

**MINUTES OF THE 53rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
OLD FELIXSTOWE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION HELD ON  
THURSDAY 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2026 AT 7.30PM**

**Present:** Celia Page – Chair and Administrator  
Gillian Barnett - Trustee  
Gina Cooper – Vice Chair & Trustee  
Paul Weavers – Treasurer  
Gemma Gooch– Secretary  
Dave Songhurst – Newsletter Editor & Website Manager  
Linda Drouet - Administrator  
Lorna Fraser - Accounts Administrator

**Plus:**

Dave Norman, Steve Wiles (Felixstowe Town Council), Jacky Fairweather (Management Committee), Pauline Varden (General Council), Margaret Lamacraft (General Council), Janet Berry (General Council), Lesley Songhurst (General Council), Janet Hilton (Brackenbury WI) Liz Sampson (General Council), Lyn Osborne (OFCA Community Markets), Elaine Wright, Val White (Felixstowe Garden Club), David White (Felixstowe Garden Club), Maureen Burns (Morning WI and Jubilee Club), Pauline Lincoln (Jubilee Club), Helen Swift (Girlguiding UK), Rosey Freeman (Martello Circle), Ellie Clark (Community Markets), Cheryl Shipp, David Shipp, Debbie Wink and Helen Cox

**Celia opened the meeting at 7:30pm and welcomed everyone to the 53rd Annual General meeting.**

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Doreen Savage (Trustee), Anne Arbon (Flower Club), Terry Smith (Trustee), Dawn Cheadle (Lone Star Line Dancers) and Joan Webber (Martello Ladies).

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes from last year's AGM held on 16th October 2025 were circulated prior to this AGM. The acceptance of these Minutes as a correct record was proposed by Gina Cooper and seconded by Lyn Osborne and agreed unanimously.

**3. Annual Accounts**

**From Lorna Fraser:**

The accounts for the year end 30 June 2026 have been prepared using the standard format from the Charity commission for receipts and payments accounts as they were in 2025 and 2024 and so you will be familiar with the layout.

As last year, these accounts don't include a balance sheet – this is used to show the assets of the Charity at a snap shot in time (in this case the year end date). As a Charity, OFCA don't have many assets – the main ones being the property and cash. This would be more relevant if (for example) we had significant balances of people who owe money to the Charity, but traditionally we haven't shown this as a balance in the accounts. We've always prepared the hire income on the basis of cash received and so there isn't a big change.

I will now run through some of the figures.

## **Income**

The total income looks to be less than last year, however there was £15,000 of grant income received from the postcode lottery in the prior year.

Hiring income has increased by around 13% on the previous year. This represents the continued increase in hirers of the hall – mainly represented by an increase in regular hirers.

Donation income includes £1,165 raised from the summer fair in 2025 and also £1,800 from 2026.

## **Expenditure**

The repairs and renewals code is made up of building improvements and general repairs and renewals. The main expenses for this year are:

Various lighting repairs and replacements £1,268

Fire alarm work £1,068

Work in the Jane Bolton lounge (curtains and carpet) £5,300

Kitchen units and shutter replacement £12,000 (around)

Replacement boiler £3,600

The rest was made up of general repairs around the building.

The costs in relation to the roof works (total of £36k have been capitalised within building costs).

The remainder of the expenses are reasonable when compared to prior years and therefore as we'd expect.

Section A4 allows us to show any cash movements that relate to assets held by the Charity. This includes any capital purchases (any items that would have an expected life of more than one year). This is where the previously mentioned roof works have been shown.

The bottom line of section A of the accounts shows the movements in funds and reconciles this to the movement in cash funds held during the year. As you will see, the overall result shows an decrease in cash funds on the prior year of £36k. This is due to the significant investment that has been made in the building during the financial year.

The accounts have been passed to Alistair Porter of the Suffolk Tax Accountants Group for Independent review as agreed.

Acceptance of these accounts was proposed by Margaret Lamacraft, seconded by Linda Drouet and agreed unanimously.

## **4. Reports of General Council/Management Committee and Tennis Section**

### **General Council from Celia Page:**

This year has highlighted once again the fact that OFCA is a family. However, like all families we are getting older so we would welcome the younger generation to join us so if you know of anyone who would like to be a part of OFCA, please get in touch.

The Community Centre continues to be extremely popular especially in the evenings, so much so that potential regular hirers have been turned away. This is all incredibly positive news looking forward and with the range of groups meeting at the Centre we really do provide a wonderful choice for the community. However, success brings more demands so the role of volunteers is extremely important. If you feel you would like to get involved or know of anyone, please have a chat with me after the meeting.

The Community Markets continue to be an enormous success with an average of £400 raised at each market; my thanks go to Elaine Wright who co-ordinates this and Lyn Osborne who takes the bookings and has the unenviable task of organising the tables. Of course, this is a team effort, so my thanks also go to John and Ian who set up the tables and clear away, Jenny, Gillian Margaret, Anne Trusselle and Ann Wimbhurst who run stalls in aid of the Association, the amazing raffle ticket sellers, Gina, Barbara, Jacky, Lynn and Mike Osborne who helps with the raffle draw. Thanks also go to Dave Norman who steps in to help at the Market, very often at short notice, to the ladies from Brackbury WI who run the kitchen and provide such delicious refreshments, the Parish Nurses and Councillor Steve Wiles who regularly attend the Markets, their advice and support to our visitors is invaluable. Margaret Lamacraft and Ann Truselle ran their stall for the last time in September so I would like to extend a special thank you to them. Margaret has been running the stall in aid of the Association for forty years and for example raised £400 last year. Their dedication was amazing so a big thank you to them both.

This year's Summer Fair was held in June and £2,002 was raised. This annual event is crucial to the success of the Association and my thanks go to Elaine Wright who co-ordinates the event and to all the affiliated organisations who run the stalls. This year a colouring competition was introduced to encourage more young people to get involved. This was incredibly successful and my thanks go once again to Elaine and also to Gemma Gooch.

The Trustees have been incredibly grateful for financial donations received during the year from Jean Brackley and several donations in lieu of membership.

As previously mentioned, this year has highlighted once again the importance of volunteers. We welcomed Steve Fairweather who produces the invoices for the regular hirers and there are many! David Shipp, a close neighbour of the Centre joined our team and helps out on the maintenance of the Centre which is an enormous help, thank you David. David has recently taken on the gardening at the front of the Centre so many thanks to him for stepping into this role.

Last year Ellie Clark stepped down as Chair and Minutes Secretary of the Management Committee. Gemma Gooch has taken on the role of Minutes Secretary and a different Committee member Chairs each meeting, this system is working well. I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of the members of the Association to our hardworking Centre Management Committee, Gina Cooper as Vice Chairman, Gemma Gooch, our Secretary, our Treasurer, Paul Weavers, Vickie White, our Purchase Ledger Clerk, Steve Fairweather for producing the monthly invoices, Lorna Fraser for collating the Annual Accounts, Linda Drouet for sharing the administrative role with me, Dave Songhurst for managing the website and the online newsletter and Jacky Fairweather who carries out the essential monthly safety tests and is Treasurer of the Tennis Club.

The front garden at the Centre always looks neat and tidy so thank you to Janet who has maintained the front border for many years and produces a wonderful display as the seasons change. Janet is giving up this role so thank you Janet for all your hard work over the years and for your offer to continue to supply the plants. Thanks to Lynn who places the orders for the cleaning materials and to Barbara who washes the tea towels and keeps the tea and coffee cupboard stocked up.

In addition to those mentioned there is an army of people who, without them the Centre would not run so smoothly. Numerous jobs are carried out behind the scenes, and my thanks go to everyone who help in whatever way, it is most appreciated.

### **Management Committee from Celia Page:**

The main responsibility of the Centre Management Committee's work is to ensure that the Centre is well maintained and some significant improvements have been completed this year.

The kitchen underwent a complete refurbishment in March. A small Committee was formed to design and choose worktops, cupboard fronts, flooring and sinks so my thanks go to Angela Pratt, Liz Sampson and Jacky Fairweather who joined me to oversee the project. Quotes were sourced and Paul Cotterell was employed to install the new kitchen and I am sure you will agree that it is a huge improvement, many positive comments have been received.

The roof of the Jane Bolton Lounge had been causing problems for a long time so a planning application was submitted and following approval this was replaced and the spire removed. At the same time the flat roofs throughout the Centre were replaced. This part of the project was more costly than first thought and took a lot longer to complete than anticipated. My thanks go to the hirers who had to contend with rather a lot of noise at times and to Paul Weavers and Ellie Clark who oversaw the project which at times was a difficult task.

Various electrical work has taken place during the year; this includes new spotlights on the stage and outside lights to make leaving the Centre safer during the winter months.

The outside store-room is now water tight and, following a donation by Ellie Clark, new shelving was installed. Along with other items, the Garden Club now store their equipment there.

Other jobs carried out during the year was a new fire panel fitted in May and a deep clean of the whole Centre in August.

OFCA Policy documents were reviewed and updated on our web site in January 2026. These are critical to the ongoing compliance requirements. Thanks to those who co-ordinated this and to Dave Songhurst for uploading them onto the OFCA web pages.

Over the next few years, we will be looking at replacing the ceilings throughout the Centre as currently they are made of compressed cardboard.

Any thoughts regarding future improvements at the Centre would be most welcome.

### **Tennis report from Jacky Fairweather:**

OFCA Tennis Club has continued to thrive with 36 members regularly playing tennis throughout the year. Club mornings are well attended and in addition many members arrange friendly doubles matches at other times during the week. Our membership has increased slightly since the end of the grass court season as most Dellwood Tennis Club members who did not already belong to OFCA have decided to join in order to continue playing during the winter.

In March of this year the 50 year lease on the tennis courts from East Suffolk Council expired. Almost a year in advance of this date contact was made with the council regarding the renewal of the lease. Unfortunately despite numerous email conversations and a meeting with a representative of the council we are no further forward and await news of any development regarding a new lease. However, in order to reassure tennis club members it is necessary to state that we have a protected lease which means we won't suddenly be prevented from using the courts.

Last year I mentioned that some of our members have had to hang up their tennis racquets. In recognition of their long standing contribution to not only the tennis club but also OFCA it was decided to ask Margaret Lamacraft, Lesley Songhurst and Janet Berry to become honorary life members of the tennis club. Without fail Janet continues to run the book stall at the Community Markets raising £280 for the tennis club this past year.

Following on from the success of last year another afternoon of tea and tennis was organised. The Margaret White Hall was booked in case of inclement weather. However, the opposite was actually the case as the hall was needed to escape from the relentless sunshine. An afternoon of tennis, lovely food and plentiful cups of tea was enjoyed by approximately 20 members. Also, when not playing tennis the afternoon gave everyone the opportunity to catch up with members they don't meet regularly.

We were contacted by Felixstowe Lawn Tennis Club at the beginning of the summer season as they were replacing their tennis nets and wondered whether we could make use of two of the nets they were discarding. This was a very fortunate meeting as our tennis nets were quite dilapidated. We are extremely grateful to the Lawn Tennis Club as the new nets have saved our club a considerable amount of money. Members of OFCA tennis club have agreed wherever possible to support fundraising events at Bath Road to show our appreciation.

Finally I would like to thank all members (too many to mention) of the club who in various ways help to ensure that the club runs smoothly. We are all volunteers and the help given by members (and often family) is much appreciated and goes a long way to making belonging to the club a pleasure.

## 5. Election of Officers 2024

### **Trustees**

|                   |                                                               |                      |                               |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Chair of Trustees | To be appointed at the next trustees meeting on 19th November |                      |                               |
| Trustees          | Gina Cooper                                                   | Proposed<br>Seconded | Elaine Wright<br>Linda Drouet |

|  |                                            |                      |                                |
|--|--------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
|  | Gillian Barnett                            | Proposed<br>Seconded | Linda Drouet<br>Elaine Wright  |
|  | Nominate Steve<br>Wiles and Dave<br>Norman | Proposed<br>Seconded | Elaine Wright<br>Lyn Osborne   |
|  | Co-opt Liz Sampson                         | Proposed<br>Seconded | Gillian Barnett<br>Gina Cooper |

### Honorary Officers/General Council

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                      |                                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Treasurer                             | Paul Weavers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Proposed<br>Seconded | Celia Page<br>Elaine Wright                 |
| Accounts<br>Administrator             | Lorna Fraser                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Proposed<br>Seconded | Celia Page<br>Elaine Wright                 |
| Secretary                             | Gemma Gooch                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Proposed<br>Seconded | Jacky Fairweather<br>Linda Drouet           |
| Administrator(s)                      | Celia Page<br>Linda Drouet                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Proposed<br>Seconded | Gina Cooper<br>Rosey Freeman                |
| Newsletter Editor/<br>Website Manager | Dave Songhurst                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Proposed<br>Seconded | Margaret Lamacraft<br>Elaine Wright         |
| Chair of General<br>Council           | Gina Cooper                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Proposed<br>Seconded | <a href="#">Celia Page</a><br>Elaine Wright |
| Vice Chair of<br>General Council      | Vacant                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                      |                                             |
| General Council<br>Members            | Janet Berry<br>Linda Drouet<br>Jacky Fairweather<br><a href="#">Lorna Fraser</a><br>Margaret Lamacraft<br>Lyn Osborne<br>Liz Sampson<br>Dave Songhurst<br><a href="#">Lesley Songhurst</a><br>Pauline Varden<br>Elaine Wright<br>Paul Weavers | Proposed<br>Seconded | Gina Cooper<br>Celia Page                   |

### Management Committee

|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Chair of<br>Management<br>Committee | Rotating chair |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|

|                                  |                                                                                                                               |                      |                                       |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Management Committee             | Barbara Bown<br>Gina Cooper<br>Linda Drouet<br>Jacky Fairweather<br>Judy Jones<br>Celia Page<br>Paul Weavers<br>Elaine Wright | Proposed<br>Seconded | Margaret Lamacraft<br>Gillian Barnett |
| Independent Examiner of Accounts | Alistair Porter<br>Suffolk Tax Accountants                                                                                    | Proposed<br>Seconded | Lorna Fraser<br>Paul Weavers          |

All officers were elected unanimously.

#### 6. Any Other Business

Celia gave personal thanks to all involved as she stepped down as chair.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7:51pm.**