

WOODTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 1st
September 2026 at 7.30pm

Present:

Cllr Jane Wickstead (JW) – presiding, Cllr Richard Denny (RD), Cllr Adam Fairhurst (AF), Cllr John Turner (JT), Cllr Steven Webb (SW), Cllr Caroline Wells (CW), District Cllr Chris Brown (CB), District Cllr Brendon Bernard (BB), County Cllr George Boyd (GB), and Yvonne Wonnacott – Parish Clerk (YW).

Apologies:

None.

Members of the Public:

None.

2026/038 Chairs welcome (to include any apologies for absence for approval)

Chair welcomed all present to meeting.

2026/039 To receive declarations of interest

None

2026/040 To approve a time limit for the meeting

Chair advised will aim to finish within 1.5 hours.

2026/041 To agree the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held 16th June 2026

Cllr Wells proposed minutes of the PC meeting held 16th June 2026 as previously circulated to be agreed as correct, all Members present at June meeting agreed. Minutes signed by Chair.

2026/042 Matters arising from the minutes of the PC meeting held 16th June 2026

A member of the public raised concerns at the June meeting regarding individuals accessing a private field adjoining the Community Wood. PC subsequently undertook a site visit to assess the situation but could not identify any exit points from the Community Wood into the adjoining field. It was agreed that no further action was required at the present time.

2026/043 Adjournment for public participation

None.

2026/044 Election/appointment of Vice-Chair

Cllr Wells volunteered to take up the position of Vice-Chair. All Members present accepted the offer, and Cllr Wells was duly appointed Vice-Chair.

2026/045 County/District Council report(s)

District Cllr Brown provided brief summary to meeting, key points summarised as follows.

- Local government reorganisation continues
- Greater Norwich Local Plan - Call for sites is now closed
- Food waste collection – second tranche delayed to November 2026
- Bungay Football Club – planning permission approved for 3G pitch

District Cllr Bernard advised that he had nothing further to report.

Chair welcomed County Cllr Boyd to his first Woodton meeting and thanked him for his previously circulated report. Key points summarised as follows.

- Parish Partnership Scheme 2027/28
- On 29 July, the Environment Agency declared that seven areas of England are now officially in drought, including East Anglia. An Anglian Water temporary use hosepipe ban is legally in force across parts of Norfolk.
- Norfolk County Council announced on 5th August that Dennis Bacon is its preferred appointment for chief executive.
- Norfolk Fire and Rescue (NFRS) colleagues alongside our partners in the Norfolk Road Safety Partnership, launched a motorcycle safety campaign, aimed at reducing the number of serious and fatal collisions on our roads involving riders.
- The Suffolk Water Recycling, Transfer and Storage (SWRTS) Project is a major new water infrastructure scheme being developed by Essex & Suffolk Water, which intends to improve long-term water security in Suffolk and the wider East Anglian region. It is currently in the pre-application phase.
- The Norfolk County Council (NCC's) apprenticeships website has now been updated with the new amendments to government policy on apprenticeships which come into effect this October.
- The Norfolk Crisis and Resilience Service (CRS) continues to provide support for Norfolk residents experiencing financial hardship, helping people with both immediate crises and longer-term financial resilience.

2026/046 Village hall

Cllr Wells provided update to meeting, key points summarised as follows.

- £700 was raised at the recent yard sale, with the funds to be allocated towards the kitchen refurbishment.
- A National Lottery grant of £18,837 has been secured towards the installation of solar panels and replacement of the front windows.
- A Community Facilities Grant application for £14,000 towards the kitchen refurbishment has been submitted; the outcome is awaited.
- The possibility of submitting an application to South Norfolk Council's In Bloom scheme is being explored. Match funding would be required.

Thanks expressed to Cllr Wells for her time, hard work, and outstanding achievements to-date.

2026/047 Finance matters

Expenditure for approval/to be noted

The following items of expenditure were formally noted and/or approved.

- Parish Clerk gross pay, September @ £477.10
- Parish Clerk pension, Nest, September @ £52.48
- Parish Clerk expenses, June @ £23.60
- Parish Clerk expenses, July @ £24.13, includes £1.65 VAT
- Parish Clerk expenses, August @ £25.96, includes £1.75 VAT
- Reimbursement to Cllr Fairhurst @ £32.64, includes £5.44 VAT, 4 x bags of postcrete (for installation of sign & sculpture)
- Signs Express @ £244.59 + VAT, signage for Community Wood, Forest School area
- Playsafety Ltd @ £123.00 + VAT, annual inspection
- JDW Environmental Ltd @ £830.00 + VAT, grounds maintenance
- HMRC, Parish Clerk, quarter 1 @ £224.83
- Woodton Parochial Church Council @ £500.00, donation as approved at June meeting
- PKF Littlejohn @ £210.00 + VAT, external auditor

Noted £150.00 donation from Bedingham Parish Meeting received, contribution towards Ravens Den/ Community Wood.

The Local Government Services Pay Award 2026/27, Clerk

Approved the Local Government Services Pay Award 2026/27 for the Clerk. The award provides for a 3.3% increase, effective from 1 April 2026, and is a one-year award covering the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

External Auditors Report and Certificate

Noted the External Auditor's Report and Certificate and the amendment required to Section 2 – Accounting Statements. The Council confirmed that it is not a sole managing trustee and that the response to Section 2, Box 11 should therefore be recorded as “Yes”. No other matters were raised or noted.

Notice of conclusion of audit 2025/26

Noted that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was published on 30 July 2026.

Introduction of new Digital AGAR Portal

Noted that SAAA (Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd) is introducing a new Digital AGAR Portal to simplify and improve the security and efficiency of AGAR submissions. The portal is expected to be available for the 2027 AGAR submissions and will initially be voluntary, with SAAA intending it to become the primary submission route and potentially mandatory from 2029. The Council agreed in principle to register for and use the scheme, including taking advantage of any incentive available for early adoption.

NPTS Autumn Seminar

Approved Clerks online attendance to seminar.

Donation to Parochial Church Council

Noted email of thanks received from PCC for £500.00 donation from PC.

Litter pick award

Noted £50.00 award received. Agreed in principle to purchase of portable pressure washer and water container. Clerk to provide prices for PC's consideration – YW.

Nature Conservation Grant

Noted that consideration had been given to establishing a growing area within the Community Wood. A budget estimate of £4,650 has been received from Anglian Water for a new water supply. Concerns were raised regarding the management and control of water usage and associated standard charges. Considering the estimated cost and concerns raised, it was agreed that establishing a growing area was not viable at the present time. PC agreed to proceed with the draft grant application, as previously circulated, for Phase 2 of the Community Wood. The proposed project will enhance an existing area through managed clearance, tree coppicing, new fencing, wildflower and grass planting, and the installation of two interactive interpretation boards to improve biodiversity and encourage greater appreciation of the natural environment. The total project cost is £9,000, with a grant request of £7,500 and £1,500 to be funded through CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). PC agreed to add basic costings to the application and submit the grant application – YW/JW.

2026/048 Planning

Applications received to date for consideration

2026/2180, Bevere, 26 Triple Plea Road – Agreed PC to respond PC does not object to application but would like to raise concerns with regards to the nature of privacy on the adjacent property, The Rectory – YW.

2026/2378, 2 The Woodyard Square – Agreed PC to respond “no comment” - YW

2026/2379, 8 The Wood yard Square - Agreed PC to respond “no comment” - YW

Decision notices received to date

2026/0939, Land To The North Of Church Road. Withdrawn.

2026/0270, Outline planning application. Land North Of Church Road. Approval with Conditions (Delegated).

2026/0995, Change of Use, The Old Post Office, Hempnall Road. Approval with Conditions (Development Management Committee).

Church Road development, drainage concerns

Noted that corrective works had been carried out to lagoon, resulting in the water draining away. PC to continue to monitor situation. Chair advised had received resident complaints with regards to noise and vibration levels, and height of pathways with direct concerns to potential future flooding. Chair advised residents to contact site manager direct with their concerns.

East Pye Solar Panel project

Noted Preliminary meeting 15th September 2026. Noted PC had submitted a comprehensive examination submission to The Planning Inspectorate within the required deadline. This submission was kindly put together by a parishioner who works as a researcher and analyst. PC expressed their gratitude to the volunteer for their time and work in producing the submission on behalf of the PC.

Greater Norwich Local Plan Scoping Consultation

Agreed draft response to be circulated to full PC for approval, response to include that the PC does not consider that further housing growth in Woodton is viable or justified. Several recent developments in the village remain unfinished, unsold, and/or unoccupied, including the 50-house development on Church Road currently being constructed, with no clear evidence of sufficient demand for the housing already being provided – YW/ALL.

2026/049 Environmental matters

Footpaths

Proposed future working party to maintain walkable condition of footpath located opposite the school. Damaged sign to be reported to NCC – RD.

2026/050 Administrative updates

Parish Clerk job description

Job description as previously circulated approved.

Councillor vacancy

To be added to next meeting's agenda – YW. Chair advised resident had expressed an interest in vacancy, Chair to recontact resident – JW.

Bank signatories

Noted former Vice-Chair had been removed and Cllr Wells added as signatory.

Speed awareness machines

No update.

Assets of Community Value (ACV)

Noted PC's application for The King's Head and Roti II ACV to be renewed was refused by South Norfolk Council. Agreed PC to submit a request for reconsideration/review of the ACV decision, challenging the reasoning under sections 88(2)(a) and 88(2)(b). Request to include a new application submission - YW. Both District Cllrs and County Cllr agreed for new application to include their endorsement of application – YW.

Autumn 2026 newsletter

Agreed newsletter to be distributed by 12th October 2026. Chair to product draft and circulate to full PC for approval – JW. Articles to include ACV nomination, East Pye, village hall, and Community Wood events.

District Cllr Brown and District Cllr Bernard left meeting 8.27pm.

Parish Council logo

Approved logo for inclusion on future correspondence, governance documents, and other PC material.

Website, biodiversity

Noted biodiversity section of website updated, new subpages, each focusing on key topic areas to provide residents with more detailed information about biodiversity and environmental initiatives within the parish.

Governance documents

Safeguarding policy – Agreed to adopt updated policy as previously circulated with immediate effect – YW.

Risk assessment for Speed Awareness Machines – Agreed to adopt risk assessment with immediate effect – YW.

Biodiversity policy – Agreed to adopt updated policy as previously circulated with immediate effect – YW.

IT policy – Agreed to adopt updated policy as previously circulated with immediate effect – YW.

Dignity at work policy - Agreed to adopt updated version as previously circulated with immediate effect – YW.

Business continuity plan – Item to be deferred to next meeting – YW.

ICO Model Publication Scheme Version 1.2 – Agreed to readopt scheme – YW.

Guide to information and schedule of charges - Agreed to adopt updated guide as previously circulated with immediate effect – YW.

2026/051 Community Wood/Ravens Den

Transfer of second area of land

Noted documentation received from solicitors, including Title Plan and Plan 1 and Plan 2. PC to review documents to ensure following.

- Happy with the areas shown on both plans.
- Is anything missing?
- Whether anything needs to be added in relation to the Parish Council's rights or access – ALL.

Once reviewed PC to advise solicitor accordingly – YW.

Annual inspection

Annual inspection report to be simplified into spreadsheet document and circulated to full PC – AF.

Forest school area

Noted signage “Fires are prohibited” now in place.

Sculpture

Post has been erected and sculpture to be installed – AF/RD. Agreed addition of plaque with wording “In memory of Harry Clarke” – SW. Proposed unveiling of sculpture, late September with press in attendance – AF.

Probationers visit(s)

Noted next visit 13th and 14th September. Highways 30mph sign coming into Woodton is unreadable, County Cllr Boyd advised he would report to NCC Highways – GB. 30mph sign located on Triple Plea Road has been knocked and is currently leaning at an angle into the hedge, PC to report the issue to NCC Highways - YW.

General

PC to look at websites that advertise good play areas to visit in Norfolk with a view to adding Ravens Den/Community Wood as entry – YW. Noted that a resident had placed plastic bowls and water bottles in the Community Wood for hedgehogs. These items had not been replenished with water or subsequently collected. It was agreed that the items should be removed.

2026/052 Yard sale, 4th July 2026

The Yard Sale was a successful event and was well attended. It was agreed that, going forward, the event should not necessarily be held annually, but could instead be considered on a biennial basis.

2026/053 Correspondence and consultations

Age UK Norfolk, donation request

Noted, no further action.

East Anglian Air Ambulance, clothing bank

Noted correspondence received thanking PC for supporting clothing bank programme.

Community Wellness Event

Noted Community Wellness Day on 29th September at the Jubilee Hall, Loddon from 11am to 4pm.

Norfolk Solar Summit, 4th September

Noted.

2026/054 Date of next Parish Council meeting, and items to be considered for agenda

Chair advised unable to attend next proposed meeting date, 13th October. Agreed to change meeting date to Monday 19th October. PC to update website and noticeboard – YW/JW.

Councillors to advise Clerk of any items for agenda – ALL.

2026/055 Chair's announcements

PC agreed to contact the grounds maintenance contractor to request that, going forward, prior notification is provided before any works are undertaken - AF.

Meeting closed 8.56pm.

Minutes prepared by Yvonne Wonnacott, Parish Clerk, 02/09/26

Approved:

Date: