HUNSTON PARISH ORDINARY MEETING 4 MARCH 2026

DRAFT MINUTES

1. **Apologies:** Ron and Kathy Back, Louise Goodwin, Gilly and Colin Myram, Jane and David O'Reilly, Meg White-Thomson, Judy and Bob Wade, Claire DT, Terry Lewis

   **Present:** Jo and Richard Abnett, Merle and David Cattermole, Valerie and Alan Clark, Isabel Cockayne (acting parish clerk), Jan and David Cox, Matthew DT (treasurer), Alex Knight, Sue and Neil Margereson, Andy Morgan, John White-Thomson (chair), David Johnson, Marian and Mike Wyllie.

2. **Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 28 October 2025**
   The minutes were approved without amendment.
   a. **Matters arising:** JWT noted there were no formal matters arising.

3. **Chair's update**

   **Cottage Committee:** One quote has been received for internal and external work, including painting the west gable with Keim paint; a second quote is awaited. JWT noted that obtaining the second quote has been slow but added that the delay has not been problematic given the recent poor weather, which would have prevented external work in any case. An emergency repair was carried out in January after a roof tile came off and water began entering the cottage; as this was a straightforward and low-cost job, it was dealt with on a single quote.

   Committee members: Mike Wyllie, Kathy Back, David O'Reilly and JWT.

   **Reserves Committee:** Following a meeting of the committee in January, it has been agreed to place surplus funds with the Hinckley & Rugby Building Society. Approximately £25,000–£30,000 will be deposited across three accounts: easy access, 45-day notice, and 90-day notice. The intention is not to speculate but to make the income generated by the cottage work a bit harder. The process of opening the accounts is under way.

   Committee members: Isabel Cockayne, David Cox, Mike Wyllie, MDT and JWT

   **Traffic:** JWT reported that the case for a 40mph speed limit on the road between Stowlangtoft and Hunston has been submitted to Highways. Evidence from the Speed Watch team and pneumatic tube surveys was included. The Highways officer has come down in favour of the speed reduction on balance, and his recommendation now goes to the two relevant cabinet members responsible for transport policy and transport operations respectively. A decision had been hoped for by February but has not yet been received; JWT noted this is likely due to preparations for the forthcoming local elections. A decision is not now expected before the end of March at the earliest.

   Separately, David Cox has secured £1,316 in locality funding from Andy Mellen (who is stepping down from Suffolk County Council but remaining as head of the district council). This money must be spent on road safety improvements before March 2027. A longlist of approximately 12 potential items has been drawn up. David noted that some of these —

including several traffic signs damaged or knocked down by lorries, and repainting of white lines, 30mph roundels and dragon's teeth markings — should properly be addressed by Highways within their own budgets. The full list of options will be brought to the next meeting (immediately following the AGM, likely April or May) for discussion and decision.

Ideas raised in discussion about improving the visual appearance of the village entrance included: colourful planters, painting posts white, and widening the structure at the village entrance so that signs appear on both sides of the road. It was agreed that anything installed must be maintainable. These suggestions will be carried forward for discussion at the next meeting alongside the road safety budget options.

**Chair** JWT confirmed he will stand down as chair at the AGM. Anyone interested in taking on the role is invited to speak with him.

4. **Treasurer's update**

MDT reported that a full set of accounts will be presented at the AGM. Current position: £37,259 in the bank; £522 outstanding liability (insurance on the cottage, payable in instalments. MDT confirmed that a discount for payment in full was declined by the insurer). Income to date this year: £10,903. Expenditure related to the Cottage: £3,924. With further general expenses of £2,126, surplus generated to date is £4,853. A further month's rent is still to come in, so the final surplus for the year will be slightly higher than this figure.

*Item 6: (Village and Church News subscription) was taken at this point — see below.*

**5. Dog fouling**

JWT recapped previous discussions on dog fouling along the public footpath to the church and the divided views on installing a bin. There was now a new issue outside Windsor Cottage. Mentioned he was unconfortable with being filmed. And Alex confirmed

Alex Knight said he and Sarah moved into Windsor Cottage in April 2025 and have found the 50-metre stretch of path along their perimeter fence a persistent problem: on three occasions their gardener collected five bags of waste from that stretch alone. Alex asked that dog owners' bag and bin it, adding that leaving dog waste on a public footpath is also an offence.

Discussion covered the following points:

- The path behind Windsor Cottage is a cut-through, not a public footpath, and has slightly different legal status to the church footpath.
- Dog walkers come in from outside the village, including people parking at Norton — the problem cannot be attributed solely to residents.
- Ground-nesting birds are a reason why dogs should be on leads at this time of year.

DRAFT

- On bins: opinion was divided. Capital cost is £130–£370 plus £200–£400 installation, with emptying at approximately £50/year. Some felt a bin removes the excuse for not picking up; others doubted it would change behaviour and raised concerns about overflow.
- Isabel Cockayne suggested positive framing for any signage — noting what most people do rather than issuing prohibitions.

It was agreed that signs encouraging people to bag it and bin it would be put up as a temporary measure to see whether they made a difference; IC to draft with Environment Group guidance

Alex Knight also reported that since installing a visible security camera at his boundary for property protection purposes, there has been no waste outside his gate. GDPR was raised in terms of capturing images beyond his boundary, and Alex confirmed the camera does not film the public footpath and is triggered only when within one metre of the gate.

**6. Decide on renewing subscription to the Village and Church News**

Agreed to renew the subscription for a further 12 months from April 2026: 32 copies at £6.00 per copy = £192. MDT noted the publication is also available free online, but that print copies remained an appropriate alternative provision for the parish.

**7. Any other business**

**AGM:** To be held as early as practical after Easter — provisionally mid to late April 2026. MDT asked for at least one week after the end of March to finalise the accounts. Accounts must be submitted by end of June.

**Potholes:** Residents reminded to report potholes via the relevant helpline/online channel.

**Defibrillator:** Bob Wade will step down as coordinator at the AGM. A replacement coordinator will be needed — anyone interested is asked to consider this ahead of the AGM.

**Clay shoot:** Dates confirmed as 23, 24 and 25 May. JWT had received a couple of comments about this, which would be dealt with at the next meeting.

**WhatsApp helpline:** JWT reminded members that the helpline is for general exchanges, news, requests for help and emergencies. More serious complaints or issues should be directed to the chair or clerk by email.

**Environment group dates:**

Litter pick: 14 or 21 March (to be confirmed)
Summer biodiversity survey: 6 June
Autumn survey: 3 October
Village spring walk: 25 April or 9 May (details to follow)

DRAFT