

MINUTES OF THE SOMERSHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held on Monday 19th May 2025 at 7pm
In the Millennium Pavilion, The Trundle,
Somersham, PE28 3JS

Under the Chairmanship of Daryl Potter

PRESENT WERE:

Parish Councillors: B Bruce, A Chapman, N David, D Potter (in the Chair) and R Woolway.

Members of the Public and Representatives: Cllr S Criswell (District Councillor), Mr J Clarke (Headmaster) and Mr W Bergius (school governor)– Somersham Primary School, Mrs C Grant – Somersham Friendship Club, Mr T Palmer (Chair) – Somersham Angling Club, Mr J Barrott (Chair) – Friends Of Somersham Library (FOSL), Mr J Sewell – Somersham Scout Group, Ms L Minter (Chair) and Mr R Braithwaite (Treasurer) – Victory Hall Management Committee (VHMC), Mrs P Peck – Somersham and Pidley Timebank & Changing Lives (Somersham Parish Council).
Ten members of the public were present.

Officers: Mrs I Healiss, Executive Officer and Mrs J Turney, Deputy Clerk, Somersham Parish Council.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from;
County Councillor C Lowe.
Cllr C Dolby, Cllr J Drury, Cllr D Skeggs, Cllr D Sutton, Cllr T Sansom –
Somersham Parish Council
Mr D McCandless – Community Road Watch.
Miss J Bullard and Mr D Bonnett - Harvey Feoffees Charity
Mr M Greaves - Somersham Christmas Lights
Mr P Clark - Somersham Nature Reserve Group (SNRG)

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING 20th MAY 2024

The Minutes were proposed by Cllr Potter, seconded by Cllr David and
RESOLVED as approved, and were duly signed by Cllr Potter.

3. **ACCEPTANCE OF ACCOUNTS & REPORTS RECEIVED** via email
from:-

- a. **Somersham Primary School (SPS)**
Mr J Clarke read the SPS report.
Report as Appendix 1
- b. **Community Road Watch (CRW)**
The Executive Officer read the CRW report.
Report as Appendix 2
- c. **The Somersham Charities of Poor's Money (SCP)**
The Executive Officer read the SCP accounts on the behalf of the trustees.
Accounts as Appendix 3
- d. **The Educational Charity of Thomas Hammond (ECTH)**
The Executive Officer read the ECTH accounts on behalf of the trustees.
Accounts as Appendix 4
- e. **The Harvey Feoffees Charity (HFC)**
The Deputy Clerk read the HFC report and accounts on behalf of the trustees.
Report and accounts as Appendix 5
- f. **Somersham Friendship Club (SFC)**
Mrs Grant read the SFC report
Report as Appendix 6
- g. **Somersham Christmas Lights (SCL)**
Cllr Chapman read the SCL report.
Report as Appendix 7
- h. **Somersham Angling Club (SAC)**
Mr Palmer read the SAC report.
Report as Appendix 8
- i. **Somersham Community Library (FOSL)**
Mr Barrott read the FOSL report and accounts.
Report as Appendix 9
- j. **1st Somersham Scout Group (SSG)**
Mr Sewell read the SSG report and accounts.
Report and accounts as Appendix 10

k. Victory Hall Management Committee (VHMC)

Ms Minter read the VHMC report and Mr Braithwaite read the VHMC accounts

Report and accounts as Appendix 11

l. Somersham and Pidley Time Bank & Changing Lives Project

Mrs Peck read the Timebank and Changing Lives report.

Report as Appendix 12

m. Somersham Parish Council Year End Accounts

The Executive Officer read the financial year end figures report and Income & Expenditure accounts.

Report as Appendix 13

4. SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR'S REPORT

Cllr Potter read the annual Chairman's Report.

Report as Appendix 14

5. ANNUAL REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

District Cllr Criswell read his annual report.

Report as Appendix 15

6. PUBLIC FORUM

Thanks were shared between the groups and volunteers in Somersham for their positive and enthusiastic approach. Succession planning is important reading future progression of these groups, and it was jointly suggested that communication be shared with residents to advertise vacancies for volunteer positions - possibly via the S4U Newsletter, Timebank and school.

Thanks were offered to Cambridgeshire Constabulary for their successful operation 'Hypernova' in the village earlier in the year.

Fund raising for the new scout hut is going well, but more help is needed. It was suggested that the Scouts consider funding streams such as a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) bid via HDC.

Cllr S Criswell was presented with a gift by Cllr Potter for his outstanding contribution to Somersham over the years, following his recent retirement from Cambridgeshire County Council.

Chairman's Signature

Date

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20:40 hours.

Appendix One

Somersham Primary School – Report to the Annual Parish Meeting – May 2025

- It has been a positive year for Somersham Primary School with regard to pupil achievement, curriculum progression and community engagement.
- Following the school's 'Outstanding' Ofsted judgement in September 2023, high expectations have continued to be aimed for. In the summer of 2024, children's attainment in end of year assessments was either in line with, or exceeded, national standards.
- The school is constantly reviewing and evaluating its curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning. Staff work closely with colleagues in schools in the Meridian Trust, which comprises of 14 primary schools, 13 secondary schools, one all-through school and three special schools across the Eastern region. The schools work in partnership to maximise expertise and to support and challenge each other.
- At the time of writing, there are 303 pupils on roll at the school. This has grown steadily since October 2019, when the total on roll was 241. There are a number of reasons for this.
- In September 2025, we will be welcoming 50 children into Reception and the roll will rise slightly further.
- This is very positive in the context of many primary schools experiencing falling rolls – 10 to 20% across the country.
- Currently, the school's classroom and outside space is suitable for the number of children on roll. Group and support space is more of a challenge. However, the fabric of the school building has improved significantly over the last few years, with the support of Meridian Trust helping to finance redecoration, new interactive screens and wireless, a new fire alarm system, new fire doors and new blinds.
- Somersham, like many schools currently, faces some significant financial challenges. There are more costs coming to schools which have not been fully funded, such as pay and National Insurance. Also, there has been an increase in children with additional needs who need more bespoke support. We have a great SEND offer at Somersham but there are local delays in the processing of paperwork and the resulting funding, which is putting pressure on all schools.

The school's PFA continues to work hard to both support the school financially and also organise community events for families. They are currently fundraising for a new stage and to provide groundwork in the school's Forest Area.

- The school continues to work in partnership with other community groups, including Somersham Library, the local Church, the Royal British Legion, TimeBank and Community Police Force.

Jonathan Clarke
Headteacher
Somersham Primary School

Appendix Two

COMMUNITY ROADWATCH(UK) CIC – ANNUAL REPORT TO SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL FOR FY 24/25

Intro. Community Roadwatch(UK) CIC (CRW) was founded in 2015 - as an independent, limited, not-for-profit company run by a handful of unpaid volunteer directors - out of the ashes of an immensely successful Police-managed but user-coordinated Community Speedwatch (CSW) scheme when it collapsed in Nov 2014 because the St Ives & Ramsey Sector Speedwatch coordinator (the glue) became unavailable overnight. Somersham was one of the villages affected by the demise of CSW in 2014.

Community Speedwatch - Past. Subsequently, despite 2 attempts by us - with massive effort from your Parish Clerk & Deputy in printing the 200 or so flyers (available at the APM) - those initiatives, both in Chatteris Rd, ended in failure mainly because no one felt capable of acting as coordinator for the .CSV /spreadsheet returns needed by the Police CSW system and to organise 3-person sessions.

Community Speedwatch – This Year. Notwithstanding previous 2x failures, we still seek volunteers to make up a CSW team of about 6 residents to be briefed/trained by the Police to enable them to carry out a 3-person session every 2 weeks (or so) at different safe (approved) locations. Unfortunately, CSW is not now supported in 20 zones because the Police do not enforce in them. Notwithstanding, if interested in helping to make your village's 30mph roads safer for all, please contact the Parish Clerk who will liaise with us to form a viable team to present to the Police coord to then train/manage.

CRW. Despite the demise of CSW, CRW has continued to use lawful methods of quantifying speeding using expensive £3k Traffic Loggers and then moderating it to some extent with the use of sponsored Speed Indicating Devices (SIDs). We have also carried out discrete sessions using calibrated speed guns or using those SIDs along with dashcams

running to address other forms of unacceptable driver behaviour (such as dangerous driving by private vehicles and for liveried commercial vehicles: tailgating, driver distraction, 7.5t infringements we send database-generated appropriate, polite letters to relevant company executives like Transport Managers/MD/CEO/Owner and in the case of Taxis , the licencing authority. This is a very effective DIY method of dealing with commercial unsafe practices in our communities and has prompted the likes of Mick George to support us in providing Loggers, SJDs and some financial support to us help you (and others) deal with anti-social use of vehicles.

Currently. We continue to change the batteries of your SWARCO SID and move it around the village (Chatteris Rd 30, High St 20 at WestEnd and St Ives Rd 30. We train and gratefully use local residents to do that whenever possible. Also during the year, for differing periods we have loaned the village one or two of our own MickGeorge-sponsored Armadillo Traffic Loggers and Westcotec data-enabled Min-SIDs. These have been installed in the High St at Feoffees, in St Ives Rd inbound and in Chatteris Rd both directions and when both a 30 limit and also 20. Data from all these installations are published on the village's CRW web portal at www.roadwatch.org.uk/Cambs/Somersham and data from the Mick George-sponsored SIDs we maintain in Colne Rd can be found at www.roadwatch.org.uk/Cambs/Colne where we used donated funds to have a post fitted so we could hang a SID on it to address inbound speeding.

LHI Application. This year we have also applied under LHI for 2x Morelock SIDs for the village. Results later in the year and, if successful, delivery next year.

Enforcement. We are also engaging proactively with our local Police to render a lawful consequence for any vehicles/drivers we witness driving dangerously in residential zones, irrespective of limit. Two such reports have been actioned recently by our proactive, caring Neighbourhood Police.

David McCandless, MD CRW(UK) CIC Dated 10 May 2025 md@roadwatch.org.uk

Appendix Three

SOMERSHAM CHARITIES OF POOR'S MONEY
WILLIAM PETIT WILSON AND ROBERT HEMPSTEAD

Charity Registration No. 213346

BALANCE SHEET YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2025

Current Assets

<u>31 March 2024</u>		<u>31 March 2025</u>
£0.00	Trustees Savings Bank	£ 0.00
£ 0.00	Dividend cheques paid in	£ 0.00
£ 0.00	Interest	£ 0.00
£2000.00	Donations received (from Somersham PC on 1/2/24)	£0.00
£612.02	Somersham PC holding account	£0.00
	Co-Op bank account	£2612.00
<u>£2612.02</u>	TOTAL Assets	<u>£2612.02</u>

An account with co-operative bank was opened in February 2024.

We declare the foregoing Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025 is correct.

Mr D S W Bonnett
(Trustee)

Rector S Simpson
(Trustee)

Ms D Skeggs
(Trustee)

Mr R Sutton
(Trustee)



Appendix Four

THE EDUCATIONAL CHARITY OF THOMAS HAMMOND

BALANCE SHEET YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025

Current Assets

<u>31st March 2024</u>		<u>31st March 2025</u>
£3,872.52	195.34 COIF shares (Value £20.2933 per share @ 31 Dec 2024)	£3,964.09
£1,975.77	Lloyds Bank @ 31 st March 2025 <i>Last statement received as at 31/3/25</i>	£2,133.51
£ 53.19	COIF interest received (30 th June 24- 31 st Dec 24)	£ 54.27
£112.43	Lloyds Bank interest	£ 23.60
£0.00	New Co-Op Account	£0.00
<u>£6013.91</u>	TOTAL Assets	<u>£6175.47</u>

Represented by:

The Educational Charity of Thomas Hammond As at year ending 31 st March 2025	£6197.60
Income from COIF shares (dividends)	£ 54.27
Interest from Lloyds Bank (less tax)	£ 23.60
COIF Charity investments	£ 0.00
Less dispersions	£ -100.00
TOTAL	<u>£6175.47</u>

Appendix Five

SOMERSHAM HARVEY FEOFFEES CHARITY

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025

The Trustees met twice during 2024-2025 in order to discuss matters relevant to the Charity. Additionally there were email exchanges on matters pertaining to the allotments; land at Heathfields and a funding request from St John the Baptist Church regarding repairs to a church wall.

With regard to the allotments, we had a change of tenancy on two of the allotments. One was due to the tenant retiring and this was taken over by an existing tenant and the other because the tenant was moving away and the plot was taken on by a couple on the waiting list. Maintenance work was also carried out to the front of the allotments.

Anglian Water, working in partnership with Cambridge Water, is developing proposals for two new reservoirs in the East of England. One is in the Fens and Heathfields land along the Somersham Road, which the Charity owns, has been identified as being on the route that will be used to transfer water to and from the Fens Reservoir. Construction of the new reservoirs and their associated water infrastructure is expected to begin by 2030 so the project is at a very early stage. The Trustees have agreed to fund repairs to part of the Church wall but work is unlikely to start until June. We have also paid for flags at the Church. The Charity has also contributed to the cost of a new Parish Council notice board within the grounds of the Church.

Again we are grateful to Somersham Parish Council for allowing its lengthsman to help with some hedge cutting at the allotments.

David Bonnett, Chairman

SOMERSHAM HARVEY FEOFFEES CHARITY

CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT FOR PERIOD April 2024 – March 2025

Over the last year the Charity has agreed a total of £923.60 in funding made up of the following:

£500 to the Parish Council as a contribution towards a new Parish noticeboard in the Church grounds and £423.60 for flags at the Church.

The Charity started the year with a balance of £5,124.98. The total income the Charity received from interest on investments, rent from Heathfields land and the Colne Road allotments came to £3995.41.

Our remaining expenditure included allotment insurance, water bills, audit and honorarium fees came to £926.09 leaving a balance of £7,270.70 to carry forward into 2025/2026.

The Charity has £30,909.41 in its COIF Deposit Account as at 31 December 2024. This sum will be depleted in the next month or so as we are committed to paying for repairs to the Church wall at a cost of £8,385.60.

Other investments, values at 31 December 2024:

COIF Special Range 1866.57 units Value £37,878.86

COIF Surplus Income 51.10 units. Value £1,036.99

M&G Charifund 1980 shares. Value £29,153.52

Black Rock Charishare 674.01 shares. Value £5,047.05

Judith Bullard, Clerk

Appendix Six

Somersham Friendship Club continues to be very popular with the older villagers. We have 40 members and a waiting list.

The weekly sessions are on every Tuesday 10.30 to 13.00 in the Victory Hall. £5 a week. We start with coffee and biscuits followed by an activity or some kind of entertainment. We regularly have a seated keep fit session, a visit from the library and preschool children. We had a fabulous street party in the hall for VE Day with authentic food and music and memories shared. We've had visits from the Norris museum with artefacts for members to guess their purpose. We regularly have a visit from a clothing company which is great for our very elderly members who can't get to the shops. In April we had a trip to Johnson's Zoo and in the summer we are going to Springfield shopping centre in Spalding.

I think the all time favourite activity is Pig Racing with our 5 squeaky pigs racing on a track to win prizes.

One of the biggest attractions of the club is the delicious 2 course home cooked meals served at noon. Our 2 lady chefs are fabulous, cooking amazing meals on a small budget.

The only issue is trying to find lifts for the immobile members. The time bank help no end with a driver each week but they can only drive about 7 members. We currently have 6 or 7 who are driven by members who have cars and people on the waiting list who cannot attend as they can't get there. Any ideas?

Cheryl Grant. May 2025

Appendix Seven

Somersham Christmas Lights Working Party

The Christmas Lights working party includes members from the Parish Council and volunteers who work throughout the year to provide the Christmas Lights display and organise the Switch on event on 1st December each year.

As a working party of the Parish Council, the Christmas Lights working party benefits from the support of the Parish Clerk and her staff who are able to look after any official or legal implications of erecting the Christmas Lights and arrange the closure of Somersham High Street for the annual Switch-on.

Most of our income comes from the annual prize draw at the switch on, with other income from collection boxes placed around the village, donations, and also funding from the Parish Council when required. Everything we raise is spent on the lights and the switch on event.

Work by the volunteers continues throughout the year to maintain, PAT test and replace lights. By the time of the Annual Parish Meeting we will have started working on the lights towards the Switch-on in 2025.

Our main issue in 2024 was to find a Christmas Tree for the village. Purchasing large Christmas trees commercially can be very expensive and for the past 10 -15 years we have been lucky to have a tree donated each year by a local business (who always asked to remain anonymous) with Cornwell's kindly providing the transport and erection of the tree. This arrangement ended when the business changed hands in 2024 leaving us needing to find a new supplier.

We were able to find a tree from one of the Somersham allotment holders who has some trees on his plot which have grown too big for domestic use but are becoming ideal for us. We hope to be able to use this source for the next few years.

The Somersham Town Band playing at the annual Switch-on along with the arrival of Santa on his sleigh ensured another successful evening.

The Christmas Lights wouldn't be possible without the individuals, businesses and community organisations who generously give their time, skills and donations throughout the year to support the effort. Finally, I would like to thank the Parish Council for their support.

Mervyn Greaves

Appendix Eight

The lake continues to thrive and give enjoyment to all who come and visit either to walk the reserve, feed the wildlife or fish.

Over the past year we were fortunate to secure a grant from the EA and Angling Trust to finance the build of the new fantastic large fishing platform on the north bank for juniors and families to enjoy. We have also financed the service and repairs to one of the aeration pumps, the parish taking care of the same for the other one, many thanks. Since becoming the chairman of the club 8 years ago, along with the team we have managed to raise over £22k in grants and ticket sales to put towards the upgrades and upkeep of the lake, quite an accomplishment, continued support from our partners the Nature reserve group see other projects taken on and fulfilled around the lake.

Fish stocks are very good providing angling for all to enjoy, stretching out to the events held on the lake annually, Neil Kidds fishing matches, and evening with the cubs and beavers and the incredible Lake Funday which I am particularly proud of.

This year we are adding another event to our diary, an evenings angling and nature walk with the resident children at RAF Wyton, something else to look forward too.

This year heralds the introduction of the Junior angling club, who's chairman is young Harry Stansfield, He is tasked to form his junior committee and then commence with activities and educational days to help introduce our local kids to good angling practices, conservation work and upkeep of our wonderful lake, ensuring the next generation are on a good footing, Hopefully he will become a Minnie me !!

The lake, reserve and surrounding areas have become a very popular asset to the parish and village alike, The upkeep of these is managed purely by volunteers, from manual labour, book keeping, meetings, minute taking, work Rotas, stocking, habitat creations and water monitoring etc, the list is endless, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved, particularly the nature reserve group, without who's companionship to the angling club, we would not have what we have now.

Many thanks,

Financially the angling club has a reserve of £960 in the account with another £480 owed from the nature reserve towards the purchase of the large gazebo and a further £341 in ticket sales currently being returned,

Tim Palmer Chairman Somersham Angling Club

Appendix Nine

Somersham Community Library (FOSL) Report for Annual Parish Meeting 2025

This report covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 (please note that this is not the same as FOSL's financial reporting period which runs from 1st June each year).

Headlines:

Consistent or slightly improved performance compared to 2023-24.

Card payments introduced (most libraries still don't offer this).

Successful recruitment drive for new members.

Car park wall rebuilt by Cambs. County Council.

Opening hours.

Currently:

Monday 1400-1800

Tuesday 1000-1200 and 1400-1800

Thursday 1400-1900

Friday 1400-1800

Saturday 1000-1230

Community events and activities.

The library continues to be available as a space usable by the wider community. During the year it has been used by a number of groups, including:

P3 Charity Group;

Cruse Bereavement Counselling;
NHS Social Prescribing Service;
Somersham Reading Group;
National Women's Register;
Hope CIC.

School visits. FOSL continues to work with both Somersham Primary School and Whitehall School to organise the visit of pupils to the library. The pupils come with their teachers, class by class every Friday (Somersham) and once or twice termly (Whitehall). The children learn about books generally, are enrolled into the Cambs. library system and borrow a book.

Performance. The library's performance (as monitored by Cambs. Central Library Services) was slightly improved over 2023-24 and continues to be satisfactory when compared to the other central and community run libraries.

Key figures are:

- 100 new borrowers (last year 91);
- 499 active borrowers (last year 469) out of a registered total of 912;
- 6,839 items issued (last year 8,163)
- 819 items reserved and picked up in Somersham (last year 752);
- Number of visitors: 4,400 (last year 4,996).

Our borrowers have an average age of 33 and the age profile of registered borrows remains very good (in terms of younger people with around 50% of registered borrowers being children and young adults). This indicates the continued effectiveness of the school liaison activities. Page 2 of 2 Somersham Community Library (FOSL) : Registered Charity # 1149100

During 2024 the library introduced an option for customers to pay by card. This notably increased the number of ad-hoc donations that were received during coffee mornings and normal opening hours.

Fundraising.

The FOSL volunteers have once again worked hard and had a successful year of fundraising (over £850 in the 10 months to March 2025). Some events held include:

- Book and plant sales at The Cross;
- Coffee morning at the Rose and Crown;
- Quiz;
- Christmas and Easter celebrations in the library, with entertainment;

Finance.

FOSL's financial year runs from 1st June to 31st May each year.

FOSL's annual financial statements for 2023-24 were considered and passed at the Annual General Meeting in July 2024 (for the year ending 31 May 2024).

In summary, the total annual income to 31st May 2024 was **£4,578** (2022/23 £4,402) and expenditure **£7,969** (2022/23 £5,090), giving a total net movement of **-(£3,391)** (2022/23 - (£688)).

This result (being a larger deficit than last year) was largely as planned, with some building maintenance, a deposit on the purchase of a new storage shed and a 20th Anniversary Party being exceptional items that were budgeted for. FOSL retains reserve funds of just over £20,000 to allow for future budget shortfalls if required.

Building, Utilities and Energy Use. FOSL appreciates the ongoing support from the Parish Council in covering the utility bills for the library building. We continue to pro-actively investigate options to reduce energy use.

The library rear car park wall, which had been in a poor state of repair for many years, was finally identified as being the responsibility of Cambs. County Council and was repaired by them during the year.

FOSL Members, Management and Volunteers. FOSL members either volunteer their services or pay an annual subscription of £10 to the charity. This allows them to attend the AGM and gives them access to regular updates. FOSL lost a number of (paying) members through the COVID period and as a result of failing to send timely reminders. A new system has been established by the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer whereby members can join at any point within the year (not just in June as before) and can do this using an on-line form if they wish. They can also now pay their subscriptions by card. These initiatives, along with an e-mail shot to lapsed members has resulted in a healthy increase in membership during the year which now stands at a total of 78.

FOSL remains concerned about the demographics of its membership and the lack of interest in taking up active Board positions. This could lead to an existential crisis within a few years.

The Management Board currently consists of 9 Trustees (down from 10 last year) who meet monthly.

The Board is currently seeking a new Secretary.

John Barrott

Somersham Community Library (FOSL)

Balance Sheet

as at 31 May 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Current assets			
Cash at bank and in hand	5	20,640	24,271
		<u>20,640</u>	<u>24,271</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	6	(288)	(528)
Net current assets		<u>20,352</u>	<u>23,743</u>
Net assets		<u><u>20,352</u></u>	<u><u>23,743</u></u>
The funds of the charity			
Unrestricted funds		20,352	23,743
Total charity funds		<u><u>20,352</u></u>	<u><u>23,743</u></u>

Somersham Community Library (FOSL)
Balance Sheet
as at 31 May 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Current assets			
Cash at bank and in hand	5	20,640	24,271
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Unrestricted funds		20,352	23,743
		<u>20,352</u>	<u>23,743</u>
Total charity funds		<u><u>20,352</u></u>	<u><u>23,743</u></u>

Appendix Ten

1ST SOMERSHAM SCOUTS REPORT

At the last census in January 2025, Somersham Scout Group's membership broke down as follows:

- 12 Squirrels
- 20 Beavers
- 20 Cubs
- 16 Scouts
- 11 Section leaders (some of whom are also Trustees)
- 3 additional Trustees

Some interesting bar charts are below, one showing just how many children have benefited from Scouts in the last 25 years. The other shows how we have achieved greater gender parity, since UK Scouting mandated mixed sex groups in 2007.

Our volunteer leaders give their time and energy to provide fun and educational experiences for Somersham's young people. The Trustee Board expresses its thanks to every one of our volunteers.

Trustee Board

Our Trustee Board is currently 7 strong, though four of those are also section leaders. We know that two of the non-leader trustees, including our Treasurer, will be stepping down at the AGM in July. We are therefore seeking new volunteers, who are willing to help ensure good governance for the charity. This is not a hands-on, practical role, and no contact with

actual children is involved! Please let us know if you are potentially interested or would like more information.

Scouts report

Our Scouts section currently comprises 10 girls and 6 boys, aged between 10 and 14 years.

Activities over the last year have included:

- A joint camp with other Somersham Sections at Copley Scouting Centre
- Cycling proficiency sessions
- Hiking, orienteering and pioneering
- A visit to the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge
- Participating in VE Day, Remembrance Sunday and St George's Day parades
- A treasure hunt around Cambridge
- Pumpkin carving and making a bonfire effigy
- DIY skills
- First aid

This summer, we are planning a camp with air rifle shooting and archery, a visit to the Great Fen Project, and a day of paddleboarding and kayaking, as well as our usual weekly meetings.

Beavers report

Our Beavers section currently comprises 13 boys and 8 girls, aged between 6 and 8 years.

Activities over the last year have included:

- A joint camp with other Somersham Sections at Copley Scouting Centre
- A fishing evening hosted by Somersham Angling Club
- Participating in VE Day, Remembrance Sunday and St George's Day parades
- A Sausage Sizzle with other Beavers in our local district
- A morning of bell boating at Holt Island
- A night hike at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park
- A nature session with Adam from Somersham Nature Reserve
- A litter pick around the village
- Participating in the Christmas Tree festival at St John's Church

This summer, we are planning another morning of sailing at Holt Island, a camp with Beavers from all over the county, and a visit to the Norris Museum with a river boat trip included.

Fundraising and new Scout Hut

We continue to be humbled and grateful for all the support that the village is giving us as we continue to raise funds for a new meeting place. Our JustGiving total currently stands at around £11,000.

We continue to make progress on choosing a supplier for a new building, with some of our volunteers travelling to Bewdley yesterday to meet a supplier and look at their offering. As soon as the location of the site is confirmed, we will be able to cost up groundworks and connecting electricity and water/sewerage. We believe that the step after that would be to apply for planning permission. After that, we will be able to start applying for grant funding, to raise the remaining money needed to get the building constructed.

Appendix Eleven

SOMERSHAM VICTORY HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR OUR FINANCIAL YEAR 1st JANUARY 2024 TO 31st DECEMBER 2024

We have had another very busy and successful year at the Victory Hall.

We now quite often have over 30 bookings in a week; largely due to our dedicated and very efficient booking clerk. In spite of this we have had a small loss this year. We did not put our prices up during 2024 but are likely to need to do so during 2025 due to another rise in the Living Wage as well as the general costs of living, utilities, green bin collections, etc. Never the less we are cheaper than most other nearby halls and often appreciated especially for our cleanliness and warmth. The age of the building has led to increased repairs to electric lights and to one of our boilers – although not the very old one (yet!) that we think is probably 30 years old.

Both our regular cleaners had some serious health problems during the year and that led to sick pay as well as the use of contract cleaners for a while which proved very expensive. One of our cleaners has since resigned. We are pleased to have found an experienced cleaner living locally to take over as well as a temporary cleaner who covered for 7 months and has offered to help again if necessary.

We have several new groups for babies and toddlers in addition to the well-established groups for older residents so a very wide variety of the community is catered for. The badminton court is now used four times each week and we are hoping to increase its use by encouraging Pickleball now that it is becoming better known. Party bookings of all kinds remain in regular demand.

Our monthly winter film nights continue to be popular and bring in a small profit along with the jazz night we held in April. Each film night costs over £120 for licences which cuts down on profit.

During the autumn an organisation involved in special education inquired about using the Community Room every day in term time. That room is leased long term by Cambridgeshire County Council and subletting was suggested. It would have made good use of that little used room but communication with CCC was lost and the idea was abandoned.

We are always grateful to our hirers for the care and interest they show in the hall and they often report repairs that are needed. Sometime we ask for practical help, especially now that several of our trustees are in our 80s. We were especially grateful this year to Tang So Do who helped to put up and take down our Christmas decorations. We also sometimes ask for help with gardening.

Our thanks go to Teresa Clark, one of our trustees, who has moved on after several years and we are pleased to have found someone new to sign up. Everyone who joins us brings different skills and experiences to contribute. We are, as always, extremely grateful to all our trustees, employees and volunteers who all contribute to the efficient running of the hall.

We continue to be in need of a few more trustees, especially some who are able to help with practical tasks now that three of us are in our eighties and will soon need to think

about retiring. We still lack two of the three parish council representatives called for in our trust deed.

We look forward to another energetic year ahead with the frequent new challenges that cause us to say that there is never a dull moment on the Victory Hall Management Committee.

Lesley Minter Date 3rd March 2025 Chair of Trustees.

**SOMERSHAM VICTORY HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TREASURER'S
ANNUAL REPORT FOR OUR FINANCIAL YEAR 1st JANUARY 2024 TO 31st
DECEMBER 2024**

Financial Review

I am pleased to present the Statement of Accounts for our Financial Year 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024. These show an overall loss for the year of £ 1,441

The principal source of income for 2024 remained the hiring fees from our regular hirers which, combined with income from private users of the halls, plus fundraising events such as film and quiz nights, outside entertainment and in-house events made up the majority of our annual income.

We received no grants throughout the year which put a greater strain on our finances and meant that we had to be even more mindful of expenditure control.

The previous decision to open a 2 year, fixed interest Savings Bond with Cambridge & Counties bank resulted in interest earned of £417.

Conservative spending has been observed throughout the year and diligent consideration given to any purchase or outlay. This diligence is laid out in our Financial Policy, regularly reviewed by the Management Committee.

Our roof solar panels continue to bring in good revenue, £695 in this financial year.

Wages for our staff were adjusted in April to reflect the National Living Wage set down by the Government.

My personal thanks to Sara, our Booking Clerk for helping keep control of our debtors and ensuring that monies owed are kept to a minimum.

In conclusion, ending the year with a financial loss of £1,441 is disappointing. As such, being aware of ever rising utility bills etc, I emphasise that we must always be mindful of our costs and maximise all opportunities for increasing our income. I would recommend that the incoming committee examine our hall charges to ensure that where possible, we meet our expenditure whilst offering our hirers competitive rates and good value for money.

Financial Position	31 December 2024	31 December 2023
	£	£
Treasurers Account	15,326	17,185
Repairs Imprest account	50	50
Cash in Hand	89	89
Cambridge & Counties Savings Bond	10,417	10,000
TOTAL	25,882	27,324

All cash held is unrestricted. Funds are held in order to meet any expenditure that may occur. We aim to hold at least £5,000 as a contingency.
Richard Braithwaite Treasurer 3rd March 2025

Appendix Twelve

Somersham and Pidley Timebank Annual report

19th May 2025

Since last year's report, our regular Timebank activities such as Knit and Natter, The Nature and Social walks as well as coffee mornings have continued as normal with attendances ebbing and flowing along with external influences such as the weather and other outside events and activities determining the numbers each week and month.

Regular exchanges such as the Friendship Club drivers also continue to provide lifts for the residents to and from club. A rise in members sees the Timebank needing to recruit more drivers and start a second rota (if anyone interested)

We find a similar picture with the Changing Lives classes that also continue to run steadily and with the return of our Nordic Walking sessions, albeit a new format as a new 'Move and Mobility' class, despite a couple of unfortunate false starts, we have a good few interested delegates looking to start the Bi-weekly sessions on Tuesday next week.

Once again, the events we hold in conjunction with the Nature Reserve Group and Angling Club in the form of Lake Fun Day and Apple Day have seen attendances from local residents and beyond soar as they continue to prove very popular. Despite a lack of Timebank volunteers in comparison to previous years, we outsourced some of our usual Timebank manned stalls to other local groups such as the 1st Somersham Scout Group who were and still are in need of raising funds for a new scout hut. This change also proved a hit with the public and so the Scouts were very successful in raising money and awareness of their plight at both events.

Some of our events have seen a dip in numbers over the last couple of years, such as our annual Litterpick. However, as usual we have a plan to combat this and I have a list of group members and other residents who wish to do regular picks throughout the year at dates and times that are more convenient for them.

The momentum of the Skills Exchange Programme for mental health has continued to roll on with the Men's mental Health 'Talk Club' running steadily. Mindfulness group sessions were started in October, hosted by one of our very own highly skilled Timebankers, which has also proven to be a welcome addition to the programme. We have also recently started a monthly Menopause Café which is also going well.

We held our second Family Wellbeing Day a couple of weeks ago and although external events such as the Scouts March in St Ives and the London Marathon took families out of our town on the day making the event seemingly quiet, the Guides reported making a healthy profit from their refreshments stall. Our other stallholders were also complimentary about the event as a whole.

Last week we also started fortnightly trials of a new 'Brainfit' class which is basically exercise and mindfulness together along with positive affirmations. As we are nearing the last of the original funding for the Skills Exchange Programme, the trial classes are currently free for a short period and will only continue as paid for classes (similar to Changing Lives) if it proves popular.

I believe we have spent the money from this grant wisely, adding a significant improvement in the services that we can provide for mental health within our area and so have achieved the goal this particular grant was created for.

To ensure the continuation of the Programme the Somersham Parish Council over this last year secured a grant for the long-awaited repair shed. The shed is ready to be delivered, we are just waiting on a date of confirmation of this. Once the shed is in place, there will still be electrical and other groundworks for accessibility to be done as well as final checks and the stocking up on equipment and materials. Although we are still a good few months away from opening fully, we are already recruiting members who would specifically like to get involved in this project. There has been research into how we would like to compose our Shed by visiting other similar local projects and repair cafés and having regular meetings.

For Pidley specifically we started off the year by hand delivering a questionnaire to every household in an effort to establish some ideas of what Pidley residents would like to see from the Timebank.

From that we set about working on bringing about events and activities that were of interest to Pidley residents by way of two successful workshops, one for Scam awareness in July and a CPR and defibrillator training session in November. The Pidley Cum Fenton Parish Council expressed that they were happy with these activities.

The new year has seen the Timebank concentrating on a lot of background areas of the Timebank itself and getting the new Repair Shed plans in place. We are bringing the Timeonline (TOL2) system up to date in a bid to get volunteers back to doing the individual exchanges

(which was the original point of Timebank) and back to a useable state in time for an influx of interest we are expecting for both the Repair Shed and the Timebank as a whole.

This is still a fraction of what we as a Timebank have been up to over the past year (I've not even mentioned all the activities in the lead up to Christmas!) We are delighted at how things are progressing and we once again hope that you are too.

Paula Peck – Timebank Co-ordinator for Somersham and Pidley.

Appendix Thirteen



Somersham Parish Council

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 March 2025

			<u>Account Description</u>	<u>Balance</u>
<u>Bank Statement Balances</u>				
1	31/03/2025	UNITY TRUST 3580		5,209.11
2	31/03/2025	UNITY TRUST DEPOSIT 3577		175,299.39
6	31/03/2025	CCLA Public Sector Fund		110,413.26
8	31/03/2025	LLOYDS CARD		0.00
				290,921.76
<u>Receipts not on Bank Statement</u>				
0	31/03/2025	All Receipts Cleared		0.00
				0.00
Closing Balance				290,921.76
<u>All Cash & Bank Accounts</u>				
1		Unity Trust Bank-Current a/c		5,209.11
2		Unity Trust Bank-Interest a/c		175,299.39
6		CCLA Public Sector Fund		110,413.26
7		SSLA Current/Deposit		0.00
8		Lloyds Card		0.00
		Other Cash & Bank Balances		0.00
Total Cash & Bank Balances				290,921.76

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

31st March 2024

31st March 2025

Current Assets

1,908	Debtors	2,219
4,615	VAT Control A/c	5,400
3,575	Prepayments	19,703
8,607	Unity Trust Bank-Current a/c	5,209
147,364	Unity Trust Bank-Interest a/c	175,299
105,050	CCLA Public Sector Fund	110,413

271,119

318,243

271,119 Total Assets

318,243

Current Liabilities

0	Creditors other	185
888	Accruals	872
100	Key Deposits	290
0	Receipts in Advance	12,168

968

13,515

270,151 Total Assets Less Current Liabilities

304,728

Represented By

16,608	General Reserves	25,188
3,000	Youth Worker -Shared	3,000
264	Agency funding (grass cutting)	0
990	MSA tarmac resurfacing	0
3,000	MSA Court Lights- 3rd Party f	3,000
132	Amenity Areas/open spaces	632
1,181	Angling Club	961
10,043	Capital Projects	15,043
3,000	3rd party fund -lake footpath	3,000
47,894	Community Infrastructure Levy	62,069
1,957	Contingency fund	1,957
426	Chairman's Allowance	426
6,266	Christmas Lights	7,369
451	Community Orchard	451
369	Community Plan	369
1,171	Community Library	1,742
1,628	Computer renewals	2,628
348	Defibrillator fund	348
8,056	Digital Screens	13,056

11/04/2025

Somersham Parish Council

16:16

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

31st March 2024

31st March 2025

800 Donations	400
2,280 Elections	2,280
4,238 Localism Projects	4,238
3,104 Millennium Pavilion refurbish	3,104
569 Local Nature Reserve	326
20,554 Millennium Sports Facility	20,520
9,400 Millennium south ditch repair	9,400
12,000 Millennium shower refurb/boile	12,000
2,202 Norwood Building - Rates	2,202
27,825 Norwood B & field projects	27,825
7,418 Pension payments	10,986
6,000 Environmental Lighting	6,000
2,000 Legal Fees	5,000
5,406 PWLB - Burial land	0
5,512 LHI Fund	5,512
1,874 Recycling credits	2,046
145 Sea containers - lake area	462
1,016 Somersham4u Newsletter	162
1,286 Street Lighting	88
1,670 Time Bank	705
6,429 Changing Lives Project	5,699
9,853 Training	10,393
409 Tree Audit	2,409
5,070 Tree surgery fund	3,670
14,000 Tractor sinking fund	14,000
12,306 Connections Youth Bus	14,060

270,151

304,728

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31st March 2025 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :
Chairman



Date : 20-5-25

Signed :
Responsible
Financial
Officer



Date : 20/5/25

Appendix Fourteen

Chairmans report 24/25

Good evening, everyone and welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting.

We currently have 10 councillors but that means 5 vacancies so don't be shy come and join – be part of the solution.

I am going to mention things that have gone on in the year in no particular order and hope that I cover everything.

This year saw the 25th anniversary of the Somersham Community newsletter – a fantastic achievement by all those involved over the years.

Coffee with a Cop is back on the 16th August at the church 10-12 pm – try to come along and say something to our local officer, even if it is “milk please, no sugar!”

Remembrance Day had to be scaled down last year owing to the lack of time for planning a road closure, but this is planned to happen this year – so back to normal.

There has been some much-needed repair work carried out on the Chatteris Road and Station Approach - more work is needed, but some is better than none.

Parish Councils have now been around for 130 years – a fact you may not know!

The Christmas lights working party have done us proud again with a lot of private residences also putting up a good show to cheer up the dull winter evenings.

The long awaited “men shed/repair café” is now ready to be implemented, and we look forward to seeing its development into a hive of activity.

The 80th VE celebrations have happened, and no doubt brought back some personal memories and stories. My Mum and Dad had just got married and then my dad was shipped off to Singapore..... (a fantastic holiday destination these days.)

The organisers of the youth bus have brought new buses and should be back in action soon.

We had a pantomime this year “the Gingerbread Man” which it was well received by all who came.

The Parish Council have also put on some free sports sessions run by One Leisure – keep an eye out for the posters around the village.

The carnival is back on this year and we wish the organisers every success!

We are putting together a neighbourhood plan – anybody who wants further information can contact the office or stop by the stand on carnival day – we look forward to seeing you.

The battle to extend the Norwood car park trundles on with a lot of hurdles in the way by planning – we hope to see this project completed soon.

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Steve Criswell for his outstanding contribution to the community of Somersham - he retired as County Council Councillor this year and we wish him every success with his retirement. We are fortunate to hold onto him as District Councillor for a while longer.

Daryl Potter Chair Somersham Parish Council

Appendix Fourteen

Somersham A P M report. 19/05/25 Cllr Steve Criswell DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Authority continues to be run by a Joint Administration comprised of a coalition of six political groups, the largest of which is Liberal Democrat. By its very nature, a coalition does not often result in strong leadership, allowing officers to dictate policy rather than elected members. This was demonstrated by the introduction of the green bin tax. It had been put forward by officers year after year as a quick way to make money and was always resisted by previous administrations. The coalition quickly seized the opportunity and a year later it appears to have generated more income than the cost of the service.

For the first time in HDCs' history, the external auditor was not able to certify that the council provided value for money.

For 2026, the government is insisting on a separate collection for food waste, for which caddies will be provided.

Civil Parking Enforcement is due to commence across the district by late summer. Signs and lines will be refreshed, and parking wardens will issue tickets. They will adjust the frequency of visits in response to the number of tickets issued, thus providing a cost-effective service.

Work on the new local plan is proceeding at pace and swallowing up a lot of officer time. Work on the previous plan commenced in 2012 and was completed in 2019, resulting in 5 sites earmarked for development. Only 2 have progressed so far. The Plan must be revisited every 5 years in recognition of increasing housing demand. A 'call for sites' exercise was undertaken last summer resulting in 14 sites being proposed and open for public consultation last autumn. In the meantime, the government increased HDCs' target by 50%, resulting in a public consultation on a further 5 sites, due to close on June 4th. Many sites may be deemed unsuitable, but it is important that the public have their say. Details are on the HDC website.

The provision of infrastructure is quite rightly a common concern. However, this is the responsibility of the individual service providers, who are all consulted as part of the local plan process. HDC Planners are required to make decisions based on their response, which often differs from public perception.

- The shortage of doctors is a national issue, and it is for the Nhs to decide how to respond to the expected housing growth.
- County Highways will respond regarding the capacity of the road network. This is evidence based and is usually measured by waiting times at junctions or pinch points.
- Anglian Water will decide if sufficient water or sewage capacity can be provided and the relevant timescales.
- The Education Authority will liaise with schools and respond regarding school places. There is a tried and tested formula based on birth rate, Nhs data, housing mix and historical averages.

What is often not appreciated, significant developments are required to contribute infrastructure funding. For example, the development currently underway off The Bank will contribute over £1.4m. This will be shared between HDC and the parish council and includes funding for the nature reserve, and local sports provision.

COUNTY COUNCIL

For the last 4 years, the County Council has been run by a Joint Administration coalition, with Lib Dems being the largest Group - similar to HDC. Again, officers have been required to influence policy due to weak leadership. Following the recent election, the Lib Dems are now in overall control, so they will need to take full responsibility.

The most visible and contentious issue is the declining state of the roads, with far too little funding available. As a councillor, it is a constant battle to secure funding for road maintenance in your area.

Apart from contributing at numerous Committee meetings, the main work of a back-bench county councillor is helping individual residents or families with issues regarding Social Care, Special Educational Needs and Home to School Transport. This can be frustrating and rewarding in equal measure.

The Government is insisting on local government reform, whereby all 2 tier authority areas will change to Unitary status over the next 4 years. This will cause the County Council, 5 District Councils and Peterborough City Council to disappear and be replaced by 2 Unitary Authorities. The change will be costly, very disruptive and experience elsewhere has shown that the expected savings are rarely achieved.

After 19 years as a county councillor, I decided to step down at the election on May 1st. Over that time, I was fortunate to be given senior roles and the opportunity to exert more influence than I ever thought possible. Following our successful trials in Somersham over 10 years ago with the parish plan, Timebanking, the stakeholder group and changing lives project, I was entrusted with £1m to replicate similar projects across the county. That grew into £2.3m and also helped start community navigators, social prescribers, repair cafes and men's sheds, the latter of which will be coming to Somersham shortly.

At various times, I was responsible for Customer Services, Service Transformation, Partnerships and Highways. I chaired the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Strategic Road Safety Partnership for 4 years. I was asked and accepted the challenge of transforming both the Library Service and Adult Skills Service. Perhaps most challenging was leading the county response to Covid through the worst of the pandemic, the success of which was down to the humbling dedication of an excellent team of officers.

I mention all this, not to blow my own trumpet (well maybe a little), but to emphasise what an important role elected members can have, often unknown by the public.

I would like to congratulate my successor, Charlotte Lowe and hope she enjoys the experience as much as I have.

I am proud to have represented all 9 villages in this division, but especially Somersham, which has been my home for the last 70 years.