

Hoxne Parish Council.

Chair's Report 2023/24.

The May local elections of last year brought a largely new parish council into being for the people of Hoxne. But, only just, we had only four councillors willing to serve, the bare minimum. Any less and Mid Suffolk Council would have taken over the running of our council.

We now have a full complement of eleven councillors, all offering a greater diversity of views which can only help the democratic process. Yet I know that many people view the parish council as an irrelevance, without any real power and that perhaps it has not strived to reflect the views of Hoxonians.

It is true, the parish council does have limited power, however what it lacks in 'real 'hard ' power it can ,if so minded make up in 'soft power, using it's powers of persuasion, or even coercion in order to get things done by other bodies.

So, what has the 'new' council achieved this year ?

It is evident that one of the major concerns expressed by residents has been either the volume, the speed, or the size of traffic going through the village. A long felt concern, perhaps made worse by the HGV ban which came into force in Eye last year. This year the council received the results of a traffic survey it commissioned

to actually ascertain exactly what was happening. Using the results from this it has been in regular dialogue with the local community traffic engineer for the highways authority looking at proposals to try and manage the traffic going through Hoxne. The council has also opened up a more meaningful dialogue with a group of residents on Green Street who have been campaigning for some time about the volume and speed of vehicles on a designated lorry route which many would argue is not suited to this task. A meeting was arranged between the council, Green Street residents the police commissioner, senior police traffic officers and the traffic engineer on site to see at first hand the problems. (On this occasion two large lorries met each other head on causing one of them to mount the pavement, it was therefore breaking the law).

The council now has a working party involving Matthew Hicks our Mid Suffolk district councillor who just happens to be also chair of the county council, - the highways authority, to look at proposals Hoxne Parish Council has put forward in order to manage the traffic through the village more effectively and so hopefully lessen the results of it on local residents.

Watch this space.

Community Infrastructure Levy money has been used to erect an extra noticeboard in the village opposite the shop for community groups to advertise their activities. CIL has also been used to erect two village entrances on the way into the village from Oakley. There were plans to erect two similar entrance on either the Denham Road,

or the Eye Road. However these have been put on hold pending the results of the traffic management working party and any extra expense involved in implementing proposals which may have to go to a judicial review.

The council has supported the group hoping to buy and revive the village shop, however, contrary to some rumours we are not taking out a large municipal loan in order to buy the shop.

The Neighbourhood Plan was voted on by residents earlier in the month and I am pleased to say it had a majority of the those who voted in favour of the plan. It has been a project some years in the making, the aim being to control what new housing goes up in the village with some effort to provide the type of housing needed.

The Plan followed a precisely dictated format of development from an initial questionnaire sent out to every household in the village. It included an exhibition of proposals in the village hall at which residents could scrutinise and make comments, linked to a question and answer session. The Plan was also scrutinised by a national government inspector and Mid Suffolk Council to ensure that the correct procedures had been followed. They had.

It has therefore been a busy year for the council in a variety of ways. Yet, our aim must always be to listen to the people of Hoxne and act upon their concerns and views. We will not please people all the time, but hopefully we might please some people some of the time.

May I take this opportunity to thank my fellow councillors for the very hard work they have done this year, whether it be all those extra hours in meetings and training courses or getting their hands dirty cleaning traffic signs or setting up speed cameras and picking up rubbish in the village Spring Clean. Equally I would also like to thank Sarah our Clerk without whom we would not function. She must be praised for her valiant attempts to keep us in order at meetings and her knowledge of the correct procedures to follow.

Annual Report for the MSDC Hoxne & Worlingworth Ward from Cllr Matthew Hicks

MSDC have formally adopted their Joint Local

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have formally adopted their Joint Local Plan – the blueprint for the districts’ future development until 2037 – providing clarity for communities and developers. A Local Plan is prepared by a local planning authority and includes policies to tackle key social, economic and environmental issues – providing a framework to guide future planning decisions. Mid Suffolk’s Joint Local Plan (JLP) has been designed to ensure residents and communities have sufficient housing, employment and inward investment, environment and heritage is protected, and the infrastructure is in place for healthy communities and thriving towns. Work on the JLP began in 2016, going through several iterations and extensive consultation – incorporating feedback from thousands of community responses during its development. This allowed the first phase of the plan to go before councillors at Mid Suffolk District Council’s meeting for formal adoption. The adoption of this Joint Local Plan is a significant milestone that enables the district to agree an up-to-date planning framework to guide development and sustainable growth to 2037. It provides a set of strategic and local development management policies which will be used to inform decisions on planning applications and will help us to reassert a plan-based approach to future development in Mid Suffolk. All documentation involved in the JLP process, including the Planning Inspectorate report, is available on the councils’ website www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/jointlocalplan.

MSDC agreed a 2% increase in Council Tax

The new Green administration in their budget agreed a 2% increase to its share of the Council Tax bill for 2024/25. Other increases include Dog bins up 22.5% and litter bins up 23.3%. MSDC have also put Council house rents up 7.7% and HRA garage rents up 8.9% and sheltered housing service charges up 18.0% on average. They also put sheltered housing utilities up 44.0% and also voted to put up the collection of bulky items (up to 5 items) - by 20.2%. I spoke and voted against these increases especially with regards to the increase on sheltered housing due to the impact on those most in need.

Town and parish councils in Babergh and Mid Suffolk will receive more than £1.3 million in developer contributions

Suffolk District Councils will see £1,355,329 distributed between 67 town and parish councils across the districts. Of this, £1,028,795.56 will be allocated to 40 town and parish councils in Mid Suffolk. Town and parish councils can then decide how to spend this money to best support the development of their local area and meets the needs of its community. CIL payments are a legal requirement paid by developers building houses across the districts. These funds are then reinvested by the councils into the communities, helping local infrastructure to develop at the same rate as housing. A proportion of this funding is paid directly to town and parish councils, with a higher amount going to those with successfully adopted Neighbourhood Plans. With the increase in housing in our local areas, it is really important that supporting infrastructure is able to grow at the same pace and it is through funds such as CIL, that we can enable this crucial grassroot investment in our communities. Through CIL funding, the council is able to provide financial support to the towns and villages within our district that have seen the most housing growth. It is vital that those communities receive the help they need to fund additional facilities and infrastructure to meet demand. Further information about how CIL works can be found on the council’s website, with details about how the levy has been allocated available on the councils’ Developers Contribution Database.

More than 1,500 households at risk of homelessness

More than 1,500 households at risk of homelessness have been helped to keep a roof over their heads by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils since 2019. The figures form part of a report spelling out how the councils intend to further step up their commitment to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping across the districts as the nationwide cost-of-living crisis continues to take its toll. The councils' joint homelessness reduction and rough sleeping strategy has been reviewed to ensure it reflects the current challenges facing the districts. The councils' housing solutions service is facing increasing demand, not only from tenants struggling to pay the bills, but also those looking for help because their private landlords is selling up, putting a further squeeze on available housing in the area. The report shows how during 2022/23 in Mid Suffolk, the number of applications rose to 588 compared to 510. Not all applications result in council help being required, but each requires further investigation and urgent support for those most in need. In fact, between April 2019 and March 2023, the councils stepped to urgently rehouse 247 in Mid Suffolk who would otherwise have found themselves on the street. The figures also show that in addition to supporting those requiring urgent help, the councils are working hard behind the scenes to support residents before they reach crisis point. Between April 2019 and March 2023 the team prevented homelessness in 553 cases in Mid Suffolk, with the councils' early intervention team offering advice and practical help to tackle financial issues, and supporting those affected by domestic abuse.

Although rough sleeping less of an issue for the rural districts, the strategy describes how contact is currently made with anyone found to be sleeping on the streets within 24 hours of a referral being received with outreach support, and the specialist bedspaces and wrap-around services provided to help them get back into accommodation and work. The strategy commits to further work in these areas, as well as providing further support to those in temporary accommodation – particularly children; pledges further work to help those facing financial hardship as part of the councils' cost-of-living action plan; and the expansion of Central Suffolk Lettings – the council's trailblazing lettings service. By providing landlords with a free lettings service and guaranteed rent payments, the councils have opened up the private rented sector to those in need and reduced demands on temporary accommodation or the need to use B&Bs or hostels

Work to make council homes warmer and bring down energy bills

Babergh and Mid Suffolk received a £1.6m boost in government funding to be added to the £2.25m already committed by the councils to install energy saving measures in social housing, taking the total investment pledged for retrofitting and decarbonising to £3.85m across both districts.

Secretary of State for Energy Security Claire Coutinho announced that Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils would be receiving £1,593,000 as part of the latest round of awards from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. The funding is to help lower income households by delivering warm and energy efficient homes and lifting tenants out of fuel poverty by saving money on their energy bills. **Together with our Cosy Homes initiative which supports energy efficiency in the private sector, we are committed to making a practical difference to climate change in our district, as well as to the lives of our tenants.** Work is now underway to target council properties with the lowest EPC (energy performance certificate) ratings, with improvements to be carried out over the next two years. Meanwhile, [Warm Homes Suffolk](#) offers grants for energy efficiency measures to private homeowners and landlords whose gross income is under £36,000. For those in Mid Suffolk, there is also the [Cosy Homes initiative](#) tailored for households with an income of less than £60,000 and less than £16,000 in savings. Find out more information on the councils' websites.

Matthew Hicks – District Councillor for the Hoxne & Worlingworth Ward

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Cllr Matthew Hicks 2024 Annual Report for SCC on behalf of Cllr Peter Gould

Council budget approved with a focus on protecting the most vulnerable

Suffolk County Council has confirmed its financial budget for 2024-25. The £752.8m package was approved at the Full Council meeting on Thursday 15 February 2024, with the priority to protect vulnerable adults and children across the county. Despite the recently announced uplift in government funding and asking residents for the maximum Council Tax contribution, it is still not sufficient to cover the rising costs imposed by inflation, or the increasing levels of demand for services - in particular children's care, special educational needs, and disabilities (SEND) and home to school transport. Focusing on those children who have extremely demanding needs and no-one else to turn to, is the right thing to do. The same is true of adults who we want to help lead independent lives, or to have the best quality of life possible. To provide care and services for vulnerable children and adults, the next two years will see an additional £42.7 million allocated to children's services, and an additional £29.9 million for adult services. However, this means £64.7 million of savings needs to be found at the same time. These significant savings over the next two years include:

- £11 million of staffing costs through changing the way services are delivered and restructuring across the council.
- £30.6 million of additional savings from an extension of the council's hugely successful Adult Social Care Transformation programme, which has focused on reducing demand for more expensive social care options by boosting people's independence and ability to stay well for longer through innovative methods including cutting edge care technology. This transformation programme has already saved £30.7 million over the last six years
- £140,000 of savings by centralising Suffolk Archives to The Hold and closing the branches in West and East Suffolk. In February 2023, the council committed £3.4m to relocate the West Suffolk Archives branch to the proposed Western Way development. Remaining at its current location would have required over £5 million to protect the historic records and meet modern archive standards. West Suffolk Council has since decided not to progress with the Western Way development, ending that opportunity. Centralising the three branches into one brings Suffolk in line with the majority of archive services across the country and is better value for taxpayers' money.
- £15.9 million of reserves will be used to balance the 2024/25 budget.

Balancing this budget has been incredibly tough. But by prioritising our spending on those in greatest need, they will hopefully not find life incredibly tough. Focusing on those children who have extremely demanding needs and no-one else to turn to, is the right thing to do. The same is true of adults who we want to help lead independent lives, or to have the best quality of life possible. These are very expensive services to provide. It does not leave us with as much money as we would like to invest in every other service that we are required to deliver. We have just 23p in every £1 to maintain highways and footpaths, fund libraries, run a fire and rescue service, tackle climate change, and so much more.

The council's budget will increase by 8.6% (from £693.0 million to £752.8 million), some of which is generated by a 4.99% increase in the council's share of Council Tax, and additional Government funding. The increase of 4.99% to Council Tax is made up of a 2.99% increase in general Council Tax and a 2.00% increase dedicated to funding adult care. This will see the council's share of a Band B property's bill rise by £1.12 per week, compared to last year.

Councils unite against National Grid pylon proposals

In a [joint letter to National Grid](#), the leaders of the Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex County Councils address the extensive impact on landscapes and local communities that the scheme would bring. They also highlight that an offshore solution has not been sufficiently investigated, and the opportunities that this could bring to co-ordinate with other large-scale energy projects off the region's coast. The Norwich to Tilbury project would see 114 miles of electricity pylons weave their way through the three counties. Only a small percentage of this cabling would go underground, an issue which the councils also raise, stating that more would be needed particularly in the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and near Diss and the Waveney Valley. We have taken to writing at this time, as there is still the opportunity to explore all options and solutions for a development of this scale. We all support the collective effort to tackle climate change, work towards net zero and to create a secure future for the country's energy. But there are so many elements of this proposal which just do not go far enough. The impact that this scheme would have should not be underestimated, particularly on the region's unique, designated landscapes and the many communities that will be affected. We all agree that studies into an offshore solution have not been appropriately explored, this is a viable option which we feel has been dismissed too readily. Should proposals for the project progress, and further consultations take place, we would expect National Grid to invest a lot more time and effort in working with our local communities. These large schemes can be guilty of doing the minimum necessary when they should be working with local people and businesses as much as possible, who know the area and can help find the best solutions, should the project go ahead. We must be looking to a coordinated offshore centred approach to energy transmission in the UK. Given our long-term energy security goals and the infrastructure that will be required, simply installing more pylons, and digging trenches cannot be the only viable solution. We will continue to stand strong on behalf of all the communities who will be affected by these proposals. You can read more about the Norwich to Tilbury project and view a calendar of consultation events on the [National Grid website](#).

Formal opening of £1.3 million Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service training centre

The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre at Wattisham Flying Station near Stowmarket has recently undergone a £1.3 million upgrade. It now boasts a tactical firefighting facility, which uses real fire and an LPG-fired facility to simulate incidents firefighters may be faced with. The most recent addition is the modular office complex, which features additional classrooms and welfare facilities for all delegates and staff. The centre was formally declared open at the annual base families' day on Thursday August 24 by Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Jon Lacey of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, and Colonel Toby R Moore MBE, Station Commander, Wattisham Flying Station. This is an exciting new chapter for the training centre, which has been at been based at Wattisham now for over a decade. Our new training centre provides additional classrooms and office space, supporting various aspects of fire and rescue training, such as incident command. It also provides improved welfare facilities, which was designed to bring everyone together in an atmosphere where they feel they belong. Similarly, the new training complexes allow us to give new firefighters the best training possible in a way that is realistic yet less harmful to the environment, through us not having to use as much carbon-based burning material as before. The work of the fire service is vital in protecting our community and often requires them to undertake hazardous work in extremely demanding conditions. Our firefighters deserve the best possible training to prepare them for such work and this facility will offer exactly that for many years to come. The fire service training centre has been at Wattisham since 2011 and occupies a 17-acre site that previously housed the Bloodhound missile system from the Cold War. The training centre is used throughout the year for a wide range of training requirements which include refresher and ongoing assessments by all staff.

SCC Adult Social Care service rated Good overall by Care Quality Commission

Suffolk County Council has been awarded an indicative overall rating of “Good” for the quality of its Adult Social Care services. Following a period of intense inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Suffolk County Council has become one of the first councils nationwide to achieve this standard. Earlier this year CQC announced that 5 local authorities with responsibility for adult social care, including Suffolk, had volunteered to be part of a Local Authority Assessment Pilot, to help CQC develop the new model of inspection to help assess councils against the requirements of the Care Act. This model would then be rolled out across the country with all 153 Local Authorities with responsibility for Adult Social Care being inspected by the commission. The assessment process began this summer with a request for information to each local authority taking part in the pilot. This collected the written evidence needed to allow CQC to understand how each council is delivering its adult social care services. Following on from this initial ask, the County Council was then required to arrange over 40 different meetings including 4 staff drop-in sessions, with over 150 people, including staff, partners, providers, carers, and people with lived experiences. These meetings allowed the CQC inspection team to meet people directly and ask questions to help further evidence the quality of social care services provided. CQC’s final report rated the overall quality of Suffolk County Council’s Adult Social Care services as “Good” and highlighted areas of strength including, the quality of its leadership, the culture of learning and support for staff, the range of digital care options available, the good relationships between social care and health colleagues and locality team knowledge and understanding of community needs. I am delighted, this is a fantastic result for Suffolk County Council, especially for those colleagues working within Adult Social Care. I am especially pleased to see areas like Safeguarding rated as good, this is a real acknowledgement of the hard work SCC and partners have put in place over the last few years to learn from every incident and work closely together as a system to ensure the safety of the most vulnerable in our community. I believe this rating is also a testament to the high levels of financial investment we as a council have consistently put into Adult Social Care over the years, especially during the dark days of the pandemic, and shows how through imagination and service transformation, we are delivering on our priority to put people’s health and wellbeing at the top of our agenda as a local authority. “Of course, there is always more that can be done with something as complex as Adult Social Care and we certainly won’t take this overall rating for granted. There are challenges ahead which this report touches upon, but what this rating ultimately should do is give us all confidence that we have the right people and processes in place to provide good quality Adult Social Care services for the people of Suffolk

Almost £1 million extra committed to investigating significant flooding following Babet

Suffolk County Council has committed almost £1 million of funds to bring in additional flood investigation specialists as the response to Storm Babet continues. Since the storm, targeted recovery work has been carried out across the county to ensure damaged highway infrastructure is repaired, those whose properties were flooded get help and that investigations can start which will identify how to reduce flood risk. As lead local flood authority, the county council has a duty to investigate significant flooding under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act. These investigations help to establish the source of flooding, factors which may have caused or exacerbated the flooding, the impacts on people, services and infrastructure and any actions which could be taken to increase resilience to future storm events. In any usual year, Suffolk County Council carries out around three or four of these investigations. Following Babet, up to 100 look set to be needed. The impact of this truly unprecedented event is still being felt across the county and will continue to do so for months to come, so it is important that we recognise that and increase our resources appropriately. These investigations help us to work with communities to establish the cause of flooding in the worst hit areas and identify ways to manage the risk better in future.”

New Independent Chair appointed to drive forward SEND reform

SCC announces that Kathryn Boulton has been appointed as the new independent chair of the Local Area Partnership's SEND Improvement Board. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision is delivered by the Local Area Partnership in Suffolk, which includes SCC, NHS Suffolk and North-East Essex Integrated Care Board and NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board. The SEND Improvement Board was set up in response to the inspection of SEND services in Suffolk in November last year by Ofsted and CQC and is a requirement of the Improvement Notice that will be issued to Suffolk by the Department for Education. Made up of senior leaders from the council and NHS, board members will oversee the implementation and review of plans and services aimed at improving the way SEND services are delivered in Suffolk. It will also ensure the successful delivery of the Priority Action Plan, which was co-produced following the inspection and has been agreed by the Department for Education. The new chair of the board, Kathryn, has 37 years of experience across children's services. With an education background and success in several senior leadership roles, Kathryn has significant experience of transforming SEND services in local authorities and ensuring the voices and experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families are central to the design and delivery of SEND services. An independent chair is crucial in ensuring we stay on track and improve outcomes for our children and young people with SEND and their families. Kathryn will hold the partnership to account and will act as both a critical friend and a sounding board. The Improvement Board has an important job to do and we remain focused on providing the best provision for children and young people with SEND. In addition to Kathryn's appointment, the Local Area Partnership will receive an Improvement Notice from the Department for Education. This was an expected outcome after the Ofsted and CQC inspection. It means that advisors from the Department for Education and NHS England will work with the Local Area Partnership to support and monitor improvement plans until further notice. We welcome this. We already have a good relationship with the Department for Education, and the additional expertise and guidance of specialist advisors will further strengthen our improvement work. SCC Cabinet has also confirmed that 60 new members of staff will be recruited to drive forward important reform to the way special educational needs and disability (SEND) services are delivered in Suffolk.

Highways Statistiscs

Since storm Babet in October 2023 there has been a substantial increase in the number of customer reports received by Suffolk Highways. When comparing the October to February period for 2022/23 and 2023/24 there has been a:

- 6,133 increase in pothole/road defect reports (105% increase)
- 6,791 increase in flooding/drainage reports (376% increase)

| October to February | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Difference |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Potholes/Road Defects | 3,097 | 5,843 | 11,976 | 105% |
| Flooding/Drainage | 1,819 | 1,807 | 8,598 | 376% |
| Total Customer Reports | 15,455 | 17,947 | 34,624 | 93% |

In terms of the Emergency Response Service, Suffolk Highway recorded 2,185 highway emergencies since October 2023. This is an increase of 69% compared to the same period in 2022/23. During the period October to February, the average number of reactive gangs on the network is over 24 per day. For the same period during 2022/23, there were an average of 12.6 reactive gangs per day.

Matthew Hicks - County Councillor for the Thredling Division

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Hoxne Bowls Club Annual Report

The club had a most successful year. We were Upper Waveney Division Two Champions and won both the Mid-Suffolk Catter Cup and the County area-B Charity trophy - The Percy Dunnett Memorial Cup.

The club is excited, this year, that Alan Garnham is to be President of the Upper Waveney League. To celebrate, we will be hosting a 'President's Day Tournament on Sunday 28th July.

We will also be running a target bowls game at the village's May Fest.

However, for various reasons, the club has lost several of its long standing members so may struggle to field teams this summer.

To encourage more use of the green, we are introducing 'Social Bowling' on Wednesday evenings. Non-members are welcome to come and enjoy a relaxed game with family or friends or make new ones. The initial visit is free, then £4 a time, reduced to £3 for social members. Coaching is available if desired but the main aim is to have some fun.

Hoxne Heritage Group.

Chair's Report 2024.

In simplistic terms Darwin said that if all creatures did not adapt and evolve they would die out. The same can be said of institutions and groups. To give a local example, Hoxne Garden and Social Club was on the verge of being wound up five years ago because of the dwindling numbers of members and those willing to stand on the committee to lead the group forward. No future talks had been planned in anticipation of this happening and the finances were in a precarious position. A new committee was formed however, involving new members and a future programme of ~~better~~ quality talks was arranged. Membership gradually began to increase and a newer committee installed last year has built upon this improvement by increasing membership numbers further together with other activities associated with horticulture, notably regular plant sales, 'garden training days' and there are even early plans to revive Hoxne Open Gardens.

Hoxne Heritage Group last year was at a similar stage of the Garden Club five years ago. Yet, to be fair, in the twelve years of its existence the Heritage Group has achieved a great deal of which it should be very proud. For example, a comprehensive website recording many of the historical aspects of the village including the built environment and the lives of former residents. A community dig which seemed to involve virtually all the village in digging up their back gardens to reveal a

plethora of interesting artefacts. Numerous talks have also been staged at the village hall on a wide variety of historical topics, not just limited to Hoxne, - to say nothing of exhibitions which gave residents an insight into World War Two or Hoxne on the day of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Other activities arranged over the years have included archaeological digs for members and instructions on using a metal detector. In all a record of which the members should be proud.

Last year Hoxne Heritage Group membership was dwindling, one or two members had sadly died or had left not renewing their membership. Potential new members would perhaps come along to the Swan and after one or possibly two meetings would no longer return. Why ? Informal feedback was suggesting that the meetings at the Swan were boring and not very educational. They had come to be 'entertained' not get embroiled in a 'committee meeting'.

So in 2023 a new committee was formed to lead the members and in doing so clarify strategic objectives. The first of these was to instigate a programme of talks at the village hall on a variety of historical subjects, such as the mills of Suffolk and the early days of broadcasting. many using East Anglia as a source of material. The prime aim of these talks has been to entertain and inform. Members have still been involved in the running of the Group through the meetings at the Swan. The system is not perfect and needs to be refined to ensure that a balance is achieved between 'entertaining', and encouraging local research which can then be reported back to other

members. Hoxne Heritage Group also needs to increase its membership. Taking a leaf from the Garden Clubs experiences it is only by attracting new faces will the Group regain its vibrancy in investigating, entertaining, informing and the training of its members to undertake their own heritage/history research.

We need to build upon the changes we have already made in order to do this. Our membership has at least stabilised and our finances are in a very healthy position due to the diligence of our Treasurer, Julie, despite the increased outgoings of paying speakers. May I take the opportunity of thanking Julie for undertaking this role for the last twelve (?) years or so with such competency. It will be a hard act to follow. I would also like to thank other fellow committee members for their support in formulating these changes and keeping 'the show on the road'. Above all credit must go to you, the member, for your perseverance in enduring the changes that have been made over the last year.

Being a volunteer, or a member of any group should be fun, if not, then there is no point in participating. We need to bring back the fun into Hoxne Heritage Group. Otherwise the group will dwindle away and die, just like many of the dinosaurs.

Chris Parkin.

Hoxne PCC Year Ended 31 December 2023
Report to Annual Meeting of Hoxne PC 26 April 2024

gm26.4.24

As Churchwarden I am pleased to supply this Report.

Along with a Church Service every Sunday we have celebrated St Edmund Day (20 November) we provide the venue for the Annual Addington Day service on Lammas Day (1 August).

Last year we completed the work on the Lavatory Building, linking it with a new pathway from the North Door to the Car Park. The final cost was £64,832 and this was covered by Grants from the Community Infrastructure Levy and support from the Friends of Hoxne Church.

Excluding the Lavatory Building total Income was £23,355 with matching Expenditure of £22,132.

Hoxne PCC paid in full the Quota of £9,869 and also paid in full the Incumbents' Expenses.

The PCC has secured a complete set of ringing bells and the project to put in a new Ringing Frame in the Tower is making progress.

We are examining the possibility of installing ev charging points near the Car Park.

Guy McGregor
26 April 2024

Commonwealth War Graves
Thanks to all volunteers

From Andy Morda
Churchwarden

Hoxne Shop and Post Office - Update

Mike Bartron sends his ^{Apologies}applies as he is unwell, we wish him a speedy recovery.

Now a year and a bit into the project: purchase the Shop/Post Office as Community Asset.

In September registered as a Community Benefit Society which is not for profit.

Management Committee oversees the project: with elections each year.

Once established anyone owning shares can put themselves forward to the Committee.

Over 98% of respondents to our community survey in 2023 supported the project.

Shop/Post Office specifically mentioned in recently adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

Fully costed Business Plan to purchase and refurbish the shop and flat circa £685k:

We will transform the garden into a community space, provide volunteering opportunities for young and old, provide a delivery service to those with reduced mobility and offer significantly increased opening hours and product ranges.

We are even considering opening the Post Office on a Sunday!

Funding: We now have share pledges of over £150k from over 500 people.

Over 50% of households in Hoxne have pledged financial support. A big thank you!

Applications for grants totalling over £30k have been submitted and/or approved.

Discussions with Barclays Bank to secure significant grant funding for the project.

There is a funding round for the Community Ownership Fund in late May: circa £450k.

With an election looming this is the last opportunity for this funding, so it's now or never!

We have had positive feedback from the Plunkett Foundation who are advising us.

We have a website www.hoxnecommunityshop.co.uk and a newsletter for information.

If you're not sure of about our plans, please ask myself or one of our 37 brilliant volunteers who have committed so much time to make this possible.

Particular thanks to Alison Carter, Alison Buckland, Helen Giles and Pete Cooper who have been knocking on hundreds of doors in the last couple of weeks to gain pledges.

If you want to volunteer to help with the project, then please get in touch.

Our next village meeting is at 7pm next Tuesday 30th April – Here at the Village Hall

ANNUAL REPORT FOR HOXNE PHOENIX GROUP 2023

I'm pleased to report that Phoenix has had a very busy year, in fact I think we are almost back to where we were before Covid.

Apart from the usual monthly meetings, two outings were organised. In early May a group set off in the Border Hopper to Horning where they boarded the Paddle Steamer for a cruise along the Broads before having lunch in Wroxham, and returning to Hoxne after an excellent day out. In November, 27 members went on a Simmonds coach to Ely Cathedral to the Christmas and craft Fair, it was a beautiful morning and the Cathedral looked magnificent as we approached the City, and judging by the number of bags and parcels in the coach on the way home, it was another successful day out.

Phoenix supported all the events in the village for the King's Coronation and decorated a tree in church for Christmas, but sadly during the year we lost one of our ^{er v e B} Founding members, Doreen Weller who died at the great age of 98. Although she had spent the last 10 years or so at Hartismere Place, she has left her mark on many organisations in the village including the W.I. which is now Phoenix, which were remembered at her Funeral.

In February after our AGM, 4 Explore Scouts from Fressingfield came to give us a presentation of their forthcoming trip to Kenya, where they would be living and working in an Orphanage in Nairobi for two weeks. We gave them a donation to help them on their way, and in August they came back to show us a video of their exploits. The most significant help they gave was to remove a rusty old water tank and replace it with a much larger plastic one. They also cooked and ate local food, helped the children with their homework and organised a Sports/fun day. They also managed to squeeze in a few days in the Bush where they were lucky enough to see all 5 of the big game. They told us the trip had opened their eyes to see how others live, and it was an experience they would never forget.

Our Fund Raising event in September when the Shanty Folk entertained a full house was good fun and enabled us to send over £500.00 to the RNLI, and in October Mark Mitchels came for his last visit to us as he is moving back to Devon, and ^{used} gave a very interesting talk along with photos about the River Deben from Source to Sea, we shall miss him.

We finished the year off by having a Beetle Drive – some of our members had never heard of such a thing, but we ended up having a rather chaotic but fun evening which everyone enjoyed.

Our membership has gradually increased during the year, everyone has enjoyed the meetings with a chance also to make and meet new friends, our Secretary now produces a newsletter each month reminding everyone of what has been planned, and a growing number of members meet regularly each month for a walk in the local area, usually finishing with a coffee somewhere.

Over 20 of our members are visiting Beth Chatto's Garden on May 7th either on the Border Hopper or by car, and our Fund Raising event this year will be Hoxne Race Night on Friday 4th October in the village hall which will be in aid of Phoenix Group and Hoxne Village Shop Community Project to which you are all invited.

V.C. Bradford

26/4/24

CHAIRMAN

St. Peter & St. Paul, Hoxne
Report for the Parish Council Village Meeting
Youth and Community projects

The church in Hoxne is very pleased to report that it now provides activities for children and young people of all ages.

The Little Lambs Babies and Toddler Group meets once a month at the Pavilion where parents, grandparents and carers enjoy socialising together and the under 5s take part in various activities, including crafts, water play, singing and lining up endless cars!

Messy Church is also a monthly activity aimed at the 4-8 year olds, where the children take part in games and craft activities around a particular bible story. The parents attend with their children so this is another opportunity for them to get to know other parents and share time together.

During the school holidays the church runs a workshop called Club Create for the 7-12 year olds, at which the kids take part in a creative activity. The most recent Club Create at Easter was a drama workshop based on the story of the resurrection. The children enjoyed acting out the various parts of the story, but their ingenuity and teamwork when it came to creating props and making a tomb out of cardboard boxes was quite amazing.

The newest project the church has been involved in is the launch of the Youth Café held once a month on a Friday evening at the Pavilion. Around 20 young people aged 12+ have attended since January where they are able to enjoy activities including pool, table top football, darts and outdoor games. Food is always on offer (a must with teenagers) and the youngsters have really enjoyed making new friends and socialising together.

A very encouraging aspect of all these activities is that people from outside of the church community have been putting themselves forward to help out. The Church and the Scouts will be working together when the Scouts put on a BBQ at the Church Summer Event on 8th June.

At the other end of the spectrum from the children's work, members of the church have been able to resume visits to the Depperhaugh Care Home following Covid. Visits take place on average twice a month; one of these takes the form of a short service with hymns, readings and prayers, and communion is also offered; the other visit involves members of the befriending team sharing poetry, short stories, newspaper and magazine articles or photographs with small groups of residents, to encourage chatting together about their memories, childhood, families and work. We find this very rewarding from both sides and the laughter and obvious pleasure emanating from the residents is a joy.

If anyone feels they would like to get involved in any of these activities please do get in touch with anyone at the church.

Pavilion Chairman's Report

AGM 18th April 2024

This last year has been very productive for the Pavilion and the Playingfield on the whole. We have had a successful Coronation event in May 2023, for which we were given a lot of local funding (thanks to Stuart Jarrold), to enable us to create a free community event for all local people.

The bar and Social Club has been well re-established and is open weekly on a Thursday while Ed's Plaice Fish and Chip Van is in situ at the Pavilion, as well as opening on the first Friday of every month for the local community. The connection with Gary from Coconut Monkey has also gone from strength to strength as he provides regular exciting dining experiences for local residents, as well as visitors from further afield.

We also have some regular hires from the Church through Little Lambs (Baby and Parents group) as well as a Youth Club every month for High School aged children. This has proven to be quite popular with local teens from the village and surrounding villages.

Unfortunately, there is no regular sports team that uses the facilities any longer, enquiries have been made to local teams (in various sports) to see if they would like to make use of the fantastic venue. Perhaps this coming year will prove more fruitful in this area.

A lot of cleaning up of both the inside and outside has taken place, as well as general maintenance of the building. Quotes have been obtained for more updating of the inside (in terms of new flooring and storage space) as well as the outside space. No grants have been able to be secured for these upgrades as yet, applications will be made in the next financial year. Many thanks to Duncan McGreggor, Felicity Golding and Carole Smith for these applications in the past.

Bar staffing is primarily covered by Duncan McGreggor, with help from Paul Chapman, Stuart Jarrold and our kind volunteer Angie Sarthet. Greater numbers of volunteers need to be sought to take the strain off of Committee.

Our next event will be Mayfest on Sunday 5th May from 11 am – 7 pm and will include classis cars, Music from several groups, a children's entertainer and stalls from village groups (including the Bowls Club for a target game). The bar will be open, as will the kitchen for teas, coffees and cakes, and the fabulous Scouts will be running their BBQ again.

It is a free event due to the amount of fundraising by Stuart Jarrold and kind donations from the local authority and local groups. It is a community event which is open to all villagers from Hoxne, surrounding villages, and further afield. So please do tell anyone you think may be interested in coming along.

Including the installation of EU charging points & A D-fib machine.

2023/2024 and the Maynard's trust

Two Trustees are appointed by St Edmund's Primary School, 2 Trustees by the Parish Council and one Trustee from the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul with St Edmund, Hoxne. We have met quarterly to consider grant applications regarding a wide range of educational purposes for people living in Hoxne of all ages and backgrounds. Applications are not means tested.

Two trustees have stepped down this year having done a great job in the administration and decision making of the Maynard's Educational Trust – Jonathan Lawry and Amanda Jones. One of these has been replaced by Jonny Stenhouse who is already having a strong input to the trust and a further trustee is in the process of being appointed.

The Trust has granted £3,125 since January 2023 towards a variety of educational causes for people who live within Hoxne. This includes school trips, laptops for specific learning needs, coaching, tutoring, support for older members of Hoxne updating computer skills. As the 2022-3 contribution to the school, we donated £300 towards the provision of a sensory space for pupils at St Edmund's primary school.

The Trust is there to be used. Its funds, which are defined by income generated by the trust, are available to all who live in Hoxne, irrespective of age.

Richard Giffin (Maynard's Educational Trust)

Village Voices Report
For
Hoxne Parish Meeting – April 26th 2024

Hoxne Village Voices is a community choir which meets on Mondays at 7.30p.m. in St Edmunds Village Hall.

We sing an eclectic mix of music – everyone is welcome.
Singers come from a large catchment area of over 11 villages.
We have 34 members and an average attendance of 24.

In May 2023 we sang a selection of songs at the Coronation event held on Hoxne playing field.

At Christmas we entertained the residents at The Depperhaugh with seasonal songs and on the 23rd December we gathered with many villagers at The GreenGold Café for a fun evening of Christmas carols.

In February we held a very successful concert in Starston Church singing to a packed audience.

We are currently rehearsing for a concert in aid of the RNLI Bicentenary and the Village Shop. This will be held on Saturday June 29th at Hoxne Church.

We are very fortunate to have an inspiring musical leader in Janet Koralambe, who kept us going through the pandemic with weekly sessions on Zoom. A lot of choirs disbanded during this time, but we have been lucky to have a strong group who have maintained their enthusiasm and enjoy singing.

Liz Govan
Chairman.

VILLAGE VOICES COMMUNITY CHOIR
REPORT FOR HOXNE PARISH COUNCIL APRIL 2024

- Our numbers are continuing to build after Covid – we now have 32 members who regularly attend our practice on a Monday night, 7.30 – 9.30 in the Village Hall
- *Dec. 18th @ Deepeshaugh*
- We had a very successful and really enjoyable evening singing carols at Green Gold café on December 20th, with fantastic audience participation. Snacks and hot chocolate were provided by Gill and Yannis
- We have been invited twice now to create performances for Norman Steer, the Vicar at Starston Church. The first was to celebrate the Dickleborough British Legions 100th anniversary. This was held at Dickleborough church and the Gislingham Silver Band also took part.
- The second was originally to be held in October, but had to be cancelled due to the floods. It was rescheduled for February 10th at Starston church. The church was full and the choir were much appreciated by the audience. Simon Limbrick, an internationally renowned percussionist joined us for that performance.
- Our next concert will be on June 29th in and around the Church in Hoxne and will be part of the national singing events that are taking place to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the RNLI. Prior to the concert we'll be visiting, and singing at, the lifeboat station in Aldeburgh on June 1st. Some of the money we raise from these events will go to the RNLI and some will go towards the setting up of Hoxne Community Shop and Post Office.
- Our membership comes from Hoxne and a number of other local towns and villages, some as far afield as Walsham Le Willows.
- We are a friendly, non-auditioning choir that welcomes anyone that would like to sing. The songs are all taught by ear so you don't have to read music and sound files are available to help your learning.

Janet Koralambe,
Choir leader