

ELSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Elsham Parish held on Tuesday 27th May 2025 commencing at 6.30pm, at the Village Hall, Elsham

Present: Chair - Cllr Sandra Van Oosterhout
Cllr Andrew Horner, Cllr Steve Moir, Cllr Deborah Damary-Thompson
Clerk – Louise Price

Six members of the public attended.

APM25 –0501 Minutes of Previous meeting

- a) Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 21st May 2024 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate and true record and signed accordingly.

APM25 –0502 Chairman's Report

a) Councillor Sandra Van Oosterhout, Chair of Elsham Parish Council, gave a report on the previous year: I must start by thanking everyone who has given up their time, in whatever way, to help the parish council over the last year. Volunteers have made a big difference to what we have been able to achieve in terms of the environment in the village, and this is very much appreciated. Below is a summary of the main actions we have been involved in over the last 12 months.

Year Highlights

Nature Reserve

The nature reserve continues to evolve and grow. This spring was a good one for the cowslips, which are spreading and now establishing down in the basin. Five hundred new bluebells were planted around the quarry entrance, which as they spread and establish, should make a wonderful display. Last summer we counted a record number of bee orchids and common spotted orchids were also doing well and spreading. Unfortunately, the top of the picnic table in the centre was damaged and burnt by a disposable barbeque, and rather than replace the whole bench we have sourced new planks to repair it with. We have also purchased a new bench for an extra place to sit and admire the wildflowers.

Play Park

More pigeon spikes were installed over the swings to help keep them clean, and equipment was cleaned and painted by Ian our handyman. Many thanks to Cllrs Jane Ewen and Deborah Damary Thompson for carrying out inspections of the equipment. The moles have started to be a problem again and we are investigating ways of preventing them from getting into the park as they make the ground very uneven. Drainage has also been a problem at the far end of the play park, despite the very dry spring, and we are monitoring this.

Highways

In November 2024 we met with Highways to discuss the work outstanding in the village and they were able to give us a schedule for the works. As I write this, Church Street has just been resurfaced and a new drainage channel fitted between the top of Church Street and the drain at the church, to allow water to drain away rather than sit on the road surface. Work has begun on a new drain and catchpit on Barnetby Hill and then the resurfacing will be completed. Following several accidents on Barnetby Hill at the junction with

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Newland Hill, we have again requested NLC to look at moving the 30mph sign further up the hill, but this seems unlikely to happen.

Planning

The main planning applications in the village considered since last May have been alterations to existing properties, including remodelling of Hibiscus House on Hall Lane, all of which have been approved. Permission was granted for six shepherds huts for accommodation at Elsham Hall, and in September planning permission was granted for two dwellings on the paddock on Church Street. The application to erect eco-lodges on Front Street opposite the quarry was refused, as was the application for a lorry park near Barnettby, although this has now gone to appeal. Thank you to those who made representations at planning committee meetings for these applications.

Crime and Neighbourhood Watch

There have been no serious incidents in the village, and we have picked up less litter on our litter picks.

Community Involvement

We are very grateful to everyone who has volunteered this year. In November 2024 we were very fortunate to have a dozen volunteers from Anglian Water and one of Craig Leaning's employees to help plant a large part of the 3000 daffodil bulbs we purchased with our N. Lincs in Bloom grant last spring. They looked fantastic lining Front Street in February. Four volunteers from the village also planted bulbs around the village, which was very much appreciated. We also had good turnouts for the autumn and spring litter picks, and in March Nelipak on the industrial estate sent nine volunteers to collect the remaining plastic tree tubes so that they can be sent for recycling and reuse. Andrew and I are currently busy planting up the beds and containers in the village for summer, and we have been helped in this by six volunteers, which is fantastic. Several others will be watering and taking care of the containers over summer. The wonderful flower displays would not be possible without their help.

Special Events

We again welcomed Pain in the Brass at our Christmas Tree lighting event, which was well attended. On 8th May we held a ceilidh with the local Coronation Band, to celebrate the VE-Day 80th anniversary, and this was sold out. The smiles and laughter during the evening showed just how much it was enjoyed by everyone.

Best Kept Village/ East Midlands in Bloom

We entered East Midlands in Bloom for the first time last year and we were very pleasantly surprised to be awarded a Silver. Our high-quality flower displays and work on the environment were acknowledged, but we were advised to try harder to involve the community, which, as shown in the above section, we have tried hard to do. For Best Kept Village, we came a joint second with East Lound, with Low Burnham again taking first – they are hard to beat! We are planting more and more perennials in our displays to try to reduce the number of annuals we plant, as these are discarded every year. Using perennials is more sustainable.

Stevenson and Julian Charity Trust Fund

The parish council continues to contribute £500 a year to this fund and to help promote its use to Elsham residents.

Current Projects

Our focus this summer will again be on the East Midlands in Bloom and Best Kept Village competition, but we welcome suggestions for new projects from residents.

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Finances remain stable as we continue to deliver within budget so again, we have not requested an increase in the precept - a reduction in real terms.

Council members

Cllr Deborah Damary Thompson was co-opted to the council in May 2024, and one councillor resigned in November 2024, which still left us with two vacancies. The Spring edition of the Elsham Leader carried an advertisement and information about the council and as a result, at the May meeting we have five applicants for these two places. We are very thankful for the interest in joining the council and look forward to working with new colleagues.

We also started working with a new clerk, Louise Price, in March. She has quickly brought herself up to speed with Elsham and we thank her for all her hard work.

APM25 –0503 Parish Projects

Our focus again this summer will be on the Best Kept Village and East Midlands in Bloom competition. A new bench has arrived and is to be installed in the Nature Reserve. Repairs are due to take place to a damaged picnic table. Councillors have been discussing installing a Victorian street light in the village but are still looking at options.

Councillor Van Oosterhout informed the residents that if they have an idea for something that they would like to see added in the village, please email the clerk or come to a PC meeting to talk to us. We are open to new projects!

APM25 –0504 Public Comment

- a) There was no public comment.

Meeting closed 6.38pm.