

**All members of the town are warmly invited to attend the**

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
TO BE HELD ON  
TUESDAY 16 April 2024 at 7.30pm  
in the Lincoln Hall (doors open from 7.20pm)**

The Annual Town Meeting is NOT a Town Council meeting, but an occasion for members of the public to ask questions, make comments, raise issues with the Town Council and propose resolutions.

Light refreshments will be served after the meeting

**A G E N D A**

- 1. Welcome, and to Receive Apologies for Absence**
- 2. To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 18 April 2023**
- 3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 18 April 2023**
  
- 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.**
  - 4.2 Draft accounts for the financial year 2023/24**
  
- 5. Hingham Town Council Working Parties update**
- 6. Hingham Neighbourhood Plan update**
  
- 7. Open Forum to Discuss Matters Raised by the General Public**

(Ideally notice of any resolutions should be sent to the clerk prior to the meeting)
  
- 8. To Receive Reports from Hingham Clubs, Societies, Charities and Organizations etc.**

(approximately 5mins each)
  
- 9. To receive Annual Reports from District and County Councillors**
  - 9.2 District Councillor Josh Woolliscroft**
  - 9.2 County Councillor Margaret Dewsbury**
  
- 10. To Discuss Any Other Business**

Steve Thompson  
Chairman – Hingham Town Council  
09 April 2024

## Contents

1. Hingham Town Council Chairman’s Report 2023/2024 .....	3
2. Hingham Town Council Draft Accounts for 2023/24 .....	5
3. Hingham Town Council Working Parties - Update .....	7
4. Hingham Neighbourhood Plan .....	8
5. Hingham Primary School .....	9
6. Hingham Community Cupboard Annual Report: 31 March 2023-1 April 2024 .....	10
7. Lincoln Social Centre .....	11
8. Hingham Lunch Club .....	11
9. Hingham and Hardingham Art Club .....	12
10. Hingham Gardening Club.....	13
11. 1st Hingham Brownies .....	13
12. St Andrew’s Church, Hingham.....	14
13. Heritage Fund St Andrew’s Church Hingham Charity Number 1071172.....	14
14. Hingham Christian Fellowship Church ‘aka’ Copper Lane Church.....	14
15. Hingham Methodist Church .....	15
16. Hingham Rectory Bowls Club.....	16
17. Hingham Santa’s Grotto.....	16
18. Hingham & District Community Car Scheme - April 2023 - March 2024.....	16
19. Hingham Playing Field Association Registered Charity No. 286060 Annual Report April 2024 .....	17
20. Hingham Table Tennis .....	17
21. Wymondham Judo Club (held at Hingham Sports Hall) .....	18
22. Hingham Pickleball.....	18
23. Hingham Tennis.....	18
24. Hingham Short Mat Bowls.....	18
25. Hingham Bowmen .....	19
26. Hingham Charity .....	19
27. Hingham and Deopham District Councillor – Josh Woolliscroft .....	20
28. NCC Annual Report for Parish Meetings.....	22

## Hingham Town Council Chairman's Report 2023/2024

For the previous 4 years Hingham Town Council has managed to budget carefully to allow for no increases in the precept. Unfortunately for 2024/25, the Town Council were unable to ensure the budget required to undertake necessary Council work and provide services, without a small increase in the parish precept. Increased energy costs have impacted on the cost of providing our 148 footway (including bus shelter) lights, however we are gradually converting footway lighting to more energy efficient and reliable LED lighting, which has enabled a reduced cost footway lighting maintenance contract to be gained. The increase in cost of energy, water, and general inflation has meant that costs for the public toilets, grass cutting, dog waste bins, tree works and standpipes have all increased.

Staff wages have also increased in line with the Local Government Services Pay Agreement. It was realised that Ali our Town Clerk has an increasing workload and so I am pleased that we have been able to increase the post's hours to a more realistic number, albeit there is an inevitable but necessary cost to the Council. I have to say that I and my fellow Councillors realise that without her hard work we would not be able effectively to operate and having seen her attend out of hours incidents and guide us in times of difficulty, I am constantly grateful for her hard work, guidance and support.

We are very grateful to David our general maintenance operative, for his hard work and commitment, including keeping the cemetery, toilets and garden areas maintained as well as litter picking many areas of the town and keeping the litter bins clean, so our town is a clean environment to the benefit of our community and visitors. Thank you, to both of our members of staff.

Parking needs in the town centre remains high on the list of improvements desperately required. The Council once more reminds drivers that they should park in a responsible manner, as per the Highway Code by not blocking entrances, driveways and junctions and avoid parking on pavements to the danger of pedestrians especially the elderly and less mobile. Aside from setting up a Highways, Transport and Environment Working Party, I can report that negotiations have been commenced with Norwich Diocese with a plan to obtain a piece of land off Attleborough Road. This could have potential for community uses including car parking, as well as additional land that would potentially enable improved pedestrian access to this and the Town Cemetery. We have been awarded Pride in Place grant funding (through South Norfolk Council), to pay for a detailed feasibility study on the land concerned, which will assist us in our decision making over this important matter. The Church could also benefit from additional parking to use their newly improved facilities.

We are very grateful to South Norfolk Council for the allocation of Pride in Place funding and to Norfolk County Council for the allocation of Parish Partnership funding, which has recently part funded the renovation of the Market Place bus shelter and a roadside "Village Gate" scheme which should see the village gates installed soon, once sizing and the design has been completed.

Following several incidents in Ringers Lane involving injuries to elderly pedestrians I am pleased to report that we were able to convince NCC Highways to undertake Capital Spending on a project to improve the existing poor pavement and I look forward to seeing that work hopefully commence in the summer. In late 2023 there were two separate vehicle incidents on Attleborough Road at the cemetery, resulting in damage to gravestones and the cemetery railings. Insurance claims are still being pursued and the Council are looking to install appropriate protective bollards to prevent a similar incident. We have also asked the Highways Authority to consider reducing the 60mph speed limit on this stretch of road due to these as well as other recent crashes on Attleborough Road.

A concern is that climate change has been causing warmer and wetter winters in recent years and this past winter has seen some of our residential roads suffering from blocked culverts, overflowing ditches, excessive surface water and surface damage including ever growing numbers of potholes. Residents of Low Road and The Fields, to name just two locations, have suffered badly from these issues in recent months and I am pleased to report that we have now managed to bring these matters to the attention of NCC Highways through discussions and site visits to try to bring about improvements. We will be monitoring these locations carefully to ensure appropriate remedial work takes place.

In the past year we have managed to have closer dialogue with our Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team and this has resulted in regular visits to Hingham. We saw action to remove an unroadworthy vehicle from the Market Place, as well as more frequent speed enforcement on the B1108. We will continue to build on this relationship over the next year as we rely on the police to enforce matters that they have legal jurisdiction over such as Highway Obstruction.

The Town Council thank our County and District Councillors for their support of our community and Town. And finally, I want to thank my fellow Councillors, whom we should remember are all volunteers from our community. They give their personal time and commitment to try to improve our community lot and whilst thanking the 2 members who decided to resign in the past year for their past service, there remains at this time a vacancy for any member of the community who wishes to be considered for co-option on to the Town Council.

Steve Thompson, Chair – Hingham Town Council

## HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL DRAFT ACCOUNTS FOR 2023/24

### Income and Payments

DRAFT			
Hingham Town Council Accounts Year End 31 March 2023			
	2022/23	RECEIPTS	2023/24
	<b>£77,000.00</b>	PRECEPT	<b>£77,000.00</b>
	<b>£551.86</b>	BANK INTEREST	<b>£3,421.90</b>
	<b>£6,530.00</b>	CEMETERY FEES	<b>£5,160.00</b>
	<b>£100.00</b>	RECREATION GROUND LETTINGS	<b>£100.00</b>
	<b>£4,180.57</b>	CIL	<b>£2,647.47</b>
	<b>£0.00</b>	EVENTS	<b>£0.00</b>
	<b>£4,368.43</b>	NCC GRASS CUTTING PAYMENT	<b>£4,863.32</b>
CBF INV FUND, COMMUNITY CAR FROM NCC, JUBILEE GRANT, INSURANCE PAYMENT FOR TOILETS	<b>£2,728.30</b>	MISCELLANEOUS	£10,563.59
	<b>£14,500.00</b>	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GRANT	£4,836.00
	£109,959.16	TOTAL	<b>£108,592.28</b>
	<b>£4,395.73</b>	RECLAIMED VAT	<b>£6,838.51</b>
	£114,354.89	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>£115,430.79</b>
PAYMENTS (N.B. NET FIGURE SHOWN FOR GOODS AND SERVICES)			
	2022/23		
	£31,553.88	STAFF COSTS	<b>£34,109.86</b>
	£6,201.19	GENERAL ADMIN (EXCLUDING STAFF)	<b>£6,213.01</b>
	£83.00	S137	<b>£40.00</b>
	£2,532.00	GRANTS/DONATIONS (OTHER THAN S137 & EVENTS)	<b>£1,993.60</b>
	£15,529.13	STREET LIGHTING	<b>£31,003.52</b>
	£10,702.24	GRASS CUTTING	<b>£11,909.84</b>
	£385.00	TREES	<b>£8,075.00</b>
	£69.79	CEMETERY	<b>£72.10</b>
	£4,900.38	TOILETS (NOT STAFF)	<b>£2,555.47</b>
	£187.45	EVENTS	<b>£1,629.87</b>
	£0.00	NCC PARISH PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS	<b>£30,494.00</b>
INC. CHRISTMAS TREE, HOLIDAY COVER LITTER BINS, FAIRLAND STANDPIPE, COMMUNITY CAR, MISC EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE	£6,727.90	MISCELLANEOUS	<b>£9,991.81</b>
	£12,239.15	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN	<b>£12,048.46</b>
		CIL (other than Parish Partnership)	<b>£11,848.00</b>
	£91,111.11	NET TOTAL	<b>£161,984.54</b>
	<b>£6,838.51</b>	VAT	<b>£13,918.59</b>
	£97,949.62	TOTAL INC. VAT	<b>£175,903.13</b>

## Bank Account to Cash Book Reconciliation

<b>Balance per bank statements 31.03.2024</b>			
Current account			<b>£20,581.57</b>
Tracker account			<b>£80,634.85</b>
High interest account			<b>£39,367.04</b>
Charity Bank			<b>£86,789.77</b>
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£227,373.23</b>
LESS Amount from Unpresented Cheques (as below)			<b>£2,404.63</b>
436	ORLANDO HORNER EASTERN TREE CARE	TREE WORK	<b>£840.00</b>
482	RADII SKATE PARK REPAIRS	SKATE PARK REPAIRS/MAINT	<b>£425.00</b>
489	SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL	HEDGING PROJECT	<b>£100.00</b>
491	NORFOLK CITIZENS ADVICE	DONATION	<b>£600.00</b>
527	NORFOLK COPIERS	METERED PRINTING	<b>£49.12</b>
532	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	CEMETERY STANDPIPE	<b>£19.10</b>
533	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	TOILETS	<b>£291.07</b>
534	THE COMMUNITY HEARTBEAT TRUST	DEFIB ELECTRODES/LIGHT	<b>£80.34</b>
ADD any unbanked cash			<b>£0.00</b>
<b>reconciled with the cash book</b>			<b>£224,968.60</b>
<b>sh Book for the 12 MONTHS - 01 April 2023-31.03.2024</b>			
<b>CASH BOOK</b>			
Opening Balance (as per bank reconciliation 31 March 2023)			<b>£285,440.94</b>
Add Receipts 01 April 23-31 MARCH 2024			<b>£115,430.79</b>
Less: Payments 01 April 23 -31 MARCH 2024			<b>£175,903.13</b>
<b>Closing balance per cash book as at 31 MARCH 2024</b>			<b>£224,968.60</b>

## Details of Restricted/Earmarked Funds Held in Reserve

<b>OF THE BALANCE THE FOLLOWING IS EARMARKED/DESIGNATED OR RESTRICTED FUNDS</b>			
		<b>£16,893.48</b>	
BUS SHELTER PLAQUE		<b>£300.00</b>	
CAR PARK DRAIN REPAIRS (FROM CHURCH)		<b>£100.00</b>	UNABLE TO UNDERTAKE AS NOT OWNERS OF LAND
TOILET REFURB/COMMUTED		<b>£31,929.03</b>	
EVENTS		<b>£781.49</b>	
HINGHAM SOCIETY FUNDS		<b>£4,337.81</b>	
COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME 23.24		<b>£778.00</b>	
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GRANT		<b>£1,493.40</b>	TO BE RETURNED TO Groundworks
<b>TOTAL (TBC)</b>		<b>£56,613.21</b>	

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 RECEIVED

## **HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES - UPDATE**

In October 2023, the Town Council agreed to form 2 Working Parties, the Archives Working Party and the Highways, Transport and Environment Working Party, to undertake relevant projects and work in these areas. Thank you to all members of the Working Parties who have volunteered their time to help.

### **Archives Working Party**

Although the Archives Working Party has not yet met, work has started to preserve the Town Archive for the future. The Town Council offer their most grateful thanks to Penny Overton for becoming the Town Archivist, accommodating the storage and undertaking the sorting of Archive material passed on to the Town Council following the death of former Town Archivist Mr Dick Stickland, who over the years had collected large volumes of documents and artifacts for the town. Further material has been given over to the Town Council, some from individuals, and from the closing down of the Hingham Society and Hingham History Centre.

Penny has been able to share some of the historical photographs on social media, which has generated a lot of interest, and it is the long-term aim of the Town Council to be able to make archive material accessible to the community (and beyond) via digital formatting. It is an aspiration to have a permanent home within Hingham for the archives and it is envisaged that this could be within a Community Hub type building.

The Working Party when their work gets underway, will initially concentrate on sorting, collating and cataloguing the archive material, and investigating ways to ensure the future of the Archive for the town and community.

### **Highways, Transport and Environment (HTE) Working Party**

The HTE Working Party first met in December 2023, and have continued to meet on a monthly basis. The Working Party have been working through the 'Fairland Crossroads/Parking/Market Place crossing point Feasibility Study' written by Norfolk County Council, to assess which of the schemes and recommendations could provide practical solutions for Hingham to become less congested with parked cars and safer for pedestrians and drivers, and considering if the Norfolk County Council recommended preferred option would produce the best outcome.

As parking congestion issues remains a continued source of concern raised from the community, this has been the primary focus of the group. The Working party has designed a brief survey to be delivered to all households and businesses in Hingham, to gather data on how residents and businesses are affected by parking and other highway issues. The feed back from this survey will be crucial to the next stage of pursuing any road safety improvements with Norfolk County Council. It is hoped that the Working Party will meet with NCC highway safety officers in early May .

In addition to this, the Working Party are gathering data on road traffic accidents/incidents within the parish to use as an evidence base to pursue improvements with Norfolk County Council. Information regarding such accidents/incidents can be emailed to the Working Party via email [hinghamtc@hotmail.com](mailto:hinghamtc@hotmail.com) PERSONAL INFORMATION IS NOT REQUIRED, only incident facts such as location/time/date/incident type/emergency vehicles in attendance. As yet, Norfolk County Council have not committed finances to any road safety/parking scheme, however by gathering evidence it is hoped that the Working Party and Town Council will be better placed to pursue such improvements with Norfolk County Council.

## **HINGHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

It has been a very busy year for the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Grant funding was secured to help fund and progress the Neighbourhood Plan project. With the help of the Consultants, the Steering Group completed writing the Neighbourhood Plan policies and supporting text to produce the Draft Hingham Neighbourhood Plan, which was put to public consultation from 03 July to 25 August 2023 (regulation 14 consultation).

There was a good response rate to the consultation, with responses from statutory consultees, interested parties and (68) individuals. The comments on the draft plan were considered by the Steering Group over a series of long meetings between October and December, and the Steering Group made any changes they considered necessary based on the feedback received (working within the legal framework of what can and cannot be a consideration within a Neighbourhood Plan). The Consultants finalised the Neighbourhood Plan and associated documents, ensuring that the formatting complied with Website Accessibility requirements.

Hingham Town Council considered and agreed The Neighbourhood Plan for submission for examination at their meeting on 06 February 2024, and the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to South Norfolk Council on 15 February 2024 for independent examination. The examination process may result in modifications to the plan being required, before the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan can be put to a referendum.

South Norfolk Council have accepted the submission and have given the approximate timescales for the next stages of the Neighbourhood Plan, as follows:

- Hingham Neighbourhood Plan to go to Cabinet for consideration – April 2024
- Reg 16 consultation (to be run over 6 weeks) – May-June 2024
- Independent Examination – July/August 2024
- Consideration by Cabinet – September/October 2024
- It is expected that a referendum could potentially be held towards the end of 2024.

We very much encourage residents to vote positively for our Neighbourhood Plan, so that it will become part of the statutory development plan for the area. Having a Neighbourhood Plan in place will generate more Community Infrastructure Levy money for the parish (this is payable by developers, when development takes place within the Parish). Community Infrastructure Levy is an essential funding stream for the Town Council to support improvements to the Town's community facilities. Previously it has been used to pay for the resurfacing of the access drive to the Lincoln Hall, resurfacing of the skate park, provision of a footway in the Market Place, improvements to Public Right of Way, sewer improvements at the Sports centre and improved heating and windows at the Bowls Club. Community Infrastructure Levy will only be paid at a higher rate if the Neighbourhood Plan is voted for positively in the referendum and the community vote is a majority to adopt the plan.

**The Town Council would like to pass on its sincere thanks to all members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for all their time and hard work in producing the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan.**



## HINGHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Since our last report to the Town Council, the school has continued to go from strength to strength.

The last year has been full of excitement, events and academic achievement.

The academic progress of our children, with the support of our excellent teachers and teaching assistants, has led to good results. The children achieved well and made excellent progress. In summer 2023, Year 6 results were excellent - well above national average in reading and maths - meaning that our children went off to their secondary schools ready and prepared for their next step.

We enjoyed some very special events over the last year.

Our Year 5 class became stars as they met Prince William at the Royal Norfolk Show. He came over and chatted with the children. The group were then posted on the Royal social media accounts and on local news outlets! The Royal Norfolk Show has become a recent tradition for Key stage 2. This enables the children to connect with and gain understanding of the heritage of our farming community and all the strands of life in modern Norfolk.

Other trips and visits took place to Pensthorpe, Time and Tide, Gressenhall, Crucial Crew, Theatre Royal, Norfolk Lakes and Gorleston Beach alongside local trips around the town. We had visits from an author, Water Aid, RSPCA and Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

We have some regular opportunities available to enhance the curriculum including weekly visits from Hallie the therapy dog and Forest School. Forest School is something that, as an "outdoorsy" school, we feel is a vital part of our school provision. For some children this is the time they shine developing independence and confidence.

Our children have lots of opportunities to develop their artistic talents too. We have held 2 art competitions over the last year supported by Harrods of Hingham Art Gallery and their artists. The children have experienced what it is like to be a professional artist with their art on display in the gallery.

At Christmas, with the support of St Andrew's Church we enjoyed a fabulous Nativity play with our youngest children taking the star roles and the whole school supporting as choir. In the summer term, our 2 oldest classes performed "Matilda" to a packed Sports Hall. The children were exceptional, singing and acting with confidence and skill. We look forward to this year's performance of "Oliver".

We like to be part of our community and this year we have sung at Hasingham House and for the Luncheon club Christmas meal and made Christmas decorations for the Community tree on the Fairland. We celebrated the Coronation with a picnic and dress up day.

The Friends of Hingham School continue to support us to achieve our aims for the children. Their fund raising and event coordinating enrich the children's experiences daily with provision of technology, toys and games, events, books and coaches for trips. Their Easter Egg hunt has just taken place and is a whole community event. We are looking forward to our Summer Festival event in July. We can not thank them enough for their contributions of time, energy and enthusiasm.

Ofsted inspected our school in July 2023. We were delighted with the result which reflected the hard work and commitment of the staff, the team work with the families and the achievements of our amazing children. The full report can be seen [here](#).

Below are some snapshot statements from the report...

"Pupil behaviour is good in class and around school."

"Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school."

"Teachers have high expectations for all pupils' achievement in lessons."

"Staff are proud to work at the school."

...but my favourite line is the first one: "Pupils love their school."

Thank you to all those who contribute to school life as volunteers, employees and governors. It makes it a lovely and productive place to be.

**HINGHAM COMMUNITY CUPBOARD ANNUAL REPORT: 31 MARCH 2023-1 APRIL 2024**

reg Charity no. 1206704

**History**

It all began in September 2022, when the founder, Lilith Oakley, started collecting food donations for local families in need and leaving them in a disused phone box outside Copper Lane Church. Since then we have moved into the foyer of the Sports Hall at Watton Rd, Hingham and open weekly. We opened a bank account on 31 March 2023 and completed registration with the Charity Commission on 24 January 2024. We have received overwhelming support from many local individuals and businesses, and successfully applied for a number of grants to improve our provision.

**Achievements**

In the last year we have supplied regular food parcels to people who, for a number of reasons, are unable to buy sufficient food to feed themselves or their families. Some of these are families rehomed in safe housing after leaving abusive relationships, others are affected by illness, bereavement, loss of/reduced employment hours, relationship breakdown or simply the cost of living increases. Most individuals supported by us face multiple challenges. Since the beginning of August 2023, we have distributed 333 food parcels comprising non-perishable and fresh goods. In addition, we provided 18 Christmas hampers comprising a meat box, fresh vegetables and fruit and Christmas treats. We have supported 31 different households including 39 children. As well as our Christmas hampers and regular food provision, we provided "Breakfast like a King" hampers for Coronation Weekend and Summer Lunchbox hampers for the 6 weeks school holiday. Since January we have provided weekly fresh fruit & vegetable hampers courtesy of the Winter Pressures Grant provided by the District Council, and also given two £25 meat vouchers to each family we support, funded by the Household Support Grant, Round 5 given by Norfolk Community Foundation.

We are much more than a food bank, we are a small and personalised local service. We are able to support individual needs and provide social support, signposting and suggestions with compassion and a lack of judgement.

**Going forward**

This year we intend to increase our outreach work with the aim of raising awareness of our service and reducing the stigma attached to food poverty. We will continue to build relationships with other agencies to ensure all our customers are in receipt of all available support to help them move towards independence where possible. We will continue fundraising and seeking grant support to ensure nutritious, fresh food is available to those who cannot afford to buy it for themselves.

**Finances****Income**

Grants £4671.77 (Hingham Town Council Small Grants (£1073.60, District Councillor member's fund £300, Winter Pressures Grant SNDC £1320, Household Support Fund round 5- Norfolk Community Foundation £750, Co-Op Community Funding £1228.17)

Local charitable organisation donations £1734.83: (Hingham Charity £700 to date, Thurrock & Payne £200, residual funds from Covid Emergency Packages £714.83, Santa's Grotto Ctee £120)

Donation boxes/fundraising £708.93

Personal or business donations £7044

**Expenditure**

Expenditure on food/household goods £9340.04

Expenditure on storage/stationary £285.19 (Member's grant applied)

Public Liability Insurance £336.47 (HTC Small grant applied)

Sign board at Sports hall £100 (£60 compensation from bank applied)

Bank charges £35

Our total income for this year : £14,159.53

Total expenditure for the period: £10,096.70

Balance as at year end £ 4062.83

Our reserve funds are in part ring fenced for Christmas Hamper/Winter holiday provision (£1300), also the final payment for the meat vouchers (£375). The remainder will be used to continue our fresh vegetable and fruit provision beyond the grant application period.

Providing food is our priority and this is reflected in our expenditure. This is only possible due to the generous support in terms of time, expertise and professional services provided by our many supporters and volunteers. Printing services, professional art work, branding advice, equipment, a place to operate from have all been provided free of charge. Our supporters are too numerous to mention individually, but they know who they are and we offer our sincere thanks for your kindness. Providing this service is hugely rewarding to the volunteers who see every week that we make a difference to those most in need of a helping hand.

Deb Hardy  
Secretary & trustee  
Hingham Community Cupboard  
[Hinghamcommunitycupboard@gmail.com](mailto:Hinghamcommunitycupboard@gmail.com)

### **LINCOLN SOCIAL CENTRE**

After many years of dedicated service Annette Seabrook has stepped down from her role at Lincoln Hall, she will be sorely missed and we wholeheartedly thank her for her hard work over the years.

Amanda Stevens has joined the committee as bookings secretary and bookings for the hall can be made through her by emailing [bookings@lincolnhallhingham.co.uk](mailto:bookings@lincolnhallhingham.co.uk) or by phone on 07493 743895.

Our new website [www.lincolnhallhingham.co.uk](http://www.lincolnhallhingham.co.uk) is now live but is still in its early stages, the bookings calendar is proving more difficult than we had imagined but we are hopeful we will have this added in the near future.

We have a variety of regular activities taking place throughout the week but there is space for more to fill some of the gaps. Weekends are available for birthday parties, weddings, dances etc.

If anyone is interested in joining the committee to help shape the future of Lincoln Hall then please get in touch.

### **HINGHAM LUNCH CLUB**

Hingham lunch club meets every first and third Thursday of each month. Around 30 local pensioners come to socialise and have lunch. We have a waiting list of 10 people hoping to join us .

Unfortunately, due to the hall not allowing us to buy and put in a dish washer we feel unable to accommodate more. The club is going well with many volunteers, Michael cooks wonderful lunches with drivers and helpers all giving up their time.

Chairman, Helen Gill

## HINGHAM AND HARDINGHAM ART CLUB

This year the club has continued to go from strength to strength in terms of popularity, success of exhibitions, and the personal artistic development of members. During the last year we have enjoyed the benefit of new members Mike Adams, Chrissie Bolton, Anne Bone and Kay Henderson. We have also enjoyed the new and interesting ideas presented to us by members who have a more experimental approach to their work.

Sadly Sheila Orford who was a founder member passed away in January as did Geoffrey Copeman. Geoff Young who was also a very long standing member passed away at the end of February. They will be remembered at our annual exhibition in November where some of their work will be displayed and some will be available to buy.

With the efforts of our membership secretary Cate Aspinall, we have reduced the waiting list for the club from 12 to 6. We now have 25 full members and 10 associate members. It is impossible to predict how many members will turn up each week and although we sometimes run out of small tables we always manage to fit everyone in.

On the first Tuesday of the month we are treated to a clothed model to paint or draw and there are often inspiring still life arrangements on the third Tuesday. These 'themed' weeks offer a focus to members and are popular, but some people prefer to continue with their own work or do a mixture of both. There is always a whole range of materials and styles displayed by members and we learn so much from one another at club. To capitalise on this learning process, some of our members have agreed to teach 'in house' courses. So far we have had printing with Deborah Hallam which will be repeated this year because of its popularity. Christine Wright has shown us how to use mixed media to develop our skills with still life (cups, jugs and fruit). This year Christine is offering a course on doing a self-portrait which we are looking forward to. Stef Max who used to teach art has been an inspiration to us all and has helped us to get texture into our work and have a more abstract approach to subject matter in a course she gave in February. These courses have been a great success and will be continued this year.

We also have courses from outside tutors and Kay Barker was with us last year talking about composition and will be teaching courses in April and September of this year. It is always so nice to get out and paint plein air in the month of August.

The weather wasn't quite as good as it had been for the past 2 years but all visits went ahead and there were some lovely days especially at Gooderstone Water gardens and the ones based at members' houses Annie Neave in the centre of Wymondham and Tracy Shallom's garden near Mattishall. The ancient Church of St Mary's at Houghton on the Hill with its medieval paintings and lovely aspect was also a wonderful way to start the August break and many thanks go to Kate Wolstenholme for allowing us to come and paint her lovely house and gardens at College Farm, Thompson.

It is always a pleasure to be reminded of these special visits at the annual exhibition in November, held at Lincoln's Hall, Hingham, last year we sold more than ever and members pull together and all contribute to make the event a very enjoyable occasion for all. The exhibition continues to attract supporters locally and from further afield and everyone seems to enjoy the celebratory atmosphere of the display. We were also visited by both Geoff Young and Sheila Orford as well as other past and life members.

The club continues to exhibit at Harrods of Hingham, which is an excellent community gallery. Thanks to Emily for giving us exhibition space and to Alison, Cate and Deborah for their support with Harrods. Monica continues to oversee the display at the doctor's surgery and Hassingham House so many thanks to her. We also had a successful exhibition at the Dragonfly gallery in Watton at the end of June last year. This was introduced with a private view that made use of the community gardens that are part of the gallery site. The display looked lovely, and an exhibition will be repeated this year during the first two weeks of July.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the committee and all members for making the club such an fulfilling place to do art and all the work that takes place behind the scenes keeping us on our toes and everything running smoothly. This is especially true of our treasurer Mike who is a great support and Christine our deputy chair who deals with all the publicity and continues to inspire us. We are continuing to share the catering for events

such as the Christmas Party and for this year's AGM which was a great success as we have some brilliant cooks in the club.

We are truly blessed with such a talented group of people who are so generous of their time and enthusiasm. It makes my job both easy and enjoyable. We also thank everyone in the community who continue to support the artistic endeavours of our club and its members. (Ann Reid Chair - April 2024)

### **HINGHAM GARDENING CLUB**

2023 was a fairly quiet year. We started in January with a hello and welcome to the club meeting but not many people turned up.

May found us walking along the back of the Fairland green and in the churchyard then sheltering in the church porch with Ingrid Sykes to see what grows there that can be used for cosmetics. The weather wasn't very good but we found a few bits that could be used. Then we came back to the Hall for a cuppa and a chat.

June saw the return of Pauline Harper to show us what we could compost. She had lots of pictures and a board which we stuck them on showing if we could or couldn't compost.

July it rained again while we were looking at the Dereham Road allotments to see what was growing.

September saw the return of Dr Ian Bedford a retired research entomologist from the John Innes Institute. He gave us a talk and virtual tour of his garden to show how we can use our home gardens to HELP IN BRITAIN'S NATURE RECOVERY PLAN.

In October Richard Clark of Panache Plants gave us a talk on Hardy Exotics. He spent the whole evening talking about the plants on his slides but didn't refer to notes even once. He really knows his subject.

November was back to the AGM but unfortunately there were not many members present. A few ideas were given about topics for this year and in May we have Pauline Harper coming back to talk about vegetables for the kitchen. Hopefully we may get a few more people at meetings or we might end up closing like Attleborough and Cromer gardening clubs.

If anyone has any requests for speakers or knows any speakers please let the club know.

Carolyn Edwards  
Secretary Hingham Gardening Club

### **1ST HINGHAM BROWNIES**

It has been a very good fun year for all of us at Hingham Brownies. All of our Brownies have had the opportunity to experience many adventures both within our weekly meetings and of course our weekend/holiday events too.

This year in January we had a great sleepover (not too much sleeping had) in February we again held a District Thinking Day event for all of our young members in Forehoe Girlguiding (celebrating with our friends across the world) and last month we ran our Easter Fayre, which was very successful. The girls loved running our stall which in addition to being great fun, it clearly helped develop their skills and we also raised a little money for our unit too, thank you to everyone who supported us.

Many of our young members have achieved some outstanding Girlguiding badge awards during the year and a few have now moved onto Guides after they reached 10 years of age. As a result, this does mean that we do currently have a few places for new Brownie members (aged between 7 and 10) and as always we would love to hear from anyone who is interested in being a volunteer helper within our unit.

Jayne Little (Brown Owl) email - [brownowl.jayne@gmail.com](mailto:brownowl.jayne@gmail.com) website - [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk)

## **ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, HINGHAM**

St Andrew's Church continues to thrive, although we are still in the process of recruiting a new vicar. Last year finally saw the installation of the toilets in the church, the upgrade to the church and the removal of some pews to create more community space. This project has been in the planning for 40 years. The new community space is now regularly used by our Messy Church and Paws for Coffee events.

Other fundraising events have now begun for the next project; to repair the Ringers Floor and Tower. We also continue with our St Andrew's Pantry and Wall of Kindness, supporting those in need with food and coats.

### **HERITAGE FUND ST ANDREW'S CHURCH HINGHAM CHARITY NUMBER 1071172**

Heritage Fund was formed many years ago to raise funds solely for the upkeep of the fabric of St. Andrew's church. Activities include a Cake Stall in the Market Place once a month from April to September (though we will be having a break from this for 2024), 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 replastering, 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 £98,000.

We always welcome new members and new ideas for fund raising. If you like to help us, join our Committee or take on the role of Chair, then please contact the Acting Chairman on 01953 850 369 or e-mail [trett@nnbus.co.uk](mailto:trett@nnbus.co.uk)

Peter Trett  
Acting Chairman

### **HINGHAM CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH 'AKA' COPPER LANE CHURCH**

Over the last twelve months, the most significant growth we have seen is in our mid week meetings.  
Mondays: Make and Mend. From 09:00 to 12:00 a number of ladies gather around their sewing machines and knitting needles share their know-how while mending clothes or assisting with various projects. It has been exciting to see members of the community, who have had no previous experience, now mending clothes and looking quite comfortable behind a sewing machine.

Thursdays: Toddlers Group. From 09:30 to 11:30 parents and carers enjoy a cup of coffee and a chat while their toddlers safely play.

Fridays: Friendly Space 10:00 to 11:00. We are extremely grateful for the grants that enabled us to keep the heating on during winter so that the good folk of Hingham can enjoy a good natter in a cosy environment. Numbers have steadily increased from 3 (after lockdown) to 30. There was a time when we had background music playing, but now there is so much chatting taking place that even if there was background music, it wouldn't be heard. All three of these meetings will continue during the summer months.

And obviously, we continue with our church services on Sunday mornings at 10:30 and online via zoom, on Thursday evenings at 7:00pm.

## HINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH

Throughout the year we have shared in Ecumenical Services with St. Andrew's Church and The Christian Fellowship Church. These include the Town Carol Service, also the Good Friday Service on the Market Place Green. Socialising over Tea/Coffee and Hot Cross Buns at our Church afterwards.

We also welcome the Congregation of St Andrew's Church, when they join with us for our annual Covenant Service each January.

### OUTREACH

This year we have again provided a 'warm space' over the colder months. Those attending our Soup Lunches, have been able to join with others, enjoying a hot meal and a bit of entertainment, on a monthly basis from October to March.

### COFFEE SHOPS

These are ongoing, providing a great opportunity for outreach. It is good to see folk enjoying coffee/tea and scones, chatting to friends and making new friends ! Browsing the stalls can be both interesting and enjoyable, a chance to pick up a bargain !!!

### OTHER EVENTS

- A DISPLAY of NATIVITY SETS  
Collected by Rev Jacqui Horton and Deacon Jen Woodfin.
- TALK, 'LIFE ON IONA' FOLLOWED BY CREAM TEAS.  
Again, this was by Rev Jacqui and Deacon Jen.
- AN AFTERNOON OF MUSIC & SONG, FOLLOWED BY CREAM TEAS.  
Annette, Susie and June provided the Music & Song.
- THOMAS SEMMENCE SINGS.  
The wonderful voice of Thomas Semmence, followed by Tea/Coffee and Cakes.

### FUND RAISING FOR THE TREE.

In May, we started a fund raising drive. We wanted to purchase a tree to be planted on the Market Place Green. This Tree would commemorate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. We raised the money through our raffles at Coffee Shop, and some generous donations. We owe thanks to our regular supporters for all the help and encouragement they have given us over the past year. A suitable tree has now been purchased. A PINK HAWTHORN. Thanks to our friendly Architectural Landscaper, for all his help and advice, the choosing of the tree and a trip to Barcham's Tree Nurseries in Cambridgeshire, in order to do this.

Thanks also go to Hingham Town Council for their donation towards the necessary sundries that are required for successful planting, aftercare and maintenance of the tree.

### THE PLANTING WILL TAKE PLACE ON WEDNESDAY 17TH APRIL 2pm IN THE MARKET PLACE.

Our Superintendent Minister Rev Jacqui Horton will do 'The Honours' !!

Rev Jacqui and Deacon Jen will be retiring in July. We will then have a new Superintendent Minister, Rev Derek Grimshaw who will have overall responsibility for the Central Norfolk Circuit comprising of 25 Chapels. The Minister for our section of the Circuit will be Rev Anne Richardson, who will be living in the Swaffham Manse, looking after our Methodist Church and 7 other Chapels.

We are rather 'thin on the ground' as far as Ministers and Local Preachers go. Because of this, it has been necessary for some members of the Churches to undertake the preparation and leading of services. Five of us from Hingham Chapel have attended a Certificated Course on 'Leading Worship', This enables us to take services when there is no Minister or Local Preacher available. This we have been doing for some time now, hopefully with good effect !!

We welcome all who would like to come and worship with us on a Sunday morning.

Our Services start at 10.30am, followed by Tea / Coffee and 'social chat'.

Heather Parle , Snr Steward, Hingham Methodist Church

## **HINGHAM RECTORY BOWLS CLUB**

Last season was a challenging one with only 33 playing members available for matches which meant some of the team captains were struggling for numbers and some bowlers playing two or three matches each week. We did manage to get a team through to the semi final of the county triples where they were unlucky to lose by just one point. Our greenkeeper and other volunteers have been busy over the winter months adding soil and seed to the green and it's looking in good condition for the coming season.

We have our green opening this Saturday, 20th April at 2pm, anyone is welcome to come along and try bowls, all you need is a pair of flat soled shoes, we can supply the bowls, the coaching and the bar will be open. More details can be found on our website [www.hinghamrectorybowlsclub.com](http://www.hinghamrectorybowlsclub.com) or our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/Hingham-Rectory-Bowls-Club-109265657321588](https://www.facebook.com/Hingham-Rectory-Bowls-Club-109265657321588)

## **HINGHAM SANTA'S GROTTTO**

December 2023 saw the arrival of a newly built Santa's Grotto on The Fairland and a revamped Cabin. Following the success of the Christmas 2023 Fun Day, which was quickly moved from the Fairland into Lincoln Hall because of the weather, it has been decided to hold the 2024 event indoors again. There will be singers and various activities for children, as well as our usual raffle and tombola.

The Santa's Grotto Committee are celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the Grotto this year in style with a Summer Fun Day for the children of Hingham, Hingham School and Nursey; whilst continuing to raise money for the maintenance of the Christmas display, public liability insurance, Christmas trees, decorations, lights, and presents from Santa.

2024 events:

- May 12th – Yard Sale around Hingham
- August 6th – Summer Fun Day at the Sports Centre
- September 14th – Yard Sale around Hingham
- November 3rd – Gift and Craft Fair in Lincoln Hall
- November 29th & 30th Santa's Grotto and Cabin set up on The Fairland
- December 7th – Santa Fun Day in Lincoln Hall
- Santa will also be travelling around Hingham in a Fire Engine once more, date to be confirmed.

## **HINGHAM & DISTRICT COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME - APRIL 2023 - MARCH 2024**

The Scheme is very well used and much appreciated by our community. From March 2023 to April 2024 we have:

Undertaken 1,698 journeys, which is 849 individuals taken to and from their medical appointments.

Covered 20,174 miles ; which is a significant uplift and reflects a wider range of medical locations than in previous years. Drivers are volunteers, They are paid the LA Mileage rate of 45p + 5p for a passenger = 50p per mile. Clients pay 25 pence a mile, at the time of the journey; HTC and SNDC pay the balance monthly direct into drivers bank accounts.

Current issues:

We have recently lost our last two "full time" drivers, one to retirement after driving for the scheme since it started, and one very sadly and suddenly died. Our remaining drivers are excellent, but not available every day due to other commitments, so we are seeking to increase the number of drivers to ensure we can cover every day to meet demand. This seems to reflect the increase in pension age and possibly economic pressures. The SNDC pay their contribution as a grant, in advance. This has remained the same since 2012 at £2,189. This year their "share" is £3,100, £902 more than we received. We appreciate that they cannot increase their contribution, so we are looking to increase the contribution of clients to mitigate the shortfall. (Clients consistently ask us to increase their charges, rather than risk losing the service.) A small working group is now looking at this, and will report to HTC soon.

Alison Lys , Scheme Co-ordinator



## **HINGHAM PLAYING FIELD ASSOCIATION REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 286060 ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2024**

The Trustees and committee of Hingham Playing Fields Association (HPFA) are delighted to present our annual report to Hingham town Council and the residents of Hingham.

The HPFA sports hall remains an invaluable resource in the town of Hingham, offering much needed sports facilities and activity classes for residents as well as plenty of open space for children and families, a cricket pitch and two football pitches, outdoor gym equipment, a play space, a skateboard park, and a large, grassed area for dog walkers.

Indoor facilities include badminton courts, pickleball courts, changing facilities and a viewing platform. In 23/24 the cost-of-living crisis had a significant impact on the running costs required to keep the facilities open. This has required careful budgetary management. Plans for 24/25 include completing grant applications to obtain funds to enable us to reduce our electricity costs and become more energy efficient. Other plans for 24/25 include fundraising to repair and replace our playground facilities which are becoming tired and challenging to safely maintain.

We have been delighted to welcome Hingham Community Cupboard Charity in making their home within our facility. We believe this has raised the profile of the charity and provides better support for families in need within our communities.

The HPFA remains home to a number of successful sports clubs such as cricket, football, tennis, table tennis, short mat bowls, pickleball, archery, judo, and badminton. Each of these clubs provide reports for the HPFA. Several of our sports clubs have expanded and the HPFA has become a regional centre. The HPFA is now the South Norfolk home of pickleball, the Judo club has started planning to host regional competitions and booking extra sessions at HPFA to give the players specialised competition training. The Hingham Bowmen (archery club) has been hosting tournaments and the Short Mat Bowls team will be running a national competition weekend in October. The table tennis team have entered a team to play in The Wymondham Summer League and will shortly be adding additional sessions to their weekly timetable.

The committee have installed a new board at the entrance to the HPFA facilities, sponsored by several of our sports clubs and our partner in the sports centre, Abrahams Bar and Clubhouse.

We continue to work very closely with Abrahams Bar and Clubhouse and Apollo events to provide a range of family friendly and seasonal activities to entertain and bring people together.

We now submit this report to Hingham Town Council and residents of Hingham for their information and approval.

The Trustees and committee of HPFA.

### **HINGHAM TABLE TENNIS**

Table tennis sessions have now been running for around 18 months and we regularly get 12-14 participants every Tuesday evening.

In addition we did successfully enter a team into the Division 1 Wymondham League from last September ( we have one more match left), and have also entered a team into the Summer League starting in May.

It is possible that for next season starting in September, we may be able to enter two teams, proving how popular the game is!

## **WYMONDHAM JUDO CLUB (HELD AT HINGHAM SPORTS HALL)**

Wymondham Judo Club continues to run classes for children and adults on Monday evenings at Hingham Sports Hall.

In October '23 we hosted a successful judo tournament for children and adults from invited local clubs, and this year we hope to build on that success and open this competition up to all regional judo clubs for 2024.

Our judo players continue to have success further afield at local, national, and international competitions.

Our classes are almost at capacity so if you're interested in joining us then get in touch soon via email to [wymondhamjudo@gmail.com](mailto:wymondhamjudo@gmail.com)

## **HINGHAM PICKLEBALL**

Pickleball in Hingham has taken off in the past year. We started playing in the Hingham Sports hall in 2018 supported by Hingham Tennis. Post Covid new players have come in from all backgrounds to this relatively new sport (founded in the USA in the 1960's) which has recently exploded in popularity across the UK with Norfolk having a strong cohort of players, including some top players in Europe.

The beauty of the game is it's easy to get playing but a challenge to master so it has something for everyone. With numbers increasing we decided to set up a separate club- Hingham Pickleball was therefore founded last summer. Since then, we have continued to grow and currently have 88 paid up full members and over 100 players in total. We have expanded the number of regular sessions to 4 per week but are looking to increase this further to cope with the continued demand.

All our current sessions are full and we are having to turn players away. We have held additional weekend coach led sessions and have held several tournaments, including inter-club tournaments with other clubs in the region.

## **HINGHAM TENNIS**

Hingham Tennis is now approaching its 8th year, and our membership numbers remain strong. We run several social and cardio sessions weekly, and there is something for everyone of all abilities to enjoy. Our junior groups are up and running for this year and we have good numbers of new players/families starting tennis. Links to book can be found on the Hingham Tennis website.

We have weekly group beginner sessions which is a good place to learn some technique and tactics. Our main focus recently has been to replace our existing flood lights with LED's. Tim, one of our committee members, has worked hard to get planning permission and to research specialist companies to provide quotes for the work. We are hoping to finalize this soon and have our new lights up and running for the coming autumn/winter. We are looking forward to an active summer of tennis and competitions for all to enjoy.

Sue - Membership Secretary

## **HINGHAM SHORT MAT BOWLS**

This September will see that Hingham Short Mat Bowls will have been running for 34 years being started by Bob Lister and friends in September of 1990. We are a friendly club and at present we have 49 members. We have roll ups on Monday and Wednesday afternoons and on Thursday evenings. At the moment we have the Friendly Afternoon League playing throughout the year with a winter and summer leagues with various clubs which is enjoyed by many new members. In September is the start of the Breckland and South Norfolk Leagues which run though to March 2025. We have various inter club matches and fun days throughout the year.

We would welcome new members young and old to come along to our Wednesday roll ups.

## **HINGHAM BOWMEN**

It's been another busy year for the club. The indoor season is just coming to a close, and we are now looking forward to the outdoor season and hoping for some dry warm weather.

In February we hosted the Norfolk Archery Association Indoor Championships, places sold out for all three sessions within 48 hours, fortunately we were able to hire the sports hall on the Saturday evening so we could have an extra session for those who were unable to get a place on the Sunday. Four sessions were a first for the Norfolk Indoor Championships and goes to show how keen archers are to enter competitions. March was the End of Season competition we hold most years and was also very well attended by archers from all over Norfolk.

Two beginners' courses have been held over the last year, with a high percentage of the beginners joining the club at the end of the course, becoming enthusiastic members.

We were asked again to run the archery at Hautbois Activity Centre family fun weekend in May. Both days were sold out, we enabled about 900 children and adults to have a go at archery over the 2 days. In September we ran another Have a Go at Great Ellingham school fete.

Members have been travelling all over the country to competitions with great success.

Clare Stimson, Club Secretary  
[hinghambowmensecretary@gmail.com](mailto:hinghambowmensecretary@gmail.com)

## **HINGHAM CHARITY**

Hingham Charity is donating to the Community Cupboard to help our community. The Mill Farm allotments are also doing well, although we have some vacant plots.

## HINGHAM AND DEOPHAM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR – JOSH WOOLLISCROFT

I would first like to take this opportunity to thank Yvonne Bendle for her 12 years of service as the Councillor for Hingham and Deopham. Yvonne was a great help to me during the election and gave me a real insight into the pleasure of representing the community I live in. I was lucky enough to see her appointed an Honorary Alderman of South Norfolk at the end of last year and I'm sure the whole community will join me in wishing her well in her retirement.

I would like to also extend my thanks to the whole of Hingham Town Council who have been so welcoming and generous in helping me. Whilst Hingham is a town, it is a small one, and it is testament to hard work and dedicated service of the volunteer councillors, and Ali the clerk, that we can punch above our weight. The achievement of the Neighbourhood Plan, the considerable efforts on parking, the work on traffic and the other myriad support for residents speaks to the dedication of the volunteers and staff. I believe that as we head into the next 12-months we have a great opportunity to all work together for the good of the community.

Finally, I would like to recognise what a special place Hingham is and that is thanks largely to the sometimes small, but always dedicated, groups of volunteers who help to ensure that our town is as vibrant and dynamic as it is. We are lucky to have them, they always need our support and I hope the whole community recognises the work that the Community Cupboard, the Playing Fields Association and a many others do in our town.

I was elected in May 2023 with a little over 50% of the vote of the people of Hingham and Deopham, taking over from Yvonne after her service of 12 years. In June I was appointed chair of the Stronger Greener Economy Policy Committee, to the Board of South Norfolk Council and the Greater Norwich Development Plan Board.

The past year has seen a continuation of the cost-of-living crisis for many of our families and South Norfolk has not been immune to the challenges that other councils have faced, however, thanks to starting in a more secure financial position we have managed to maintain a budget surplus and continue to be a council which does things. Whilst, sadly, council taxes have gone up this year we have been able to expand support for individuals and families who need help. We have been able to increase our spending power on capital programmes and community support by 5.62%.

This year working with across the parties of the South Norfolk Council we were able to secure a budget with input from Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat colleagues – this was very much a joint effort. Some of the measures include:

- £145,548 to top up to £1 million to support leisure provision in the district – a non-statutory service
- £355,000 to double the Household Support Fund
- £100,000 to retain our ditch walker – and if anyone in Hingham has concerns about this please get in touch
- £70,000 into a reserve for additional planning resource
- An additional £100,000 into the Community Action Fund and increasing the maximum grant to £20,000
- £100 million capital investment programme to improve infrastructure and services over the next 4 years

In addition to the financial aspect of the council's activities we have also approved the Greater Norwich Development Plan, protecting the district from speculative applications. We have also created Norfolk Environmental Credits which will mitigate the pressure that has been put on areas not covered by Nutrient Neutrality. The council has now relocated to the Horizon Centre, saving tax payers a significant amount of money and providing a safer and more modern working environment for our staff.

On a local level I have been able to support our local community on everything from potholes to planning and lots in between. I have been happy to use my Member Grant to provide:

- £300 for the Hingham Community Cupboard
- £700 for the Hingham Playing Fields Association

The new funding kicks in in May, so I would ask any community group to reach out if they would like to discuss how the grant could help them. As a reminder it is £1000 and must be used for a sustainable purpose, that is to say not to cover day to day running costs or to fund an event or similar.

As we look ahead there is a lot of work to do. The Hingham Neighbourhood Plan has now been submitted to South Norfolk, we will likely have a referendum this year and if passed I look forward to proposing it to South Norfolk Council to approve. The on-going work on Lady's Meadow continues and I will support the Town Council where I can.

With the approval of the Local Plan, we will expect to see a new planning application for the town arriving soon. I know that many people do not welcome this, but with the inclusion of the site in the Local Plan it will be coming. As your elected member, working with colleagues on the Town Council, it is vital that we ensure we get as much benefit from this application as we can and that it enhances the built environment of our town.

Please accept my apologies for not being able to present this in person and if any resident wishes to discuss the above or any other issue, please contact me on 07590466648 or

[Josh.Woolliscroft@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:Josh.Woolliscroft@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

## NCC ANNUAL REPORT FOR PARISH MEETINGS

### Council Tax

NCC agreed a Council Tax increase of 4.99% (that is 2.99% for general services and 2% increase for Adult Social Services). Overall the budget will provide an extra £60million for Adult Social Services and £35 million extra for Children's Services. This is necessary because the demand on these services increases every year. The Rise Up children's mental health and wellbeing programme supported over 10,000 children in its first year.

### Devolution

The Council also agreed to accept the £600 million, (over 30 years), Devolution Deal offered by the Government. This will ensure we have extra funding and the power to decide how it should be spent. The deal will include having a Directly Elected Leader who will be elected in May 2025.

### Highways

Twenty-seven new gritters have been purchased to help keep the main roads safe during the winter months. The service has been working hard dealing with the results of the flooding as well as the usual potholes etc. This year there were 118 bids for Parish Partnership funding. NCC is helping all of them. The joint investment in these schemes will total £1,040,586. Generally contributions are 50/50 but very small parish councils only have to contribute 25%.

### Flooding

The Leader and the Chairman of the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance went to London to lobby ministers for more funding to stop flooding because Norfolk is the 10th most at risk of surface water flooding, out of 149 authority areas. The discussion also included how to capture the excess water for use in times of drought during the hot summer months, and extra support needed for coastal erosion as Norfolk has one of the fastest eroding coastlines.

### Bus Services

Norfolk received funding from the Department of Transport to improve local bus services. As well as providing extra buses the plan is to expand some routes and increase the frequency of services on key routes. Bus fares have been kept low and from February 1st people holding a disabled concessionary travel pass have been able to travel free of charge at any time. Previously they were only allowed to travel free at off peak times.

### Waste disposal

Until the beginning of this year people had to pay to dispose of DIY construction and demolition waste. From this year waste from small scale projects in up to 100 litre bags can be disposed of free of charge. This is limited to four visits to a tip within four weeks. Traders must continue to pay for all waste disposal.

### Environment

As part of the aim to plant one million trees over five years to help reduce carbon emissions in the area the council has also been growing trees at Gressenhall to sell to other organisations. Last May the council also adopted a Climate strategy which includes retrofitting our buildings, sustainable transport and developing a green economy. The Council is also preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and is one of 48 local authorities working with the Government on supporting nature.

### Public Health

The Council's Public Health Strategic Plan commits to delivering a new programme of tobacco control and Stop Smoking initiatives to help people stop smoking and create smoke free environments. Although E-cigarettes (vaping) is a useful tool to help people stop smoking they are not good for adults or children who have never smoked. It is illegal to sell vapes to under 18s and the council has been working with schools on preventing children from taking up vaping and providing guidance on dealing with vaping incidents.

### Adult Education

The Adult Learning Service was rated 'Good' following it's Ofsted inspection. One third of courses are now provided on line to cater for people unable to travel to them. The Construction Centre on the edge of Norwich is doing well and there will be Adult Learning Centres in the new Community Hubs being developed in Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth.

**Fire Service**

The Fire Service was also rated 'Good' after it's HMI inspection. It has worked hard dealing with wild fires and flooding as well as other incidents over the last year. They also do a lot of prevention and protection work, advising people on how to keep their homes and businesses safe from fire.

**Libraries**

As well as providing books, information and free internet access our libraries also provide a variety of activities for all ages, from Bounce and Rhyme for babies to Knit and Natter for older people plus a warm space in which to meet. The Summer Reading Scheme for school aged children took place as usual as did the Holiday Playschemes. Norfolk County Council continues to provide a wide range of services to support adults, children, businesses and organisation.

Margaret Dewsbury