

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

Minutes

Of a meeting of the Estates Committee held on 4th September 2025

Present: Cllrs M Karunaratne, M Lavelle, K Grimes,

Attending: Clerk Hilary Workman, Cllr Andrea Grimes (substitute)

25.09.01 **Noted:**

Cllr Mel Karunaratne having been appointed Chair of the Committee by the Parish Council, the committee received his signed declaration of Acceptance of Office.

25.09.02 **Noted:** Apologies for absence to be noted or approved:

- Mr Di Giulio – Not present
- Roger Medley – Personal Commitment - approved
- Mary Jolland - Personal Commitment - approved

25.09.03 **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.

25.09.04 Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 3rd July 2025, as tabled, be agreed as a true record

25.09.05 **Noted:** Public Forum – (**Open Session**)¹. 19:03

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

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

1. Local Resident – reported child's skin reaction after using play equipment
2. Suffolk Wildlife Trust – report on July visit to parish wildlife areas.
3. Prospective – Sovereign Play

25.09.07 **Noted:**

Decisions of the Parish Council at its July meetings, previously circulated as report **WPC.EC.25.09.01**.

25.09.08 **Noted:** Portfolio Holder reports

8.1 **Parish Assets** (defibrillator)

Cllr A Grimes

Both defibrillators had been checked that morning and were ok. The defibrillator sited at the MSC is showing signs of paint flaking and some rust which may indicate that a replacement cabinet might be required at some point in the future. The meeting agreed to continue to monitor and asked the clerk to check the lifespan of the cabinets and order new stickers for right hand side at MSC, and check cards for both cabinets.

8.2 **Environment & Sustainability**

Mrs M Jolland

A further litter pick is planned for 2nd November in advance of Remembrance Sunday.

¹ 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 P Karunaratne

Dated: 06/11/2025

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

- 8.3 **Footpaths officer report** **Mr R. Medley**
The meeting noted the points raised in Mr Medley's previously circulated report, particularly with respect to the undercut and steep banks at Footpath 26, where the fence had recently been removed. The meeting asked the clerk to source signs to be fitted warning pedestrians to keep away from the bank. Cllr Lavell reported that a member of public had requested that a handrail be fitted to the bridge behind the school field and the meeting asked the clerk to report this request online.
- 8.4 **Tree Warden's report** **Mr D Di Giulio**
The clerk reported that Acacia Trees, who had inspected diary noted trees in July, had advised that T10 (a horsechestnut at the corner of the cemetery) required no work at present and had advised that Network Power should be approached to cut back the branches from around the power cable to the Chapel of Rest.
- 8.5 **Youth Facilities** **Cllr Karunaratne**
- 8.5.1 **Main Playground**
An oral update from Cllr Karunaratne that the Annual inspection report had identified a number of low risk items to be addressed. The meeting agreed that a volunteer day to tackle items on the list would be needed and having agreed to use the next scheduled volunteer morning on 1st October to clean down equipment and cut back vegetation, asked the clerk to promote the event. Cllr Karunaratne confirmed he would request access to water from the WI Hall. Cllr A Grimes reported that water was sitting in the lugs in the climbing frame and the meeting asked the clerk to check with Phil Smith, the inspector at West Suffolk, as to whether this required any remedial action.
Cllr Lavelle kindly offered to ask David Di Giulio whether his chipper might be borrowed for the morning to reduce green waste which could then be spread on FP24.
- 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 K Grimes with respect to issues identified in the Annual report:
- Multiplay - Finger entrapment – the meeting asked the clerk to contact the supplier as it had not been possible to adjust the position of the panels
 - The steering wheel to the car had never had any covers fitted to the stainless steel capped bolts (this item has never been reported under the West Suffolk monthly checks.
 - The no dog sign has now been installed
 - The whole fenceline has now been tensioned.
- The meeting noted the concern of the portfolio holders and clerk that items addressed following monthly reporting were not being signed off as complete by the play inspector and asked the clerk to query this with West Suffolk.

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

8.6 Six Acres

Cllr M Lavelle

An oral update that:

- the recently installed bench at the south end of Six Acres had been welcomed by local residents
- No further reports of young persons riding motor cycles on Six Acres had been received; and
- The jointing on the Coronation bench was a little loose, but considered safe. The meeting asked the clerk to chase supplier for remedial action.

8.7 Cemetery and Churchyard Safety Reports

Cllr A Grimes

An oral update that:

- A tomb in All Saints Churchyard with sawn off railing was a concern. The railings had been taped to identify them. The meeting asked the clerk to approach the PCC to request that they either remove the railings or find an alternative way to make them safe.
- The grounds contractor had advised that if the bows in the Churchyard became too low, it would impede cutting. The clerk advised that this had previously been reported to the PCC, who had confirmed that they would take steps to address this.
- A headstone in the cemetery now required banding
- Some kerbstones within the cemetery were hidden by grass – the meeting agreed that in the first instance the clerk should write to the owners asking them to take remedial action to the levels of the kerbstones.
- Installation of a deadhedge at the cemetery – the meeting agreed that this would require 8 4' x 2" posts and asked the clerk to source.
- Recording of memorials to the north of the Chapel of Rest in the old Cemetery had been completed, and the remaining recording would be completed once the wildlife areas had been cut and collected.

8.8 Village Greens Report

Mr D Di Giulio

25.09.09 Noted: Clerk's report

9.1 The meeting considered an update on current Estates Issues (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.25.09.02**) and, noting that the clerk had now received written confirmation from our insurers that the installation of either

- a rim automatic deadlock conforming to or superior to BS3621; or
- a mortice deadlock conforming to or superior to BS3621;

to the final exit door would meet their requirements, the meeting agreed to

Withdraw Proposal: Cllr Karunaratne

To authorise cost of replacement door for Chapel of Rest at not more than £2049.99.00 plus VAT (installed).

And asked the clerk to get quotes for the installation of mortice locks to BS 3621.

The meeting further noted that the Fire Door should be checked to ensure that its mechanism is fully working.

9.2 The work to onboard cemetery records to the new software supplier was progressing well, Burial Register and Purchased Graves Register records having been uploaded, and the mapping of records and checking against Cllr Grimes plotting underway. Thanks go to Cllr Andrea Grimes who has been checking the Grave Space records against the memorials in the cemetery to identify any discrepancies.

9.3 A replacement for the damaged sustainable bench at the far end of Six Acres had been installed and Kohima dedication added. Much appreciation has been voiced by many local residents.

9.4 All barriers to restrict access to the Recreation Ground and Six Acres have now been installed.

Signed: M P Karunaratne

Dated: 06/11/2025

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

- 9.5 With thanks to the Cemetery morning volunteers, one of the Memorial Benches had been moved into the porch of the Chapel of Rest, and with thanks to Cllrs A and K Grimes, the bench had been secured, and a new lock fitted to the small notice board, which has also been installed in the Porch.
- 9.6 Clubs making use of Six Acres had been advised that there will be no increase in charges for 2026/27, and notified of the change to conditions in respect of Wickhambrook Outdoor Bowls Club and invoiced for the current financial year.
- 9.7 The clerk had invited Wickhambrook Outdoor Bowls Club (following insertion of condition limiting contribution by WPC to water usage by with effect from 2026) to look at options for increasing their water sustainability through installation of improved water collection and storage.
- 9.8 Following an inspection of diary noted trees identified at the tri-annual inspection in 2024, no work has been identified as necessary to trees on the parish estate. Additionally, the inspector advised that the Horse Chestnut with bleeding canker at the corner of the cemetery (T19) is stable and does not currently require any work.

25.09.10 Noted:

The meeting considered a proposal for replacement of posts at Coltsfoot Green (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.25.09.03**). Cllr Lavell reported that due to the dry weather, it was now possible to lift out some of the posts, and that he would take one post to get a cost for replacement timbers, which could then be dropped straight back into the existing holes.

25.09.11 Noted:

The meeting considered an update to works to maintain parish play equipment (previously circulated as **WPC.C.25.09.04**) and

Resolved

The Estates Committee authorise the cost of:

- i. updated signage for the play parks at not more than £150.00 plus VAT; and**
- ii. work to Tree T10 to lift the canopy at not more than £170.00**

25.09.12 Noted:

The meeting considered a review of the Grounds Specification for the next financial year 2026/27 (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.25.09.05**) and, accepting that cuts with collection of arisings (as recommended by Suffolk Wildlife Trust in their report) for the wildlife areas may result in an additional cost, agreed that the proposed adjustments should be recommended to the parish council at its next meeting.

25.09.13 Noted:

The meeting considered a proposal to develop a wildlife area at Six Acres (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.25.09.06**) submitted by Wickhambrook WI. Cllr Lavelle reported that the WI would be seeking further advice from Suffolk Wildlife Trust at their October meeting and that they were keen to engage with Wickhambrook Primary Academy, who are situated adjacent to the proposed area. The meeting agreed the issues identified in the report which would need to be addressed before the parish council formally considers the proposal, and the voiced concern as to whether the parish council would have the resources (financial and time) to continue to support the area in its proposed form should any community group involvement wane in the medium to long term.

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

- 25.09.14 **Noted:**
That when any other Council business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited:
- Review of Estates budgets and draft 3 year plan
 - Review of cemetery regulations, fees & charges
- 25.09.15 **Noted:**
That the scheduled date for the next meeting is 6th November 2025 in the Pavilion, Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre
- 25.09.16 **Noted:** Close of meeting. 20:11