

Wickmere with Wolterton Parish Council

Minutes of the ordinary Parish Council Meeting held in the Village Hall, Wickmere

on Wednesday 8th July 2026 at 7pm

Present:

Parish Councillors:	Lesley Ash (Chair)	Richard Hembling	Alwin Harmer
	Phillida Hurn	Georgina Madeley	Barry Markham
	Vanessa Tomczynska		

Also in attendance:

Vicky Tovell, Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – apologies were received from District Cllr Toye and County Cllr Ringer.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - to receive declarations of interest in agenda items and individual dispensations. None declared.
- 3. MINUTES** - The minutes of the annual meeting of 13th May 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.
- 4. ADJOURNMENT** – to adjourn the meeting to receive NNDC & NCC reports, comments from members of the public and those with a disclosable interest. The clerk read the following report from Cllr Toye:

I continue to chase organisations for better digital connectivity there is a new organisation working with churches and the mobile network operators to deliver mobile coverage. We are currently trying to get all parties involved. The company that installs the equipment do it at their own expense and as I understand it at this time give free wifi to the church. To residents apart from possibly some masts on churches it should be invisible apart from the fact you get mobile coverage on your normal phone in the normal way.

We are currently awaiting responses from the mobile network operators and talking to other areas (Cambridge) who have already gone through the process. I will keep you updated.

Where county council has cut community funds North Norfolk now has a Cllr Fund which has become available. I will be sending this to my 9 parish councils at the same time in a separate future email.

Council discussed Cllr Toye's report and it was agreed improved mobile network coverage is much needed. Council hoped this new initiative would materialize as previously a similar scheme had not.

- 5. CLERK'S REPORT & MATTERS ARISING** - to receive information on matters arising from previous meeting and those not mentioned elsewhere on the agenda

1. **AGAR** – council noted the AGAR data had been logged with PKF Littlejohn and Wickmere’s status as a council exempt from external audit confirmed. Council noted the period for the Exercise of Public Rights was publicised and active until 7th August 2026.
2. **Legislative change re Register of Interests** – council noted changes to Localism Act 2011 means co-opted and elected members’ home addresses would no longer be publicly available on the Register (email circulated 01-06-26). Clerk stated the councillors’ Register of Interests were available on NNDC’s website and could be accessed via a link on Wickmere parish council’s website.
3. **Pension** – council noted the redeclaration of compliance with The Pensions Regulator had been completed 9th June. The qualifying earnings threshold is currently £6240 so there is no requirement to enrol the clerk in a workplace pension scheme.
4. **Ponds for Every Parish** – to hear any updates on Norfolk Ponds Project. There had been no response to the Facebook post asking for interested parties to become ‘Pond Ambassadors’.
5. **Ramblers’ Association** – to consider the RA’s request for parish councils to monitor and audit footpaths and ROWs (deferred from previous meeting. Correspondence and NCC’s Definitive List and map re-circulated). It was agreed councillors would give feedback about footpaths, ‘as and when’, to clerk, including but not limited to comments on accessibility, safety and signage and positive ‘all clear’ comments. Clerk would report any concerns to NCC and collate a footpath report for the Annual Parish Meeting.
6. **Clerk’s Appraisal** – to hear update regarding the clerk’s annual appraisal. Clerk thanked Cllrs Harmer and Hembling for undertaking the annual appraisal 01-07-26 and reported it was useful. Agreed objectives were: i) reduce working hours to within contract; ii) work on role as an independent advisor; and iii) be clear and concise with guidance. Council noted as per the clerk’s contract, an annual increment of a pay spine point to SPC9 from April 1st 2026 would need backdating. Additionally, the Local Gov Service Pay Agreement 26/27 had not been received.
7. **Any other matters arising** from the previous meeting not mentioned below. There were none.

6. FINANCE

1. The bank reconciliation was received, approved and signed. Bank statement 113 showed a current account balance of £4,716.87 on 15th June 2026 with £15,063.35 in the linked savings account.
2. The receipt of a refund of £90 from NPTS due to an invoicing error and overpayment was noted.
3. The draft payments tabled below were approved
4. It was noted year-end figures 2025-26 had been previously compared against the 2025-26 Budget and variance noted (Minutes 13-05-26 Item 9.4). The accounts to month 4 were noted and compared against the budget for 2026-27.
5. To appoint an internal auditor for 2026-2027 – it was agreed to appoint Elaine Tinsley as internal auditor for 2026-2027 at a cost of £40.00

7. GOVERNANCE AND PROPER PRACTICES

1. To review and update Privacy Statement for website. Council noted and approved an updated Privacy Statement (circulated) and agreed the Chair would sign and the clerk would publish it on the website.

8. DEFIBRILATOR

1. To hear any updates on the status of the defibrillator. Cllr Hembling reported he would continue to perform monthly checks of the apparatus. Cllr Madeley offered to give the housing of the apparatus a clean.
2. Council discussed clerk's (circulated) report regarding renewal of the annual support package for a further 4-year period of cover with Community Heartbeat Trust. Current package due would expire 01-10-26. Council heard package supplies a new battery after 4 years and up to 4 sets of pads per year if required. Package also offers loan of replacement unit if required. The annual cost had increased from £135 plus VAT to £196 plus VAT. The defibrillator had been deployed, but not used, twice, in April and May 2025. Council agreed to renew annual support package with Community Heartbeat Trust.

9. PLANNING

1. **To hear planning applications received:** council noted
 - i. None
2. **To hear planning decisions received:** council noted (circulated)
 - i. LA/26/0838 Keepers Cottage, Wolterton Hall, NR11 7LY. Alterations to Listed Building with approved steel framed casement windows replaced by timber framed and including replacement window east elevation and sliding rather than hinged door to kitchen. DECISION: Approved (12-06-26)

10. HIGHWAYS – to consider any highway matters raised

1. council noted (circulated) NTRO011321 Emergency road closure of The Street, Erpingham, due to burst water main; NTRO11343 temporary road closure Common Road/West End Wickmere for replacement fire hydrant and cover works
2. any other highway matters – none.

11. VILLAGE HALL

1. to hear any reports and updates from the VHMC. Chair of WCHMC Cllr Hembling reported the June Hog-Roast was successful with over 40 residents in attendance. The Hall would be used for the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner on 16-07-26
2. to refer any relevant matters to the VHMC – clerk requested any Agenda items for the WVHMC formal committee meeting on 13-08-26

12. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Council noted Cllr Ringer's Report (circulated 16-06-26). Cllr Hembling stated the closure of local schools (Corpusty) and changing catchment areas would affect other local schools. Aldborough had seen a marked increase in intake
2. Council discussed email from MOP (circulated) regarding ownership of the covid grant monies and the reported conversation with the leader of NNDC. It was agreed Cllr Markham would contact the Chief Executive of NNDC to seek confirmation the current administration of the covid grant money is proper. Clerk requested to be copied in on the correspondence.
3. Council discussed email from MOP (circulated) regarding challenging the budget to find cost efficiencies including the role and duties of the clerk. Council agreed the clerk's appraisal and objectives had partly addressed the concerns. It was further agreed council would review the employment contract every three years: first review due May 2027. It was noted a parish council is not a business entity, but councillors would continue to consider cost efficiencies within the budget and seek to obtain optimum services and products for the best price.
4. Council heard email from Mr Richard Ellis inviting council to visit Wolterton Hall for an informal meeting to hear progress on recent site developments and to be informed of

future planning applications (circulated). Council agreed to accept the invitation. Clerk would action.

- 13. TO NOTE LATE CORRESPONDENCE AND REFER TO IT NEXT MEETING** - Cllr Ringer's July report (circulated). It was noted the Local Member's Fund and the Community Fund had been abolished by the new Reform council at NCC.
- 14. TO HEAR REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS AND OTHER BUSINESS**
 1. Cllr Hembling reported a MOP had enquired whether there was potential for a playing field on land adjacent to the Village Hall driveway entrance. The MOP would contact the landowner to see if the land could be made available and under what terms. Council agreed to wait to hear the result of this enquiry before further discussion.
 2. Cllr Ash reported she would attend the online seminar provided by Rural Services Network on Affordable Rural Housing (15-07-26). Cllr Ash would provide a report for council in September's meeting.
- 15. EMPLOYMENT** – to resolve to exclude the press and members of the public to discuss employment matters if required. Not required.
- 16. NEXT COUNCIL MEETING** – an ordinary meeting of the council will be on 9th September 2026
- 17. TO CLOSE THIS MEETING** – there being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.20pm

Receipts & Payments

Date	Payee	Description	Receipt	Payment	Balance
BACS, DD, SO or Transfer					
15-06-26	Bank Statement	112			5,475.23
20-04-26	HMRC	Tax refund	27		
30-04-26	NNDC	Precept	2,035.00		
11-05-26	ICO	Data Protection fee		47.00	
11-05-26	V Tovell	Salary & Expenses		259.13	
15-05-26	Bank Statement	113			7,231.10
21-05-26	V Tovell	Travel & other Expenses March-April		158.00	
21-05-26	NPTS	Annual Subscription		162.00	
21-05-26	E Tinsley	Annual Audit		30.00	
28-05-26	WVHMC	Grant 26-27		1,650.00	

01-06-26	NPTS	Refund overpayment	90.00		
01-06-26	Zurich	Insurance yr1		345.10	
11-06-26	V Tovell	Salary & Expenses		259.13	
					4,716.87
Draft Payments Tabled for Approval					
09-07-25	V Tovell	Travel and other expenses (May/June)			£91.09

Linked 90 days notice Savings Account (credit interest rate 1.93%)

Date	Payee	Description	Receipt	Payment	Balance
15-01-26	Wickmere Parish council current account	Opening Transfer	15,000		15,000.00
02-04-26	Co-operative Bank	Credit Interest	63.35		15,063.35
02-07-26					15,063.35