

HOLME HALE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday 13th April 2026 in the Tony Evans Centre, Holme Hale Village Hall.

Present: Mr Andy Scarlett (Chairman of the Parish Council), Mr Gerald Tranter (Fuel Allotment Trust), Mr Gary Smith (St Andrew's Church and Holme Hale Playing Field Trust) and four members of the public.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Mrs Denise Scarlett (Necton School Governor) and Cllrs Broke and West.

2. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7th April 2025.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 7th April 2025 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Reports.

a) Chairman of the Parish Council – Cllr Andy Scarlett.

The Chairman presented his report and a copy is attached.

b) Holme Hale Fuel Allotment Trust – Mr Geoff Tranter.

Mr Tranter presented his report and a copy is attached.

c) St Andrew's Church – Mr Gary Smith.

Mr Smith presented his report and a copy is attached.

d) Holme Hale Playing Field Trust.

Mr Smith presented his report and a copy is attached.

A member of the public asked if any progress was being made in respect of parking on the grass. Mr Smith said that the Trust was aware of the issue in that the current car park was not big enough but to extend the hard standing was too expensive and a plastic grid system on the grass was the most suitable solution, however, there was no-one with the time to take this forward.

e) Necton Primary School.

On behalf of Mrs Scarlett, the Chairman presented the report and a copy is attached.

f) County Councillor – Cllr Fabian Eagle.

In the absence of the County Cllr, there was no report. The Chairman reported that, due to boundary changes, after the elections on the 7th May, Cllr Eagle will no longer represent Holme Hale and will be missed as he had assisted the Parish Council greatly over the years.

g) District Councillor – Cllr Nigel Wilkin.

In the absence of the District Cllr, there was no report.

4. Open Forum - an opportunity for residents of the parish to express their views on matters of interest or concern relating to the village and to suggest ideas for the future.

A member of the public queried a development between Church Lane and Cook Road. The Chairman reported it was understood a planning application will be submitted in due course.

The Chairman then thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.05pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Holme Hale Parish AGM – 13th April 2026

Chairman's Report

Welcome

- Review of Parish Council activities – April 2025 – March 2026

Parish Council Composition

- Another busy year for the Parish Council – I would like to acknowledge and thank both the Councillors & the Clerk for the substantial time and effort they have made on the behalf of the Parish and yourselves by their voluntary involvement in the Parish Council
- HHPC is permitted to have seven Councillors. Following the co-option / return of Mr Julian Pearson in March 2025, we started the year with a full complement of Councillors & remained at this level throughout the reporting period
- Dr Andy Scarlett was re-elected as Chairman: Mr Neville McBrien was elected as Vice-Chairman
- However, it is with regret that I have recently had to accept the resignation of Cllr Wendy McNeil who, for a variety of reasons, no longer feels able to continue to serve on the Council. As one of the longest-serving members of the current Council, I would like to thank Wendy for all the effort & hard work she has devoted both to the Council & the wider village of Holme Hale over a great many years. Her input will be missed.

PC Activities – 2025-26:

Planning

- The Council has reviewed & commented on numerous Planning Applications
- **Planning Enforcement** – The Council has monitored & reported on instances of unauthorised development in the Parish. Where possible, individuals were encouraged to formalise their desired developments via the normal planning application process
- **Input to Breckland Local (Housing) Plan - 2025** – To ensure an adequate housing supply over the next 20 years, Breckland is proposing an additional 14,000 homes within the District without the provision of significant new services or infrastructure. Public Consultation on the Draft Local Plan ended in December 2025: the results of this are due to be published in the near future. The current Draft Plan proposes that 20 additional dwellings would be built in Holme Hale over the next 18 years (*to 2042*), seven of which have already been built/granted permission. No specific sites have been identified for possible future development.
- **RWE / Statkraft / National Grid:** Following the granting of permission for construction of three Norfolk Offshore Wind Zone (NOWZ) converter sub-station buildings between Necton & Fransham, construction work is now in progress. Similarly, work is also in progress both regarding the (Statkraft) Necton Flywheel Grid Stabilisation facility and also on an extension to the existing National Grid sub-station.

It is probable that area south of the A47 between Necton & Fransham will develop a distinctly industrial appearance.

Highways

- The Council to monitor the condition of the Parish road network & reported on issues for repair
- The SAM II speed sign is in active use, alternately in Cook Rd & Station Rd
- The Council submitted a (*successful*) bid to the NCC Parish Partnership Scheme to fund 50% of cost of installing 'Unsuitable for HGVs' signage at either end of Lower Road. The Council gratefully acknowledges the additional contribution made towards the cost of this project by our outgoing County Councillor, Fabian Eagle.

Village Assets

- An additional Village Bench has been installed at Red Lion Close
- School Rd Bus Shelter – Renovation & Re-decoration has been completed – Thanks are due to Cllr Simon Joll & the volunteers for organising & implementing this

Solar Farms and Associated Infrastructure

- There has been a dramatic increase in planning applications for solar farms throughout Norfolk
 - Over 26,000 acres have currently been proposed & more likely to follow
 - These individual applications are likely to have a significant, cumulative impact on mid-Norfolk
- Two very large developments proposed in the local area:
 - High Grove (*a triangle bordered by Scarning, Beachamwell & Saham Hills*) - ~4000 acres
 - The Drovers (*a triangle bordered by Swaffham, South Acre & West Acre*) - ~ 2500 acres

There is also a proposal from Regener8 for a battery storage facility & solar farm on Shipdham Airfield and an associated solar farm facility at Beeston

- Conscious of the importance of this matter to Parishioners, a dedicated page has been created on HHPC website, to provide links to sources of relevant information
- During the Apr'25 – Mar'26 period, HHPC activities have focussed primarily on the proposed High Grove development, but have included keeping a watching brief on The Drovers development. The Council has:
 - Registered as an Interested Party with the Planning Inspectorate regarding their (*now ongoing*) examination of the planning application for The Drovers
 - Participated in a face-to-face meeting with the RWE–High Grove Project Team & highlighted concerns regarding the possible impact of the development on Holme Hale and have proposed possible ways in which these impacts could potentially be mitigated
 - Submitted detailed written input to the (RWE) High Grove Statutory Consultation & raised specific concerns regarding the:
 - Proposed routing of construction traffic & the need for potential highways improvements
 - Provision of additional visual mitigation measures
 - Potential Impact of the development on local sites of archaeological importance
 - Potential for light & noise emissions, both during construction of the facilities & during their subsequent operation
 - Potential for surface water contamination / run-off from the proposed sites.

Unfortunately, to-date we have not received any further formal response from the RWE team regarding these matters.

- During the period, HHPC representatives also participated in meetings of the cross-party Central Norfolk Solar Action Alliance, as convened by George Freeman, Terry Jermy and other local MPs. This attempts to seek & represent the views of Councils of the parishes & towns that are likely to be affected by the proposed developments
- Going forward, we expect to have further involvement in this group and to continue to participate in local meetings on this subject
- The Council expects to have future involvement in Planning Inspectorate Statutory Consultations & discussions concerning the granting of Development Consent Orders (DCOs).

Whilst this process is already underway concerning The Drovers, the High Grove submission to the Planning Inspectorate has been delayed from April 2026 to October 2026 at the earliest. This being due to the likely date for High Grove being granted a connection to the National Grid having been delayed to 2031-35.

- HHPC remains concerned regarding the likely cumulative impact of these & other similar large-scale solar and national infrastructure developments on rural mid-Norfolk & Holme Hale Parish in particular.

Andy Scarlett

13th April 2026



Holme Hale Fuel Allotment Trust

Report For Village A.G.M 13 April 2026

HOLME HALE FUEL ALLOTMENT TRUST ACCOUNTS 2025

Date	Bank	Reason	In	Out
01 01 2025	Co-op		£2,626	
	CCLA		£67,144	
	Redwood		£20,000	£89,770
12 2026	Co-op	9 cheques		£2,700
10 02 2025	Redwood	Interest	£963	
31 12 2026	CCLA	Interest	£2,870	£90,903
31 12 2026	Co-op		£889	
	CCLA		£70,014	
	Redwood		£20,000	£90,903

Looking at the accounts didn't we do well, the Trust paid out and still in pocket by over £1000 mainly due to high interest rates. But no, the Trust members fear that there are residents in the village that should be claiming but are afraid to.

As can be seen from the accounts nine grants were paid out in 25 ,one less than last year but a grant was made in February this year, obviously not shown in the accounts.

Over the past year Trust members have worked hard to pass the word round that the Trust is there to give assistance to any villagers that are going through a bad financial patch. Besides adverts in the Moonraker and posters round the village the Trust had a manned tent at last years Summer Fayre, this seemed to attract people mainly from Necton who wanted to sit out of the sun, but very few Holme Hale residents. The Trust intends to have a stand this coming year.

The trust members are well aware of fast moving events regarding fuel etc and the fact that most residents have to travel to work, shopping and taking other family members for various appointments. The problem being we are not mind readers and therefore rely on people asking for help and of course that is a very difficult thing to do as some see it as personal failure on there part where it is really no such thing. The Trust is set up to help any village residents or in some cases village organisations just get through a sticky patch in their lives, we all have them, but to ask for a bit of help even though it is confidential can be hard.

I would urge people to at least apply, it is in strictest confidence to:

The Secretary HHFAT Fern View Cook Road IP257DJ



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St. Andrew's Church, Holme Hale

Report for the Annual Parish Meeting 2026

Overview of the Year

In many ways we have had a fairly normal year, because apart from occasional variations we have usually continued to follow our twice monthly service pattern of Morning Worship on the first Sunday of the month followed by Holy Communion on the third Sunday of the month – and this has worked well for us.

Our average Sunday service attendance is 13 people - obviously sometimes more and sometimes less on any given day.

Our most significant service of the year was our Christmas Carol Service, where I'm delighted to say that we had 39 people attending, closely followed by our United Benefice Service on Advent Sunday (30th November – St Andrew's Day in fact!) when we were privileged to host The Archdeacon of Lynn's Pastoral Visitation Service. Archdeacon Catherine was very pleased to be with us, and we had 38 people attending.

We also had a service on Remembrance Sunday with 23 people in attendance and a Harvest Festival Service with 21.

With regards to the occasional offices, we had a very quiet year, as we had no baptisms, weddings or funerals during 2025 with only one burial of ashes.

Thankfully, we have had no safeguarding issues during the year to report.

Financial Position

We generally, through a lot of hard work and dedication by a small group of villagers, just about manage to raise enough income to keep the church open and running day-to-day – but not really to cover any repair and restoration work.

In particular, in 2025, we made a net loss of £3,400. This was made up of:

- Total income of £18,518 – this included an impressive £8,532 from fundraising activity (principally from refreshments and open gardens up at Holme Hale Hall), £5,167 from gifts and donations and £2,790 from various tax reclaim opportunities.
- Total expenditure of £21,918 – this included £8,893 in repairs and maintenance (for which we applied for and received a £5,000 grant from the Diocese in 2024), £9,800 for our Parish Share (essentially the cost of our rector and diocesan support) and £2,111 for insurance.

As at the end of 2025, we are fortunate to have £9,034 in unrestricted reserves and £18,106 in restricted reserves (monies raised or given to the church over the years for specific purposes, including the bells, the church fabric and for community support). Our reserves are gradually reducing year on year.

Fabric and State of Repair

As I'm sure you appreciate, we are, in our village, very lucky to have such an old and beautiful Grade 1 listed church, with over 700 years' of rich history and containing a number of interesting features – including, for example, a brass memorial plaque for one of the first lords of Hale manor, who died during the Black Death in 1349.

Unfortunately, such a building, of course, takes a huge amount to maintain and keep functioning!

At the end of 2024 and beginning of 2025, we completed a fairly significant project of 'minor' repairs to the north wall, roof and porch.

We unfortunately now face, a major programme of work, which must be completed over the next couple of years to:

- Repair the stone and flintwork on the southern Nave wall as well as rebuild the buttresses which support it
- Install guttering and surface water drainage to the Nave and re-route all drainage from the southern to the northern side of the Church
- Repair damaged, internal wall plaster and repair/replace rotten floorboards under the pews on the southern side of the Church

These repairs will cost over £120,000 to complete.

We are planning to apply for funding grants to help but, in many instances, we will need to raise matching funding to qualify. This is a big, even overwhelming, challenge, especially given that the burden currently is falling on just a handful of people.

Wider village community support is really needed if we have any hope of raising this money.

Thanks and Gratitude

Finally, I would like, of course, to thank The Reverend Canon Stephen Thorp, our rector, and all the members of his worship team as well as the small group of volunteers who act as service assistants - not only preparing the church for worship, but keeping it clean and tidying up afterwards – and to all those who provide and serve refreshments after our services and who arrange flowers and ring bells – all of whose contributions to the worship here at St Andrew's Holme Hale is very much appreciated.

I would also like to extend many thanks to all those who have served so diligently on our PCC – and, in particular, to Mrs Denise Scarlett for her conscientious work as our Parish Safeguarding Officer and as Foundation Governor at Necton Church of England Primary School as well as to Mrs Ann Curston as our Electoral Roll Officer.

We don't have a formal "Friends of St Andrew's" organisation, but we fortunately do have friends, and I would like to thank all those who have worked so tirelessly to provide an amazing array of refreshments to sell up at Holme Hale Hall, raising much needed funds for our parish church – their efforts truly make such a *real* difference – and, naturally, I would also like to extend enormous thanks to Simon and Delia Broke for all their hard work and generosity in organising and hosting the annual programme of open gardens and events.

But finally though and, in particular, on behalf of everyone in our regular congregation, I would like to say a special thanks to Mr Andy Scarlett, my fellow Churchwarden, for all his committed and considerable service to the Church ... and for kindly sharing the burden of office!

Everyone's collective generosity and dedication is deeply valued and very much appreciated.

Thanks and with best wishes



Mr Gary Smith

Churchwarden and Lay Chair of St Andrew's Holme Hale PCC

7th April, 2026

Holme Hale Playing Field Trust

Accounts Year Ended 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
<u>Receipts</u>		
Hire income	7,267	7,660
Moonraker advertising	1,310	1,410
Other income	0	394
Interest received	99	108
Running Income	8,676	9,572
Grants and Donations	475	831
Fundraising income	10,752	10,886
Additional Income	11,227	11,717
<u>Total Income</u>	19,903	21,289
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Utilities	4,150	6,028
Insurance	2,281	1,995
Equipment & supplies	3,615	4,259
Moonraker production	1,394	1,854
Licences and safety	200	404
Bank charges	0	0
Miscellaneous	0	0
Total Running Expenditure	11,640	14,540
Fundraising costs	1,189	1,117
Repairs and maintenance	1,620	16,907
Additional Expenditure	2,809	18,024
<u>Total Expenditure</u>	14,449	32,564
Net Deficit/Surplus for the year	5,454	(11,275)
Cash Funds at Year End	20,088	14,634



Belong, believe, thrive, achieve.
Rooted in Christ, we learn, grow and flourish.

The Governing Board has continued to work collaboratively with the Head teacher and staff. Mrs Long and her staff have continued to develop and provide learning and educational opportunities to enable the children to develop educationally, spiritually and to flourish. There is a continuing passion to develop and embed the core values of Respect, Attitude and Peace across the curriculum and within the school's Vision and Christian ethos

Collective worship is integral to the spiritual life of the school and takes place for the majority of the week. The school continues to work closely with Necton church. Their Vision Service was held at the beginning of the Autumn term, renewing the core values and embedding the relationship with Church and School. This continues with the Harvest Festival and the Christmas Nativity. A modern, exciting production with the heart of the nativity at its core.

The Nursery continues to flourish. This has been a positive success for the school. Numbers have increased term by term. The younger children have taken it in their stride being involved in school life at this early age and responding to involvement in the school as well as the nursery. This is completely due to the strong team of staff that have worked together to provide such a safe, strong and educational nursery.

The SRB (Special Resource base for speech & language) is well under way and should be open in June. This will be a purpose-built building and will be run through the school.

The demographics of the school have changed significantly over the last few years, and this has added different demands to the teaching and support staff. The number of children with SEND has increased and continues to increase. Mrs long and her team have consistently worked hard ensure that these children are included and offered the same opportunities as those that are not SEND.

We will be expecting an OFSTED this year. The framework has changed and how it is graded. We are very positive how the school has developed and grown since the Last OFSTED and will continue to ensure the children have an exciting positive and enjoyable time at school.

Once again thanks must go to Mrs Long and her very strong and dedicated team of staff for the continued growth and development of the school both spiritually and educationally.

Jane Barley

Chair of Governors