



HUMBERSTON VILLAGE COUNCIL

Annual Report and Accounts
Year 21/22

Humberston Village Council

ANNUAL REPORT

For Year 21/22

Councillors' Attendances

The year saw the final month of the temporary legislation in place to allow virtual meetings up to May 2021. From then onwards the Council reverted back to normal 'in person' meetings at the Village Hall whilst maintaining and complying with the social distancing legislation in force at the time.

Each month the usual Council meetings were called on the first Wednesday and then mid-monthly meetings are usually also held on the third Wednesday of each month.

Attendances for Councillors serving throughout the year – 23 full regular meetings called during the year:

Cllr. Liz Shawhulme (Chairman) 23 out of possible 23

Cllr. Heidi Clark (Vice-Chair) 17 out of possible 23

(note that Cllr. Clark was granted a six month sabbatical from March 22)

Cllr. Mike Hodgins 14 out of possible 23

Cllr. Tracey Rudd 20 out of possible 23

Cllr. Jane Woollock 22 out of possible 23

Cllr. Mark Thompson 11 out of possible 23

(note that Cllr. Thompson was granted a six month sabbatical from October 21)

Members who joined during the year:

Cllr. Tracey Duff (coopted mid-July 2021) 14 out of possible 16

Former Cllrs. who served through the year but are not longer members

Former Councillors who served throughout the year were as follows:

S. Bailey served from April 2021 through to end of June 2021

P. Stevenson served from April 2021 through to end of June 2021

D. Watkins served from April 2021 through to end of June 2021

M. Leveridge served from April 2021 through to end of September 2021

A. Leveridge served from mid-July 2021 though to end of September 2021

The Council started the year with 11 members out of a possible 12 and completed the year with 7 members.

Cllr. Shawhulme took over the Chairmanship of the Council in July 2021 and Cllr. Clark served as Vice-Chair for the year.

Cllr. Rudd served as Chairman of the Allotments Committee for the year.

Mrs. Kathy Peers, a CiLCA qualified Clerk, served as the Village Clerk for the year. The Clerk is also an associate member of the Society of Local Council Clerks.

Councillors also undertook training throughout the year by attending virtual events including planning training and the Clerk attended ERNLLCA and SLCC training events.

Members and the Clerk also attended meetings of outside bodies including the Town and Parish Liaison Committee with NELC, quarterly Highways meetings with NELC and the ERNLLCA North East Lincs District Committee meetings.

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Planning Matters

The Village Council is a statutory consultee of the local Planning Authority, which is North East Lincolnshire Council. The Village Council is consulted on every planning application within the Village and also those which are on its boundary or close to its boundary within a neighbouring Village.

During the year the Village Council was consulted on all planning applications which are within, or adjacent to, Humberston Village. Consultation is 'paperless' with a list sent through, the applications added to each Agenda and Members viewing the plans and details through the planning portal on the NELC website.

Now that meetings are held in person again, the relevant plans are downloaded by the Clerk and projected at meetings so that member and any public present can also see the issues Council members are considering and discussing.

During the course of the year various representatives from development teams often attend Council meetings to undertake pre-application consultation on proposed future developments within the Village.

The Council's comments and observations on the planning applications are also published on the Village Council's website, and residents are most welcome to attend meetings of the Planning Committee and make their views known to members.

During the year the main issues centred around new housing developments and residents often attended the meetings to make representations over planning applications.

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Wendover Hall and Wendover Paddock Hall

The Village Council owns and manages the Wendover Paddock area which incorporates play equipment and leisure equipment areas as well as both Wendover Hall and Wendover Paddock Hall. Security for the whole compound is provided in-house via the Village Council's own staff.

The Halls were open to appropriate groups during Covid-19 restrictions and the Wendover Preschool and other children's activity groups were allowed to operate within strict guidelines. The Halls were registered as official Covid-secure venues. Gradually throughout the year, both Halls were then fully opened up and the usual hiring groups returned.

The Village Council employs three Caretaking/Cleaning staff to operate the Halls and staff were furloughed as appropriate and then returned to work as and when restrictions were relaxed and /or lifted.

The grounds are professionally maintained by a grounds maintenance contractor.

Play areas were eventually allowed to reopen and the Village Council maintained its annual playground inspection of the paddock play equipment and carried out any necessary repairs.

As part of its ongoing enhancement of the Paddock area, a new zip wire was installed which was purchased as a result of a successful bid for lottery funding. The Council has now committed each year to include in its budget an item of equipment or other project within the Paddock.

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Humberston Cemetery and Allotments

Cemetery

The Village Council runs the Humberston Cemetery and Allotment Site on Humberston Avenue.

Costs for using the cemetery have two different rating schedules – one for Humberston residents and another for non-residents. Facilities are provided for either burial or cremated remains interments as well as ashes scattering. There is also the facility for reservation of plots whereupon a fee is paid and a Deed issued. Burials, cremations and plot reservations are booked through the Village Clerk, as are applications to erect monuments and memorials.

The Village Council employs a contractor to cut the grass and hedges etc. The burial plots are dug by gravediggers employed through the individual funeral directors.

Fees for the cemetery had only been increased very slightly for the year in question.

The Village Council continues its maintenance programme at the cemetery and carries out monthly inspections and is responsible for turfing plots when ready and also routine tree inspections and maintenance.

During the year the Village Council has continued with its ongoing programme of removing the large trees in the main avenue in the cemetery and another tree was removed in early Spring 2022 and some remaining stumps removed. Repairs were also undertaken to the Cemetery shelter, with Traditional Joinery carrying out specialist repairs to the original leaded-glass windows in the building. Pathways repairs were also ordered for parts of the new extension and NELC would be carrying out this work in early Summer 2022.

The Village Council has also identified that NELC has the responsibility for maintaining the main Cemetery Road off Humberston Avenue and repairs are now carried out by NELC and costs apportioned to the road users, with the Village Council being only part of the group of users which has access to the roadway.

Day-to-day administration of the Cemetery is carried out by the Village Clerk with any necessary matters being placed before the full Council. The Cemetery remained open for visitors and users during lockdowns, as was allowed under the regulations.

The Village Council also now employs a 'Cemetery Sexton' who assist with Cemetery issues and is in attendance at interments within the Cemetery.

Allotments

There are over 80 allotment gardens on the site and the Humberston Allotment Holders Association continues to work closely with the Village Council and uses its own dutch barn on the site for a meeting room/utility area for the members of the Association to meet and provide social functions.

The allotments were allowed to remain open during the lockdowns and so have been open to members all year as usual.

Each January the tenancies are renewed and in January 2022 renewals were once again carried out both by electronic means and also in person with the Clerk and the Chairman of the Allotment Committee, Cllr. Rudd, attending the site in person to collect tenancy rentals from those who wished to renew tenancies in person.

Tenancy fees include insurance for individual plots and water rates. It was a pleasure to hold the allotment competition again in the Summer of 2021 and the presentation event was held on the allotment site and kindly hosted by HAHA.

Improvements to the site include working in liaison with HAHA to put in grass pathway support structures on the site and also creating three smaller 'starter plots' for those wishing to have an introduction to allotments. These have been quickly taken and the Village Council has provided them with a storage unit already on site.

There is a waiting list for allotments on the site, with a two tier system in operation – first preference being given to Humberston residents and then a secondary list for those living outside of the Village.

The members of the Committee for the site carry out regular inspections of the site.

Cllr. Tracey Rudd served as Chairman of the Allotment and Cemetery Committee for the year.

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Community/Highways/Footpaths/Other

During the year the Council carried out necessary repair and improvement works to areas of land owned and maintained by the Village Council.

The Council has full ownership of land off Humberston Avenue at Carrington Gardens and the Westleigh Homes site. The Council has liaised with residents during the course of the year and made minor amendments to its landscaping arrangements as a result of these liaisons. The land is subject to a professional grounds maintenance contract and this was put out for invitation to quote during 21/22 and a contract duly awarded.

As the remainder of this site is developed by the owners, then further land will be transferred to the ownership of the Council along with another bonded sum for its upkeep. The Council has met with local representatives, the original development land-owners and local residents to discuss ongoing management of the site.

The Village Council also owns two thoroughfares within the Village known as Strang Walk and Postman's Walk and these are also maintained through the Grounds Maintenance Contract which also incorporates the Cemetery.

The Village Council employs a litter picker who covers the whole village on a few hours per week and this was carried out during lockdown as this is viewed as a key-worker post.

Events were once again allowed to be held and a very successful Christmas Event was held in December 2021. This incorporated a craft fair, refreshments, Santa's Grotto and local choirs and musical groups providing some entertainment.

A fashion show was also held in September 2021 with all monies raised being donated to a local charity.

The Council also started preparations for its Centenary celebrations, with 2022 seeing 100 years of the Parish Council at Humberston. A Centenary Green project was initiated, supported by Ward Councillors and land acquired on a peppercorn lease from NELC to provide a Centenary Green. Planning permission has been applied for to site a notice board and possible flag pole and Ward Cllr. funding has helped with the construction of a flower bed which commenced construction just

after the end of the Council year in early April 2022. A centenary event was also scheduled for July 2022.

The Council also signed up to take part in the national Beacon lighting for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee to be held in June 2022 and was preparing for this event as the Council year drew to a close in March 2022.

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Newsletter

The Village Council has continued with the production and distribution of its Newsletter during the year with the usual delivery to every household and business in the Village now back in place.

This publication is produced every quarter, with four editions covering Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. The publication sells advertising to support the cost of production and distribution and is managed entirely by Council members and the Clerk.

A copy of the Newsletter is distributed to every home within the Humberston electoral area, including Humberston Fitties, and also to every business in the Village, including all of those on Wilton Road Industrial Estate.

Printing is carried out by Print and Copy Centre who also kindly deliver the finished copies to us at Humberston so that we can then organise delivery.

During the year a competition to find a new front cover was launched and a winner was chosen with the design appearing on the Spring 2022 edition.

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Finance

The precept set by the Village Council for 21/22 was £93,00 which was increased from the previous year.

Income for the year:

- Precept - £93,000
- Job retention scheme payments - £548
- Lottery funding for zip wire - £8,500
- allotment rents - £4,616
- cemetery income - £25,830
- income from hire of Wendover Hall - £12,811
- income from hire of Wendover Paddock Hall - £10,920
- income from advertising sold in village newsletter - £1,150
- VAT refund - £6,970
- Other income included minor amounts for stall holder rents, tickets etc. for events.

(VAT reclamation is allowed to local authorities and affiliated bodies)

Expenditure for the year:

- Wendover Halls and Paddock - £56,179 (this included complete refurbishment of Wendover Old Hall with toilet refurbishment, kitchen ceiling, new flooring to rear, damp proof course and roof repairs)
- Cemetery expenditure - £18,404
- Allotment expenditure - £3,049 (including £1,500 on grass protection)
- Land maintenance expenditure - £7,170 (land off Humberston Avenue)
- Highways/footpaths - £436
- Zip Wire equipment for Paddock - £8,578
- Newsletter expenditure - £6,219 (including distribution for the year)
- Salaries for all staff - £39,808 (5 staff positions)
- Donations - £478
- Holiday Club provision during summer holidays - £800
- General administration - £10,327
- Loan repayments - £7,500 (loan has now been paid in full and has a zero balance)

- VAT (to be reclaimed during next year) - £9,912

Notes on Expenditure:

Hall expenditure includes all insurance, heat, water and commercial rates as well as repairs and day to day running costs such as cleaning materials and hygiene products as well as all necessary electrical and gas compliance etc.

Cemetery Expenditure includes the grounds maintenance contract which also covers grass cutting at Wendover Hall and two small footpaths the Village Council own and manage. There are also insurances, water rates and non-domestic rates payable on the site as well as annual rental charges from NELC. The grounds maintenance contract is awarded to a contractor every two years as part of a competitive bid process and the current contract expires in May 2023 and will be awarded at that point until June 2025.

Allotment expenditure includes insurance, water rates and any minor repairs carried out by the Council.

Highways and footpaths includes all maintenance of land owned by the Council such as Postman's Walk and Strang Walk and also repairs to street lighting. This also includes all gritting works carried out during the winter months.

Land management expenditure covers the land off Humberston Avenue which the Council owns and maintains. A contract is awarded for this each year through a competitive bid process. The maintenance is carried out in accordance with a land management plan for the area agreed when the Council took ownership of the land.

Newsletter expenditure includes printing and distribution.

Salaries covers five staff positions and covers all PAYE such as tax and national insurance as well as holiday/relief cover and pension contributions.

General administration covers the Council for all of its insurances, membership of its County Association, the East Riding and Northern Lincs Local County Association, training for members and the Clerk, all office and administration costs including postage, stationery and travel expenses for both members and the Clerk, a Chairman's allowance and also membership of bodies such as the National Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management.

The Village Council has an approved list of contractors which it uses for works/contracts/repairs etc. This is based on a local contractor priority policy as far as is practical and also any of the advertisers which support the Village Newsletter.

There is an internal audit carried out each year, and this was done in May 2021 and carried out by Mr. M. Peterson, with a full written report submitted to the Village Council. An external audit has to then take place which is usually completed by

September each year. No concerns or actions were raised from either of the audits for the previous financial year. There were four quarterly account reconciliations carried out in June 2021, September 2021, December 2021 and then at the end of the financial year in March 2022 – these are all published on the Village Council's own website.

The Village Council's external audit each year is carried out by the nationally appointed auditors, PKF Littlejohn and the Village Council complies with all legal requirements of the audit process each year.

The Village Council has its own website which is administered by the Village Clerk and has a Facebook and Instagram page to keep residents updated with events and Village Council news.

The Village Council met in December 2021 to ensure budgets were on target, set the budget for financial year 22/23 and to set the precept for the coming year.

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General Matters

Ward Councillors from NELC for the year were Cllrs. Stan Shreeve, Hayden Dawkins and Stephen Harness. The three Ward Councillors are regular attendees at the Village Council meetings each month and work closely with the Council on projects and issues both locally and borough wide with NELC.

Members of the public were also regular attendees of meetings over the course of the year along with various visitors including representatives of developers/planners who regularly conduct consultation with the Council on planning matters.

The Village Council also enjoys a close working relationship with the local Policing Team and acknowledges their hard work on behalf of the Village throughout the year. There was occasional attendance at meetings by the Police during the year, but detailed written reports are received each month throughout the year and circulated to all members of the Council.

The main issues concerning the Council during the year were the final introduction of the parking restrictions throughout the village, which prohibits parking on verges and footways apart from exempt streets, parking issues and potential housing site development within the Village.

The Council was also busy making improvements were necessary and a much-needed storage facility was installed at Wendover Paddock. A successful bid to the Community Lottery Fund yielded funding for a zip wire which is now in place, and very well used, in Wendover Paddock. The Council made a commitment at its budget meeting to allocate funding to the Paddock each year to improve and add extra equipment.

The Council also completed its refurbishment of the toilet facilities at Wendover Old Hall which complemented its redecoration programme. Further roofing works have also now been carried out and damp proofing and refurbishment of the rear storage room at the old Hall has also now been completed.

Also fencing adjacent to the Hall was replaced and a new kitchen ceiling installed. Both halls are now fully decorated and very well used by the community.