

# Hockering Parish Council

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**MINUTES** of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at the Village Hall, Hockering.

**Cllrs Present at the Meeting:** J Blackwell (Chair), G Bambridge, P Cocker, B Higgins, P McIntee and R Neave

**Also Present:** Parish Clerk

1. **Welcome. To receive apologies for absence** – all councillors were present.
2. **To receive any declarations of interest** – Cllr McIntee declared that as he is on the FoHPS committee, he would not vote on any financial matter concerning the Primary School. Cllr Bambridge declared an interest if there were discussions concerning the call for sites for building development in Hockering.
3. **To approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 13th May 2025 together with Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting** – having previously been circulated to all councillors, Cllr McIntee proposed, and Cllr Higgins seconded that both sets of Minutes be approved and signed. All agreed.
4. **To receive County/District Councillor reports** – A written report had been received from County Councillor Bill Borrett which is attached to these minutes. District Councillor Bambridge said that he did not have any updates to report on following his report which had been attached to the minutes of the May meeting.
5. **To receive updates from:**
  - a) **Village Hall** – The Parish Council has purchased a 10" x 12" size portrait of The King, at a cost of £115, and Cllr Cocker will arrange for it to be framed when it is received so that it can be hung in the Village Hall.
  - b) **Village Church** – She stated that the Parish Share required for the 5 local churches has been increased from £72,000 to £90,000 pa and that payments to the Mattishall Church Clerk will be increased to take account of all the work she does for the group of 5 local churches. Cllr Bambridge said that he is appalled that the Church of England has increased the burden on local churches in this rural and generally poorly-paid area. Cllr Neave confirmed that Rev Sally will be retiring in August which will leave 3 lay readers to arrange services. It had been agreed that the Coffee Mornings will continue until Christmas. Cllr Neave said that other local churches try to support the coffee mornings, but it is generally down to just two members to buy the Tombola prizes and help out serving refreshments in the kitchen. Cllr Bambridge said that if at the end of the year it was decided that the Coffee Mornings could no longer be arranged by members of the Church, then the Parish Council should consider taking over the running of the Coffee Mornings as they are very popular events for the village.
  - c) **Primary School/Friends of Hockering Primary School** – Cllr McIntee reported that the FoHPS are arranging for the pupils to paint a mug for Fathers' Day and if packaging is needed then a donation would be welcomed. Plans are well in hand for the Village Fete on the 18<sup>th</sup> August and Cllr Bambridge confirmed that if the FoHPS contact Breckland Council in good time they will be able to supply equipment and arrange to collect rubbish on the Monday after the Village Fete. The FoHPS Committee had asked if the Parish Council could make a donation to fund overheads, such as First Aid, hire of Bouncy Castles and hire of the Village Hall. These costs amounted to approximately £600 and all councillors agreed that this amount could be donated. A Grant Request Form is to be sent to the FoHPS Committee for them to fill in. It was noted that the charge for hiring the Village Hall had been

increased from £35 last year to £120 this year and councillors agreed that the Village Hall be contacted to express their disappointment that this huge increase had been requested. It had been suggested that the Parish Council would be willing to help FoHPS to run Bingo sessions in the village again to raise funds and these could start in September after the summer holidays. Enquiries will be made to ensure that the preferred day of the week – a Saturday – did not clash with events at the local Public House and that the Village Hall would be available. It might be possible to hold the Bingo sessions on the same day as the Coffee Mornings, but timings could be an issue.

- 6. Open Forum for Public Participation** – The matter of the state of the Playing Field was raised as it is overgrown, with lots of rubbish and uncollected dog mess. The Parish Council are trying to obtain information on the management of the Playing Field, the Football Club and the Pavilion, as the personnel responsible for these organisations has changed recently and it is difficult to obtain information from the Charity Commission or Companies' House on who should be contacted. The Playing Field should be an important asset run for the benefit of the village, and every effort will be made to try and sort out who should be responsible for the running of these organisations.

**7. To receive updates on the following Working Parties:**

- a) **Neighbourhood Plan** – Cllr McIntee has kindly offered to take an interest in creating a Neighbourhood Plan for Hockering. He asked that Cllr Blackwell provide him with Terms of Reference to cover his research into Neighbourhood Plans which had been produced by other Parish Councils. Breckland District Council are producing a Local Plan which covers this area, and any villages which have a Neighbourhood Plan would be in a better position to have their views taken into account in the Local Plan with regard to possible sites for future building development and other such matters. Even if a Neighbourhood Plan is incomplete, the District Council are more likely to take into account the views of a Parish where a Plan is in process. All councillors agreed that they were happy for Cllr McIntee to be paid expenses to visit other parishes to investigate what needs doing to put a Neighbourhood Plan for Hockering in place and he was asked to keep a note of all time spent as this may be important if we form a joint neighbourhood plan with an adjoining parish council. It was pointed out that as both Hockering and North Tuddenham will be bypassed by the improvements to the A47, these villages will be targets for future building development plans as they are close to Norwich and Dereham and will have an improved road infrastructure in place. Therefore it is important that Hockering's views are put forward to the District Council to ensure the best outcome for Hockering residents.
- b) **Play Area** – The annual RoSPA inspection will take place shortly and it is anticipated that there will be several issues with regard to the safety and poor state of the equipment. This matter, and the possible costs of repairs will be discussed at the next meeting.

**8. To discuss the following:**

- a) **Purchase of Village Noticeboard** – Cllr Bambridge had forwarded details of a local company who could provide a suitable noticeboard to go alongside the bus shelter and when quotes are received these will be forwarded to all councillors.

**9. Highway Matters:**

- a) Cllr Blackwell had written a letter to the A47 contractors, Galliford Try, National Highways and First Bus expressing the Parish Council's concerns regarding the recent closure of The Street, Hockering. In particular the lack of adequate signage of the diversion, the fact that the bus stop had been moved to the A47 which meant that residents had to cross a very busy road to access bus stops and there was no signage warning drivers that pedestrians would be crossing the road. It was suggested that any future changes to the road system through Hockering should be adequately signed, a reduced speed limit on this section of the A47 be put in place and prominent signs be erected warning drivers of elderly pedestrians crossing before the junction on each approach.
- b) It was also noted that advance warning had been received that the entrance to Wood Lane from the A47 would be closed for three months starting in October and Cllr Bill Borrett will be contacted to act on our behalf to ensure that any diversion route does not mean that HGVs will be directed through Hockering, along Heath Road to rejoin the B1535. This road is a designated Lorry Route between the A47 Norwich to Dereham and the A1067 Norwich to Fakenham and concerns were expressed that local 'rat-runs' will be used whilst this long period of closure and disruption is in place, causing increased traffic through Hockering.

- 10. Gov.Uk Email Addresses for Councillors** – this will be discussed at the next meeting.
- 11. Correspondence for circulation** – all relevant correspondence had been circulated to councillors and dealt with.
- 12. Planning Matters** –
- a) An Application had been received, PL/2025/0777/VAR, concerning the Proposal: Variation of condition 2 on pp 3PL/2020/1445/HOU - changes to design of extension (windows/doors) at Site: Six Acres Stone Road, Hockering. All councillors were in favour of this application.
  - b) No planning decisions/appeals had been received since the last meeting.
- 13. Finance & Governance Matters**
- a) **To approve the following payments and note Bank Balance** – The payments for May had been circulated and were approved by all, following a proposal by Cllr Higgins, seconded by Cllr Bambridge.

PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL IN APRIL: THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK COMMUNITY ACCOUNT				
BALANCE AS AT 13.05.25			£24,233.36	
PAY TYPE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL AMOUNT	VAT
BACS	M Ridgwell	May Salary & Exps	297.60	
BACS	HMRC	PAYE to Period 02	71.20	
BACS	Norfolk PTS	Training for P Cocker	72.00	
BACS	Royal Images	Portrait of The King (pd by MR)	115.20	
		Less	556.00	
BALANCE C/FWD 10.06.25			£23,677.36	

- 14. To receive any new items for the next agenda** – To progress and receive updates on matters raised above.
- 15. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council** – This will be on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.17pm

Signed .....

**Cllr Bill Borrett**  
**Parish report for the Elmham and Mattishall Division**  
**June 2025**

I am not starting with Devolution and Local Government Reform this month, but there will be a lot to share next month when all the options are out in the open for you to see.

**Norfolk County Council waives fees for street parties to celebrate VJ Day anniversary**

This year marks the 80th anniversary of VJ Day on 15<sup>th</sup> August and Norfolk County Council is excited to offer communities the opportunity to host road closures for celebrations, completely free of charge.

This anniversary provides a special moment for reflection, celebration, and a chance for the nation to unite in honouring and paying tribute to those who lived through and served during the Second World War. VJ Day signifies Japan's surrender, officially ending the war.

Norfolk communities can join in the national celebrations by hosting their own street parties on the following dates: VJ80 from Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August to Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2025. Street parties are a wonderful way for neighbours to come together and mark this significant occasion.

To support these celebrations, Norfolk County Council is offering a fee waiver for road closures intended solely for street parties in residential areas. It's a fantastic opportunity for local communities to come together and celebrate these important milestones without the worry of extra costs.

The deadline for applications is as follows:

- VJ80 - Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025

**[Find out more about Street Parties for the 80th Anniversary of Victory over Japan \(VJ80\).](#)**

**Consultation launches on plan to boost Norfolk's Nature Recovery**

Norfolk County Council is inviting residents, landowners, conservation specialists, and local communities to participate in the public consultation for Norfolk's draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

Running until 11th June, this consultation offers an opportunity to provide feedback on the priorities and actions for restoring and enhancing nature across the county.

While Norfolk is home to a rich variety of species and natural spaces, many of these are isolated and fragmented. The LNRS aims to reverse biodiversity loss, support climate adaptation, and encourage sustainable land use to benefit both people and wildlife.

As one of 48 Local Nature Recovery Strategies across the country, Norfolk's strategy focuses on addressing nature's decline and identifying key areas for recovery. The draft has been developed with input from local authorities, nature experts, farmers, land managers, and Norfolk residents.

People are encouraged to review the [Local Habitat Map](#), draft LNRS, and FAQs available at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/naturerecovery](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/naturerecovery) and submit their input. For additional information, visit the Norfolk and Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership website or reach out via [naturalnorfolk@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:naturalnorfolk@norfolk.gov.uk). Emails monitored Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Read our [privacy notice](#) to find out how we use your personal information.

**Norfolk's roads to get miles of improvements to prevent potholes**

Norfolk County Council has once again demonstrated its commitment to road safety and maintenance, leading the country in road repairs last year. According to Department of Transport statistics, Norfolk fixed 92% of reported road repairs during 2023/24, and topped the National Highways and Transportation customer satisfaction survey.

Building on this success, Norfolk's annual spring and summer road surface dressing programme began on April 7, aiming to enhance the durability and safety of the county's roads. This proactive programme will treat 320 miles of road this year, up from 280 miles last year, thanks to additional funding from the Department for Transport. The treatment helps prevent potholes, extends road life, and provides a skid-resistant surface that reduces the risk of accidents.

Focusing initially on high tourism areas and main roads, the programme aims to complete these key routes before the summer season begins. With a total investment of around £12 million, this initiative represents a forward-thinking approach to road maintenance that will benefit Norfolk's roads and residents for years to come.

**Removing illegal and dangerous goods from sale among successes of Trading Standards team in Norfolk**

Norfolk's Trading Standards team has made significant strides in consumer safety over the past year, achieving notable successes such as:

- Leading a regional project that removed 1,813 unsafe lithium-ion batteries and chargers from an online marketplace.
- Conducting eight investigations, resulting in five prosecutions for illegal sales of vapes to minors, illegal tobacco, and rogue tradespeople.
- Working with partners to tackle illegal vapes, obtaining court orders to close down persistent traders.
- Calibrating over 25,000 pieces of equipment, generating income reinvested into consumer safety work.
- Raising awareness and implementing No Cold Calling Zones to protect against fraud and scams.
- Supporting the Trusted Trader Scheme, generating £555k in local business revenue.
- Ensuring restaurants follow allergen safety procedures and removing unsafe products from sale, including unroadworthy cars and hazardous toys.
- Addressing animal disease outbreaks like blue tongue virus and avian flu.

Looking ahead, the 2025-2026 service plan focuses on:

- Supporting business and consumer vulnerabilities.
- Promoting environmental protection and compliance with green regulations.

- Investing in workforce development to respond to evolving legal needs.
- Aligning with the Food Standards Agency's new delivery model.
- Enhancing integration with Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service for greater efficiency.
- Expanding commercial services to reduce reliance on grant funding, including a new webshop for calibration services.

### **Norfolk Fire and Ambulance Services' joint working shortlisted for award**

A partnership between Norfolk's fire and ambulance services has been shortlisted for a prestigious industry award:

- Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) is a finalist for Project of the Year at the Global Search and Rescue Excellence Awards 2025, recognizing its collaboration with the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST). This innovative partnership sees specially trained firefighters respond to the most critical medical emergencies in their local areas.
- In Norfolk, ten fire stations have trained firefighters, alongside EEAST paramedics, to co-respond to Category 1 calls, including life-threatening emergencies like cardiac arrests. The goal of this partnership is to deliver rapid assistance to patients when every second counts.
- In the past 12 months, Norfolk firefighters have responded to 60 Category 1 calls, arriving first at the scene in 40% of those incidents. Trained in basic life support, these firefighters can be dispatched by ambulance control when not engaged in their regular duties, helping to ensure timely intervention during critical moments.

### **Norfolk Firefighters to join convoy across Europe to deliver life-saving fire equipment to Ukraine**

Earlier this month, Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) will play its part in supporting Ukraine by sending a convoy of volunteer firefighters to deliver essential fire equipment to the war-torn region.

A group of 15 NFRS firefighters will drive five retired fire vehicles across Europe to Ukraine, bringing vital equipment such as ladders, generators, hydraulic rescue tools, light portable pumps, and positive pressure ventilation fans. These vehicles and equipment are part of a larger humanitarian initiative coordinated by FIRE AID and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

The five vehicles from Norfolk will be included in a UK convoy of 30 fire appliances, carrying over 15,000 items of essential firefighting equipment to help replace resources lost in the ongoing conflict.

### **Public encouraged to learn life-saving water safety skills ahead of this summer**

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is urging people to learn life-saving water safety skills this spring and summer, following 16 tragic incidents last year where lives were lost in the water.

The National Fire Chiefs Council's Be Water Aware Week, which started on 28th April, raised awareness of accidental drowning risks and provides essential water safety advice ahead of the warmer months.

Key water safety tips include:

- Call 999 for help, not attempting to rescue someone yourself. Use the Coastguard at the coast or Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service inland.
- Stay safe near open water – many drownings occur unexpectedly, such as from slips or falls.
- Respect the water – even calm waters can have hidden dangers.
- Avoid cold water shock – enter water slowly to acclimatise.
- If in difficulty, float on your back to regain control of your breathing.
- Never enter water under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Wear a lifejacket, no matter your swimming ability.

**Thank you for your interest. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on [bill.borrett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:bill.borrett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk)**

**With my best wishes  
Bill**

