

Chairman's Report: Horningtoft Annual Parish Meeting May 8th 2024

Planning

- North Pole Farm – Retrospective planning application for change of use from agriculture to mixed use of agriculture and the use of land for the temporary static caravan to be used as a residence. The council objected to this planning application.
- Old Owl Barn - Conversion of an existing detached outbuilding into an annexe. Approved.

Highways

- The Clerk reported to Highways that the blocked ditch opposite the Church Farm holiday lets was getting blocked after the Highway's corkscrew had been used to clean the gullies. Highways acknowledged that the work had been carried out but the Parish Council couldn't see any improvement. Highways also confirmed that the street signs had been cleaned, but the main signs were still dirty. The Clerk reported both items again.
- The speed restriction on the B1146 was looked at again in September by Highways and the village sign was still waiting to be re-located. The Clerk updated the Council regarding the moving of the village sign, Cllr Kiddle-Morris is still looking into Highways moving the sign or cutting back the verge.
- In November, due to the recent heavy rainfall, flooding occurred on the B1146 and nearby houses were very close to being flooded. The Council are still requesting and urgently supporting, with the backing of County Cllr Kiddle-Morris, that the speed limit on the B1146 be reduced. The combination of recent flooding and the speed of traffic going past the houses, means their banks and verges are rapidly eroding.
- County Councillor Kiddle-Morris reported that the drainage on the highway system is only able to drain the highway water so any water coming from the fields and other sources results in flooding. The maintenance budget within highways is for remedial work and will not cover replacing gullies and pipes etc. Cllr Hill and Cllr Drew reported that the grips that were dug out last year didn't help the situation as the debris corkscrewed out has now blocked the ditches. Cllr Drew reported this last year several times and would like it noted to Highways again, Cllr Kiddle-Morris was to pass this information on.
- Cllr Drew reported a potential water leak on Oxwick Road. A level marker has been placed within the ditch to establish the water levels which can be recorded as evidence to report to Highways.
- In March, The Council were updated on the potential water leak on Oxwick Road. A parishioner had contacted Anglian Water and the water was tested to confirm that chlorine was present. A date was booked with Anglian Water to carry out further investigations with the use of cameras.
- In February, an urgent site visit was carried out with the Highways engineer, County Cllr Kiddle-Morris and Cllr Hill to discuss the flooding and drainage issues on the B1146. Various areas were identified as needing attention and some of the ditches have since been dug out to enable the water to drain away.

Finance

- It was agreed that the new precept will be increased by £250 making the yearly precept £2200 for 2024-25.

General

- In May, Cllr Hill requested an update on the Church renovations, the PCC had obtained quotes. It was suggested making an application to the National Lottery as this is a community venue as well as a place of worship. The Council discussed this and fully support the PCC which then carried out a village survey regarding Church repairs/alterations.
In Nov, the PCC collated all the returned and completed survey forms and agreed to hold a meeting for residents to share their views verbally and to have further discussion.
- In July, the Council agreed to continue, at an increased rate, the present monthly grass cuts up until September and a possible extra cut if needed in October.
- In March 2024, The Council were informed that the new signs installed at The Hurdle were installed by NCC. A parishioner has kindly offered to refurbish the Finger post (near to the Church) for the cost of materials only. The Council thanked the volunteer and agreed to cover the cost of paint to the max cost of £50.00.
- Disappointingly, despite constant reminders from our Parish Clerk, the Breckland District Councillor did not attend any of our Parish Council meetings throughout the year. Following recent elections it is very much hoped this will change.

I would like to thank all the villagers and friends who have helped during the course of the year and the councillors for their attendance and support at meetings. Likewise thanks to County Councillor Mark Kiddle – Morris.

Lastly sincere thanks to our Parish Clerk Donna Secker for all her hard work.