

Brundall Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 7th April 2024 at 7pm in the St Laurence Centre

Present: Kevin Wilkins (Chairman Brundall Parish Council), Joe Warns, Graham Abbott, Phil Gabillia, Ken Applegate, Lawrence Britt, Julie Mickelburgh, Paul Clark (Brundall Men's Shed), Marianne Gibbs (Brundall and Braydeston WI), Jan Davis and Eleanor Laming (District Councillors), Andrew Proctor (County Councillor), Rev Dave Hanson (Yare Valley Churches), Jan Barrington (Chairman Brundall Memorial Hall Trustees and Brundall Evening WI), Chloe Veale (Brundall Local History Group), Claudia Dickson (Clerk to Brundall Parish Council), and 4 members of the public.

All reports can be found on the Brundall Parish Council website.

1. Welcome

The Chairman of Brundall Parish Council, Kevin Wilkins opened the meeting and explained the format.

It is not a Parish Council meeting but the annual meeting of the parish and is to talk about what has been going on in the village and the plans for village, and all about the community, to celebrate all the good things that go on in Brundall.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 8th April 2024

The minutes were noted by the meeting. They are available on the Parish Council website.

3. Brundall Parish Council

Presented by Kevin Wilkins: The year under review has seen significant progress for the Council with the formal opening of the Sports Hub building and 3G sports pitch providing much needed additional recreational facilities in the village. This is an outstanding achievement for the Council following a lengthy period of planning, preparation and funding.

The Parish Council has not only continued to deliver its 'business as usual' but has continued to develop projects to enhance local amenities. We held a strategy day in October to help us prepare our plans for the future, and we recently started working on a review of our Neighbourhood Plan.

It is also encouraging that reports at this Annual Parish Meeting from community organisations demonstrate the vibrancy of local facilities and community life in Brundall.

The Council has continued to deliver its normal substantial business through the sub committee and working group structure and I am grateful for all the work that councillors, the clerks, co-opted members and Friends Groups put in as we regularly report at our council meetings. This includes the significant workload associated with managing our existing facilities at the Countryside Park, Church Fen, Cremer's Meadow and the Cemetery.

We have also continued to extend and professionalise our social media management during the course of the year which has created greater engagement with the community and local residents and working with Brundall Memorial Hall and Yare Valley Churches this now includes a bi-monthly newsletter.

We are appreciative of the ongoing work and regular reports from our county and district councillors. We will be monitoring closely the proposals for local government reorganisation and

devolution as the year progresses.

We were concerned to see the closure of Springdale Care Home in Autumn 2024 and although we have been reassured it is expected to be replaced with a care facility this has yet to be confirmed, or any timescales. We will continue to campaign for the enhanced provision of care for older residents in Brundall, as set out as a policy in our Neighbourhood Plan

In addition to 'business as usual' we are continuing to work on the Brundall Village Park project which will be delivered on Land East of the Memorial Hall under a Section 106 agreement with the developers. This work remains in the planning and preparation stage, pending when the land and funding becomes available under the agreement although we note that building work on Phase 1 will start imminently.

This year has seen further change within the clerking team, but since October 2024 we are fortunate to have a settled team of our clerk, Claudia and two deputies, Rachel and Clare, and wish them well as they continue to develop and support the council.

We have seen the departure of two councillors, Chris Whitehouse and Julie Mickelburgh and thank them both for their service, dedication and contributions to the council. We welcome Ken Applegate and Paul Wooldridge as new parish councillors.

As we move into a new business year, the Council's agenda remains busy not only to deliver our normal service but also to focus on priorities such as road safety and the further delivery of recreational projects. I am grateful for everyone who contributes to our mission.

4. Parish Council finance report

The Precept for 2024/25 was set at £162,620. For 2025/26 the Precept will be £173,820. This is an increase of 4.9% (or £0.38 per Band D property per month) and reflects the Council's commitment to continuing provide, maintain and enhance the facilities and services already in the village. It includes money towards repairing, maintaining and improving the Council's assets (including streetlights, benches, play equipment, the Cemetery), our ambition for a second pedestrian crossing on The Street, and our Safer Journey to School route for children.

Income

The Council received the following grants and donations in 2024/25:

- £3,319 from the Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership funds for 50% of the cost of 3 village gateway signs on Cucumber Lane, Postwick Lane, and Strumpshaw Road. These have been ordered and we hope will be installed in April.
- £206,815 from the Football Foundation to help build the pavilion at Brundall Sports Hub
- £1,957 Green Infrastructure Funding for the bridge from Cremer's Meadow to Marty's Marsh
- £1,000 from County Councillor Andrew Proctor's ward grant for the lowering of the raised kerbs at the entrance to the Countryside Park. This will make the entrance wider and safer for those entering and exiting the car park.

Land in Brundall

Brundall Parish Council owns:

- Brundall Sports Hub
- Church Fen
- Cremer's Meadow
- Cucumber Lane Cemetery
- Meadow View Play Area

- The play equipment at Brundall Memorial Hall

Brundall Parish Council leases land for:

- Countryside Park
- Allotments

Projects for 2025-26

- Improvement of cycle ways through the village
- A feasibility study for a second pedestrian crossing on The Street
- A review of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Draft design of Brundall Village Park
- Repairs and improvements to the boardwalk at Church Fen with the longer term aim to replace it

Further Information

All finance information of the Parish Council can be found on the website.

The Finance Report will be published in the Annual Parish Report 2025, and the full accounts will be available in due course once they have been approved by the Council. Details will be published on the website, or contact the Clerk.

5. John Evans Good Citizen Award

The John Evans Good Citizen Award is presented each year by the Parish Council to a person or team who have provided exceptional service to our local community

This year the John Evans award is presented to Julie Mickelburgh for her work as a Brundall parish councillor for over 18 years

Julie has given outstanding service to our village during this extended period of time and has shown true dedication and determination to improve life in the Brundall for our whole community.

She represented the Council on the Recreation and Wellbeing Committee which was originally formed to look for opportunities to improve recreational opportunities in Brundall, formal and informal, and in more recent years has expanded to look more holistically at the health and wellbeing of the village. She used her experience and knowledge of the Broads National Park for local community benefit.

Julie also undertook an important governance role by helping to form policies on the Advisory and Scrutiny Committee to ensure compliance with legislation and national guidance. As a member of the Council's planning team, she spent many hours walking round the village looking at application sites and advised on planning applications to make appropriate submissions to the planning authority.

She retired from the Council in January 2025 and we thank Julie most sincerely for her long and dedicated service to the Parish Council and to our community and I am delighted to present her with the John Evans Good Citizen Award.

6. Norfolk County Council

Budget 2025/26

Despite facing considerable financial challenges Norfolk County Council has approved a balanced budget for the 2025/26 fiscal year.

Key Details are as follows:

- **Gross Budget:** The council has a gross expenditure budget of £2.2 billion (£1.7 billion excluding schools). This includes:
 - £700 million for Adult Social Care
 - £367 million for Children's Services (non-schools)
 - £283 million for Infrastructure
 - £44 million for Communities and Environment
 - £46 million for Fire Services

Net Budget: The net budget for 2025/26 is £572 million. This represents the amount raised through Council Tax to fund the services provided by the council.

- **Budget Growth:** The 2025/26 budget includes an increase of £121 million, which covers:
 - £31 million for inflationary pressures
 - £35 million for legislative pressures (including the increase in the National Living Wage and higher Employers National Insurance contributions)
 - £15 million for demand and demographic pressures
 - Over £25 million to cover recurrent overspends from Adult and Children's Services in 2024/25.
- **Funding and Savings:** While costs have risen by £121 million, funding has only increased by £32 million. The Government has eliminated the Rural Services Delivery Grant and reallocated funds from rural to metropolitan areas. To balance the budget, savings of £45 million have been implemented.
- **Council Tax:** For 2025/26, Council Tax will increase by 4.99%, which includes a 2.99% rise for general Council Tax and a 2% increase for the Adult Social Care precept. A Band D household will pay £1,755.63 per year, or around £34 per week, for County Council services in 2025/26.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

Norfolk is set to receive new powers and funding following a Government announcement, with the County being a key focus for devolution and local government reform.

Government is offering a devolution deal that covers both Norfolk and Suffolk, including the creation of an elected mayor. Part of this involves plans to replace the existing "two-tier" system, where key services are shared between county and district councils, with unitary authorities.

As a first step councils have submitted initial proposals to government on how new unitaries could be created. Currently there is a district proposal for 3 unitaries with the county submitting a proposal that leans towards either a single county unitary or 2 unitaries but with a fully evidenced and data driven business case to be completed by September 2025. The county has ruled out 3 unitaries as costing too much and delivering little in the way of savings.

Notwithstanding the different proposals so far it is hoped that the districts and the county can progress towards a unified approach otherwise there is the risk that a new arrangement will be imposed by government.

Although no plans have yet been formulated it is expected that Town and Parish Councils will have an enhanced role in the future.

As a result of being in the situation of setting up a new Strategic Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk, lead by a Mayor to be elected in May 2026, and reforming local government structures in the two counties, the county elections that were due to be held in May 2025 have been cancelled.

A consultation on devolution run by government is currently under way and I would urge everyone to respond through this link www.norfolk.gov.uk/devolution. The end date for responses is 13 April.

For more details on the story so far, including the Government's devolution white paper and answers to frequently asked questions from the Local Government Association, visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/devolution. You can also [watch our video explaining devolution and local government reform](#).

New Economic Strategy

Ambitious plans for Norfolk's economy through the new strategy, also known the Local Growth Plan, seek to build on Norfolk's influence in key sectors, including clean energy, agri-tech and cutting-edge research.

Norfolk is a global leader for offshore wind with £39bn of clean energy investment forecasted over the next 20 years. In Great Yarmouth, the new Operations and Maintenance Campus is expected to create 650 new jobs and new commercial space for the offshore renewable energy sector. This £24.8m partnership project is a collaboration with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, with enabling works well underway.

Work is also underway to examine how to decarbonise the gas supply through the development of a 'Bacton Energy Hub', reusing existing North Sea assets for carbon storage, and blue/green hydrogen production.

The local Agri-Food and Agri-Tech economy puts Norfolk at the epicentre of addressing challenges around food security and climate change. Norwich Research Park is a world-leading research base at the forefront of global food and health research. It is Europe's largest single site hub of research, training, education, and enterprise in food and health.

Norfolk is already well known for a visitor economy which accounts for nearly 20% of all employment. The county was recently successful in bidding to become a Local Visitor Economy Partnership, alongside Visit East of England and Suffolk County Council.

New Business Grant programme

As part of the county's five-year economic blueprint the £1.1m Business Growth Fund offers grants of £5k to £50k, covering up to 30% of project costs. The £1.2m Made Smarter Adoption programme will provide grants of up to £20k, funding up to 50% of advanced manufacturing and engineering projects. These initiatives aim to boost key sectors like clean energy, agri-tech, and research, while unlocking private sector investment. Grants will be available from April 2025.

East Anglian counties partner with US city for mutual business and economic growth

The counties of Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex have partnered with Virginia Beach, a US city with booming technology and renewables sectors, to boost transatlantic trade and cooperation through a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Virginia Beach is the largest city in Virginia, about the size of Bristol, halfway down the US East Coast.

The MOU was signed on 12 November 2024 at the US Embassy in London by the three County Council Leaders: Norfolk's Kay Mason Billig, Suffolk's Matthew Hicks, and Essex's Kevin Bentley. Signing for Virginia Beach was the City's Deputy City Manager, Amanda Jarratt.

Local Enterprise Partnership moved to County Councils

Business support and other economy-boosting services delivered by New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) will continue after integration into Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils.

Key functions and employees of the LEP transferred to the authorities on 1 April 2024 as part of the Government's devolution process. Its functions include business representation, strategic economic planning, and responsibility for the delivery of government programmes.

Business support will continue to be provided by New Anglia Growth Hub - which delivers the LEP's business growth programme, including the administration of grant schemes.

The Growth Hub has supported businesses and the region's economy, with the economic impact of its Business Growth Programme measured over a 10-year period at £1,032,797,741, creating

new jobs and safeguarding existing employment.

Major construction and infrastructure projects across Norfolk have received significant funding thanks to the LEP's Growth Deal with Government, which secured £223.5m for the region to 2021. These include the Herring Bridge in Great Yarmouth, the Digi-Tech Factory at City College Norwich, and Productivity East, the centre for engineering, technology and management at the University of East Anglia.

Both councils have worked closely in the run-up to the transition and are keen to build on the LEP's 13-year legacy.

Norwich Western Link

Although the planning application for the Norwich Western Link has been withdrawn, negotiations are still going on with central government about funding the project and in what state it can proceed. The project remains a priority of the County Council and is supported by a majority of residents and businesses.

Norwich Park and Ride

Good news for Postwick Park & Ride as following a competitive tender process Norfolk County Council awarded contracts to run all Norwich Park and Ride services for up to the next eight years, starting at the end of March 2025.

Two operators have been successful, with First Bus having been awarded the contract to run services from the Airport and Thickthorn sites, and Central Connect (operating as Simonds) providing services from Harford and Postwick. First Bus has committed to running zero-emission buses from the Thickthorn and Airport sites. All four sites will see earlier and later journeys and a service on a Sunday.

The Sprowston site will continue to be part of the overall park and ride system but offering a slightly different service as it will be opened up to local bus services to use as a transport hub on local routes.

Long Stratton Bypass

The main construction work on the new bypass for Long Stratton began in July 2024, following the approval of the full business case from government.

Construction is expected to take 18 months, with the road planned to open by the end of 2025. The work will be undertaken by Octavius Infrastructure Limited who were appointed as the main contractor in January 2024.

The proposed new A140 bypass will be a single carriageway road that will provide a new roundabout junction at Church Lane to the north, extending from this junction on the east side of Long Stratton going south for approximately 3.9km, where it will re-join the existing A140 near Oakside farm.

The current estimated overall cost of the bypass is £46.9m with funding primarily sourced from central government, a £14.5m commitment from the Greater Norwich Growth Board, local developer contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Heartsease Fiveways roundabout

Work on the final phase of improvements to Heartsease Fiveways roundabout in Norwich finished in May 2024.

New Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital roundabout

Improvements are being made on the main Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital roundabout through a developer-led scheme.

Work on the £1 million-plus scheme started on Monday 9 September and will last for around six months. The work will see improved pedestrian and cycle access to the hospital and nearby research park, alongside the installation of a new Toucan crossing.

The developer is leading the project, with certain elements delivered in partnership with Norfolk

County Council and South Norfolk Council. This partnership approach has enabled the improvements to be delivered as a single scheme, reducing disruption to road users during the work.

Parish Partnership Scheme

97 parishes, from Antingham to Worstead, will benefit from projects funded through the Council's 2025/26 Parish Partnership scheme. The programme is designed to deliver what local communities have requested, including trods, village gateways, bus shelters, and vehicle-activated signs.

Blofield, Brundall and Strumpshaw have all received successful bids.

The programme is jointly funded by Norfolk County Council and contributions from Town and Parish Councils. This year, Norfolk County Council plans to contribute £425,476, enabling a total investment of £848,702 for local projects.

Government funded highways maintenance

Norfolk is set to receive more than £56 million for highways maintenance that can be used throughout 2025/6 on the roads that are in most need of repair, and to deliver immediate fixes for communities across Norfolk.

Norfolk took the top spot for the second year in a row in the National Highways and Transport (NHT) survey on roads and transport. People from across the county gave Norfolk the highest (above average) score in satisfaction with the condition of the highways.

More than 5,300 potholes have been fixed across Norfolk since April 2024 and of those 99% were repaired within the agreed response times.

If you see a pothole - don't assume someone else has reported it. Report it by completing the online form: www.norfolk.gov.uk/potholes

Four years of Beryl in Norwich

The UK's leading micromobility provider, Beryl, along with scheme partners Norfolk County Council and National Grid, have celebrated the fourth anniversary of their popular bike, e-bike and e-scooter share scheme in Norfolk.

The scheme has had a significant impact in breaking down the barriers to active travel for people. It has, so far, amassed more than 1,328,000 journeys across nearly 3,885,000km - the equivalent of nearly 100 trips around the Earth.

It has also had a significant impact on reducing traffic congestion, with user feedback showing that, on average, nearly a quarter of all Beryl journeys have replaced those that would have been taken in a car, van, taxi or motorbike.

According to industry calculations, that has saved over 176 tonnes of harmful CO2 emissions, which is a major contribution towards improving the quality of the region's air.

Bus improvements

Residents living in the North of the county now benefit from the many bus service improvements with more frequent buses, and later buses, operating between Norwich and Cromer/Sheringham and Holt.

The increased services, which are all operated by Sanders Coaches, began on 2nd June 2024 and are funded by money that Norfolk County Council secured from the Department for Transport (DfT).

Improvements include:

- A later bus back from Norwich on the X55 service at 22:40 to allow a way back to North Walsham after evenings out in the city.
- Coupled with an increased frequency to the X44/44A service which operates between Sheringham and Norwich a new fast service X41 will be added and this will allow buses to run every half an hour throughout the day Monday to Saturday between Aylsham and Norwich previously every 45 minutes. This benefits those living on route in places such as

Aylsham Marsham Hevingham St Faiths and Hellesdon.

- Extra buses on the fast X40 and new X41 journeys will get you to the City or Coast where you can join other services to explore Norfolk further.
- X41 fast buses will serve 3 stops in Aylsham - Burgh Road - Tesco and Norwich Road.
- With the introduction of the X41 from Burgh Road off peak 43 service buses will now serve the west of Aylsham travelling from Willow Park - via Cawston road then Norwich road on route to Norwich.

These are examples of a number of service enhancements which are being funded by the £49.55 million funding which Norfolk County Council was successful in securing from the Department for Transport (DfT) to use on improving bus services across the County over the next three years.

Approximately £12 million of the funding has been allocated to provide new or expanded bus routes and increase service frequencies on key routes, including more evening and weekend services.

New all electric bus fleet

First Bus celebrated the completion of the project to transform its Roundtree Way Depot to an all-electric commercial bus fleet as the operational centre for 59 double deck and 11 single deck brand new state-of-the-art electric buses.

This is not only the East of England's first zero-emission bus fleet but it is also the first complete zero-emission commercial bus fleet in England located outside of London.

The new electric vehicles produce zero tailpipe emissions. This makes them great news for the environment and Norwich's many residents and visitors, as they will help to create a cleaner, greener environment for people to live, work and enjoy. They also offer customers a more comfortable ride, as they are quieter and smoother than diesel vehicles.

The introduction of the new bus fleet means that over half of the Norwich network operated by First Bus is now electric. That is over 60% of all bus journeys through Castle Meadow in the city centre.

Hi Tech Gritters

With 45 brand new gritting vehicles joining the fleet over the last 2 years and all 58 of our vehicles now operating at the highest specifications available, each vehicle runs with brand new auto-salting technology. Aided by satellite navigation, it allows teams to salt the road with limited manual intervention, making the operation more accurate, saving time and reducing waste.

On average, the technology reduces the amount of salt used by between 10% and 15% and saves salt being distributed onto grass verges and other areas that do not require gritting.

Using mapping data, information from the Norfolk network, along with input from our highly skilled drivers, vehicles can track pre-programmed routes making treating Norfolk roads easier and more precise.

Because route data is uploaded into the vehicles, any driver can select any route, set the required spread rate and drive - improving safety and ensuring more effective use of resources and drivers. This means that the network will be treated appropriately and consistently throughout this winter helping to keep Norfolk's roads moving.

Alongside this technology the Roadside Weather Stations across the County are being upgraded as they come to the end of their serviceable life. Recent upgrades include Smallburgh, Cromer and Barn Road Norwich, followed by Wells. These stations collect roadside data, such as road surface temperatures, which enables the Highways Team to decide on gritting actions over a subsequent 36 hour period.

Herring Bridge receives further national awards

The new Herring Bridge in Great Yarmouth, which opened in February 2024, has received further national recognition winning the Major Project of Year award and was also later announced as

winner for the Highways Special Merit award across all shortlisted finalists.

This follows the bridge already receiving Major Project of the Year at the New Civil Engineer awards early this summer.

Norfolk's entry was a joint submission with consultants WSP who worked with the council and partners to take the project, constructed by BAM Farrans joint venture, from its inception through to delivery.

Booking system at Norfolk Recycling centres

People going to a Norfolk recycling centre from Monday 18 November 2024 must now book in advance. Bookings can be made up to seven days ahead either online via the council's website or by phoning the customer service centre. The new booking system was live from Monday 11 November.

Additionally, from 1 November trade customers saw a change to the way they pay to dispose of their waste. Businesses will be charged based on the size of vehicle and the type of waste they bring, instead of the number of bags.

The changes will help with service demand, reduce congestion and make sites safer whilst ensuring costs are covered for the disposal of waste.

More household hazardous waste days to be held at Norfolk's recycling centres

Additional household hazardous waste events will be held across the county at seven recycling centres this spring, supplementing the usual autumn events.

The free events will be held throughout April and May 2025, and residents must use the recycling centre booking system to attend. Bookings will open one week before each event.

These events are exclusively for residents disposing of hazardous household waste. They are not open to businesses, groups, or other organisations. If residents do not have hazardous waste to dispose of, they will be directed to an alternative site, as the events are expected to be in high demand.

The spring hazardous waste events will be held on the following dates:

- 4 and 5 April at King's Lynn
- 11 and 12 April at Dereham
- 25 and 26 April at Thetford
- 2 and 3 May at Norwich North
- 9 and 10 May at Hempton
- 16 and 17 May at Caister
- 23 and 24 May at Norwich South

A list of acceptable items for disposal at the hazardous waste days can be found at:

www.norfolk.gov.uk/hazardouswaste

Norfolk street lighting goes green

A project to upgrade street lighting across Norfolk to make it more energy efficient and environmentally friendly has been completed almost a year ahead of schedule. The change will see CO2 emissions on lighting maintained by Norfolk County Council cut by over 200 tonnes a year.

500,000 trees planted as part of 1 Million Trees for Norfolk scheme

Norfolk County Council has reached the halfway point of its 1 Million Trees for Norfolk initiative, planting the 500,000th tree. The milestone tree, a Norfolk Oak, was planted at Priscilla Bacon Lodge with support from Paul Bussey, who has funded several tree planting projects. Grown by volunteers at Gressenhall Community tree nursery, the tree is part of the scheme launched in 2020 to plant one million trees across the county. The project has engaged local communities, schools,

businesses, and landowners, with the council aiming to plant 150,000 trees annually until the goal is achieved.

Norfolk signs historic agreement with Ukrainian region of Lviv

A cooperation agreement has been signed between Norfolk County Council and the Ukrainian region of Lviv which is designed to explore knowledge transfer, educational exchange and trade opportunities.

Both Norwich and Lviv have links to UNESCO: Norwich is a UNESCO City of Literature, and the historic part of Lviv city (300-acre historic centre) is included in the UNESCO World Heritage list. In 2022, Lviv was granted Freedom of the City of Norwich in solidarity with Ukraine, and the MoU - similar to a twinning arrangement - will further celebrate and build on these links.

Norfolk and Lviv have identified several key opportunities for collaborative working, including the TechBridge programme, a strategic partnership between the UK Government, Ukraine Ministry of Digital Transformation and Ukraine Ministry of Foreign Affairs to forge connections between our tech ecosystems.

Progress and improvements at Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found NFRS had improved in five key areas since its last inspection.

The report recognised the service's sound financial management, positive working culture, and the high priority it gives fire prevention.

Particular praise was given for 'promising practice' in significant incident and multi-agency fatal fire reviews, which are improving outcomes both locally and nationally.

Inspectors found NFRS is good at: understanding risk, responding to major and multi-agency incidents, and ensuring the affordability of its services now and in the future.

They noted a positive working culture with staff feeling empowered to challenge poor behaviours and the service acting to tackle bullying, harassment and discrimination, dealing effectively with disciplinaries, grievances and dismissals.

A good approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion and a good people strategy which aims to attract, retain and develop a diverse and talented workforce, create an inclusive culture, and better represent the community it serves were also noted in the report.

Staff wellbeing is a high priority with a significant range of support available for both physical and mental health and most staff reporting they understand and have confidence in the processes available, the report said.

In recognition of the progress made, the 'cause for concern' related to preventing fires and risks has now been removed with the service improving its rating from 'inadequate' in this area to 'requires improvement'.

Inspectors recognised the direction of travel on improvements, but said it needs to do more on assurance for the quality of its prevention and protection work, more on training, more to improve diversity in its workforce, and more on identifying and developing leaders.

The report said that NFRS is adequate at: protecting the public through fire regulation; responding to fires and other emergencies; making the best use of its resources and within its workforce promoting its values and culture and ensuring fairness and diversity.

It requires improvement in preventing fires and other risks, getting the right people with the right skills, and managing performance and developing leaders.

Household support fund extended

The Household Support Fund was extended in September 2024 for another 6 months, through Government funding of £421 million to councils to help them support the most vulnerable who are struggling with household bill costs, such as food and energy.

Norfolk County Council opposes National Grid pylon scheme

Councillors in Norfolk have objected to a National Grid proposal to construct an electricity transmission line across the county.

National Grid are planning to build a 114 mile overhead power line between Norwich in Norfolk, Bramford in Suffolk and Tilbury in Essex.

In non-statutory consultations, Norfolk County Council has urged National Grid to reconsider the scheme, but the project will be determined by the secretary of state for energy security and net zero as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project.

Norfolk County Council's planning and highways delegations committee have agreed to object to the proposal, arguing that alternative options, including an offshore or underground scheme, had not been adequately considered.

County Councillors have backed a motion expressing concerns over the proposals including further consideration of an offshore alternative and of putting more of the power line underground.

7. Broadland District Council

This report outlines the activities of the two district councillors for Brundall Ward (Cllr Jan Davis and Cllr Eleanor Laming) over the last year.

We have attended all of the Main Council meetings at Broadland District Council which continues to be run by [a partnership of Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green councillors](#).

Cllr Davis is a member of the Cabinet and holds the Environment Portfolio which covers a wide remit including waste and recycling, community protection and environmental quality, regulatory services, food safety, burials, public health protection and nutrient neutrality.

Cllr Davis is a BDC representative on the following organisations: Broadland Futures Initiative Elected Members Forum, Community Rail Norfolk, Broads (2006) Internal Drainage Board, Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance, Norfolk Climate Change Partnership, and the Norfolk Waste Partnership.

Cllr Laming has a place on the following committees/panels: Planning, Overview and Scrutiny, Communities Housing and Planning, Awards and Standards.

We have attended nearly all of the main parish council meetings for Postwick, Brundall, Strumpshaw and Cantley and cluster group meetings (at which representatives of local parish councils meet to share ideas and current issues). We have raised issues on their behalf and submitted regular update reports.

We corresponded with residents over a wide range of matters such as planning and enforcement issues, light pollution, highways concerns mainly related to pot-holes, road safety and bus service provision, waste collections and fly tipping.

We have commented on a number of planning applications and planning appeals where appropriate, both in the ward and in neighbouring wards, and called in contentious applications to the BDC planning committee.

We have submitted responses to several consultations including the Norwich Western Link planning application, the NCC Rail Consultation 2024, the government's National Planning Policy Framework Consultation, the NCC Shaping Norfolk's Libraries consultation. the government's consultation on Enabling Remote Attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings, the NCC Short Journey Travel Habits Survey, the NCC Budget Consultation and Street Light Consultation, Norfolk Police Budget Consultation, the NCC Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025 Public Questionnaire and the government consultation on Devolution in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Cllr Davis has put his members Ward Grant of £1,000 towards improvements at the Buckenham and Hassingham Social Club hall which included new flooring in the toilet area, repairs to the entrance doors, improvements to the fire exit door with push bar and replacement of a missing window panel.

Cllr Laming put her members Ward Grant of £1000 towards the now completed internal improvements for Brundall Memorial Hall which included replacing the current patio doors with bifold doors, removing the post that is in the centre of the room, and redecoration.

Cllr Laming applied to the BDC Community Grant Scheme in October 2024 on behalf of Brundall Memorial Hall Committee, who were awarded £9000 towards the cost of making external improvements to the Memorial Hall which will be carried out later this year.

We have attended the following events and meetings: Brundall Armistice Day and Remembrance Day services, the 80th commemoration of D-Day flag raising ceremony at the Horizon Centre, the event to unveil the new village sign in Postwick, the Pride Flag Raising at the Horizon Centre, the Yare Valley Churches Institution service for the Rev David Hanson at St Laurence Church, Brundall, the Town and Parish Summit held at the Horizon Centre, the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System Conference at the Kings Centre the BDC Community at Heart Awards evening, the official opening of the Brundall Sports Hub, the A47 "Start of Works" event held by National Highways and the contractor, Galliford Try, the Norfolk Landscapes Conference and Exhibition, the Norfolk Flood and Drought Summit and the Norwich Society Conference on Adapting our City for Climate Change.

Brundall is the chosen BDC Ward for the Fast Followers Net Zero Climate Change project run by the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership. It is one of 7 communities involved in Norfolk. The ambition is to make it easier for residents to: make changes to properties so they are more energy efficient, use greener ways to travel, and create and access renewable energy. Cllr Davis has been assisting the managers and consultants of this programme. He has actively supported the successful funding bid submitted by Postwick parish council to the new Greater Anglia Customer and Community Improvement Fund for a study to explore the feasibility of a cycleway linking Postwick and Brundall.

Cllr Davis attended a session on World Cafes and used the methodology to run a community consultation for a new village hall in Cantley and to assist with a café in Reedham.

Cllr Davis has continued to liaise with National Highways managers re the increase in volume and speed of traffic through local villages in relation to the A47 dualling works. Additional signage has been erected to encourage drivers to slow down through local villages.

Abbreviations:

BDC – Broadland District Council; NCC – Norfolk County Council

8. Acle Safer Neighbourhood Team Police

Acle Beat Team sent their apologies for not being able to make the meeting this evening.

Team Members:

PC 1586 Jackie Chambers

PC 1592 Sally Nairn

Sgt 841 Steve Knightley.

We have welcomed our new Sgt to the team at the beginning of March this year. He is very keen on getting out and about on patrol with us so hopefully you will get to meet him at one of our community events or when generally patrolling.

I have enclosed a Team Poster that can be displayed locally for information.

Acle Beat Team Priority Setting Meeting:

Our next Priority Setting Meeting is June 11th 2025.

Following the last set of meetings our priority moving forward will be **Road Safety**.

As outlined at the last Priority Setting Meeting we held on the 13th March, there is a desire within the Force to have a consistent approach to priority setting across the county.

As a result, moving forward we will fall into line with what is taking place in the rest of the county and we will hold 1 meeting for the Sprowston, Old Catton, Thorpe, Wroxham and Acle policing areas.

The meetings will be held in person at an advertised venue with a facility for people to also join the meeting online.

The details of how to join the meeting online will be advertised along with the physical meeting details.

In addition the Beat Managers will continue to work locally running engagement events across the District to listen and deal with local concerns.

Once the priority setting meetings have taken place we will meet with partner agencies to discuss the priorities raised and then formally set the policing priority following that consultation to ensure that all agencies are working towards a shared goal.

Please contact the Team on SNTAcle@norfolk.police.uk for details closer to the time.

Crime figures (snap shot) January 2025 to end of March 2025

For Brundall only:

25 Crimes recorded, the vast majority of these (10 crimes) fall under the category of Violence against the Person and consist of Common Assault's and those amounting to Actual Bodily Harm. All of these crimes have happened during Domestic Incidents in the home or Mental Health incidents and one occurred between children. None of the crimes of violence consist of people that are strangers to each other.

We have had one Burglary reported – this is currently being investigated by the Acle Beat Team, known suspects identified.

10 Thefts were recorded 7 of which from Shops in the village.

There is one Theft of Motor Vehicle, but the parties involved are known to each other.

1 offence relating to possession of drugs from a vehicle that was stopped in the Brundall area.

The Acle Beat Team have been involved in lots of local engagements across the area including a visit to Acle Pre School, Acle Primary School and other primary schools in the Broadland area, we attended the Girl Guiding Group at South Walsham, the Beavers at Salhouse and the Beavers at Brundall. We have a date coming up in the diary where we will be doing a visit to Acle Youth Club.

We continue to conduct the Brundall Primary school parking patrols and have been made aware of near misses on the Pedestrian crossing near to Braydeston Avenue, which we have been patrolling.

We also held a joint traffic operation with Student Officers and colleagues from the Road Policing Department where we targeted the Fatal Four. Speeding, Seat Belts, Mobile phones and Drink

Driving. We are looking to conduct another day like this before June. During this day speed checks for the Acle area were conducted in Cantley and outside the Hermitage Pub at Acle – no enforcement was necessary on the Acle area. We will vary the locations on the next date for this event.

We are currently responding to speeding concerns on Postwick Lane, Brundall and have some deployed our Camera Safety Team to that location and awaiting the results.

We have also conducted numerous patrols of the Brundall allotments following a break in at this location. The patrols have been at different times and have also been part of the Response Team's tasking for over night patrols.

9. Yare Valley Churches

Presented by Rev Dave Hanson: I would like to begin by thanking everyone for the warm welcome you have given to my wife and myself from the village. It has been really great to meet so many groups and organisations in Brundall. We are impressed the degree of collaboration and partnership that is going on and we are very keen to be part of that.

When new rectors come to a parish they are very much building on the foundations of those laid by others. The parish was in vacancy for over 2 years vacancy, an extended period. The PCC, the Church Council, did an amazing job keeping so many things going but inevitably some things suffer. Unfortunately the work with children and young people took a bit of a hit.

Over the past year the Church has continued to run its twice weekly Community Café on a Monday and Thursday morning providing a warm and welcoming space for people to meet and come back from social isolation and loneliness.

The Anna Chaplaincy team have been busy visiting local care homes to run services and sit and talk with residents.

The Community Pantry is open on a Monday morning and is well used by people from the village and by the wider community. It is stocked with food stuffs toiletries, food for pets. There is no need for a referral, the service is provided in a discreet and confidential way. We really appreciate donations from individuals and from parkrun, Guides and other local organisations. We will be trialling opening the Community Pantry twice a week, starting this week, for 3 months.

The Forget me not Café for those on the dementia pathway and their carers continues to run.

The Toddler Group is open on a Tuesday morning

We are pleased to support parkrun by providing refreshments on a Saturday morning.

All of this is in addition to running the normal Church services and baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

We have been consulting the Church community to find out what our priorities should be over the next few years which has resulted in an action plan. It will concentrate on contacting children, young people, and families, and people who are isolated due to age, poverty or disability. We want to continue to partner with local organisations to achieve this.

We have a robust safer recruitment process in place to recruit volunteers. Every volunteer must have a DBS check and undertake training.

We want to arrange a series of events for families to bring families together in Brundall and are exploring the possibility of starting a Youth Club. We want to rebuild the relationship with the school again.

We are really pleased to be working with the Parish Council and Brundall Memorial Hall to produce the first edition of the Brundall Newsletter, what used to be the Parish Magazine. It was the one thing everyone asked for when I started. We are hoping that eventually it can be self funding from adverts.

10. Brundall Memorial Hall

Presented by Jan Barrington: We have had an eventful year at the Hall. We have successfully raised the funds to reinvent the Lounge, removing the central pillar, repairing and laying a new floor, and completely redecorating. It is now a very welcoming space and we hold a café every Wednesday morning.

We received a grant from the National Lottery and together with money raised by fundraising and a grant from Broadland DC we are now in the process of reconfiguring the exterior, outside the new Lounge patio doors. We will have planters and an area of seating. It will be fenced to enable children to play safely while their parents have a coffee.

We will be celebrating this along with VE Day on May 11th along with various groups in the village and the school. The Trustees will be providing cream teas and bacon rolls. The Bishop of Thetford will be there to say a few words at the Memorial Plaque in the entrance.

We have also collaborated with the Church and the Parish Council to produce the Newsletter for Brundall which has been sorely missed. Hopefully with advertising this can be self funding.

11. Friends of Cremer's Meadow

Submitted by Gill Buckley: As usual the Friends have had a busy year on the Meadow. Regular maintenance takes place most Friday morning for 2 hours. Planning meetings take place bi-monthly when decisions can be made for the improvements of the site. In addition, 2 major events take place during the year – the Annual Orchid Open Day and the Cut and Clear day when we welcome additional volunteers to help.

The Orchid Open Day in 2024 was successful with the addition this year of home-made cakes and soft drinks. Visitors were able to enjoy the orchids which were out in abundance once again and it is interesting to see they have spread further northwards this year.

At the Open Day we also celebrated that it is 10 years since the first opening of Cremer's to the public. The Friends welcomed Shirley Cremer on the day, and she made a speech and cut the anniversary cake. Councillors also attended the event and Kevin made a speech which thanked everyone for their work over the last 10-12 years.

The long-awaited bridge between Cremer's and Marty's Marsh was finally opened in September. Everyone has given very positive feedback about the look of the bridge and that it has opened safe pathways between the villages and beyond.

To mark the collaboration between the two sites, we are holding a joint open day on June 14th which will celebrate the different natural environments which the overall space offers.

Heavy rainfall has caused the surrounding dykes to become full and these are being monitored to prevent overflow - particularly into the barn. There is concern that at least one culvert may be blocked which could lead to significant work in the future. John from the Friends has worked with members of local councils and other experts to determine the best way to tackle this issue. It is likely there will be a significant job of work to be carried out during the year.

The central pond is still the subject of discussion and hopes for improvement. We have completed some preliminary work on depth measurements but are awaiting information about whether there will be funding and help from external sources.

We are still waiting to complete repairs on the Information Hut. New bearings have been put in place (thanks to the Allotment Working Group) but the floor and roof require more attention. It is hoped that this might be completed during the summer of 2025.

The tree surveys (both local and by an expert contractor) demonstrated that there is no significant concern about the trees on the site. A small amount of remedial work has been carried out to comply with their findings.

We have been supported by the Parish Council Environment Committee this year as their Biodiversity Working Group has been carrying out several surveys on the site to determine a baseline of flora and fauna found at Cremer's. The highlights of their findings are;

Number of breeding bird species - 35

Number of plant species – 226

Number of individual (temporarily) trapped invertebrates – 112

The group have also installed more bird boxes and introduced some bat boxes onto the site and continue to give valuable guidance for the site overall.

The Cut and Clear in September was again successful. Help from Badcog and Bure Valley Conservation made it an easier task and we had completed by lunch time. The lunch provided was a very welcome celebration of a job well done. Thanks to the Central England Co-op who provided the ingredients and the Friends who made them into a delicious cream tea.

We have welcomed a few new volunteers to the Friends group over the year and they have been wonderful with their work. A group of Aviva volunteers also came for a day and worked very hard to tackle the bamboo which is invading areas of the site. Having a group of strong youngsters was a very welcome addition to the work of the regular volunteers.

As ever, huge thanks go to the Friends of Cremer's Meadow who dedicate time and effort into making it such a valued village asset. If you would like to volunteer to work on this wonderful site, please contact Gill on 07530 447980 for further information.

12. Brundall Evening WI

Another successful year enjoying our monthly meetings with some very interesting speakers. A monthly lunch out and regular walks.

At our December meeting members donated many and varied items in aid of the Salvation Army, shampoo, shower gel, toothpaste, and socks to give the homeless a bit of dignity. Our membership has increased during the year despite losing a few to the church yard and we are looking forward to the future.

13. Brundall Men's Shed

Presented by Paul Clark, Chair of Brundall Men's Shed: The Men's shed now welcomes ladies. Our current membership is 65 paying and 2 supported members. We are open 4 days a week and we tackle loneliness head on. More than a sprinkling of men on their own, some of them sent by the Church. We welcome people from a vast range of education, social, and economic backgrounds

We have been involved in various community projects – a notice board for Lingwood Village Hall, bookcase for the walk-in rooms in Blofield, bird boxes for Sprowston Brownies, cleaning Braydeston Church, moving boxes for Blofield School to name but a few.

At the AGM recently we voted to increase our membership fee from £10 to £15, this is the first increase since the Shed opened. Our rates reduction has unfortunately changed from 75% to 40% meaning we now pay £1,607 up from £486.

General costs also continue to rise and we have secured the shed from Clive Richardson at our cost. £10,000 rent a year. This is only achievable by a matched funding grant of £5000 from Clarion for the next 2 years. We desperately need to find our own property as that is an unsustainable figure.

14. Brundall and Braydeston WI

Presented by Marianne Gibbs: We have also increased our membership from a very shaky start 4 years ago to now have 15 and are having more inquiries. We have set up a Facebook page to encourage more participation.

We too took part in village events. We did a lot of fundraising, taking part in the garage sale, the Lions Fete, Xmas event at the Brundall Memorial Hall, we will be running children's games at the VE Day event.

We have moved back to the Memorial Hall as it is more convenient and accessible those with mobility issues.

We have reached a nice solid foundation. Some of our old members returned and the future is looking good.

15. Brundall Local History Group

Good evening everyone. I'm Barbara Ayers, chairman of Brundall Local History Group. I'm reporting on our past year's activities, although our year goes from October to July. We organise monthly public talks at Brundall Memorial Hall on the first Saturday of the month in the afternoon except for December, and June when we usually have an outside event.

So far this year we have had talks about Norwich trams, First World War Auxiliary war hospitals, The Pastons, Landscape Archaeology, Norwich in the 50s and 60s and the A to Z of Curious Norfolk. We have an average of 70 attendees with a record attendance of 96 for Norwich in the 50s and 60s. The audience is made up of members, and visitors, many of whom hear about the talk via Facebook and we are grateful to our committee member, Zinta, who manages our Facebook page. Another means of publicity is our website very ably managed by Celia. Our speakers often comment on how well organised we are and this is due to a team of committee members and others who do everything from putting out the chairs at the beginning of the afternoon to serving refreshments at the end.

As well as the monthly talks we have an enthusiastic group of about 11 members who meet at Blofield Court House on Tuesday afternoons under the guidance of Chloe Veale, our archive administrator. Some members contribute by working on projects from home. The vast majority of our material is digital, and, working in conjunction with the Norfolk Record Office we are aiming to catalogue our archive so it will be accessible to all. This process has led to more research and more fascinating history of Brundall being discovered. Every year we receive several historical enquiries from the general public which our volunteers do their best to answer.

Following on from this we are very excited about our Community Activity Project for 2025, Victorian & Edwardian Brundall, and are grateful to Brundall Parish Council for a generous grant towards this. We have contacted the occupants of houses and businesses whose buildings are pre 1914 with a view to creating a discovery trail based on the properties whose residents are willing to take part. When you think that the village was populated by only about 500 people then compared to 6,000 today everyday life was very different.

We will be featuring the Hotblack family of Shiels Court (now Braydeston Court Care Home). George Snelling Hotblack was a partner in his family's boot and shoe factory in Norwich before retiring to Shiels Court, Braydeston Avenue, an Arts & Crafts house built around 1893. For our May talk, Caroline Holland, a direct descendent of John Hotblack, Mayor of Norwich, 1884-5 will be telling us more about the family.

On 11th May we will be going back in time again to give a flavour of what life would have been like in Brundall during World War 2. Although a few decades later than the Edwardian era, Brundall's population was still a fraction of what it is today (it was about 1000). We will be taking part in the village event in the Memorial Hall to commemorate VE Day by putting on a visual and audio presentation. . . . so we continue to link generations across the community through collecting, preserving and sharing information and memories about our history and heritage.

16. Open Session

There were no matters raised by the public in this session.

Kevin Wilkins closed the meeting: Thank you all for your contributions tonight and also to those who contribute to the life and soul of the village throughout the year. It is amazing what goes on in our vibrant village and all the time and effort that so many people put in making that happen.

Thank you on behalf of the village for everything you do to make things happen and for the groups that you represent. Amazing amount of voluntary effort that goes in and it makes this such a wonderful place to live in.

Refreshments were served at the end of the meeting.