

Wickhambrook Parish Council – Estates Committee

Minutes

Of a meeting of the Estates Committee held on 2nd July 2026

Present: Cllrs K Grimes, M Karunaratne, M Lavelle

Attending: Clerk Hilary Workman, Cllr Andrea Grimes

26.07.01 **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 note receipt of declaration(s) of Acceptance of Office.

26.07.02 **Noted:** Apologies for absence approved:

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

26.07.03 **Noted:**

That when invited, there were no Members' Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Registerable Interests in subsequent Agenda items and no additions nor deletions to the Council's Register of Interests.

26.07.04 **Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 9th April 2026, as tabled, be agreed as a true record

26.07.05 **Noted:** Public Forum – (**Open Session**)¹. 18:06pm

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

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

- All Saints PCC – request not to mow over hollyhocks planted in churchyard
- Local Resident – request for improvement to surface of path by school fence (FP23) – advice reported under Footpaths
- Local Resident – stream between Coltsfoot Close and The Duddery – signposting to Riparian Responsibilities

26.07.07 **Noted:**

Decisions of the Parish Council at its April and May meetings (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.26.07.01](#))

26.07.08 **Noted:** Reports to this meeting from Portfolio Holders or other agencies summarised below:

8.1 **Parish Assets (defibrillator)**

Cllr A Grimes

An oral update that:

- checking of units was up to date
- a newsletter from The Circuit included advice asking parish councils to learn 5 British Sign Language (BSL) signs: Help, pain, ambulance, medicine and hospital – the meeting asked the clerk to post a video with these signs to the website
- The defibrillator at the MSC had been taken out twice recently

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: Mel Karunaratne

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- A replacement battery for the unit at the MSC has been ordered
- Motion sensor lights have been fitted inside each cabinet, and a motion sensor light above the unit at the fire station at Clopton Green has also been fitted with thanks to Cllrs A & K Grimes.

8.2 **Environment & Sustainability** **Mrs M Jolland**

The clerk reported that a scheduled Litter pick was planned for Sunday, weather permitting.

8.3 [Footpaths officer report](#) (previously circulated) **Mr R. Medley**

8.4 [Tree Warden's report](#) (previously circulated) **Mrs Deb Moir**

8.5 **Youth Facilities** **Cllr Karunaratne**

8.5.1 Main Playground

An oral update that:

- Cllr Lavelle would arrange to purchase more palings from clerks of Walsham for the children's play area
- The bolts to the Green benches had been tightened (with thanks to Cllr K Grimes).

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 that:

- Play equipment (slide and multiplay) had been cleaned and treated for algae
- The gate closing speed had been adjusted again.

The meeting asked the clerk to consider how the Developer contribution in respect of play equipment arising from the proposed development at Bunters Road, if approved, might best be spent and how the parish council might best engage with West Suffolk and the Community to prioritise suggestions.

8.6 **Six Acres** **Cllr M Lavelle**

An oral update that:

- The Coronation Bench adjacent to the zip-wire would benefit from the joints being tightened
- Larger branches overhanging FP26 would benefit from cutting back and the meeting suggested that this be scheduled for a volunteer morning.

8.7 **Cemetery and Churchyard Safety** **Cllr A Grimes**

An oral update that:

- A recent inspection of All Saints Churchyard had identified that work may in future be required to the blue fir planted close to the front of the church. The meeting asked the clerk to report to the PCC and ask that no new planting take place without consulting with the parish council, who have the same responsibility for maintaining the churchyard, and its walls, gates, fences, grass, trees, etc., as the Parochial Church Council had prior to the giving of notice to transfer responsibility. This is because the Parish or District Council would need to apply for a Faculty (which has cost and time implications) to authorise any works in the churchyard other than routine maintenance, since the churchyard remains consecrated ground.
- The gates to the churchyard are rotten and permanently open
- The cemetery had been tidied on the volunteer morning the previous day and thanks extended to all participants
- A misinterpretation of the areas to cut under the grounds contract by the operatives had resulted in some areas of the cemetery being left uncut and some complaints from residents reported.

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- The clerk reported that having spoken with the grounds contractor, the cuts to the wildlife areas would be delayed to the back end of July to allow for all seeds to set
- The meeting asked the clerk to check the extent of undertakers' responsibilities to level graves in the cemetery.

8.8 Village Greens

Mrs Deb Moir

An update from the clerk that the bench below the cherry trees would benefit from attention to its fixings and that a post had been reported loose.

26.07.09 **Noted:** Clerk's report

- 9.1 An update on current Estates Issues (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.26.07.02](#)). The meeting asked the clerk to schedule cleaning of the village sign for the next parish morning on 5th August.
- 9.2 That following the kind offer of two oak tree saplings (f.o.c) from a local resident, the meeting thanked Cllr Karunaratne for nursing them through the spring and summer, and agreeing to plant them on the norther boundary of the Cemetery (within the hedge line), asked the clerk to engage with the school for a planting ceremony in the autumn.
- 9.3 That in May the clerk had submitted to applications to "The Repair Shop" in response to their casting call, for the refurbishment of the Memorial Clock, and also the Village Sign. Whilst the submissions were not successful on this occasion, The Repair Shop have said that they would be happy to keep parish details on record for any future casting opportunities.
- 9.4 Slats to the fencing at the Children's play area had been replaced with thanks to Cllr Lavelle.
- 9.5 Both Wickhambrook Surgery and West Suffolk Council having agreed locations of the proposed Noticeboards for which Cllr Sarah Pugh kindly contributed £1000 from their locality budget in the previous financial year (Minute [WPC.EC.26.02.10](#)), these items had since been ordered and should be delivered within four weeks.
- 9.6 The clerk had joined a demo session for Civicy, an asset management software package which is associated with SCRIBE.

26.07.10 **Noted:**

The meeting considered a review of the Grounds Specification for the next financial year 2027/28 (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.25.07.03](#)) and asked the clerk to check the shape and extent of the cut within the wildlife area situated by the Tennis Courts before referring back to full council.

26.07.11 **Noted:**

The meeting considered an update on play area inspections (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.26.07.04](#)) and, agreeing that the balance of the cost (relating to fixings of the bin - £29.24 plus VAT be dealt with under delegated authority in consultation with the Chair

Resolved

The Estates Committee authorise the cost of a replacement bin for the Children's play area at Cemetery Road at a cost of not more than £165.00 plus VAT

26.07.12 **Noted:**

The meeting considered an update on parish lands (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.26.07.05](#)) and agreed the actions set out in the report and below:

1. Update the registered address on each Title with HM Land Registry to ensure that any future notices served by them are sent to the correct address (exempt from fee)

Signed: Mel Karunaratne

Dated: 03/09/2026

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2. If Six Acres land is registered as common land, consider whether to apply to register Qualified Title of the land with HM Land Registry
3. Consider whether to apply for registration of the land used for the Cemetery
4. Get an initial estimate for the likely cost of clearing the ditch on the boundary between the Bowling Green and Thorns Close properties.
5. Establish whether any of the restrictive covenants recorded in the summary title deeds of Thorns close properties relate to any form of shared responsibility for the ditch to the rear of the properties.

26.07.13 Noted:

The meeting considered an update on the interim inspection of parish trees (tabled and circulated as [WPC.EC.26.07.06](#)) and take action as appropriate

Resolved

The Estates Committee authorise the cost of:

- i. Provision of a shredder and operator at not more than £140.00**
- ii. Work to parish trees identified in the interim report at not more than £660.00**

26.07.14 **Noted:** That when any other Council business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited, the following

- Wickhambrook gates and signage – A143

26.07.15 **Noted:**

That the scheduled date for the next meeting is 3rd September 2026 in the Pavilion, Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre

26.07.16 **Noted:** Close of meeting.18:59

Signed: Mel Karunaratne

Dated: 03/09/2026