

HOUGHTON AND WYTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Wednesday 8 January 2025, 7:00pm.

Present: Cllr P Boothman (Chair) Cllr R Baxendale
Cllr B Gilmour Cllr R Guinea
Cllr D Keane Cllr J Rodgers
Cllr R Southworth

There were three members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr A Skinner.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were declarations of interest from: Cllr Boothman, item 7.4 as a neighbour; Cllr Southworth, item 9.4 as a neighbour and affected by the issue; Cllr Gilmour, item 8.4 as a member of the Royal British Legion.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Parish Council would like to thank the Christmas Lights Committee for arranging the Christmas Tree and lights which form a focal point at The Green each year. It is appreciated that the decision to cancel the 'switch on' event due to predicted high winds must have been difficult to make, but has the Parish Council support.

A representative of the Royal British Legion stated that they had nothing to add to the discussion on the request to move the War Memorial, but they hoped to have more information by the February Parish Council meeting.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of 4 December 2024 were approved as a correct record.

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

5. MATTERS ARISING

- Flooding– It was suggested that a meeting with the Flood Group would be arranged to discuss progressing the work needed at the pumping station. A date for a meeting with Anglian Water will also be set. **CLERK**
- Annual Parish Meeting – this will be held on Sat 14 June in an effort to encourage members of the public and parish groups to attend. **A.CLERK**
- Parish Council email – when the issue of transferring address books from Gmail to Outlook is solved a full transition can take place. **A.CLERK**
- A date for a visit from the Chief Exec of HDC will be arranged. **CLERK**
- There has been no response from HDC to queries about progress with the applications for Assets of Community Value. **CLERK**

6. DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Green bin subscriptions not on direct debit can be renewed now. Emails are being sent out and details can be found here.

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

HDC is refurbishing the gym at One Leisure St Ives to reopen soon. There is a temporary gym available. There are lots of offers and 'active-for-health' initiatives.

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

Devolution: On 16 December 2024, the government announced they are looking to devolve and reform powers within the local government structure. There are a lot of unknowns at this point; but there are likely to still be Cambridgeshire County Council elections in May.

HDC is actively involved in the process. And currently setting up the working groups to respond to the Secretary of State by the relevant timelines

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth>

D Cllr Keane was asked about progress with the civil parking enforcement by HDC. HDC are renewing yellow lines to indicate parking restrictions; he will ask about the road markings on Mill Street which are often covered and worn. The double yellow lines to be marked on St Ives Road are a CCC responsibility and they will be reminded about this. **CLERK**

7. PLANNING MATTERS

7.1. Demolition of garage and erection of replacement garage/carport in a new location. Silverways Thicket Road Houghton Huntingdon PE28 2BQ Ref. No: 24/02295/HHFUL

RESOLVED: Houghton & Wyton Parish Council recommend that this application be **APPROVED** for the following reasons:

This is a large plot, and the sympathetically designed carport is set in a suitable and unobtrusive site. We have had no objections from neighbours and note that the previous garage has already been demolished due to the flooding and drainage issues. Proposed: Cllr Rodgers; Seconded: Cllr Guinea. All in favour

7.2. Conversion of garage to provide gym and office space and construction of rear conservatory to converted garage. New Manor Farm Sawtry Way Wyton Huntingdon PE28 2DY Ref. No: 24/02369/HHFUL

RESOLVED: Houghton & Wyton Parish Council recommend that this application be **APPROVED** and have the following comments:

While there is no planning reason to object to this application, we believe there are several inconsistencies and lack of attention to detail, leading to points that should be clarified before a full decision is made.

Description on Application Form states - Residential Conversion of Garage and Construction of a Rear Conservatory, yet your planning website describes it as Conversion of garage to provide gym and office space and construction of rear conservatory to converted garage. Is there a difference?

The house and existing garage are set well back from Sawtry Way.

The plans do not state whether the existing garage will be demolished or not (they mention stables– see later), but utilise the existing floor footprint, adding a conservatory 3m x 5m to the rear and increasing the overall height of 1.2m to accommodate an office above. Whilst not providing details, the drawings do show gym equipment on the ground floor level.

The proposal is to use materials to match existing building buff brick, slate roof, UPVC windows.

There are no tree or hedge impacts

Residential conversion of the garage will reduce parking from 3 spaces to 2 however, other parking provision is available within the wider New Manor Farm site.

This is residential conversion therefore has no requirement for biodiversity net gain; however, a preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted with minor recommendations in place and is appropriate.

There is a little bit of confusion about the stable block in respect of this application: Doc ref 101 Proposed Block Plan And Location Plan shows a stable block to the south which is labelled 'to be retained' but the description and reference plate at the foot of the plans state differently. Can this be clarified, please?

New Manor Farm is not within the conservation area and whilst outside of built-up area it is not a new residence hence the Neighbourhood Plan is largely silent in respect of any promotion or restrictions.

Proposed: Cllr Boothman, Seconded: Cllr Keane. All in favour

7.3. Houghton Grange phase 1 & 2

This application will not be discussed at the January DMC; more information is awaited from Homes England.

7.4. Electric supply box at National Trust site

An electricity supply box has been installed by the National Trust on their land at Waterclose Meadow campsite. This is visible from at least two Rights of Way and has caused some concern among residents due to the visual impact and lack of communication from the National Trust.

It has come to light that the electricity supply is to be routed along the footpath from Thicket Road to Love Lane and then across Love Lane to the site. Neighbours on either side of this right of way were not consulted. Although an application was made to close the former path, there was no request to close Love Lane for the work.

A resident addressed the meeting to provide information on the problems that would be caused and the communication with the parties involved. It has been made clear that the work may be within the 'no-dig' zone to some of the mature trees in the area and would be very close to a high wall that is over 100 years old. This is within the Conservation Area and some trees are within the curtilage of a Listed Building. The route may also damage the roots of large trees on Thicket Road. This is particularly disappointing as the National Trust have restricted parking in their own car park to protect tree roots.

There is also concern about the effect the connection could have on existing residential electricity supply.

The owner of the wall will look into having this listed. The Parish Council agreed to look into applying for TPOs on suitable trees in the area, although they do have some protection under Conservation Area legislation. They are also trying to arrange a meeting with the National Trust.

7.5. Other Planning Matters

The Planning department have found that the work being carried out at Whympers will require planning permission. A retrospective application is awaited, meanwhile the work is continuing.

**[Remove 32m of Hedgerow \(HR 5\)](#) HR5 Hedgerow Opposite Garage St Ives Road Wyton
Ref. No: 25/00036/HED**

**[Remove 8m of Hedgerow \(HR 6\)](#) H6 Hedgerow East Of Banks End Wyton Ref. No:
25/00043/HED**

**[Remove 6m \(3m either side of access\) of Hedgerow \(HR 7\)](#) HR7 Hedgerow East Of
Training Centre Banks End Wyton Ref. No: 25/00044/HED**

**[Remove 8m of Hedgerow \(HR 8\)](#) HR8 Hedgerow Old Houghton Road Hartford
Ref. No: 25/00048/HED**

Planning applications to removal lengths of hedgerow have been received. These are for work being done by Anglian Water. Hedges over 30 years old need planning permission to remove them, and will have to be replaced if this is granted. We question whether alternatives to this removal were considered? The timing of the work should be coordinated so as not to disturb nesting birds and to ensure maximum survival of the replacement plants. Any replacements that do not survive must be replaced.

There was concern about how this work would affect the sewage system in the village, which is already experiencing problems. This will be discussed with Anglian Water.

8. REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. Local Highway Initiative 2025/26

The Parish Council will submit an LHI application to relocate the bus stop at Hartford Marina for safety reasons. **RB & CLERK**

8.2. Traffic and highway issues

The solar powered speed indicator sign for the A1123 in Wyton has been received and will be erected.

The signs to ask people to not park by the church in Mill Street have been ordered. These will belong to St Mary's PCC and be erected inside the churchyard boundary. There has been no response to our solicitor trying to progress the transfer of land to create official Rights of Way in the vicinity of footpath 3. **PB**

CCC Active Travel will be reminded about the signs at the Scout Hut in St Ives, that appear to permit cycling on the Thicket footpath. They were to be amended.

8.3. Sports Clubs – Agreements and fees

The Assistant Clerk will prepare a letter and amend the draft agreements to suggest that going forward the fees should be based on a fixed figure to be inflated by a chosen inflation index annually. This would be reviewed after 3 years, unless there were exceptional circumstances that would indicate a review sooner. The fixed figure would initially be based on recent charges and current use by the clubs.

The division of this fixed figure between the four sports clubs should be divided between them in a ratio decided by the clubs, as in the current agreements. If the clubs cannot agree on an equitable division by a given date, the Parish Council will revert to the division most recently agreed between the clubs.

8.4. Royal British Legion request to move the War Memorial

Cllr Gilmour is looking into the costs of relocating the War Memorial and potential sites. If the RBL has further information or requests this will be considered when received.

8.5. St Mary's Centre Green Energy report/grant application

A draft application to the Net Zero Villages fund from the CaPCA has been written and will be finalised with the St Mary's PCC who will submit this.

An updated report and advice on the grant application and proposed work has been received from Green Energy Solutions.

8.6. Supporting Public Service

At a meeting of local Parish Council chairs there was concern over the amount of insurance cover provided for councillors in the case of a legal challenge.

RESOLVED: the Officials and Trustees Indemnity insurance cover will be increased to £1,000,000 at a cost of £112.

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

The MP, Ben Obese-Jecty, as agreed to look into the support and protection provided to elected members.

9. PROJECTS

9.1. Clock Tower phase 2

A zoom meeting will be arranged with the highways consultant to discuss the brief for an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order application at The Green.

9.2. Pavilion repairs and refurbishment

The repairs to the roof have been completed. The benches in the changing rooms are being refurbished. New flooring is due to be laid in the corridor, changing rooms and toilets beginning 20 January. Once this work is complete repainting of this area can be arranged. A quote will be sought to repair the fencing around the pavilion patio and at the car park.

9.3. Cemetery Extension

The fencing to the north and west of the area is being installed.

A date in February will be set to plant the hedging with the help of volunteers.

9.4. Trees in St Mary's Churchyard

RESOLVED: The quote received from Cambridge Trees to carry out necessary work on

trees in St Mary's churchyard will be accepted if this can be arranged in conjunction with the work to be carried out at the church itself.

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

10. CLERK, ASSISTANT CLERK & RESONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

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

RESOLVED: All payments presented be approved.

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

Payee	Description	Amount (*inc vat)
J & S Gardening	Green Area Maintenance	£1,155.00
HDC	Playing Field bin	£223.90
HDC	Recycling bin	£28.60
Red Shoes Accounting	Payroll services	£340.20*
Green Building Design	Energy survey – St Mary's Centre	£6,000.00*

Bank balances and budget update were noted.

10.2. Assistant Clerk – training

RESOLVED: It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk join SLCC (£190) and register for the ILCA course (£120).

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

10.3. Parish Council Budget and Precept Request 2025-26

The proposed Parish Council budget for 2025-26 was accepted.

RESOLVED: A precept of £113,000 be requested from HDC. **Clerk**

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

10.4. Parish Council policies

10.4.1. Risk Register

Cllr Gilmour will review this and amend if needed.

10.4.2. Equality Policy

RESOLVED: The Equality Policy dated 8 Jan 2025 be adopted.

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

10.4.3. Policy Review dates

It was agreed that Standing Orders and Code of Conduct should be reviewed and agreed at the Annual Parish Council meeting every May, the Financial Regulations should be reviewed and agreed in March each year before the AGAR is completed. Other policies will be reviewed at agreed times throughout the year. **A.Clerk**

11. CORRESPONDENCE

CCC has adopted a County Council Action Plan for supporting communities to develop Community Energy projects. The Action Plan has now been published here [Community Energy | Cambridgeshire County Council](#). It was agreed this should be discussed under the Neighbourhood Plan group.

An email was received promoting local celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the modern railway. Further information, including details of local events, can be found at www.railway200.co.uk

12. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will be **Wednesday 5 February 2025 at 7pm.**

Signature Date.....