

## Hemswell Parish Council

Since the last newsletter in April, there have been six PC meetings plus the Annual *Parish* Meeting, which is held for residents to have their say on parish matters without the formal constraints of a PC meeting. It has been a busy year for the PC and the village generally – the Maypole was freshly painted ready for another very successful May Day event, All Saints' Church opened its doors to welcome visitors for the WL Churches Festival, game nights were held at the village hall and VE 80 Day, Halloween, and Remembrance Day displays adorned the streets.

The PC was pleased to welcome two new members during the year, Cllr. Andrew Horsfield in April and Cllr. Tracey Horsfield in July, taking its number to six out of the seven available seats. Unfortunately, Pam Sutherland stepped down after the PC meeting this November. Pam joined the PC in November 2023 at a time when the PC was on the verge of collapse, and the PC is very grateful for the contributions made during her time as a parish councillor and wishes her many happy travels! This leaves the PC with two vacancies, and it welcomes applications to fill those seats. Please contact the clerk if you'd like more information on the role of a parish councillor. Email: [clerk@hemswellparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@hemswellparishcouncil.org.uk).



The PC has conducted its usual business throughout the year, plus other matters such as reviewing and responding to planning applications, which have required extra meetings to allow residents to raise their concerns with councillors – a key role of town and parish councils in the community. There isn't room in this newsletter to provide full minutes from all the PC meetings, but you will find them on the notice board at the Village Hall and on the PC website, with all the meeting dates, agendas, policies, budgets, expenditure, etc. that are required as part of the PC governance. See <https://hemswell.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk>

## Budget & Precept Approval

Ahead of the PC meeting in November, members scrutinised the current financial year budget to review and prepare its 2026-2027 budget and agree the 'precept'. The precept is a charge added by WLDC to your council tax bill to cover the cost of providing services within the community. As the PC doesn't receive direct funding from central government and has only one limited source of income (Hemswell Civil Cemetery), the PC relies upon the precept to help meet its spending needs (insurance, grass cutting, cemetery costs, maintaining the speed camera, street furniture, staff costs and essential membership/subscriptions). But the PC also wants to undertake projects and make donations and grants to village groups, which is why it has sound financial controls in place to ensure your money is spent appropriately. The PC has submitted its request to WLDC for £12,200.00 for the next financial year. This equates to a *weekly increase* of £0.33 (£17.00 p.a) for a 'D' band property. For an 'A' band property – the majority of properties in the parish - this would result in a weekly increase of £0.22 (£11.33 p.a.). *Note: These are estimated figures until the tax base is confirmed by WLDC.* Although members were reluctant to increase the precept by this amount (£2200.00 over that in 2025/26), they agreed it was the only way the PC could afford to undertake projects it has identified for the year ahead, including additional tree works along the Beck, upgrading benches, a new noticeboard and easier access for the Pinfold, and ongoing cemetery work. The PC will continue to seek grants and other funds to support these projects. If you'd like to know more about the PC budget and precept applications, there's a dedicated page on the PC website available via this shortened link <https://tinyurl.com/2dattcn7>.



## Speed Indicator Device (SID)



**The Speed Indicator Device** continues to capture data from around the village. Generally, compliance with the 30mph limit *through* the village is good, but the average speed travelling down Bunker's Hill is usually slightly over the 30mph limit, with a few alarming speeds captured, including 48.0mph travelling down Bunker's Hill recorded at 18:35 on 14 April. The average speed of vehicles entering the village along Church Street was recorded at 23.2mph from June to September, but with several counts of vehicles travelling between 33 - 42mph and one count of 48.0mph recorded at 11:00 am on 18 August. Our speed indicator device will continue its watch around the village but may just be pointing in different directions along the streets over the coming months – so please keep an eye on your speed!

You may know that the PC is considering the purchase of two new speed radar signs covering the road either side of the bus stop/Bunker's Hill turn on the B1398. The cost of the signs, including cloud data storage/access and two mounting posts is just over £7700.00 inc. VAT (recoverable by the PC). This represents a significant percentage of the PC's budget, making it unaffordable without external grant funding. The PC applied to the WLDC Community Fund in October 2025, but a decision has not yet been made due to the overwhelming number of applications to the scheme. If the PC is unsuccessful in securing funding this time around, it will discuss its options and the cost/benefit of the new speed signs again in the New Year.

---

### *Hemswell Civil Cemetery*

#### ***A New Noticeboard, Cemetery 'Map' and Restored Memorials***

The good weather over the summer (yes, we did have some!) allowed a lot of jobs to progress in Hemswell's Civil Cemetery. This included weatherproofing the gate posts and repainting the metal gates, manufacturing and installing a new noticeboard, clearing overgrown graves and creating a new map of the grounds and memorials – all of which have been well received by visitors to the cemetery. It was also ideal weather for memorial safety testing, as our increasingly erratic weather patterns can affect the stability of memorials in the ground, especially those erected before 2018, when the current British Standard (BS8415) came into force. Unfortunately, several memorials failed the 'topple test' and required 'stake and banding' as a temporary safety measure. When the Burial Clerk visited the cemetery on one occasion, a small headstone (erected 1988) was found flat on the ground, having blown over in the high winds that week – thankfully, no one was injured. The PC are very grateful to the families and relatives who have arranged for memorials in their care to be restored or re-affixed by local memorial masons to the current British Standard, including the one that blew over in the wind. If you are the grant holder for a memorial in the cemetery and have any concerns about the safety or condition of a headstone, please contact the clerk for help and advice.



---

### *Hemswell 'Living Advent Calendar'*



#### ***Brightening up December!***

Keep a lookout for a little bit of sparkle and fun as you walk around the village this December. See if you can spot the 'advent' windows in 24 different properties around Hemswell that will reveal themselves starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December. Hopefully, it will brighten up the dark afternoons as the countdown to Christmas Day begins. Thanks to everyone who is taking part this year – and if you are happy to do so, please share photos of your window with the clerk or on Facebook.

*Don't forget there's a Christmas Wreath Making event in the Village Hall on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00 pm – see the village FB page for more information.*



---

### *Tell us how best to keep in touch with you*



The PC is aware that social media, tweets and websites are not always the best way to keep in touch with residents and is grateful to those who read our information on social media and share it with those who can't access it. The PC is always keen to see if there are better or more efficient ways to contact residents about upcoming meetings or events, planning applications, minutes of meetings, road closures, etc. Please get in touch if you have ideas on how we can share information with you more easily.

---

### *Recognition for Hemswell PC Clerk*

In October, Elizabeth Raymond, Responsible Officer and Clerk to the PC, was awarded a CiLCA Exemplary Award for achieving exemplary passes in all five units of the CiLCA qualification for clerks – one of just three people nationally. Elizabeth has also been appointed as an SLCC Recognised Trainer with LALC to train and support clerks starting their CiLCA qualification in 2026.

***Finally***, as we draw 2025 to a close, the parish councillors and clerk wish the residents of Hemswell Parish a safe, happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

