

HOUGHTON AND WYTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Wednesday 2 April 2025, 7:00pm.

Present: Cllr P Boothman - Chair
Cllr R Guinea
Cllr J Rodgers

Cllr B Gilmour
Cllr D Keane
Cllr R Southworth

There was one member of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllrs Baxendale and Skinner due to illness. C Cllr D Dew was not present.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

A resident of Wyton on the Hill offered to repaint the phone box library, and other structures at The Green. The Parish Council expressed their gratitude and he will liaise with Cllr Keane.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED: the minutes of the meeting of the 2 March were approved.

Proposed: Cllr Southworth; Seconded: Cllr Rodgers. All in favour

5. MATTERS ARISING

- An application has been received for co-option onto the Parish Council. This will be circulated to councillors and the co-option will be put on the next agenda.
- CCC Active Travel will be reminded about the inaccurate 'cycling' signs directing people to The Thicket footpath.
- Due to the work at the church, the tree work scheduled for this spring will be delayed until the autumn.
- There has been no progress with a defibrillator at The Three Jolly Butchers.
- The response to the Active Travel Consultation was not submitted due to illness delaying response until after the deadline.
- There is no update on the transfer of land off Thicket Road to form rights of way.
PB
- The application to register the St Mary's Centre as an Asset of Community Value will be submitted. **Clerk**
- Sports Club Agreements: The Assistant Clerk will contact the Tennis Club to clarify the facilities covered by the agreement and fee. **A.Clerk**
- Football goals: The club have agreed to lock up the goals to prevent access. This purchase will go ahead.
- Net Zero Grant for St Mary's Centre: This bid was unsuccessful. There has been no response to the request for a reason. Other sources of funding will be investigated.

6. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Upcoming Elections – County Council and Mayor.

Elections will be held on Thursday 1 May 2025 for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Cambridgeshire County Council for 17 divisions in Huntingdonshire.

East Cambridgeshire District Council is the lead authority for the Combined Authority Mayoral election.

Nominations opened on Tuesday 25 March 2025 and closed at 4pm on Wednesday 2 April 2025. This division has five candidates.

Local Government Reorganisation

HDC is a signatory to a joint letter sent a letter to the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution, setting out progress on plans to move towards a new system of local government. The letter, signed by the leaders of Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, is in response to the invitation from government for councils to work together to develop a proposal for local government reorganisation.

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/news/council-leaders-issue-joint-letter-on-local-government-reorganisation>

HDC Economic Growth Strategy Survey.

HDC is encouraging local business owners to share their insights, to help ensure the strategy reflects their needs, tackles key challenges and helps drive investment into the area. <https://jsvlcrgs0n.typeform.com/to/Nkr5WaCs>

Huntingdonshire Futures Grant Scheme 2025 - Launched 24th March

Huntingdonshire Futures Grant Scheme (HFGS) 2025 is now open for applications.

This encourages applications for events and activity that celebrate Huntingdonshire and its communities, heritage and culture.

It is open until 30th June 2025, or sooner if the fund is exhausted. A total of £40,000 is available in grants of £500 - £2,500 to local organisations.

Further information, including eligibility criteria and application form, is available here

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/council-democracy/grants/>

Garden Waste Renewal or Sign Up

The cost per year is £57.50 for one garden waste bin and £30 per additional bin (up to a maximum of 3 additional bins). Residents can sign up for the service anytime, but the annual subscription runs from 1 April to 31 March. Renewal is required before the next April to maintain service. Check out the link as different process for new joiners compared to renewal. Residents joining mid-year, will be charged for the full year.

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste/garden-waste-subscription-service/>

Mooncup

HDC is offering reusable menstrual cups, the council aims to tackle this environmental challenge by enabling residents to adopt more sustainable habits.

Disposable menstrual products contribute significantly to landfill waste, with the UK producing 200,000 tonnes annually. In 2019 alone, the 180,000 residents of Huntingdonshire sent about 260 tonnes of these products to landfill. By offering reusable menstrual cups, the council aims to tackle this environmental challenge by enabling residents to adopt more sustainable habits.

There is a discounted charge of £5.

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste/reduce-your-waste/discounted-reusable-period-products-initiative/>

Active for Health

A 12-week activity programme for adults to help residents become active. Sign up for the Active for Health programme if a resident has a BMI of 25 or over, or 23.5 if from the BME community.

Active for Health Xtra is a new 12-week activity programme for over 50s who have at least two of the additional risk factors of cardiovascular disease; diabetes, are a smoker, high blood pressure, have an unhealthy diet, have high cholesterol, family history of heart disease, are from a Black, Asian or minority background, are inactive, drink alcohol to excess, are overweight or obese.

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/leisure/active-for-health/>

Staying Active is a new 9-week activity programme to help residents become more active. The programme will include a range of activities to help improve mobility, socialise and improve overall wellbeing. For participants aged at least 55 and meeting at least two eligibility criteria, check out details:

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/leisure/staying-active/>

Civil Parking Enforcement in Huntingdonshire

This is proposed to launch in August.

7 PLANNING MATTERS

7.1 Houghton Grange phase 2

This application will not be on the April Development Management Committee (DMC). S106 agreement: **RESOLVED:** The Parish Council agreed to request this be used to compensate for the extra cost of securing a 125 year lease on the eastern part of the Playing Field. (This has already been partially funded by S106 awaited from Houghton Grange phase 1). If this request is not possible the Parish Council will request the funds to pay for a professional survey of the use of the Playing Field and sports and recreational facilities in the Parish; and to provide or improve the sporting and recreational facilities based on the findings of this survey to serve the needs of a changing population.

Proposed: Cllr Boothman. Seconded: Cllr Gilmour. All in favour.

7.2 Erection of side and rear extension to dwelling. Whympers, The Green, Houghton, Huntingdon PE28 2AX. Ref. No: 25/00194/HHFUL

RESOLVED: Houghton & Wyton Parish Council submit the following comments on this application.

We cannot make a decision based on this application as there is insufficient information and detail that we would normally expect in an application of this size and importance.

Some of the information provided is inaccurate eg start date was listed as 01/01/2025 on the application form when the work was already in progress in November 2024.

This raises concern over the accuracy and completeness of other information and plans. There is no information about the changes to the first floor window over the orangery, there is no mention of the removal of the external walls to create the internal space of the orangery, there is no site specific flood report or mitigation measures mentioned, as required by the Flood Risk sheet (HWNP Policy 14).

The building has listing potential due to its iconic status within the village and its history and relevance to the local culture and architecture. It is sited in the Conservation Area and a Neighbourhood Plan Character Area and is part of the street scene that includes several listed buildings. The extension is visible from at least two streets and the materials used differ from the existing materials. (HWNP Policy 17) The building work was started in November 2024 without consultation with or permission from the local planning authority. HDC Enforcement confirmed in December 2024, that the work did not meet permitted development criteria and a retrospective application was requested. The work continued on the building and the application was received in February 2025.

Proposed: Cllr Gilmour, Seconded: Cllr Guinea. All in favour

7.3 Other Planning Matters

Extensions to respond to two other applications will be requested

Holme Cottage – Following an objection from an arboricultural officer at HDC the application has been given an extension to provide more information on the status of a tree in the grounds of this dwelling.

Clarification will be sought on which applications can be called into the DMC. The HDC constitution maybe ambiguous on this point and is interpreted differently by officers and councillors.

HDC Local Plan: More sites have been brought into consideration recently, making nearly 40,000 potential new dwellings in this area. Cllr Boothman asked MP Ben Obese-Jecty about this exponential growth when they met recently. There seems to be no challenge to this from those with influence.

The meeting of local area parishes has agreed to invite other parishes to join them to provide a larger voice for local residents.

8. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. Traffic and highway issues

Mill Street: the National Trust and Parish Council agreed to work together to improve the parking issues on Mill Street. This included asking for cross hatching at the southern end and enforcement action.

The 20mph zone in the village is still in the pipeline.

It was agreed to assess the effectiveness of the double yellow lines on St Ives Road before asking for them to be extended at any point.

8.2. Playing Field and Sports Clubs

8.2.1. Community Garden.

Timebank has used short term funding to clear and replant an area in the south east corner of the Playing Field with fruit trees. Native plants and herbs will be added later. All the volunteers who helped with this are thanked for this improvement to a neglected area.

8.2.2. CCTV.

A quote to improve the CCTV will be sought **CLERK**

An incident involving glass being broken and thrown around the Bowls Green will be reported to the police and their advice on preventing this happening sought. **CLERK**

8.2.3. Playing Field surface improvements and maintenance

RESOLVED: Complete Weed Control will be contracted to improve the drainage and surface of the Playing Field. **A Clerk**

Proposed: Cllr Rodgers, Seconded: Cllr Southworth. All in favour

8.3. Thicket Wood

The Clerk and Chair met with the chair of the St Ives Civic Society and officers from HDC to discuss management of the Thicket woodland and other areas along the footpath. It was reported that work has been necessary to remove diseased trees in the wooded area, but noted that regeneration is evident. A survey of the area has been undertaken and is ongoing; there is no report available yet. Public access to the area can hinder regeneration; but so far there is not an agreement to restrict public access. There is concern that developments at Houghton Grange and The How and the opening of Berman Park will increase visitors to the Thicket Wood and along the footpath. It was agreed that volunteers could help HDC to plant native flowers in the area and remove invasive species, such as Rhododendron

St Ives Civic Society will talk with GOVT about installing information boards at either end of the Thicket footpath and look into setting up a Friend of the Thicket Path group.

The Civic Society is keen to use 'Green Week' 7-14 June 2025 to recruit volunteers and promote the formation of the group. A further meeting will be set up.

8.4. Royal British Legion request to move the War Memorial

There was no further update or representation at the meeting.

8.5. Feast Week

It was agreed that the Parish Council would ask for a stall at this year's event, to include the Flood Group, Timebank and Neighbourhood Plan. **CLERK**

8.6. Annual Parish Meeting, Sat 14 June

This date has been booked with the St Mary's Centre and village groups have been invited to take part.

8.7. Grants and other funding

8.7.1. Neighbourhood Plan survey

CPRE will get in touch with details of funding to help with the refresh of the Plan and funding for the Housing Needs Survey.

8.7.2. St Mary's Centre, Green energy improvements

Further grants to improve the energy efficiency of this building will be sought.

8.7.3. Huntingdonshire Futures grant

It was agreed to work with the History Society to apply for a grant to provide an information board at Loxley Green showing the history of the area and local resident Isbella Bird.

9. PROJECTS

9.1. Clocktower Phase 2.

There is no update.

9.2. Cemetery Extension – update on ground preparation

A date to meet with the preferred contractors will be arranged. **ACTION: Clerk**

10. CLERK, ASSISTANT CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

10.1 To authorise payments due and paid and note financial reports and bank balances.

RESOLVED: Payments now due are authorised:

Proposed: Cllr Gilmour; Seconded: Cllr Guinea. All in favour

Payee	Description	Amount (inc vat)
Red Shoes Accounting	Payroll	£291.60
BI Catering Services	Pavilion maintenance	£222.00
Safeplay Playground Services	Play Area inspection	£102.00
Flood Group	General expenses	£86.78
Flood Group	Water testing	£365.00
Feast Week committee	Grant	£550.00
Michael Murray Signs Ltd	Sign for church	£384.00
Parish Councillor	Parish maintenance	£74.83

The budget report and bank balances were noted.

10.2 Affiliation fee to CAPALC/NALC

RESOLVED: An affiliation fee of £587.43 will be paid for membership of CAPALC and NALC for 2025-26

Proposed: Cllr Southworth, Seconded: Cllr Rodgers. All in favour

10.3 Parish Council emails

New .gov.uk emails have now been adopted by the Parish Council. The previous emails will be retained until 'teething problems' have been resolved and contacts informed.

The Parish Council will consider the wider use of WhatsApp groups to send out information.

10.4 Parish Council policies

All councillors have been asked to fill out the Members Register of Interests.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

- There was no correspondence to note

12. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED AT FUTURE MEETINGS, DELEGATED ACTIONS OT FOR INFORMATION ONLY

A co-option for the current Parish Council vacancy will be held at the next meeting. It was noted that sewage releases from water treatment plants within the parish are still happening with increasing frequency and longevity. The Flood Group are continuing to monitor the water quality in the river and it is hoped that, with this evidence, Anglian Water can be persuaded to take action.

13. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will be **Wednesday 7 May 2025 at 7pm.**

Signature Dated: