and Care Bill, Integrated care systems (ICSs) are being established in all areas of the country to drive changes that are intended to lead to better, more joined-up care for the population.

Much of the activity to deliver integrated health and care and improve the population's health will happen more locally in the places where people live and work, meaning the new Health and Wellbeing Partnerships will play a key role in driving forward this activity.

Strengthening community Resilience

A new single point of contact for flooding in Norfolk has been launched, allowing residents to report any sort of flooding quickly and efficiently

In the event of flooding residents can call 0344 800 8013 to report it.

Alternatively, residents can continue to report flooding online via our flooding pages.

The new number gives residents a single point of contact and allows reports to be made swiftly.

Different agencies respond to different types of flooding, which has historically made reporting a flood by telephone more complicated when and where it is not possible to ascertain the source of floodwaters. The new number provides a single point of contact making the reporting of flooding quicker and easier.

Where there is a potential risk to life from flooding people should still call 999 immediately.

Flood Reserve Fund spending agreed

Norfolk's Cabinet considered the allocation of the council's £1.5m Flood Reserve Fund to support urgent works, repairs and to enable recommendations from flood investigation reports.

The Reserve Fund was set up in the annual budget for 2021/22 agreed by the County Council in their budget meeting in February.

The Cabinet meeting, held on 6th September, discussed the proposed allocation of the funding, including £695k for additional highway and ditch maintenance and £365k for drainage asset improvements.

This funding will be used for work on the 285,864 metres of drainage grips and 31,037 metres of kerb drains on Norfolk's highways, as well as operations to clear some of the county's 145,305 gullies that help drain rain water.

Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance formally adopts Strategy

The Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance (NSFA) has formally adopted an overall Strategy, designed to enable county wide responses to flooding across all agencies involved.

The Strategy, which lays out the NSFA's vision, objectives, approach and structure, is a major milestone in the development of the Alliance, which was founded earlier this year to bring together all agencies and partners involved in planning for and responding to flooding in Norfolk.

£1million awarded to community groups across Norfolk

Community and voluntary organisations across Norfolk were set for a major cash boost as the recipients of the Norfolk Social Infrastructure Fund were announced.

Norfolk County Council has handed out £1.02 million to 25 different organisations, with grants ranging £3,400 all the way up to £250,000.

In total, the fund saw 64 applications with funding requests that totalled almost £5million. This was more than double the number of applications received last year.

Leading on Economic Development

Ground-breaking partnership to provide Covid-19 recovery support for Norfolk

Norfolk County Council and New Anglia LEP were part of an ambitious cross-border project which helped to deliver a unique package of Covid-19 recovery support for local businesses and people. The C-CARE (Covid Channel Area Response Exchange) initiative, funded by the Interreg France (Channel) England programme which has allocated €2.2m for C-CARE in Norfolk, was set to reach businesses and people that were been hit hardest in the pandemic.

Drawing on a range of expertise from local government, enterprise and tourism in the UK and France, the project supported people at risk of exclusion from the labour market and businesses at risk of closure.

C-CARE aims to reach 4,500 people and almost 2,000 businesses through its pilot initiatives which include skills training to help individuals find new routes into employment or starting a business, and advice and grants aimed at helping companies reset their business models in response to the pandemic.

In Norfolk the project will work to support over 600 people into employment or self-employment and provide support for up to 800 businesses.

Norfolk to get faster broadband thanks to new Government funding

Hard to reach premises in Norfolk are to receive between £115m and £195m of funding as part of the Government's Project Gigabit to provide 1GB per second broadband to up to 119,000 premises. Contracts will be awarded from February 2022.

Rural homes and businesses across Norfolk and Suffolk will get next-generation gigabit broadband brought to them under a £5 billion plan to level up internet access across the UK.

It means families no longer having to battle over bandwidth and will give people in rural areas the freedom to live and work more flexibly, with the speed and reliability needed to start and run businesses.

Supporting families and young people

Vulnerable young people in Norfolk have chance to take New Roads with launch of dedicated support service

A new service to support some of Norfolk's most vulnerable young people to live within families and achieve their full potential launched on 1st June 2021.

New Roads was set up by Norfolk County Council with significant investment to give young people access to a dedicated support team that sticks with them, understands them, and helps them to achieve and succeed.

Based out of two hubs, in Dereham and Norwich, the service provides young people with education, life coaching and speech and language therapy, as well as access to short term residential beds and foster care placements to help meet their needs.

The aim is to give young people stability, reduce risk-taking behaviour and help to avoid the need for long-term residential care, as well as longer term costs to themselves, the wider system and communities.

Hundreds of free activities available for children and young people this Easter

Bookings are now open for The Big Norfolk Holiday Fun, a programme of free activities that will run over the Easter holidays for 5–16-year-olds across Norfolk.

The scheme is provided as part of the government's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme and is being delivered by Norfolk County Council in partnership with Active Norfolk.

After the success of HAF over the Christmas break and some brilliant feedback from parents, it's returning from 4 April though till 19 April with free activities for children eligible for means-tested free school meals. There'll be a fantastic range of activities taking place including outdoor adventure sports, dance and drama and circus skills across the county. With so many activities on offer, children will have an excellent range of ventures to take part in and may even discover a new passion.

Free online business summer school for 16-25-year-olds in Norfolk

There are so many options to choose from when leaving school - like apprenticeships, university, work experience, getting a job...

Or how about starting a business? It may seem a daunting idea at first, but there's lots of free help on offer.

Started in August 2021, the Business & IP Centre (BIPC) Norfolk, managed by Norfolk County Council's Library and Information Service, ran a free online Summer School for 16-25-year-olds to help them decide whether starting their own business might be right for them.

Plans for thousands of new school places in Norfolk

More than a dozen new primary schools could be needed in Norfolk in the next decade, to cater for growing pupil numbers in areas of development. A report to Norfolk County Council's Cabinet highlighted the scale of school development that is likely to be needed to support Norfolk's growing communities. It addresses both demographic changes and population growth from new housing. The report, discussed by members on 31st January, provided a snapshot of the council's plans to ensure there are sufficient school places for Norfolk children aged four to 16.

Alongside district councils, the County Council expects to secure nearly £100m in developer contributions for the proposed new and extended schools but if all of the places are needed, a further £191m would need to be found.

Some of this will be met by Community Infrastructure Levy and government grant contributions.

Inspectors praise support for children in care in Norfolk

Most children in care in Norfolk are well looked after and receive good support for their emotional and mental health and education, Ofsted inspectors have found.

A team of Her Majesty's Inspectors visited Norfolk County Council in October for a two-day focused visit of the council's services for children in its care.

In a letter detailing their findings, inspectors said that social workers know their children well, listen to them and help them to understand their experiences.

Ofsted's visit follows a similar focused visit in 2019, which looked at how the council responds to child safeguarding calls and referrals. Following that visit, inspectors described the quality of decision making as "consistently strong".

Caring for our environment

Carbon cutting commitment central to new county transport plan

A plan set to drive the county's transport policy for the next 15 years was discussed by County Councillors in August.

The ambitious Local Transport Plan has at its heart the aim to support a growing economy, strengthen communities and reduce our impact on the environment.

A carbon cutting commitment is central to the transport plan which supports the county council's pledge to achieve net zero carbon by 2030, which Councillors adopted as part of the authority's Environmental Policy in November 2019.

Buzz created as pollinator paradises set for Norfolk roadsides

Tripling the number of Roadside Nature Reserves in Norfolk were among a range of green measures considered by County Councillors last July.

Fewer cuts for rural roadsides, a pollinator action plan, and 188 more roadside nature reserves are all on the cards as part of plans to boost biodiversity along roads and paths across the county.

Also on the agenda were plans to help boost cycling and walking across the county, and development of a new verge management policy which will include information for parish and town councils wishing to take on responsibility for verge cutting in their local area. The aim is to help involve local communities more in decisions about verge management near them.

DRAFT