

Hildersham Parish Council
Clerk: Mrs. PM Harper
17 Lewis Crescent, Great Abington, Cambridge CB21 6AG

A Meeting of Hildersham Parish Council was held on Tuesday 4th March 2025, at Hildersham Village Hall.

Present: Mark Logan, Darren Long, Rob Clay, David Mercer, Tom Barton-Owen, Rob Clay, one member of the public and the Clerk.

Meeting started at 7.30pm

88. Open Forum - Parishioners can raise any matters of concern. No items were raised.

89. Apologies were received and unanimously accepted by councillors from County Councillor and District Councillor Henry Batchelor, and District Councillor John Batchelor.

90. Councillors to declare any interests in the items to be discussed during the meeting? Has the Clerk granted any dispensations under section 33 (1) of the Localism Act and the basis is set out under section 33(2)? No interests were declared.

91. Approval of the minutes from the last meetings on 13th January 2025. Councillors unanimously approved the minutes which were signed by the Chairman.

92. Report from District Councillor John Batchelor – the reports had been circulated to councillors. No updates as John Batchelor had sent his apologies for not attending the meeting.

93. Report from County Councillor and District Councillor Henry Batchelor – their reports had been circulated to councillors. No updates as Henry Batchelor had sent his apologies for not attending the meeting.

94. Selecting a new grass contractor for 2025.

There had been no clarification on whether the county council would take back responsibility for cutting the verges this year. The Clerk had contacted previous three previously used grass contractors and three new contractors but had only received one quotation from Peter Carter.

Councillors unanimously accepted his quotation to cut the play area, verges and plantation land, suggesting that he do the first few cuts until we are advised whether the County Council will cut the verges.

95. Biodiversity

a) Discuss the options for biodiversity. Update on suggestion that the North Holding have a unplug boundary to encourage nature and that the South Holding be cut once a year for the same reason. Mark Logan spoke to Gerald who had left a 20–30-foot unplanted border in the North Holding field.

b) Discuss whether to adopt the ‘Climate emergency statement’. Mark explained that although SCDC had made an emergency statement about climate changes impact on the environment, without a plan and timescale to back this up such statements have little impact.

Councillors unanimously agreed not to adopt an ‘Climate emergency statement’.

96. Update on the Neighbourhood Plan

A £7,000 grant had been secured to fund a consultant, who may do a technical assessment of the South Holding as a potential site for a few houses and a new village hall. The consultant had been very helpful considering the number of dwellings it would take to fund a village hall. He has advised talking to SCDC to ask what the big issues are likely to secure permission to build on the South Holding.

97. Feedback on actions from the last meetings

- a) Update on transferring the verge grass cutting to the County Council-see item 94.
- b) Emergency Flood Plan- suggestion that the church could be a centre for flooded households. Jean Kelly had suggested that if the church was identified as a flood centre they could claim refunds for an expenditure required during such events from SCDC. Councillors thought that the church would be used (with permission) if the event of a flood and a formal designation as a flood centre was not required.
- c) No through Road sign for Blench Lane suggested as drivers think it's a through road. David Mercer to ask another Blench Lane resident whether they think a sign is necessary. Action: Clerk to get costing for a sign to be secured to an existing post.
- d) SSE – Clerk has been trying to secure a new electricity supply contract with both SSE and Utility Aid, but has been advised to contact UA, but has had no quotes so far.

98. Correspondences

- a) Update on transferring the verge grass cutting to the County Council. – discussed earlier in meeting under item 94.

99. Open Forum for Parishioners to make comments or raise items - no comments were raised.

100. Items for the next meeting's agenda on 13th May 2025 – the first meeting in May (Parish Meeting) would start at 7pm.

Meeting ended at 8.10pm

Hildersham Land Management Trust meeting

This meeting follows the Parish Council meeting

The meeting started at 8.10pm

Present: Mark Logan, Darren Long, Rob Clay, David Mercer, Tom Barton-Owen and the Clerk (no members of the public).

1. Maintenance of the new plantation-

a) Maintenance of the plantation grass cutting. Clerk had not obtained confirmation from CCC that they would be about verge cutting before contacting contractors to avoid duplication of visits to Hildersham. Trustees unanimously agreed that the new grass contractor, Peter carter should cut the play area and the plantation area as per his quote, and cut around the daffodils in mid-March. No quotations were received form any of the previous contractor or the other two new contractors the Clerk contacted.

2. Allotment

- a) The next Inspection of the allotment plots to take place in the later in the Spring as we could advertise this on the noticeboard on the allotments. No date in spring was agreed.
- b) Quotation for play area and plantation grass cutting to be considered and contractor selected. Discussed under item 1.

3.South Holding

- a) In the northeast corner of the South Holding there is a pile of chalky dirt in the gap of the hedge (possibly form Flourish). **Action: Mark** to talk to the owner of Flourish.

4. Recreation Ground

a) Update on the clearance of ditch. The ditch contractor, Jonathan Sutherland of JSB Agricultural explained that having cleared the ditch of debris that have found that water level in the ditch is the same as the river level; possibly the river level has increased over the years. Councillors discussed using the wood chips to put at the entrances to the recreation ground to reduce the mud, and that the remaining wood could be used by residents as firewood. A resident had requested a fence be erected to stop dogs going in the river; Trustees unanimously decided that this was not required.

5.Finance

- a) Update on payments made from the account and the balance. Three payments had been taken from the Trusts current account: £1250 for the plantation gate, £596 for the allotment fencing and £135 for the play area swing. The invoice for the ditch work would be paid form the Trust current account too, as agreed by Trustees.
- b) £20,000 had been transferred from Trust current account to the 'Land' interest account, which is now for Trust use only, as requested by Trustees at the last meeting.

Meeting ended at 8.30pm