

Homersfield Parish Council

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Homersfield Black Swan

Tuesday 5th May 2026 – 6.00 pm

Councillors Present: Lucy Hammond (Chair), Lynne Elliott & Peter Kent

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also Present:

MINUTES

1. Welcome by the Chair of the Parish Council

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Bird and County Councillor Judy Cloke.

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 6th May 2025

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 6th May 2025 were confirmed unanimously as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. The Chair's End of Year Report

The Chair summarised her report (*attached*) and answered questions.

5. The Responsible Financial Officer's End of Year Report

The Responsible Financial Officer read out her report (*attached*).

6. The County & District Councillors' End of Year Reports

No reports were received due to the forthcoming elections.

7. To Receive Community Reports

a) Homersfield Tree Warden

The Chair read out the Tree Warden Report (*attached*).

b) Homersfield St Mary's Parochial Church Council

Lucy Hammond Secretary to St Mary's PCC read out a report (*attached*).

c) Homersfield Poores' Land Charity

Mr Tom Holdridge Trustee of Homersfield Poores' Land Charity sent a report (*attached*).

d) Homersfield Community Park Charity

The Chair Debbie Bird was unable to attend and the Chair read out the report (*attached*).

8. Public Questions

None

The meeting ended at 6.45 pm

Signed: _____ Chair

Date:

Homersfield Parish Council

4. The Chair's End of Year Report– April 2026

The Parish Councillors, our Parish Clerk and volunteers continue to work hard to keep Homersfield a special place to live in and visit. My thanks to them.

We are grateful to Tony and Helen for enabling us to have our meetings in the Black Swan.

The new 'Wood Information Board' has been well received. Thank you to Peter Kent for his beautiful art work and to East Suffolk Council for sponsoring the majority of the cost.

A slate plaque has been installed on the village sign with the names of the soldiers from Homersfield who lost their lives in the World Wars. This replaced the wooden plaque which had deteriorated badly. There are also new oak crosses, kindly made and donated by Mr Taylor.

Wood volunteer mornings have continued. Thank you to our Tree Warden, Mark, for organising these and to those who have given their time. There is room for more people to come along as the numbers have dwindled. As last year, particular thanks to Keith for working so hard to clear brambles, under Mark's direction, and to Emma and Sally for keeping the bridleway clear.

Safety recommendations from the recent tree inspection need to be actioned this Autumn, after a bat survey has been undertaken.

The missing Nature Reserve white post has been replaced to protect this important roadside site. Daffodil bulbs, donated by East Suffolk Council, have been planted around the village and bluebells (native) in the clearing in the wood.

Two litter picks have taken place. It is noticeable that it is the same people who come and help with this valuable work to keep our village tidy. Newcomers would be welcome.

The 'What's On in Homersfield' sheets have been introduced to go out with the South Elmham Community News. Thank you to Peter Kent for his illustration of the village sign. The idea behind these sheets is that they can be pinned up so residents remember to come along to events as well as inform about useful schemes etc.

We have continually advertised for another Parish Councillor to join us. It is now urgent to find new councillors as not only are we one short, we have others waiting to be replaced as soon as it becomes possible.

It remains for me to thank our County and District councillors for their support this year.

Lucy Hammond (Chair)

Signed: _____ Chair

Date:

Homersfield Parish Council

5. The Responsible Financial Officer's - Year Ended 31 March 2026

The Council's financial position at the end of the 2025/26 financial year remains sound, with total receipts of £18,266.47 and total payments of £5,129.81, resulting in a significant surplus of £13,136.66. This increase is primarily due to the one-off receipt of £10,000 from the sale of the play area.

The precept remained unchanged at £7,000. Additional income was received from grants, VAT reclaim and increased interest from the Business Saver Account. Overall income levels are notably higher than the previous year due to the exceptional capital receipt.

Expenditure during the year was well controlled and reduced compared to 2024/25. Key areas of spend included the Clerk's salary, insurance, and maintenance. There were no costs incurred for elections, village projects or play area valuation in this financial year, contributing to the lower overall expenditure.

The Council's cash balance has increased from £5,370.95 to £18,507.61. Of this, £3,500.00 is held in General Reserves, in line with recommended levels for a Council of this size, and £15,007.61 is held in Earmarked Reserves. The increase in earmarked reserves reflects the allocation of funds from the play area sale for future projects.

There are no outstanding liabilities, and no uncleared receipts or payments at year end.

In summary, the Council is in a strong financial position. The level of reserves will enable future investment in community assets and projects, whilst maintaining financial stability.

Sally Chapman
Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Homersfield Parish Council

7. a) Homersfield Tree Warden Report

Monthly work parties were held in Church Wood over the winter period but wet and stormy weather led to the cancellation of a couple of the tasks. The following work was completed by volunteers:

- Planting oak trees where there were gaps in the canopy
- Clearing around trees planted in previous years
- Brush-cutting brambles in selected areas
- Keeping paths clear of encroaching
- Vegetation
- Tidying up minor storm-damaged trees

Mark
Homersfield Tree Warden

Signed: _____ Chair

Date:

Homersfield Parish Council

7.b) Homersfield St Mary's Parochial Church Council Report to Homersfield Parish Council – May 2026

The highlights for us this year have included:

- Repair of the historic flint wall between the old and new churchyards. This cost £8000. We were glad to be supported by Adnams with a grant of £1000 and also the Geoffrey Watling Trust with a grant of £1000. The rest has come from our remaining capital from the sale of the Iron Rooms.
- We held our first Pet Service in May. It was mainly attended by dogs and their owners. The collection of £74.50 went to the Guide Dogs charity.
- The Baptism of Amelia took place in June.
- Another lovely Carol Service took place with the Benefice choir, an organist, handbells, a saxophone and mulled wine afterwards. Sally Remblance made some delicious baked goods. We noticed that most of the congregation came from outside of Homersfield. It would be wonderful if more people who live in the village came along and joined in.
- Continued visitors have been popping in to look at the church and buying a little something from the porch stall (QR code available for non-cash donations). Unfortunately, some items are disappearing without a donation, so a camera has been installed.

We are glad to have a volunteer team cutting the churchyard. Thank you to Sally, Emma and Keith. We are also extremely lucky that Sally and others clean the church.

We are considering installing a Portaloo and also a noticeboard.

Unfortunately, we remain without a Churchwarden. It would be wonderful if others would like to join our Parochial Church Committee and maybe consider this role in the future.

Lucy Hammond – Secretary

Tom Holdridge – Treasurer

Mary Secker – PCC Member

Sally Remblance – PCC Member and Churchyard Guardian

7.c) Homersfield Poores' Land Charity Report period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

INCOME AND ACCOUNT BALANCES

CCLA investment holding @ 31 December 2025	£13,984.50
CCLA dividends 28 February 2025	£76.65
30 May 2025	£76.65
29 August 2025	£76.65
28 November 2025	£105.31
Total	£335.26

Barclays' balance @ 31 December 2025 £2,182.26

EXPENDITURE £150.00

A donation of £150 was made to the Waveney Foodbank.

Signed: _____ Chair

Date:

Homersfield Parish Council

In addition, £3,500 was transferred from the Barclays current account to the CCLA account in order to earn interest.

Tom Holdridge
Trustee

7.d) Homersfield Community Park Charity Report for the Village meeting, 6th May 2026

The activities this year include

- Two inspections by Sovereign. These regular inspections have been a great relief to the trustees. The latest have identified some issues that the trustees will have to address.
- Visual inspections – usually weekly, which have identified a few issues. One swing had somehow been wrapped around the top bar. This was unwrapped by a volunteer.
- The grass is regularly cut.
- All the wooden equipment will need to be cleaned, usually by scrubbing brushes and hard work. We are careful to use cleaners that will not cause any damage.
- A notice has been erected with some simple and straightforward guidance in pictograms.

Income Bank Interest	£393.95
Debbie's Crafts	£58
Total	£451.95

Debbie Bird
Chair of the Trustees
Homersfield Community Park
Registered Charity Number 1193118

Signed: _____ Chair

Date: