



## **YAXHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF YAXHAM PARISH COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> OCTOBER 2025 AT 7.30PM IN THE DAVID MYHILL ROOM AT YAXHAM VILLAGE HALL**

**Present:** Cllrs Ben Conway (Chair), Maggie Oechsle (MO), Paul Bone (PB), Graham Howe (GH), Gary Davison (GD), Chris Couves (CC) and Bob Gust (BG).

**In attendance:** Clerk, DC Paul Plummer, and 4 members of the public

#### **1. Chair's opening remarks**

The Chair welcomed everyone and emphasised that the Parish Council is there to serve the best interests of the village. The Chair encouraged more parishioners to attend future meetings, noting that while councillors strive to represent the community, their views may not always reflect those of all residents. Greater participation from parishioners would help ensure that wider range of perspectives and concerns are heard and considered.

#### **2. Apologies for absence**

None.

#### **3. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation.**

None.

#### **4. Public Session**

A resident addressed the Council regarding the gates associated with planning application PL/2025/0763PAAF. He noted that, having read the previous minutes, he agreed with councillors concerns about the colour of the gates and intends on painting them forest green. The resident reported that his Planning Agent had been contacted by a Breckland Council enforcement officer regarding the gate's height and their proximity to the road. The gates are currently situated 1 meter from the road, whereas regulations require 2.5 meters. He confirmed that, if it is determined the gates need to be moved, he will comply. The resident expressed his willingness to work with the community and invited anyone with concerns to speak to him. He also clarified that the gates are temporary measure and not his long-term intention for the site.

Cllr Bone joined the meeting.

#### **5. Reports from County and District Councillors**

DC Plummer reported that Breckland District Council will be transferring control of local car parks to town councils, primarily due to the upcoming unitary authority changes. The intention is for town councils to manage the car parks locally, as they are best placed to understand community needs. However, this will require town councils to fund ongoing maintenance.

DC Plummer also clarified recent concerns regarding solar farms. Contrary to some reports, Breckland District Council did not invite solar farms to the area as part of its 2019 climate emergency plan. The main power infrastructure is the wind turbines from the North Sea, which connect at Necton. Solar farm developers have sought to connect to this. Additionally, new pylons are planned from Tilbury to Norfolk and then to Necton to take all the power to London. Norfolk will not benefit from the electricity generated by the solar farms.

MO enquired whether the recent Breckland Cabinet meeting had agreed the consultation period for the Call for Sites. DC Plummer was not present at the meeting but will look into it.

## 6. Minutes of Previous Meeting

**6.1.** To approve the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 24.9.2025

The minutes of the meeting were **approved** without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record. **All agreed.**

**6.2.** To receive the Clerk's Report on matters since the last meeting.

- Yaxham Parish Council's Response to the Proposed Residential Development Land at Dimpling Green, Dereham was sent to Armstrong Rigg Planning.
- A list of potholes and other defects was sent to the Highways Rangers Service.
- Breckland Planning Enforcement was contacted regarding the installation of high metal gates associated with planning application PL/2025/0763/PAAF.
- Yaxham Charity's Annual Return has been submitted to the Charity Commission.
- An email was sent to Lanpro regarding the overgrown hedges either side of the Mill (south side of the main road) obstructing visibility of the nearby bus stop – They responded that they would look into it and get back to the Clerk.
- An email was sent to CC Ed Connolly requesting help in discovering whether the £3,000 green infrastructure contribution had been received by NCC and who holds it? What are the plans and timeline for delivering the FP4 footpath connection on Planning Appeal APP/F2605/W/18/3194045 (Badger Building, 25 homes, Norwich Road, Yaxham).
- An email was sent to Community Safety – Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirming that the Council is happy to receive trigger alerts.

**6.3.** Matters arising from minutes of previous meetings not considered elsewhere on this Agenda.  
None.

## 7. Planning

**7.1.** To receive and consider any new planning applications

**PL/2025/1440/PAAF** - Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Erection, Extension or Alteration of a Building for Agricultural or Forestry use. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 6 - Proposed erection of an agricultural building, Land Off Cutthroat Lane, Yaxham.

Councillors discussed the planning application. GH asked the applicant if he now intended to house the pigs in one large enclosure rather than several smaller ones. The applicant confirmed the new shed will replace the smaller units, explaining that the land is nitrate vulnerable and following discussions with the Environment Agency and Catchment Sensitive Agency (CSF), all parties support containing the pigs in a single area as far from the River Tud as possible. The applicant noted that the first barn had not yet been built but may be located closer to the new barn.

MO expressed concern about the lack of information in the application, particularly regarding surface water management. PB also raised concerns about the absence of a report from the Environment Agency on the Breckland planning portal, despite references to it in the application. He felt there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with environmental requirements.

The applicant stated that he plans to create a 1.9-acre wetland and wildlife habitat and plant at least 1,000 trees in the future, having learned a great deal about the environment from various agencies. Regarding surface water, the applicant clarified that there is no drain

as shown on the planning map, instead rainwater will be harvested from the roof into tanks for reusing.

It was noted that pig rearing has already commenced, with the intention to move into the barn if permission and finances allow by spring. PB reiterated concerns about the lack of information from Breckland District Council. GH proposed that the Council's comments and concerns be summarised and sent to the Breckland District Council. All **agreed** the Clerk would email the planning officer to note the Council's concerns.

**PL/2025/1504/FMIN** - Proposed Extension of Fielding's Drive & Type 3 turning head, 8 Fielding's Drive, Yaxham

This application was discussed, and it was agreed – no comment.

## **7.2. Any planning decisions**

None.

## **7.3. Breckland's upcoming Regulation 18 consultation stage of the Draft Local Plan**

GH reported that Breckland District Council had held a meeting at which it was confirmed the Local Plan will proceed to Regulation 18 consultation stage. A copy of the Local Plan, which is on the website to view, proposes 50 new properties in Yaxham between 2018 – 2042, in addition to the 64 properties that already have planning permission or are in progress. GH noted difficulty in identifying the specific locations of these properties. The additional 50 properties were situated behind the houses recently constructed by Badger Homes. GH was happy that the proposed allocation is limited to 50 new properties, emphasising that while this does not prevent further development applications, it does help in managing future growth if developments are not included in the plan.

GH highlighted that the current Regulation 18 draft of the Local Plan contains significantly more sites in Yaxham than the version released earlier in the year. Screenshots of both versions were displayed and discussed. The Parish Council will seek further information and clarification when the consultation stage begins.

## **7.4. Response by Yaxham's Neighbourhood Plan Working group to the Examiner's Report on Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan.**

GH reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group along with members of the Parish Council had reviewed the Examiner's Report in detail. All had agreed to accept the Examiner's recommendations, except for a few minor grammatical errors. A draft response confirming this had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was unanimously **agreed** for the Clerk to send this to the examiner.

# **8. Play Area Report**

## **8.1 Weekly inspection reports and agree any actions arising.**

CC reported all play equipment is in good condition and that the annual inspection of the play equipment is scheduled to take place on 24<sup>th</sup> November. The inspection will be the same price as previous years.

# **9. Events**

## **9.1 Update on the Christmas Tree Light Switch-On and agree any action arising**

CC reported that he and BG will be reviewing the electrical requirements for the Christmas tree. There will be some additional costs incurred, for the purchase of cable, cable protection ramps, connection to the Christmas tree, and storage of these items for future use. New lights will be required, which will be mains powered (rather than battery operated) but will remain low voltage. Additional baubles will also be needed.

PB enquired whether a risk assessment would be required for the Christmas tree. It was confirmed that one was required and GD volunteered to complete it.

BG confirmed that a meeting to discuss further arrangements will be held on 17<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm at the Village Hall.

## 9.2 Litter Pick

GH reported that the risk assessment had been approved by Breckland Environmental Services. He will collect the equipment on Friday and confirmed that all arrangements are in place for the event to commence at 9.30am on 25<sup>th</sup> October in the Village Hall car park.

## 10. Newsletter

PB confirmed that the Christmas Spectacular is featured on the front page and the Christmas lights switch on will take place at 6pm, with carols beforehand. PB proposed that the newsletter be delivered on either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> November, the 8<sup>th</sup> was **agreed**. PB reported on the changes he had made to the second page. All **agreed** they were happy with the amendments. PB will send the completed newsletter to the Clerk, who will arrange for printing.

## 11. Highways and Footpath issues

### 11.1 Footpath or highway issues.

CC asked if the footpath sign had been repaired. It was confirmed that the repair has not yet been completed, but it will be undertaken soon.

GH reported that he had attended a meeting of the Norwich Western Link Liaison Group prior to the Parish Council meeting. He updated the Council that National Highways and the Government are currently reviewing national highways expenditure, which may result in the withdrawal of funding for the Western Link project, including the review of alternative routes.

Norfolk County Council has prepared a draft letter to National Highways expressing support for the Western Link, specifically the connection from the Northern Link to the A47. NCC has requested that the names of all parish councillors be attached to the letter to demonstrate collective agreement, effectively forming a petition.

GH read out the draft letter to councillors and sought their approval to have their names included. All councillors confirmed they were satisfied with the wording and agreed for their names to be attached to the letter. The Clerk will respond to NCC when the email is received.

GH also reported the following upcoming road closures –

- **Wood Lane Full Road Closure:** A47 North Tuddenham to Easton improvement scheme, will be closed from 2<sup>nd</sup> November until March 2026.
- **A47 Closure:** The A47 will be closed from the Eastern roundabout to Hockering from 8pm Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> November until 6am Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

### 11.2 Update on the possible speed limit reduction on the B1135 and agree any action arising

The Clerk informed the Council that an email had been sent to Matt Lines from Highways requesting an update. He had responded that the Funding and Maintenance Programme Engineer has been asked to provide a price for sorting the flashing sign. The Clerk interpreted this to mean that Highways will now be funding the sign, rather than the Parish Council, and therefore expects the sign to be installed at a suitable location before the bend.

### 11.3 Update on the outstanding FP4 footpath connection, as required by the Planning Inspector as part of Planning Appeal APP/F2605/W/18/3194045.

The Chair read out the following response received from Norfolk County Council “I can confirm that the Green Infrastructure contribution was paid on 07/10/2024, the contributions have been secured to establish a physical connection to Yaxham Footpath 4 (FP4), which forms part of the Yaxham Circular Walk.

The Natural Environment team received this contribution, and the team has 5 years from final occupation of the site to spend the monies. The site is not yet complete so the spend deadline date is not yet known. The Natural Environment team will ensure that the project is delivered as per the Section 106 agreement.”

Councillors discussed the response and noted that the project timeline is dependent on the final occupation.

## 12. Norfolk County Council's consultation on the Property Flood Resilience scheme and flood risk mitigation

The Chair explained the details of the Norfolk County Council consultation on property flood resilience and outlined the various options available to residents in the event of a flood. GH had prepared draft responses to the consultation questionnaire, which were displayed on the screen. Councillors reviewed each question and the proposed answers. All **agreed** with the responses. The Clerk will submit the completed questionnaire to the Flood and Water Management Team at Norfolk County Council.

## 13. Response to Transport Made Simple's invitation for community engagement following their acquisition of Go East Anglia

The Chair read out the correspondence received. After a discussion, it was **agreed** that no response was necessary.

## 14. Finance

**14.1** All **agreed** the following payments be approved for payment. (\* - already paid)

To Pay	Detail Invoices available for viewing	£ Total	VAT	Ex VAT
Unity Bank	Service Charge*	6.00	-	6.00
Craig Delph	Jubilee Field Cuts - September	259.44	-	259.44
Colin Thurgill	Wood for Village Sign Repair	65.00	-	65.00
R Wade	123 Domain Renewal	22.79	3.80	18.99
R Wade	Poppy Wreath and donation	50.00	3.33	46.67
R Wade	Parish Charity Administration	380.50	-	380.50
HMRC	PAYE	68.80	-	68.80
R Wade	Clerk wages and expenses October	621.85	2.16	619.69

### 14.2. To note any receipts

Detail	£ Total
None	-

### 14.3. Neighbourhood plan payments

To Pay	Invoices available for viewing	£ Total	VAT	Ex VAT
None		-	-	-

### 14.4. Neighbourhood plan receipts

Detail	£ Total
None	-

### 14.5. Bank Position and budget

This was circulated prior to the meeting.

## 15. Purchase of a new Parish noticeboard for Clint Green

Councillors discussed the potential purchase and noted that new boards are very expensive. The main reason for considering a new noticeboard is that the current one is sometimes not large enough to accommodate all necessary notices. CC informed the Council that the existing noticeboard had been specially made. It was proposed that, as an alternative to purchasing a new board, the carpenter who recently repaired the village sign could be approached to see if he would be willing to extend the current noticeboard. It was **agreed** to contact the carpenter to see if he would be willing to do this and request a quote.

**16. Policies**

The following policies were unanimously **agreed** by the council. With the following amendment, as provided by Norfolk Parish Training Services, will be added to the bottom of each policy.  
Proposed by GH and seconded by MO.  
IT Policy and Equality and Diversity Policy

**17. Correspondence received since last meeting**

Norfolk PTS, Healthwatch Norfolk Newsletter, about Dereham, Vanguard Project Newsletter, Transport Made Simple, Flood and Water Management – NCC, Norwich Western Link, CC Ed Connolly, Breckland Local Plan - Regulation 18, Breckland Town/Parish Council engagement sessions, Community Action Norfolk.

**18. General Parish Issues (for information only)**

MO enquired whether the Clerk had received a response from Mid-Norfolk Railway (MNR) regarding the proposed multi-agency meeting to address flooding issues affecting the level crossing in Yaxham. It was noted that David Peaty from MNR had been attempting to arrange a meeting with all relevant parties earlier in the spring. The Clerk confirmed that no further correspondence has been received and will follow this up.

**19. To note the next meeting date of the Parish Council – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025**