

Helmdon Local History Group

Minutes of Helmdon Local History Group (HLHG) Committee Meeting 12 November 2025 held at 20 Wappenham Road, Helmdon.

The meeting opened at 7:30pm

Present: Danny Moody - Chair (DM), Audrey Forgham (AF), Richard Farquharson (RF), Ross Vicars (RV), Faye Holloway (FH), Bill Elkington (BE), John Plunkett (JP).

Apologies: none.

1. Welcome new committee members.

The Chair welcomed all committee members including two new members Bill Elkington as treasurer and John Plunkett.

The Chair extended thanks to Mike Barnes (MB) for his work as treasurer over the time since HLHG started.

With regard to bank account signatories, it was resolved that BE and RF should be added and that MB be removed at a later date.

Action:

BE to review documentation received from MB and to contact MB as needed.

BE to arrange that BE and RF become bank account signatories.

BE arrange removal of Mike Barnes as bank account signatory after new signatories are in place.

2. Minutes of Committee Meeting 10 September 2025.

RV requested the name Netherbury be added to each reference to Priory Farm. With this amendment, the minutes were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Action:

RF to update and then publish the minutes 10 September 2025.

3. Website project contacts follow up.

DM advised that he had made contact with the final identified contact. This contact is unable to help, but is interested in village history

The do-it-yourself approach to website conversion was discussed. DM has tried a coding generator "Replit" where the results were impressive but not a total success. However, it did prompt further thoughts for features on our website project.

BE advised that HS2/EKFB may be starting a new budget year for community project funding.

Action:

DM to make a further assessment of the Replit package if time permits.

JP to make an initial enquiry with a web designer contact.

DM to contact EKFB regarding funding.

4. Review of AGM and Talk 21 October 2025.

The AGM was viewed as being quick and very well presented, with approximately 55 attendees. Danny's illustrated talk "What has the Parish Council ever done for us?" started as a last resort suggestion, but ended as a well-received presentation.

After next year's AGM it was proposed that a farming related talk be presented. Potential contributors and a speaker were discussed. RV suggested that relevant artefacts should be available to discuss during the talk. AF recommended that reference should be made to existing records on the Helmdon History website.

Changing the day for the AGM and talk was discussed but rejected. Tuesday 20 October 2026 was proposed and agreed as the preferred date, starting at 8pm.

Action:

DM to contact suggested speaker to confirm availability on 20 October 2026.

RV to liaise with the suggested speaker as needed.

5. Talk or Event Tuesday 03 February 2026. [Revised to 10 February 2026]

A talk on the structure of the village, incorporating work of author William Ellis, was discussed. RV offered to be the speaker and proposed that date be changed to 10 February 2026. The committee accepted the change of date.

Action:

RF to send initial notification of events to our mailing list, including the reason for changing event start times.

RF to update AGM minutes to reflect change of date.

6. History Guided Walks Tuesday 09 June 2026.

These will be based on the June 2025 event. Alternative walk leaders may be required if previous walk leaders have other commitments. An alternative walk leader was suggested.

Action:

DM to contact alternative leader re availability on 09 June 2026.

7. Reminiscences.

Following the pairing suggestion for the collection of reminiscences as discussed at the previous committee meeting and at the AGM, AF confirmed that no offers for new reminiscences had been received.

AF believes that most people prefer to write reminiscences rather than as a verbal exchange. AF suggested that committee members should do reminiscences. JP suggested "The Last Carnival Float" as a potential subject.

Obituaries can be included as reminiscences but none have been identified recently.

Action:

DM to review whether published reminiscences are easily accessible, as there appear to be two index lists.

DM and RF to appeal for contributions via website and social media.
ALL to consider producing their own reminiscences.

8. Improve engagement with group.

Methods to improve engagement with group members and the wider public were discussed.

Action:

RF to regularly update our Facebook page and ensure our events and other activities are promoted. Continue to post relevant items to Helmdon Villagers.

RF to promote a link to follow our Facebook page, this may be by email to mailing list.

9. Constitution update.

Proposed constitution amendments were accepted by members at the AGM on 21 October 2025.

Action:

DM to email the current Constitution document to **RF**.

RF to produce and publish an updated Constitution document.

10. Member and mailing lists maintenance.

To ensure correct information is distributed by email, the secretary (**RF**) needs to know who has joined the group as a member.

Action:

RF and BE to agree method of maintaining member and mailing lists.

11. Date of next committee meeting

The next committee meeting will take place at 19:30 on Wednesday
14 January 2026 at RV's. Further meetings have been scheduled for:
29 April 2026, in preparation for History Walks in June,
09 September 2026,
11 November 2026.

An additional meeting may be needed if the website project develops further.

12. Any other business (A.O.B.)

12.1 Previously, Judy Cairns had reviewed physical memorial inscriptions. We believe that details are recorded beforehand which should be accessible to us.

Action:

RF to contact Cliff Netton to determine procedure to follow and obtain sample text.

The meeting closed at 8:48pm