

## **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Scarning Village Hall on April 14 2025**

Present: F Bradford (Chair), T Abel, M Blackburn, S Bunn, C Hewson, H Manning, M Steward.  
In attendance: N Hartley (Parish Clerk). Cllr L Turner (Breckland Council). Thirteen members of the public.

### **1 Community Engagement Awards**

The Parish Council Chair presented the Parish Council's Community Engagement Award to three recipients – Michelle Abel, Tricia Foreman and Ken Rockley. The award to Michelle Abel was recognition of all her hard work in transforming a piece of waste ground on Dereham Road with shrubs and flowers. Tricia Foreman's award was recognition of all that she had done in setting up and running the coffee mornings in the Village Hall. It was noted that to date she had raised £41,800 from these. The award to Ken Rockley was recognition of all he had done litter picking around the parish. All were thanked for their outstanding contributions to the parish.

### **2 Parish Affairs**

None.

### **3 Report from Cllr L Turner – Breckland Council**

District Councillors are elected to serve their whole electorate across their wards, which in our case includes Shipdham, Scarning, Cranworth, Wood Rising, Letton, Cranworth High Common and Southburgh.

Councillors have a wide range of roles within the District Council, including representation on a large number of outside bodies (e.g. A47 alliance, drainage boards, armed forces covenant board and health and wellbeing) all of which are of interest in some way to their parishes. Councillors also undergo a large amount of training, including cyber and personal safety, mental health awareness, licencing, housing, finance, data protection and safeguarding, all of which enables us to be more effective in our parishes. Much of the Council's time is now taken up with the Local Plan, Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation, and now Solar Farms, however day to day services continue to be delivered until other local government systems are in place.

Our current concentration is of course on the new Local Plan, Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation and now of Solar Farms across our region.

### **Scarning Specific**

For Scarning specific in the past year, both Paul and I continued to represent at planning committees if requested to do so, and worked with officers on enforcement issues and other planning issues such as the proposed solar farms. We attend regular SNAP meetings with local residents and the police. We have supported applications from Scarning for a number of grants, and always signpost groups and individuals to a range of help and support from Breckland.

Of course much of our work within our ward is sensitive and confidential, and whilst not identifying any individual persons or situations, work has included:

- Emergency Housing
- Planning representation at committee
- Vulnerable adults
- Mental health
- Safeguarding
- Domestic Abuse
- Financial and other urgent support
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Dogs
- Licensing
- EFRA and Breckland re Avian Flu outbreaks

Some cases can take as little as 5 minutes to resolve, others take hours, even days or months, with numerous interactions to try and reach a solution. Different parishes have different needs, and we have to be sensitive and appropriately reactive to whatever is thrown at us.

We continue to work with Housing Associations, the Police, Operational Partnership Team, all the teams at Breckland, our County Councillors and NCC, and a multitude of other agencies to try and resolve issues, large and small. Some take a five minute phone call, others take hours of visiting, negotiating, challenging decisions, and regular follow up calls once a matter is concluded to check all is still well.

We do our best – but our time is limited now, as we move rapidly into Local Government Reorganisaition. Breckland will not exist – there will be no district councillors – who you take your questions and concerns to in the future? Paul and I don't know – but we will keep our ward updated as best we can, when we do know.

We thank you for your support and co-operation over the years we have served you. Without the team support of our parish councils and especially our parish clerks, our work would be a lot harder to do – and far less enjoyable.

#### **4 Report from Cllr P Hewett – Breckland Council**

Lynda has spoken about the specific Ward issues she and I are involved in across the communities of Shipdham, Scarning, Cranworth, Wood Rising, Letton, Cranworth High Common and Southburgh. She has also referred to the wider role of a District Councillor outside of this village and the wider patch. I will now briefly cover some issues which will indirectly affect you over the next couple of years, because you contribute through your annual £118 District council tax slice to this wider activity. More to the point, no other Parish or Town Council in the district has a committee Chair and former Council Chairman, and a current Cabinet member, acting on their behalf at District level.

Lynda is a former Chairman at Breckland and also currently Chairs the General Purposes Committee, covering cost-related issues such as redundancies of which there has been a dozen or so this year keeping downward pressure on your council tax. I sit on the Norfolk Pensions forum as your District representative, on the Norfolk Parking Partnership and on the A47 Alliance. Not as interesting as Lynda, but all of these groups exist and all take a slice out of your council tax contributions, albeit indirectly.

At Cabinet I am responsible for assets, projects and procurement, directly and indirectly covering Scarning-based assets (Scarning Water Meadows) and costs. I have previously spoken about the need for carparks to pay for themselves rather than eat up £0.5m of general costs paid for by the Breckland taxpayer, and have reported back when and why that work was paused due to LGR: there is no need for Breckland to statutorily produce a medium term balanced budget if Breckland will cease to exist. We are now looking to pass over carpark operation to the towns when the District ceases to exist.

I have also previously indicated to you that Barnham Broom was never going to be sold at a loss, and it wasn't: it proved an effective asset to buy, to hold, and to sell.

For Scarning, removing carparks out of general council spend will save approximately £9 a year on a typical Band D property (about 8%); The management of Council assets, of which Barnham Broom was one, contributes another £40 (35%) on a typical Band D property over and above interest rates from the bank. So, although not felt immediately at village level, the work of just one team in Breckland contributes significantly to the village's council tax bills.

Lynda referred to LGR, devolution and the local plan. Without talking too much about matters wider than this village, I need to cover those as they will profoundly impact this village over the next few years. The arguments for Devolution and LGR are also becoming overtly political, and will continue to do so until a decision is made. This will not please some in this room I am sure, but it is important to know the facts and have your say.

Devolution is a government ambition to allow regions (like Birmingham and Manchester) to have a greater say, and do bigger "deals" in how they are managed on areas such as roads, rail, and health. Devolution links Norfolk and Suffolk together under a "County Combined Authority" and a single Mayor. The Government led a 8 week consultation on this change which ended yesterday. No one knows the full benefits this will bring to the 1.5m people in

the CCA, though it will add an additional layer of council tax as the CCA structures need to be paid for.

LGR aims to improve efficiency of delivery of local services by combining different levels of local government – in our case, replacing districts and counties by a single unitary (either a single Norfolk (jam doughnut), a joint two-council authority (pacman), or a east-west donut + hole (3 council). NCC favours a single unitary and sent a deck outlining why every other option is rubbish. Norwich City wants bits of South Norfolk (like posh Wymondham) and is promoting the two authority model. Breckland (along with all other district councils) believes that any structure of LGR will only add costs without improving services, and if it has to happen would retain the structure that best represents local views (3 council). Initial plans were sent in by Norfolk (the only people who can comment) last month; final proposals need to be in place by mid-September, with new authorities in place shortly after that (though after the new mayor elections). Unseemly haste I feel (anyone know here what is involved?). The one thing we do know is that Council taxes in Scarning will go up by definition, and as a result believe you should have your say: suggest you go onto the Breckland web site and express your views.

More than anything, Scarning will be impacted by the new Local Plan. This is a result of new housing numbers for the district being increased by 50% by the new government (people will be aware of Angela Raynor's 1.5m houses within the next 4 years). For Breckland, and for Scarning, this will be a major issue. For those here who sat through Lynda and my scary maps of possible housing build locations a couple of years ago, and who felt we got away with the "old New local plan" introduced soon after (which made no new allocations to our village due to extant planning permissions already in place), right now the new question is not "whether" houses will be built, but "where". And we need to lead this conversation because if we do not choose, choices will be made on our behalf (It is called "the Local Plan and Compulsory Purchase Act").

The timetable for this is ridiculously short: the timetable for call to sites has already begun, and everything that was originally in the last call for sites is already back in the mix. Deadline April 28. Then there will be a call for community involvement shortly thereafter. Essentially the final version of the new Local Plan needs to be ready by September. Last time Breckland set the timetable, this stage took over 2 years.

I am aware that I am talking about issues that, for some in this room, do not impact Scarning directly. And we haven't even thought about mandatory Food recycling, boundary reviews, and other non-local initiatives that will change or village way of life: these may be the subject of other conversations for those interested in them. But the Local Plan, Devolution, and LGR will all affect the way we think, feel, and work as a community moving forward and it is important that we collectively understand both how and why even if you don't want to hear it here.

Lynda and I would be happy to talk further about these areas if you are interested.

## 5 Report from Scarning Primary School

April 2024-April 25 at Scarning VC Primary School has been a positive period, with many highlights.

We remain a popular school. The school roll remains at over 400, with a healthy intake anticipated for September.

Attendance is good, suspension/exclusion figures are low and the children behave well. Outcomes for our youngest children (EYFS) and Year 1 phonics were strong, but Key Stage 2 (SATS) data was weaker than our normal above national average performance. We anticipate this will rebound this year.

Our recent parent survey saw all but 1 parent out of 250 say they would recommend the school. This is something for children, staff and governors to be very proud of.

The governing body has continued to provide invaluable support and challenge to the leadership of the school. The governing body continues to be a strength of the school.

The Seckar Trust has maintained their support in a range of ways and we remain thankful for any financial assistance that they give us.

It brings a touch of Déjà vu to note that, last year I wrote:

‘I note last year that I reported: ‘It is fair to say that financially the current educational landscape is the most challenging it has been in my experience.’

Unfortunately, it does feel like this type of observation will continue to be included in this report for a while yet - the challenge of doing more, with less, remains a feature of the educational landscape.

We have received the first indications of what the new National Curriculum may look like. At this stage it appears to be more a case of evolution not revolution, but either way, by the time I write this next year we will be in the throes of considering the review body’s recommendation and then building our new Scarning curriculum.

Sports, arts and cultural activities have continued to take place throughout the year. Highlights since my last report have included:

- Our first ever whole school ‘Book Swap’ during World Book Week
- A ‘Termly Interview’ with a former headteacher, Roger Everett, the special guest
- Multiple sports events attended within the Sports Partnership
- 2 residentials – one to Hilltops in Norfolk; the other to the Peak District
- Recent attendance at a Norwich Dance festival
- Some excellent termly debates. (The most recent of which saw the motion ‘I would rather visit the future than the past’ rejected by 282 votes to 151)

One other highlight has been the Wildlife/Event Camera that Richard and Penny Allen, our long-standing next-door neighbours, presented to the school. Over the course of the last year we have seen badgers, foxes, a vast array of birds and numerous deer. We have loved putting these on our Twitter feed and regularly checking in during assembly with developments in the Thistle field.

As ever, the staff at school remain a pleasure to lead; the families we work with, crucial to the overall team effort and the children a delight.

Nick King, Headteacher

## **5 Report of Scarning Parish Council**

This report outlines some of the business and activities conducted by the Parish Council in the last year.

The business of the Council is very varied and the funds raised by the precept contained within Breckland Council's council tax is used to provide many services to the Parish which perhaps go un-noticed, such as lighting, dog bins, grit boxes and play equipment.

The Council has pledged its support to the PCC in relation to the work which is required to be carried out on the Church within the next few years, together with the Village Hall Estate Trust, which is seeking to provide better access to the hall and associated car parking. It is hoped that this work will commence in the near future.

The Council also supports the Playing Field Committee with the provision of grants to assist with running costs and purchase of equipment with a £5,500 maintenance grant about to be paid this month.

The Church, Village Hall and playing field are the focal point of the original village, all are well used by various groups and it is hoped that they will all continue to provide a hub to the local community as a whole.

The playing areas on the Water Meadows also receive support from the Council and again in the last year we have seen replacement of well used equipment and fencing. The Council is working towards the re-vamp of the play equipment in the Blackthorn Drive Play area and surveys have been carried out to assist with the development. The area will have sensory and inclusive equipment for use by all. It is anticipated that costs will be in the region of £80,000 and it is hoped that grant applications will be made in the coming months with construction commencing once these have been obtained.

It is wonderful to see how well the Water Meadows is and for those who have never been there why not pay a visit. It is one of only five sites in the Country and is well worth a wander round, take a picnic and perhaps make use of the equipment that is there.

The Council also provides grants to other organisations with Scarning Pre-School receiving grants of over £1,200 for equipment.

The Council organised a lighting of the beacon for D-Day celebrations. This was well attended and the Council's thanks go to Chris Farnham and Tim Abel without who's help the event could not have taken place, and who's further work saw the basket of the beacon being removed, repainted and placed back in position for future use.

The Village sign also received some renovations and our thanks go to Bunnings and Tim Abel for the work involved with this.

The Council instigated a new Community Grants scheme and put £2,000 aside to allocate to suitable projects. There is also the Inspirational Citizens Award, which is now open for 2026 nominations please see the website for details.

The Council also made a nomination to Breckland Council's unsung hero's award scheme which was successful, and Sharon Goldsworthy received the award from Breckland in the Village Hall last year for the amount of effort she puts in to maintaining the Parish's flower boxes and other areas.

As will all Councils there are the annual matters which keep reappearing, the cutting of the grass and hedges is one. There is only so much that can be done in relation to this but the Council does endeavour to ensure that the areas for which it is responsible are well maintained and it also assists with cutting the grass in the Churchyard.

Parking at the school is an ongoing problem and the Council has worked with various agencies and the school throughout the year to try and improve the situation. However improvement is dependent upon the respect people have for one another and the safety of the children.

In July I and others attended a meeting with Cllr Richmond of Norfolk County Council and the Highways Engineer. It was expressed that some of the road works carried out had not been to a satisfactory standard and it was agreed that these would be revisited. Unfortunately the request for a uniform 40 mph speed limit along the Dereham Road was not agreed as it did not meet Breckland's criteria for such a restriction. A request for a cycle path from the old village to the school was also refused. It was agreed however that the pavement opposite the tennis courts would receive attention in the 2025/26 financial year.

Using Norfolk County Council's Parish Partnership Scheme the Council is seeking to have two sets of speed gates erected and it is hoped that this will be progressed once designs can be agreed upon.

On behalf of the Council I attended meetings of the Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel and that by the developers of the High Grove Solar Farm both were very well attended and I would recommend that future meetings of these groups be supported, they are open to all.

In August Cllr Manning joined the Council and with the assistance of her son the Notices of Council meetings now have a QR code which allow the public to link directly to the full agenda of any forthcoming meeting.

The Council is still trying to recruit two more members. These are voluntary posts and I would urge anyone who takes an interest in their community to join. You can help determine the level of precept charged, where it is spent and bring to the attention of others those issues which are important to the Parish.

For some a Parish Council may be an archaic institution, which needs review with modern practices and more robust regulations introduced. This may attract people to becoming a Councillor. This can only come about, if indeed it is required by the involvement of the community, if you are reading this report it may well be you. Support your local Council, it needs you.

Cllr Bradford

## **6 Report of the Trustees of Scarning Village Hall**

The Trust is pleased to report that Scarning Village Hall continues to provide a pleasant and welcoming venue for an array of activities, celebrations, social gatherings and business use. The Trust works pro-actively in maintaining the Hall to a high standard and ensuring the Hall remains accessible for all hirers and users of the facilities.

The Trust is continuing further marketing of the Village Hall for event hire. We have ordered some banners and produced posters to signpost potential users to the Village Hall. The Trustees feel it is important to highlight to passing traffic and pedestrian footfall that the Hall is available to hire and these banners will be installed shortly. Marketing is also taking place on social media such as Facebook. The Trust would ask Scarning Parish Council to help in these efforts by signposting the general public and businesses to Scarning Village Hall whenever possible.

We have recently sourced quotations for the proposed CCTV installation on the external elevations of the Village Hall for security purposes.

The Trust is in the process of considering the updating of the original governance document to suit more readily the needs of today's Hall hirers and users. This includes an ever changing array of Policies & Procedures that we use and promote for the safe running of the Hall and its facilities.

The Trust is aware that the Car Park Project has not yet begun. Trustees have had to put this on hold as our residual funds have been used to carry out urgent extensive modernisation and



re-let of one of the Trust's Cottages, with the considerable updating of a second Cottage prior to it also being re-let. The Hall Cottages are 123 years old this year and obviously the maintenance of them is a continual work in progress.

## **CAR PARK**

The Trust would like to ask the Parish Council if it would consider taking on the construction of the entrance apron/visual splay to the proposed Car Park in Shipdham Lane, utilising the funds the Parish Council have already allocated towards the Car Park. This work is an additional requirement, unforeseen by the Trust, that has been requested by Norfolk Highways Department. We understand if the Parish Council undertook this part of the project they would be able to claim back the VAT.

The Trust would then be willing and able to construct, with its own funds, the Permissive Path in 2025/26 from the playing field along the west side elevation of the Village Hall out on the public footpath opposite the Church gate. (As per the existing Planning permission).

Alan Glister

## **7 Report of the Parochial Church Council**

This year we start with thanks to the Parish Council. We are very grateful to the Council for funding the cutting of the churchyard. The contractors appointed for the second part of the 2024 season did an exceptional job. The council is also responsible for the maintenance of the church clock. It is always uplifting at the darkest time of the year to have a lovely Christmas tree in the churchyard complementing the lights on the Village Hall. Thank you to the Council.

Once again, the younger children from Scarning School came to church for a Christingle service in December, and we have recently had the older children in church for an Easter service. It is a delight to have the church full of noisy youngsters, and fascinating to watch how the staff keep order.

We are very fortunate in our clergy team of Paul Cubitt, Laura Purnell and Rachael Dines, who are supported by lay readers. Services are held every Sunday at 11.15 am. We are pleased that the church is open every day and record our thanks to Alf Webdale for opening and closing it.

There has been some progress on the tower project – although architects and surveyors seem to move very slowly. We secured a grant from the Norfolk Churches Trust to help with the costs of the development stage of the project. This includes the investigations of the tower's condition so that a detailed costing can be prepared. The structural surveyor came in December and examined part of the tower with the aid of an impressive cherry picker. A second visit is scheduled for 1 May. The surveyor recommended that a strap should be placed

around the parapet to prevent any masonry from falling in the event of extreme weather – and the strap should be installed on the next visit. The surveyor confirmed that it was fine for bell-ringing to continue.

Last year, we were talking about installing a toilet and kitchenette in the church as part of the project. It now looks more likely that we will seek funding to improve access by surfacing the footpaths so that they are easier to negotiate for people using mobility aids. Heritage England always look for community benefit in the projects that they help to fund, and accessibility is a key requirement.

Over the last year we have held several fund-raising events which have been well supported. These included concerts by Kyle and the Dereham Band – both of which are booked again for this year. There were also cream teas, a barbecue, the Christmas Craft Fair, a quiz and the monthly coffee mornings. The next coffee morning on 4 May will include a plant sale.

In September, we took part in the Heritage Open Day event with a display on the life of Augustus Jessopp. Visits to the bell chamber were very popular. This year, as well as telling Jessopp's story, we will feature extracts from Fred Hoskins' book on his time as a Far East Prisoner of War. The concert by Kyle in August will commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VJ Day.

We wish to thank everyone who helps the church in any way – including cake bakers, flower arrangers, bell ringers and everyone who runs and supports events. There is a big task ahead in securing funding for the tower project. We hope that the community will work together to ensure that the tower is safe for the future.

Tim Farnham and Sue Rockley, Churchwardens

## **8 Report of Scarning Playing Field Committee**

Charles Hewson, Chair of the Playing Field Committee, said that the playing field is flourishing with two football teams currently using the facilities. The Committee was hoping to resurface tennis court number 2 and is talking to contractors. Tennis court one had been out of action and has since reopened. The Bowls Club was running smoothly. The Committee was hoping to have funds available soon for play equipment. Fund raising has taken place and there will be further fund raising.

Charles Hewson

## **9 Report of Scarning United Charities**

Tim Abel, Chair of Scarning United Charities, said he had been helping to look after the charity for six years, having taken over from Ken Steward. He said that water had been added to the

allotments four years ago and a hard road had been added to the entrance/exit two years ago. All was funded by the charity.

Tim Abel

## **10 Report of Cllr Richmond – Norfolk County Council**

### **Council Delivers Balanced Budget and calls for cost-saving local government reorganisation**

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

#### **Key Details from the Norfolk County Council Budget:**

- **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 will be implemented.
- **Council Tax:** For 2025/26, Council Tax will increase by 4.99%, which includes a 3% 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.

#### **Norfolk announced as priority area for new powers and funding**

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.

Ministers are aiming for a devolution deal that covers both Norfolk and Suffolk, including the creation of an elected mayor. They also plan to replace the existing "two-tier" system, where key services are shared between county and district councils, with unitary authorities.

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](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/devolution).

### **Norfolk's highways set for major investment in the year ahead**

Norfolk County Council Cabinet has reviewed a series of investments and improvements to the county's highways infrastructure.

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

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.

The Cabinet has also reviewed the highways capital programme, which highlights successes from the previous year and outlines how highways maintenance funding will be allocated for the coming 12 months. This includes an additional £15 million from the Department for Transport (DfT).

With this extra funding, an additional 100 miles of roads in Norfolk will be resurfaced this year, supporting the Council's proactive approach to highway maintenance that helps prevent potholes. The funding will also provide additional resources for local repairs and patching across the county.

### **New apprenticeship starts in Norfolk increase by a staggering 11%**

Apprenticeship starts with Norfolk businesses and organisations surged by 11% in the first three months of the 2024/25 academic year, compared to a national increase of less than 1.5%.

From 1 August to 31 October 2024, there were 2,025 new apprenticeship starts in Norfolk, marking a rise of 199 from the same period in 2023/24. This represents the highest number of starts in this timeframe in over five years.

Apprenticeships Norfolk reports growth across all age groups, with starts up by 7.4% for those aged 16-18, 9.6% for 19-24-year-olds, and 14.6% for those aged 25 and over. Notably, the 16-18 age group saw its strongest first-quarter performance in over five years.

Department for Education (DfE) data also highlights an increase in recruitment, with the number of 'newly recruited' apprentices (those employed for up to three months at the start of their apprenticeship) rising by 10.4% from the previous year. This translates to 94 more starts.

In terms of employer size, non-levy funded apprenticeships, typically started by small to medium-sized businesses, grew by 10.3% (69 more starts) compared to 2023/24. Larger businesses also saw growth, with an 11.2% increase, adding 130 more apprenticeships.

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

As part of the Norfolk County Council budget for the upcoming year, additional household hazardous waste events will be held across the county. These events will take place 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

Please note, there will be no hazardous waste events over the Easter weekend.

A list of acceptable items for disposal at the hazardous waste days can be found here: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/hazardouswaste](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/hazardouswaste)

### **11 Report for Scarning Pre School**

Apologies for not being able to attend the meeting. This is an update about the preschool performance and changes over the past year.

We would like to thank Scarning Parish Council for all your support with helping us replace our broken dishwasher.

We have been incredibly lucky to retain most of our long-standing committee members, although we lost a few due to their children leaving the setting. We were fortunate to quickly replace them with two new committee members who both have extensive knowledge of childcare.

We have had an incredibly positive year, with a higher intake of children in Jan 2025, which is due to more parents receiving working parent funding.

Many early years settings are struggling due to low funding rates from the government and are now charging parents additional charges (consumable fees) on average of £10 per day. We as a charity have managed to keep our parent contribution to a minimum of just £2.50 per half term. These charges go towards sun cream, wipes, tissues, and our cooking activities.

We have received lots of positive feedback from our last two parent surveys, which were sent out to all preschool parents, breakfast and after school club. We encouraged parents to comment on how we can improve practice further, demonstrating our passion to enhance our provision and meet the needs of our families.

We are currently waiting for our Ofsted inspection which is due over the summer term. We are looking forward to showing off all the positive changes we have made and the positive experiences we provide for the children attending our setting.

We continue to receive financial support from the Secker Trust, for which we are extremely grateful for, and this has been extremely beneficial for the children in our setting.

Over the last year we have carried out the following fundraising events: -

Cake sales, book sale, Easter/Christmas stay & plays and Xmas wreath workshop. Using these funds, we have provided the children with a new playhouse and water station for our garden area. Added resources for the children such as math equipment, indoor water trays, and sandpits. Plus, experiences such as Go-carting, Bollywood dancing, and Mini Monsters visit. Mini Monsters was great as we had a snake, land snail, tarantula, bearded dragon, and a millipede for the children to see and touch.

Due to the increased number of children with special educational needs, we have secured additional funding from the local authority to turn our summer house into a sensory room, this allows practitioners to provide our SEN children with a quiet space to help improve their emotional and mental well-being.

Due to expanding numbers of staff and the need to provide small group interventions for the children, we were finding our staff room was in increased demand and we were often struggling for room. Due to sound financial planning, the contributions and support from various sources such as yourselves the Scarning Parish Council, we were able to fund another outbuilding, which will be used for extra small group activities, confidential meeting room for safeguarding, parent's meetings, and other day-to-day activities.

Due to various projects taking place in our local area we have been able to tap into companies who offer support to local charities and community groups, to help with additional work at the preschool at no additional cost. This work included preparing the area for our new playhouse and removing a large amount of unwanted/broken equipment. They also spent three full days digging out, levelling, and laying a base for our new outbuilding, which saved us a large amount of money, (£2,500). In addition to this another company provided staff to help paint our garden fences in the summer.

Thank you for your continued support, it's a great help to us running the preschool and to support the families in the local area.