



HUMBERSTON VILLAGE COUNCIL

Annual Report and Accounts
Year 24/25

Councillors' Attendances

Each month the usual Council meetings were called on the first Tuesday and then Planning Committee Meetings were held on the third Tuesday of the month if required.

There were 12 scheduled monthly meetings and then in addition to Planning Committee Meetings, Personnel Committee and Cemetery and Allotment Committee Meetings were also held.

There was also a special Budget Meeting called in January 2025 to set the budget for the 25-26 financial year and the precept requirement for Humberston Village.

Attendances for Councillors serving throughout the year – 12 full main Council meetings:

Cllr. Liz Shawhulme (Chairman)	10 from a possible 12
Cllr. Dennis Sharp (Vice-Chair)	10 from a possible 12
Cllr. Heidi Clark	10 from a possible 12
Cllr. Mike Hodgins	9 from a possible 12
Cllr. Tracey Rudd	11 from a possible 12
Cllr. Jim Hudson	10 from a possible 12
Cllr. Tracey Duff	12 from a possible 12
Cllr. Mark Thompson	7 from a possible 12
Cllr Mike Dunne (co-opted in Feb 2025)	1 from a possible 2

The Council started the year with 8 members out of a possible 12 and completed the year with 9 members.

Cllr. Shawhulme served as Chairman for the year and Cllr. Sharp served as Vice-Chair for the year.

Cllr. Rudd served as Chairman of the Cemetery and Allotments Committee for the year and also Chairman of the Personnel Committee. Cllr. Sharp served as Chairman of the Planning 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, a Conference 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.

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.

During the year 89 applications and 3 appeals were considered by the Village Council.

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 local residents concerned with planning applications had attended meetings.

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 issues around the Fitties Conservation area.

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 – now called the Queen Elizabeth Hall in honour of her late majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Security for the whole compound is provided inhouse via the Village Council's own staff.

The Village Council employs three Caretaking/Cleaning staff to operate the Halls and the grounds are professionally maintained by a grounds maintenance contractor.

Both Halls are extremely busy and generate good revenue for the Village Council. There are reduced rates for regular, long-term hirers and special rates for community/charitable/not-for-profit groups. Party hirings are also available at reduced rates for Humberston residents and slightly higher rates for non-residents.

During the year solar panels were installed at the Halls which will help support the Village Council's green agenda and hopefully yield enough energy to support the running of both of the Halls. During the year the CCTV cameras were also updated in the paddock for extra security and these cover the exterior of both Halls and the Paddock area and car park.

The Village Council also provided another piece of play equipment in the paddock area as part of its long term commitment to improving the facilities provided.

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. Contractors maintain the site for the Village Council.

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 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.

Events were again held with a very successful Summer Event with entertainment, food and a bar run by the Village Council. Then the popular Christmas Event was held in December 2024 with a very popular visit from Santa and his Sleigh. A new venture for the Council was the introduction of Seniors' Lunches for the older generation of residents and these have proved very popular and will be continuing. Two of these were held – one for VE Day and one just before Christmas. The Village Council also ran summer clubs during the summer holidays. These were free sessions for youngsters up to 11 years of age and saw a disco party, Nunny's Farm came to visit, a dance and sport session and a crafting session. All supported and paid for by the Village Council.

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. The Newsletter is now printed in full colour.

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.

Humberston Cemetery

The Cemetery on Humberston Avenue is managed by the Village Council with the land owned by the Village Council. During the year the Village Council continued to

progress the new cemetery extension project. The land had been purchased from NELC and planning permission obtained. During the year the infrastructure was put in, with fencing around the site and pathways installed with tarmac overlays, a central gazebo structure and benches beneath it. Remaining to complete the project is the planting of hedging around the perimeter fence and the introduction of a memorial style structure for placing of memorial plaques.

There is a scaled fee system in place for the Cemetery, with local residents enjoying reduced fees for interments and plot purchases and non-residents paying higher fees.

The Cemetery is maintained through a Contractor who is appointed by the Village Council with the contract running bi-annually. Burial plots are prepared by outside contractors but ashes plots are now prepared in-house by the Council's own contractor.

Two more trees were removed from the main central path in the cemetery and the two trunks were used for carvings at the cemetery entrance. A moon-gazing hare and an owl were carved and these have been very well received by visitors and users of the cemetery.

The Village Council employs a Cemetery Sexton who is present for funerals and independent memorial masons operate within the Cemetery installing and repairing memorials as required. The Parish Clerk also attended Memorial Safety training as a refresher course during the year.

Humberston Allotments

The Village Council manage the allotments on land leased from North East Lincolnshire Council. The Village Council has an Allotment Committee and members undertake regular inspections of the site throughout the year and undertake any necessary actions.

The Village Council works closely with HAHA (the Humberston Allotment Holders' Association) and each year in January, renews the allotment tenancies for another year. The tenancy agreement is reviewed each year, in liaison with HAHA, and then issued to all tenants.

The Allotment Competition was held during the year and a presentation held in late Summer at a Village Council meeting to the winners and runners up.

Improvements to the site included provision of skips, one funded by the Village Council and one by HAHA to help site clearance for tenants.

The Village Council is a member of the National Association of Allotment Gardeners.

Finance

The precept set by the Village Council for 24/25 was £120,000 which was increased from the previous year. The precept was increased due to the increase in the number of homes in Humberston from the previous year. The village, in relation to the Council Tax Base figure set by NELC, is now the largest area after Grimsby and Cleethorpes.

Income for the year:

- Precept - £120,000
- allotment rents - £6,435
- cemetery income - £19,709
- income from hire of Wendover Hall - £20,611
- income from hire of Wendover Paddock Hall - £17,751
- income from advertising sold in village newsletter - £2,100
- VAT refund - £10,773
- Ward funding (from NELC Ward Cllrs.) - £2,000
- Other income included minor amounts for stall holder rents, tickets etc. for events and sponsorship of the Centenary Flower Bed from Lovelles, Humberston

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

Expenditure for the year:

- Wendover Halls - £25,701
- Wendover Paddock - £16,780
- Cemetery expenditure - £25,546
- Loan repayments – 12,664 (for new cemetery provision)
- Allotment expenditure - £2,209

- Land maintenance expenditure - £2,210
- Highways/footpaths - £708
- Newsletter expenditure - £7,173 (including distribution for the year)
- Salaries for all staff - £53,039 (6 staff positions)
- Events/Holiday Clubs - £3,706
- General administration - £6,535
- Office expenditure - £937

Notes on Expenditure:

Hall expenditure includes all insurances (both buildings, public liability and employer's liability), 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. Waste disposal is also included in this figure. Repairs and any new equipment are also included in this figure.

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 commercial waste disposal. The grounds maintenance contract is awarded to a contractor every two years as part of a competitive bid process and a new contract was issued right at the end of the council year for the new year 25-26 commencing in June 2025.

Allotment expenditure includes insurance, water rates, some waste disposal and any minor repairs carried out by the Council as well as skip provision.

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 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. Expenditure comes from a ring-fenced pot of funding which came with the site and which the Village Council has to use solely for the maintenance of the site.

Newsletter expenditure includes printing and distribution.

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

are not set by the Village Council but are set nationally for the staff. The 6 staff positions are the Clerk, 3 Caretakers, a litter picker and a cemetery sexton.

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 and a contribution towards the Clerk's membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks.

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 2024 and carried out by Mr. M. Peterson of MSP Accounting Services 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 or recommended from the audit. There were four quarterly account reconciliations carried out in June 2024, September 2024, December 2024 and then at the end of the financial year in March 2025 – 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 (based in Canary Wharf) 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 January 2025 to ensure budgets were on target, set the budget for financial year 25/26 and to set the precept for the coming year.

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.

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 fairly regular attendance at meetings by the Police during the year, and detailed written reports are received each month throughout the year and circulated to all members of the Council and published in the quarterly Newsletter.

In May 2024 the Council held its Annual Parish Council Meeting at which it reviewed all of its documentation, procedures and governance arrangements and appointed the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and its Committees.

The Annual Parish Meeting for Humberston was also held in May 2024 at which the Annual Report for 23/24 was published.