



Minutes of the Annual Holt Town Meeting held on Monday 28th April at 7pm at the St. Andrew's Meeting Room, St. Andrew's Church, Church Street, Holt.

Attending: Cllr Sarah Tribe (Mayor), Cllr Ray Moore, Cllr Bryan Payne, Cllr Chris Bishop, Cllr Sue Barham, Cllr Martin Batey, Cllr Rodney Smith, Cllr Simon Williams, Admin Assistant Paul Dulson and Town Clerk Gemma Harrison.

18 members of the public were present.

1. Welcome from the Holt Town Mayor.

1.1 Cllr Sarah Tribe welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. To agree the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 20th May 2024.

2.1 The minutes were circulated prior to the meeting; they were AGREED by all.

3. To receive the Mayors Report for the year 24/25

3.1 The Mayors Report can be read in full at Appendix A.

4. Holt Honours

4.1 HTC celebrated those in the town that go above and beyond in the community. Those that were awarded the Holt Honours;

- Nigel Hadlow for his work with the Holt Markets.
- Boots Pharmacy for their hard work and commitment to the community in giving advice and distributing prescriptions.
- Kings Court Care Home for offering exceptional care.
- Linda Allison, Kat Allison and Sophie Skipper for their hard work in creating Festive Holt, a community event celebrating the start of the Christmas festivities.
- John Jarvis – for lifting the community's spirits and his work running the Memory Swap Group.

Public Question Time

To receive questions from the electors

- A member of the public thanked all the volunteers who helped with Festive Holt.
- A member of the public asked when the Albert Street Toilets will be opened, it was confirmed that they would be opening in the next few days.
- A member of the public asked if there was an update on the new primary School – HTC were unable to give an update but hoped to be given more information from NCC in due course.
- A member of the public asked for an update regarding the traffic calming measures on the Heath Farm roundabout. It was confirmed that NCC have carried out all agreed actions apart from the speed review which will be carried out shortly. It was noted that the lighting could still be improved.

5.GUEST SPEAKER – Steve Blatch – CEO North Norfolk District Council

5.1 Steve gave an update on the Local Government Review and current Unitary proposals.

6. GUEST SPEAKERS – The Holt Lowes Trustees

6.1 The Trustees gave a presentation on the history and management of Holt Lowes.

APPENDIX A – Annual Mayor Report

Annual Report 24/25

It has been another busy year for Holt Town Council, starting the year in April 2024 we knew we had a challenging year ahead with an extremely tight budget. Grant funding streams that we have always relied upon for larger projects were no longer available, and with ever increasing costs such as fuel, streetlighting, utilities, insurance and contractor costs we were aware this year would be a budgetary challenge. Let's reflect on another successful year and share with you some of our highlights from 2024.

The year started with a re-organisation of the Maintenance Team and the creation of a new role of **Town Ranger**. The Town Ranger is employed on 30 hours a week and is responsible for the maintenance of all town council assets. The role has allowed us to branch out and support our colleagues at the District Council and County Council with issues such as dog fouling, flytipping, cleaning road signs, removing graffiti, repairing bollards, handrails and steps and grass cutting. The role also includes weekly health and safety site inspection.

Last year we also created a new role of **Caretaker**, who is responsible for the opening, closing and cleaning of the Church Street Toilets and Memorial Gardens.

HTC hosted a **ROSPA training event** for local Town Councils which was a huge success and has led us to forging strong connections with Fakenham and Wells Town Councils.

The newly **refurbished Church Street toilets** were opened last Easter, and our Caretaker has done a fantastic job of keeping them looking spotless. The new toilets have hot water and are accessible with a disabled toilet. They are kitted out with modern day facilities including censored taps, lights and hand dryers. They have been exceptionally busy since the temporary closure of Albert Street Toilets, but we are pleased to say they have fared well with them looking just as good as the day they were opened. We continue to receive glowing reports regarding their design and cleanliness.

Last summer Holt Town Council received (through a transfer of deeds from the Fields in Trust) the **Holt Playing Fields** off Kelling Road. Holt Town Council are now the registered landowners of the site which means we get to protect it in perpetuity for the

people of Holt. As we are based in the town, we are able to take a more active role in the running of the site. This is an exciting opportunity to work with the Playing Fields Committee to find grant opportunities to invest in the site. We are looking at introducing some recycling facilities on the site which will generate a small income for the clubs.

We are also thrilled to announce that there will be two new **Padel Tennis Courts** built on the site. Padel Tennis is the new up and coming sport and is a cross over between tennis and squash. We are delighted to share with you that planning has been granted for two courts which will be built and available for use by the end of June.

Last year saw the **refurbishment of the Holt War Memorial**, standing in the middle of town it is an iconic symbol of Holt. It had started to look tired, with a small amount of erosion and was covered in dirt. The last maintenance was carried out over 10 years ago and so was in desperate need of a makeover. The work was completed in just 3 days, ahead of the annual Remembrance Day Parade. Again, the Council has received fantastic feedback about the work and would like to extend its thanks to Nick Hindle the local Stone Mason who carried out the refurbishment.

Last year also saw our **busiest year yet at the Holt Tourist Information**. The Tourist Information is located in the Town Council offices at Nelson House and welcomed just under 5000 visitors between April and October last year. The centre is run by volunteers, it does not sell any goods but instead offers free leaflets, maps, walking and cycling routes and local magazines to its visitors. It is also a hub for advertising local events. There is a Heritage Room available which has a video, books and information on display about the history of Holt. It is enjoyed by both visitors and locals alike. The Town Council would like to extend its thanks to all the volunteers working in the Tourist Information, without them it would not be possible to run. If you haven't been into the centre, please do pop in and say hello to one of our friendly volunteers. We have arranged **community planting events** and are delighted with the recent collaboration with Lovells, the planting of daffodil bulbs, which have now all flowered and the Community Orchard where the trees are looking fantastic. The Town Council have also replanted all the town planters with sustainable planting to compliment the Fish Hill planting which took place in 2023. And a number of town **litter picks** are organised in conjunction with St Andrew's Eco Church.

Last summer we launched the **Cley Road Cemetery consultation**. Cllrs were keen to understand the future demand for the cemetery as well as understanding how the cemetery is currently used and valued. The Town Council knows that space is limited

at the cemetery, if burial rates remain the same then the remaining plots will be all taken within 10-15 years' time. The results showed that Holt goes against the national trend with many residents still keen on being buried rather than cremated. There was a lot of interest for a wooded burial site and unanimous support for an extension to the existing site. Cllrs are working with nearby landowners to see what can be achieved and look forward to sharing with you some more information in the near future.

The Town Council are responsible for a six **Defibrillators** in the town and run quarterly free defib training sessions which continue to remain popular with residents. We recently took on ownership of our sixth defib relocating it from behind Reboot to a more prominent position in the telephone box on Shirehall Plain. Unfortunately, North Norfolk continues to have longer than average Ambulance Response Times and as such having quick access to a Defib is more important than ever. Holt Town Council continue to work with East Anglian Ambulance and the Norfolk and Waveney NHS Commissioners to try and tackle Ambulance Response Times.

Unfortunately, the year ended with some difficulties for us as we suffered a break in with all our power tools and maintenance equipment stolen. The break in which happened just days before the Christmas break could have been a disaster, but I am pleased to say that HTC were able to continue service as normal from the New Year, this is thanks to staff and insurers who acted swiftly.

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Looking forward to the year ahead we hope to be welcoming a **permanent home for our Bank Hub**, a much-needed service in the town. We look to progress **the Green Whell initiative**, and hope to work with businesses to set up a **new Chamber of Commerce**. We are still waiting for **the transfer of the new allotment site** from Lovells and now hope to have this by the end of June 2025. We will also shortly be putting up some **new town maps** in our car parks showing visitors where the location of facilities and services are. We shall continue to support a 2025 initiative instigated by Colin Rawlings of Red Dot Gallery, to invent and produce a **Holt town tartan**. Weaved by local Aylsham resident Maeve, the tartan has now officially been accepted onto the Scottish Register of Tartans! The newly designed tartan has greens which represent the forest and woodlands of Holt, a beige/buff colour to represent the chalk soil and red to represent the Great Fire of Holt. We look forward to an update from Colin as to how it may be adopted within and for the town. We also continue to support our Youth Council, attending meetings and working alongside them to help fulfil their

aims and objectives for this year. One of which is a **new town bench** to be located at George V playing fields, their reason for choosing this and its main criteria was to provide a wheelchair accessible/access for all sitting area. They are well on their way to meeting their funding target. They are also keen to undertake a new **Green Wheel 'outdoor spaces for all'** section for our aspirational linking up the town with its green spaces project.

I wanted to also take this opportunity to remind everyone about the **Holt Community Support Fund** which is run by several stakeholders in the town. If you need help with utility bills, white goods and other essentials there is money available through the fund, please contact the Town Clerk for more information.

Communication

A reminder that **Meet The Mayor sessions** are available before every Town Council meeting, which is held on the second Monday of the month. Please make an appointment via the Town Clerk. Members of the public are very welcome to attend our monthly meetings which are usually held at the Holt Football Club and Playing Fields off Kelling Road. Our next **Holt Sunday Market Town Council stall** will be 1st June, please do come along and say hello. We always put a copy of our minutes in the library for those not able to read them online. We have **social media platforms on Instagram and Facebook** so please do follow our pages for updated information. Our website is also regularly updated and has a list of all our agendas and minutes from our meetings. We encourage you to visit us in Nelson House which is open 10am – 3pm Monday – Friday and can also meet you outside these times with an appointment. We are also contactable via email and telephone (I will bring my business cards along to the meeting for distribution).