

# Necton Parish Council

## Annual Report

*April 2023 to March 2024*

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### *Our Councillors*



*Jean Bass  
Chair  
01760 441391*



*Fraser Bateman  
07967 398010*



*Joe Sisto  
01760 722168*



*Alice Spain  
07519 511611*



*Phil Hayton  
07979 510032*



*Mark Jennings  
07879 041130*



*Thirza Hicks  
07826 719681*



*Genine Curtis  
Vice Chair  
07813 169810*



*Zsolt Fajer  
07592 903805*

**Elections were held in May 2023 and all of our Councillors were reconfirmed as your Necton Parish Councillors. Sadly, Annie Turner resigned following her decision to move away from the area and we saw the return of Phil Hayton as a councillor following co-option onto the Council. In January 2024 Sue Catlin made the decision to step down and the vacancy for one councillor was advertised. This vacancy was filled in March 2024 by Zsolt Fejer.**

**Our thanks go to both Annie and Sue for their time and valuable contribution to Necton.**

**Our Staff – mobile 07483 412755**

**Necton Community Centre**

**Email : [nectonparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:nectonparishcouncil@gmail.com)**



*Justine Luckhurst  
Parish Clerk & RFO*



*Sue James  
NRCC Cleaner*

### **Welcome to Our New Caretaker**

**In November 2023 our caretaker Richard Brown known as Bunt made the difficult decision to step down from the role. Whilst we were looking for a replacement David Catlin, a Necton resident stepped in to help and was hired to undertake the emptying of the PC's bins. In January Colin Brady, another local resident was offered the role on a permanent basis following a successful interview and he thereafter accepted the position of caretaker. Our thanks go to Bunt for all his hard work and also to David for helping us out. A big welcome to the team Colin! Be sure to say hello to Colin if you see him out and about and don't forget he can pass on any of your comments to the Parish Council**



## Chairman's Report

I would like to start this annual report with the changes in personnel connected to the Parish Council.

First of all, I would like to welcome Phil Hayton and Zsolt Fejer who have joined the Parish Council. My thanks to Sue Catlin and Annie Turner who have left the Parish Council.

I would also like to welcome Colin Brady, who joined us as the new caretaker following the departure of Bunt from the role. Thanks go again to Bunt for all of his hard work.

We are very fortunate to have a strong team under the management of Justine Luckhurst, our Clerk. Colin Brady as caretaker and together with our NRCC cleaner, Sue.

I would like to express my thanks to everyone involved in careful and conscientious day to day care and maintenance of Necton.

The Clerk has taken over the management of the hall together with her role as Parish Clerk. This has been a seamless transition and I would like to record my thanks to her for the outstanding continued management of both roles.

The Parish Council has had another busy year and below is a list of some of the projects that the Parish Council has been involved with.

- Benches around the village
- Improved entrance to necton from the A47
- Flooding issues
- Neighbourhood plan
- Community Speedwatch
- Coffee mornings
- Flower tubs around the village
- Queen Elizabeth Memorial Wood
- New fencing around car park
- Representation at local police committees

We also have an action plan work party working on possible future village projects following the survey results

My thanks to all the parish council for their hard work and continued enthusiasm and also support for me as Chair.

**Jean Bass**  
Parish Council Chair

## What we did during the year

- The Coffee Morning continues to go from strength to strength and it has now been running for over 2 years. This provides a regular meeting for residents to come and have a cuppa and a chat and actively looks to encourage residents to meet, chat and socialise. Numbers during the year have continued to grow and this is proving to be a great success.
- Equipment in the play area at the community centre was inspected and it was noted that the small roundabout wasn't working. After discussions with the play equipment specialists it was decided this should be completely replaced. This was completed during the year and a brand new roundabout was installed. The entrance into the MUGA was also found to be needing work and so the surface was upgraded, ensuring dirt and sand wasn't walked in the area.
- Work commenced on the widening of the junction at Tuns Road with the A47 during the year. This much needed improvement was made possible after the PC gifted a small section of land to National Highways. Whilst the works were undertaken it understandably caused some frustrations with overnight road closures and inconvenience but in order to improve the junction the disruption was unavoidable. The small hedge that was there unfortunately had to be removed to allow the road to be widened but National Highways were keen to ensure any lost fauna was replaced. Therefore, they provided replacement hedge plants which Necton Area Trust kindly volunteered to plant in the Queen Elizabeth Memorial Wood.
- Whilst works were being completed at the Tuns Road junction the speed limit on the approach to this junction on the A47 were lowered to 40MPH. Following a meeting of Councillors Fraser Bateman, Genine Curtis, Alice Spain, Chair Jean Bass, Breckland Councillor Nigel Wilkin and NCC Councillor Mark Kiddle –Morris with our MP, George Freeman the request was made to George for him to take forward the councillors request to keep the limit at this lower 40MPH on a permanent basis. The junction has been a hot spot for accidents for many years and he was urged to take forward this request. The great news is that he was successful and the speed limit on the A47 at the approach to this junction is now reduced permanently. This, along with the widened junction should really help to make it much safer.
- The Coronation of King Charles III in May was celebrated with an event held at the Community Centre and playing field. There was live music, children's games and food and drink arranged and everyone in the village was invited. The weather held and a great time was had by all those attended. Thanks go to Councillors Sue Catlin, Genine Curtis, Fraser Bateman and Thirza Hicks for arranging this fantastic event.
- New, larger bins were purchased and positioned at the entrance to the allotments and dog walking area and also at the Kingfisher Drive end of the village. A replacement bin was also installed outside the church. Necton has a very large number of bins dotted around the village but, sadly, still suffers with litter and dog mess issues. You are never very far from a bin so we continue to urge residents to be 'good neighbours' and dispose of your litter

appropriately and pick up after your dog. We have also put a number of signs up around the village to remind people to pick up after their dog.

- Continued to maintain the flower tubs in the village by keeping them watered and restocked with plants.
- Work continued at the Marlpit with the help of Necton Area Trust, a registered Charity. They have continued to volunteer their time and raise funds to carry on with important work at this site. Finally, after many, many hours of hard work the area was ready to be officially opened to the public. It was decided to commemorate this landmark event by giving the area a new name and, in June 2023 the Queen Elizabeth Memorial Wood was officially opened! The 'cutting of the ribbon' was undertaken by George Freeman MP. Revd. Thorp provided a blessing and Councillors, Necton Area Trust volunteers, local residents and a number of dogs were in attendance to mark the occasion. This area is a wonderful place where you can take a stroll, sit at a bench and take time out to connect with nature. This area of previously unused land has fast become a really valued asset of Necton and the Parish Council urges everyone to visit and enjoy it.



- The telephone box, situated near the church was purchased by the Parish Council a couple of years ago. This has now been fully renovated and has had a new coat of paint and all of the old Perspex panels replaced. This should now be a dry and water tight place for the book exchange to continue out of.
- Councillor Curtis, along with Chair Bass have continued to take forward the flood issues experienced in Necton. They have attended local meetings with other affected parishes and also held regular meetings with the relevant agencies. Hopefully their hard work will start to see improvements to the infrastructure and help alleviate some of the ongoing problems. This has resulted in Anglian Water now undertaking extensive investigations into the drain and sewers within the village.
- The Speedwatch group continues to undertake regular sessions to monitor the speed of the traffic travelling through Necton. This initiative is a Police backed one and the information and data collected, will provide valuable data that can be shared with the Police for them to consider if they want to use official speed surveillance vehicles in Necton. This group of volunteers is made up of councillors and local residents. If anyone would like to hear more information about this or are interested in joining the group, please contact Councillor Curtis or the Clerk.

- The Neighbourhood Plan committee continued to work on the Necton Neighbourhood Plan and held monthly meetings and worked a vast numbers of hours to continue with this project. Finally, this was submitted to Breckland Council.

The Plan has been accepted by Breckland Council and hopefully this should go to Referendum in the very near future. The hope is that then the plan is adopted by Breckland District Council as this will shape the Necton of the future.

- Three new benches were purchased and installed in Necton. One outside the church, near the village sign. One on Hale road close to the shops, bus stops and doctor's surgery and the final one on Ramms Lane. These benches are mounted on concrete bases and are made from recycled materials. They will give residents a place to sit to rest, chat or watch the world go by. Further benches may be considered next year.



- The ongoing discussions and planning from the previous year finally resulted in timers being fitted to the adopted street lights in Necton. This meant that the lights started to turn off between midnight and 5.00am. This is now becoming very commonplace with many councils across the country as not only does it reduce costs (this has saved Necton PC thousands of pounds) but is good for our carbon footprint and the environment.

- After many years the Parish Council finally had confirmation that all land owned by itself and NRCC was registered at Land registry. Due to backlogs there was a huge period of waiting but this was finalised and completed at last.

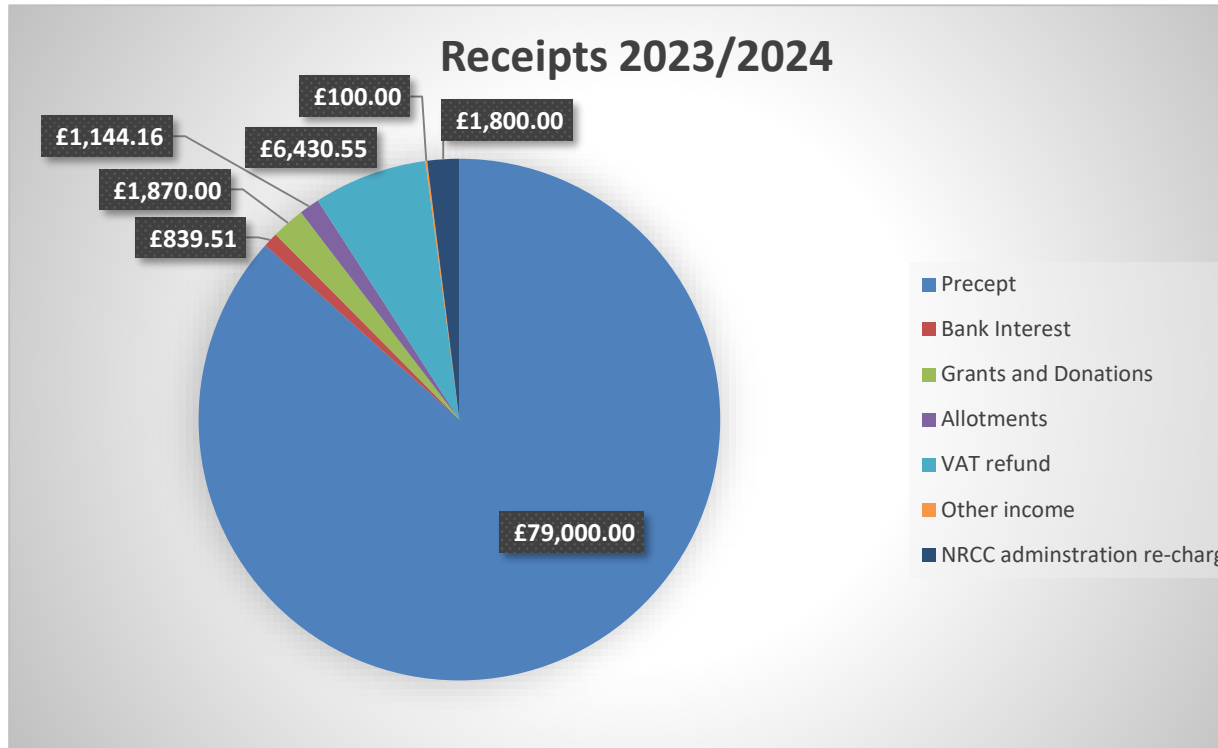
## **Continued development and community engagement**

- Equipped our councillors with professional local government training
- Over development fears- keeping on the PC meeting agenda, meeting with Breckland Planning to keep the village voice heard and concerns registered.
- Councillors continue to support residents with the ongoing issues regarding flooding and have held meetings with the relevant authorities in Necton and walked them around the hot spot areas to highlight the issues.
- The PC liaised on a regular basis with Norfolk County Council to report and arrange repair of various pot holes and similar issues.
- Any reports of faulty street lighting that were reported were actioned promptly.
- Liaised closely with National Highways to help facilitate the junction improvement of Tuns Road with the A47 and provided a strip of land to be used to make this junction safer and easier to use.
- Following the closure of the Windmill public house the Parish Council arranged for an ACV (Asset of Community Value) to be put in place with Breckland Council. This meant the building could not be sold without a community group being given the opportunity to purchase it with a view to getting the pub re-opened. This helped pave the way for the independent Necton Community Enterprise Limited to form, enabling a steering group made up of residents to investigate if the community could purchase the freehold and get the pub open again.
- Councillor Curtis attended local SNAP (Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel) meetings throughout the year to hear updates on current police priorities, raise any local concerns or issues and to take part in voting in the next policing priorities in the area.
- Hosted local Police surgeries during the year at the Coffee Mornings.
- Continued to highlight the dog fouling issues experienced in the village. The Parish Council continually raised this subject during meetings and highlighted the need for residents to pick up after their dogs in the Link magazines. Signage was installed at the dog walking area and around the village as well. The parish Council encouraged residents to report any incidents they witness to Breckland in order for them to take forward and prosecute individuals wherever possible.

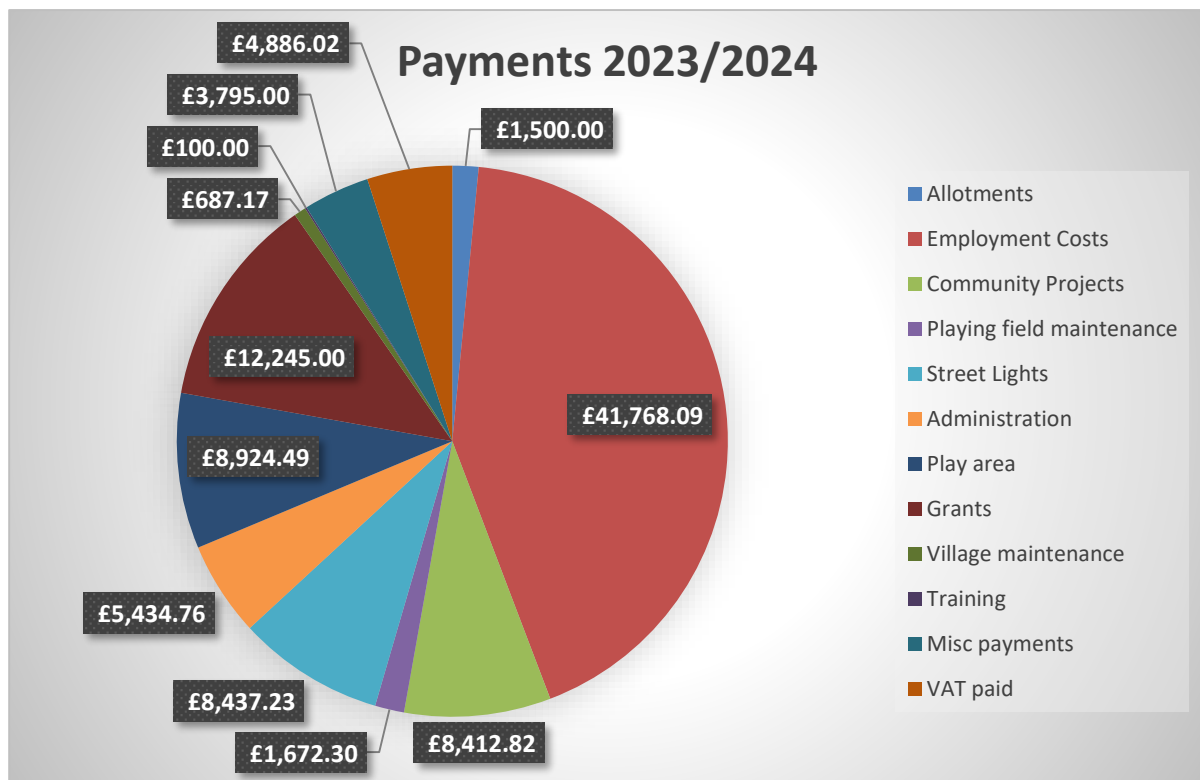
# Finances

## Receipts during 2023/2024

Grants and Donations- £1870.00 which was funds raised for a tennis court and subsequently returned to Thirza Hicks. The 'other income' was £50.00 received in rent and £50 of unused prize money from the Jubilee celebrations that was paid back into the account.

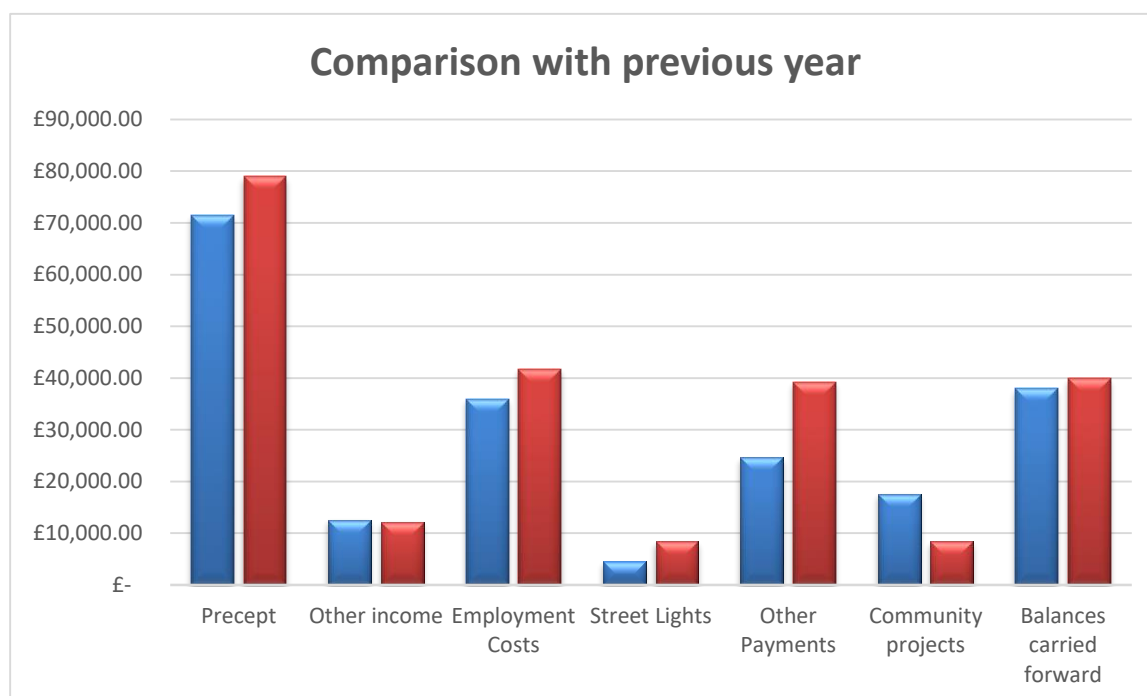


## Payments during 2023/2024





## Comparison with the previous year



Balances carried forward are slightly higher this year as the recently installed fencing was planned to use monies from this year and next year carried over as it was a large project. Hence the lower community spend compared to last year -Other payments were higher due to the decision made not to proceed with a tennis court meaning all of the funds raised by Thirza Hicks over the last couple of years being returned to her. Street light costs were higher due to the installation costs for the timers (albeit our utility bills have reduced). The 'other' payments were also increased as we provided £12245 in grant funding compared to £7419 the previous year.

## Grants

Each autumn the Parish Council consider applications for funds from local organisations and groups. Full details on how to apply can be found on the Council's website:

<https://nectonparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/files/2020/03/Grants-Policy-Review-March-2020.pdf>

### Parish Council grants to local organisations during 2023/2024

- Necton VA Primary School - £4650.00 for equipment for their outdoor classroom.
- All Saints PCC Necton - £450 to support churchyard grass-cutting
- NRCC - £2000 towards refurbishment of the kitchen
- Silver Threads - £75.00 to contribute towards coach hire for a day trip to Great Yarmouth and £70.00 towards their Christmas event.
- Necton Community Enterprise Limited - £5000.00 to towards legal and other admin costs arising as part of the 'Save the Windmill' campaign.

## Necton Community Centre

Necton Parish Council took over as sole trustee of Necton Rural Community Centre in October 2015. This allowed the long-standing management committee to finally retire.

The Council carry out their trustee responsibilities through the NRCC committee, which meets bi-monthly.

The Clerk is responsible for the operational activities and is supported by a long-standing Cleaner, a Caretaker and a small team of volunteers.

**Finances** of the community centre are completely independent of the Parish Council finances. They are managed by the Parish Clerk.

The headline figures for year end 31 March 2024 are as follows:

Receipts	£22,349.26
Payments	£24,131.94
Balance in bank	£20,273.25

### Looking ahead – our priorities for 2024/2025

- To finalise the Neighbourhood Plan. This has been a project taking over 2 years to get to this point. Hundreds of hours of work have been completed by the Neighbourhood Plan Committee. This was a huge project and thanks are to be given to all those involved.
- Vanguard and Boreas- (now RWE) - to continue liaising with Breckland District Council and request and attend meetings with all relevant parties whilst Breckland are considering the planning permission element of this construction. Ensuring Necton residents interests are heard and considered as part of this development.
- To continue to support residents with the ongoing flooding issues by attending George Freeman MP Mid Norfolk Flood Partnership meetings and raising awareness of ongoing issues in Necton with them and other relevant authorities.
- New fencing at the play area
- Village gates
- Considering the responses received from a village questionnaire and to prioritise what's important to the local residents.


## Our website

Our website is the best place to find information about your local council, its functions, governing documents, business plan & actions, minutes and finances

[www.nectonparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk](http://www.nectonparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk)


### Necton Parish Council

*A Norfolk Parishes site*




Meetings News About us Documents Village Events Village History Community Centre

Welcome to the official website for Necton Parish Council.



Necton is a village immediately south of the A47 main road 4 miles east of Swaffham and 7 miles west of Dereham in the Breckland district of mid-Norfolk. It has a population of 1,923 residents (2011 census) and covers an area of just under 16 sq. km.

A thriving and active community, Necton has many facilities such as a primary school, two doctors' surgeries, an active church of significant [historical interest](#) and a [peel of bells](#), many clubs and societies, a well-equipped modern community centre, sports facilities, a local shop, butchers, full-time post office and a [friendly](#)



**What's on at the Community Centre**

Jun 20

2:00 PM - Carpet Bowls

7:00 PM - Breaking Records Boot-camp

## Contacts

**Justine Luckhurst, Parish Clerk**

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