

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wortham & Burgate Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 19th May 2026 in Wortham Pavilion at 7.15pm

Councillors present: Stephen Beckett-Doyle, Jacky Bradley, Nick Castle, Neil Kewley, Kirsty Neve, Jenny Piper, Chris Williams & Susan Wright
In attendance: Clerk - Jane Wright, District Councillor Warboys and County Councillor Bains
Apologies: Councillor Judd

1. To elect a Chair of the Parish Council for 2026/2027

Cllr Piper proposed Cllr Wright be elected Chair 2026/27. Seconded by Cllr Bradley and approved unanimously with 1 abstention (Cllr Wright).

Declaration of Acceptance of Office signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

2. To elect a Vice Chair of the Parish Council for 2026/2027

Cllr Williams proposed Cllr Castle be elected Vice Chair 2026/27. Seconded by Cllr Piper and approved unanimously with 1 abstention (Cllr Castle).

3. Chair's welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Wright welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Judd were approved unanimously.

4. To approve the draft minutes of previous Parish Council meetings:

4.1 Parish Meeting 21st April 2026

Approval proposed Cllr Williams, seconded Cllr Piper, approved unanimously with 2 abstentions (Cllrs not at the meeting)

4.2 Parish Council Meeting 21st April 2026

Approval proposed Cllr Piper, seconded Cllr Kewley, approved unanimously with 2 abstentions (Cllrs not an the meeting)

4.3 Playing Field Committee Meeting 11th May 2026

Approval proposed Cllr Castle, seconded Cllr Piper, approved unanimously with 5 abstentions (Cllrs not at the meeting)

4.4 Commons Committee Meeting 11th May 2026

Approval proposed Cllr Williams, seconded Cllr Piper and approved unanimously with 5 abstentions (Cllrs not at the meeting)

5. To receive Declarations of Interest from members on agenda items - None

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

7. To appoint the Committees/Sub Committees/Working Groups

Cllr Wright proposed moving to agenda item 8 which Cllr Warboys and Cllr Bains were in attendance for. Approved unanimously.

8. Public participation session to include District and County Councillors Reports

8.1 To receive residents' questions or comments - No public in attendance.

8.2 To receive reports from the District and County Councillors -

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District Cllr Warboys read through his report (Appendix 1). Cllr Wright asked if grants would be available if the redevelopment of the pavilion went ahead, for solar panels to be installed. Cllr Warboys suggested that MSDC have a very useful page on their website offering various grants for general improvements to facilities. Cllr Wright thanked Cllr Warboys for his report.

County Cllr Bains was welcomed to the meeting as the new County Councillor. A report had been circulated to councillors from the previous district councillor, Cllr Fleming prior to the meeting. Cllr Bains introduced himself and gave a little of his background to councillors; having served in the military and now retrained as a heating engineer, he decided to venture into politics, not to sit on the sidelines and wants to make a difference. Cllr Wright thanked Cllr Bains and highlighted the help that Cllr Fleming had given to the villages over her time as the previous district councillor. Cllr Wright informed councillors that she had written to Cllr Fleming to pass on the thanks of the parish council.

Cllr Warboys and Cllr Bains left the meeting at 7.36pm.

7. To appoint the Committees/Sub Committees/Working Groups

Playing Field Committee: Cllr Castle, Cllr Piper, Cllr Kewley, Cllr Bradley & Cllr Beckett-Doyle

Commons Committee: Cllr Williams, Cllr Bradley, Cllr Neve, Cllr Piper & Cllr Judd

Planning Committee: Cllr Castle, Cllr Williams, Cllr Neve, Cllr Piper & Cllr Judd

Employment Committee: Cllr Wright, Cllr Castle & Cllr Bradley

Finance Representative: Cllr Castle

Wortham Footpath Representative: Cllr Beckett-Doyle

Burgate Footpath Representative: Cllr Williams

Redevelopment of the Pavilion Working Group: All councillors & Joy Cornish (Wortham Village Hall)

Village Maintenance Committee - it was unanimously agreed that the Village Maintenance Committee could be dissolved.

9. To receive the Chair's Report - The Chair advised councillors that all the accounts for 2025/26 have now been audited and subject to approval at item 17, will be submitted to PKF Littlejohn, External Auditor. WLTC rent will be reviewed at the next playing field committee meeting. A positive response has been received from WLTC regarding the proposed redevelopment of the pavilion.

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

All the accounts for 2024/25 have now been submitted to PKF Littlejohn.

The defibrillator now has a new battery and pads. It is also now registered with The Circuit so it is accessible by the ambulance service.

An email has been sent to pass on the thanks of the parish council to the volunteer who very kindly moves the SID's around the village. He would be very grateful if a new volunteer could be found.

Cllr Castle and Cllr Neve very kindly offered to take over.

The gutters at the pavilion need clearing.

Clerk to contact the volunteer regarding the SIDS and obtain quotes for gutter clearance.

11. To consider, agree and/or note new planning application:

11.1 - To consider Application for Planning Permission - DC/26/01585

Proposal: Householder Application - Demolition of existing garage and erection of single storey

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side & rear extensions. Amendments to existing fenestration.

Location: Sunnyview, Long Green, Wortham, Diss Suffolk IP22 1RD -

The planning application was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. After discussing the application it was proposed by Cllr Piper that the Parish Council has no objection to this application, seconded Cllr Castle. Approved unanimously

11.2 - To consider Application for Planning Permission - DC/26/01844

Proposal: Full Planning Application (Retrospective) - Subdivision of four blocks of buildings to provide 7 no. individual premises with the following changes of use: Unit 1B - Woodworking (B2), Unit 3A - Office (E(g)(i)), Unit 3B - Storage (B8), Unit 4 - Office (E(g)(i)) and associated alterations, Unit 5 - Metal Fabrications (B2), Unit 6 - Storage (B8) and Unit 7 - Storage (B8) with Office (E(g)(i))

Location: The Rookery, Bury Road, Wortham, Diss, Suffolk IP22 1RB -

The planning application was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. After discussing the application it was proposed by Cllr Williams that the Parish Council has no objection to this application, seconded by Cllr Bradley. Approved unanimously

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

11.4 - 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

11.5 - To receive an update - Oak Trees, Burgate - NO UPDATE

12. Wortham Pavilion Improvement update - Cllr Wright & Cllr Kewley have sent the plans for the proposed redevelopment of the pavilion to the Village Hall and Wortham Bowls Club. From the proposed plan, WLTC have raised concerns that parking would be insufficient. Access to and the number of toilets is also a concern. Cllr Castle suggested that 2 toilets be made available to the public from the playing field, but this would raise issues with cleaning and potential damage. There is currently a toilet near to the entrance of the pavilion which houses a shower, so it was suggested that the shower be removed and if possible make the area into a further toilet cubicle.

Storage seems to be a further concern, but it was agreed that the proposed area would not need to be much bigger in order to house tables and chairs (from the village hall).

Solar panels and a ground source heat pump have all been put forward to the architect as possible options. It is hoped that the redevelopment would be fully costed and plans submitted by September. Cllr Wright will email the architect and copy all councillors in to keep everyone up to date.

13. Wortham Primary School Working Group update - The plans for the area of land outside the primary school are now in the Parish Office. The existing track needs to be re-surfaced, however, Open Spaces need to be contacted to find if any permission is required and also if there is a permitted type of surface that would need to be laid. Following a reply from Open Spaces, clerk to contact 3 potential contractors. The Asset of Community Value is due to expire on The Manor House in December 2026. The Manor House is now in a huge state of disrepair, has been broken into and suffered from anti-social behaviour.

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There is no longer access to the rear of the pub, which is why there seems to be more of a problem with parking during school drop off times.. Cllr Bradley to contact Star Pubs to enquire if they would consider allowing use of the car park.

Clerk to contact Open Spaces

14. To consider the repairs to Playground Equipment - The quote for the repair work required to the zip-line was requested by the clerk following the playing field committee meeting. This has not yet been received, but has been promised by HAGS by Thursday 21st May. The repairs were initially approved in July 2025 but these were not carried out. With this in mind, it was proposed by Cllr Castle that approval be given for the repairs to be carried out up to a sum of £3,000 plus VAT, seconded by Cllr Piper and approved unanimously. **Clerk to chase quotation**

15. To consider Electricity Supplier for the Pavilion - the electricity supply to the pavilion came up for renewal in October 2025 when it was agreed to transfer the supply to Octopus Energy. This wasn't actioned and the tariff with E.ON Next was automatically transferred to the Business Flexible tariff for a further 12 months. The Clerk sourced quotes from various suppliers, however, as the contract with [E.ON](#) Next did not expire until October 2026, the tariff would remain the same until October if the supplier was changed. Quotes were provided by [E.ON](#) Next whereby the tariff could be changed the next working day. The Clerk had prepared a comparison of various tariffs which was circulated to councillors and it was proposed by Cllr Williams that the supply be transferred to a 2 Year Fixed Business Plan with a standing charge of 30p per day, day rate of 31.8pence per kWh and night rate of 21.1pence per kWh, seconded by Cllr Castle and approved unanimously.

Clerk to contact [E.ON](#) Next

16. Internet installation at Pavilion update - The clerk had a meeting with a site surveyor from Openreach regarding the installation of internet at the pavilion. The surveyor has advised that due to the position of the existing poles, a new pole would need to be installed at the end of the hedge near the tennis court and then be ducted underground to the pavilion. He estimated costs to be in the region of £1,000. Councillors queried why this work was necessary, when there is currently internet at the village hall. The possibility of satellite internet was also discussed as a possibility. **Clerk to contact Openreach to see if there are any further options and make enquiries about satellite internet.**

17. Annual Accounts for 2025/2026

17.1 To receive the Internal Audit Report for the 2025/2026 Accounts from Trevor Brown - The Internal Audit report was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting.

17.2 To appoint an Internal Auditor for 2026/2027 -

The Chair wished to thank Trevor Brown for assisting the clerk to complete all the outstanding accounts for 2024/25 and 2025/26. Cllr Castle proposed that Trevor Bown be appointed as Internal Auditor for 2026/2027, seconded Cllr Bradley and approved unanimously.

17.3 To approve AGAR (Annual Governance Accountability Review) Section 1, Section 1 'No Responses' and Section 2 for 2025/2026 -

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, together with Section 1 'No' responses.

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17.3.1 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 Cllr Castle, seconded Cllr Bradley - unanimously agreed that the AGAR Sections 1 & 2 be signed as a true record.

17.4 To approve the Accounts 2025/2026 -

The accounts for 2025/26 had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Castle proposed approval of the accounts, seconded by Cllr Bradley and approved unanimously.

17.5 To approve Asset Register 2025/26 -

The Asset Register had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. The Chair will liaise with the clerk to ensure that all the details are updated in readiness for the 2026/27 year end. Cllr Castle proposed approval of the asset register, seconded by Cllr Bradley and approved unanimously.

A monthly Income & Expenditure summary will now be prepared by the clerk and presented to the council at each parish council meeting

Clerk to submit AGAR Section 1, 2 and 'no' responses to PKF Littlejohn.

Monthly Income & Expenditure to be prepared for each Parish Council meeting

18. Policy Review and Approval

Standing Orders* - deferred to June meeting

Financial Regulations* - deferred to June meeting

Terms of Reference (Amalgamated Version)

IT Policy

Code of Conduct

Data Protection (GDPR) Policy

Retention of Data and Documents Policy

Freedom of Information Policy

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

The individual Terms of Reference have now been amalgamated into one document and will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis. The Commons Committee approved at their meeting on 11th May 2026, minute ref 5, to review every 3 years instead of 4 to keep in line with the other committee/working groups TOR's. In line with the Internal Auditors report, with the exception of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, which were deferred until the next meeting, the above policies were drawn up and circulated to councillors. It was proposed by Cllr Castle to approve and adopt all the above policies, seconded Cllr Kewley and approved unanimously.

Clerk to add all policies to the Parish Council website. Clerk to liaise with the Chair to draft Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in line with NALC's models 2025

19. Accounts

19.1 Account balances as of 13/05/2026

19.1.1	Current Account	£37716.53
19.1.2	Reserves Account	£76024.60
19.1.3	Commons Account	£10329.39

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19.2 Account Payments

19.2.1	Safe & Sound	Mole Control	11816	£60.00
19.2.2	Pear Space	.gov.uk domain registration/renewal	INV-PS0089	£90.00
19.2.3	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit	2024/2025	£329.70
19.2.4	121 Computer Services	Computer Security (July 2024 invoice)	45701	£69.98
19.2.5	Admin Payments	Not itemised due to GDPR	May Salaries	£1665.05
19.2.6	J E Wright	Expenses	April/May	£149.13
19.2.7	T G Askew	Planings for Village Hall Track	54049	£732.00
19.2.8	Wortham Village Hall	Window Cleaning Pavilion	172	£40.00
19.2.9	Pear Space	Accessibility Report for website	INV-PS0101	£70.00

19.3 Direct Debit Payments

19.3.1	EON	Electricity Pavilion	£TBA
19.3.2	O2	Mobile Phone	£24.24

19.4 Receipts

19.4.1	Interest	Commons Account	£10.86
19.4.2	Interest	Reserves Account	£79.90
19.4.3	County Broadband	Wayleaves	£2320.50

Additional payments/receipts received prior to the meeting.

Overtime payments to the Clerk had been authorised by the Chair prior to the meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Williams that all payments be approved en bloc, seconded by Cllr Bradley and approved unanimously.

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

20.1 Playing Field Committee - The Playing Field Committee will meet on Tuesday 23rd June at 6.30pm in Burgate Church Hall.

20.2 Commons Committee -The Commons Committee will meet at the Pavilion on Tuesday 9th June at 6.30pm to draw up a plan for capital works.

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- 20.3 Finance Representative - Nothing to report
- 20.4 Employment Committee - Meeting to be arranged in July
- 20.5 Planning Committee - None
- 20.6 Redevelopment of the Pavilion Working Group - As above
- 20.7 Village Maintenance Committee - Committee dissolved at item 7
- 20.8 VHMC - nothing to report
- 20.9 Rights of Way - Cllr Beckett- Doyle to meet with the previous Footpath Representative. **Clerk to investigate the whereabouts of the enlarged copies of the Rights of Way.**
- 20.10 Councillors - Cllr Neve asked if the clerk could contact Highways to arrange for the speed to be monitored along Long Green.
Clerk to contact Highways.

21. Correspondence Received - An email had been received from a resident in Great Green, Burgate raising an issue with the speed of vehicles and the state of the road. Clerk to inform the resident that the road is a private road and owned by Christine Howard.

22. To receive items for the next Agenda - Dates for meetings for 2026/27

23. Date and time of the next Meeting Tuesday 23rd June at 7.15pm to be held in Burgate Church Hall

APPENDIX 1

GISLINGHAM WARD

Mellis, Gislingham, Thornham Parva, Thornham Magna, Wortham & Burgate, Wickham Skeith

May 2026

<p>Devolution and local government reform</p>	<p>New website - jointly created by Suffolk's county, district and borough councils - providing simple and clear information and updates about Local Government Reorganisation in Suffolk.</p> <p>The Future Suffolk website will go live Friday 15 May at www.suffolklgrhub.gov.uk It has been developed in-house by the councils' communications teams, and will evolve as plans progress, but it already includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explainers about LGR • a timeline of the LGR process and key milestones • maps showing the new council boundaries • details about the 2027 shadow authority elections. <p>The site also includes an interactive map showing provisional ward names and boundaries, as well as details of councillor numbers. These have been shaped, in line with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's guidance, by cross party groups of councillors with support from our democratic services and elections teams.</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"> • 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>As government funding has been withdrawn 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>

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May 2026

<p>Clarification Joint Local Plan</p>	<p>The new Joint Local Plan is proceeding in response to significant changes in national planning policy (December 2024) and updated Government housing requirements. The most recent Call for Sites exercise, held from 20th October 2025 to 9th January 2026, was an essential early evidence-gathering stage. This followed an earlier Call for Residential Sites exercise undertaken between 5th January and 2nd February 2024.</p> <p>What is being published and why</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Councils are publishing a map of all sites submitted during these Call for Sites exercises. This will be published on Friday 27th February and can be accessed here from Friday https://www.babergh.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/call-for-sites and https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/call-for-sites• This is not a list of preferred development locations.• Publication promotes transparency and ensures communities have early visibility of what has been suggested. <p>Key Messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No planning status is granted by submission. Sites do not benefit from any presumption of development.• Submissions will now be assessed against planning policy, constraints, evidence and deliverability criteria.• Residential sites previously submitted in 2024 are still included in the assessment process.• Assessment outputs will be published through the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in Spring 2026. <p>Officer assessment does not determine allocations — that occurs at the draft plan stage, which will be subject to full public consultation.</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. Until the start of the new scheme in June, residents should continue to use their existing bins as normal.</p> <p>Information packs are being sent out with further details, and information can also be found here: www.suffolkrecycles.org.uk and on social media @suffolkrecycles</p>
<p>Solar for Business</p>	<p>Over 250 solar panels were installed last month to the rooftops of sister companies Wrightfield and Wrightform at Mid Suffolk Business Park in Eye, as part of a new council scheme – offering businesses the opportunity to reduce carbon emissions and save on energy bills by signing up to have solar panels provided and installed on their premises for free.</p> <p>Electricity generated by the panels is then sold to the business at a rate lower than their current tariff, helping to slash energy bills and improve their bottom line.</p>

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	<p>In its first month of operation, the installation has already generated 15,000kWh of renewable electricity and is on track to not only save the firms more than £10,000 in electricity bills in its first year, but also save up to 25 tonnes of CO2 emissions. Solar for Business has been running successfully in West Suffolk for more than nine years, but has only recently been extended, with Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils joining forces with West Suffolk Council to allow even more businesses to benefit.</p>
NSIP's	<p>The Inspectors for Norwich to Tilbury have already visited the Waveney valley on the unaccompanied site visits, there are no MSDC visits on the accompanied site visits on 27th May. We have already made submissions to the examination about impacts on the Waveney Valley and preferences for undergrounding, both in writing and verbally at the recent hearings. The Inspectors have asked for some more viewpoint assessment in this area but it focusses on the setting of a listed church in South Norfolk rather than the valley landscape as a whole. We are still pursuing compensation for the Waveney Valley impacts.</p> <p>I asked the following at the last meeting: "The amount of infrastructure needed to connect the different solar installations is in my opinion disproportionate to the benefits of the scheme? Is there any guidance on how much the impact of connection of a Solar Farm to the Grid can be tolerated?"</p> <p>From Bron: "Regarding EcoPower – there's no specific guidance as such, it's each case on its merits as with other planning decisions. But, we can raise this concern at the upcoming statutory consultation which will go to joint cabinet briefing for member review and amendments sometime in June or July. We have also already raised concerns about the cumulative impacts around the substation and will be pursuing this point further. I have copied Cllr. Dan Pratt into this email as he is taking over the lead on the EcoPower project with my support so, between, us we can make sure we are representing the concerns of communities effectively." Statutory Consultation starts 22nd June for 8 weeks.</p> <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. 11th June Link to join: Norwich to Tilbury NSIP: Babergh and Mid Suffolk drop in surgery Meeting-Join Microsoft Teams</p>

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