

# Minutes of Hacheston's Annual Parish Meeting

Hacheston Village Hall  
7pm on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025



## 1. Chairman's welcome

James Hardy, as Chair of the Parish Council, welcomed everyone to the Parish Meeting. There were two members of public present as well as six Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerk who was the minute taker.

## 2. Apologies for absence

There were received from County Councillor Stephen Burroughes and District Councillor Sally Noble.

## 3. Minutes of 2024 Parish Meeting

These were agreed.

## 4. Matters arising

None

## 5. Hacheston Parish Council

The Parish Council has had a busy year, with increasing responsibilities and engagement demands. Linda Montgomery was co-opted following the resignation of Andy Markham, who was thanked for his service.

Three new solar-powered Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) were purchased using CIL funds, with one already installed and the remaining two due for installation later in the year.

In response to Storm Babet, the Chair and Cllr. Lavender compiled a detailed report for Suffolk County Council's Section 19 Flooding Review, drawing on input from parishioners.

The commencement of Sizewell C has led to the formation of several liaison groups, increasing the administrative burden on councillors. The Chair highlighted the need for more community support to manage this growing workload.

Highways improvements this year included the installation of 30mph roundels and slow road markings, with applications submitted for verge gates and village signs. A long-awaited site meeting with Suffolk Highways is scheduled for 5th June.

Community initiatives included planting bulbs provided by East Suffolk in Bloom, continued financial support for local charities and churchyard maintenance, and a £1,500 contribution to the village hall's battery installation.

The Council received a clean internal audit, and the Chair expressed thanks to all councillors and to Clerk Lydia Kindred for her ongoing dedication and support.

## **6. Village Hall**

The Village Hall remains in a strong financial and operational position but had been facing governance and succession challenges. However, two new Trustees have now joined, including one who has agreed to take on the role of Treasurer — a significant and very welcome development for the Committee.

The Chair still intends to step down in 2026, and the search continues for a future replacement. The bar managers are relocating, prompting a need for new volunteers in that role.

The hall continues to operate smoothly thanks to its staff and volunteers. Financial performance was positive, with 64 one-off bookings in 2024/25 (up from 39 the previous year), though energy costs remain a challenge. A modest hire rate increase will take effect in September 2025.

The Trustees agreed three major projects for 2025/26:

Battery storage system (£4,367)

Exterior repainting (£4,496)

Legal fees for transitioning to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (£2,000)

These will create a forecasted deficit, but reserves will remain healthy at around £30,000. The battery system was installed in May 2025 and is expected to increase solar energy use from 26% to 71%, reducing electricity bills.

The Trustees also made progress on land protection, successfully registering Church Meadow and the allotments as Assets of Community Value, and continue to work with Hacheston United Charities (HUC) regarding long-term lease arrangements.

Due to legal limitations linked to the hall's current unincorporated status, the hall is seeking to convert to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. A constitution has been submitted to the Charity Commission and legal work is underway to transfer assets and engage former trustees.

Trustees thanked all staff and volunteers for their continued support and encouraged more residents to get involved in well-supported events for the village, maintenance and inspections.

## **7. All Saints Church**

At the APCM, John Bradfield was elected Churchwarden, with Graeme Hall as Vice-Chair and Michael Dawe as Secretary/Treasurer. Hazel Woodard stepped down from the PCC and her role as Electoral Roll Officer. Though now living outside the village, Kaye and Michael Dawe continue to support the daily running and maintenance of the church, along with Chris White, who also assists with churchyard management.

Due to declining congregation numbers and a shortage of officers, the church transitioned to 'Festival Church' status in 2023, with agreement from Bishop Martin. As a result, six services are now held annually, including well-attended events such as the Carol Service and services for Ash Wednesday, St Valentine's Day, and Palm Sunday. The church also hosted two funerals and a thanksgiving service and Reverend Ann conducted another funeral service off-site.

Other activities included a successful “Discover Your Church” open day in September and the launch of a monthly free ‘Big Breakfast’ at the village hall, now attracting 40–50 people regularly.

#### **8. Corrance School Trust**

The Corrance School Trust supports the educational and religious development of young people up to the age of 25 living in the parishes of Parham and Hacheston.

The current trustees are Rev Anne Kember (Chair), Susan Paul (Secretary), Michael Block, Adam Paul, Sandra Poacher, Claire Adams, Jennifer Garnett, and James MacKenzie.

The Trust’s funds originated from the sale of Parham School, which closed in 1986. Additional donations have been received over time, and the total amount on deposit with the Cambridge and Counties Bank now stands at £13,000.

During the year, the Trust received £509.32 in interest from its accounts with the Cambridge & Counties Bank and the HSBC Business Money Manager Account. It also received further donations amounting to £35. Bank charges over the year totalled £62.99. The hire of the Village Hall for the annual March talk cost £43.05. The trustees approved two grants during the year, amounting to £200. All applications are treated in the strictest confidence.

#### **9. Hacheston United Charity**

No report received as yet.

Adrian Revell, as a Trustee, gave a brief update on the status of the Trust.

#### **10. Village Recorder**

No report received to date.

#### **11. District & County Councillors**

Written annual reports were received and published on the village website.

#### **12. Public Forum**

There was the opportunity to ask questions of the above but no issues were raised.

*Copies of all written reports have been filed with the minutes and will be placed on the village website.*

James Hardy thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 7.25pm.