



YAXHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF YAXHAM PARISH COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY 7th JANUARY 2026 AT 7.30PM IN THE DAVID MYHILL ROOM AT YAXHAM VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs Ben Conway (Chair), Paul Bone (PB), Gary Davison (GD), Graham Howe (GH) and Bob Gust (BG).

In attendance: Clerk and 2 members of the public

1. Chair's opening remarks

The Chair welcomed all present and thanked them for coming.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr's Maggie Oechsle, Chris Couves and DC Paul Plummer.

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

None.

4. Public Session

None.

5. Reports from County and District Councillors

Reports from CC Ed Connolly have been circulated.

6. Minutes of Previous Meeting

6.1. To approve the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 26.11.2025

The minutes of the meeting were **approved** without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record. **All agreed**, Cllr GH could not comment as he did not attend the previous meeting.

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

- Mid Norfolk Railway responded regarding the flooding and potholes on Station Road. "We can confirm that we are still awaiting the joint meeting with Anglian Water and Highways. Work is ongoing to coordinate a suitable date with all parties."
- Yaxham Parish Council's formal response to the Regulation 18 Breckland Local Plan consultation was submitted to Breckland District Council.
- The Clerk confirmed with the grounds maintenance contractor that the Council wishes to retain his services for the upcoming season.
- The nitrous oxide canisters were reported to Breckland Environmental Services - who requested Serco to collect them. They have asked if any further instances occur, please let them know and they will ensure they are addressed promptly.
- Posters were placed on the parish notice boards to inform residents of a confirmed case of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) in the Mattishall area, as requested by Trading Standards.

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/2025/1943/HOU - Installation of a canopy/veranda roof at the rear - Dunromin Norwich Road, Yaxham

This application was discussed, and it was **agreed** to submit the attached RAG report. Proposed by GH, seconded by GD and all agreed.

7.2. Planning decisions

None.

7.3. Other planning issues

None.

7.4. Update from Yaxham's Neighbourhood Plan Working group

GH reported that the Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan Review has now received formal sign-off from the Breckland Head of Planning, enabling it to proceed to Referendum. Democratic Services have been asked to arrange the Referendum at the earliest practicable opportunity.

8. Play Area Report

8.1 To consider the inspection reports and agree any actions arising.

BG confirmed there were no issues.

8.2 Annual Playground inspection report and agree any actions arising.

The report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Councillors reviewed the findings and noted that the playground remains in good condition overall and was assessed as Low Risk.

BG reported that one protruding bolt had been identified during the inspection and confirmed that this will be addressed shortly. Councillors expressed their thanks to CC and BG for their continued work in maintaining the playground to a high standard.

9. Response to the Local Government Reorganisation Consultation

Councillors considered the consultation in detail. The consultation questions were reviewed individually and responses were agreed collectively. Proposed by PB, seconded by GD, and unanimously **agreed**.

The Clerk will submit the agreed consultation response.

10. Preferred website provider to ensure compliance with Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance Statement

The Clerk reported that two quotations had been obtained for the provision and hosting of a new parish council website, from Norfolk ALC and Parish Online. Councillors had been provided with links to example websites from both providers prior to the meeting.

Both providers had confirmed that they could host the Neighbourhood Plan and provide an accessible, compliant website platform.

After a discussion, councillors resolved to appoint Norfolk ALC as the preferred provider. The Clerk will confirm the initial set-up cost and arrange for the fully managed service, which will include ongoing support, and website updates as required. Proposed by GH, seconded by PB and unanimously **agreed**.

11. Events

11.1 Christmas Tree Light Switch-On – Update

Councillors were happy with how well the event had been received and noted it had run smoothly. The earlier timing of the light switch-on was considered successful and will be implemented again next year.

The report from the YVAA, is attached to these minutes.

11.2 Friends of Yaxham School and Parish Council village yard sale – Update

The Chair of the Friends was unable to attend but advised that 4th May and 25th May fall on bank holiday weekends and should be avoided, as should the final weekend of May due to half term, when families may be away. This leaves two suitable weekends, PB confirmed from previous feedback Saturdays are preferred.

PB noted the event would be a Friends fundraiser, with the Parish Council supporting the event through promotion in the village newsletter. The Friends have not yet held a committee meeting. The Parish Council will await confirmation of the date from the Friends.

12. Highways and Footpath issues

12.1 To note any footpath or highway issues needing attention

PB reported that Well Hill has been closed due to haunching work being undertaken, following concerns that the road was subsiding. GH noted that the majority of potholes in the area have now been repaired, and it appears that the report he submitted to Highways has been effective. It was reported that hedge-cutting work had commenced on Norwich Road around the bus stop. It was noted that only the top of the hedge had been cut, with no work yet undertaken on the roadside. Councillors to monitor the situation to ensure the remainder of the hedge is cut appropriately.

GH reported that, beyond the bus stop towards the café, brambles from a property were encroaching onto the footpath. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would write to the resident requesting that this be cut back to maintain safe pedestrian access.

13. Finance

13.1 All **agreed** the following items for payment (* - already paid)

To Pay	Detail Invoices available for viewing	£ Total	VAT	Ex VAT
Unity Bank	Service Charge*	6.00	-	6.00
Nathan Couse	Grass Cutting and Strimming*	125.00	-	125.00
D Bracey	Annual Play Inspection*	150.00	25.00	125.00
R Wade	Clerk wages and expenses December and January	1,223.71	4.32	1,219.39

13.2. Receipts noted

Detail	£ Total
Rent	£150.00

13.3. Neighbourhood plan payments

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

13.4. Neighbourhood plan receipts

Detail	£ Total
None	-

13.5. Bank Position and budget

This was circulated prior to the meeting and noted by members.

The Clerk explained how she had separated the grass-cutting costs, outlining how routine grass cutting and general village maintenance had been allocated under different budget headings to improve clarity.

13.6. Budget for 2026/27

The budget had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was **agreed** to increase Computer Expenses by £75. The budget was discussed in detail, and after careful consideration members confirmed they were happy with it. Proposed by PB, seconded by GD, and unanimously agreed.

13.7. Precept for 2026/27

After referring to the agreed budget and considering the Parish Council's reserves and discussing the rising costs, it was **agreed** to increase the precept to £15,939.00. This represents an increase

of £5.05 per year, or 51p per month, for a Band D property. Proposed by GH, seconded by BG, and unanimously agreed.

13.8. Internal auditor for 2025/26

It was agreed to appoint Robin Goreham as Internal Auditor for 2025/26. Proposed by GD, seconded by PB and unanimously agreed.

14. Correspondence received since last meeting

Breckland Regulation 18 Local Plan – Evening Consultation events, Breckland – Online Virtual Engagement, Norfolk PTS, CPRE, CC Ed Connolly’s NCC briefing notes and Parish Report, Breckland Environmental Services, NCC Trading Standards, Police Community Engagement Officer, Breckland – Cabinet decision on devolution in Norfolk and Suffolk, Breckland – LGR in Norfolk Statutory Consultation Response, LGR Town and Parish sessions, MP George Freeman 2025 annual reporting pack, Parish Online, Norfolk ALC and emails from residents.

15. To agree the meeting dates for 2026

The following dates were **agreed** -

25th February – Parish Council

25th March – Parish Council

22nd April – Annual Parish Meeting & Parish Meeting

27th May – Parish Charity & Parish Council Annual Meeting

17th June – Parish Council

22nd July – Parish Charity & Parish Council

23rd September – Parish Council

28th October – Parish Charity & Parish Council

25th November – Parish Council

16. General Parish Issues (for information only)

GH advised the meeting that it is unlikely he would stand for re-election as Councillor when his current four year term concludes in 2027. Members noted this and a discussion followed with PB raising the importance of increasing public awareness of the Parish Council’s role and activities, noting that improved visibility may encourage residents to consider standing for election when vacancies arise. He suggested that the forthcoming new Parish Council website would provide an effective platform for promoting this information.

PB also proposed exploring the installation of an iPad or similar device in the Village Hall to enable residents to easily access council information, including meeting dates, agendas, minutes, and general parish information.

17. Date of the next Parish Council meeting

25th February 2026

The Chair closed the meeting at 20.46pm

PLANNING APPLICATION RESPONSE
FROM YAXHAM PARISH COUNCIL
DUNROMIN, NORWICH ROAD YAXHAM

APPLICATION REF:	PL/2025/1943/HOU	DATE:	7/1/2026
-------------------------	------------------	--------------	-----------------

YAXHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES			
POLICY	RAG	COMMENTS	
STR1 – Strategic Gaps Policy THE GAPS BETWEEN SETTLEMENTS		No impact	
HOU1 – LOCATION OF NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT		This application is for a new glazed canopy at the rear and within the curtilage of an existing dwelling	
HOU2 – HOUSING DENSITY	N/A		
HOU3 – SCALE OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	N/A		
HOU4 – EXISTING LAND USE			
HOU5 – HOUSING MIX	N/A		
HOU6 - DESIGN		The design is in character with the existing and surrounding properties.	
HOU7 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING	N/A		
ENV1 - DARK SKIES	N/A		
ENV2 – CONSERVATION AREA & HERITAGE ASSETS		The site is not adjacent to the conservation area	
ENV3 – GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	N/A		
ENV4 – SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT PLANS	N/A	The proposal is to collect rainwater via a water but	
ENV5 – SEWERAGE PROVISION			

TRA1 – TRAFFIC AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT	N/A		
TRA2 – PARKING PROVISION	N/A		
ECN1 - NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	N/A		
COM1 – EXISTING PARISH-BASED COMMUNITY SERVICES	N/A		
COM2 – DEVELOPER FUNDING PRIORITIES	N/A		

WEIGHT

	IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY
	FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED
	AGAINST POLICY
N/A	NOT APPLICABLE

GENERAL COMMENTS ON APPLICATION

The majority of the policies within the Neighbourhood Plan are not applicable to this application. Where they do apply, they are in accordance with policy.

Yaxham PC approve this application.

Report for Yaxham Parish Council on the Christmas tree lighting event

Sunday 7th December 2025

Many thanks to the Parish Council for funding the Christmas tree again this year. Particular thanks go to Chris for the hours he spent wiring cables for the lights into the lamp post. Having the lights operated on mains not only saved Chris a lot of work on charging batteries, but the lights are brighter and the baubles look great.

We acknowledge grateful thanks to Gary for sorting out the complexities of removing the flagpole from the base (as well as serving mulled wine!), and Rob Garner for coming along with his teleporter to put the lights and baubles on the tree. A fantastic effort by all!

Bob, ably assisted by Jeffrey, had the unenviable task of car park duty, made all the more onerous by the pouring rain! Looking like a pair of drowned rats, they allowed entry to stallholders and people with mobility issues, and directed everybody else to park in the road.

Sarah and Dani, raising funds for Tommy's Pregnancy and Baby Charity, put an enormous effort into organising the stalls and making all who exhibited feel welcome and valued.

Carlie was the lynchpin of the event and worked tirelessly, despite an untimely bout of flu, to ensure all went smoothly. She, together with Steve, provided festive decorations that made the Hall look perfect for the occasion. Carlie was assisted with the decorations on Saturday evening by Jude, Rebecca (our Parish Clerk) and her daughter. Steve's work behind the bar was obviously much appreciated by many people from the village during the afternoon.

We must also thank Niki and Graham Jones for providing tea, coffee and mince pies on behalf of the Community Café and Lorraine Varney for helping to organise the mulled wine.

Jo Robinson came along to support the carol singing with her recorder, and members of the Mid-Norfolk Singers joined us to add harmony. Many said they really enjoyed joining in.

Of course, it wouldn't have been the same without Santa! Thanks to Ben for taking on the role, ho-ho-ing along the way, leading the countdown(s) to the lights switch on and distributing sweets to the children. He may be relieved to know that Rob Garner has agreed to take on the role next year!

Julie Couves, our ever-smiling elf, encouraged many people to write personal messages on wooden hearts, to be hung on the tree. This is a reminder of the real spirit of Christmas and very much appreciated, particularly by those who have lost loved ones.

We estimate that up to 300 people attended and the feedback was fantastic. All in all, the YVAA trustees who were able to attend were delighted as to how it went.

As members of the PC may be aware, the lights switch-on had originally been planned to take place at 5.00, for the benefit of families with young children. Due to an error in the PC newsletter that stated the switch on would be at 6.00, we aimed for that time. However, as people began to arrive at 3.00, or soon after, many were starting to leave by 4.30. It is for this reason that the decision was made to turn the lights on earlier. Fortunately, members of the choir had initially been asked to come along to sing at 4.45. One family partaking of mulled wine said they had come along for the lights at 6.00 but were very understanding when the explanation was given.

I think we can all pat ourselves on the back for hosting an event that was enjoyed by so many members of our wonderful community. We understand that the fundraising target for Tommy's was exceeded – an all-round success to end the year.

We have begun making notes on improvements that can be made for next year; constructive suggestions will be very welcome!

Trudy Gust

On behalf of the Trustees of YVAA