

Rockland St Mary with Hellington Parish Council

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 5th April at 7:30pm in The Parish Room,
Rockland St Mary**

(Subject to amendment until signed by the Chair at the next Annual Parish meeting)

Parish Councillors present Joanne Norris, Jack Trutch, Janet Rogers, John Sayles, Paul Francis
Apologies for absence Nikki Stone, Juliette Harkin
County Councillor None
District Councillor Vic Thomson
Also in attendance Charlotte Rust – Parish Clerk and Steve Gildersleeve – Caretaker
Members of public (MOP) Seven

Teas/Coffees were being served from 7:00pm

23.01 To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Apologies given.

23.02 To approve minutes of the Annual Parish meeting of April 2022.

Approved and signed.

23.03 To report matters rising from the previous minutes (for information only).

Clerk confirmed that she had added the Parish rooms report from 2022 as it had not been added to the minutes.

23.04 Finance:

23.04.1 To note the bank balance.

General account	£11,536.90
RSM CIL	£3,457.22
Hellington CIL	£0.00

23.04.2 To note any receipts.

Salvation Army	£24.58
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23.04.3 To note any grants.

King's Coronation Grant	£200.00
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23.05 To approve any payments of invoices and other expenses received since last meeting.

23.05.1 See April's Payment Schedule.

FOR APPROVAL						
	DATE	EXPENDITURE	PAYMENT METHOD	TOTAL	VAT	P/R NO
Caretaker	14.02.23	Dog Bin Post	BACS	£5.90	£0.00	
Caretaker	05.04.23	March Invoice	BACS	£365.25	£0.00	
SNDC	28.02.23	Dog Bins	BACS	£1,194.48	£199.08	
Clerk	05.04.23	Clerk Expenses	BACS	£21.94	£0.00	
Adepta	20.03.23	Payroll for yearend 05.04.23	BACS	£66.00	£11.00	
Parish Room	06.04.23	Coronation Grant	BACS	£200.00	£0.00	
Norfolk ALC	28.03.23	Subscription	BACS	£222.48	TBC	
SUB-TOTAL				£2,076.05		

Before the reports were given, a parishioners requested the Parish Council introduce themselves. All Cllrs present and Clerk did so.

23.06 To hear Annual Reports from:

23.06.1 District Councillor, Cllr Vic Thomson.

Cllr V Thomson provided his 2022/23 report which covered:

- Elections in May
- Impact of Covid – SNDC offered numerous grants to businesses. One bin run was missed during the pandemic.
- Heatwave – A review is being undertaken by the Fire Services following the devastating fires that affect neighbouring villages.
- War in Ukraine – Refugees continue to live with families.
- Inflation – SNDC offered numerous grants to assist with the cost-of-living crisis. Created warm rooms across South Norfolk which will run again in Winter 2023. The social impact of these warm rooms has been wonderful.
- A handyman service is being implemented across South Norfolk, in 2023.
- Office move – From Long Stratton to Broadlands has provided cost savings of £1 million, this is from not having to heat the old offices and the new offices being more energy efficient.
- Cllr J Rogers enquired about South Norfolk food caddy pilot for food recycling. Cllr V Thomson said the Government were looking into this, but it may not be cost effective in rural areas as well as problematic.

Cllr V Thomson left at 19:43pm.

23.06.2 County Councillor, Cllr Kay Mason-Billig – Read by Clerk.

Once again, I have had a busy year as your County Councillor. I have been to many parish council meetings in the division and have been answering questions about local issues from residents.

We still have many problems with potholes. If you come across one, please report it on the Norfolk County Council website. This will give you an enquiry number. If it isn't fixed in reasonable time, then let me know. I will chase it up with my Highways Engineer to find out what is happening. Having an enquiry number makes this easier to do, as it has already been logged.

We still have issues with hedges and trees obstructing footpaths and causing visibility problems on some roads. Again, please report it and then let me know if things don't improve. Some foliage can be cut back by the Council team, where it is not on private property. Alternatively, we can write to landowners asking for them to trim back any obstructions.

The new roundabout at Loddon on the A146 has made a massive difference to safety at this junction. I am aware that it is not looking its best though and

I am pursuing this to get the dead trees removed and replanted and for some regular maintenance to take place.

The extension to the 50mph speed limit at the Hellington Bends is likely to happen later this year. I am awaiting the issue of the Road Traffic Order that will enable us to replace the signage and reduce the speed limit on this dangerous stretch of road.

We have tackled the problem of flooding in many different areas in the division including recent works in Ashby St Mary and Chedgrave. I am aware that this is an issue which affects many people, and the flooding of residential property causes major distress and upset to residents. If you know of any particularly vulnerable places, let me know and I will ask my Highways engineer to take a look.

I have also been out with Officers from County to look at some new safety schemes in our villages. I am aware that speeding is a big issue in many places. I am trying to find solutions for the problems in Woodton, Chedgrave, Claxton, Rockland St Mary, Alington and Loddon, which have been brought to my attention. I am sure there are many others. I can ask the Police to attend if you know of regular incidences, where we can give them intelligence about times and places. Please get in touch if I can help.

If I can help in any way, you can contact me at
kay.masonbillig.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

23.06.3

Chair of the Parish Council – Read by Vice Chair, Cllr J Rogers.

This report covers the period from April 2022 until March 2023.

The Council

I have been Chair from January 2023 following the retirement of the Parish Council's long serving and dedicated Chair Kate Bevington.

As ever, the Parish council had been busy and pro-active. Three new councillors were appointed in 2022: John Sayles, Jack Trutch, and Janet Rogers replaced Catherine McCormick, Ernie Green and Mike Hayward. Charlotte Rust was appointed as Parish Clerk in Sept 2022.

In the new year Juliette Harkin was appointed bringing the council to its full complement of seven councillors with a wide and varied range of experience between them.

Bus Shelter

The bus shelter near St Margarets Way was replaced and re sited further away from main road. The bus shelter was hit by a large vehicle, which rendered it beyond economical repair. The insurers covered the cost of the replacement.

Blackhorse Dyke

Two new memorial benches have been installed in the quiet memorial garden area one of which has been designated as the Queen's Platinum Jubilee bench. Parishioners are able to purchase plaques to mount on the benches commemorating loved ones (as far as space allows). This idea came from parishioner suggestions for the use of Community Infrastructure Levy funding.

SAM2 Post

SAM2 post has been re sited to the correct position close to the Footpath 1, The Street.

The Footpath 1

Fingerpost was damaged by a bus and has been replaced by Norfolk County Council.

The Cast Iron Signpost by Surlingham Lane

The cast iron signpost was in need of repair. The Council arranged for it to be restored rather than have it replaced with a more modern design.

Post box at Hellington

The Royal Mail post box was damaged following an attempted theft. Royal mail removed the old one and replaced it with a post mounted pillar box.

Bench at Hellington

A new bench has been installed on the grass triangle at the bottom of Hellington Hill, using Hellington's remaining Community Infrastructure Levy.

Green Lane Playing Field

A tremendous amount of work has continued throughout the year replacing play equipment as required: an infant swing installed, removing the degraded tyre line, new rubber matting under the climbing unit, additional bark laid and both goals re-sited with new nets.

I'd like to thank our village caretaker Steve Gildersleeve for helping to maintain and check on the area. The area is very well used by locals and visitors, but we keep a watching brief on occasional bouts of anti-social behaviour with the support of our community police officer.

Super-Fast Fibre Broadband

A new revised scheme is being discussed as the voucher scheme has been paused. Details to be confirmed on a possible County Broadband scheme.

Housing sites

The Parish Council submitted a detailed response to SNDC's consultation regarding the village Cluster Plans for the allocation of two sites in the village. The response was based on parishioners' comments from the Parish Council meeting on the 1st March 2023 which also fulfilled the necessary criteria. This response was in addition to the previous series of five consultation sessions with parishioners and two council meetings during 2021. This resulted in a very detailed response based on empirical evidence compiled and submitted to SNDC.

Village Caretaker

The Parish Council continued to employ the services of the excellent Village Caretaker Steve Gildersleeve. Steve keeps the village looking very tidy, cutting the grass and helping out with a number of other tasks. On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to thank Steve for always going above and beyond what he is required to do.

Other matters

The Parish Council has continued to support individual parishioners over matters such as getting hedges and overhanging trees cut back and would like to thank those residents who prevent their hedges from encroaching footpaths. The Parish Council has provided support to residents regarding drainage issues on New Inn Hill, and School Lane which has been reported to Highways with work to rectify it going ahead, as well as several other matters.

I hope my report highlights the main things that the Parish Council had accomplished over the past year, and that these are of interest to parishioners. I note that there were many other tasks that the Parish Council carried out on a regular basis, and I wish to thank my excellent co-councillors, on behalf of the parishioners of Rockland St. Mary and Hellington, for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to both parishes.

Councillor Stone

Councillor Rogers

As Vice Chair and on behalf of my fellow Councillors I would like to thank our Clerk Charlotte who since her appointment has completed a tremendous amount of work organising the administration and finances of the Council and particularly for her work on the submission to the consultation in respect of the cluster developments. Thank you.

23.06.4 Poor's Trust – Read by Clerk.

Rockland St Mary Poor's Trust (Fuel Allotment) - a local charity with a charitable remit of...the PREVENTION OR RELIEF OF POVERTY in the Parish of RSM by way of grants to INDIVIDUALS IN NEED. Most of the Trusts income comes from mooring rentals.

Expenditure includes:

- Annual maintenance of the Staithe (grass & hedge cutting, & insurance).
- Grants to parishioners
- Essential long-term maintenance of the estate.

In the past year the major undertakings have been:

- Replacement of 60+ meters of wooden quay heading on the staithe moorings (adjacent to the boat dyke track off Lower Road), at a cost of £10,000
- Refurbishment of 20 meters of perimeter barrier in the car park at a cost of £1,200
- During this period 3 grants were made to parishioners totaling £1465 and a further £3200 given in grants under the 2022 Winter Hardship Fund initiative. A total of £4665 in grant aid to parishioners.

THANKS TO: Anita Manganaro and Jane Wood, trustees who have recently stepped down and to Adam Peel and Richard Underhill who have volunteered to replace them.

The Trustees would also like to thank Steve Gildersleeve for his sterling work maintaining the staithe over the past year.

Compiled by Sebastian Shelton (Chair) 27/03/23.

23.06.5

Parish Rooms – Read by Clerk.

Annual Report April 2022 -March 2023

Introduction

1. The Parish Room is used for a range of community activities within Rockland St Mary. It hosts a number of clubs and societies and therefore plays an important role in village life. It also has a part to play in civic life serving as a venue for Parish Council meetings and as a polling station during local and national elections. The hall continues to be a real asset to the community by promoting regular social activities hosted by private hirers as well as regular group activities, such as coffee mornings, which bring our community together.

2 . The Parish Room has charitable status and is managed by a committee of five volunteers. The Committee carries out its duties on behalf of the Roydon Trust although in practice the trustees have virtually no input into the day to day management of the Parish Room.

Bookings

3 . In addition to private bookings and one- off events, the following groups and clubs regularly use the Parish Room:

- Two table tennis clubs;
- Gardening Club;

- Craft Club;
- Cafe Church;
- Community Cafe;
- Poors Trust;
- Snug as a Bug Pre-School Group;

Finance

4 . Total income from bookings for 2022/23 was £2,280.14 and the total running costs, excluding maintenance and capital projects, was £3,265.74.

Maintenance Projects

5 . Drawing on Restart funding granted by South Norfolk Council during the Pandemic, extensive repairs to the roof and chimney were undertaken last Summer. This work was long overdue and proved necessary to prevent rain damage.

6 . The Committee was successful in obtaining grant funding of £938.00 from the Saffron Trust which enabled us to replace old strip lights with new, energy efficient LED lighting.

7. We have also purchased a new microwave oven, a paper towel dispenser, some new tables and a new noticeboard over the last year.

Insurance and Safety Issues

8. We continue to insure the building through Allied Westminster at a cost of £433.44 per annum. We arrange for fire safety inspections and fire extinguisher checks to be undertaken at regular intervals.

Future Priorities

9 . Although the repairs to the roof have gone a long way to make the Parish Room weatherproof repointing of the walls and application of waterproofing and sealing substances is necessary in order to prevent dampness on some of the walls. A local builder has been asked to submit a quotation for this work. Once this work is completed the Committee plans to give the Parish Room a complete makeover by redecorating throughout.

10. Following feedback from some of the groups which use the Parish Room we are in the process of having some new kitchen cabinets installed. These will be fitted by a local kitchen designer.

11. The above projects will be financed drawing on existing funds.

Jim Wretham, Chair of the Parish Room Committee

28 March 2023

23.06.6 Margaret Mack Room

Main hirers are the school. Other hall hire has remained steady. School has the monopoly during the day during term time. One thing that should be noted is that the side gate which now appears to be designated as a main entrance for the Nursery has no legal right of way from the road. When it was put in during the time of Ken Holbeck as headmaster it was a 'grace and favour' agreement between the then MMR Committee and Ken so that the children would not have to go along the road when accessing the MMR. This usage was sorted out a few years ago and NCC put in the gated entry (looks like a trolley park) for the school.

With the advent of the Nursery and covid restrictions they took over the usage of the gate and the MMR Committee have never been asked if the gate use can be changed, they've just done it. We should have had the permission of the Charity Commission for this, and I somehow doubt that they would have been given permission. The MMR is a registered Charity and the whole is vested in the 'Office of the Official Custodian for Charities' so there is no need for individual trustees.

The new trust deed in 1984 set up by the Charity Commission has a Management Committee including representatives from the RSMWH Parish Council, the RSM Church Council, RSM WI, the school, reps from other regular users e.g., the Bramrocks. We think we should have a PC rep as it would be a help, if and when we need to apply for any grants. Anyone else who feels they have something to offer would be welcome.

A copy of the Financial Statement is available to see. It is based on simple income and expenditure and hence appears to be 4 terms income from the school in 2022, but in 2021 they were late paying the last term and only paid 2 terms. The accounts are always independently examined at the end of our financial year.

A parishioner informed the MMR that the school clear the blocked drains as a good will gesture for use of the room.

Daphne Howlett

23.06.7 Hellington and Rockland St Mary Community Reserve (including report on the 200 club) – Read by Clerk.

Who owns and manages it?

Hellington and Rockland St Mary Community Reserve is a designated county wildlife site and comprises 6.6 acres of land, situated in a secluded valley at the eastern end of Hellington Low Common. The land is leased from the Parochial Church Council. The current lease runs to April 2024.

During the past 12 months, the committee has continued to administer the reserve in a way that supports the natural environment whilst promoting full access to all who wish to use it. Footfall has continued to be high which is good.

Our AGM this year, will be held on the 6th June, at the Parish Rooms, commencing at 7.30pm, Andy Hind from Norfolk Pond Project will give a talk on his work and show some footage of our ponds.

What was achieved in 2022/23?

We do have some big news, and that's the addition of two ponds on the marsh side of the reserve kindly sponsored by the Norfolk Ponds Project to encourage biodiversity and habitat for great crested newts.

A life-ring and signs have been erected for safety and we're looking forward to seeing what new wildlife we have encouraged onto the reserve. The addition of the ponds is very exciting.

Work on the reserve has continued and we have worked hard to keep pathways passable.

In addition, we have installed the following:

- A number of new Bat boxes
- Replacement Owl boxes
- Social activities included a very informative four churches walk led by Peter Armitage. Thanks to Peter.

What is planned for the future?

- We hope to conduct a further moth survey this summer
- Hold an event to look at what we have growing and living on the reserve
- Organise a walk around the local area
- Undertake working party days (Dates and times will be notified)

Rockland St Mary 200 Club

Currently our officers are Jane Paterson and Deborah Frosdick (Licence holder).

- This year we have paid £635 in prizes.
- £635 has been paid to The Community Reserve as half of the proceeds. This income has enabled the committee to maintain the current subscription at £20.

Stakeholders

More than 110 stakeholders supported the reserve in 2022 -2023 period, each donating £20 annually.

The committee are pleased to promote our reserve and we would encourage you to visit this super spot, we hope if you are not already a stakeholder, and you enjoy this community facility you will consider joining.

Entry is free and open to all.

Ian Sturgess, Chairman. April 2023.

23.06.8 Rockland St Mary Primary School

None provided.

23.06.9 Parochial Church Council – Read by the Clerk

Rockland St. Mary Church was open daily throughout 2022 for private prayer and visitors. The pattern of Sunday worship has been fortnightly, with additional services in the church and Barn for special occasions. It was a great joy to hold the popular Christmas Eve Crib Service once again. The sad death of HM The Queen was marked at St. Mary's by tolling a bell, a candlelit vigil and the opportunity to leave messages for the Diocesan condolence book. Rockland clergy also offered support to bereaved local families at funerals held in church and at local crematoria and the annual Tree of Light service before Christmas. Hellington church experienced a post-pandemic clean-up

before being used for a Group Summer service in July. In December a well-attended Christmas event organised by the Hellington community also took place there. Our thanks go to Helen Garrard and Mandy Ansell for their caring and faithful ministries in the parish.

It has been a great pleasure to support Rockland School through assemblies and Out of the Box storytelling in class, and to welcome the School community into St. Mary's for their Harvest and Christmas celebrations, and also the Year 6 leavers' assembly. I'm grateful to Helen, Gary Watson, our youth worker and his colleagues for a high-octane Easter discovery event in the Church and the Barn.

With Covid restrictions ended, the Barn has begun to flourish as a centre for spirituality, training, arts and refreshment. As well as hosting quiet days and services, it has been a popular venue for refreshments and towards the end of the year, as a warm room for the local community. We are very grateful to the Parish Council and SNDC for generous grant aid and the support of Cllr Vic Thomson.

We are very grateful to Steve Gildersleeve and our churchyard volunteers for maintaining the much-visited churchyard as a quiet space for reflection. The church and churchyard has been rejuvenated by a programme of works undertaken by thirty local volunteers. We would like to thank Mandy, the Churchyard Officer, and David Richardson for organizing work parties and repairs to Rectory Lane, and the many willing volunteers on whom we depend. We would also like to thank the Friends of St. Mary's for their essential financial support.

Thanks are due to the PCC officers, Debbie Frosdick, Secretary, and Daphne Howlett, Treasurer, for their continuing work. Our income is gradually recovering from the pandemic setbacks, greatly helped by well-supported Platinum Jubilee flower and Christmas tree festivals, with original, lively contributions from the wider parish community. We will keep listening to the community, seeking to respond to its needs and working in partnership wherever possible.

Finally, may I thank the PC for all it has achieved over the past year to support the communities of Rockland and Hellington and for helping to foster the good relationship between the Church and Parish Councils we enjoy.

Nick Garrard, Rector

23.06.10 Bramrocks

The repercussions of COVID 19 have led to Bramrocks struggling, as well as people moving away or various health issues. Bramrocks are hoping to put on a show this December with more details to follow. The one show in 22/23 was a success and made a profit.

Bramrocks thank the Parish Council for their hospitality.

Keith Saxton

23.06.11 Gardening Club

We have had a successful year and now have a membership of 40.

We have enjoyed speakers from Anglia Water, The Olive Tree Company, and the warden of Wheatfen. The Naked Gardener talked about spring flowers and Dr Ian Bedford told us about butterflies and the changing environment. Our final talk of the winter was on different types of bees , pollination and fertilisation.

In the summer we visited gardens in Rockland , Kett's Hill in Norwich, Stoke Holy Cross and the School of Gardening at Ketteringham (now at Bixley Manor).

We meet on the 4th Thursday of the month.

This year's summer show is on Saturday July 15th in the Parish Room. All welcome.

Ruth Everett President of the Gardening Club

23.06.12 W.I

We meet regularly on the second Tuesday evening of each month in the Margaret Mack Room.

We have enjoyed a wide range of speakers from Recycling with a difference, making hats and handbags, to Yoga for hands and shoulders. Lynton Johnson gave us an excellent demonstration of Flowers for Christmas and we enjoyed a cooking and tasting evening.

We celebrated the Queen's Jubilee with a party and in house entertainment.

We hold regular scrabble mornings and arrange outings and walks in the summer months.

Ruth Everett President of the WI

23.06.13 Others

The Rockland Broad Management Committee summary provided figures for the last year which will be on the website along with these minutes.

The meeting finished at 20:27pm.