

**HAWSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
AT THE VILLAGE HALL  
on THURSDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** P Cllrs H Brewis (Chair), J Lomas-Farley, J Bulbrook, R Alexander (in part) & C Carr; C Hibbert – clerk. One member of the public.

**Apologies:** P Cllr A Brewis; SC Cllr Soons.

*The meeting started at 7.30pm.*

**1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND CONSIDER ANY APPLICATIONS FOR APPROVAL OF ABSENCE: NOTED and ACCEPTED.**

**2. PUBLIC FORUM**

**2.1 Public participation.** A member of public expressed interest in items 8.7, 8.8, 11.1 and 11.2 and it was **AGREED** to consider these items out of turn.

**8.7 WSC play equipment inspection service level agreement (taken out of turn).** The meeting heard that West Suffolk Council has reviewed its play equipment service level agreement and will now proceed with a quarterly (rather than monthly) inspection of the swings on the Green at no charge to this Council. The proposed service level agreement for 2026 was **AGREED**; the meeting heard that the HCC receives a WSC inspection report in relation to the play area (which it manages) and the football pitch (which the Council manages); HCC offered to forward reports relating to the football pitch to the Council as and when received.

**8.9 Village hall car park (taken out of turn);** the meeting heard that; (i) work is required to repair the entrance to the car park which is now potholed; (ii) in recent years HCC and the Council have shared the cost of any car park repairs between them; and (iii) a more substantial repair requiring concrete to be laid to the entrance is now required. The Council confirmed **SUPPORT** in principle for 50% of a total cost of works up to £3,000 plus VAT, subject to prior consideration of a spec for the work and three quotes (to be sourced by HB). The meeting **NOTED** the HCC aspiration to get this work completed ahead of the forthcoming wedding season.

**11.1 Playground reports (taken out of turn);** The most recent playground reports from WSC (swings on the green) were received and **NOTED**. (All low/no risk findings).

**11.2 WSC letter withdrawing bottle bank (taken out of turn);** It was **NOTED** that; (i) with the introduction of the new kerbside recycling regime, the bottle bank at the village hall would be withdrawn; (ii) HCC has concerns about how this change will impact on their ability to dispose of empties generated by the bottle bank and any public expectation of being able to dispose of recycling at the car park.

**2.2 County Council** In her absence, a copy of SC Cllr KS' report was received and **NOTED**; a copy will be uploaded onto the website.

**2.3 West Suffolk Council.** See item 2.2 above.

**2.4 Police.** The local constabulary has reported the following crimes in Hawstead since the last meeting: (i) a domestic non crime (January 2026); and (ii) a theft and assault (February 2026).

**3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

**3.1 To receive disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting.** It was **NOTED** that RA has in interest in item 7.3 below as Chair of the RLCP.

**3.2 To consider any applications for dispensations in relation to declared pecuniary interests:** no dispensation applications were received.

**4. MINUTES FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATED 8<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2026.**

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting dated 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026 were **APPROVED** and signed as a true and accurate record of this meeting.

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## 5. MATTERS ARISING

The meeting heard that; (i) the new speed indicator device (SID) has now been delivered to the Council; the new post is yet to be installed by SCC; (ii) the domain name of the old PC website has been changed to hawsteadhistory.co.uk to avoid confusion with the current PC website.

Thanks to AB.

## 6. REPORTS

**To receive reports including the following:-**

**6.1 Communications;** nothing to report.

**6.2 Highways and safety;** the meeting heard that; (i) with increasing daylight, Speedwatch sessions will take place 2 xpcm; (ii) the defibrillators are all in good order and JML is logging updates with Webnos/The Circuit; (iii) with potholes being a persistent issue in the locality, it was **AGREED** to encourage residents via the WhatsApp group to report the potholes which affect them directly to SCC using the highways reporting tool and to monitor any follow up.

**6.3 Volunteering;** due to the current vacancy on the Council it was **AGREED;** (i) to remove volunteering as a standing agenda item; and (ii); to appeal for volunteers (as and when required for any specific tasks) via the Whatsapp group.

**6.4 Clerk.** The clerk report was received and **NOTED.** It was **AGREED** that the clerk should follow up with WSC as to the outcome of negotiations with the landowners regarding the enforcement issues at Woodlands.

*RA joined the meeting.*

## 7. CONSERVATION

**7.1 Greens;** the meeting heard that; (i) 'no driving' signs have been installed on the Green; driving on the Green is ongoing; (ii) SFI options have now been updated and are available via the Countryside Stewardship scheme (likely available to the Council in June 2027); and (iii) the felled logs in the river have moved downstream and are in a position where they will not exacerbate bankside erosion.

**7.2 Footpaths (inc footpath rep);** a footpath report was received – no particular issues identified.

**7.3 River proposals – update on grant funding.** A draft plan (attached) was circulated; the meeting heard that the proposals – to create a new attenuation pond near Bells Land would improve the flow of the Lark. RA, as Chair of River Lark Catchment Partnership, seeks permission from the Council as riparian owner/ affected landowner to agree to these proposals which will enable RLCP to apply for grant funding to implement the works. Discussion followed about the cost of the works to the Council; the special importance of the unimproved grassland on the green; health and safety implications of pond ownership; the depth/ dimensions of the pond; the statutory protections on the green/ need for a formal derogation; the Council's obligations under the existing Countryside Stewardship agreement and the contributions the pond might make to water flow, water quality and road run off. It was **AGREED** to meet on site to review the proposal further.

**7.4 Tree work;** a quote (£695 plus VAT) for various tree works around the village had been provided by SB; works have now been undertaken, ahead of nesting season. It was **AGREED** to approve these works. It was **AGREED** that an appeal for support with the tree warden role should be put out to the community.

## 8. TO CONSIDER

**8.1 Updated asset register** The asset register (copy attached) was updated to include the new SID and signage and **APPROVED.** It was **AGREED** to add these items to the insurance schedule.

**8.2 Updated risk assessment** The risk assessments were reviewed and **APPROVED.**

**8.3 Website accessibility audit** The website accessibility audit was received and **NOTED.** The website scores 9.6/10 for accessibility but there are some errors which require correction. The clerk is working towards dealing with these and will post an updated website accessibility statement when appropriate. [Post meeting note; it was **AGREED** to ask Suffolk Cloud to correct errors].

**8.4 New solar post for new SID.** It was **NOTED** that SCC will charge £630 to supply and install a new post from which to operate the new SID. Cost **APPROVED.**

**8.5 Tree work** See item 7.4 above.

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**8.6 Vacancy on Council** It was **NOTED** that Cllr JW has tendered his resignation. It was **AGREED** to note the valuable contribution which he has made to the work of the Council as Chair and councillor and to thank him for this; and (ii) to advertise the vacancy for co-option.

**8.7 WSC play equipment inspection service level agreement (taken out of turn)** -see above.

**8.9 Village hall car park (taken out of turn)** – see above.

**8.10 Request for licence over Village Green** The Council reviewed a request from the owner of Maglio Rosso concerning access over the Green, alongside the previous correspondence/minutes on this issue. It was **AGREED** that there was no change in the Council's position as set out in its previous letter to him dated 15 October 2015 and this should be re-sent.

**8.11 Emergency generator servicing** It was **AGREED** to allocate up to £100 towards generator service. It was **AGREED** that **HB** would look after the emergency generator.

**9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS, APPEALS AND NOTIFICATIONS**

**9.1 Planning notifications;** the following notification was received;-

DC/26/0158/AG1/ PP-14641816

Address Flatts Farm Bell Lane Hawstead Suffolk IP29 5NW

Proposal Determination in respect of permitted agricultural development - agricultural roadway

Status Decided

Decision Not required

Decision Issued Date Mon 02 Mar 2026

**9.2 To consider DC/26/0151/HH Householder planning application - veranda across rear Elevation at 3 Bull Lane Pinford End Hawstead Suffolk IP29 5NU** The meeting reviewed this application and noted that the near neighbours had not commented nor was the proposal visible from the road. It was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to **SUPPORT** this proposal.

**10. FINANCE**

**10.1 To receive and approve the bi-monthly financial summary for January- February 2026;** the bi-monthly report was received and **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**.

**10.2 To approve payments to be made;** the following payments were **APPROVED**.

	Payee	Detail	Net	VAT	Gross
1	CH	online	856.80		856.80
2	HMRC	online	214.20		214.20
3	Lloyds	DD	4.25		4.25
4	Lloyds	DD	4.25		4.25
5	Coastline Graphics	ALREADY PAID	106.50	21.30	127.80
6	Suffolk Cloud	ALREAD PAID	70.00		70.00
7	CH – Ionos – website charge	DD	66.00	13.20	79.20
8	CH – Ionos – new domain name	DD	4.00	0.80	4.80
9	CH expenses	online	52.00		52.00
10	SALC - payroll	online	19.00	3.80	22.80
11	Elancity - SID	online	2589.99	518.00	3107.99
12	SB – tree work	online	695.00	139.00	843.00

**10.3 Appointment of SALC as internal auditor and acceptance of terms of engagement;** The Council **AGREED** to appoint SALC as internal auditor for 2026 and approved the SALC letter of engagement.

**10.4 Review adequacy of Internal controls** The Council reviewed the system of internal controls, concluded they were adequate and **AGREED** to approve the internal controls statement attached.

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**11. CORRESPONDENCE** The following correspondence was received and **NOTED**;-

**11.1** Playground reports; see above.

**11.2** WSC letter withdrawing bottle bank; see above.

**11.3** Correspondence from WSC re Woodlands enforcement issue. See above.

**11.4** Correspondence from resident re Cranks Footbridge. The Council **NOTED** the response from SCC and concluded that it had no observations to make at this stage but would monitor the situation

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING** Thursday 14th May 2026 at 7.30pm to follow Annual Parish Meeting at 7.00pm.

*The meeting closed at 9.15pm.*

Distribution

All Cllrs/Website/Noticeboard

Documents before meeting

Clerk report

Bimonthly summary

Internal controls statement

Aquamaintain plan

Draft

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**Attachment to Item 7.3 River Lark Catchment Partnership  
Strings of Beads: the rivers round Bury St Edmunds – project description**

This landscape restoration project takes its title from research into the geomorphology common to the upper Lark, Linnet and Black Bourne (Sapiston) catchments, described in the recent Fluvial Audit for the River Lark, prepared by Professor David Sear, University of Southampton. This report has major implications for river restoration and supersedes all previous practices, reports and advice for the Lark. In line with RLCP's stated aim to gather, use, and disseminate evidence from the widest possible range of sources, this project is therefore partly aimed at providing proof of concept for other catchments that share the same morphology in the Anglian region, and wider afield.

In their natural state, the rivers in this relatively flat, rich agricultural landscape (a thick layer of boulder clay over the underlying chalk aquifer), flow very gently, and tend to form instream meres, ponds and wetlands, evocatively termed 'beads on a string'. The feature gives rise to local placenames, including the village of Sicklesmere. This research is relatively new to science; there is just one similar documented river system in the literature (in a montane region of North America), although it most likely affects other rivers in the south Suffolk region such as the Brett and the Gipping.

The project also takes to heart Prof Sear's advice in the Fluvial Audit to plan for extended river restoration projects over long lengths of river rather than trying to deliver small, disconnected projects. It is thus a demonstration of a genuinely Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) to river restoration in that it pays careful attention to the functioning of the rivers in *this* landscape, while integrating the whole range of activities and pressures associated with riparian landscapes: agricultural; industrial; recreational.

It will be one of the two initial Lark Flagship restoration projects (the other being relocation to its paleochannel of chalk stream near Icklingham, with the rewetting and conservation of a significant store of peat). It involves the whole of the upstream reaches of the Lark, from the headwater streams in the parish of Hawstead, to the north of Bury St Edmunds, plus the Linnet and the Black Bourne catchments. It coincides geographically with our newly formed Lark and Little Ouse Headwaters Farm Cluster which has a focus on water quality and soil health (currently 8 farms, 5,200 hectares).

**Strands of the Strings of Beads Project  
Water flow**

Flow is critical for the very survival of some of the supposedly 'ephemeral' streams in the upper Lark catchment. The project is designed to learn more about the relationship between perched water springs; ground water flows within soils, and surface water flow with the habitats this sustains. The aim is to increase safe water retention within the landscape at times of peak flow, including water storage in ponds, pingos, meres, and wetlands, and thereby mitigate the effects of periods of drought. Preparation for the project will involve the accurate mapping, and where possible, verification through soil coring, of any surviving paleochannels of the much canalised River Linnet.

**Water quality and water quality testing**

We are in the process of applying for Evidence Champion status with the academic journal <https://www.conservationevidence.com>. This requires that we are able to test the effectiveness of any environmental interventions we undertake.

Continued support for water quality monitoring is a vital aspect of this project before, during and after delivery to assess the effectiveness of the actions taken. We want to be able to continue eDNA testing, automatic sensor monitoring and CS testing across the catchment but particularly in the waterbodies associated with the project.

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We have shared our data with AW and EA on numerous occasions to alert them to pollution events in the catchment. In the few months since the Sensors have been installed, we have identified the following problems, which otherwise would not have been picked up:

1. Very low levels of Dissolved Oxygen at Golf Course, Tollgate, Eastgate Bridge and Southgate Bridge in BSE
2. Repeated human E.coli and Enterococcal eDNA spikes at Queen's Hill (due to sewage overflow)
3. Repeated agricultural pollution events (dangerously high levels of swine enterococcal eDNA) upstream of Sicklesmere

The application therefore includes continued funding for a select number of Seneye sensors for the duration of the project and for, at minimum, 1 year afterwards, with continued funding for our original CaSTCo-type CS monitoring and its dashboard.

### **Public engagement**

The successful delivery of the Lark Flagship restoration project will require extensive public engagement. The level of public debate on urgent issues of water quantity and water quality in our rivers needs to be raised. It should not be all about sewage, or flood defence via dredging and the removal of fallen trees - as most frequently presented in the media and in parliamentary debates. For this reason, RLCP wishes to appoint a full-time public engagement and education officer: a skilled communicator who can take the body of evidence that RLCP has collected over the years and present it in meaningful ways to the local community, thereby giving people of all ages a sense of agency in the improvement of their local environment, while building support for what Cunliffe called 'innovative' nature-based solutions for our nature-depleted surroundings. Such a role is essential for building public understanding of 'Environmental Destination' as outlined by the Environment Agency and Water Resources East in the face of the challenges to water security in this region, as well as helping to align restoration initiatives under various funding schemes (Flagship, WINEP and A-WINEP), with planning considerations for the region. The role will be charged to this project on a daily basis, supported by additional funding from elsewhere to enable it to be full time.

### **Projects and opportunities for partnership working**

The proposed project capitalises on a rare synergy of opportunities:

1. Planned relocation of Greene King from the centre of BSE to a new purpose built brewery site on the outskirts of town. They own one of the water meadows on the south side of BSE and want to leave a legacy in the town. RLCP has had discussions with them and they came to the last Flagship meeting.
2. The Abbey of St Edmund Reborn Heritage Lottery project (stage 2 bid submitted, February 2026); RLCP is now designated as their delivery partner for all environmental parts of the project outside the immediate precinct and gardens. This involves No Man's meadows and the Crankles. We have written them a letter of support.
3. West Suffolk Council's desire to leave a lasting legacy in the face of devolution. They own the Holy Water Meadow to the SW of BSE, Babwell Meadow next to British Sugar, Natterers Wood and land south of this reserve; and Ram Meadow nature reserve, as well as a long length of straightened river from Westley into BSE. They would like to be able to join up these currently disconnected areas of green space with a new footpath right round the town – a terrestrial form of beads on a string.
4. A small new 'bead' in Hawstead – an attenuation pond to solve a perennial flooding problem in the village associated with an historic ford. We received a £10k donation, some of which has been recently used to commission a design and costings from Aquamaintain. The landowner is the Parish Council. This could be shovel ready by June. The remainder of this grant will contribute to making an area of water meadow shovel ready this summer.
5. Harp Meadows (opposite the Greene King site) was purchased 7 years ago by a private philanthropist to protect it from development. It has been largely left untouched since this

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purchase. It is crossed by the tributary running from Hardwick Heath and has extensive wet woodland, a medieval (or earlier) bank and hedge, and some drier meadow areas.

6. RLCP has been monitoring the Lark for water quality, and as part of the Fluvial Audit, between Dobbies and the Police investigation centre downstream of HH and immediately upstream of Southgate Bridge. The river there is over wide, with minimal natural processes. It is frequently foul smelling. It would benefit from the installation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in the form of installing instream brush bundles to improve flow and biodiversity. It could be permitted and shovel ready by June.

#### **Complementary projects by other organisations**

7. The 'Beads' project is complementary to AW WINEP plans to install wetland treatment areas to mitigate the effects of combined sewage overflows in wet weather
  1. Wetlands at Queen's Hill? Plus Whepstead? Hawstead? Sicklesmere
8. Hopkins Homes housing developers have responsibilities for river restoration on their site upstream of Southgate bridge under a section 106 environmental. This is an entirely separate, standalone project, but their environmental plan is complementary to RLCP plans. As part of a more extensive programme, it would therefore contribute to a CaBA approach to river restoration in this area. We have been in occasional contact, and they sent a representative to the last Flagship meeting.
9. Section 106 agreement associated with the West Suffolk Hospital rebuilding programme to fund a raised board walk above the existing tarmac public footpath across the the water meadows.

#### **Match funding secured**

1. We are in receipt of a small grant (£2700, February 2026) from WSC's Thriving Communities Fund which we intend to use as seed corn funding for a full-time public engagement/education officer.
2. As host of CamEO we now expect the government grant to be doubled (i.e. to £30k per annum). We intend to use it to:
  1. continue the employment of the current Liaison Officer/administrator on a 1 day per week basis (a purely CamEO role)
  2. match fund the employment of a Public Engagement Officer on a similar 1 day per week basis (mixed CamEO/RLCP role)
  3. continue to fund the annual CamEO conference.
3. We have the loan of very expensive equipment in the form of Seneye sensors - ?£60k match funding (depending on the number of sensors deployed. We have just received a grant of £5000 from Bury Town Council (February 2026) to make the CaSTCo dashboard publicly accessible, and to keep a limited number of Seneye sensors running for the next six months until further funding can be secured.
4. The new AW funded Lark and Little Ouse Headwaters Farm Cluster for which RLCP is the host, currently consists of 8 farms dotted across the Beads area, on the Linnet, Lark and Black Bourne (5200 hectares - £30k over three years from 1 March 2026). In the first year, RLCP will map water flows across the beads landscape where the farms are situated. Involvement with the Cluster demonstrates RLCP's commitment to the connected, landscape scale ambition of the 'Beads' project, although the £30k set-up costs for the Farm Cluster are separately funded by AW and are ineligible as match funding for the Strongs of Beads project. One of the Cluster farms, however, is adjacent to the site of the Hawstead project. The landowner is amenable to providing additional tree planting along the stream and on a wet corner of his field, as well as an adjustment to the height of his bank. This will improve the effectiveness of that project.

The 'Strings of Beads' project therefore has the potential to demonstrate and test the benefits of a joined up, multi-organisational, public and private approach to river restoration, in a very public place, in one of the most water stressed regions of the United Kingdom.

#### **Project plan**

RLCP intends to apply in June/July to AW's Rural Regeneration fund for the first phase of a 3-5 year plan to start in August this year. This fund requires £:£ match funding (whether cash or in-

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kind, including volunteer time). In preparation, we are liaising with AW's WINEP team on their plans for the Linnet related to the augmentation scheme, and are preparing layered maps including Scimap and Lidar of the entire area.

Work in the first phase will consist of 4 discrete but connected river restoration projects that address different problems in slightly different ways, all using NbS, with a sizeable proportion of volunteer work, and all with a vigorous programme of public engagement and education. The careful monitoring of the projects in this first phase will function as proof of concept of the overall approach and of the restoration techniques employed to prepare for further linked floodplain and wetland projects to the East and North of the town in phases 2 and 3. The entire project brings opportunities for considerable amounts of match funds both in cash and in kind, including Green Finance, in addition to the usual daily/hourly match that RLCP would bring in volunteer and staff time.

1. Hawstead attenuation pond; Aquamaintain have drawn up a plan to be submitted to Hawstead Parish Council, the land owner, in mid March. The new owner of land adjacent to this site is willing to contribute tree planting, and potentially bank lowering in selected places; to be shovel ready by June. The proposed leaky dams could be supplied by volunteer labour using material onsite. Requires landowner permissions, and Local Flood Authority (SCC) permission
2. RLCP intends to install instream brush bundles to catch silt and improve natural processes in the river between Southgate Bridge and the Hopkins Homes site. This project could be delivered by RLCP at minimal cost using materials on site and volunteer labour. It could be permitted and shovel ready by June
3. Harp Meadows; new minimal management of the site to build on the benefits already accruing from benign neglect over the last 10 years; improvement of wet woodland to increase water storage in the landscape. RLCP and BWMG volunteer delivery, using materials on site. Plans to be drawn up to be shovel ready by June
4. Holywater Meadow, ideally finding a route across the meadow for the Linnet to reform its instream mere or wetland; board walk and dry path. Planning ongoing to be shovel ready by June 2026
5. Public Engagement programme to improve public understanding of flood and pollution problems, and to build a sense of public pride in the unique watery landscape round the town. It will include work with schools and disadvantaged groups

**Grant match funding**

Project	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Non AW?
Water quality testing: maintaining Seneye sensors; maintaining our CasTCO activity and making the dashboard publicly available	5,000			Yes, received, Bury Town Council
Public engagement	2,700			Yes, received, WSC
Public engagement (CamEO)	8,000	8000	8000	Yes, planned, WEIF
Hawstead 'bead'	10,000			Yes, received, private donation

**In kind funding**

Seneye sensors	£50k?			
WSC owned land parcels				
Privately owned land				

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Abbey reborn (if lottery bid is successful)	10,000	20,000	10,000	Yes, planned, Heritage Lottery

**Other match funding**

RLCP volunteer management time				
RLCP volunteer time				
WSC open spaces team				

**Separate but aligned RLCP projects**

Lark and Little Ouse Headwaters Farm Cluster	15,000	10,000	5,000	No. AW funded

**Item 8.1 Hawstead Parish Council; Register of assets as at 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

Description	Location/location held	Value	Date of acquisition (where known)
The Green	Adjoining Bells Lane and Bury Road	£1 nominal value	
Pound Green	Bury Road, adjacent to Almshouse	£1 nominal value	
Bull Green	Bull Lane	£1 nominal value	
Brook Green	Adjoining Bells Lane	£1 nominal value	
Millennium Field	Church Road – adjoining Cemetery	£1 nominal value	
Village sign	The Pound	£3157	
Bus shelter	Junction of Bury/Lawshall Road and Whepstead Road	£2000	
Swings x 2	The Green – southern boundary	£1501	
Seats x 3	(1)The Green – adjacent to swings  (2) The Green adjacent to play area	(1) £557  (2)	(1)2015  (2)?  (3)?

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	(3) Millennium Field	(3) £300	
		Total £857	
Memorial bench x1	The Green adjacent to play area	£500	
Dog bins x 2	(1)The Green – village hall car park  (2) The Green –Bells Lane	£150	
Dog fouling signs	The Green – various locations	£148	2014
Litter bins x1	Adjacent to bus shelter	£100	
Grit bins x 13	Various locations around village	(1) £687.50 (x5) (2) £115 (x2) (3) 297 (x3) (4) 366.92 x (3) Total £1466.42	(1)?  (2)2014  (3)2019  (4)2022
Scoops		77	2025
(5) 1x set outside xmas lights;  (6) Internal decorations as follows: Xmas tree LED lights x1 2 x colour garlands, 1x white garland, plus timer in box with connector	Village hall	(1)£235 (2) £345  Total £580	(1)2014  (2)?
Emergency plan equipment; generator x 1, gas ring burnerx1, gas cylinders x2	1 Manor Cottages; The Green; Village Hall; Pinford End Farm	£594	
Noticeboards x3	(1) Village hall car park;	(1) £1013.50	(1) 2014

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	(2) Church Road adjacent to Pinford End Farmhouse, (3) The Pound.	(2) £913.50 (3) £340 (est) Total=£2267	(2) 2014 (3) ?
Interpretation Board	The Green	£990	2019
Finger posts x 2	Hawstead Brook	£400	2019
Gating to village entrances		£598	
Village bench and table	The Pound	£800	
Goal posts	The Green	£215	2014
Defibrillator	Village Hall	£2020	2015
Speedwatch signage	Village Hall	£170	2015
Bat boxes	The Green	£114	2016
Orchard sign	Millennium Field	£98	2021
Well	Bull Green	Notional value	?
Footbridge	Hawstead Brook	£1375	2017
Speed gun	c/o Cllr Lomas Farley	£1110	2017
Phone box	Pinford End	£1	2017
Defibrillator	Pinford End	£2010	2019
Waymarker signs	Brook Green	£210	2019
Road signage	Larkfield Corner	£324.40	2022
Tree plaque	Village green	£50	2022
Owl Box	Village Green	£178	2024
SID and post	c/o Cllr H Brewis	£2589.00	2026
Village green signage	Village Green	£106.50	2026
TOTAL		£26,762.31	

**Item 10.4 HAWSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL  
INTERNAL CONTROL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026**

**1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Hawstead Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Council is responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

**2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROLS**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based

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on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

### 3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

#### THE COUNCIL:

The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets for the following year at a full meeting of the Council. The Council will approve the level of precept for the following financial year at a full meeting of the Council. The Council monitors progress against objectives, financial systems and procedures, budgetary control and carries out regular reviews of financial matters throughout the year. The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.

#### CLERK TO THE COUNCIL/RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER:

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

#### PAYMENTS:

All payments are reported to the Council for approval. Two members of the Council must sign every cheque or order for payment. The signatories should consider each cheque or order for payment against the relevant invoice, sign the invoice and initial the cheque counterfoil/payment schedule. All authorised signatories are members of the Council. No officer of the Council can sign cheques. Online payments may be made by the Council provided that two members of the Council have considered a list of proposed online payments against each relevant invoice and signed each invoice together with the list of payments.

#### INCOME:

All income is received and banked in the Council's name in a timely manner and reported to the Council.

#### RISK ASSESSMENTS / RISK MANAGEMENT:

The Council reviews its risk assessment annually, and regularly reviews its systems and controls.

#### INTERNAL AUDIT:

The Council appoints an independent internal auditor who reports to the Council on the adequacy of it's:

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems
- Internal Control
- Regulations
- Risk Management

#### EXTERNAL AUDIT: INTERNAL AUDIT:

The Council's external auditors submit an annual certificate of audit which is presented to the Council.

### 4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control, which should include a review of the effectiveness of internal audit. The results

Signature.....

of that review must be considered by the Council, which should also approve the Statement on Internal Control.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk/RFO

Approved and adopted by Hawstead Parish Council

Meeting date and minute no: 12 March 2026 Minute 10.4

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Signature.....