

MINUTES of the proceedings of the **ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE TOWN MEETING** held at Fakenham Parish Church on **Thursday 22nd May 2025** at 7.00pm, those present:

Town Councillors: A Glynn (Chair), V Joslin (Vice Chair), M Campbell, G Acheson, P Bucknell, D Hunter & L Harrison

District Councillors: L Vickers & C Cushing

County Councillor: T Fitzpatrick

Press: None

Police: 2 officers

Town Clerk: L Meanley

Deputy Town Clerk / RFO: K Lindsay

Administrative Assistant: B Combrink

Sponsors: Kinnerton Ltd – 2 representatives

Speakers: Active Fakenham – Richard Crook

Shop Fakenham – Clarie Howard & Melanie Harriss

The Gas Museum – Nick Ezra

Community Stands: First Responders, Norfolk Law Service, Fakenham Archive, Fakenham

Community Shed, Active Fakenham, Fakenham Area Conservation Team

Public: 62 members of the Public

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Meeting and made introductions.

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Assembly held on Wednesday 14th June 2023 & Wednesday 9th May 2024 were confirmed.

3 ANNUAL REPORT

A detailed written report was provided to all attendees. The Chair highlighted progress on the Fakenham Leisure and Sports Hub (FLASH) Project, which remains on track to deliver a swimming pool for the town. Ongoing community consultations by Norfolk County Council and North Norfolk District Council on devolution were noted, with potential impacts yet to be determined. The Town Council is also conducting its own community engagement survey regarding future recreational provision at Millennium Park, and all residents are encouraged to participate.

The Vice Chair reported a significant increase in work across the Town Council's estate, including general maintenance, cemetery improvements and tree safety inspections. Thanks were extended to the grounds and office teams for managing the additional workload. The Council is exploring the use of bespoke software and technology to support future operations. Appreciation was also expressed to volunteers for their continued efforts in maintaining the Cinema Triangle.

4 REPORT FROM FAKENHAM POLICE

A detailed written report, including annual crime data in graph form, was made available. PC Jessica Elliott and a colleague advised that up-to-date crime figures are available on the police website and highlighted that a key challenge in Fakenham is a lack of intelligence provided by the public. Residents are encouraged to report any concerns to the police.

It was explained that local policing priorities are set at the quarterly SNAPS (Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel) meetings, which are open to the public. Concerns can also be reported, anonymously

if desired, via Crimestoppers, at the police station, by calling 101, or online. In emergencies, residents should call 999.

A resident asked how to report matters at the police station if it is unstaffed. PC Elliott advised that the yellow telephone at the station entrance connects directly to the control room and will always be answered.

A resident also asked whether drug activity is a continuous problem. PC Elliott responded that while drug use does occur in the area, it is not currently considered a large-scale problem.

5 GUEST SPEAKERS

The Chair introduced Richard Crook from Active Fakenham. Richard outlined the ethos of the organisation, focusing on low cost, accessibility, inclusivity, and wellbeing. He provided a brief history of Active Fakenham's development and described the range of events it organises. He highlighted the positive outcomes and community feedback, emphasising the role these events have played in bringing people together and strengthening community connections.

The Chair introduced Claire Howard and Melanie Harriss from Shop Fakenham. Claire and Mel shared their backgrounds and outlined their joint vision to support the town through three key aims: collaborating with all small businesses, sharing ideas and resources, and promoting the town centre. They highlighted achievements to date, including regular business meetings and the installation of a map board in the Aldiss car park. Looking ahead, they outlined plans to further promote Fakenham by launching a Saturday food market and developing a dedicated town website.

The Chair introduced Nick Ezra from The Gas Museum, with a foreword by Town Councillor George Acheson. Nick provided an overview of the museum's unique history as the only surviving town gasworks in England and Wales. While it attracts national and international visitors, it remains relatively unknown to many Fakenham residents. The museum is keen to increase local engagement, collaborate with other community organisations, and play a larger role in promoting Fakenham. Volunteers are always welcome. With its unique offering, the Gas Museum has the potential to contribute significantly to a broader community-focused strategy for the town.

6 PRESENTATION OF THE MAYORS CADET AWARD

The Chair invited two representatives from Kinnerton Ltd, proud sponsors of the Mayor's Cadet Award, to present this year's award.

The 2025 recipient, Tyler Barker, was recognised for his outstanding commitment.

The Town Council expressed its thanks to Kinnerton Ltd for their support.

7 PRESENTATION OF THE COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARD

The Chair invited the four nominees – Richard Crook, Clarissa Belson, Dawn Wakefield, and Serena Ward – to receive certificates in recognition of their outstanding contributions to community spirit. On behalf of the sponsors, Pensthorpe, the 2025 Community Spirit Award was presented to Richard Crook.

The Town Council expressed its thanks to Pensthorpe for their support.

8 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised residents that they were welcome to raise questions publicly or, if they preferred, to submit questions via the box provided. All questions would be responded to as soon as possible.

A resident raised a concern about the overgrown vegetation at the entrance to Tesco, noting that it is encroaching on the pavement and that barriers are protruding.
The Chair advised that the Town Council will report the issue directly to Tesco.

A resident asked how often the First Responders are called upon.
The First Responders advised that call frequency varies from daily to weekly. They confirmed they are well equipped and are regularly utilised in the community.

A resident expressed thanks to the Town Council and all volunteers for their dedication, ambition, and continued efforts in supporting and improving the Fakenham community.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS RELATING TO ANY PUBLIC MATTER OF A PAROCHIAL NATURE

There was no further business.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the Meeting.
The meeting closed at 8.03pm.

CONFIRMED this

day of

2026.

CHAIR