

DRAFT MINUTES GREATFORD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Tuesday 31st March 2026 at 7:00pm at the Village Hall

Present

Cllr Vanessa Smith, Cllr Tony Barker, Cllr Phil Britton, Cllr Jason Halsey, Cllr Caroline Nathan, Cllr Gemma Taylor, Kate Armstrong, Steve Armstorong, Nigel Ashby, Helen Britton (Clerk GPC), Alex Doust, Paul Doust, Ross Dykes, James Everitt, Jeremy Hockham, Kerry Hockham, Lois Webb.

Opening of meeting

Welcome given by Phil Britton who chaired the meeting.

Apologies for absence

Cllr Ashley Baxter, Bob Hogg.

Approval of Minutes from APM June 2025

Proposed by Gemma Taylor, seconded by Tony Barker.

District Ward Councillor Vanessa Smith's annual report

It is a privilege and a pleasure to serve as one of Greatford's elected representatives at SKDC. Over the past year, much attention has been given to proposed local government reorganisation and its impact on Lincolnshire. Both SKDC and the Central Government have undertaken consultations, and further clarity from Westminster is expected later this year. Reforms are still anticipated to proceed on schedule, with elections to any new authority likely in May 2027.

SKDC has also been progressing its new Local Plan, identifying sites for housing and employment over the next 15 years. Residents will have seen the introduction of food waste bins, with collections beginning in April, helping to improve recycling across the district. Alongside this, the Council has continued to support communities, leisure and arts provision, expand social housing, and determine planning applications.

I remain committed to representing Greatford and will continue working hard to support the village in the year ahead.

Greatford Parish Council annual report (Cllr Phil Britton)

Introduction

The preceding year has for the first time in three years been 'dry' with no flooding affecting dwellings within the Parish.

The composition of the Parish Council (PC) has changed with the resignation of Cllr Natalie Pretsell, and the co-option of Cllr Caroline Nathan. I would like to thank Natalie for her service during her time on the PC, and also welcome Caroline who has brought with her a wealth of experience gained from her previous role as Chair of Water Newton PC.

Planning

A number of applications for planning have been received and commented upon by the parish council, most applications were approved. The main planning concerns have centred around The Mallard Pass Solar Farm with numerous discharge orders being reviewed and commented upon by the PC, in addition to attending several community engagement meetings concerning these discharge notices. The Parish Council and other affected PCs are trying to engage with Quinbrook, and their contractors to try and ensure that the development has the least possible impact upon Greatford, however there appears to be little regard for the various concerns raised at the community engagement meetings, and the answers to some of the questions raised are slow and not satisfactory. Greatford Parish Council continues to work very closely with the Mallard Pass Action Group.

Highways

The community speed watch group has re-started activities with training for new members planned for the near future. Nigel Ashby continues to move the radar speed sign around the village to assist motorists in moderating their speed (thank you Nigel). Speeding remains a problem in the village. The roads surrounding the village are beginning to fall into disrepair, particularly along the edges of roads where increasing use by HGV traffic has eroded the edges of the roads and in some places the

Verges. HGV traffic through the village has again increased over the preceding year, specifically quarry traffic and pallet network trucks associated with businesses along King Street. There has also been a recent increase in HGV's turning right from the Carlby road junction towards Belmesthorpe. The hedge and STOP sign adjacent to, and at the junction have both been damaged by HGVs manoeuvring through this junction, and HGVs regularly mount the pavement when doing so. This is continuously reported to LCC highways with the only action of late being to straighten the STOP sign after it was hit by passing traffic. The village footpaths continue to be well used by locals and visitors alike, and are in a reasonable state of repair.

Community activities and events

The village hall and playing field hosted a very successful summer play scheme for the children of (or associated with) the village again in 2025. Funding for this in 2026 is doubtful, but the PC will pursue funding options if and when they arise.

Flooding

Following the disastrous floods of 06/01/2024, and 03/01/2025, there have been no flood events in the village, though many parishioners did deploy their flood prevention measures on occasion during the winter of 2025 /26 in response to flood alerts issued by the Environment Agency (EA), though thankfully inundation did not occur thanks to the sterling efforts of our Flood Wardens who continue to engage with the County Council, EA, local land owners and the local drainage boards to maintain and improve the hydrological infrastructure in and around the village. Some good progress has been made on this front and more projects are ongoing to try and further improve our situation.

Summary

Greatford continues to be a great place to live though there are some significant challenges to village life that the PC is confronting with what time and resources it has available. The Parish Council is doing all it can to maintain and enhance our beautiful village and the life of the village.

Greatford Parish Council Financial report (Responsible Financial Officer, Cllr Jason Halsey)

As of the end of February 2026 the current account balance stands at £16,161.16. Our balance is unusually high as we are holding £5,050 pledged towards the rebuilding of

the village play equipment. Without this we hold a near normal healthy balance of £11,111.16.

This year we recovered 2 years VAT, £146.30 & £430.38 from 2023 and 2024 respectively. Apart from our usual yearly expenses we have made payments for additional playing field landscaping, Flood wardens tools and PPE, Greatford Emergency response group equipment and will be making a contribution towards the new village hall entrance.

Greatford Village Hall Management Committee annual report

The village hall has had another successful year and it has been great to see the hall busy with many Live and Local events, and we are again hugely grateful to Alison Horton for all of the hard work she puts into each event to ensure they are so successful.

Regular bookings have sadly dropped off in the last few years/post COVID with attempts to restart fitness classes proving unsuccessful, however we're grateful to all those involved in trying. However the hall is still regularly used for puppy training, parties, a race night, messy church and many other activities including of course the Parish Council meetings. The summer sports event for local children was also another strong success. Further events including a tea party and another Live and Local event, the Pocket Choral Society are planned in the spring.

We are very grateful to the Parish Council for their support in co-funding the works to the entrance which has had a really positive impact to the look and feel of the entrance and has of course made it safer for users.

We are keen to hear from any groups or individuals who wish to use the Hall or to support its running or maintenance and we are also keen to hear from anyone who would be interested in taking on the hall cleaning (paid) for a couple of hours a month. Thanks once again to the PC and all villagers for their ongoing support.

Report from the Greatford Flood Wardens (Cllr Jason Halsey, Ross Edgar and Richard McDermott)

The work carried out by the flood wardens and other willing volunteers in the leadup to winter 2025 seems to have been largely beneficial. During a considerably wet winter period we have, so far, avoided any visible flooding. With a limited grant from SKDC

and funding from the Parish Council we were able to clear and restore some critical drains and ditches. Some landowners have also taken responsibility to keep their land clear. However, much more work is needed by the farmers and landowners to improve field drainage and keep rainwater flowing quickly out of the village. We have demonstrated, on a small scale, the value of well maintained and clear drains and ditches, it is hoped more can be done before winter 2026.

The independent land and hydrology study is active, threshold levels and ditch surveys started last week. It is hoped that the results of this study will make recommendations for future projects and civil construction of improved flood prevention. The Flood Wardens are continually engaged with and will continue engagement with the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Boards, Lincolnshire County Council and local landowners in order to incrementally improve our drainage and flood resilience. The further works required to mitigate flooding will be determined by the outcomes of the Hydrology Report currently being researched and undertaken.

The meeting closed at 7:15pm.