

Clerk: Mrs. Ruby Cole
32 Old Road
Walgrave
Northampton
NN6 9QW

Tel: 07881 458801

E-mail: clerk@holcot-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.holcot-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES

Minutes of Holcot Full Parish Council meeting held on **Monday 20th April 2026** at 7.00pm, Church Room, Main Street, Holcot, Northampton NN6 9SP

Present:

Councillors: Chair - Cllr Chris Bailey, Vice Chair - Cllr Tony Hewitt , Cllr Paul Higham, Cllr Deryck Watson

Phil Scordellis: Trustee - Holcot Village Hall Association

Public: 2

Clerk: Ruby Cole

26/077	Apologies: None	
26/078	Public address to the council: Phil Scordellis - Chair of Holcot Village Hall Phil briefly addressed the meeting, initially as a member of the public, expressing appreciation for the well-run Annual Parish Meeting on 16 th April and commending the Parish Council's ongoing work on solar initiatives and road safety. He then clarified that he was attending in his formal capacity as Chair of the Board of Trustees to Holcot Village Hall Association, not as a member of the public. In this role, he stated two reasons for attending: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To observe discussion of Agenda Item 26/101, noting that the Parish Council holds the freehold of the Village Hall.• To participate, in line with the grant awarding policy, in discussion of Agenda Item 26/083 (Budget Policy).	

	<p>He advised that his role during the meeting would be to respond to councillors' questions, provide factual clarification where necessary through the Chair, and highlight any concerns Trustees may have and potential next steps.</p> <p>Phil also reminded the Council of its role as custodial trustee of the charity, noting that responsibility would fall to the Council should the charity become unable to operate.</p> <p>He concluded by confirming that he would participate in the remainder of the meeting solely in his capacity as Chair of the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Cllr Deryck Watson moved position to the public area to speak as Secretary of Holcot Village Hall.</p> <p>Deryck spoke in his capacity as Secretary of Holcot Village Hall, and wanted to make his position absolutely clear regarding the documentation presented to the Parish Council.</p> <p>Firstly, he does not support the comment that was described as 'illegal', nor does he support the petrol station fuel purchase analogy.</p> <p>However, he does believe the matter can be kept quite simple. Where the Village Hall provides services to the Parish - particularly where those services may involve charges to the public or hirers, there should be an appropriate level of reimbursement. This could take the form of an agreed contribution or arrangement between the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee Trustees.</p> <p>Deryck returned to take his position as Councillor.</p> <p>Public 1</p> <p>He is aware that this matter is already on the agenda (Gardening group), so at this stage he would simply like to say that he is here as a parishioner - to observe and to listen. In particular, he is interested in hearing how the undertakings made previously by the Parish Council will be carried forward, especially the commitment to act more in line with the views and feelings of the village. He is here to see how that is reflected in practice.</p>	
26/079	Declarations of Interest: Cllr Watson - agenda item 26/083	

At this point Chair reminded Councillors and public of the Code of Conduct that each councillor abides, particularly the Nolan Principles. He reminded all Councillors of their fundamental responsibilities, including the obligation to avoid conflicts of interest, to exercise reasonable care and diligence in their roles, and to ensure that public resources are used prudently, in accordance with the Local Authority's requirements and in the public interest. He emphasised that these principles should underpin all discussions, questioning, and decision-making processes.

26/080	<p>Minutes: Full Parish Council meeting Monday 16th March 2026</p> <p>Resolved: Minutes approved. Chair signed at meeting</p>	
26/081	<p>Actions Outstanding: See end of document for full update. <i>See Appendix 1</i></p>	
26/082	<p>Correspondence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 14.04.26 WNC - Invitation to provide feedback. Road Safety Strategy. Closes 13.05.26. Cllr Bailey to respond. Action 26.082.1 2. 30.03.26 Marlec Engineering Solar Powered Variable Message Speed Signs and Lighting information. To be placed on file for further 	CB
26/083	<p>Holcot Village Hall Association: Request for clarification regarding Parish Council 2026–27 budget and grants policy (email and attachment received 13.04.26. Note from Trustees of Holcot Village Hall)</p> <p>Councillors discussed about concerns over the proposed changes to village hall funding and whether the right level of consultation had taken place. A main point of discussion was that there are different views on past payments. It is not clear whether these were meant as one-off discretionary grants or a longer-term commitment. The Council’s position has generally been that these were discretionary payments made within budget limits, while the Village Hall sees things differently. Councillors agreed that this needs to be clarified so everyone is working from the same understanding.</p> <p>They also noted some recent unexpected spending (including legal costs and playing field costs), which had already been covered in earlier budget discussions. It was recognised that the Council does have reserves, but these still need to be managed alongside other priorities - that being Traffic Management.</p> <p>There was discussion about how any surplus funds might be used, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village hall funding • Community facilities • Road safety improvements <p>Overall, there was agreement that it would be helpful to consult more widely with the village to help decide what the priorities should be.</p> <p>Resolved: It was agreed that essential community use of the village hall should continue during the review period, while longer-term arrangements are clarified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further clarification to be sought with the Village Hall on historical funding arrangements • A report to come back to a future meeting • Consideration to be given to a village-wide consultation on funding priorities • Interim arrangements to ensure essential services continue without interruption <p>Cllr Bailey & Cllr Hewitt to meet with Mr Watson & Mr Scordellis to discuss further. Cllr Bailey to arrange. Action 26/083.1</p>	CB TH

26/084	Gardening Report: The Gardening Group has withdrawn from responsibility for maintaining the crossroads garden area, though it remains available to support the village more generally. The Parish Council will develop a plan for the site over the coming months. In the interim, the area will be kept tidy and weeded, with bark chippings applied as necessary. The Parish Council hopes to attract volunteers to assist with the ongoing care of the site. Some members of the Gardening Group will merge with the Friends of Holcot group.	
26/085	Friends of Holcot: Good progress reported with regular volunteer sessions and strong turnout. Some benches have been renovated; remaining work includes oiling and one bench needing major repair at Rectory Lane. Recent tasks included ivy removal and general tidying. The Washbrook work is mostly complete with some clearing left. Some village signs need attention, including a damaged post near the Brixworth entrance. A photo survey will be carried out to create a list of future maintenance tasks. Work will continue as time, weather, and volunteers allow.	
26/086	Planning Notices: 2026/1408/S73 08.04.2026 - 46 Moulton Road Holcot NN6 9SH. Variation of Condition 2 Plans & Removal of Condition 4 Visibility & 5 Access to allow amendment to siting & remove conditions re access & viability to 2024/5339/FULL (Demolition of two semi detached bungalows and construction of two 2-storey detached houses and associated landscaping). Comments by 29.04.2026. Resolved: No Objection. Clerk to respond accordingly. Action 26/086.1	Clerk
26/087	New Parishioners: None. Cllr Watson has produced a flyer to welcome future new parishioners and will deliver the flyer to the two recent new parishioners	

Regular Reports and Decisions Arising

26/088	Defibrillator: The pads will need replacing later on in the year. Cllr Higham will revisit the free CPR and defibrillator training session offered by St John Ambulance, as there was initial interest. However, the arrangement process appeared disorganised. He will look into this again with a specific date in mind.	
26/089	Green Hill Solar Farm: 13.04.26. Notification of completion of the Examining Authority's examination. Noted. The decision or report is now with the Examining Authority, and they are currently doing the detailed assessment. The final decision will sit with the Secretary of State (Ed Miliband).	
26/090	Road Safety and Highways: 02.04.26 WNC - Work to improve the A43 between Northampton and Kettering. The next phase will continue work towards Holcot Lane/Sywell Road roundabout. Noted	
26/091	Holcot Car Boot & Farmer's Market: Cllr Watson reported ongoing contact with the MP Stuart Andrew and local councillor Cllr Cecile Irving-Swift regarding planning enforcement concerns. It was noted the site is permitted to operate on limited days (Thursdays, Saturdays, and bank holidays, up to 28	

	<p>days per year). Concerns were raised about operation outside permitted sessions, previously reported to enforcement.</p> <p>Public 2 also spoke about the contacts and correspondence she has made whilst on the council. Cllr Watson has contacted WNC planning enforcement to request a full response to emails sent on 9th and 13th March, and copied in relevant parties. A one-week deadline for response was set, after which escalation will be considered if no reply is received.</p> <p>It was noted that there was significant congestion on Saturday morning, with queues affecting access to the roundabout and A43. Cllr Watson has also sought clarification on enforcement action once permitted days are exhausted.</p>	
26/092	<p>Police Liaison/Neighbourhood Watch: Cllr Bailey has not yet heard from Sgt Harrison, although only a couple of days have passed. He will follow this up if no response is received by the end of the week. One of the matters to be raised with Sgt Harrison concerns previous issues with police communication, which has not always been effective. Cllr Bailey has provided Sgt Harrison with a brief outlining the matters that need to be addressed. Going forward, rather than attending a single meeting per year, there will be a request for more regular and proactive communication from the police.</p>	
26/093	<p>Play Equipment Inspection: The repairs are expected to be carried out in May. It was decided not to pursue funding for potential play equipment at this time.</p>	

Finance/Governance

26/094	<p>Co-Option: Currently 3 vacancies. No nominations for co-option received</p>	
26/095	<p>Mowing: Grass cutting schedule and insurance details received from Park Landscapes - April 2026/27 £5456.00 + VAT. This will be the last year that Jeremy from Park Landscapes will be operating due to retirement. Noted</p>	
26/096	<p>Annual Parish Meeting: 16.04.26. Holcot village hall. There was very positive feedback overall.</p> <p>A parishioner raised a concern regarding the lack of communication about the Parish Council's intention to dissolve the King George V Field Charity. This matter forms part of an ongoing investigation, which began in July 2025, into buildings and land belonging to the Parish Council.</p> <p>During this process, it was discovered that the King George V Field Charity had been in existence. Upon further investigation, it was found that no accounts had been submitted for a number of years. As a result, the Parish Council sought advice from Fields in Trust, Northants CALC, and solicitors in order to clarify the position. The Parish Council has reviewed the situation and is now considering the dissolution of the charity as per February 2026 minutes. An agenda item will be included at the May meeting to formally consider the dissolution of the charity. To ensure full transparency, relevant correspondence is appended to these minutes. <i>See Appendix 2,3,4,5</i></p>	

26/097	Annual General Meeting: Monday 12th May 2026 7.00pm in Church School room. Noted	
26/098	Internal Audit: NCalc internal auditor instructions received 30.03.26 and documents sent 03.04.26. Confirmation received 17.04.26 that the audit has been completed with no issues.	
26/099	2025/26 AGAR: PKF Littlejohn external auditor instructions received 24.03.26. Noted	
26/100	Accounts 2025/26: Clerk has completed year end accounts, previously circulated. Resolved: Accounts approved. <i>See Appendix 6</i>	
26/101	Land Ownership & Assets: Cllr Hewitt reported that he had met with James Bonser (church warden) regarding the boundary/retaining wall. He confirmed he was content that the stone walls were within Church ownership, but the retaining wall was under query. Councillors noted previous advice indicating that, due to the age and nature of the boundary, responsibility would likely rest with the Church, particularly where the wall functions as a retaining structure. Resolved: It was agreed that the Parish Council does not accept ownership or liability for the retaining wall, but may consider a discretionary contribution towards any future maintenance if appropriate. Cllr Hewitt to respond to James Bonser. Action 26/101.1	TH
26/102	Invoices: Clerk has sent an invoice for £324.50 for allotment services. Payment has since been received.	
26/103	Payments: Receipts. Interest £96.56 31.03.26, allotments £324.50 10.04.26. Current invoices £3294.41. Resolved: Payments approved. Invoices signed at meeting. Cllr Bailey & Cllr Hewitt to authorise bank. Action 26/103.1	CB TH

Ref	Payee	Description	Date	Method	Amount
430	Clerk	April Salary inc home working	17/04/2026	Online	498.40
431	HMRC	Employer Paye - NIC	17/04/2026	Online	9.81
432	Weekley Parish Council	50% Share Microsoft	17/04/2026	Online	43.75
433	Eon	Street Lights ¼ March 26	17/04/2026	Online	76.80
434	Northants Calc	Annual Membership Fees	17/04/2026	Online	638.38
435	SSE	Street Light Electricity March 2026	17/04/2026	Online	101.57
436	Park Landscapes	March Mowing	17/04/2026	Online	592.20
437	DM Payroll	Annual Payroll Administration	17/04/2026	Online	144.00
438	Ramprint	Newsletters	17/04/2026	Online	132.50
439	HCR Law	Legal Services King George's Field	17/04/2026	Online	1050.00
440	Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Bank Charge March	30/04/2026	Direct	7.00

3294.41

26/104	Financial Report/Bank Reconciliation: Unity Trust Current Account - 31.03.2026 £10,292.65. Unity Trust Instant Access Savings Account - 31.03.2026 £18,818.50. Resolved: Approved. Year end bank reconciliation signed at meeting.	
26/105	Bank Account: To approve transfer of surplus funds from current account into savings account. Deferred to next meeting	
26/106	Next Agenda Items: Referendum on grants. Church grant letter. Allocation of surplus funds. Dissolution of King George V Charity. Insurance review. Action 26/106.1	Clerk
26/107	Next Meeting: 18th May 2026 Annual Parish Council Meeting & Full Parish Council Meeting - Church Room 7.00pm	

Meeting closed: 20.28

Action Points for Tracking

Ongoing Actions

26/032.1	Clerk	Clerk Laptop: To seek prices up to £500. Awaiting repair.	Ongoing
25/277.1	TH	Christmas Tree lights: Not all the lights are working and these need to be checked by the supplier Mushroom Lighting. Cllr Hewitt to make contact to check and renew any items not working.	Ongoing

New Actions This Meeting

26.082.1	CB	Correspondence: Road Safety Strategy. Closes 13.05.26. To respond.
26.083.1	CB/TH	Holcot Village Hall Association: To arrange meeting with Village Hall Trustees.
26.086.1	Clerk	Planning Notices: 46 Moulton Road. To respond. No Objection.
26.101.1	TH	Land Ownership & Assets: To respond to J Bonsor regarding Church Wall.
26.103.1	CB/TH	Payments: To authorise bank.
26.106.1	Clerk	Next Agenda Items: Referendum on grants. Church grant letter. Allocation of surplus funds. Dissolution of King George V Charity. Insurance review.

APPENDIX 1

<p align="center">Actions Outstanding from Holcot Parish Council meeting Monday 16th March 2026</p>			
25/277.1	TH	Christmas Tree lights: The Christmas tree lights were working until New Year's Eve, when a power cut occurred. Since then, they have not been operational. The location of the switch/fuse is currently unknown.. Xmas tree lights to be checked once down. The lights have been taken down and they have been checked and are working. It has since been discovered that not all the lights are working and these need to be checked by the supplier Mushroom Lighting. Cllr Hewitt to make contact to check and renew any items not working.	Ongoing
26/032.1	Clerk	Clerk Laptop: To seek prices up to £500. Awaiting repair.	Ongoing
26/054.1	DW	Gardening Report: To draft an email response with redrafted attachment for councillor approval.	Complete
26/054.2	Clerk	Gardening Report: To send email response to R Walker.	Complete
26/057.1	DW	New Parishioners: Two properties on Moulton Road. To send welcome note.	Complete
26/059.1	Clerk	Newsletter: To prepare a more welcoming message for the Parish Council website	Complete
26/060.1	Clerk	Dog Show: To send email of response of refusal	Complete
26/061.1	PH	Defibrillator: To gauge interest on CPR training via website.	Agenda 26/088
26/066.1	Clerk	Play Equipment Inspection: To make enquiries regarding funding for potential play equipment for financial year 2027/28.	Complete
26/068.1	Clerk	WNC Election Recharge Consultation: To submit option C to WNC	Complete
26/069.1	Clerk	Annual Parish Meeting: To circulate notice on both websites.	Complete
26/069.2	Clerk/CB	Annual Parish Meeting: To prepare agenda	Complete
26/071.1	Clerk	Asset Register: To place on parish council website.	Complete
26/072.1	CB/TH	Payments: To authorise at bank.	Complete
26/075.1	Clerk	Next Agenda Items: Move surplus funds into Savings Account.	Complete

APPENDIX 2

KING GEORGE'S FIELD HOLCOT – Charity Details

Following a request at the Parish Meeting held on the 16th April 2026 the position with the King George's Playing Field, Back Lane, Holcot is:

The Playing Field was acquired by the Parish Council from Phipps Brewery in a conveyance dated 1st July 1939 and is registered at the Land Registry

The total cost of the project is recorded as £320 of which the Parish Council received a Grant from the King George's Field Foundation of £175

There are 3 King George Playing Fields in Northamptonshire namely Holcot , Yelvertoft and Burton Latimer

The Deed of Dedication dated 12 March 1958 details that the land *“should be preserved in perpetuity for the purpose of a Public Playing Field as a memorial to His late Majesty King George V under the provisions of the King George's Fields Foundation.”*

This is recorded at the Land Registry

The King George's Fields Foundation was dissolved in December 1965 and any remaining assets transferred to the Fields in Trust

There was a Charity registered on 21st February 2001 - King George's Field Holcot - Charity number 1085108 . It appears from the Google search it was formed to raise funds for the Playing Field from donations and events etc. There was income and expenditure in the period 2004 to 2007 but no income or expenditure is recorded after this period and returns are outstanding to the Charity Commission from 2021. The Charity has no legal interest in the Playing Field.

Ruby consulted with Northants Calc and the Fields in Trust on the redundant Charity before Councillors agreed to instruct HCR solicitors to seek its dissolution.'

APPENDIX 3

Holcot Parish Council



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Northampton
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Fields In Trust
Unit 504
Clerkenwell Workshops
27-31 Clerkenwell Close
London
EC1R 0AT

29th November 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

King George's Field, Back Lane, Holcot, Northampton - Charity Registration No: 1085108

I have pleasure in enclosing a copy of the conveyance dated 1st July 1939 together with the handwritten Deed of Declaration on the last page of the conveyance dated 12th March 1958.

The land is registered with the Land Registry.

You will note from the Government website that there have been no Annual Returns submitted for this Charity for some considerable time and the last income and expenditure was in the year ending 31st March 2007.

Holcot Parish Council maintain the King George's Field , Back Lane, Holcot for recreational use for the benefit of the residents of Holcot and there is no income as the Parish Council do not seek to let out this space to third parties.

We are seeking to close the Charity to reduce administration given there is no income for the King George's Field and it is maintained by Holcot Parish Council to whom the land was conveyed to in 1939. Could you please advise what is required in order for this to be actioned?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Ruby Cole - Clerk & RFO - Holcot Parish Council

APPENDIX 4

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: RE: Thanks for your enquiry
Date: Tue, 9 Dec 2025 15:23:07 +0000
From: Fields in Trust <info@fieldsintrust.org>
To: clerk <clerk@holcot-pc.gov.uk>

Hi Ruby,

Thank you for clarifying that.

We advise that the Council should take independent legal advice on what to do to close the charity and this matter.

Unfortunately, we cannot provide any advice on this matter.

Thank you for understanding.

Best wishes,

Naomi

Approved

APPENDIX 5

Fwd: King George's Field Holcot (1085108)

Subject: Fwd: King George's Field Holcot (1085108)
From: Ruby Cole <clerk@holcot-pc.gov.uk>
Date: 16/04/2026, 21:23
To: clerk@holcot-pc.gov.uk

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: RE: King George's Field Holcot (1085108)
Date: Thu, 15 Jan 2026 11:47:38 +0000
From: Joseph Hobbins
<jhobbins@hcrlaw.com>
To: Ruby Cole
<clerk@holcot-pc.gov.uk>

Dear Ruby

I hope you are well.

My sincere apologies again for the delay in reverng on this maer.

We have undertaken a detailed review of the conveyance dated 1 July 1939 and Deed of Declaraon within. I note that the land was conveyed to the Holcot Parish Council to be held in "*preserved in perpetuity for the purpose of a public playing field as a memorial to his late majesty King George under the provisions of the "King George's Field Foundaon"*". Further, the land (tle number NN308584) is held by the Parish Council.

In short, we struggle to see how (and why) the Charity (King George's Field Holcot – 1085108) actually came about and how it is governed.

In light of the above circumstances, I propose that we write to the Charity Commission (on behalf of the Charity) seng out the background and condions of the conveyance, seeking any objecon from the Charity Commission to the dissoluon of King George's Field Holcot – 1085108. Should the Charity Commission provide no objecon to the Charity's dissoluon, we can then formally dissolve the same.

For us to undertake the above, I would esmate our costs to be circa £875 + VAT (which will include our review of the documents provided to date). In the event that the Charity Commission object or provide any queries, we will provide an updated costs esmate.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that you would like me to proceed with the above course of acon – at which point I will share our terms of engagement with you and begin preparing the necessary leer.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Joe. **Joseph Hobbins**

Solicitor
Charities and Not-for-Profit Team

For and on behalf of HCR Legal LL

The logo for hcrlaw, featuring the lowercase letters 'hcrlaw' in a bold, dark teal font.

APPENDIX 6

HOLCOT PARISH COUNCIL				
Year End Account Summary 31/03/2026				
Bank Current Account (Unity Trust Bank)				
Bank Savings Account (Unity Trust Bank)				
	2024/25		2025/26	
	£	£	£	£
Receipts				
Precept	21,500		22,250	
Mowing Grant	808		808	
OPFCC Grant	0		0	
Allotments	243		255	
VAT Reclaimed	1,299		757	
Donation/Grant	407		0	
Other	33		44	
Bank Interest/Credit - Savings Account	287		376	
Total Receipts		24,577		24,489
Payments				
Administration/Communications	2,713		2,519	
Maintenance incl mowing	6,201		5,290	
Projects	0		0	
Lighting	891		1,021	
Other	888		593	
Clerk Salary (inc allowance)/HMRC	4,467		5,251	
S137/Sundry/Grants	3,073		3,652	
VAT	1,529		1,279	
Total Payments		19,762		19,605
Surplus (Deficit) for the Year		4,815		4,884
Bank Reconciliation				
Balance b/f Current 31.03.2024		11,256	Balance b/f Current 31.03.2025	15,784
Balance b/f Savings 31.03.2024		8,156	Balance b/f Savings 31.03.2025	8,443
Add Receipts		24,577		24,489
		43,989		48,716
Less Payments		<u>19,762</u>		<u>19,605</u>
Balance of Receipts & Payments		<u>24,227</u>		<u>29,111</u>
Unpresented Cheques		-		
Balance b/f Current Acc 31.03.2025		15,784	Balance b/f Current Acc 31.03.2026	10,293
Balance b/f Savings Acc 31.03.2025		8,443	Balance b/f Savings Acc 31.03.2026	18,819
TOTAL		<u>24,227</u>	TOTAL	<u>29,111</u>