

PRESS RELEASE REF SHADCRA CLAIM AGAINST COUNCIL

Brancaster Parish Council has signed a "Drop Hands" agreement with members of Scolt Head and District Common Rightholders Association (SHADCRA) to dismiss their Court Claim for monetary compensation for the supposed loss of grazing rights for one common right on CL124 located in the Parish of Brancaster – the Brancaster Beach Car Park.

Unable to fund the action they had started, the Claimants (SHADCRA) petitioned Brancaster Parish Council to make the "Drop Hands" Agreement. Brancaster Parish Council agreed on condition that the Claimants never bring this action to Court again. Should SHADCRA try the Claim again, financial penalties will be enforced. The Agreement in full is available on the Brancaster Parish Council website.

The claimants - Chris Cotton, Peter Bickell, Tom Gathercole and Michael Bucher - brought the action against Brancaster Parish Council in the Small Claims Court in December 2022. The action was vigorously defended by Brancaster Parish Council and their solicitors DAC Beachcroft, and the dismissal of the case was agreed by all parties on 23rd August 2024.

Tom de Winton, Chair of Brancaster Parish Council and Borough Councillor, said "This represents a big win on the part of the people of the Parish of Brancaster. The donations that we receive from the Brancaster Beach Car Park, given to us by the Royal West Norfolk Golf Club, allows us to give grants to local groups and charities. These include village halls, children's play areas, sports clubs, both churches, our New NHS First Responder as well as our local school. All our Parishioners benefit from a significantly lower Parish Precept than our neighbouring Parishes."

He added that "It is the duty of the Parish Council to defend our finances from all comers for the benefit of all our Parishioners – Brancaster Parish Council is very pleased with the result."

Thanks to the judiciousness of Brancaster Parish Council and Clerk Simon Bower, the substantial costs of defending the case were covered by insurance. However, it is estimated that, if Council had been forced to pay for the defence itself, it would have cost the Parish of Brancaster over £30,000.

For further information contact Simon Bower, Clerk to Council.