

Meeting Report (draft) from the Annual Parish Meeting of Emneth Parish Council
Tuesday 29th April 2025 at 6.30pm at Emneth Central Hall

Parish Councillors present: Lloyd Groves (Chair), Yvonne Howard, Julian McCourt, Roland Fry, Michael Pearson, Brenda Kok, Mike Wiles, James Tingley, Mark Purchase, Steve Curtis, Jon Burgess-Lee and Dan Finnis. Also present: Kate Bennett (Parish Clerk), Chris Dawson (County Council), Chris Crofts (Borough Council) and eleven members of the public

Apologies: None

1 Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2 Apologies for absence

No report.

3 To receive an annual report/update from the Chairman of the Parish Council

The Chairman gave a report on Parish Council activities over the last year, some of which included:

Finance: The annual precept for 2024/25 had been increased to £43,000.00. We started the 2024/25 financial year with £83,528.64 across both bank accounts. The Claude Coates fund¹ stood at £36,594.04 and the balance was in the current account.

- A new bus shelter has been installed at Hollycroft Road and another planned for 2025/26 at Gaultree Square as well as a new bench. Possibly Hungate Road and Scarfield Lane will get shelters too.
- Dog waste collection by the Borough Council has increased by 200% to £4.225 per bin per empty; we now have 11 bins in the parish.
- We have changed website provider to become compliant with new legislation and now have a new website and email addresses with a *gov.uk* domain name.

Old Canal Towpath matters

- Some damage had been done to the field gate at the Collett's Bridge end of the towpath; this was vandalism. The gate has been replaced.
- Dog fouling has been a big problem at the towpath this year; new signage is being provided.
- A donation of £250.00 had been granted to the Friends of Emneth & Elm Towpath group for fuel, machine maintenance and PPE; this donation is to be reviewed annually.
- Maintenance works had been carried out by our Parish contractor including the cutting back of some willow trees and flailing at a cost of £480.00.
- A section of the fence had been removed from the stile at the Pocket Park end of the path to allow for disabled access.
- A Parish Council Facebook Page is now operational.
- A new lamp column and lamp were installed at Hollycroft Close at a cost of £2195 + Vat.

Agricultural Holdings matters

- All of the Parish-owned land has been revalued by Maxey Grounds (a Red Book Valuation) and land rents will increase as of October 2025.
- Repairs to the track at Grays Lane holdings will hopefully be carried out this year.

¹ Money left by a benefactor for use at the playing field only

Grass cutting in the parish

- Grass cutting services at the churchyard and playing field continue with an 8% increase for 2025/26 for cuts at the football pitches and play areas at Hungate Road.
- The Parish Council may take on the verge cutting from Norfolk County Council within the 30mph zones of the Parish in 2026/27.
- The Parish Council commemorated D Day & Remembrance Sunday.

Playing Field

- Trustees were added (from the Parish Council) to the Playing Field Committee.
- There has been considerable vandalism to the tower in the play area.
- Verti draining to football pitches was paid for by the Parish Council: £300.00.
- The drain/dyke at the rear of the playing field was cleared out and paid for by Cousins of Emneth.
- Repairs to the ceiling of the pavilion were carried out via donations from Cllr. Crofts and Humphrey.
- The large hedge around the perimeter of the bowling green was cut back.
- A £100,000.00 grant has been approved to the Playing Field Committee to resurface the car park.
- The Parish Council paid to scrape and level the playing field car park; £1,200.00.

Churchyard

- Repair works to the church wall are nearly complete; thanks to Cousins of Emneth.
- £700.00 tree work in the churchyard was agreed and will be carried out in 2025/26.
- There are roughly only six full grave burial spaces left.
- Bird boxes and hedgehog boxes have been provided thanks to Councillor Curtis.

4 To receive a report from the Borough Council

- As of 2027 the Borough Council will no longer exist. A new Unitary Council will be in operation under a Mayoral system part of the Local Government Reorganisation for Norfolk.
- Borough Councillor Crofts provided an update on the *Local Plan*. This plan guides development and use of land in the Borough up to 2040 and was approved in March 2025; the detail of which can be found by following this link:

https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/site/custom_scripts/static_content/large_files/KingsLynn_WestNorfolk_LocalPlan/Local_Plan_final_April_2025.pdf

5 To receive a report from the County Council

- The Norfolk County Council elections originally scheduled for May 2025 will now take place in May 2026.
- There will be changes to the way District Councils are structured with one combined unitary authority overseen by an elected Mayor.

6 Open Forum for local groups and residents of the Parish

- A resident requested input into speeding issues within the Parish; this was agreed.
- The Chairman of the Playing Field Committee provided a report on Playing Field matters:
 - An update on expenses for the year highlighting certain areas that had either increased or decreased namely, water, lighting, heating, hire fees etc.
 - A leak in the roof caused by vandalism had been repaired.
 - Resurfacing works to the car park are imminent.
 - Sadly the Playing Field Caretaker has broken her leg so is currently out of action.

The meeting closed at 7.10pm

Chairman's signature