

MARLINGFORD & COLTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Colton Village Hall 14th May at 7pm.

Minutes

Present

John Morse	JM	Chairman
David Woods	DW	Councillor
Debbie Perfect	DP	Councillor
Mark Pfeiffer	MP	Councillor
Maria Hutson	MH	Parish Clerk
Margaret Dewsbury	MD	Parish and District Councillor
Judy Scrivener	JS	Marlingford PCC
Liz Plater	LP	Colton PCC

1 Member of the Public

1	To receive any apologies. Marion Morse, Colton Fuel Allotment Felicity Maton, Grapevine Rosanna Ellis, Colton Art and Crafts Club Dominic Castle, Colton Village Hall Chris Witting, Marlingford Village Hall Andrew Sneddon, Police Officer
2.	To accept and sign the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11 th April 2023 DP proposed and MF seconded that they are a true record
3.	Reports from Local Community Organisations
	a) Marlingford PCC MP – Quinquennial report has stated that £70,000 of urgent work that is needed attending to. Looking at ways to fund this work
	b) Colton PCC LP gave a brief summary of the annual report. One of the biggest issues is maintaining the material of the building. A new carpark has also been installed which has been well received.
	c) Marlingford Village Hall Report MH read out a report submitted by Chris Witting, chairman of the village hall committee, Appendix A
	d) Colton Village Hall Report MH read out a report submitted by Dom Castle, chairman of the village hall committee, Appendix B
	e) Fuel Allotment Charity MH read out a report submitted by Marion Morse, Appendix C
	f) Grapevine MH read out a report submitted by Felicity Maton, Appendix D

	g) Marlingford Cricket Club MH read out a report submitted by Johnny Wyndham Club Captain, Appendix E
	h) Colton Arts and Craft Club MH read out a report submitted by Rosanna Ellis, Appendix F
4.	Reports from other bodies
	a) Parish Council Report John Morse summarised his report which is in Appendix G
	b) District Council Report Margaret Dewsbury read out her report which is in Appendix H
	c) County Council Report Margaret Dewsbury read out her report which is in Appendix ****
	d) Police MH read out a report submitted by PC Andrew Sneddon Appendix J
5.	General Parish Issues raised by members of the public Fingerposts look good now they have been refreshed/replaced

Meeting closed 19:53

Appendix A

Marlingford Village Hall Annual Report

April 2024

Marlingford Village Hall has had another successful year with users enjoying the improvements to the facilities carried out over the past few years.

We have added an additional bench to the patio area to Commemorate the Coronation of King Charles 3rd thanks to a donation from South Norfolk District Council. This was unveiled at a afternoon event celebrating the Coronation which was attended by many villagers.

We have also added broadband and wifi to the halls facilities and this has also allowed us to set up an electronic payments system for hall events.

The existing 3 art groups that use the hall on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and the dance classes on Tuesdays are all going well. A further regular event has been added to the roster where a local dog agility group are using the grounds on a monthly basis. These regular events bring a regular income which gives stability to the finances of the hall and mean that the regular costs of running the hall are covered.

We also provide a venue for the PCC to hold fund raising events on a regular basis, including quizzes and bingo evenings which allows them to raise the much needed funds for the urgent building repairs. Marlingford Cricket Club has also used the hall for fund raising events through the year.

The annual Christmas Fair was well attended and well received with a number of new stalls as well as a visit from father Christmas and his elf. The weather allowed us to effectively extend the hall with the use of the marquee on the patio. The hall also put on a number of events during the year including a MacMillan coffee morning where we partnered with the Marlingford Bell to attract steam engines and vintage tractors to the hall, a village Bonfire night and the return of the Acapella group which attracted a good audience.

The committee is always grateful for the support received when holding events and the support that we get from the parish council and South Norfolk District Council. If anyone would like to book the hall in advance for an event/party/group or get involved with the organising committee, please get in touch.

We will make improvements to the facilities when we have the finances to do so and we will continue to do this going forward.

Chris Whiting
Chair, Marlingford Village Hall Committee

Appendix B

Colton Village Hall Chair's report 2023/4

Colton Village Hall has had a relatively quiet and steady year after the upheavals of the pandemic and subsequent recovery from it.

Our regular groups, the Little Owls and the Colton Art Group, ensure that the hall is used at least weekly and provide a steady income stream. Following the passing of Joyce Ireland, a long-time pillar of the village hall committee, the Thursday coffee morning was stopped. Sue Rix experimented with a couple of community lunches to see what support there would be from the village but there was not quite enough interest to maintain it. It would be good to see if we could find a way of hosting a regular event for the villagers who do enjoy some company and meeting others.

We have had a few hires for parties, and a funeral, through the year and the annual elections provide a welcome boost to the coffers. As always, it would be good to expand the number of hires if we can.

Events run by the hall committee have generally been very successful. Easter and Christmas bingo sessions continue to attract people to the hall and the summer barbecue was a great success. An autumn curry night collaboration with the Norfolk Lurcher was also a popular night and a good way to welcome the new owners to the village and a couple of Saturday coffee mornings have also done well.

We continue to work to improve the fabric of the hall and make it as attractive as possible to existing users and potential new hirers. New curtains have been installed in the internal doorways and we have a bid in for funding to purchase and install sound-deadening panels to improve the acoustics in the room. We have already received £1,000 from councillor Margaret Dewsbury's community grant funds towards the costs, for which we are very grateful. Outside the hall we also have a bid in for funding to remove the now damaged lift-out security bollards and replace with a height-restriction barrier, which will allow cars and small vans in at any time, making the car park available to the users of the play park and other casual users and removing the need for hirers to lift the heavy bollards themselves.

We will also be installing, in the play area, a bench in memory of Joyce and a grant of £250 from Marlingford and Colton PC has been offered to help fund this.

Financially the hall remains on a solid footing with a healthy bank balance (see treasurer's report for details). We are, however, not covering our annual regular costs so could do with more regular income to ensure the long-term viability of the hall.

We are pleased that Jo Elizabeth and Darren Minns agreed to become trustees and join Dennis Mickleburgh.

We are a small committee and everyone works hard to make the hall a success. However we need new members to help spread the load and bring in new ideas and energy and I ask everyone to bear this in mind, especially when meeting people who have just moved to Colton.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to all on the committee for their efforts in the past year. Here's to a successful 2024!

Dom Castle
Chair, Colton Village Hall
March 2024

Appendix C

Report from the Colton Fuel Allotment Charity

Prepared for the Annual Parish meeting on 14th May 2024

In the last year, income was £1000. 26 payments of £30 per household were made on the night of the Village Hall Bingo on 09/12/23 (£780) and 14 households donated to the church by cheque (£420) so total payments of £1200.

The next distribution will be made in December 2024, at the Village Hall bingo night on 2nd Saturday in December (7/12/24)

Yours sincerely,
Richard P Smith
Trustee

Appendix D

The Grapevine report –2024

The Grapevine is enjoying another good year and we are pleased we managed to regain printing the magazine, bimonthly in 2023 and on line for all 10 issues.

In 2023 we gained some new advertisers having lost a few through the covid epidemic.

In 2023/24 we hope to continue to produce 10 issues: double issues for July/August and December/January. Residents are able to learn of local news that we are able to bring them and advertisers promoting their businesses locally

We have 900 printed, of which 650 are for Easton, 110 for Colton and 100 for Marlingford with extras for leaving in village halls, church porches, etc. We have volunteers who deliver a copy to each home and business in the villages. We are always appealing for more volunteers to help distribute the magazine.

The online version goes out every month and is distributed to all contributors, advertisers and committee contacts as well as those who have asked to be added to the online distribution list. The magazine is also uploaded to the parish council websites and a link is put on the Nextdoor website which covers Easton, Marlingford and Colton as well as part of west Norwich.

October and November are busy months for us when we need to renew the advertisers' interest in the magazine. We now offer colour or black/white options. We are fortunate to have a loyal amount of supporters and now a few new companies to add to our advertisers.

We have received the annual donation from Easton Parish Council of £1,000 We also received an annual payment from Marlingford & Colton Parish Council in 2023. Many thanks for your support.

Unfortunately the readers of the magazine have not contributed very much in 2023 and we would appreciate any residents' donations into our bank account as requested in every edition. We would like to print more months but finance does not allow as it costs almost £700 for printed magazines.

Our editor, Annette Hudson is a great asset and has helped us to develop the magazine over the years and, hopefully, the readers are happy with the new improved version. Annette is always pleased to receive any articles with local interest and news.

Our voluntary committee members are: Felicity Maton - Assistant Editor, Carol Chiles - Treasurer and Sally Neale.

We welcome anyone who would be interested to join us.

Appendix E

Last season was once again very successful on and off the pitch. Membership has increased and Marlingford CC is still well represented by members who live in the village. New players are always welcome!

This season we plan to run a junior cricket programme in the summer holidays now we have a qualified ECB coach at the club. It is also our aim to have Marlingford's first ever women's match this year.

The club has applied for a grant, which, if successful will help improve the facilities. Fingers crossed!

We thank the good people of Marlingford and Colton for popping down and supporting us.

Many thanks

Johnny Wyndham
Club Captain

Appendix F

The Colton Art Group.

The group continues to meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, with a couple of exceptions. We charge £3 a session and can help provide equipment. There are 8 regular members who have experimented with various mediums and techniques including watercolour and acrylic.

We welcome new members and they need not have any experience; current members are really pleased with their progress from absolute beginners.

Appendix G

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2024

Parish Council Meetings. As reported at our 2023 Annual Parish Meeting, due to continued non availability in Marlingford, we currently to hold our meetings in Colton Village Hall, with occasional meetings being held during the summer months in the Marlingford Cricket Pavilion.

However, the most significant change this year has been to hold meetings bi-monthly. This is primarily aimed at continuing to recruit more prospective councillors and thus make attendance less onerous.

Although we have been successful in recruiting two new councillors, we continue to be short of a further three, and would be very pleased to welcome new prospective representatives.

Precept & Finances. The Parish Council's reserves are currently modest, having used a substantial part of our available Communities Infrastructure Levy (CIL) fund, for new play equipment in the Colton Amenity Area.

Due to the continuing levels of liquidity, the Parish Council has postponed the implementation of a formal Reserves Policy for the time being.

The Parish Council precept for 2024/25 has been set at £12,140. This is an increase of 11.37% from last year which equates to an extra 15p a week for a band D property. The Parish Council was very mindful of keeping increases to a minimum where possible.

The Parish Council has allocated 2 grants to the village halls for £250 each. Audit fees have also risen due to the increased complexity of auditing parish council accounts. Accounts must be audited annually, and paperwork lodged with the external auditor to ensure adherence to transparency codes.

Additional money has also been earmarked for Councillor training. £500 has also been allocated for ensuring that the Defibrillators are kept in working order with "in date" pads and batteries.

The Parish Council has continued to employ the same Auditors as in 2023.

Information and Dissemination. To disseminate information to the local community, in addition to the use of its website, and village notice boards, the Parish Council continues to write, print, and distribute a Newsletter, produced in months when the Grapevine Parish Magazine, is only published as an online edition. To date, 10 editions have been published, and response from villagers, especially those without access to the internet, continues to be positive.

Additionally, the Parish Council has advertised and has been able to augment the membership of a Colton WhatsApp group, and a similar communications system has also been recently established in Marlingford. Both have proved very successful and useful for sharing local knowledge and information. It is hoped that going forward, we will be able to pool our resources such that both villages can collaborate more, for mutual benefit throughout our parish.

Local Issues

- Highways.

The most significant issue in 2023/24 has been the damage to roads, walls, verges, and potholes, caused by traffic using Colton and Marlingford as “Rat Runs”, on several occasions but particularly following flood in the A47, following Storm Babette, last 1 October. Although Norfolk County Council did promise to carry out the necessary repairs, there has been limited work on repairing some potholes, we still await a timetable for the remainder of the remedial work to be carried out. We continue to make the necessary representations to senior representatives on Norfolk County Council, no timetable for the works have been provided.

The Parish Council continues to send a delegate to continuing discussions regarding the planned dualling of the A47, and the construction of the Norwich Western Link. We have received representatives twice, from National Highways but we are still concerned, that our villages will be used as “Rat Runs” during the construction phase of the A47, but still have not been told whether there is a plan in place to divert traffic away from the parish.

Incidents of flooding by the pond on The Street, Colton and in Mill Road Marlingford have also been reported to NCC Highways. Other than providing Flood signage to warn drivers, we have not yet seen any remedial work being undertaken, either by the local authority, or relevant landowner.

The Parish Council continues to be concerned about potential speeding and traffic volume issues through both villages, but more specifically, in Marlingford. The Council continues to monitor traffic flow, using both SAM2 speed cameras in Marlingford.

- Footpaths.

Councillors continue to monitor public footpaths in both villages. They are in generally good condition with any issues being reported to Norfolk County Council who oversee these paths, or to the landowners, as necessary. We are however aware that in two locations, landowners have removed finger posts, or put up warning signs hoping to persuade the public not to pass near their property. Residents are reminded that such obstruction is against the law, and we will be taking steps to rectify the situation

- Policing.

The Parish continues to have low levels of crime. We are advised that the parish has a new Beat Manager, PC Andrew Sneddon, who has visited us once since his appointment. However, we recently reported an incident to PC Sneddon, but he did not respond within a suitable timeframe for the matter to be resolved.

- Sports and Recreation Facilities.

There is an ongoing initiative in Marlingford to facilitate a wider participation in maintenance of the Conservation Area. In Colton, we will shortly re start negotiations with the landowner regarding the renewing of lease on the Amenity Area, and Village Hall Car Park. It is hoped that we can get agreement to a longer lease period than previously, for us to seek development funding from such entities as The Heritage Lottery Fund.

- Planning Applications.

At the time of writing, in the past year the PC has dealt with five planning applications. Of these, three have been approved, with the other two applicants initially withdrawing their original request, only for them to re-submit them later. Both applications are currently awaiting approval from South Norfolk Planning department.

- The Millenium Yew.

It was brought to our attention that the commemorative Yew Tree, and accompanying signage were removed without the Parish Council's prior knowledge. However, we have been fortunate to obtain a replacement, grafted from a tree from the 2 original batch which were distributed across Norfolk, and have received approval from the Saint Andrews Church, Colton, Parochial Church Council for it to be planted in the churchyard, in 2025.

The Parish Council would again wish to record our considerable thanks for all the work carried out by our Parish Clerk / Bookkeeper / general factotum, Maria Hutson, and to Margaret Dewsbury, our District and County Councillor, for her continuing support, and continued access to grant funding. I would also like to extend my thanks to my fellow members of the Parish Council, for their considerable commitment.

John Morse Chairman, May 2024

Appendix H

South Norfolk Council Report for Annual Parish Meeting

As South Norfolk and Broadland Councils have now settled in to the Horizon Building on the Broadland Business Park the office at Long Stratton has been advertised for sale. Unlike some councils South Norfolk is in a good place financially and has substantial reserves due to sharing the building and staff with Broadland Council. Also, our development company, Big Sky, is now ten years old and contributes about £3million a year to council funds as well as providing many houses to rent to local people.

The Greater Norwich Local Plan, 2018 - 2038, was considered sound by the inspectors and has now been formally adopted by Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk councils. The GNLP is made up of three documents covering The Strategy,

The Sites Plan and the Monitoring Frameworks. The South Norfolk Village Clusters Plan will be going to the inspector in December.

Nutrient Neutrality held up developers for quite a while but they can now mitigate this by buying credits from Bio Diversity Net Gain provided on other green sites elsewhere if they cannot contribute anything on their own site. This means planning permissions and development are no longer held up.

Work on the Long Stratton Bypass is just beginning and should be completed in about eighteen months. The plan included sites for housing and employment as well as a site for a new primary school.

The leisure centres and swimming pools have been refurbished and the number of people using them is now getting back to pre COVID numbers. Over one million people use the centres each year and we teach over 3,000 youngsters to swim each year.

Bins continue to be emptied on time and from 2026 we will also be collecting food waste.

The Help Hub has gone from strength to strength and is supporting local people in many ways. It is one of the best in the country and helps about 100 families each week. There is now an outreach vehicle that goes out to villages to engage with people who cannot get to them. Over the next year they will be paying six consecutive visits to Bunwell, Hingham, Thurlton, Bressingham and Ditchingham.

South Norfolk does much to support local people and organisations. The Pride in Place grant helped many villages tidy areas/plant flowers etc. over the last year and we have the Community Action Fund (closing date May 22nd) and Member Ward grants of £1,000 to help local organisations with their projects.

John Fuller was made a Lord in this year's Kings Honour's list and as a consequence, after 17 years as Leader of South Norfolk, he will be stepping down at the AGM on May 20th.

Margaret Dewsbury
Easton Ward

Appendix I

NCC report for Annual Parish Meeting

Council Tax

NCC agreed a Council Tax increase of 4.99% (that is 2.99% for general services and 2% increase for Adult Social Services). Overall the budget will provide an extra £60million for Adult Social Services and £35 million extra for Children's Services. This is necessary because the demand on these services increases every year.

The Rise Up children's mental health and wellbeing programme supported over 10,000 children in its first year.

Devolution

The Council also agreed to accept the £600 million, (over 30 years), Devolution Deal offered by the Government. This will ensure we have extra funding and the power to decide how it should be spent. The deal will include having a Directly Elected Leader who will be elected in May 2025.

Highways

Twenty-seven new gritters have been purchased to help keep the main roads safe during the winter months.

The service has been working hard dealing with the results of the flooding as well as the usual potholes etc,

This year there were 118 bids for Parish Partnership funding. NCC is helping all of them. The joint investment in these schemes will total £1,040,586. Generally contributions are 50/50 but very small parish councils only have to contribute 25%.

Flooding

The Leader and the Chairman of the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance went to London to lobby ministers for more funding to stop flooding because Norfolk is the 10th most at risk of surface water flooding, out of 149 authority areas.

The discussion also included how to capture the excess water for use in times of drought during the hot summer months, and extra support needed for coastal erosion as Norfolk has one of the fastest eroding coastlines.

Bus Services

Norfolk received funding from the Department of Transport to improve local bus services. As well as providing extra buses the plan is to expand some routes and increase the frequency of services on key routes.

Bus fares have been kept low and from February 1st people holding a disabled concessionary travel pass have been able to travel free of charge at any time. Previously they were only allowed to travel free at off peak times.

Waste disposal

Until the beginning of this year people had to pay to dispose of DIY construction and demolition waste. From this year waste from small scale projects in up to 100 litre bags can be disposed of free of charge. This is limited to four visits to a tip within four weeks.

Traders must continue to pay for all waste disposal.

Environment

As part of the aim to plant one million trees over five years to help reduce carbon emissions in the area the council has also been growing trees at Gressenhall to sell to other organisations. Last May the council also adopted a Climate strategy which includes retrofitting our buildings, sustainable transport and developing a green economy.

The Council is also preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and is one of 48 local authorities working with the Government on supporting nature.

Public Health

The Council's Public Health Strategic Plan commits to delivering a new programme of tobacco control and Stop Smoking initiatives to help people stop smoking and create smoke free environments. Although E-cigarettes (vaping) is a useful tool to help people stop smoking they are not good for adults or children who have never smoked. It is illegal to sell vapes to under 18s and the council has been working with schools on preventing children from taking up vaping and providing guidance on dealing with vaping incidents.

Adult Education

The Adult Learning Service was rated 'Good' following its Ofsted inspection. One third of courses are now provided on line to cater for people unable to travel to them. The Construction Centre on the edge of Norwich is doing well and there will be Adult Learning Centres in the new Community Hubs being developed in Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth.

Fire Service

The Fire Service was also rated 'Good' after its HMI inspection. It has worked hard dealing with wild fires and flooding as well as other incidents over the last year. They also do a lot of prevention and protection work, advising people on how to keep their homes and businesses safe from fire.

Libraries

As well as providing books, information and free internet access our libraries also provide a variety of activities for all ages, from Bounce and Rhyme for babies to Knit and Natter for older people plus a warm space in which to meet. The Summer Reading Scheme for school aged children took place as usual as did the Holiday Playschemes.

Norfolk County Council continues to provide a wide range of services to support adults, children, businesses and organisation.

Appendix J

Crime

For the Easton Ward there have been 140 reported crimes for the period 01/04/23 – 30/04/24 compared with 199 for the same period last year. This is a 34.8% reduction in reported crime.

Of those 140 crimes nearly 20% can be attributed to Sundown Festival. These offences range from Drugs possession / Theft / ID offences.

There are no spikes in reports of Anti-Social behaviour, Burglary, Criminal Damage and Theft. I am aware of the incidents of discarded NOS canisters and the potential for drug related offences.

Of note

I am aware of the increase in discarded NOS cannisters and evening and late patrols will continue to try address this.

Road Safety

Complaints of speeding are low but I appreciate this is likely not a true reflection. Please forward any 30 / 40 limits where you perceive there to be a problem and I will factor in speed enforcement both in person and with the assistance of the Safety Camera Team.

Reporting Crime

Please encourage residents to report their own crime. As with a lot of areas, people will post on social media and tell others but they do not always report it to us.

Reporting crime has never been easier. Reports can be made online via the Norfolk Constabulary website or through 101.

Intelligence

Intelligence is a valuable tool. Residents can send information to the dedicated neighbour inbox: SNTCostessey@norfolk.police.uk or anonymously through Crime Stoppers.

Q2 Priorities

The priorities for the quarter (1st April – 30th June 2024) for all Parishes that I look after are as follows:

1. Anti-Social Behaviour
2. Theft

Road Safety including speeding is an ongoing priority that runs all year round and will no longer be listed as a specific priority each quarter.