

Hoxne Parish Council.

Chair's Report 2024/25.

Hoxne Parish Council is not divided along party political lines and in my view nor should it, the main rationale being to try and make Hoxne a better place in which to live. One does not need to be a member of any political party in order to do that. However, during this year party politics did make an impact on the work of the Council when a General Election was called for July of last year with a change of Government as a result.

Prior to the election the Community Benefit Society hoping to buy the village shop before it closed down had more or less all of its finances in place for the project to go ahead. Then, catastrophe, the funds from the Government department responsible for levelling up ceased. The change of Government meant the shop group had a major cash shortfall.

In stepped the Council at their request, a joint group was set up and despite what I said last year it looked as if Hoxne Parish Council would be taking out a large loan payable back over fifty years to make up the shortfall. This has not happened partly due to rising interest rates on municipal loans and a revaluation of the shop premises which was not good news for all involved in the negotiations. The shop has now closed and the Council subsequently supported an application for a change of use to a residential unit using specific planning criteria laid down by law. Hopefully the shop group will be

successful in their quest to open a village shop in new premises.

The Council is still in negotiations with the County Council Highways Department regarding suggested traffic management proposals. At the moment it looks as if we have been partially successful in our plans with speed reductions hopefully agreed for Low Street and Cross Street. This has yet to be formally agreed, but if successful then the Council will be expected to pay for the legal procedures and the implementation of any changes. We do not yet know how much this will be but it will likely be in the thousands rather than the hundreds.

This is one of the major reasons why Hoxne Parish Council has increased its share of your Council Tax by 50% this year. This is the first real increase since 2023. For a Band D property this means an increase of £19.68 spread over the whole year. Obviously, if you live in a Band A, B or C property, then the increase will be less.

Trying to make Hoxne a great place in which to live means the Council is an advocate of social cohesion. We want this village to be a living, thriving community, not just a collection of dwellings where the inhabitants commute to a nearby town to work returning to their homes in the evening closing the front door behind them, or indeed older residents who do not go out because there is nothing for them to get involved with in their village. There are villages not too far from here just like that.

That is why we were involved in the shop project. That is why we try and support different groups and clubs in the

village if possible. For example we gave a grant to pay for the village hall hire so that the Garden and Social Club could present the annual Hoxne Flower and Produce Show. The Council also gave a donation to Hoxne Heritage Group to help in updating their Website, available for all to see. The Council also gave financial support to help in buying garden tools for the Community Payback Team working to tidy up the church graveyard. A grant was also given to the team in organising the Community Day at the playing fields and pavilion, albeit, not as large as last year.

It has therefore been a another busy year for your parish council. Not just through the monthly meetings but also a plethora of additional meetings to do with flooding, traffic management, planning issues. And they are only the meetings; your councillors have also not been afraid to get their hands dirty, either washing and cleaning traffic signs cutting back vegetation in the community orchard, or picking up litter in the annual village 'spring clean'.

I must therefore thank my fellow councillors for their commitment to the village shown by the work they have done and their support for me. A team I am proud to be part of.

Finally, I have some sad news to report. Sarah Foote your Parish Clerk of some sixteen years has decided to step down from her post. Her support in following the correct procedures, keeping us in order at meetings and liasing with external agencies on our behalf has been immeasurable. I wish to also thank her personally for the additional support Sarah has given me as Chair over the

last two years, making this job so much easier. Sarah will be a hard act to follow. We wish her well for the future.



FRESSINGFIELD SCOUT GROUP

Annual Report to our Communities 2025

1st Fressingfield Scouts provides wonderful opportunities for young people of all ages to contribute to their communities, gain confidence, and learn new skills. But we can't do this without input from our friends and supporters for which we are very grateful.

Regardless of the title that we have we like to think of ourselves not as just Fressingfield Scout Group but as the Scout Group for the area and it is good to see enthusiasm for what we do and to have so many members and such great support from the surrounding villages.

We continue to develop and improve our site and this year have installed more hedging for wildlife and shelter. Unfortunately, the next door building development has stalled and we do not yet have our own mains water and sewer connections and whilst the new access from New Street has been laid out it isn't finished or accessible to us. This is making it impossible to finish our carpark and the temporary surface has suffered badly.

We continue to fundraise to fund developments and maintenance at the HQ. There are Group events like the Open Evening and Santa Run which this year finished at the Village Christmas Market, where we were pleased to provide the barbeque. There was much positive comment about Scouting and support for what we do which was very pleasing.

Other fundraising events have included bric a brac stalls, cake stalls, quizzes, barbeques and sponsored activities. Thank you to everyone from the many villages that our members come from for their support at these events.

We have been pleased to support Christmas Tree Festivals in Hoxne and Weybread.

As you would expect camping and outdoor activities are a big part of what we do. Our biggest camp was Group Camp which was again at Eaton Vale Activity Centre. 75 Young People and 16 Leaders had a very active weekend camping, climbing, canoeing, pedal go carting, crate stacking, raft building, shooting both air rifles and bows, grass sledging and playing wide games. The smallest camp was the overnight stop on a two day Expedition Challenge hike where four 13 year old members navigated, mainly on footpaths from Eye to Stradbroke via, Brome, Oakley, Hoxne and Denham completing a survey comparing and assessing the churchyards for wildlife benefit. We have twice had camps for small groups in a remote wood. Firstly, for our annual Middle of Nowhere camp where we go back to basics with cooking on a fire, butchering wild game for dinner and sleeping in bivouacs. Secondly, as an overnight stop off on their first experience of hiking carrying all their kit and cooking expedition food on lightweight stoves.

The Explorer Summer Camp was to Corfe Castle where much hiking, swimming, sea kayaking and exploring was done. The highlight seems to have been a “mud run”!

Pioneer Troop Scouts had a very busy and successful joint activity camp with Warriors Beavers at Hallowtree Scout site in Ipswich, apparently many of the Young People slept in the car all the way home which is usually a good indicator of a successful camp!

Our contingent had a great time at the annual Bank Holiday Norfolk County organised Water Activities Weekend at Decoy Broad. Unfortunately, the weather was unkind and although we set up on Friday evening and finished on Monday afternoon in warm sunshine the two days between had a lot of rain, the occasional thunder clap and a few flashes of lightning!

The outstanding highlight of our year has been the Explorer Expedition to Iceland last Easter. This was our third visit over ten years and this year we combined with Long Stratton Explorers so there was a much bigger group. Activities included hiking across glaciers, pony trekking, having a dip in hot springs and a snowball fight! Our members and Leaders gained an enormous amount from the trip and joining with another Scout Group added an extra, and very positive, dimension to the experience.

We have recently completed our annual membership return to the Scout Association. This has revealed that the Fressingfield based sections have grown by 10 youth members in the year. This is spread across all sections and is around an overall 11% increase which is very pleasing but results in an increasing strain on our Leader Team.

Scouting is fun, rewarding and challenging not only for the young people from our communities but also for the dozens of adult volunteer Leaders and helpers that support the Scout Group.

Subject to the necessary Safeguarding checks and some training and support, we are also seeking to expand the number of adults that volunteer with us either in roles in the Sections with our Young People or in support roles in the background. Opportunities in a number of roles exist for anyone aged between 18 and, well, anything really!

Get in touch through our website, www.fressingfieldscouts.com Facebook, twitter or Instagram pages or speak to any Leader. You can also email Andrew the Group Scout Leader at: gsl@fressingfieldscouts.com

As always we are very grateful for the support, both financial and in other ways from local Parish Councils.

1st Fressingfield Scout Group is affiliated to the Southern Norfolk District Scout Council, Norfolk Scout Association. It is operated by volunteers and is funded solely by our members, fundraising and the generosity of sponsors and public subscriptions.

We are a registered charity (No. 1181154) our governance arrangements and accounts can be viewed at the Charity Commission website.

Hoxne Garden and Social Club 2025 Report for Parish AGM

Last year was another full year for the Garden Club, with our usual varied range of talks and speakers for members and non-members alike. The wildlife talks are always popular and included the Wild Waveney and the honey bee last year. This coming October we have a talk on owls, rescheduled from last year, and on perfect pollinators in January, so do come along if you are a wildlife lover. Our members and visitors alike enjoyed talks on salvias and wild gardens, and this year can look forward to learning about orchids, geraniums and the British oak, among others.

We held our plant sale in May, which was very successful, adding substantially to the club's funds. This year we will be holding our plant sale at the Hoxne Community Day (formerly known as Mayfest) this coming Sunday 4th May, from 11am at the Hoxne Playing Fields. Please do come along to support us and buy from our great selection of annuals, perennials, shrubs and vegetable plants, which the committee has been growing and potting on for the last year.

The Flower, Craft and Produce Show was very well-attended again last year, with many exhibits and visitors coming to see the lovely displays and enjoy tea and cake in the afternoon. We will be holding the Flower, Craft and Produce Show again this year, on Saturday 6th September. We try to make it a fun event, not too serious, so if you haven't entered before, please give it a go. Full details will be available in the Village Voice, but include categories such as the wonkiest vegetable,

the heaviest tomato, jams, chutneys, tarts, knitted and sewn items, photography and many more.

The committee is a happy group who work well together to keep the club alive. Jeanette is doing a fantastic job as chair, bringing a wealth of gardening experience to the club; Julie has been our treasurer for 7 years now and does a wonderful job; Angie has taken the lead on marketing and promotion of the club, posting messages on FaceBook, putting out the A-boards each month to advertise the talks, and designing this year's flyer. Rachel is our secretary, taking accurate minutes of all our committee meetings and ensuring actions are taken in a timely fashion. Debbie now writes the articles for the Village Voice and uses her artistic flair to embellish our advertising A-boards. I am now the membership secretary, so please do come and speak to me if you are thinking of joining our vibrant club.

If you don't already have a flyer with our talks and events for 2025-2026, please do collect one. Thank you.

Hoxne village Hall - Report to the parish meeting – 1 May 2025

I am pleased to report this hall has made financial progress in the past year and made a small surplus, following a series of Covid induced deficits (YE 28-02-25).

The most visible change in the past year has been the introduction of media equipment into this room (the lounge). So far, this has gone down very well, and in particular our monthly film night attendance has gone up as a result.

The hall continues to renew. Recently three stalwarts have stepped back. **Sharon Knights** has left the committee and is no longer a booking clerk and no longer runs the bar. **Micheal Knights** is currently still on the committee but becoming less active. I think it would be fair to say neither has entirely disappeared, and we are grateful for their continuing support.

The third person to go is Wendy. **Wendy Hambling** has been cleaning the hall for slightly longer than anyone can remember, and has finally chosen to take a well earned retirement. (PAUSE)

Having said that the hall made a small surplus to last 28 February, I ought to add that I don't think we are necessarily out of the financial woods. The retirement of Wendy is likely to double the cost of cleaning the hall. Also, as I predicted last year our insurance has gone up a lot – about 50% - to over £3,000 a year. So, we may still need to increase prices, albeit they look more stable than before.

I am expecting us to break even next February.

For a more detailed account of the hall's plans, come to our AGM in this very building on **Thursday, 22 May 2025**. Five committee members will be elected at the meeting.

I remind organisations that are regular users of the hall that they can nominate a representative on to the hall committee, but need to tell us by the beginning of the AGM.

Finally, as always, we are indebted to our booking clerk who is now **Sally Dudley**. Much effort is now put in by the Chair & Secretary: **Bryn Lerwill** and **John Coop**. As neither is here, if you have any complaints, I am happy to confirm it is their fault!

Any Questions?

Stephen Nixon (Treasurer)

Hoxne Heritage Group.

Chair's Report 2025.

The path chosen by members of Hoxne Heritage Group last year was to continue with the changes it had made previously in order to try and widen the appeal of the Group. Without removing its remit to investigate the history of Hoxne the Group has also continued to provide a range of activities to educate and inform not just members but also others who might have an interest in history.

We have therefore continued with our bi-monthly talks at the village hall. It is fair to say that some have been better than others, however, the scope of those talks has nevertheless been wide enough hopefully to appeal to a wide variety of historical interests. The last couple of talks were especially successful with a large audience. Hopefully this improvement will continue.

We also organised a visit to Bulmer Brickworks last summer to observe bricks being made in a traditional manner for heritage projects. The visit was well attended and I think everybody came away appreciating the importance of heritage crafts being practised in a traditional manner in this age of mechanisation. I am hoping more visits for members will follow. (so if you would like to organise one.....).

We also turned the corner in increasing our membership. We now have 29 paid up members which is four up on

last year. Although at a very early stage I am hoping the increase in membership will create a new vibrancy to the Group with more members coming forward to lead or arrange activities for other members to participate in. This has already started to happen, for example a relatively new member is organising and leading a walk around the Smithfield/Farringdon area of London during the late spring of this year. Another member is organising a visit to the site of a Roman villa in the south of the county. At the end of the day the Group will only be as good and rewarding to be part of as the efforts the membership puts into it.

Less successful was our liaison with the community group hoping to buy the village shop and post office. A small group of committee members investigated the old brick shed in the back garden of the shop with a view to it ultimately becoming an 'archive' centre and a base for the historical items amassed by the Group over the years. The quest to buy the premises failed, primarily as a result of the General Election. The owner of the shop has now applied for a change of use to a residential property.

An aim for this year will be for the Group to centralise all of its paper archives and develop a system whereby they can be borrowed and returned after use by any member. Proper accommodation for the larger archive materials and display cabinets and boards may take a bit longer.... It is fair to say however that much of this material can already be accessed on the website or cloud part of it.

More successfully has been the creation of a new Hoxne Heritage Group website which is now up and running. With financial help from the Parish Council and a private resident of Hoxne the cost of the new website has not 'broken the bank,' it has a more modern appearance and greater flexibility of use. Please, everybody have a look it.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank all the members of your committee who have worked diligently to ensure that Hoxne Heritage Group survives and prospers. As Chair it has given me great pleasure to be part of a great team. Thank you.

Chris Parkin.

Parish Church of St. Peter & St.Paul with St. Edmund
Community and Pastoral Care Report

As reported last year, the Church in Hoxne is continuing to provide activities for children and young people of all ages, as well as the older folk in the community.

The Little Lambs Babies and Toddler Group is currently meeting twice 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 creative play. We have also been joined on occasion by the younger children from St. Edmund's primary school.

Messy Church is continuing to thrive and is 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 children also share tea together. 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 science based morning where the children made rockets to blast off and balloon propelled cars, as well as learning about sound and colour mixing. A total of 11 children joined in the fun, along with some parents who also had a great time.

The Youth Café is held once a month on a Friday evening at the Pavilion. This is aimed at young people aged 12+ who enjoy activities including pool, table top football, darts and outdoor games. Food is always on offer and the youngsters have really enjoyed making new friends and socialising together.

A small group from the church go into St. Edmund's Primary School twice a term to present Open the Book, where we act out bible stories for the children. Often these sessions involve active participation from the children and there are always a good number of enthusiastic children who want to take part. The school have been bringing the children to the church for an end of term service, during which the children have read poems and prayers written by the children, and very enthusiastically joined in the wonderful songs they have been learning. These services are always well attended by the children, staff and parents as well as the church community, and are greatly enjoyed by all.

Our contact with the Depperhaugh Care Home has continued to develop with visits taking place two to three times a month, either in the form of a short service with hymns, readings and prayers, and on occasion communion is offered; other visits

involve members of the befriending team sharing poetry, stories and photographs with small groups of residents, to encourage chatting together about their memories, childhood, families and work. One of the residents kept us entertained recently for about half an hour with memories of his evacuation during the war. We also engage in craft activities, and have made Christmas decorations, spring flowers, snow pictures and hedgehogs using autumn leaves. We find this very rewarding from both sides and the laughter and obvious pleasure emanating from the residents is a joy.

We were able to instigate a connection between Little Lambs, St. Edmund's primary school and the Depperhaugh when at Christmas time, the children attended a Crib Service in the Church, after which they decorated their tree ready for the Christmas Tree Festival. As the residents of the Depperhaugh could not attend the church to decorate their own tree, the children very kindly decorated the tree on their behalf with the decorations that the resident had made.

The monthly coffee mornings in church still take place on the third Saturday of the month and is a chance for villagers to get together for a chat and to browse the book stall.

For those of you who visit the churchyard, you will have seen the wonderful work that has been done with the help of the Community Pay Back Team, who visit once a month and take on any tasks to help maintain the churchyard. It also provides an opportunity for pastoral care towards those who have lost their way in life. We are often thanked by the participants for just showing simple love and kindness (along with cakes and scones which are greatly appreciated by the chaps). We have also been able to tap into local expertise to help out with tree management and general conservation and we would like to take this opportunity to thank Carl Leader, Alan Garnham and Waveney Trees for their assistance, and also Marie Lagerberg who has been helping us to develop the churchyard into a community space focusing on the environment and the flora and fauna. The PCC is very grateful to all those in the community who do their bit to keep the churchyard looking tidy around the burial plots. It is a huge task and we are extremely grateful to those who help out.

If anyone feels they would like to get involved in any of these activities please do get in touch with any of the church members. Contact details can be found on the new church website: www.hoxne.church.

Caroline Abbott
Lay Elder in Pastoral Ministry
17.4.25

St Peter & St Paul with St Edmund Hoxne Hoxne Parochial Church Council

Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2024.

Although the confirmation of Canon the Reverend Eleanor Goodison took place this month it is such a significant event I start this Report with this. Eleanor is now the Rector of the Hoxne Benefice. This includes the parishes of Denham, Horham, Hoxne, Redlingfield, Syleham, Wingfield and Athelington. This elevation from Priest in Charge to Rector confirms the esteem and confidence in her Ministry.

Hoxne Church has managed to ensure that regular Church Services are held every Sunday and on Zoom we hold Services of Compline. We hold additional Services such as Lamass (for the Addington Charity). For Hoxne Village School we facilitate special services to celebrate Christmas. There is also weekly attendance for Open the Book.

The Church and, thanks to the Community Payback Scheme, the Churchyard are all in good order. We have not given up on our plans for the Restoration of Church Bells. Hoxne PCC has fully met its financial obligation to its local ministers and met the Quota to the Diocese in full.

This is the Established Church for England and So the Hoxne PCC has a Duty to All Residents in the Village.

Guy McGregor 30 April 2025
Churchwarden

2024/2025 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 – Amanda Jones and Polly Potter. One of these (the primary school trustee) has been replaced by Rachael Cooper and the other (the Church trustee) was replaced by the Reverend John McCracken. They are already having a strong input to the trust and a further trustee is in the process of being appointed.

The Trust received £3142 income and has granted £4756 since January 2024 towards a variety of educational causes for people who live within Hoxne. It has used some of the surplus capital generated but not used during the COVID years. Grants have included school trips, glasses for specific learning needs, coaching, tutoring, textbooks. As the 2024-5 contribution to the school, we donated £300 towards the training for a member of staff at St Edmund's Primary school so they can offer Forest Schools sessions.

We are currently working on developing a website for the Trust using a Hoxne business and hope that most applications will be able to be dealt with via this media.

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)

ANNUAL REPORT FOR HOXNE PHOENIX GROUP 2024

I'm pleased to report that Phoenix is going from strength to strength. We celebrated our 17th Birthday last month, our balance sheet is healthy and our subs remain the same at £25.00 per annum.

We've had some interesting speakers this year starting in January when Adrian Tindall, head town guide of Bury St Edmunds came to tell us about the history and architecture of the town. Members were so interested, a guided tour given by Adrian was arranged by our Speaker Finder for June, and that was so successful a second tour was booked for September. A similar tour of Norwich is now being discussed for later this year.

We've had serious talks to listen to 'Modern Day Slavery' was very thought provoking, but also amusing subjects 'Beach Bonkers' what you can find on a beach, and I'm very disappointed I missed a talk entitled 'Positive Ageing'. But I think that's too late for me now. We tried something new in October for our fund raising event, a Race Meeting which not everyone agreed with, but I know those members and friends who went, thoroughly enjoyed trying to pick the winners, and we were able to donate £50.00 towards the new projector in the Village Hall, and £320.00 to the Waveney Food Bank.

In May a group filled the Border Hopper to visit Beth Chatto's garden, and were blessed with glorious weather, however in November a group of 29 went on a Simonds Bus to Sandringham Christmas Fayre, plenty of parcels and bags arrived on the bus for the journey home, plus fortunately 29 of us, because it was bitterly cold as most of the stalls were outdoors.

We finished the year listening to a local lady from Oakley who brought a wonderful selection of candles that she makes, a lovely subject for a Christmas meeting, but it was even more interesting to hear how and why she had moved from London to the Suffolk countryside.

Apart from all the meetings and outings, an increasing number of members visit Green & Gold café once a month for coffee and chat, also a walk of about 5 miles is organised once a month and usually ends somewhere with coffee. Our Secretary produces a monthly newsletter which reminds members of these events and we also now have a group whatsapp.

So all in all I think I can report that Phoenix has had another successful year.

V. E. Bradfore

Chairman

1/5/25