

# Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

## Minutes

Of a meeting of the Estates Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025

**Present:** Cllrs M Lavelle, K Grimes, T Turner (Substitute), Mr Di Giulio

**Attending:** Clerk Hilary Workman, Cllr Andrea Grimes

25.07.01 **Noted:**

Cllr Mel Karunaratne having been appointed Chair of the Committee by the Parish Council, to confirm appointment of Vice-Chair (Cllr Mike Lavelle) and receive his declaration of Acceptance of Office. The meeting noted that the Declaration of Acceptance of Office from Cllr Karunaratne would be received not later than the next meeting of the Estates Committee.

25.07.02 **Noted:** The following apologies for absence were approved:

- Cllr Mel Karunaratne – Personal commitment
- Mr Roger Medley – Personal circumstances
- Mrs Mary Jolland – Personal commitment

25.07.03 **Noted:**

That when invited, there were no Members' Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Registerable Interests in subsequent Agenda items and no additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests.

**25.07.04 Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025, as tabled, be agreed as a true record**

25.07.05 **Noted:** Public Forum – (**Open Session**)<sup>1</sup>.19:01

That when invited, there were no comments or question on any Agenda item or matter of concern from those members of the public present and the session was closed.

25.07.06 **Noted:**

The following correspondence received to this meeting not dealt with as an Agenda item or in the Clerk's report:

- 6.1 Wickhambrook Outdoor Bowls Club – confirmation that they had been watering the Bowling Green with the drier weather. The meeting asked the clerk to advertise the Bowling Green on the website as available use by other clubs.
- 6.2 Wickhambrook All Saints PCC – two further issues with the Memorial Clock had recently been reported to Haward Horological which had caused the clock to be stopped. The meeting asked the clerk to investigate whether an alternative horologist might be approached for an opinion on the viability bringing the Memorial Clock back into use.
- 6.3 Local resident with an interest in biodiversity and wild flowers had recently offered assistance with identification of wild plants and insect life and messaging to residents. The meeting noted that there is a vacancy for a further lay member on the committee and asked the clerk to speak with Mary Jolland, whose portfolio covers environment and sustainability, about how the portfolios might complement one another.

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<sup>1</sup> The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

**Signed:** M Karunaratne

**Dated:** 04/09/2025

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- 25.07.07 **Noted:**  
Decisions of the Parish Council at its April and May meetings (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.25.07.01**).
- 25.07.08 **Noted:** Reports of Portfolio Holders or other agencies and to take action as appropriate.
- 8.1 **Parish Assets (defibrillator)** **Cllr A Grimes**  
An oral update that
- She had recently completed a handover from Peter Vince, who had given a decade of service to the maintenance of the defibrillators and provided advice to both councillors and the clerk on many occasions to resolve issues when they arose. The committee extended its thanks to Mr Vince for his service over the past nine years.
  - Both defib were displaying 2 bars of charge on their batteries, which are scheduled for replacement next October.
  - Cllr K Grimes had tested the power to the thermostat in the heated cabinet, and the Wickhambrook MSC Committee had confirmed that they were responsible for the electricity supply to the cabinet.– scheduled for next year – under guarantee
  - Mr Vince had advised that the parish council had supported the establishment of a group of community first responders in 2017, but there had been very low uptake. Mr Vince’s advice was that there was not an established need for such a group at this time.
- 8.2 **Environment & Sustainability** **Mrs M Jolland**  
A litter pick was scheduled for this coming Sunday (13<sup>th</sup> July)
- 8.3 **Footpaths officer report** **Mr R. Medley**  
Report previously circulated.
- 8.4 **Tree Warden’s report** **Mr D. Di Giulio**  
An oral update that:
- The annual walk around of parish trees had taken place the previous day.
  - A willow tree at Coltsfoot Green (growing out of the bank of the culvert, just opposite Pump Cottage, appeared to have died and was likely to fail in a future storm.
- The clerk had initially thought that this might be a parish responsibility, but it had subsequently been established that the tree was on unregistered land (although an interest had been registered against the land). The Clerk subsequently reported the tree to Suffolk Public Rights of Way team.
- 8.5 **Youth Facilities** **Cllr Karunaratne**
- 8.5.1 Main Playground
- 8.5.2 Teen Project and Games Area
- 8.5.3 Zip Wire
- 8.5.4 Bury Road Playground **Cllr K Grimes**  
An oral update from Cllr Grimes that:
- recent inspections had been satisfactory
  - washers had been fitted to the bolts of the Multiplay equipment at Bury Road
  - the tumbler of the combination lock at Cemetery Road play area had been reset by persons unknown. The clerk reported that the grounds contractor had reported this to her and would fit a replacement. It was suggested that once the combination had been set to its usual number, further changes be prevented through the application of araldite.

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- Boughs of the chestnut by the multiplay at Cemetery Road were closer than 3m. The meeting asked the clerk to obtain a quote for the boughs to be cut back or removed.

### 8.6 **Six Acres**

**Cllr M Lavelle**

An oral updated that:

- The Grounds contractors were doing a good job
- A number of the conservation area signs were yet to be fitted
- The Memorial Hall hedge required trimming back. The clerk confirmed that this hedge was included in the grounds contract and would be cut at the end of the bird nesting season (early autumn)
- The storage unit situated on the hardstanding adjacent to the Bowls Club was the property of the former football club. This was what the ground rent charge had been for. The meeting asked the clerk that, in the event that the football club agreed to another football club making use of the storage unit, that team should be charged the ground rent.

### 8.7 **Cemetery and Churchyard**

**Cllr A Grimes**

An oral update that:

- all was well and plotting of the old cemetery had recommenced
- at the last volunteer morning the hedge adjacent to the footpath had been cut back and some new saplings uncovered
- a naturalised hawthorn had been removed from a grave space

### 8.8 **Village Greens Report**

**Mr D. Di Giulio**

It was noted that the grass was being cut well this year

### **25.07.09 Noted:** Clerk's report

- 9.1 The meeting noted an update on current Estates Issues (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.25.07.02**) and take action as appropriate.
- 9.2 Work was still ongoing with PRoW to finalise a solution to the flooding running down from Byeway 31 which is further degrading the surface of the highway (track) below it. The clerk had chased progress with the PRoW officer.
- 9.3 Repairs to Chapel of Rest roof were completed in May.
- 9.4 A Locality Grant through our West Suffolk Councillor, Sarah Pugh, had been paid and used to purchase equipment to further support volunteer groups and activities in the parish, in the sum of £500 of this £340.29 plus VAT had been spent, leaving a balance of £159.71 plus VAT for the purchase of items to support volunteering work in the parish.
- 9.5 Works to replace the feet of the swing set at Bury Road and Cargo Net at Cemetery Road Play Areas had been completed by Online Playgrounds, and further work to replace grass matting at Cemetery Road Play area, and install a new rubber mulch at the top gate was completed in June. The total invoiced cost was £4358.81 plus VAT (split between a grant from WS Capital Communities £2250 and the balance contributed by Wickhambrook Parish Council).
- 9.6 Work to parish trees (stump grinding and pollarding) was completed in April and had resulted in considerably more light in the cemetery and many more spring flowers.
- 9.7 Posts with signs messaging about the new wildlife areas established this year have been installed.
- 9.8 The rotten board in the footbridge (FP23) reported in May had been replaced.
- 9.9 An interim inspection of diary noted trees had been scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> July.

**Signed:** M Karunaratne

**Dated:** 04/09/2025

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- 25.07.10 **Noted:**  
The meeting considered a proposal for replacement of posts at Coltsfoot Green (tabled and circulated as **WPC.EC.25.07.03**) and asked the clerk to canvass for further quotes..
- 25.07.11 **Noted:**  
The meeting considered a review of the Grounds Specification for the next financial year 2026/27 (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.25.07.04**). No changes were proposed by the meeting but Cllr Turner reported that some additional messaging may be necessary at Nunnery Green, where some residents were cutting into the wildlife areas immediately in front of their properties.
- 25.07.12 **Noted:**  
The meeting considered an update to works to maintain parish play equipment (previously circulated as **WPC.C.25.07.05**) and identified no additional actions.
- 25.07.13 **Noted:**  
The meeting considered an update to Memorial Furniture across the parish estate (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.25.07.06**) and identified no changes to the current policy for Memorials and Commemorative furniture. The meeting did note, however, that it may be favourable to move the bench currently sited in the wild life area out of the long grass and into the porch of the Chapel of Rest
- 25.07.14 **Noted:** That when any other Council business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited, the following:
- Parish trees following Tri-annual Survey
  - Finalise Grounds contract specification
  - Review of cemetery regulations
- 25.07.15 **Noted:**  
That the scheduled date for the next meeting was 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025 in the Pavilion, Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre
- 25.07.16 **Noted:** Close of meeting. 19:35