

**HUNSTON PARISH MEETING
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
22 APRIL 2026**

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Apologies

Marian Wyllie, Terry Lewis, Claire D-T, Pat Notley, David O'Reilly, Dave Spencer

2. Present

Jo and Richard Abnett, Ron and Kathy Back, Sue and Neil Margereson, Colin and Gilly Myram, Andrew and David Johnson, Isabel Cockayne (acting Clerk), Jane O'Reilly, Matthew D-T (Treasurer), John White-Thomson (Chair), Meg White-Thomson, Richard Winch (District Councillor), Valerie and Alan Clark, Mike Wyllie, Merle and David Cattermole, Andy Morgan, David and Jan Cox, Andy Mellen (District and County Councillor)

3. Minutes

The minutes of the AGM of 20 May 2025 had been approved at the Parish Meeting on 28 October 2025. The draft minutes of 4 March 2026 were approved with two amendments: to record JWT was uncomfortable with being filmed and that Alex confirmed the cameras would stay up.

4. Chair's Report

JWT gave a report for the year, noting the village walk, Environment Survey and VE Day celebrations had all gone well. He said that everyone enjoyed the cycle race – not least because the potholes were filled in beforehand.

However, the application for a 40mph speed limit between Stowlangtoft and Hunston was declined by Suffolk County Council. Highways were in favour and Suffolk Police were not. He thanked everyone who had worked so hard on the application, particularly Meg and David Cox, and Richard Winch and Andy Mellen for their support.

5. Treasurer's Report

Matthew D-T presented the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026. The cash surplus was £5,621.51 (2025: £5,338.90), with over 80% of reserves now held with Hinckley & Rugby Building Society. The accounts had been circulated and posted on the village website.

Attendees passed the following resolutions unanimously:

- That the accounts fairly present the financial position of the Parish Meeting for the year ended 31 March 2026.
- That the Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 be approved.
- That, as the Parish Meeting satisfies the qualifying criteria and annual gross income and expenditure for the year to 31 March 2026 were respectively £25,000 or less, Hunston Parish Meeting is exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, and that signing of the Certificate of Exemption be authorised.
- That the commencement date for the exercise of public rights be set as Monday 8 June 2026 and that from that date until Friday 17 July 2026 inclusive, the accounts and accounting records will be available for public inspection.

6. New Defibrillator Coordinator

The meeting thanked Bob Wade for his long service as coordinator, as he has stood down. Jake Waddilove was suggested as someone to approach to organise the maintenance checks. The position remains open.

7. Neighbourhood Watch

Oil theft was noted as a growing concern. Residents with tanks were encouraged to alert neighbours when away. Richard Abnett offered to check how parishioners get updates from Suffolk Police.

8. Update from County and District Councillors

Andy Mellen: Reporting on his final term as county councillor, Andy noted that library services have been brought back in-house; council tax was raised 4.9%; road conditions are poor but technology is helping; new bus and sustainable travel funding is being rolled out and suggested the village try again on the 40mph issue after the election in May. Sophie Farrington has taken on the Community Liaison Engineer role. The meeting thanked Andy.

Richard Winch: Outlined the proposed Suffolk devolution structure — a Mayor for North and South Suffolk with three unitary councils, taking on responsibilities for bins, planning and housing. Hunston will be in the western Suffolk unitary council. New food waste, Tetra Pak and soft plastic collections are coming, aiming to raise recycling rates from 33% to the high 60s. A local plan is being developed identifying housing sites near Badwell Ash, the A14 and Walsham le Willows; Government is seeking a 37% increase in housebuilding. A biodiversity grant scheme is available.

9. Cheddite Clay Shooting Championship

Concerns were raised about noise from the championship over recent years. Last year the championship ran from the Friday afternoon (set up) before the Bank Holiday through to 5.45pm on the Monday. JWT had received two letters and various comments from villagers; the event was going on longer than before and the noise was getting worse. Some villagers' events had had to be cancelled because of the noise and he asked whether the shoot could stick to its advertised times (especially the start of the day) and move to a different date or part of the farm. Andrew Johnson, who manages the shoot, explained that the Cheddite is linked to the Olympic shooting calendar, attracting international and national competitors and cannot be rescheduled. Andrew said they have a licence permitting up to 28 days of shooting per year under planning rules. [Note: This relates to planning permission and is separate from noise nuisance law.] *He added that unfortunately there is no alternative site on the farm of the right size and with parking.* The public footpaths in other areas was also a problem. Andrew undertook to aim for a clean 9am start and a defined end time each day. It was noted that the event provides significant financial support for maintenance of the woodland, which, although not open to the public, had been enjoyed as part of the last village walk.

10. Cottage Committee

JWT reminded the meeting that some works were still outstanding. Of the works discussed in May 2025, east wall damp required no immediate action (watching brief maintained), while the internal lintel had been dealt with. However the current priorities were to: re-skim the plaster in the bathroom, repair the external north wall outside the bathroom, and limewash the west gable (or use keim paint) One quote has been received and a second is awaited. However, to enable these three pieces of work to be carried out before the next Parish Meeting it was resolved that the Cottage Committee be authorised to proceed with these works up to a total cost of £14,000 inc. VAT. Passed unanimously. This superseded the previous resolution in May 2025.

It was agreed that, before authorising any work on the west gable, the Cottage Committee would check when it was last redecorated and who carried out the work.

11. Reserves Committee Report

Covered in the Treasurer's Report above.

12. Summer Biodiversity Survey

Saturday 6 June, 9.30am at the village pond. Jo and Richard Abnett will provide coffee. A plant swap is planned. Consent arrangements for photographs on the village website to be reviewed.

13. Village Walk

Andy Morgan offered to organise the walk. Date to be confirmed. An evening walk in June was suggested.

14. Community Emergency Plan (CEP)

IC said that a small group had met with MSDC to find out more about a CEP covering emergencies such as power failure or severe weather, like plans being developed in Walsham le Willows and Badwell Ash. Jo Abnett, Jan Cox, Marian Wyllie and IC have made a start, and importantly Marian and Jan have created a draft fire hydrant map. Richard Winch added the importance of having links with Walsham and Badwell, which have village halls that serve as refuges in emergencies.

15. Traffic Update

The 40mph application will be revisited after the election. David Cox reported on allocation of the £1,316 locality funding (to be spent before March 2027). Options discussed: improving the Badwell Ash village

gateway; replacing the rusted Mill Lane signpost (£1,500 via Highways or c.£100 independently); extending dragon's teeth markings (£2,500). A decision is needed on what the money will be spent on by October, given Highways' lead times. Merle Cattermole suggested the road towards Badwell Ash was the priority. It may mean asking permission of David Johnson to complete the gateway at that end.

16. Election of Officers

The meeting thanked John White-Thomson for his service as Chair and Meg White-Thomson for her work as Clerk. The following were elected unanimously:

- **Chair:** Isabel
- **Treasurer:** Matthew D-T
- **Clerk:** Vacant. Isabel said this would need to be kept under review

17. Any Other Business

Matthew D-T reported that water and electricity are now available at the church; heating and lighting are expected to be installed within weeks. Phase two will look at creating a larger space for Community use. Approximately £8,000 is needed to cover VAT which can no longer be recovered.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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