

Minutes of the Annual Smisby Parish Meeting 12th May 2026

Smisby Parish Council Attendance: Councillors Cuming (Chairman), Brooke, Dickens and Sullivan. Parish Clerk Caroline Crowder

Members of the public and other organisations: District Councillors Lowe and Haines, County Councillor Hill, a member of DCC Highways, 7 members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Declarations of Interest on Items on the Agenda

None.

3. Items Raised or Suggestions by the Public

Hazel phone box may need painting, me to find paint.

4. Reports from Local Groups/Organisations

a. Smisby WI

I have been secretary at Smisby WI for sixteen years and it only seems like yesterday that I joined a very small group of ladies who met at Cynthia Masseys bungalow because the village hall was having a total refurbishment thanks to the Parochial Charity and their kind generosity in making it what it is today.

We have a lot of other WIs visit us to take part in activities that we invite them to and we have some lovely comments like “my word they’re posh loos”

Lesley Smith is a favourite of ours and last year she entertained us as Florence Nightingale, and a few months later Dr Gareth her husband gave a very interesting talk on the Witch Finder General, it seems very strange it was mainly women who were the witches, glad I didn’t live in those days I have a dog not a black cat. But I do think we must have cast a spell, our membership is sixty, we have stayed stable, we must be doing something right as several WIs have dwindling numbers or have closed. We have lost five people this year through age, illness and or moving house to look after grandchildren.

Our outings this year have been in keeping with the ethos of the WI which is to broaden our knowledge and learn new things. Notty Hornblower gave a superb fashion show of vintage clothes in 2024 so last year we went to Tislington to see the well dressings and then on to her museum of clothes. We visited the City of Liverpool for a day in September, quite honestly you need more than a day there, but we may go back at some time in the near future.

At our monthly meetings we invite a speaker come along to give a talk and we try and get a diverse mix of people, Martin Cooper from the Air Ambulance was very interesting about how he raised £25,000, we sent a collection box round the room and raised another £200 towards his next goal. Ellen a retired police officer let us hold her very heavy stab-vest, and the retractable baton. Kathy Powis gave a talk on the Mary Rose Tudor War Ship in

Portsmouth and that's our next overnight stay to visit the ship and museum, and of course many more interesting speakers over the past twelve months.

We have made one hundred bags which contained a toothbrush and toothpaste which were donated to local charities, to encourage children and adults to look after their teeth. Fifty fiddle muffs made by the crochet group have been distributed to care homes and Royal Derby hospital for people with Alzheimer's. and we are also making bags with toilet items inside for the Women prisoners at Foston Jail.

My son and grandson will soon be doing a sponsored walk up Ban-eye-Bruck-Ein-Og (Brecon Beacons) over £200 has been raised by members, and between my son and grandson they have raised over £2,000 for Alzheimer's UK. As its Alzheimer's month in June, we have been busy crocheting over 300 hundred Forget not flowers which will be attached to a board over the Village Hall porch to bring it to people's attention what a terrible disease this is for the sufferers and carers. The RVS run a fortnightly get together here in the hall for people with dementia and nine of our WI ladies help out on a Rota basis serving tea & biscuits and generally talking to them, & playing games, we all enjoy the mornings we spend with them and hope it helps the carers to relax and have a couple of hours away from home and seeing other people in a safe environment.

This is just a short snapshot of what we have done and achieved over the year; we do have an exceptionally good website kept up to date by me and Marie South which gives a clearer picture of how very active we at Smisby WI are.

Thank you for listening, Suzanne, Secretary Smisby WI

b. Village hall.

The Village Hall is soon to undergo refurbishment and be repainted.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 19:11.

Signed: Date: