

MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held on **THURSDAY 15th MAY 2024** at **7PM** at **YOXFORD VILLAGE HALL**

1. Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr. Richard Allenby-Pratt
Cllr. David Childs
Cllr. Janet Gardner
Cllr. Laura Greenberg
Cllr. Nicol McCallum
Cllr. Ian Patterson
Cllr. Angela Roper
Cllr. Deborah Thompson
Cllr. David Tower
Cllr. John Walford
Cllr. Hazel Wheeler

Apologies accepted for absence:

County Cllr. Richard Smith

In attendance:

District Cllr. Julia Ewart

10 members of the public

2. Annual Reports:

- i. In the informal setting, Community Groups presented their work for attending members of the public to view and discuss. Reports were submitted for consideration and are included as separate appendices to these minutes.
 - a. Art Group: written report taken as read. Appendix A.
 - b. Carpet Bowls Group: no report.
 - c. East Suffolk Council: written report taken as read. Appendix B
 - d. Meet Up Tuesday Group: written report taken as read. Appendix C
 - e. Sing Out Yoxford Community Choir: no report.
 - f. Suffolk County Council: written report taken as read. Appendix D
 - g. St Peter's Church: written report taken as read. Appendix E
 - h. Table Tennis Group: no report.
 - i. Yoxford Allotment Association: no report.
 - j. Yoxford Bell Ringers: written report taken as read. Appendix F
 - k. Yoxford Bowls Club: no report
 - l. Yoxford Cricket Club: no report
 - m. Yoxford History Group: written report taken as read. Appendix G
 - n. Yoxford Parish Council
 - o. Yoxford Tennis/Sports Group: written report taken as read. Appendix H
 - p. Yoxford Youth Club written report taken as read. Appendix I
 - q. YoxVox: no report
 - r. Yoxwood Community Woodland: no report

3. Annual Reports from any other groups

No further reports were received.

4. Date and time of the next meeting

The date and time of the next Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 7th May 2026 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

Trudy Charles
Parish Clerk

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Appendix A – Yoxford Art Group

Amazingly we have now been up and running for two and a half years. Our numbers have been particularly steady this year, resulting in a keen group.

We have worked on a range of topics : Abstract Art, Pop Art Sweets, Still Life, Mother & Baby, Spring Flowers and Aborigine Art.

We have also been lucky to have professional sessions with Yoxford artist Michele Ashby. Michele works largely in pastel and graphite and the themes covered were Eyes and Ears, Posed Figures and Pet studies.

It is also particularly nice to see the group mixing so well and offering praise and encouragement to each other.

We also participated in the Yoxford Creatives Exhibition and received pleasing comments on our large display.

Joan Hodgkiss and Deborah Thompson.

Kelsale & Yoxford Ward Councillor Report (May 2024 – April 2025)

Cllr Julia Ewart

Hello. Thank you for reading my report. For those of you who have not met, I am Julia Ewart, a resident of Kelsale village, who has been a district councillor for two years now and goodness what a busy time it has been. Across the ward it's been a busy year, and I'd like to briefly highlight the key issues and achievements from May 2024 to April 2025.

Infrastructure:

The construction of Sizewell C really has kicked off in earnest and continues to impact our communities. While it promises long-term energy benefits, I remain focused on ensuring through our council proper controls and have asked for advanced air quality monitoring—especially in Peasenhall and Yoxford. Preparations for new roundabouts at Kelsale and Yoxford are now underway, and we're keeping a close watch on traffic impacts. Sizewell C's Northern Park and Ride near Darsham and the closure of Willow Marsh Lane until 2027 have raised concerns about congestion and rat-running. I am aware that we still need a solution to cross the A12 for bicycles.

I've also submitted responses on behalf of the ward regarding the Sea Link and Lion Link transmission projects. I continue to advocate for a fully offshore grid solution to minimise impact on our farmland and precious communities. As your councillor I am now the vice chair of the committee that attends to the large infrastructure projects. I know the devastation of the works is upsetting and I truly feel, as many of you do, how difficult it is that this is taking place.

I have recently secured, at the annual community forum that Sizewell C invites all impacted parishes to send 2 delegates to Hinkley point before the end of the year so that they can understand the impact and likely changes that will occur.

Planning & Development:

We've seen active public engagement with planning this year—particularly around the recent site for the proposed Kelsale solar farm and new housing near Yoxford. I hope to host a video call with the solar farm management team to discuss the site, should you wish to join. There more cases due Kelsale. And I encourage everyone to continue using the East Suffolk Planning Portal to have your say and to always comment if you have concerns. Be assured the issues of Carlton caravan park are high on my list.

Farming & Services:

Farming remains under pressure from changing policy, the demands on land use, and climate challenges. Being 'on farm' needs more support and I am working with the council to embrace this change.

I continue to raise food security concerns, and through East Suffolk's Community Partnership, in which all parishes have an interest, we've supported a new look at rural transport, whilst promoting 'welcome rooms' and other isolation initiatives, with services like CATS Dial-a-Ride making a real difference to residents getting about.

It is this very team, and our community officer Sam Kenward, who are looking to support the development of the village Hall here in Kelsale. I do hope that the plans proposed are supported and delivered, as it's a much deserving cause and a well loved and used village asset.

Flooding & Safety:

Villages have experienced less flooding this year. To support local water courses I have ensured that we have a better relationship with the Environment Agency. Some villages are undergoing formal

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Section 19 flood investigations to help prevent future incidents. I've worked with the council's emergency planning team and Suffolk Highways to report drainage issues and have pressed for better

ditch maintenance. For those living with flood challenges I have a special safety leaflet for you to take home.

Cost of Living Support:

The district council's *Ease the Squeeze* programme has delivered fuel vouchers, food aid, and benefit advice throughout the ward, helping residents through a tough winter. The new East Suffolk Community Hub will be looking to further strengthen this one to one support. Details for this will be easy to find.

Local Funding:

Using East Suffolk's **Enabling Communities Budget**, I've supported village hall and ground improvements, supplying community group equipment, and supporting local wellbeing projects.

A special opportunity was working with Kelsale Primary School where along with Sam Kenward the local Community Officer we took a coach to the Suffolk Show and gave young families the chance to attend together as a family. It was a smashing initiative and made for a very happy day.

These small grants go a long way in strengthening our community life. The new budget starts in April 2025.

Devolution & Governance:

As Suffolk's councils explore a new devolution deal, I do have to raise concerns about rural representation and democratic accountability if the county becomes one large authority. As a local councillor I believe in servicing all of the villages in the ward I am elected to attend, to the best of my ability, but if the territory is too large this will be very difficult indeed.

Last, But By No means Least – 'Planning':

Well we really have had quite a time of it with regards to planning in the later part of the year, particularly in the closing month of this report. Minors, majors, retrospectives, transport and noise reports, we have been totally absorbed in Yoxford, then Huntingfield planning packs with challenges from the planning applications coming through the system, which to date I have been able to 'call in' for the cases to go to the committee. And how glad I am that we did.

Sadly both cases were granted permission. The car park at Cockfield Hall is concerning and Blyth Barn in Huntingfield, being so close to the village is a huge worry with respect to noise and traffic in the first instance. Please be vigilant about both.

In Closing:

Thank you for your time, thank you for attending any of the village Annual Meetings, Thank you most of all to our wonderful **parish councillors, village clerks and the divisional councillors** I get to work with —for your dedication and hard work are the backbone of our communities. As we face the future where change in local politics may be significant, making Parish Councils attractive places to give time is important.

As ever, please don't hesitate to get in touch if I can support you with matters large or small, do get in touch.

Cllr Julia Ewart

Tel: 07770 666604

Julia.ewart@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

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Appendix C: Meet Up Tuesday Group

Annual Report May 2025

Since re-starting the group fully in April 2021 after the Covid pandemic, the Meet Up Tuesday group has grown and strengthened. Back then, the group had eight attendees but this year, we now have more than 25 active members.

This year we were fortunate in securing another grant from the Cost of Living fund from East Suffolk Council, which has boosted funds and covers weekly refreshments and subsidises the cost of a monthly hot meal. The members contribute with a weekly donation which then covers additional costs such as celebrating birthdays, which we believe is important to give personal attention to every member of the group.

Friendships continue to be formed and extend beyond these weekly meet ups. There is a deep and strong sense of love and community which provides laughter, support, comfort and a safety net.

Its impact is huge.

Below are a selection of comments from some of the members as to why they enjoy coming to the group:

"I love being part of this group. I'm welcomed and taken care of."

"I feel supported by friends and know I can call them or speak to them if I have a problem."

"It stops me being on my own which I am a lot when I'm at home."

"It's given me the confidence to go to other groups too now. I love coming and seeing everyone."

"It makes me get up, get dressed and get out."

"It's amazing. I've made new friends and love seeing them every week and having a chat. They're a lifeline."

Trudy Charles

May 2025

2024/25 ANNUAL REPORT
TO THE TOWN COUNCIL AND PARISH COUNCILS
OF BLYTHING DIVISION, SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

It has been an eventful and momentous year, my fifteenth as a County Councillor and my eighth representing Blything Division.

Last May the Leader of the County Council, Councillor Matthew Hicks, reshuffled his Cabinet and asked me to become his Deputy and also to bear responsibility for Finance, Economic Development and Skills. As I had previously held the Finance portfolio, I was pleased to resume responsibility for that crucial area of Council work which will spend, in the 2025/26 financial year, a net £803 million delivering its services throughout Suffolk. I was also pleased to be able to continue with my responsibilities for Economic Development and Skills, both of which are vitally important to all our futures.

Last year saw the demise of the New Anglian Local Enterprise Partnership, which had successfully steered business spend from Government to Suffolk and Norfolk. It has been replaced in Suffolk by a new Suffolk Business Board, who work under the brand 'Suffolk Economy' and the leadership of its dynamic and much-respected Chair, Mark Pendlington, a businessman and former High Sheriff of the County, who initially agreed to chair the Board for its first year, but has recently been persuaded to continue his chairmanship for one further year. The Board also keeps its eye on initiatives for up-skilling young people and those already in the workforce. I work in close liaison with the University of Suffolk and our three further education institutes, Suffolk New College, East Coast College and West Suffolk College to co-ordinate efforts to produce a skilled workforce which meets the demands of today's world of work.

Many of you will have heard from me how tight local government finances are. Suffolk County Council spends 77 pence of every pound on social care and services to people who are disadvantaged in one way or another. To keep elderly people in care homes who can no longer pay their fees, to provide caring accommodation to adults with a wide range of disabilities, and to keep young people safe and properly safeguarded costs huge sums of money, in our case considerably over £300 million pounds this year. The care sector has been widely affected by the Government's rise in the National Minimum Wage – which must be welcomed – but also by the rise and widening of the scale over which Employers' National Insurance is paid – which most certainly is not. The care sector initially looked to us to pay for their extra costs, but we simply are not able to do so, nor should we assume responsibility for extra costs imposed by central government action. So the situation and prospects for this year in the sector are a matter of concern.

The County Council wants to spend more money on maintaining the road network than it is able to do. While many of us do not use the care services, we do all use the roads. Resurfacing and mending of potholes all costs money, and that money is rationed severely. However, we try to do our best with the resources available and thanks to a relatively mild winter there have been fewer potholes occurring, but they are still annoying to the motorist when they do open up, and we try to fix them as quickly as possible. To that end we have brought in two 'dragon patcher' machines to help. They dry the road and the sub-surface before effecting a permanent repair, and they have made a difference. But their cost has been £3 million, so we need to assess their effectiveness before taking a decision to pay to use them again next winter.

This time last year we were negotiating a local government devolution deal with the then government. The new government, elected in July, cancelled those negotiations, and a few months later started again with their own plans, with which we are faced now. They want to see a Mayor covering Suffolk and Norfolk elected in May 2026 to sit at the table of the Council of Nations and Regions, through which most money for local government will be distributed. Their plans also mean the abolition of both our District

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Councils and the County Council - to be replaced, I hope, with one Unitary Authority for Suffolk.

Preliminary figures, and I stress they are preliminary, shows that if Suffolk ends up with one Unitary Authority, savings of around £110 will be realised over the next five years. But the view of our District Councils (and I will let them elaborate on this for themselves) is that Suffolk should have either two or three Unitary Authorities. Two authorities would still save money over a five year time-span, but ninety per cent less than one authority – around £10 million. And if we had three – East Suffolk, West Suffolk and a Greater Ipswich which would probably take in Felixstowe, Woodbridge and Needham Market, then this option would cost you and I as Council tax payers at least £50 million over five years, with considerable extra costs continuing into the future.

All councils had to put their initial ideas to Government by 21 March, and we now have until 26 September to work up a full, detailed business case. The Government will then make their decision before the end of this calendar year. Undoubtedly we now face six months of political controversy about which of the various options is right for Suffolk but, ultimately, we will have to do what the Government tells us to do. My final point for the moment on this subject is that I hope we find some really top-class candidates for the post of Mayor, as we need a figure who is a hard-hitter for our two counties on the national scene.

Elsewhere, taking decisions is never easy, and sometimes our influence is not great. Here I mention the LionLink and Sea Link projects to which we are opposed, but to which our opposition does not count for as much as it should. The final decision is in the hands of Ed Miliband, Secretary of State for Energy, and he has been over-riding local opposition and approving every project that goes across his desk. The Sunnica wind farm in West Suffolk was a terrible project which was recommended for refusal by the Planning Inspectorate. He approved it. So, I fear, that the projects affecting our area will also ultimately be approved, whatever the feelings are in the local area where the full effects will be felt – be they cables coming ashore under Walberswick beach or the building of one or more giant converter stations on high ground just outside Saxmundham. As to the effects of a yet-to-be sanctioned Sizewell C, I am almost lost for words. No final investment decision has yet been taken, although I suspect we all know that you and I as taxpayers will end up funding it. The developmental works are already proceeding at a vast pace, and from my own anecdotal, unscientific experience, the traffic along the A12 in the month of March has been not far short of what we usually experience in high Summer.

Finally, I want to say a few words about Libraries. Suffolk Libraries have run the service over the last 13 years, but the back-office costs have grown from single figures up to 33%. We could not reach agreement with them during extensive negotiations, complicated by the legalities of the procurement process, and the County Council's Cabinet agreed in March to bring the Library service back into house. Last year we gave them an emergency loan amounting to an extra 12% and we were not convinced that they could keep to their budget in future, over 92% of which is supplied by the County Council. My Cabinet colleague laid out in very great detail all about the process and negotiations, and this is now all on the public record to counter certain mis-information which has been circulating. Our guarantee is that all 45 library sites will remain open, at present opening hours. In addition, new mobile library vans will be purchased to guarantee the continuance of the service to villages across Suffolk, and we will invest in bringing the IT systems up-to-date. I firmly believe our libraries have a very bright future, not just for the borrowing of books, but for their continued development as community hubs encompassing many useful social and economic functions. The transfer of responsibility takes place on 1 June.

Without the advent of local government reform I had planned not to seek re-election and to retire on 1 May this year. Those plans are now on hold and I will continue to serve as your County Councillor until the government-defined end-of-term of this administration. We know the Government has postponed elections by twelve months, so retirement still beckons before too long! I am proud to represent Blything Division, but retirement still looks tempting...

Richard Smith, MVO, County Councillor for Blything Division
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Economic Development and Skills
Contact details: richard.smith@suffolk.gov.uk / 07545 423817

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Appendix E: St. Peter's Church

I took on the church warden's post a year ago . Due to Barrie stepping down it has been a challenging year! However many hands have made lighter work and I have been grateful for the invaluable help of my husband Richard and other members of our PCC.

The new members of our PCC are a breath of fresh air and we go forward with renewed positivity! It has been a busy productive year at St Peter's .

May bank holiday 2024. Our flower festival was well supported and thanks to a team of flower arrangers and helpers /cakes and stalls was a good fundraiser .

Harvest festival thanks to Black dog deli for donation of bread for the altar.

Christmas Advent lighting of the tree a sharing of church and village parish council was well supported despite the stormy weather! Our candlelit service with mulled wine and mince pies well attended.

Our Wednesday communion with coffee and chat is a lovely coming together of Benefice members

.Following this Pebbles play and stay welcomes our youngest .

Flowers in church always done beautifully throughout the year and at our church festivals many thanks to all involved

Thanks also to Julian Lock for organising a big spring clean up in church in March and for the hard working pairs of hands helping to make it look so refreshed .Well done all!

We look forward to a year of hope of things to come

Lynne Putland

Church Warden

Annual Report from the Yoxford Bell Ringers

May 2025

We have had another busy year. We have our regular practice night every Thursday at 7.30pm unless attendance will be too low. We have rung for the Family @ church services, a few weddings, Remembrance Day and other important dates and events in the church diary.

We managed a joint purchase with the church of half muffles which allow us to ring appropriately on Remembrance Day and hope to place an order for new ropes very soon.

A full peal was rung by visitors on 1st May 2025 lasting 2 hours 47 minutes. It is only the second time a full peal has been rung in Yoxford (that i am aware of) the last one was in 2002 and three of the ringers from 2002 also participated in the peal on the 1st May.

Michelle Pearce

Tower Captain

Yoxford Church

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Funding was obtained from the Scarfe Trust for scanning & digitising in high resolution all the large **photo albums of Fred Thompson**, donated in 2023 by his daughters. These are now all completed & stored on an external drive.

Funding will be applied for in order to purchase a fourth metal storage cabinet. This will house the photo albums & other large items eg the Horner's shop ledgers.

In Autumn we repeated the **'Putting Names to Faces' exhibition**. Some more people in the group photos were identified. We also displayed the Thompson albums again, which many visitors enjoyed looking through & reminiscing.

In October we had a stand at the annual **Alde Valley Family History Society Open Day** again, at the Fromus Centre in Saxmundham. More local history groups attended than previously & this is proving to be bigger & better year on year. Consequently, 2025's event will be held in the larger venue of the Long Shop Museum in Leiston.

In April we mounted our **main exhibition of the year, 'Yoxford at Work'**, dividing occupations into five subjects. These were 'The House and Garden' (builders, carpenters, bricklayers, gardeners etc); Transport & Communication (wheelwrights, harness makers, carriage builders, garages, Post Office etc); 'Food & Drink' (butchers, bakers, mineral water manufacturers etc); 'Clothing & Footwear' (shoemakers, tailors, dressmakers etc) and 'Farming & Agriculture'. The main written research, with a starting point of the Commercial Directories for the village (Kelly's etc), including as many relevant images from our archive as possible, was then sent to Leiston Press for printing on Correx boards. Farming & Agriculture was extensively researched separately by a member of the team. This included obtaining copies of the 1941 National Farm Survey. This was carried out by the Government during the Second World War to increase food production and to plan for post-War agriculture. These are available to view at the National Archives. Other occupations which didn't fit into these categories was printed by us as usual & mounted on our display boards. We 'dressed' the displays with vintage artefacts from a member's collection. The exhibition was a great success & brought many lovely comments. It will be an easy one to repeat & we plan to do so 11th October.

Meanwhile we are finalising an **exhibition** we had planned for **July, 'Yoxford's Creatives: Past & Present'**. (This now co-incides with the village show reviving the Flower Festival, Yoxfayre etc. The idea originated with the donation in 2023 of the archive of resident artist Deborah Ardizzone. This is comprised of mainly catalogues & receipts for exhibitions held at Yoxford Gallery in the 1960s-90s. The Gallery was founded by her mother, the artist Vera Delf. The exhibition will also include Milestone Pottery, (Diana Rose and her daughter Biddy Rose Barclay) 1974-1996. It will showcase all the artists & writers we have discovered from past centuries and highlight the work of the professional artists and makers, photographers and writers who make their home in the village now.

A hanging system is now in place in the main hall, for the use of artists. We shall use this at our exhibition in July but we also plan to source vintage picture frames so that we can hang copies of some **iconic photos from our archives**, in a changing **display**.

Plans to source funding for a **display case** in the entrance hall are on hold until the hall's renovations are complete. However, we have meanwhile purchased inexpensive Perspex flat-pack table-top cases in order that we can show some appropriate objects & documents at our exhibitions.

Donations, fewer this year, have included two iron shoe lasts, purchased in a local antique shop in the 1970s, coins found in gardens, family histories, memories & photos.

We were recently down to only five **members** but now we have a new addition to the team. Everyone has different interests, life experience & responsibilities. However, we desperately need more help! Do please contact us if you would be interested in talking to us about how you could be involved.

history@perry72.plus.com

Draft

Appendix H: Yoxford Sports/Tennis Group

YOXFORD TENNIS CLUB

Our friendly tennis club is always open to new members or occasional players. Our two courts are maintained to a high standard and have floodlights so it is possible to play all year round. We have a mixed ability group of ladies that meet each Monday and Friday and the courts are also used for free by our local primary school and the youth club.

All maintenance costs are met from annual subscriptions. Annual family membership costs £70 and single membership costs £50. It is also possible to pay and play at £7.50 per session.

We currently have 37 members, 26 of whom have family memberships.

We are actively seeking new members as well as volunteers to help with maintenance.

Laura Greenberg

May 2025

Appendix I: Yoxford Youth Club

Yoxford Youth Club Report 24/25

We ran 2-hour youth club sessions each week from Easter to Christmas. This is mostly sports and fun activities. But it has made it possible for us to support the young people with the issues they face and to encourage them to take part in other activities we offer at our other centres. We have supported 29 young people aged 13 to 18. Most young people are aged 15 or 16.

Hours offered

2 hour per week on a Thursday evening for 36 weeks last year.
Including 6 during school holidays.

Numbers of young people attending.

- Average night 12
- Busy night 18
- Slow night 7

Most popular activities.

- Football/basketball on the MUGA,
- FIFA on the Xbox
- Listening to music
- Playing pool

Issues.

- Bullying
- Problems in School
- Bereavement
- Anxiety
- Substance misuse
- Relationships
- Sexual health

Stuart Watson

CYDS Project