

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

Minutes

Of a meeting of the Estates Committee held on 5th February 2026

Present: Cllrs M Karunaratne, M Lavelle, K Grimes

Attending: Clerk Hilary Workman, Cllr Andrea Grimes, Cllr Linda Smith, Deb Moir

Cllr Karunaratne welcomed Deb Moir.

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

- Mr Roger Medley – Personal circumstances
- Mrs Mary Jolland – Personal commitment

26.02.02 **Noted:**

That when Members' Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Registerable Interests in subsequent Agenda items were invited, there were none.

There were no additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests.

26.02.03 Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 6th November 2025, as tabled, be agreed as a true record

26.02.04 **Noted:** Public Forum – (**Open Session**)¹. 19:02

That when comments or questions on any Agenda item or matter of concern from those members of the public present were invited, there being none, the session was closed.

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

- 5.1 Lay Member – Local Walks had not been added to .gov.uk website
- 5.2 Treasurer – WOBC – Funds from Wickhambrook Outdoor Bowls Club
- 5.3 Suffolk Tree Surgery – template letter re coppicing of hedge at Meadows
- 5.4 Local Resident – enquiry re cemetery records.

26.02.06 **Noted:** Decisions of the Parish Council at its November and January meetings (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.26.02.01**) and dates of Estates Committee meetings for 2026:

Thursday 9th April (n.b. this is a week later than usual)

Thursday 2nd July,

Thursday 3rd September

Thursday 5th November (apologies were noted from Cllr A Grimes)

26.02.07 **Noted:** Reports from Portfolio Holders or other agencies, summarised below:

7.1 **Parish Assets** (defibrillator) **Cllr A Grimes**

An oral update that all was going well and that:

- It had been noticed that, for the defibrillator located at the Fire Station, Giffords Lane, it was difficult to see the key at night. The meeting agreed that Cllr Grimes would speak with Paul Jolland at the fire station to investigate options for improving visibility after dark.
- Thermal insulated cabinets powered by solar are now available at a cost of approximately £2000.

7.2 **Environment & Sustainability**

Mrs M Jolland

The clerk reported proposed dates for litter picks in 2026, as below:

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 Karunaratne

Dated: 09/04/2026

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- Sunday 29th March (last day of Great British Spring Clean and Sunday before Easter)
- Sunday 5th July (before fete and flower show); and
- Sunday 1 November (before Remembrance Sunday)

The meeting agreed the dates, noting that litter picks at Clopton Green/Wickham Street would take place on the Thursdays before.

7.3 **Footpaths officer report** **Mr R. Medley**

The meeting noted the previously circulated report.

7.4 **Tree Warden's report** **Vacancy**

Cllr A Grimes asked whether a parish council was liable for any damage arising from parish trees which had not been identified in annual tree reports. The clerk advised that she had queried this with Acacia Trees, who undertake the full Triannual Inspection and interim reports, and had advised her that provided the parish council takes action to undertake work identified within the proposed timescales, it would be unlikely to be found liable for damage. Acacia Trees inspector noted that Wickhambrook PC does always act on advice set out in reports (unlike some parish, town and city councils).

Cllr Karunaratne reported that the boughs of one of the trees in the cemetery hedge line was brushing against the roof of the WI Hall. The meeting asked the clerk to obtain a quote for works to address this.

7.5 **Youth Facilities** **Cllr Karunaratne**

7.5.1 Main Playground

An oral update that the final ROSPA signs had been put up, and that the swing area nearest the WI Hall had had to be taped off following recent flooding arising from a blocked drain which Anglian Water had cleared.

7.5.2 Teen Project and Games Area

7.5.3 Zip Wire

7.5.4 Bury Road Playground **Cllr K Grimes**

An oral report that no new issues had been identified and that:

- The fence was being monitored and repaired as necessary.
- The West Suffolk Play Area inspector has continued to identify the need for a plastic cap over the stainless steel nut on the jeep. The jeep had never been supplied with a covering cap (the nut being stainless steel) but that he would take the steering wheel off to try and size and source an appropriate cap.

7.6 **Six Acres** **Cllr M Lavelle**

An oral update that:

- The King Charles Coronation bench located adjacent to the cableway was wobbly – The clerk asked for a video to provide to the original supplier.
- The main sewer had been blocked near the Bunters Road and cemetery road junction on Saturday 31st January. This had backed up until the lowest manhole cover began to leak, which was at the WI hall next to the entrance to Recreation Ground and Six Acres.
 - The effluent had created a puddle and was seeping into the play area and onto Six Acres. This had been reported to Anglian water who responded within a few hours with a team who tried to fix it Saturday night but had to give up and bring a bigger machine Sunday morning.
 - Cllr Lavelle taped off the area and provided signage to prevent people walking in the water.

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- Anglian water placed some lark matting and after four days of rain the barriers were removed. Anglian Water further advised that the area would not need decontamination with this weather.

The meeting asked the clerk to investigate the supply of wood chippings for the entrance onto the Recreation Ground.

7.7 **Cemetery and Churchyard Safety Reports** **Cllr A Grimes**

The meeting noted the previously circulated report and a further update from Cllr Grimes that:

- Plotting of the Old Cemetery was progressing
- The paintwork in the Porch of the Chapel of Rest would benefit from a wash down, seal and repaint, which could be considered as a job for a wet parish volunteer morning in the spring.
- See report – plotting progressing

7.8 **Village Greens Report** vacancy

The clerk reported that no reports had been received from residents

26.02.08 **Noted:** Clerk's Report

- 8.1 An update on current Estates Issues (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.26.02.02**) and

Resolved:

Authorise cost of a replacement lock for Chapel of Rest to BS3621 or superior at not more than £200.00 plus VAT (installed).

- 8.2 The actions agreed under the 3 year plan considered by the parish council in setting its budget for the next financial year (2026/27), the approved budget for the next financial year and proposed schedule of works for the Estates Committee (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.26.02.03**) and agreed that ideally, the cleaning of the village sign could be scheduled for late spring.

- 8.3 That Everflow had advised that Anglian Water may increase water supply charges by 11% from 1st April.

26.02.09 **Noted:**

The meeting considered an update on play area inspections (tabled and circulated as **WPC.EC.26.02.04**) and, raising no issues with the revised Service Level Agreement proposed by West Suffolk Council

Resolved

The Committee authorise the cost of purchasing a Dumpy Bag of Topsoil for levelling and spreading as necessary in the Children's Play area at the Recreation Ground, at a cost of £170.00.

26.02.10 **Noted:**

The meeting considered a proposal for authorising the costs of purchase and installation of two new parish noticeboards arising from recent grant funding (previously circulated as **WPC.EC.26.02.05**). Having been satisfied that the purchase and installation of new noticeboards was justified to increase community engagement in harder to reach parts of the parish, and noting that:

- The proposed site for installation at Clopton Green may require need an application to West Suffolk Council (it being their land)
- Residents of Attleton Green would in most cases be going past the existing noticeboard at Shop Hill to access facilities in the centre of the village; and
- A suitable site at Ashfield Green, though advantageous due to its distance from the centre of the village, may be difficult to identify

The meeting agreed that an alternative suitable site should be sought at the Surgery, Boyden End (which already caters to many of the outlying greens) and thanking Cllr

Signed: M Karunaratne

Dated: 09/04/2026

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Lavelle for his offer to approach the surgery to establish whether a noticeboard might be sited there.

Resolved

The Estates Committee purchase two parish noticeboards, at a cost of not more than £1500 plus VAT.

- 26.02.11 **Noted:** That when any other Council business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited, the following:
- Date for Fete and flower show – 11th July.
- 26.02.12 **Noted:** The scheduled date for the next meeting is 9th April 2026 in the Pavilion, Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre
- 26.02.13 **Noted:** Close of meeting. 19:50