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## **MINUTES OF THE COLLINGHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**held at 6:30pm on 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

**in the YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE, LOW STREET, COLLINGHAM**

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Parish Councillor Angela Haberton
- Parish Councillor Laurence Curran
- Parish Councillor Elliot Norton
- Caron Ballantyne & Gareth Milner (Flood Wardens)
- Charles Stothard, U3A

### **2. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 11th April, 2024**

Copies of the minutes were available and accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair

### **3. Chair's report on Parish events**

Good evening everyone,

It's a pleasure to welcome you all to this year's Parish Council Annual Meeting. It's always a great opportunity to come together, reflect on our achievements, and look ahead to the future of our wonderful community. We have a lot of things to hear about this evening from many great groups and clubs around Collingham. Tonight, I'd like to highlight four key Parish Council initiatives that continue to shape and strengthen Collingham: Collingham in Bloom, the Neighbourhood Plan, Greet, Eat, and Meet, and the Community Park refurbishment.

Taking over from Rosemary as Chair has been challenging and I am learning something new every day about how a Parish Council works and how we can all be part of making improvements to the village, large and small. We have an action plan running from 2023-2027, these being:

- Better Communication – we are much more active on social media and the website is having an overhaul which will be launched very soon.
- Engaging in Community Planning – I will expand on this a little later.
- Improving community safety – Safer Neighbourhood Group and Speedwatch which has been restarted and the speed guns have been calibrated and volunteers are now getting dates booked in to have speed gun sessions.
- Emergency Planning – Floods – the revised Flood system set up after preceding floods was successful during the last flood event and this will be built upon in the future.
- Engage in community activities.
- Maintain and enhance community assets – ongoing work, cemeteries and open spaces etc.
- Enhance youth provision – we have continued to offer Extreme Wheels.
- To provide a Warm Hub – GEM which we will hear about later from Rosemary goes from strength to strength.
- To be a “Quality Council”. We are working hard to maintain the Gold Standard.

Expanding on a few of the items above:

### **Collingham in Bloom**

Firstly, let's talk about Collingham in Bloom. This initiative has truly brought vibrancy to our village. Thanks to the dedication of new volunteers, local businesses, and community groups, we are in the process of creating beautiful floral displays that will not only enhance our surroundings but also bring joy to residents and visitors alike. You will see both small and a few big changes over the coming months improving Collingham. A

huge thank you to everyone involved—your hard work is making a visible difference! If you're interested in getting involved, we always welcome extra hands to help with planting, watering, and maintaining our displays so grab me at the end. Judging will be in the first two weeks of July.

Linked to this we are excited to tell you all we are planning the installation of a Bloom HQ community garden in the village which will provide the foundations for Blooming to continue for future years. The new HQ will be a large polytunnel, growing beds and tool shed. The project will enable the village to grow its own displays with volunteering opportunities for all age groups to be part of the Collingham in Bloom initiative. Sourcing of grant funding for this are already being sought to ... fingers crossed construct it this winter ready for the 2026 growing season.

And I would like to say thank you to our Station Adopters Team who are hard at work in their own greenhouse growing this years displays. And thank you to the litter pickers and the utterly amazing dog poo fairies in the village.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

Moving on to the Neighbourhood Plan, this is a vital blueprint for the future of Collingham. We have completed the drop in consultations and we now have a draft Design Code document which will guide all new development in the village. The Neighbourhood Plan will help ensure that new development is sustainable, in keeping with the character of our village, and meets the needs of the community. Over the past year, we have made significant progress in shaping policies around housing, green spaces, infrastructure, and local services. I want to take this moment to thank all who have participated in consultations, surveys, and discussions. Your input ensures that this plan truly reflects the aspirations of Collingham.

The Plan will be finalised and the consultation comments inputted into the document with additional information and then we will be submitting our plan to Newark & Sherwood District Council for them to assess and then put it out to a referendum within our Parish.

### **Greet, Eat, and Meet**

Next, I'd like to shine a light on Greet, Eat, and Meet. This initiative has been a fantastic way to bring people together, particularly those who may feel isolated or simply want to connect with others in a friendly, relaxed setting and Rosemary will be speaking a little more on this later. Whether it's a games event, a lunch event, or Gorilla Fitness getting some action going, these gatherings have fostered a real sense of community spirit. A huge thank you to the volunteers and organizers who make these events possible. If you or someone you know could benefit from a friendly meet-up, we'd love to see you at the next event! Please get in touch and we can get you involved.

## **Community Park Refurbishment**

I am also delighted to update you on the refurbishment of the Community Park, where the Parish Council have made an investment of over £40,000 that will overhaul this much-loved and well used space. The park is a vital asset for families, children, and all residents, and these refurbishments will ensure it remains a safe, welcoming, and enjoyable place for everyone. From upgrading play equipment to improving accessibility and safety, this project is a testament to our commitment to enhancing community facilities. A heartfelt thank you to those who have supported and contributed to this initiative—we can't wait to see the refurbished equipment!

## **Grant Funding Support**

In addition to these initiatives, the Parish Council has also been committed to supporting local groups through grant funding. This year, we have provided financial assistance to the Collingham Rural Advice Centre, ensuring vital services remain available for those in need. We have also supported John Blow Primary School, helping to enhance educational resources for our young learners. Additionally, funding has been allocated to Collingham Scouts, encouraging youth development and outdoor activities, and to the Norton Disney History & Archaeology Society, preserving and celebrating our local heritage. These grants reflect our dedication to strengthening all aspects of community life.

Other things that have happened are the Collingham Show which now has a pipe band (who managed to drink their way through the bar and still play a decent tune!).

And the Christmas Light switch on – WOW – it really was a spectacular light fest and thank you so much to Collingham Young Farmers for organising this and then .., our residents got on board with Colluminations and decorated their homes like never before with, in some cases astonishing displays.

## **Looking Ahead**

May Fair is coming up fast and hosted on Vine Farm Paddock by John and Jane Wilson and thank you to them and their team for all their hard work as I know ticket sales are going well and lots of things are planned to entertain residents over the May Day weekend.

We also have VE Day 80 coming up at the Phoenix Hall with bar, food vans, music, lantern lighting and the History Society are treating us to an exhibition of Collingham memories from the War on 8th May.

You will also see the lamp post poppies back this year with a Poppy Memory Trail. The scarecrows will be back for the May Fair.

There are loads more things happening during the next year which we hope will bring a smile to the village.

As we move forward, let's continue to build on these successes. Community involvement is at the heart of everything we do, and everyone plays a part in making Collingham a thriving and welcoming place. Whether it's through volunteering, sharing ideas, or simply supporting these initiatives, your contributions matter.

Thank you all for your time, commitment, and passion for our village. Let's keep working together to make Collingham an even better place to live, work, and visit.

Thank you.

#### **4. Representatives from groups within the Parish to report on their progress within the last year and plans for the future.**

##### ***Collingham Rural Advice & Resource Centre – Nina Young***

Nina currently serves as the Treasurer of the Rural Advice Centre, which plays a vital role in providing free, confidential advice to individuals both within the local community and beyond. The centre offers a wide range of services, including essential guidance on various matters, and operates as a managed charity. It is supported by an advisor from Citizens Advice Newark and Sherwood, the only advice centre within the district.

The centre provides home appointments and has proven to be an indispensable resource within the community. To measure its impact, Citizens Advice compiles a report that covers the period from April 2023 to April 2024. During this time, 534 cases were successfully handled. It is important to note that not all forms of support, such as benefits, are measured financially.

The centre's operational costs, including room rental, telephone services, and insurance amount to over £19,000 per annum. Funding for these expenses is sought through a combination of grants and generous donations from the village. Additionally, the centre runs raffles and other fundraising activities to raise funds and increase visibility.

One of the challenges faced is raising awareness, as many residents are unaware of the Rural Advice Centre's existence. While the primary demographic served is elderly individuals, there are also families in the village who would benefit from the services. To

further increase awareness, discussions have been held with the local school to feature the centre in the school newsletter, ensuring that parents are informed about the support available to them.

The Rural Advice Centre is dedicated to raising its profile within the village and continues to actively seek ways to better serve the community.

### ***Collingham Young Farmers – Oliver Wilson***

The club currently has 58 members, with Oliver serving as the Secretary for the current year. The year has commenced on a positive note, having kicked off with the Christmas lights switch-on and a successful Christmas charity quiz.

The club continues to serve a diverse age group, with members ranging from 11 to 27 years old. Looking ahead, the Young Farmers will be participating in the Nottingham County Show on 10th May.

This year, the club's chosen charity is LIVES, and the club itself will also benefit from the support of its members. We invite anyone interested in joining to contact them for more information.

### ***Trent Vale Trail and Wildlife Trust – Andrew Hindmarsh***

This initiative represents the most significant investment in social infrastructure the area has seen in many years.

Andrew, who has served on the Tarmac Committee for over 20 years, has played a key role in its development and continued progress. Securing funding has long been a challenge, and we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the European Union, Nottinghamshire County Council, local District Councillors, and in particular to Linda for her persistent efforts.

A total of £450,000 in capital funding has been secured—a substantial achievement. However, while capital funding has been made available, obtaining ongoing revenue funding for maintenance and operations remains a significant challenge.

Looking ahead, the Trent Vale Trail will require sustained financial support to ensure its upkeep and long-term success. The committee intends to launch a campaign, primarily through social media, inviting the public to become Friends or Members of the Trail. Although this initiative has not yet been publicly announced, the committee views it as the most viable and effective path forward for the project's sustainability.

### **Collingham Bowls Club – Malcolm Baker**

Collingham Bowls Club has been based on the Dale field behind the Cricket Club for many years and has seen a lot of success. The club has provided competitive and social activities to a high standard for many years.

*“Last year we had just over 40 members and competed in around 50 competitive matches. We play in both the Lincoln Area Bowls League and the Newark and District Bowls League. Our Monday evening team came third in the second division of their Lincoln league, Our Tuesday team came second in the second division of their Newark League and earned promotion to the first division, Our Wednesday afternoon team won the first division of their Lincoln league for the second year in a row while our Thursday team came seventh in the third division of their Lincoln league. I must emphasise that our Thursday team are not the same players who perform on the other days of the week.*

*The team that plays on Wednesday afternoon entered the Hospital Cup, which we won the previous year, and came second being awarded the Lincoln Chronicle Cup as Runners Up.*

*We have also been selected by Lincoln Area Bowls League to host one of their finals days for the 4th year running.*

*When I joined the club four years ago, I recognised a need for structured training and put myself through the coaching courses. I have now qualified as a level 2 Coach registered with Coach Bowls and aim to work with members who are interested in developing their skills in order to maintain these results and hopefully improve them. This year we have on our schedule around 47 competitive matches, 4 inhouse competitions, 1 friendly match against Woodhall Spa and 16 social sessions. I plan to be available for people interested in trying the sport on a one-to-one basis. If anyone would like more information I would be happy to talk to them.”*

### **Collingham & District Cricket Club – Charles Lucas**

*“The year 2024 was an exceptionally successful one for the club, both on and off the field.*

*On the field, the club solidified its position as a leading team in Division 1. A strong recruitment drive over the winter has further strengthened the squad, and we are now well-prepared for the start of the new league fixtures, which commence a week on Saturday.*

*The club is proud to have over 200 members, with teams catering to a broad demographic—including ladies' teams, junior teams starting from age 5, and multiple men's sides. This season, we are fielding four senior teams on Saturdays, along with a youth team on Sundays that accommodates players from 5 to 15 years of age.*

*Off the field, a major highlight of 2024 was the celebration of the club's 175th anniversary—a memorable and well-attended event that brought together the local community and club supporters. While this year is expected to be quieter in terms of off-field events, we are looking forward to hosting a cricket field day in July, followed by a beer festival over the August Bank Holiday weekend.*

*We continue to actively welcome new members, with social membership available for just £10.”*

***Collingham Football Club – Jon Townsend & Andy Germany***

Jon currently serves as the Secretary of the club, which proudly supports a wide range of teams and age groups. The club runs four senior football teams and three walking football teams, offering opportunities for players of all ages and abilities—from children as young as four to our oldest playing member, who is 70 years old. The club remains open and inclusive, welcoming participation from across the community.

Plans are underway to introduce a women's football team, which will begin playing on Sundays in the near future.

Off the field, several projects have been explored to enhance the club's sustainability and facilities. While the recent proposal to install a borehole was ultimately not viable due to the absence of a suitable water source, progress continues with the installation of photovoltaic (PV) solar panels, which remains an active and ongoing initiative.

Overall, the club is in a strong and stable position, both operationally and within the community.

***Collingham and District Local History Society – Nigel Priestley***

*“As Chair of the History Society, I'm proud to have been involved with the group since the 1970s. After a period away, I've recently returned and am delighted to be part of this thriving and passionate community once again.*

*Our aim is to attract a broad and diverse audience—from those with a strong interest in social history to residents simply curious about the heritage around them. We particularly welcome elderly members and young people, the latter of whom are not*

*required to pay membership fees. This ensures our events remain inclusive and accessible to all.*

*We host regular talks at the Memorial Hall, with typical attendance ranging from 60 to 70 people—a strong and encouraging turnout. Our programme also includes local trips, such as a recent visit to Tuxford, and our annual Village Walk, which explores different parts of the village each year, uncovering hidden stories and historical details that make this place so remarkable. One doesn't need to live in an old house to appreciate the rich history of the area—curiosity and interest are more than enough.*

*We would like to extend sincere thanks to our landlords for providing a space to house our archives. Notably, we were recently entrusted with a pre-closure map, which has now been passed to the Nottinghamshire County Archives for safekeeping.*

*As part of our continued development, we are currently revamping the Jubilee Room. New illuminations are being installed, the frontage will soon be paved, and we are also upgrading our website and expanding our presence on social media.*

*An important initiative within the society is our "Living History" project. Volunteers visit elderly residents of the village to record their personal stories and recollections. This valuable oral history work ensures that the memories and experiences of our community are preserved for future generations.*

*You can find us at upcoming local events, including the Collingham Show and the May Fair. We look forward to welcoming both familiar and new faces as we continue to celebrate and share the rich heritage of our village.”*

### **Youth & Community Centre – Lawrence Knowles**

*“I was appointed Chair less than two months ago and feels privileged to have stepped into this role to see a wonderful set up. This strong foundation allows our committee to focus on what truly matters—building a supportive community. My role now is to continue the excellent work that has already been done, and to maintain building a supportive community for the Village.”*

### **1<sup>st</sup> Collingham Scouts – Alisha Spence & Mary Sweeney**

*“The group leadership role is currently being successfully job-shared, allowing for a collaborative and balanced approach to managing activities and responsibilities.*

*We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Parish Council for their continued support and for their generous donation, which has enabled the purchase of essential equipment and seeds.*

*A new committee and board of trustees have recently been established, alongside a dedicated team of volunteers. A new cohort of participants will be joining the DLV programme following the Easter break, with activities designed for children aged 6 to 14.*

*Over the past year, the group has enjoyed a variety of exciting experiences, including day trips and overnight stays at The Deep. Scouts and Cubs have held several camps within the village, and a night hike was organised just outside the local area. Looking ahead, participants will attend a Water Camp in Hoveringham next month, followed by the District Camp in Farndon during June and July. These events are part of a wider programme aimed at building friendships and encouraging more children to get involved.*

*We're also pleased to share that the May Fair will be supporting one of our upcoming community events where we will run the BBQ. Additionally, plans are already underway to build a team for the Dragon Boat Race next year.*

*Both current group leads have been in post for approximately two years and continue to work with enthusiasm and dedication to support the growth and success of the group."*

### ***Collingham Tennis Club – Mike Ditchburn***

*"The club continues to thrive as one of the happiest and most welcoming groups Mike has ever had the pleasure of working with. Opportunities to play are available most days of the week, with a busy schedule including three winter teams and six summer teams. The winter league team recently achieved a top position and earned promotion—an exciting milestone, as it has been many years since the club last reached this level.*

*Coaching is available for all age groups, and the junior coaching programme currently supports over 50 children. Players aged 14 and above who demonstrate sufficient ability are encouraged to participate in adult sessions, helping them to progress and integrate into wider club activities.*

*The club also runs regular sessions for Hope House Autistic School. These students actively participate and have shown themselves to be excellent and enthusiastic tennis players.*

*As part of ongoing development, the club is currently undergoing a rebranding process. The website, which has not been updated in some time, is being refreshed by two dedicated volunteers, who are also managing the club's Facebook presence. A new logo is being designed, and the club has successfully negotiated with a kit supplier so that members can have coordinated attire and look professional on the court.*

*Everyone is welcome to come along and get involved. The best times to visit the club are Tuesday and Sunday mornings. Notably, two of the current team captains began with no prior tennis experience, exemplifying the inclusive and supportive nature of the club.””*

### **GEM – Rosemary Fabian**

*“Launched in February 2023, this initiative was developed in response to the ongoing challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the rising cost of living, and the growing need to support individuals experiencing loneliness and isolation. The group was established to provide a warm, welcoming space where members of the community could enjoy a homemade lunch and meaningful companionship.*

*The sessions are open to everyone in the community and have become increasingly popular, regularly attracting between 20 to 30 attendees. All volunteers involved are fully DBS checked, ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all.*

*Held weekly, the sessions take place on Tuesdays in Collingham and on Wednesdays in South Scarle. In addition to food and refreshments—including tea, coffee, biscuits, and a hearty lunch—the sessions feature a range of engaging activities such as quizzes, fitness classes, crafts, raffles, and group walks.*

*The group has also hosted seasonal events such as summer and Christmas parties. These have been made possible through generous support and funding from Newark and Sherwood District Council, One Stop, and other contributors. Notably, a special visit from Santa delighted guests during the festive season.*

*On behalf of GEM and the entire team, heartfelt thanks go out to everyone who has supported the initiative so far: those who make the soup, bake the cakes, manage the finances, print the leaflets, and, most importantly, the dedicated volunteers. A special thank you is also extended to all the guests who attend—your presence is what makes this community initiative so valuable.”*

### **RSPB Langford Lowfields – Rosemary Fabian**

*“Joe Harris has managed the Lowfield site for many years, overseeing a remarkable 37-year partnership with quarry operator Tarmac and the Peterborough Birdlife (PB) group. The site celebrated in March 2025 with the prestigious Cooper-Heyman Cup.*

*Originally opened to the public in 2014, the site now welcomes between 500 and 1,000 visitors each month, including wildlife enthusiasts, families, and general public. It is monitored by three RSPB members and supported by a dedicated team of 52 volunteers.*

*In 2024, the site secured funding that enabled the installation of a new polytunnel to support ongoing conservation work. Key management activities include scrub control and the removal of encroaching vegetation from the reedbed to maintain vital habitat. The site boasts rich biodiversity, with 221 bird species recorded, alongside 27 butterfly species and 224 moth species. Notable wildlife includes otters, eels, and murmurations of up to 100,000 starlings. Priority bird species such as herons and bitterns are known to breed on-site. Throughout the year, a variety of other significant species have been observed, including marsh harriers, large flocks of redshank, and various wading birds. The site also receives occasional visits from rare bird species.”*

### **Gusto – Steff Wright**

He was recently appointed as the Deputy Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, a role that involves supporting local events and identifying outstanding organisations that may be considered for national honours, including the King’s Award for Enterprise.

They are currently based at the Gusto House office, with construction now underway on Woodhill Road at the site of the former school. This development will consist of 16 new homes. Additionally, eight affordable homes are being built on the former railway station yard. The historic railway station house itself is being repurposed into office space.

Gusto is a certified B Corporation, recognised for its commitment to creating positive social and environmental impact. The company is transitioning toward becoming a *ply-end* business, with a continued focus on delivering tangible benefits to local communities.

Through the Gusto Community Fund, £30,000 has been allocated to support local projects and charitable initiatives. Community groups and organisations are encouraged to get in touch to explore funding opportunities.

He is also heavily involved with the Men in Sheds initiative, providing the group with a rent-free space. The group has grown to include over 50 members, offering a valuable resource for social connection and skills development.

In addition, he has taken on the running of the Royal Oak Pub, with a strong desire to collaborate with local committees and community groups. Gusto's car park has been made available for use by the fruit and vegetable market, providing a valuable asset to the local area.

Gusto remains passionate about ensuring that his business remains at the heart of the Collingham community.

### ***Notts Police – Gareth Nicholls & Andrew Mighall***

- The Safer Neighbourhood Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss local safety concerns and community initiatives. We are pleased to welcome a new member from the Rural Crime Partnership, who is now responsible for coordinating training sessions related to rural crime prevention.
- Horse Watch Initiative – 3rd May  
An engagement event is scheduled for 3rd May, aimed at strengthening relationships with the equestrian community and raising awareness of rural crime prevention measures relevant to horse owners.
- Operation Swift – Youth Engagement  
Operation Swift, a youth intervention programme, was recently held at Hill Holt Wood. The initiative targets young individuals who have committed minor offences, providing them with the opportunity to learn forestry skills and understand the environmental impact of antisocial behaviours such as graffiti. The programme has shown promising results in reducing repeat offences by fostering a sense of responsibility and awareness.  
We are currently seeking a new venue to host future Operation Swift sessions, as we continue to expand the programme and its reach.
- Social Media Concerns  
Concerns were raised regarding the misuse of social media platforms, particularly the sharing of videos or comments related to criminal activities. Residents are encouraged to report such incidents directly to the police rather than posting them online. The Neighbourhood Alert system continues to be a valuable tool, enabling us to quickly disseminate important safety messages and updates to the wider community.

### ***Tarmac – Jenny Oldroyd & Hannah Kirby***

Langford Lowfields was formerly a working quarry, which later transitioned into a restoration project focused on enhancing local habitats. Local conservation efforts have aimed to restore wetlands, grasslands, and woodland areas, fostering a diverse ecosystem.

One of the key features of Langford Lowfields is its rich biodiversity. The reserve is home to a range of species, including birds, mammals, and a multitude of insects and plant life. It plays a crucial role in providing habitats for migratory birds, particularly during the spring and autumn months, making it an important stopover point for avian species along migratory routes. They have recently won the Cooper-Heyman Cup for outstanding achievement in quarry restoration.

### ***John Wilson – Churches and May Fair***

Fundraising efforts are currently underway in support of the Church. We are pleased to confirm that the village May Fair will be going ahead as planned, with a series of events scheduled to take place.

The programme includes three main activities:

- A community event Saturday Night Live
- A traditional Ceilidh Dance
- May Fair on Monday

This promises to be a wonderful occasion for the village, bringing people together in support of a meaningful cause. Anyone interested in volunteering or assisting with the organisation of the events is kindly encouraged to get in touch.

## **5. Open forum for parishioners' comments and questions**

***Louis Lovegrove*** - He is actively involved in many of the community groups that have been mentioned and is thoroughly enjoying his participation in these initiatives. He has also been contributing to the Collingham in Bloom project, which he finds particularly rewarding. His involvement began with the GEM programme, which has laid a strong foundation for his continued engagement in various community activities.

## **6. Close of Annual Parish Meeting**

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The meeting closed at 20:05

More than 29 members of the public which include five Parish Councillors and one Parish Clerk present. No members of the press present