

PARISH OF RINGSTEAD
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
11 MAY 2026 – 6.30PM - RINGSTEAD VILLAGE HALL

Chair - Cllr W Jacob – Chair of Ringstead Parish Council

Taking Minutes – Simon Lee (Clerk)

Also in attendance:

Cllr V Everitt, Cllr S Little, Cllr N Shelley, Borough Cllr T de Winton and two members of the public. Cllr J. Barnett and Cllr B Crowfoot gave apologies for arriving late.

The Chair welcomed and thanked all those present for attending the meeting.

Apologies none had been received.

1. The minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 12 May 2025 were agreed and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

2. **Reports from:**

Borough Council – the Chair introduced Cllr de Winton who gave a verbal report including an update on the recent Couty Council election and the proposed new Wards for the West Norfolk Unitary Authority. This would include Brancaster, the Saxon Shore parishes, Sedgeford and Docking with a total of 3384 voters in the new Ward.

Cllr de Winton set out the proposed timetable and advised that a new Shadow body of Councillors would be elected in 2027 with the new unitary authority commencing on 1 April 2028. The recently elected County Councillors would only be in post for two years before the new West Norfolk Unitary Authority was established. Cllr de Winton was intending standing as Councillor for the new unitary authority.

In response to a question Cllr de Winton anticipated that the new Unitary Authority would be based in King's Lynn with satellite offices.

There was a discussion about the need to amend Ward and Divisional boundaries and Cllr de Winton advised that central Government had prepared the proposals.

In addition, Cllr de Winton updated the meeting on the proposed planning reforms being introduced by the Government, aimed at speeding up the planning process. Two new tiers of development would be created, Tier A would include smaller planning applications for house extensions and there would be no opportunity to 'call-in' these applications by Councillors, with decisions delegated to planning officers. The Tier B applications would include the larger planning applications and there would still remain the opportunity to call-in these developments.

In response to a question Cllr de Winton advised that consultations with statutory consultees would still take place for both Tier A and B developments. There was a discussion about whether planning officers would consider policies within Neighbourhood Development Plans, and it was confirmed that where adopted these were statutory documents and had to be considered as part of the planning process.

3. **Reports from Groups:**

a) **Friends of St Andrew's Church:** report submitted by Chair of The Friends.

We have been pleased to contribute to the external works to the Church in 2025 including the downpipes and guttering. This year we will be making an Appeal to help take forward repairs identified in the Quinquennial Report.

Signed _____ Chair

Date _____

We are delighted at the support we have received through Garden Sunday and also the Winter Bridge events and would take this opportunity to help all those who support us and make these events so successful

b) Village Hall Management Committee – report submitted by Chair of Village Hall Committee.

We continue to keep the hall ticking along but do not have as many bookings as in previous years.

Lunches and Teas were served for the annual Open Gardens in June and will be again this year.

The Table Tennis and Carpet Bowls groups continue to meet on a weekly basis and there are also a couple of weekly private hires, and other groups (Yoga etc) hiring throughout the year.

We held a “Winter Warmer” event in February, which was not as well attended as previous years by residents (but it did clash with the Rugby!) so we will look at dates for the next one to make sure they don’t clash with other events. This is an excellent opportunity to meet up with others and hopefully new friendships are formed.

We will be undertaking our annual risk assessments soon (H&S etc) and these will all be in an updated folder in reception.

The Electric meter has been switched off, and as a result the hire prices of the hall have increase slightly to include heating during the winter months. We will continue to review this as whilst we need to remain competitive in hire charges, we need to recoup the annual cost of electricity (£830).

The Annual Race Night was held in October and was well attended, and we will look at holding one again this year.

We would like to thank Mo Covell who has been an active committee member for a number of years for all her help, she has now stood down as a trustee due to relocation. We would like to extend a warm welcome to Amanda Crowfoot who has joined the committee and will also be taking over from Melanie as Secretary in the coming months.

d) Parochial Church Council - report submitted by the Secretary

The Parochial Church Council met regularly during the year.

It regularly received and reviewed financial reports; received reports on the progress of the appointment of a new incumbent for the benefice. Despite the vacancy in the benefice, now into its fourth year, with the support of the Rural Dean and the retired clergy in the benefice, the regular pattern of services was sustained, including Christmas, Easter, Harvest Thanksgiving and Remembrance Sunday services.

Volunteers continued to regularly clean the church and to provide flowers for the church, and maintain the churchyard, supporting the work of the contractor, with twice yearly mornings of cleaning and clearing ivy and maintaining flower beds. Major work was undertaken by the contractor to level and put into good order the east end of the Churchyard.

Major work has also been undertaken, under the direction of the church architect, to improve the rainwater disposal system and provide new soakaways to drain water away from the building, to allow the damp affecting the walls to dry out, prior to remedial internal work.

A new Quinquennial Inspecting architect was appointed on the retirement of the previous architect and has conducted a Quinquennial Inspection, as a result of which a programme of remedial works will need to be put in hand.

Signed _____ Chair Date _____

A small band of volunteers undertake sterling service to ensure that the church is well maintained and that regular worship continues to be sustained, and that the church is open daily for a steady flow of visitors.

The support of the many people involved in so many ways in Open Gardens Sunday, is very much appreciated, when so many visitors are welcomed to the church and the village. The funds raised provide the main financial support for the routine of work of the Church including the PCC's contribution to Norwich diocesan funds, and, via the Friends of St Andrew's, to fund the major maintenance of the church building.

Remedial work continues to get the church clock working again.

f) **Parish Council** – report given verbally at the meeting by the Chair of Parish Council.

During the past year the Parish Council has met monthly, except during August.

Finance

The Council continues to carefully monitor its finances against the annual budget. The aim is to retain expenditure within the annual precept received from the Borough Council, from the Parish element of the Council Tax for the parish. The Council has retained the Community Improvement Levy received from the Borough for the development in Chapel Lane, for a definite future project. Grants have been received from our former County Councillor and the Borough Council towards the new gateway sign on Hunstanton Road and a new Sam sign to monitor traffic speeds.

Highways

We are awaiting a new Sam3 Sign to monitor traffic on High Street and Docking Road. The Council monitors potholes and verge-cutting by the County Council Highways Department.

Environment

The Council employs a contractor to cut the grass on the areas around the village sign, and along Docking Road, and also to cut the Playing Field, and also monitors the equipment on the Playing Field.

We are delighted that the footpaths from Foundry Lane to Thornham Road and from Docking Road via Neats Ling to Peddars Way South have been registered as rights of way.

Planning

The Parish Council is consulted by the Borough Council Planning Department about planning applications in the village. We have raised questions or objected to applications that do not fall within the requirements of our recently approved Neighbourhood Development Plan.

We monitor the development of proposals for a Wash Barrage, in the context of proposals for a Centre Port development near Boston.

Amenities

We have secured an additional stopping point for the monthly visit of the County Council Mobile Library. We have also been pressing for a bus service through the village, linking with the coastal bus service.

Great Ringstead Allotment Charity

We have followed up questions raised by a member of the public about the management of the Charity, and the implications of the various amendments to the Charity Commission Scheme governing the Charity have been clarified.

Volunteers

The Council are very grateful to the small number of volunteers who work hard to sustain the public realm in the village, by managing the Village Hall and the activities that take

Signed _____ Chair Date _____

place there, managing the Sam Signs to monitor the traffic speeds, to monitor the Playing Field, to maintain the Chalk Pit in the Downs, to support the maintenance of the parish church, and especially David and Helga Lendrum who worked hard for many years to secure the registration of the two footpaths.

The meeting closed at 19:04hrs.

Signed _____ Chair

Date _____