

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 18 April 2023 at 7.30pm In the Lincoln Hall

The meeting was Chaired by Town Council Chairman Peter Eldridge and Ali Doe the Town Clerk took the minutes. There were 14 members of the public present

- 1. Welcome, and to Receive Apologies for Absence**
The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance. Apologies for absence were received from Town Cllr Amey, Town Cllr Thompson, Town Cllr Sta Ana, Town Cllr Dunnett, District Cllr Bendle, Vickie Newrick Headteacher Hingham Primary School, Anne Reid – Hingham and Hardingham Art Group and Kate Chan.
- 2. To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 19 April 2022**
The minutes from the Annual Town Meeting held on 19 April 2022 were agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman.
- 3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 19 April 2022**
The Chairman gave an update on Moon Court which still remains vacant. The Town Council had written to BBC Look East but had not received a reply. District Cllr Bendle and County Councillor Dewsbury had advised the Town Council that the owners of the property wanted too much money for it to be viable for either authority to take over the premises and bring it into use.
- 4. Simon Biddolph, County Broadband - Community Broadband Scheme**
Simon Biddolph spoke about the company County Broadband, advising that they are a company working in the East of England specialising in bringing superfast broadband to rural communities. The schemes are worked on a pre order basis and enough residents are needed to sign up for the service before the service can be installed in a community. This is 14 % of properties in the parish boundary for Hingham as identified by County Broadband , the current sign up figure was reported as 9%.
If the scheme gains the required sign up and the installation goes ahead, there is a benefit to the community via funding being available for community projects. County Broadband can help with small projects (both in terms of providing a work force and funding), examples of suitable projects would be painting a small community run facility or undertaking tree planting. Funding for larger projects can be applied for and would be decided by a committee. The scheme is invested into by Aviva and delivery of broadband is incentivised by the Government Gigabit Scheme.
With regard to the costs to the customer, Mr Biddolph advised that installation and the equipment was free and the monthly charge for superfast broadband was from £33.99 a month. This can include a free pay as you go land line (with calls costing 10p per minute, packages are available for high use). An existing telephone number can be used via the router. Concern was expressed by members of the public that the router would not work if there was a power failure and therefore the phone would not work. It was explained that the Government was introducing a bill to

ensure that there would be a back up facility for phone lines in the event of a power failure. Mr Biddolph explained that fibre cables are more durable in storm conditions but if there are issues the company is able to rectify issues quickly as they are only operational in the East of England and their call centres aim to answer calls within 3 minutes.

The Chairman and Clerk thanked Mr Biddolph for attending the meeting.

5. **Address by Hingham Town Council Chairman including: - see Appendix A**

5.1 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 report in Appendix A the Chairman advised that the Bus shelter renovations were underway and the Town clock had been fixed and appeared to be working well.

5.2 Draft accounts for the financial year 2022/23

The Clerk confirmed that these were draft accounts and additional information would be added when the final bank statements were received. The accounts go through several checks before being submitted for audit.

5. **Hingham Neighbourhood Plan update**

In addition to the written report it was explained that the Neighbourhood Plan was nearing completion in draft and the steering group were planning for the public consultation on the draft plan, when all residents will be invited to submit comments through the consultation process, which includes a drop in exhibition. It was explained that some issues in town, such as parking are largely outside the scope of the neighbourhood plan, but it was being explored as to whether suitable land could be acquired in order to provide a community car park, therefore the Town Council had put forward Ladies Meadow for assessment (although the Council do not own the land).

A member of the public suggested that the green outside the bowls club should become a car park. The Clerk advised that the greens could not be used as an authorised car park as they had legal protection due to their status as registered village green.

It was queried if the planning authority would take any notice of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk advised that if adopted the plan would be a legal planning document which the planning authority would have to have regard to, however the Neighbourhood Plan could not override the land and housing designations set out in the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan, but having a Neighbourhood Plan in place should give greater influence with regard to housing allocations when the Greater Norwich Local Plan is reviewed.

It was explained that in order for the Neighbourhood Plan to be adopted it would have to achieve a yes vote in a referendum and that having a Neighbourhood Plan in place would mean that the parish would receive a greater portion of Community Infrastructure Levy payments which can be used to support infrastructure projects. Previous examples of CIL expenditure by the Town Council include resurfacing the access drive to the Lincoln Hall, grants to the Bowls Club and Hingham Playing Field Association for improvements to the fabric of their buildings (heating, windows and drainage), and repairs to the skate park.

7. **Open Forum to Discuss Matters Raised by the General Public**

7.1 Concerns were raised regarding the faded road edge and junction markings in the Market Place, noting that having a clearly defined edge to the road (where there is the parking areas and no pavements) makes it much safer for pedestrians trying to cross the roads.

- 7.2 Concern was raised that the trees planted by Norfolk County Council, in particular those along main roads, were not looked after and many have died.
- 7.3 Concern was raised that there was not enough social housing to rent available in Norfolk. It was noted that South Norfolk Council set the numbers for social housing within developments and that District Cllr Bendle had previously advised the Town Council that SNC had replaced the numbers of social housing to an equivalent number prior to Council houses being sold to tenants some years ago through right to buy schemes.

8. **To Receive Reports from Hingham Clubs, Societies, Charities and Organizations etc. See Appendix B.**

A number of reports had been submitted (see Appendix B), representatives of club/organisations that were present at the meeting were invited to speak to give any additional information or updates, (as written below):

Luncheon Club reported that they are always seeking new volunteers especially drivers to give lifts to and from Lunch Club.

Community Car Scheme reported that there was an error in the written report which should read that the scheme had covered over 20,000 miles in a year. The scheme has 8 drivers, with 3 working nearly full time to cover increased demand. With the lack of parking provision at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, clients being taken to hospital appointments are having to take a friend or family member with them to assist as drivers cannot park up easily and assist clients to their appointments. There have been calls from the surgery to take patients to hospital and there is concern that Community Car drivers are not medically trained therefore a family member or friend is required to be in attendance with the patient. The Community Car Scheme is always looking for more volunteer drivers.

St Andrews Heritage Fund re iterated that they raise funds for the upkeep of the existing church building. Monthly cake stalls in the Market Place are held to raise funds. The Heritage Fund is not being used to build the new toilet in the church, but funds are being raised to reinstate the ringing floor in the church tower.

St Andrews Church reported that work to install toilets should be started soon. The Paws for Coffee event is very popular and there is an open coffee shop once a month. The Church houses a community cupboard (food/toiletries) which is used regularly, (there is an additional community cupboard operating from the Christian Fellowship Church, not church run but run by volunteers), the use of the community cupboards shows a real need for them within the community. The Church is currently without a Rector.

Rectory Bowls Club reported that they were holding an open evening where anyone could come along and try bowls.

Table Tennis Club thanked the Town Council for the grant, 2 new table tennis tables have been purchased. The club would like some more members and are hoping to get a team entered into the Wymondham league.

Hingham Playing Field Association reported that the manager was doing an excellent job in organising a wide variety of events.

Education Trust reported that they exist to provide grants to support young people moving on from school into further education. There is tight security around the forms to ensure personal details are protected and grants are means tested to ensure funds go to those who would not normally be able to fund themselves. The trust is inviting applications.

The Chairman thanked all of the Clubs/Organisations for their reports and thanked St Andrews Church and Christian Fellowship Church for hosting community cupboards.

9. To receive Annual Reports from District and County Councillors – see Appendix C

9.1 District Councillor Yvonne Bendle

District Cllr Bendle was not present at the meeting. The Chairman offered thanks to Yvonne for her work for the community over the past 12 years she had served as District Cllr, and advised that Yvonne was not standing for re election on 04 May.

9.2 County Councillor Margaret Dewsbury

County Cllr Dewsbury read through the key points of her written report.

10. To Discuss Any Other Business

It was reported that a leaflet would be delivered to Hingham residents outlining the activities that were taking place in Hingham to celebrate the King's Coronation.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm

DRAFT

Address by Hingham Town Council Chairman

Hingham Town Council Chairman's Annual Report 22/23

By now you will have received a Council Tax Bill for 2023/24, whilst the total bill will have gone up, you'll notice that the amount for Hingham Town Council has reduced by 1.8%. This is the fourth year in a row that the Town Council has managed, through careful budgeting, to keep the precept at the same level for another year.

Our auditor has found that we have acted correctly in dealing with the Council's finances but said that our financial reserves were a little high. However, having healthy financial reserves has enabled us to plan to undertake several costly projects (which have been in the pipeline for some considerable time), without having to increase the precept. Hopefully these projects, which include restoration of the town clock, resurfacing of the skate park, upgrading some footway lighting and restoration of the Market Place bus shelter, will take place during the first half of the financial year 2023/24.

The biggest concerns around Town don't seem to have changed, in that they are parking, speeding, safety of the Fairland crossroads and a safe pedestrian crossing place in the Market Place. Three years ago, the Town Council paid the County Council Highways Department to carry out a feasibility study to see if there is a solution to these issues. We are still waiting for the report to be published.

As you will remember the Council set up a group to produce a Neighbourhood Plan to look into the future of the Town's growth. They have been working with Neighbourhood Planning consultants, and are nearing the production of a Draft Hingham Neighbourhood Plan, this draft plan will be put out to the community for public consultation. The Hingham Neighbourhood Plan will then go through various other stages before the community gets to vote on the implementation of the final plan in a referendum.

On 4th May the Town/Parish and District Council Elections will be taking place. Hingham Town Council have 11 seats, 6 candidates have been nominated therefore those candidates will be elected unopposed and there will not be a poll (voting), the Town Council will co-opt to fill the remaining vacancies. There will be a poll to elect a new District Councillor as 3 candidates have been nominated.

With the Town/Parish Elections taking place, this marks the end of the 4 year term of the current Council. Over those four years we have had some new Councillors co-opted onto the Council as previous Councillors have decided to step down from the role of Town Councillor. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Town Councillors past and present, our District and County Councillors for all their support over the years. I must also pay special thanks to our Town Clerk and Handyman for all their hard work.

Pete Eldridge
Chair Hingham Town Council

Hingham Town Council Draft Accounts for 2022/23

(please note that these are draft)

RECEIPTS

	YEAR	ITEM	YEAR	
	2021/22		2022/23	
	£77,000.00	PRECEPT	£77,000.00	
	£20.94	BANK INTEREST	£551.86	
	£4,818.00	CEMETERY FEES	£6,530.00	
	£100.00	RECREATION GROUND LETTINGS	£100.00	
	£0.00	CIL	£4,180.57	
	£0.00	EVENTS	£0.00	
INC PAID LATE £3942.16 FOR 2020/21	£7,931.56	NCC GRASS CUTTING PAYMENT	£4,368.43	
CBF INV FUND, COMMUNITY CAR FROM NCC, TOILET TAX REFUND	£935.76	MISCELLANEOUS	£2,728.30	CBF INV FUND, COMMUNITY CAR FROM NCC, JUBILEE GRANT, INSURANCE PAYMENT FOR TOILETS
	£7,855.00	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GRANT	£14,500.00	
	£98,661.26	TOTAL	£109,959.16	
	£14,835.86	RECLAIMED VAT	£4,395.73	
	£113,497.12	GRAND TOTAL	£114,354.89	

PAYMENTS (N.B. NET FIGURE SHOWN FOR GOODS AND SERVICES)

	2021/22	ITEM	2022/23	
	£27,470.46	STAFF COSTS	£31,471.69	
	£5,721.01	GENERAL ADMIN (EXCLUDING STAFF)	£6,283.38	
	£905.00	S137	£83.00	
	£0.00	GRANTS/DONATIONS (OTHER THAN S137 & EVENTS)	£2,532.00	
	£9,901.57	STREET LIGHTING	£15,529.13	
	£10,290.56	GRASS CUTTING	£10,702.24	
	£0.00	TREES	£385.00	
	£50.57	CEMETERY	£69.79	
	£1,105.85	TOILETS (NOT STAFF)	£4,900.38	
	£78.17	EVENTS	£187.45	
	£0.00	NCC PARISH PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS	£0.00	
INC. CHRISTMAS TREE, HOLIDAY COVER LITTER BINS, FAIRLAND STANDPIPE, COMMUNITY CAR, MISC EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE	£4,539.95	MISCELLANEOUS	£6,626.10	INC. CHRISTMAS TREE, HOLIDAY COVER LITTER BINS, FAIRLAND STANDPIPE, COMMUNITY CAR, MISC EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE
	£3,131.94	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN	£12,239.15	
	£0.00	CIL (other than Parish Partnership)	£0.00	
	£63,195.08	NET TOTAL	£91,009.31	
	£4,395.73	VAT	£6,940.31	
	£67,590.81	TOTAL INC. VAT	£97,949.62	

Balance per bank statements 21.03.23			
Current account			£28,265.82
Tracker account			£218,864.42
High interest account			£38,898.72
Business reserve account (last statement available 28/03/12 called CAPITAL FUND)			£186.80
		TOTAL	£286,215.76

Unpresented Cheques			£774.82
ADD any unbanked cash			£0.00
Net bank balances as at 21.03.23 reconciled with the cash book			£285,440.94

The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book for the 12 MONTHS - 01 April 2022-21.03.2023

CASH BOOK

Opening Balance (as per bank reconciliation 31 March 2022)				£269,035.67
Add Receipts 01 April 21-21 MARCH 2023				£114,354.89
Less: Payments 01 April 21 -31 MARCH 2023				£97,949.62
Closing balance per cash book as at 21 MARCH 2023				£285,440.94

OF THE END BALANCE THE FOLLOWING IS EARMARKED/DESIGNATED OR RESTRICTED FUNDS

CIL	£26,094.01
BUS SHELTER PLAQUE	£300.00
CAR PARK DRAIN REPAIRS (FROM CHURCH) (UNABLE TO UNDERTAKE AS NOT OWNERS OF LAND)	£100.00
TOILET REFURB/COMMUTED SUM EVENTS	£31,929.03
CHURCH CLOCK	£2,411.36
PARISH PARTNERSHIP BUS SHELTER	£3,054.00
PARISH PARTERSHIP VILLAGE GATES	£5,525.00
N/P GRANT FUNDING	£19,444.00
TREE WORK	£3,787.83
TOTAL	£6,600.00
	£99,245.23

IN ADDITION TO THIS THE TOWN COUNCIL HAS A RESERVES POLICY WHICH ALLOCATES ANY REMAINING RESERVES TO A SPECIFIC PURPOSE (FIGURES ADJUSTED ANNUALLY), INCLUDING A RESERVE FIGURE OF 1 QUARTER OF THE PRECEPT - TO ENSURE THE COUNCIL COULD CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN THE SHORT TERM IF THE PRECEPT IS NOT RECIEVED

Hingham Neighbourhood Plan Update

At the Annual Town Meeting last year, Town Cllr Thompson was introduced as Secretary of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Cllr Thompson explained that 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.

In the past year a great deal of work has been done by the Steering Group, working with the Neighbourhood Plan consultants and the government appointed body (AECOM) to provide technical support. Grant funding was secured from Groundworks and from South Norfolk Council to cover much of the cost of producing the Neighbourhood Plan.

The first community engagement event took place in March 2022, and the online "Placecheck" tool had been opened to enable residents to make their comments on what they like, dislike or what they wished to remain the same in Hingham. Since then, more community engagement has taken place by means of a survey delivered to every household (and businesses) in Hingham.

The feedback from the community engagement has helped to shape the drafting of the Neighbourhood Plan. It has helped the Steering Group to identify the key objectives to include within the plan and write the plan policies and supporting text. This includes how development should look and fit in relation to the existing built environment of Hingham. The Steering Group and AECOM have written a design code which will be a guide to developers on how development should look in terms of style, layout, colour pallet and materials used.

Some of the feedback from the community expressed a desire for Hingham to remain the same as it is now, and for no more houses to be built. As a Neighbourhood Plan has to be written positively, it cannot dictate that development does not take place in Hingham. The Neighbourhood Plan also cannot contradict the land and housing allocations that have been made in the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan (the planning policy document made at District Council level), however the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan will seek to have a greater influence on how the housing development that will be brought forward in the GNLP will look, and how ad hoc development in Hingham will fit into its surroundings.

The community feedback also identified parking in Hingham as an issue that needs resolving. Resolution to the parking congestion on the existing highway network is beyond the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan (as the Neighbourhood Plan is about the requirement for planning permission and future development). However, as the issue was such a prominent concern expressed by the community engagement, AECOM have undertaken a parking study to try to establish what measures could be feasible to resolve parking congestion. The Steering Group will be considering if policies can be written into the plan that would support measures to prevent further parking congestion as a result of development.

The Steering Group undertook a "call for sites", to see if land could be brought forward for car parking and community uses. Four areas of land were submitted, three of which were put forward by land promoters/owners and included housing provision, one was put forward by Hingham Town Council as a suggested site for a car park and community uses, to enable the land to be assessed as such (however, the land owners have not indicated that the land would be made available). All sites submitted are being assessed by AECOM. The steering group will be discussing the outcome in their future meetings.

It is hoped that a draft Hingham Neighbourhood Plan will be going out to public consultation during summer 2023, after which any necessary amendments will be made to the draft plan prior to it being submitted to South Norfolk Council for scrutiny. The plan will go on to be scrutinised by the Planning Inspectorate. Any further required amendments will be made before the final version of

the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan is put to the residents of Hingham in a referendum, as to whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be adopted.

If the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted, a greater proportion of funds from developer contributions will be made available to the Town Council which will be spent on community infrastructure, (the Community Infrastructure Levy). So far, the CIL money that has been available to the Town Council has been used for the following projects:

- Sewage outflow replacement at the playing field
- Public Right of Way improvements, resurfacing of the path between Norwich Road and Hardingham Road
- Grant for the Rectory Bowls Club towards new heating and windows
- Resurfacing of the access driveway to the Library and Lincoln Hall
- Repairs to the Skate Park (further CIL will be used to resurface the skate park)

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would like to thank the community for their feedback during the community engagement activities. Please come and support the Neighbourhood Plan by attending the next consultation event (date to be confirmed) and by voting in the referendum to adopt the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan, so that the community can have a greater say in the future development of Hingham.

Hingham Town Council thank all of the volunteers on the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, for their time given and hard work in driving the progress of the plan forward.

Written Reports Submitted from Hingham Clubs/Organisations/Societies/Charities

(additional verbal reports and updates may be given at the meeting)

1. Hingham Primary School

We have had another busy year at school, building back to full strength post-pandemic. This academic year has felt more “normal”, with all our usual events taking place alongside new events and experiences for the children.

Despite challenging budgets, we have continued to support the children fully with Catch up sessions and ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support) alongside classroom teaching. We have prioritised the needs of the children throughout the year, working really hard to maintain and develop the precious culture of our school. All children are nurtured as learners (and people) to become independent, thoughtful and confident. It is great to see both ends of the school demonstrating this daily. Children in reception (4 & 5 year olds) are thriving, learning to read and write whilst developing learning behaviours for their future. Children in Year 6 (10 & 11 year olds) are readying themselves for the “End of Key Stage” tests (SATs) and for transfer to high school. One of the really important elements that we have been able to bring back fully this year is having the older children supporting the younger children. Our prefects take real pride in their role and make a real difference to the other children and adults in school.

We have worked closely with the Friends of Hingham School to fund a range of improvements and events. Their vital fundraising has paid for the front playground to be spruced up with new markings including a range of games that the children love. We have also replaced our games shed on the field to ensure that we can safely store the equipment which keeps the children busy over lunch times. The Friends also ensure that children enjoy trips and visits by funding a coach for each class (see below). The Halloween trail was a great success. The Easter Bunny trail has just taken place and the Grand Fete will take place on Saturday 17th June 2023.

This year we have taken the children to a range of places including a number of trips to Time and Tide and West Stow Anglo Saxon village. Pensthorpe, Gressenhall, Gorleston beach, Norwich Theatre and Crucial Crew are all still to come. A new tradition is our annual trip to the Norfolk Show with the whole of Key stage 2. We have also re-introduced our Year 6 residential trip with this year’s children going to Norfolk Lakes and next year’s going to Willersley Castle in the Peak District.

After Easter we will be welcoming our first canine staff member! Halle from Pets as Therapy will be visiting the school weekly and the children are all really excited about this.

It is hard to capture a whole year of school in a short extract, as so much happens. I haven’t even mentioned Boogie Bounce, Lights Camera Action (school play), Ukulele lessons, the Christmas Nativity, Town Council Christmas Decorations, Times table Rock Stars, Enrichment activities, Bikeability, Forest School, Book Swaps, World Book Day Shelfies, Swimming... the list goes on!

To keep up to date with all that happens at Hingham Primary check out www.hinghamprimary.org.uk.

Mrs Vickie Newrick

Headteacher

2. Hingham 1st Brownies

Hingham Brownies had a great spring term and as well as doing many Brownie Activities at our meetings (earning the brownies lots of fabulous badges), we also held some special events for our Girlguiding District.

We had a great 'Thinking Day' event at Lincoln Hall in February. This is when we celebrate with all of our girlguiding friends around the world for having the opportunity to be part of such a great charity organisation which enables girls to have fun and adventures, make friends and achieve more than they thought was possible. We had a brilliant day with approx 60 girls attending.

We also ran an Easter Fayre for families and children at Lincoln Hall a couple of weeks ago, this was such a great success and it was very attended. Thank you so very much for everyone who came along and supported us, Hingham Brownies are hoping to use the proceeds from our stall to take the girls to see a 'special screening' of The Little Mermaid at the Odeon Cinema in June.

We now have 28 Brownies, which is fantastic and this now means we have an opportunity to recruit a couple of volunteers to help out at our weekly meetings, we would love to hear from anyone who may be able to help us, please contact jayne.little@btconnect.com.

Very best wishes from the Owls and Helpers of 1st Hingham Brownies

3. Hingham Luncheon Club

The Luncheon Club is held at the Lincoln Hall twice a month and was started many years ago to provide an opportunity for older folk to socialise and enjoy a good lunch at minimal cost - currently the meal costs £5.

All those who cook, serve and clear up, are volunteers, as are the drivers who pick up those diners who are unable to make their own way to the Hall. We are lucky that at present we have eighteen people who give freely of their time to help us, but we are always looking to recruit more.

Although we are able to cater for thirty people, our numbers have dropped since COVID, so at present we have twenty-three diners. This means that we have vacancies, so if you are aware of anyone who would like to join, they would be sure of a warm welcome. Contact Clare on 01953 799989

Finally we would like to thank all our volunteers, past and present who have kept the Club running so smoothly for forty years.

4. Hingham Gardening Club

After a long 'holiday' due to Covid, the gardening club finally had a meeting in January 2022 when a few people came to see what was going on but March was the first speaker we'd had since March 2020. David Boulton brought his slides of streams but unfortunately he won't be coming again. He's giving up speaking. April should have been Dr Ian Bedford but we had to cancel as he caught Covid. In May Graeme Simmonds brought lots of things in that he'd found while out with his metal detector. His talk was entitled 'History beneath your feet'. In June Pete Eldridge told us about the Mid Norfolk Railway – how they started (past), what they are doing now (present) and what they hope to do in the future (future). Richard Beales came in July and told us a bit about his life at the rose nursery and what he is doing now. Dr Ian Bedford came in August (with his son) to tell us what the world would be like without wasps. Love them or hate them it looks like we need them.

In September Pauline Harper came to talk about winter vegetables. She brought pictures of lots of veg she grows. October was the turn of Martyn Davey who used to work at Easton College but is now at Nurtured in Norfolk at Toftwood. He gave us a talk on vegetable growing and allotments.

November was the AGM but only a couple of people turned up (nobody likes AGM's). Then in December Simon White (of Peter Beales roses) came to show us how to make a Christmas wreath. There were 3 of us there so he didn't have a lot to do.

In January we had a meeting to see if people wanted the club to carry on. It seems as if they do but it was decided we wouldn't meet in December, January, February or March. Those who were there asked for a composting/recycling talk for April but as nobody was available this is scheduled for June. Those at the January meeting asked for a meet at the allotments so that will be in July. May is going to be a herbal walk with Ingrid Sykes who is a medical herbalist in East Harling, we will meet in the car park of the Lincoln Hall at 6.30pm and go for a wander (probably across the Fairland and into the churchyard) then come back to the hall for a welcome cup of tea. Wear your best walking shoes and pray that it doesn't rain. In September we'll welcome Barry Robertson who will be talking about plant science and us. Then in October it's the turn of Richard Clark of Panache Plants in Dereham. He'll be talking about Hardy Exotics. November is back to the AGM.

Please come along and support us because if not we won't be able to carry on and, after nearly 30 years it will be such a shame to lose the club.

Carolyn Edwards

Secretary

5. Hingham and District Community Car Scheme

Annual Report to HTC/SNDC for 2022/2023

Introduction

The Scheme covers Hingham, Deopham and Hackford offering transport for medical journeys to Hospitals, Surgeries, Dentists, Chiropodists, Osteopaths and chemists. Journeys are charged at 50 pence per notional mile with clients paying half, whilst the rest is covered by funds from Hingham Council (12.5 pence per mile), and South Norfolk District Council/Norfolk County Council (12.5 pence per mile).

In the last two years we have been asked by the surgery to include some patients who live in Scoulton and surrounding areas in Breckland. We can only do these by charging the full fare, as they are not subsidised by Breckland Council. We have to prioritise our Hingham Deopham and Hackford clients.

Our drivers are volunteers, who use their own vehicles and offer their time free. They receive half the cost of the journey from the client at the time of the journey and receive the second half monthly by direct payment to their bank account. These payments are drawn up by the scheme administrator from the booking diary, authorised by the scheme co-ordinator and paid by the finance officer by internet banking.

April 2022 – March 2023

The Scheme has had a record breaking year, with 1,748 journeys and total mileage of over 10,724 miles. This may reflect increased pressure for hospitals to reduce waiting lists, but also includes an increase in longer journeys to hospitals outside the county, particularly Cambridge, London and Bury St. Edmunds.

We have lost some drivers but gained others, with the drivers who joined us during the pandemic remaining engaged, but limited to particular days/times, especially if they still work, or have other voluntary activities. There are a balance of 8 drivers, of whom four are regularly available. So far in 2023 the pressure on our drivers has dramatically increased and we have had to decline some clients because we simply did not have sufficient drivers on particularly busy days (with 7+ journeys asked for).

I remain extremely proud of our Scheme and hope that both Councils will be happy to continue funding us into the future.

Alison Lys

Scheme Co-ordinator

6. Heritage Fund, St Andrew's Church

Charity number 1071172 - Heritage Fund was formed many years ago to raise funds solely for the repair and maintenance of the fabric of St. Andrew's church. Activities include a Cake Stall in the Market Place on the 4th Saturday of the month from April to September, a barbecue, coffee morning and various other events.

In the last few years, we have contributed around £20,000 towards the cost of gutter repairs, chancel arch re-plastering, porch repair and roof repairs. The next project we are raising funds for is to contribute to the repair of the bell-ringing chamber floor – around £38,000.

We always welcome new members and new ideas for fund raising. If you like to help us please contact the Acting Chairman on 01953 850 369 or e-mail trett@nnbus.co.uk

Peter Trett, Acting Chairman

7. St Andrew's Church, Hingham

As we continued to recover from the effects of the Covid pandemic, the past year has been about organising the present and preparing for our future. The PCC remains enormously grateful, and thanks God for, all those who have worked so hard over the last year to reopen so many of our church activities and the work that has gone into the process of preparing to appoint a new Rector. As ever, we are grateful to the ministry team and those who have worked with them to maintain our pattern of worship. Once again, those who thought themselves put out to pasture have found themselves back in front of the plough.

Our efforts at outreach over the past year as the Covid restrictions were lifted have attracted lots of people back into the church building. Our Christmas services saw a return to the ever-popular Light of the World service, and it was fantastic to see the church full again! Messy Church has relaunched with great success and we offer our thanks to all those involved. The Paws for Coffee dog friendly café has also seen a number of waggy-tail visitors and their pet humans enter the church, many for the first time. We also launched our St Andrew's Pantry and Wall of Kindness, to help those in need.

After so many years of hard work – spanning literally multiple generations – we are very pleased to say that we are finally moving forward with our Facilities Project; installing toilets inside the church and relocating/upgrading the kitchen. After successful fundraising, work begins on this in the next few months and we are excited to see what new opportunities this will open for us. We have begun the process of fundraising for the restoration of the Bell Ringing Floor so that we can re-establish regular Bell Ringing in St Andrews.

The Bishop of Thetford's proposal for re-organisation of our parishes to join with the Shellrock Group (Ellingham and Rocklands) has been agreed. We know that our future Priest will have a larger group of churches, and therefore a larger group of communities, to minister to. We have been working with the Shellrock Group on the recruitment of a new rector.

Over the next 12 months, we will continue to work to secure the Church's financial future. We are looking forward to a visit from the Parish Giving team from the Diocese who will work with us to develop new ways and patterns of giving. We also need to grow the community links we have started to build, and help the Facilities Project to realise its full potential. We need to work to grow our Christian community to allow us to ensure the Church's future and to continue Christ's work in the heart of this town for generations to come.

Richard Till, Caroline Money, Churchwardens

8. The Church on Copper Lane (aka Hingham Christian Fellowship)

We are pleased to report that our church has continued to grow and develop links within our community this last year

Even though we are no longer in lockdown, we continue to stream our Sunday services as well as having face to face live meetings in the building on Copper Lane. Our weekly Sunday Communion service continues in "Coffee Shop format" with everyone seated around tables. We have discovered that this is far more conducive to conversation than when everyone was seated in rows. For some though, the online option is still considered to be more convenient, especially for midweek Bible Study, which now runs on Zoom.

We now have a twice weekly time of prayer and fellowship on Mondays and Fridays Evenings where we can pray for our town and Nation. Prayer requests can be dropped of anonymously at the church.

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 espresso based drinks this Continues to grow and provide support for a number of families in the area.

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. It is an opportunity to meet together and learn new skills while enjoying good coffee.

On Mondays and Friday mornings we also team up with the Community Cupboard to provide food for the community and a warm space.

In cooperation with The community Cupboard, our repurposed telephone kiosk has helped provide an anonymous collection point for food collection when the church building is closed. We are encouraged to see how the generous people of Hingham have responded to help those who are struggling to put food on their tables.

Our Theological School, continues with a number of students soon to be graduating with Bachelor's degrees. 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

9. Hingham and Hardingham Art Club

The art club has had a year of relative calm compared to the disruptions of Covid and the arson attack at the Hardingham Hall.

We now meet weekly on Tuesdays from 1.30 to 4pm with an average of 13 to 20 members attending. Sometimes there is a model and sometimes a still life is set up but members often work on their own projects. We are now up to capacity for the hall and have a waiting list for new members.

Our annual exhibition in November 2022 at the Lincoln Hall Hingham was a lovely event and very successful with many visitors throughout the weekend. There are a number of opportunities for members to exhibit their work. We are lucky to have a dedicated display wall at Harrods community gallery and are very grateful to Emily and Scott Field for all their hard work in developing and maintaining this inspiring space, The exhibition 'Mixed Impressions' at the Dragonfly Gallery Watton was held throughout May last year and this year we will exhibit there for the last two weeks of June. We also exhibit at Hingham Surgery and Hassingham House throughout the year.

During August we organise visits and plein air painting sessions instead of meeting in the hall. In 2022 we were blessed with wonderful weather for each of the five Tuesdays in the month and went to some beautiful locations. We hope to be similarly lucky for this August.

Courses have been difficult to organise in recent years but we are now back to being able to have external tutors. On 4th April we had a botanical watercolour course run by Isobel Bartholemew which was very enjoyable. Various other courses some of which are run by members themselves have been organised during the year.

The club continues to go from strength to strength and our members are a wonderful group of dedicated artists who are willing to contribute in so many ways. There are 10 very able committee members and we all strive to improve our skills and learn from one another within our friendly and supportive club.

Ann Reid (Chair)

10. Hingham Charity

The year 2022/2023 has been a difficult one for all but the Hingham Charity has tried to do its best to help.

It has provided free meals once a week for Hingham residents, supported the community cupboard in Copper lane and given out Christmas donations, and various other confidential deeds.

The Mill Farm allotments continue to be fully used and as soon as one becomes vacant it is snapped up.

The Charity will continue to help its residents and if you feel you are in need please do contact the Charity.

Daphne Hughes

Clerk to Hingham Charity.

11. 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. Santa's Grotto Committee consists of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and six other voting members. Each December members of the committee and town volunteers erect an interactive display on the Fairland green for a few weeks. This usually consists of Santa's grotto and his cabin, Christmas trees, a sleigh, a reindeer, and a sproftacchel (photo board). Throughout the year the Committee raises money which goes towards the maintenance of the display, public liability insurance, Christmas trees, decorations/lights, putting on a Fun Day and a gift for every child who visits Santa. This year a new Grotto is being created.

At the 2023 Fun Day there will be singers, an owl experience, bauble decorating, face painting, tombola, raffle, light up balloons as well as the big man himself. In 2022 Hingham fire station drove Santa round Hingham in a decorated fire engine and he gave out more presents. The drive around is planned for the Fun Day this year and hopefully the fire engine will stay on the green for a while.

2023 events:

7th May – Coronation picnic on the Fairland Green – live music and a children's arts and craft table.

8th May – Helping Lincoln's Tea & Coffee Shoppe with their breakfast on the Fairland (ticketed event).

At both of the above events, and at the Sports Centre's 'bring your own picnic' day, wildflower seeds will be handed out to children attending. They can either take them home or plant them in barrels that will be situated around the town or in a small section of the field next to the Fishing Lakes.

13 & 14th May – Organised Yard Sales around Hingham as well as a cake and plant stall.

4th November – Craft Fair at Lincoln Hall.

1st & 2nd December – Santa's interactive display set up.

9th December - Santa on the Green Fun Day.

12. Hingham Bowmen

Thanks to our coach Duffy with his beginners courses and the reputation of being a welcoming and friendly club, our membership has grown steadily. This last year has again seen our travelling archers acquit themselves well, against National and local opposition and brought home several accolades of their success in both Target and Clout archery.

13. 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 35 playing members and 8 non-playing member. We play in four different leagues in the evenings, and have two teams in the Age Concern league which plays on a Friday afternoon. 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.

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

14. Hingham Table Tennis

I am delighted to be able to provide a brief report on the Hingham Table Tennis activities from when we began. This was on the 14th June 2022 when we managed to persuade 8 participants to turn up on a Tuesday evening. With prior funding from HPFA we had previously acquired another good secondhand table and a number of new bats and balls.

At that time we also had two rather old tables but nevertheless there was much enthusiasm for a regular slot indeed on the 28th June 2022 we had 14 players!

During the winter months numbers fell a little but the overall enthusiasm continued unabated. As players improved it became obvious to me that we needed to replace certainly one of the existing tables with a new one, which we did from our own funds in February 2023.

However I still felt that to attract more players we needed to offer good facilities and via the HPFA we applied for a grant of £600 from Hingham Town Council. I'm delighted to say that this was granted very recently and two new tables are being delivered as I type this note!

This will then give us 3 new tables and a very good secondhand one.

The level of everyone's ability has increased significantly over the last nine months to the extent that in September 2023 I am contemplating entering a Hingham team into the Wymondham League Division One.

To conclude I'm delighted that we have been able to add this additional facility to Hingham, long may it continue to prosper!!

Paul Roberts.

15. Lincoln Social Centre

We are in the process of revamping and updating our website and hope to include a calendar of events in the future so that everyone can see what activities we have going on and when.

Bookings are available for private functions or events email Annette Seabrook at lincolnhallbookingaseabrook@btinternet.com for details and rates.

We could do with one or two additional committee members to assist with the running and decision making for the hall, if anyone is interested then please contact Annette or myself.

Steve Kitts

Chairman - Lincoln Social Centre

16. Hingham Playing Field Association

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

This time last year we were recovering from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, while carefully and optimistically planning a Jubilee Celebration for HM Queen Elizabeth the 2nd.

As it turned out, we had beautiful weather and an amazing schedule of events at the Jubilee Celebration. We had a Punch and Judy show, face painting, indoor crafting, baton twirling, archery, live entertainment, a free photo booth and a Hingham's Got Talent show as well as many other attractions.

Thanks to the sponsorship and generosity of local businesses together with grants and donations, we were able to provide the vast majority of this free or at very low cost.

Sadly, the Queen passed away last year. However, we are fortunate in now in being part of a town wide Coronation Event taking place in Hingham on the weekend of 6th of May to celebrate another historic event, the coronation of King Charles the 3rd.

Overall, the HPFA had a very successful year in terms of facilities provided and the number of bookings taken for recreational activities. We had our second Senior Christmas Party – provided free for anyone attending. We have regular events such as a Christmas Fair, craft fairs, car shows, the recent Spring Fling and now a monthly visiting farmers market. Not to mention, the very popular 1940's weekend due to take place in May.

We provided a warm space throughout the cold winter months and plan to continue offering this facility when the need arises again.

Of note the HPFA Sports and Social Club is having a fabulous makeover so please come and visit when the refurbishments are complete.

Finally, 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.

Annual Reports from District and County Councillors

1. District Councillor Yvonne Bendle

South Norfolk Council has made big strides in the last year helping the District address a whole variety of challenges including the recovery from Covid, the cost of energy and general cost of living, and the impact of Ukrainian Refugees.

Once again we have been able to present a balanced, affordable budget that does not draw from reserves. As we move forward we have approved a capital budget of £113million whilst freezing council tax once more in spite of making no cuts to the services we offer. This year we're committing an extra £1.3million pounds for those in need so we can continue to support 500 households a month address the cost of living and the challenges life sends.

Here in Hingham and Deopham we have continued to deliver local schemes. Last year we gave a £2000 grant to the Hingham Playing Field Association to purchase a industrial standard Cooker Hood for the kitchen to further enhance their facilities. We also gave a £15000 grant to Deopham Parish Council to enable the purchase of badly needed children's play equipment for the village.

Looking ahead we are planning more widespread schemes through the District:-

- We have £8million in the capital program to further develop Norwich Science Park, creating even more jobs in the world of genetics and genomics.
- We continue to match housing growth with infrastructure investment. Last year we invested in a £1m town centre improvement in Harleston, and are continuing to develop a plan to enhance Wymondham in collaboration with Wymondham Town Council.

We are already very energy efficient, having saved 700 tonnes of carbon since we began measuring our footprint. Soon we will be moving to our new more efficient low carbon building which has 2500 solar panels and will be using 84% less energy plus installing air source heat pumps for further efficiency.

In addition to considering the green environment, we have continued to help residents keep fit and healthy:-

- Investing over £2m in the Diss Swimming Pool adding air source heat pumps and other improvements.
- Working with the doctors and NHS to deliver a new surgery for Hethersett.
- Our staff continue to provide a 'District Direct' service in the NNUH, preparing recovering patients for timely discharge to an adapted home.

I have represented the District for the last 12 years and have done my best to support residents that need my help. I am saying goodbye at the next election and hope that your elected choice of representative continues to enjoy the role as much as I have.

Cllr Yvonne Bendle- 01953 850306

yvonne.bendle@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

2. County Councillor Margaret Dewsbury

Many of the Services have been very busy over the last year.

Trading Standards

Trading Standards were so busy dealing with the outbreak of Avian Flu that other services sent people to assist them. There were 65 outbreaks identified across the county as opposed to 3 the previous year. It became mandatory to keep birds 50 or more birds inside but advisory to keep them all inside.

Trading Standards also continued its everyday work ensuring businesses are operating within the correct legislation and trying to protect local residents from rogue traders who email, telephone or knock on doors. They work in partnership with Citizen's Advice who provide a helpline to received information and give advice to local people. Tel: 0808 223 1133. They also provide a Trusted Trader directory of local organisations.

Eleven new No Cold Calling Zones were set up in 2022 taking the number to 308. These 308 act as a deterrent to bogus callers and help protect 14,474 households across the county.

Fire and Rescue Service

The Fire Service was very stretched at times during the year dealing with flooding and wildfires. Last summer they dealt with over 650 wildfires sometimes tackling 50 per day, over 6 times more than in 2021 when they dealt with 96. On July 19th the call centre received 808 fire calls and on July 24th 1672 so a major incident was called and ten engines from other services came in to assist. As well as field fires many houses were completely burnt out.

April 1st 2023 marks the 75th Anniversary of the creation of the current Fire Service. They will be having Open Days at some Stations and there will be an Emergency Village at the Royal Norfolk Show to show the work of the emergency services as well as a display from the Fire Museum.

The Council continues to work with the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance and all of its partners to reduce inland and coastal flood risks by establishing a single phone number for all flood related issues and targeting support for those areas most at risk. Work will continue to encourage people to clear ditches to try to prevent the build up of water during heavy downpours. An advice leaflet has been produced.

Adult Learning

Adult Learning continues to offer hundreds of courses both online and face to face. They have just opened a new Construction Centre on Hellesdon Industrial site offering free courses for anyone over 19 years of age on bricklaying, carpentry, plastering, plumbing, and much more. A second centre is soon due to open in Kings Lynn. A temporary Construction Centre was set up at Wensum Lodge last year as they were keen to start delivering the course. Over 600 people attended the training and a third of them were female, this is far more than the one per cent of women in the construction industry. The courses are for people to learn new skills for employment but also for those who want to do their own DIY.

They have also been offering courses to people who have English as a second language. They worked with the Fire Service to ensure immigrants and refugees knew how to report a fire or other incident in this country and they are offering new Multiply training to help people with numeracy. These are to help businesses upskill their staff, improve peoples employment opportunities or help people to manage their money. Training is free and can be for individuals or groups.

Libraries

The libraries continue to be the font of all knowledge, helping people requiring information about services provided by all councils and other organisations as well as providing a warm space during the cold winter months and the opportunity to join in activities for all ages, including knit and natter, bounce and rhyme, and board games. They also provided free, Keep Warm and Go bags containing a hat, blanket, socks and a hot water bottle and Toiletry Bags containing shampoo, bodywash, soap, hand gel, toothbrush and toothpaste and deodorant as well as the usual Tricky Period sanitary packs.

The Summer Reading Challenge was a great success with around 9,000 children taking part. Children were presented with certificates and medals as a reward for completing the challenge.

There has been a Public Consultation on mobile libraries to review the routes and the demand in each village. Not many people use them and fuel costs keep rising so there will be some changes later in the year.

Museums

The Castle Museum is still hosting weddings and visits from groups of school children. The transformation of the Castle Keep to a replica of what it was like in Norman times is nearly complete. All five levels from basement to battlements will be accessible to everyone. There will also be new catering and toilet facilities.

The latest exhibition of artifacts from a shipwreck which sank near Great Yarmouth on May 6th 1682, called the Last Voyage of the Gloucester, has been very popular and attracted an above average number of visitors, over 500 people, on the first Saturday that it was open.

Carbon Emissions

The County Council has committed to achieve 'net zero' carbon emissions on our estates by 2030. All street lighting should be converted to energy efficient LEDs by 2024.

The proposal to plant one million trees in five years to help offset carbon emissions is continuing. Trees are being grown at the Environmental Hub at Gressenhall Museum. To date 210,000 trees have been planted and there is also a Hedge Restoration Fund to help fill the gaps in hedgerows and join up habitats to provide corridors for wildlife to travel safely along.

The Council has received government funding to provide 70 electric, zero emission, buses and the Roundtree Way Depot will be one of the first two fully electric bus depots outside London. Also 16 local authorities, including Norfolk, are to receive government funding to help roll out thousands of electric vehicle charging points.

Housing

Repton Property Development, the County Council's housing development company has recently completed a site in Attleborough where all 48 properties are affordable homes.

Strategic Review

The Council has been undertaking a strategic review to try to find savings by 'doing things better for less'. The predicted £60 million gap has been covered although due to increasing demand for Adult

and Children's Services we foresee a gap of about £46 million next year. It has been agreed to increase the precept by 2.99% for general Council Tax and by 2% for Adult Services Social Care in line with the governments suggested cap.

Children's Services

Children's Services has been dealing with a need for more school places over the coming years. The three new SEND schools providing 500 more specialist places have been built and have opened in Fakenham, Gt Yarmouth and Easton.

Childminders and Foster Carers have been caring for children for decades. The Council now has a New Roads scheme which is looking for people willing to offer lodgings and advice and support to young people aged 12 – 25 to help them develop independence and prepare for adult life.

Last year the Council supported children aged 5 – 16 as part of the government's Holiday Activities and food programme. The Big Norfolk Holiday Fun Scheme will be repeated again this summer and at Easter. The scheme is free for children eligible for free school meals, young carers, children who are refugees and disabled children.

The Council offers various training schemes including Social Work Apprenticeships and experience of working with both children and adults.

Highways

Work continues on plans for the Norwich Western Link and Highways England will soon be starting work on the A47 between North Tuddenham and Easton. There will probably be more rat running through the local country lanes and villages whilst the work is in progress. Highways are looking at ways of mitigating this.

The third River Crossing at Gt Yarmouth is nearing completion.

Highways Rangers have already started coming round the village to clean signs or help with small highways issues.

Devolution

The Council has been considering a County Deal with the Government which would bring in £600 million over thirty years, (£20million per year) plus the opportunity to apply for other funding and deliver more jobs, housing and investment. This would involve a directly elected leader and cabinet governance. A public consultation was held in March and the responses are being analysed. An agreement will be signed at the December Council Meeting if it is agreed to continue with this proposal.

Cllr. Margaret Dewsbury
Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships
Norfolk County Council: Hingham Division