

HOLT & DISTRICT FARMERS' CLUB

FOUNDED 1948

President: Richard Brooks

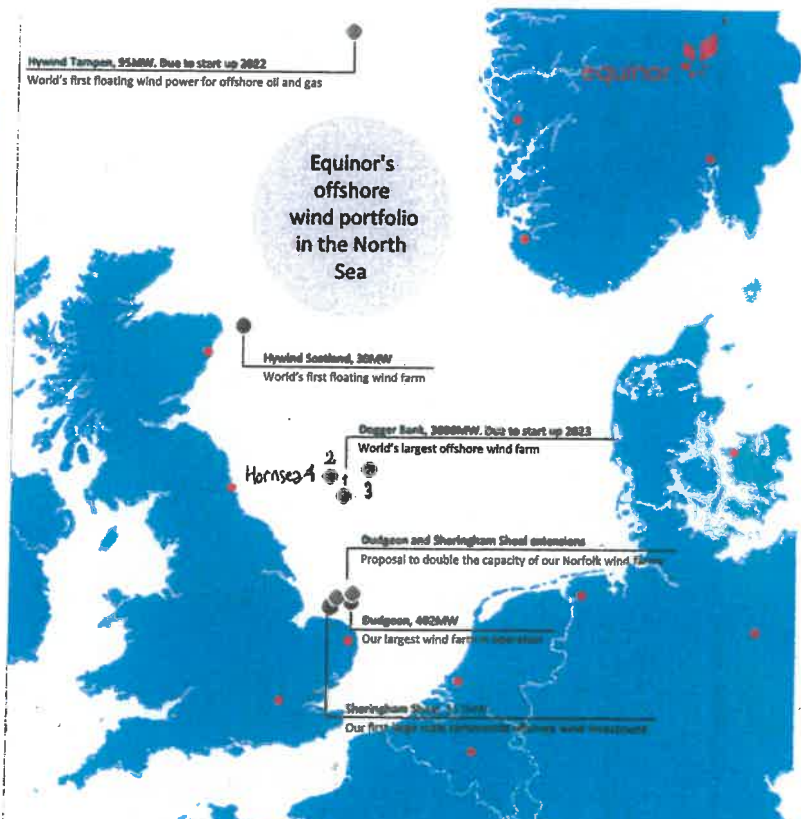
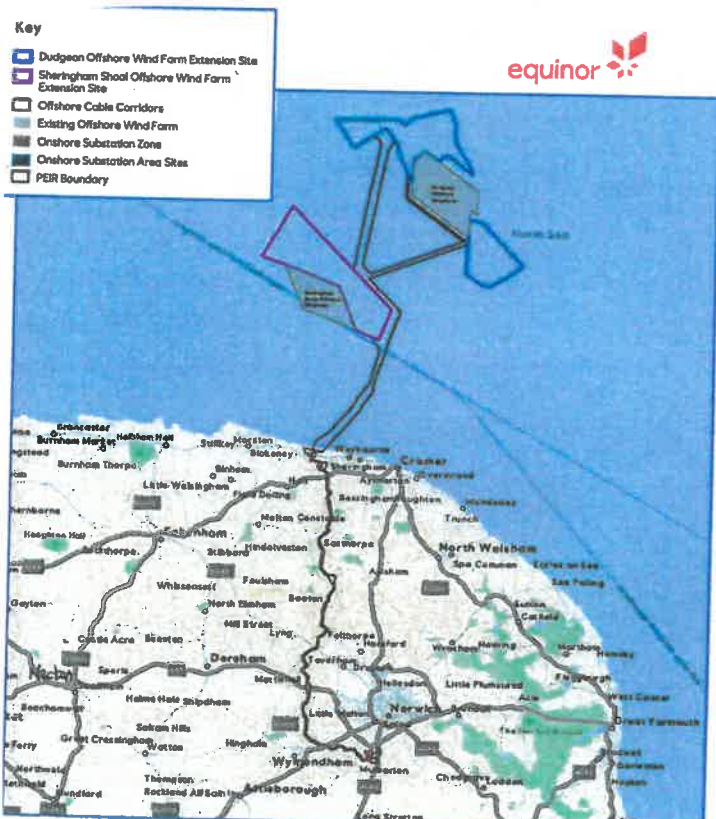
Chairman: Pat Cubitt

Vice-Chairman: Andrew Ross

www.holtfarmers.club

CLUB MATTERS June 2023

Two sets of national statistics have hit the headlines in recent weeks. To begin with, in the first quarter of this year and for the first time in UK history, wind overtook gas as our biggest supplier of energy. It produced almost one third of the total and over 2.5 times our nuclear output; the proportion from all renewables was over 40%. The other headline has been the net immigration figure of £606,000 in the year up to June of last year. The effect of these trends is being played out in vivid fashion right across Norfolk and the North Sea. The Hornsea 3 Project has started to cut a swathe between Weybourne Hope and Swardeston as is evident on the A148 between High Kelling and Bodham as well as at other crossings down the centre of our county. The whole Hornsea scheme, 75 miles north of here, will be the single largest offshore wind project in the world capable of supplying two or three million homes. Orsted's route carves through the Kelling Estate before running close to our Chairman's Manor and the Mack turbine where signs have now gone up for their next cable route. This will be for the extensions to the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon wind farms which are due to double their capacity to supply almost 1.5 million homes and to connect south to Swardeston rather than south-west to Necton. There are further hearings this month for this route while Vattenfall are also holding meetings in the next fortnight for their east-west route from Happisburgh to Necton. One might see this as, somewhat forebodingly, completing the sign of the cross over the length and breadth of Norfolk. Vattenfall have renamed their two huge wind farms to the east as the Norfolk Offshore Wind Zone and, like Orsted, are offering community funding so I hope there is some gain and not just pain from this repetitive and rather random slashing across the county.

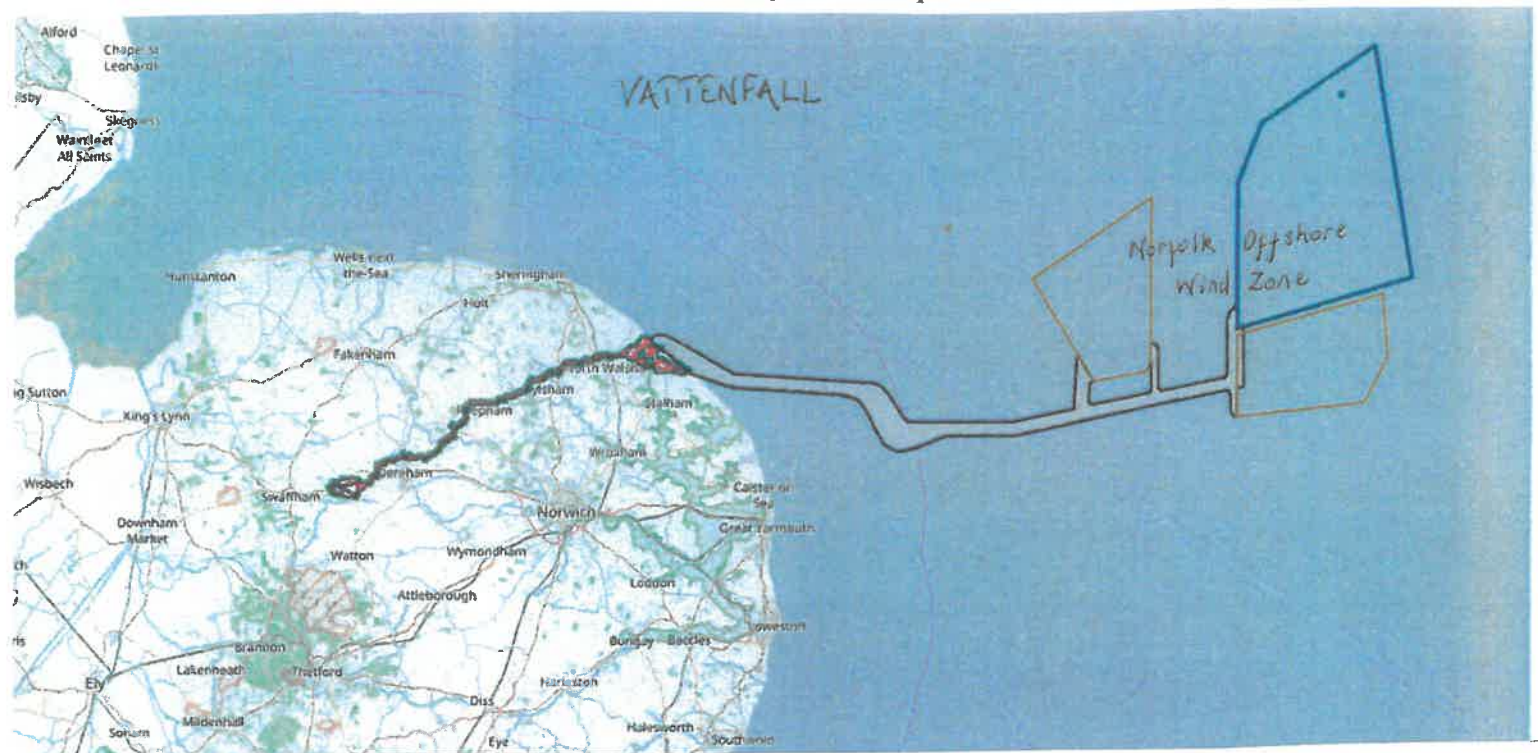




While our countryside is facing this disruption our towns are feeling the effect of the housing pressure from increased immigration. North Norfolk District Council won a rare victory last month in enforcing the theatre producer Spike Jonze to demolish his 'Holiday Inn' home opposite Cley Church but they have failed in Holt. John 'Snowball' Hubbard, now ninety and stone deaf, rented a smallholding on the north side of the town from which he supplied vegetables to Crowe's greengrocers in Bull Street. In 2012 planning permission was granted for Norfolk Homes to build up to 85 homes here 45% of which were to be affordable. After a long court case in 2021 it was determined that NNDC had failed to attach this requirement to a renewal of the consent so that none of the homes now need to be affordable. After surrendering another field that he rented at Holt Hall to Gresham's School when they became the new owners 'Snowball' has retired to spend more time in his Reliant Robin in Holt Market Place. Norfolk Homes spent the winter turning the Peacock Lane End land into a moonscape but have now left the site so perhaps the downturn in the housing market has been more pronounced than is evident elsewhere.



This was one of the reasons cited by Hopkins Homes when applying to get the obligation to build 45% of the 52 homes that they are building opposite the Kongskilde building off Hempstead Road as affordable lifted. In spite of local outrage and previous examples of this ploy in Stalham, Cromer, Wells and elsewhere the requirement was indeed reduced last month to nil. At the other end of Hempstead Road, next to the A148 Holt bypass, rumours grow over whether the former Holt Station / Thaxters site might finally be developed ten years after planning permission was obtained for the Co-op. It would also be nice to hear whether the Norfolk Orbital Project is making any progress in restoring the railway line along the opposite side of the Cromer Road now that they have acquired a short section of the line between the station at Kelling Hospital and the High Kelling end of the bypass. I see there is also an attempt to revive John Shrive's pet project of a barrage across The Wash between Hunstanton and Gibraltar Point in Lincolnshire. Then the neighbouring parishes around Bintree Wood and the former Watts Naval School (birthplace of the actor Sir John Mills) including C van B at Bintree cum Twyford, are campaigning against a new town of 5000 people – down from the initial proposal of 10,000 but still bigger than Holt – being built in the Upper Wensum area north of North 'Ellum'. All I can say is that I can admire the protagonists of these schemes, if only for their optimism.



Aside from these ramblings my main purpose this month is to alert you to a summer 'jolly' that **Laurie Hill**, our new Treasurer, has been good enough to arrange. Burn Valley Vineyard is a successful family business at the opposite western end of North Creake parish (i.e. towards Stanhoe) to the ABagri base at Egmere that I referred to in April. **On Tuesday, 4th July at 1 o'clock there will be a Food and Wine Tasting at Beacon Hill Road, NR21 9LN.** It was felt that a filling meal and the opportunity to bring spouses and/or significant others to drive would mean that you can indulge and not have to spit every sample out. The leaflet is attached and please register with Laurie (contact details below) in good time. Laurie is prepared to take payment on the day although it would clearly be easier for him if you pay in advance; numbers are limited to 50. Also **Pat Cubitt** has been talking to Tim Place whose large fruit operation at Tunstead we visited ten years ago. Whether we can squeeze a return visit in as well this summer remains to be seen but the committee is keen to get "the show on the road" again. With luck this might extend as far as Sweden next year and it occurs to me that Vattenfall is a Swedish company which might be keen to keep the right side of Norfolk farmers when they are spearing across our county.

Tim

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Hon. Treasurer: **Laurie Hill** Summerhill House 1 Sculthorpe Road Fakenham NR21 9HA 07811 034215 laurie.hill@larking-gowen.co.uk