

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wortham & Burgate Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 21st April 2026 in Wortham Pavilion at 7.31pm

Councillors present: Susan Wright, Jenny Piper, Chris Williams, Stephen Beckett-Doyle, Jacky Bradley
In attendance: Clerk - Jane Wright and 1 member of the public
Apologies: Cllr Judd, Cllr Castle & Cllr Neve

1. Chair's Welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Wright welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Judd, Cllr Castle and Cllr Neve were approved unanimously. Apologies were noted from Cllr Warboys.

2. To receive declarations of Interest from members on agenda items - None

3. To consider requests for dispensations from members on agenda items - None

4. To approve the draft minutes of previous Parish Council meeting -

4.1 Parish Council Meeting held on 17th March 2026 - approval proposed Cllr Piper, seconded Cllr Williams and approved unanimously with 2 abstentions (councillors who were not present at the meeting).

5. To co-opt a new member to a vacancy on the Parish Council -

A member of the public, Neil Kewley had expressed an interest in joining the council and his application was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Wright proposed Neil Kewley be co-opted as a Wortham Parish Councillor, seconded by Cllr Piper and approved unanimously.

Cllr Wright invited Cllr Kewley to join councillors. He signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, witnessed by the Clerk.

Clerk to forward a Register of Interest Form etc. for Cllr Kewley to complete

6. Public participation session to include District and County Councillors Reports -

6.1 To receive residents' questions or comments - None

6.2 To receive reports from the District and County Councillors - Cllr Warboys report was circulated prior to the meeting. See Appendix 1

7. To receive the Chair's Report - The Chair had given her report at the Annual Parish Meeting that preceded the Parish Council Meeting - See Appendix 2

8. To receive the Clerk's Report and o/s actions from the last meeting (for information only) -

The Clerk advised Councillors that the electrician has been contacted to rectify the faults as per his report, namely the disconnection of the underfloor heating.

The Rural Payments Agency have been contacted as numerous unread emails had revealed that an extension to the Environmental Stewardship had not been taken up. **Clerk to make further enquiries and forward the most recent email to the Commons Committee.**

The defibrillator has not been managed over the last few years and subsequently the battery and pads are now out of date. New pads and battery are now on order.

2026/PC/6.....APPROVED.....
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The electric meter at the Pavilion had come to the end of its life and EON had a legal obligation to replace it. A new meter has now been fitted.

BT came to install Wi-Fi at the Pavilion on 1st April but were unable to carry out the installation as the Pavilion is a non-served premises. It had been previously agreed to carry out the installation, but the cost will be now £235 plus VAT.

An invitation from MSDC to carry out the Play Inspection had not been taken up and therefore the Annual Inspection did not go ahead. MSDC were contacted and very kindly agreed to carry out the inspection. The full report has not been received, but the initial findings were that the Zip Line is not to be used, so has been cordoned off. Once the full report is received the repairs and any other findings will be addressed.

Waterfields have advised they will contact the Parish Council when they are able to complete the work on the Post Office Track.

A thank you letter from East Anglian Air Ambulance has been received for the donation of £20 made for the table tennis table.

The signs for the Commons and for the commemoration of the Twinning with Badbergen have been ordered.

Contractor contacted to cut the verge from the Primary School to the Mellis Road but he has not been able to visit to quote as yet.

All the historical documents have now been collected from a previous Councillor who had very kindly kept them safely for a number of years and they are now in the new Parish Office.

The lights in the Pavilion toilets have not been turned off on several occasions, as well as the verandah doors left unlocked. Signs have now been placed in the toilet cubicles and Clerk to contact the electrician to quote for PIR sensors. An email will also be sent to the Tennis Club asking them to ensure that all lights are off and doors locked when they leave the building.

The Clerk asked Councillors who monitor the SID's at either end of the village. Clerk to liaise with a resident on Magpie Green and pass on the Parish Council's appreciation for monitoring/moving them.

Clerk to contact resident of Magpie Green regarding the SIDS . Clerk to contact electrician for a quote for PIR lights in the toilets.

9. To consider, agree and/or note new planning applications

9.1 To receive an update DC/26/00187 - Householder Application - Alterations to existing garage to form new annex and erection of new cart lodge. Oak Wood House, Long Green, Wortham IP22 1RD - **Awaiting decision**

9.2 To receive an update DC/25/03257 - Planning Application - Construction of ground mounted solar panel arrays and associated infrastructure which will have the ability to export 49.9MW (AC) electricity. Construction of new vehicular access (EIA Development) Land at Stone Cottages, Bury Road, Botesdale IP22 1QH - **Awaiting decision**

9.3 To receive an update - Oak Trees, Burgate - **No Update**

10. To consider a request for a donation to the Pylons Group - A request has been received for a donation of between £100 - £500 to be made to the Pylon Group towards the ongoing legal costs.

The request was discussed but Councillors did they not consider a donation an appropriate use of Parish Council funds. Cllr Wright proposed that the Parish Council do not make a donation, seconded Cllr Williams, approved unanimously.

Clerk to inform the Pylon Group of the Parish Council's decision

2026/PC/7.....APPROVED.....

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11. Wortham Pavilion Improvement update - The proposed redevelopment and designs were discussed fully at the Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr Wright to share the details with Wortham Village Hall and then a decision will be made who else to consult. The updated plans have addressed storage and will provide more space, better insulation and be more economical than the current building. Estimated costs, grants etc are still to be explored.

12. Wortham Primary School Working Group update - The plans from the Land Registry have now been found and further discussions will be held on a date to be arranged. Cllr Bradley to contact Star Brewery to enquire if they would be in agreement to allow parking at the back of The Manor House to help with parking during school drop off times.

13. Village Maintenance Committee update - No further update

14. Parish Council Annual Insurance for 2026/27 - A 3 year deal had been agreed in 2024 with Clear Councils for the Parish Council Insurance. As the Policy premium is index-linked the premium is now £1351.03. Cllr Willams proposed that the Insurance Premium be approved for payment, seconded Cllr Kersley and approved unanimously

15. Annual Accounts for 2024/2025 (Previously unsubmitted)

15.1 To receive the Internal Audit Report for the 2024/2025 Accounts from Trevor Brown

The internal audit was circulated prior to the meeting and accepted by the Parish Council

15.2 To approve AGAR Section 1 for 2024/2025

Section 1 of the AGAR was circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting and the original documents were approved and signed by the Chair, Cllr Wright and RFO Jane Wright

15.2.1 A copy of the supporting document for Section 1 'no' responses was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The original document was signed by the Chair, Cllr Wright and RFO Jane Wright.

15.3 To approve AGAR Section 2 for 2024/2025

Section 2 of the AGAR was circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting and the original documents were approved and signed by the Chair, Cllr Wright and RFO Jane Wright

Proposed CW, seconded JP - unanimously agreed that the AGAR Sections 1 & 2 be signed as a true record, complete with the supporting document.

15.4 To approve the Accounts 2024-2025 - The accounts had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Proposed CW that the accounts be approved, seconded JP, approved unanimously.

Clerk to make the submission of the 2024/25 Accounts to PKF Littlejohn

16. Neighbourhood CIL Expenditure Reports for 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25

(Previously unsubmitted) & 2025/26 - It has come to light that no CIL Reports had been submitted to MSDC for the years 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25. These have now been completed by the Clerk. Cllr Wright proposed that all the outstanding reports were approved, seconded by Cllr Piper and approved unanimously. The report for 2025/26 was completed and circulated to Councillors at the meeting. Cllr Wright proposed that the report be approved, seconded by Cllr Williams and approved unanimously.

All CIL returns to be sent to MSDC and added to the relevant financial years on the website

2026/PC/8.....APPROVED.....

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17. To approve the Internal Control Statement & Risk Assessment and Management Policy for 2026/2027 - The Internal Control Statement and Risk Assessment and Management Policy were circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Cllr Williams proposed the approval, seconded by Cllr Piper and approved unanimously.

Clerk to add to the website

18. Accounts

18.1 Account balances as of 14/04/2026

18.1.1	Current Account	£47743.06
18.1.2	Reserves Account	£75944.70
18.1.3	Commons Account	£10318.53

18.2 Account Payments

18.2.1	SCC	Contribution to 30mph Mellis Road (Approved 20/5/2025 minute ref 24.2.8 but unpaid)	9557927	£5933.47
18.2.2	Allum Electricals	Electric testing, LED Lights etc at Pavilion	2817	£3543.96
18.2.3	East Anglian Air Ambulance	Donation for Table Tennis Table	Minuted 17/3/26 item 12	£20.00
18.2.4	CK Architectural	Step 3 Developed Design	1191397-0553	£1680.00
18.2.5	The Sign Maker	Sign to commemorate Twinning	2603.SV.092	£99.26
18.2.6	Top Garden Services	Grass Cutting (October 2025)	3569	£324.00
18.2.7	Top Garden Services	Grass Cutting (Nov 2025)	3570	£108.00
18.2.8	A Waterfields	Work on track at Post Office	AW-9754	£4800.00
18.2.9	MSDC	Play Inspection (January 2025)	20571	£75.40
18.2.10	Safe & Sound	Mole Control (March 2026)	11745	£60.00
18.2.11	Suffolk Cloud (Now Pear Space)	Website Hosting & Support	INV-PS0006	£120.00
18.2.12	Admin Payments	(Not itemised due to GDPR)	March/April 26	£2259.45
18.2.13	Clear Councils	Insurance 2026	LCO03127	£1351.03
18.2.14	SALC	Membership Subscription 2026/27	31365	£431.59
18.2.15	The Sign Maker	Signs for the Common	2603.DS.011	£1594.96

2026/PC/9.....APPROVED.....

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18.3 Direct Debit Payments

18.3.1	EON	Electricity Pavilion	£500.91
18.3.2	O2	Mobile Phone	£36.48
18.3.3	O2	Mobile Phone (update contract)	£24.00

18.4 Receipts

18.4.1	Wortham Village Hall	Overpaid Window Cleaning	£20.00
18.4.2	MSDC	Precept	£11105.01
18.4.3	MSDC	CIL Payment	£75.00
18.4.4	HMRC	VAT Refund (1st April 2022-31st March 2026)	£8873.15
18.4.5	WLTC Electricity	Invoice 227	£1545.95
18.4.6	WLTC Electricity	Invoice 229	£2351.72
18.4.7	WLTC Rent 2025/26	Invoice 230	£900.00

Additional payments/receipts received prior to the meeting.

18.2.16	SALC	Clerk Training Sessions 1,2,& 3	31427	£123.60
18.2.17	Community Heartbeat Trust	Defibrillator Pads and battery	21559	£333.60
18.2.18	J Wright	Mileage Expenses/Office Expenses	March/April	£146.44
18.2.19	Office Boffins	Office Furniture	SI2491120	£295.14
18.2.20	Office Boffins	Office Furniture	SI2490962	£81.54

It was proposed that all payments were approved en bloc - Proposed Cllr Williams, seconded Cllr Wright - unanimously approved.

Clerk to contact the electricity supplier to find out if the Parish Council are 'locked in' to an agreement, as the proposed change over to Octopus Energy agreed in October was not carried out.

Clerk to also enquire about a separate meter being installed for the Tennis Club

2026/PC/10.....**APPROVED**.....

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19. County Broadband Wayleaves Agreements - Wayleaves agreements that had previously been approved in May 2024 had not been submitted to County Broadband. All forms were signed again and **Clerk to submit for payment.**

20. To receive items from Committees/Working Groups/ Councillors (for information only)

- 20.1 Playing Field Committee - Meeting to be arranged in May, date to be confirmed
- 20.2 Commons Committee - Meeting to be arranged
- 20.3 Finance Representative - Nothing to report.
- 20.4 Employment Committee - Nothing to report.
- 20.5 Planning Committee - A Planning application was received after the agenda had been drawn up. An extension has been requested and will be added to the next meeting in May.
- 20.6 Redevelopment of the Pavilion Working Group - Covered at the Annual Parish Meeting.
Clerk to check if Terms of Reference or similar are required.
- 20.7 Village Maintenance Committee - Nothing to report
- 20.8 VHMC - The quiz was unfortunately cancelled due to lack of numbers. A new date to be advised and more advertising will be carried out.
- 20.9 Rights of Way - A complaint has been received by the Burgate Representative concerning a footbridge that borders Burgate and Mellis. Clerk to make enquiries and meet with Cllr Williams to address the issues with the bridge on Scama Lane and the sign near the old Chapel. Cllr Beckett-Doyle to be the representative for the Wortham Footpaths and will liaise with the former Councillor who was the previous representative.
- 20.10 Councillors - Cllr Beckett-Doyle now has various Wortham Archives which may be of interest. He has listed all the documents and will circulate to Councillors.

21. Correspondence Received - An email had been received from a resident who had expressed concern at the cost of the shower and toilet replacements at the Pavilion. The quotes for the work were approved in line with the Parish Councils Financial Regulations and were funded from CIL payments received. An email was received from a resident with a road safety concern along the Bury Road. There are currently 2 SIDS positioned on the Bury Road, one at either end of the village. The police carry out speed checks regularly in the village. Flashing lights have now been installed outside the Primary school but with no street lighting, a pedestrian crossing would not be possible. An email was received with concerns about the ponies on the common. The issue of the illegal grazing has unfortunately been an ongoing issue. **Clerk to contact Redwings, World Horse Welfare and PC Sophie Buckle from Rural Crime Team for any update and feedback**

22. To receive items for the next Agenda - Update of proposed redevelopment of Pavilion

23. Date and time of the next Meeting Annual Parish Council Meeting 19th May 2026 to be held in Wortham Pavilion

Meeting Close 8.52pm

2026/PC/11.....APPROVED.....

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APPENDIX 2

Wortham and Burgate Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report for 2025/26

2025/26 has been an eventful year for WBPC with both highs and lows of achievement.

Our previous Parish Clerk abandoned her duties in 2025 leaving a trail of unfulfilled tasks. Her formal resignation was accepted in January 2026 and she left her post at the end of February this year.

A new Parish Clerk, Jane Wright, was appointed in March 2026. There has not been a full handover of the Parish Council documents or property from the previous Clerk. The recovery of Parish Council property continues to be pursued.

Jane Wright has spent the last two months:-

- bringing the Parish Financial records up to date;
- organising missed internal audits;
- completing AGAR returns to the District Council;
- reclaiming VAT that had not been done at all during the previous Clerk's term of office. This amounted to a receipt of £8,000.
- dealing with in excess of 500 unopened emails addressed to WBPC Clerk.

The list of incomplete tasks goes on and will take time to unravel and resolve, but we are getting there.

Some good progress on outstanding projects has been made over the last year despite the inactive clerk due to direct action by proactive councillors:-

- The resurfacing of the parking bays on the track to the PO in March, 24 months later than planned
- Pavilion upgrade including creation of a parish office, relocation of the kitchen, replacing all the sanitary ware, internal painting of the non changing room area and overhaul of electrical system including replacement of all internal lights with LED lights with LED units.
- The PC has engaged an architect to evaluate and design an extension to the Pavilion with a view to creating a village hub, meeting and function space. The second draft proposal arrived this afternoon.
- Palgrave football club team members spread and compacted the planings over the entrance from Church Road to the Pavilion car park,

There is inevitably a list of outstanding actions on the Parish Councils things to do list which we hope to address in 2026/27.

These include in no particular order:-

- Outstanding repairs to the play equipment
- Drainage work on the commons
- Erection of no grazing signs on the commons and the removal of illegal grazers on them.
- Completion of the work by Waterfields on the parking bays on the approach track to the PO
- Making up the track around the common land in front of the school.
- Working through the plans, costs, funding and feasibility of extending the Pavilion

In summary it has been a challenging year but despite that thanks to some hard work the future looks much brighter and hopefully more productive.

Susan Wright
Chair of Wortham and Burgate Parish Council
21st April 2026

APPENDIX 1

Gislingham Ward
 Mellis, Gislingham, Thornham Parva, Thornham Magna Wortham &
 Burgate, Wickham Skeith.
 District Councillors Report

<p>Devolution and local government reform</p>	<p>In March the government announced its decision to form three new unitary authorities in Suffolk (covering West Suffolk, Central and East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich). Detailed boundaries are still being finalised. Further details can be found here: https://threecouncilsforsuffolk.org/</p> <p>Elections to the new ‘shadow’ unitary authorities will take place in May 2027. The unitary councils will take over formal responsibilities on ‘vesting day’ in May 2028. Until then, the existing County and District Councils will continue to deliver services as normal. This transition period is to enable detailed work on reorganisation to take place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · County Council elections – May 7th 2026 · Elections to the new unitaries – expected May 2027 · Mayoral elections – expected May 2028
<p>Council funding for neighbourhood plans</p>	<p>Mid Suffolk District Council has introduced new funding to support Parish Councils to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans and Reviews. A Neighbourhood Plan is written by the local community to help ensure that the right types of development are built in the right place.</p> <p>Until last year, groups developing a Neighbourhood Plan were able to apply for government grants of £10,000 to help cover the costs of technical support (funds were distributed via an organisation called Locality.) This grant scheme was withdrawn in June 2025. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have agreed alternative funding for our area, with grants of up to £20,000 to support groups to prepare Neighbourhood Plans .</p> <p>The government has increased targets for house-building across the country, as part of its ambition for 1.5 million new homes in this parliament. In Mid Suffolk the housebuilding requirement has risen from 535 to 748 new homes a year (up 40%).</p>
<p>Changes to waste collection and recycling start in June</p>	<p>The Better Recycling scheme is starting in June. This will see the collection of food waste and additional items for recycling, with more frequent collections overall.</p> <p>The new bins are now arriving throughout the district: every home across Mid Suffolk will be receiving a new blue-lidded bin and a smaller food-waste bin and food waste caddy. Until the start of the new scheme in June, residents should continue to use their existing bins as normal.</p> <p>Information packs will be sent out with further details, and information can also be found here: www.suffolkrecycles.org.uk and on social media @suffolkrecyles</p>
	<p><u>The Mid Suffolk Culture Fund was first awarded in 2025 to support community organisations that contribute to the rich culture of the district and help provide opportunities for people to engage with the arts. The fund ran again this year and 10 organisations have received a share of just under £120,000, with projects covering a wide range of areas and all age groups. This includes funding for Orchestras Live, which will use a grant of more than £8,000 to facilitate an intergenerational orchestral project in Eye and surrounding areas.</u></p> <p>Information on other grants available from the District Council can be found here:</p>

	https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/community-funding
Boost to arts funding	<p>The Mid Suffolk Culture Fund was first awarded in 2025 to support community organisations that contribute to the rich culture of the district and help provide opportunities for people to engage with the arts. The fund ran again this year and 10 organisations have received a share of just under £120,000, with projects covering a wide range of areas and all age groups. This includes funding for Orchestras Live, which will use a grant of more than £8,000 to facilitate an intergenerational orchestral project in Eye and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Information on other grants available from the District Council can be found here: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/community-funding</p>
NSIP's	<p>Bron Curtis Principal Planning officer (NSIP's) is continuing to run the expanded Norwich to Tilbury regular drop in session that includes all NSIPs including Ecopower Suffolk. The sessions will be held via Teams using the existing meeting invite and is open to anyone with queries about any NSIP. The next session is at 11.00. 14th May Link to join: Norwich to Tilbury NSIP: Babergh and Mid Suffolk drop in surgery Meeting-Join Microsoft Teams</p>

Rowland Warboys MSDC Cllr. Gislingham Ward

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