

**BUNWELL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**www.bunwellpc.info**

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**MINUTES** of **Bunwell Parish Meeting** held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at the Village Hall, Bunwell.

**Cllrs Present at the Meeting:** Cllr M Booty (Chair), Cllr M Crouch, and Cllr R Watson

**Also Present:** Parish Clerk, District Cllr Suzanne Wateridge and 3 members of the public.

MINUTES	ACTION
<p><b>1. To receive apologies</b> – apologies were received from Cllr Spooner. Cllr Ward did not attend the meeting.</p> <p><b>2. To record declarations of interest from Council members in any item to be discussed</b> – there were no declarations of interest.</p> <p><b>3. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> – the minutes of the meetings held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025, pages 576-586, having previously been circulated to all members, were agreed and signed by the Chair.</p> <p><b>4. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting</b></p> <p>4.1. Update on Village Emergency Plan – This report will be updated ready for the next meeting.</p> <p>4.2. Installation of waste bin on roundabout at Greenways – The Clerk is to confirm with local residents the best site for such a bin and to confirm the purchase, together with fixing pole and installation costs if less than £150.00</p> <p><b>5. To receive the District and County Councillors' Reports</b></p> <p>5.1. County Councillor, Catherine Rowett, had sent a full report which is attached to these minutes. Matters covered include energy infrastructure planning proposals, Government's land use strategy, devolution and local government reorganisation, consultation on Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and Early Years Childcare Strategy.</p> <p>5.2. District Councillor, Suzanne Wateridge's full report is also attached to these minutes. She spoke about the new maps South Norfolk have produced showing the sites of renewable energy installations. There is a link to these maps in her report. She provided updates on East Pye solar project and FIELD Long Stratton BESS project. She encouraged everyone to take part in the Nature Recovery Consultation (link in her report) and her colleague, Cllr Trevor Graham will be coming to our next meeting to talk about a Nature Recovery Strategy scheme in Harleston. Lastly, the Police &amp; Crime Commissioner has launched a campaign, together with the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, to raise awareness of street harassment and to upskill and empower bystanders across Norfolk to deal with all types of harassment.</p> <p><b>6. Resident's Questions</b> – A resident raised the matter of hedges encroaching on pavements and footpaths and it was confirmed that cutting a hedge during the bird</p>	<p><b>Cllr Crouch</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>

Commented [MC1]: Rupert and I agreed that this should be upped to £150 to provide some head space/wiggle room.

## MINUTES

## ACTION

breeding season is not advisable, but where there is a safety issue, owners should trim hedges to allow pedestrian access at all times.

- 7. To receive and discuss correspondence** – an email had been received asking whether the Playing Field could be hired by a small group of Disc Golfers. Councillors agreed that a Hire Agreement form be sent out for completion. **Clerk**

### 8. Highway & Footpath Matters –

- 8.1. It was noted that the safety sign relating to the crossing on the Turnpike was flashing continuously. This has been reported to NCC Highways.  
8.2. There are no matters of concern relating to footpaths in the village.

### 9. Playground/Village Hall –

- 9.1. The removal of the adult play equipment should be completed shortly.  
9.2. There are some repairs required but it was agreed to wait until the RoSPA report is received so all matters could be dealt with at the same time. A general clean-up and carrying out of minor repairs could be undertaken when a Playground clean-up is arranged during the summer. 9 signs have been installed stating 'No Dogs except guide dogs & assistance dogs'. It was agreed that 'No Kite Flying' signs should also be erected. **Cllr Crouch**

- 10. Potential Future Projects** – possible improvement projects to consider in the future include updating the external toilet at the Village Hall for use by Playing Field teams and upgrading the footpath from Greenways to Barhams Lane and on to the Primary School. **Cllr Booty**

- 11. Planning Applications – to discuss and vote on any new planning applications** – A proposal to erect a self-build dwelling connected to the neighbouring equestrian school at Water Meadows, Low Road, Bunwell, was discussed and the councillors agreed that they were in favour of this application.

### 12. Finance

- 12.1. Payments for May had been circulated and councillors agreed to these transactions.  
12.2. The cashbook balance was noted.  
12.3. It was agreed that Cllr Michael Crouch be added to the list of signatories at Unity Trust Bank.

- 13. To receive matters of importance from Councillors** – no new concerns were raised.

- 14. To receive items for the next Agenda for Consideration** – To follow up items raised above.

- 15. Date of next meeting** – the next meeting is on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 at 7.30pm.

- 16. Meeting Closed 8.40pm**

<b><i>UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT</i></b>			
<b>BALANCE AS AT 07.05.25</b>			<b>£27,519.15</b>
<b>RECEIPTS AS AT 07.05.25</b>			
<b>DATE</b>	<b>RECEIVED FROM</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ACTUAL AMOUNT</b>
<b>BALANCE C/FWD</b>			<b>£27,519.15</b>

PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL IN MAY: <i>UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT</i>					
BALANCE AS AT 07.05.25			£27,519.15		
PAY TYPE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL AMOUNT	VAT	PAYE
BACS	Bunwell Village Hall	Hall Rental, Apr and May	60.00		
BACS	G's Gardening Services	Playing Field Grasscutting, May	350.00		
BACS	Boulder Developments Ltd	Repairs to Noticeboard (Pd by M Crouch)	19.99	3.33	
BACS	Safety Signs 4 Less	No Dogs signs for playing field (pd by M Crouch)	21.00	3.50	
BACS	Amazon	No Dogs signs for playing field (pd by M Crouch)	25.85	4.30	
BACS	Gallagher Insurance	Annual Renewal	1,131.55	115.88	
BACS	Anglian Internet Ltd	Laptop Repairs (Pd by M Ridgwell)	30.00		
BACS	M Ridgwell	Mar Salary & Exps	318.75		71.20
BACS	HMRC	PAYE to month 1	71.20		
	Unity Trust	Service Charge May	6.00		
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2,034.34</b>		<b>71.20</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>					
<b>BALANCE C/FWD</b>			<b>£25,484.81</b>		

#### **CASHBOOK BALANCE: 04.06.25**

Details	CR	DR	
Cash Book Balance Brought Forward (Unity Trust Bank Current Account) <b>A</b>	<b>£27,519.15</b>		
Receipts this month (see listed above) <b>B</b>			
	Payments this month (listed above) <b>C</b>		<b>2,034.34</b>
	Cash Book Balance Carried Forward (=A+B-C)		<b>25,484.81</b>
	<b>Unity Balance</b>		<b>£25,484.81</b>

County Councillor report 30th May 2025, from Catherine Rowett

30/05/2025

### Progress report

The main issue at the moment across the division is the rash of energy infrastructure planning proposals, including the pylons, solar farms and BESS storage units. I am working to ensure that proper assessment of the environmental impacts, and correct reports relating to the quality of the land are put in place, so that we can see the planning system do its job properly. I am also working with the local MPs to try to get planning for these things put right, to ensure that suitable locations are prioritised over unsuitable ones, and that the government's desire to slash protections for nature and heritage is thwarted. I put in detailed submission to the government's consultation for their land use strategy, and I've had a useful discussion with Ben Goldsborough MP, so let's hope the government can get some strategic thinking brought to bear sooner rather than later. This week I attended, with Adrian Ramsay MP, a very useful meeting with the Norfolk Fire Service team, to hear their assessment of what are the risks associated with large BESS storage schemes in the Norfolk countryside, and how much say they have in the planning consultations.

At the May County Council meeting, I submitted a motion requiring the administration to intervene with ministers against the planning Bill (to warn against scrapping all the environmental protections), and to ask them to swiftly bring into force the excellent principles enunciated in the land use strategy to ensure that energy infrastructure is strategically located where it belongs, in brownfield sites and beside motorways and other existing infrastructure. Despite a Conservative

amendment which was somewhat ill-informed about energy security and what counts as sustainable energy, the motion passed without too much damage to the project, so that is a real achievement in setting the County Council's agenda on energy farming with a priority on the green perspective.

Meanwhile I note that the government is now going to make it mandatory for energy developers to provide substantial community funding. See link here(it's not just coastal but rural areas as well): [Cash boost for coastal towns hosting clean energy infrastructure - GOV.UK](#)

In other local work, I've been working with landowners and the footpath officer, regarding the rerouting of one of the footpaths in Winfarthing, and with residents and the riparian rights and water management teams to solve problems in Bressingham. I'm hoping to see a resolution to some ongoing issues with rights of way at Hundred Lane in Great Moulton in the near future, and resurfacing on two of the important B roads in the division, at Tivetshall and the horrible, pitted surface at Winfarthing/Shelfanger.

Strangely, given our tight budget, Cabinet appear to be planning to give councillors a new fund to spend on community initiatives, so I am interested to hear of projects or community groups (including church groups if they serve the community) that might be looking for a little financial help to keep them on their feet. The decision hasn't been taken yet but seems likely to go ahead.

Devolution and local government reorganisation

The online survey has now closed (on 20<sup>th</sup> May). The Council has received an interim response from the government minister regarding the options that were put forward regarding possible arrangements for unitary councils, but there is still a lot of discussion and work going on. I am on the County Council's Members Engagement Working Group on the topic.

Changes at County Council

Although we were not given a chance to elect new County Councillors across the county this year, we had three County Council by-elections on 1<sup>st</sup> May, in Thetford West, Mancroft Ward in Norwich, and Marshland North in the King's Lynn area.

The Green Party retained the Mancroft seat, electing Serene Shibli by a substantial majority, so the Green Group is now back up to full strength. I have been re-elected as leader of the Green Group at our Green Group AGM on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May. We have been given places on three select committees, on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a representative on the Joint Norfolk Museums committee. I am continuing on the Infrastructure and Development Committee. The Conservative, Labour and Lib Dem groups are all depleted by one member each. There are additionally two new groups who are smaller than the Greens, namely the Progressive Independent Group (3 councillors) and Reform (2 councillors). Questions and motions are taken in order of the size of the groups, so larger groups are more likely to get more bites at the cherry than smaller ones in the time allowed.

Info from County Council

Nature recovery strategy

A **consultation** on Norfolk's draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is open now and closes on 11<sup>th</sup> June. They want feedback on priorities for restoring and enhancing nature across Norfolk.

The aims are to reverse biodiversity loss, support climate adaptation, and promote sustainable land use to benefit both people and wildlife. The draft strategy has been created with input from other local authorities, nature experts, farmers, land managers and Norfolk residents.

You can review the [Local Habitat Map](#), draft LNRS, FAQs and respond [here](#).

Stay safe near water

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is encouraging people to learn life-saving water safety skills this spring and summer. Last year they attended 16 incidents in which people lost their lives in water.

## National Government info

### Bird Flu (Avian Influenza) update

Bird flu risk levels have been reduced. Mandatory housing measures for poultry and captive birds started to be lifted across England from 15 May 2025 and birds can be kept outside unless they are in a Protection Zone or Captive Bird Monitoring (Controlled) Zone. However, stringent [biosecurity measures](#) remain in place nationwide. Poultry keepers who intend to allow their birds outside need to prepare their for the safe release of their bird, including cleansing and disinfecting hard surfaces, fencing off ponds, reintroducing wild bird deterrents.

### Early Years childcare update

The [government has confirmed](#) that from 12 May all eligible working parents of children who will be 9 months old before 1 September can apply to access up to 30 hours of funded childcare a week.

### Contact me

[Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk). See also my Facebook page [here](#).

*Catherine Rowett*

30<sup>th</sup> May 2025

## Bunwell District Councillor Report June 2025

### New Maps for Renewable Energy

South Norfolk Council has created some helpful new maps (Renewables Mapping) so they and we can plot where BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) and solar farms are likely to be located across South Norfolk. They already had an NSIP (Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Projects) area mapped out, so this complements that and will be updated regularly. These reflect both consented and pre-consent projects. In terms of those that affect us here, you will see Norwich to Tilbury and East Pye on the NSIP map, alongside Station Road Solar and FIELD Long Stratton on the new Renewables Map. Links below:

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/planning/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects/map-of-energy-and-electricity-nsips>

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/planning/renewables-mapping>

### East Pye Update

The second public (statutory) consultation for this huge solar project which spans across Hempnall and down to Great Moulton and Tivetshall will be held at Aslacton and Great Moulton Coronation Hall on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July from 2.30pm to 7.30pm. Do come along to look at their plans and ask any questions. I am also pressing them for a meeting with myself and Catherine Rowett before then to try and uncover exactly where they plan to locate their BESS and substation, not to mention the National Grid Substation which they and probably other projects will connect into. This will particularly affect residents in Great Moulton.

### FIELD Long Stratton

591

4<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Chair, Bunwell Parish Council

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Despite the name, this huge BESS project is hoping to be located in Great Moulton. I have been working hard to ensure that the company (FIELD) has to do an EIA (Ecological Impact Assessment) - they were trying to get away with not doing one. I met with the planning officer in charge of the project, we had some good, open conversations and we spent much time walking the site. Together with many excellent submissions from residents in the village, which certainly helped to inform the council's decision, the company has now been informed that they must carry out an EIA. This means their full planning submission to the council will almost certainly be delayed and they may even decide to look elsewhere. As always, it's important to stress that I am fully behind renewable energy projects but they have to be in the right place and I will always fight residents' corners if I feel the locations are disproportionately impacting communities and nature.

**Nature Recovery Consultation**

After the disastrous news that the government's new Planning and Infrastructure Bill looks set to prioritise new housing at all costs, laying ruin to nature across the country, we need to take action in our communities more than ever. Please be sure to respond to the County Council's Nature Recovery Consultation (the closing date is 11<sup>th</sup> June) <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/68386/Local-Nature-Recovery-Strategy-public-consultation>

I would also like to introduce my colleague Councillor Trevor Graham to you at the next meeting, who can talk about how a Nature Recovery strategy is flourishing over in Harleston. The link to the national website is here if you would like to know more about this excellent scheme which everyone can get involved with <https://www.ournaturerecovery.org.uk>

**Stand Up Against Street Harrassment**

I would like to think this is not a huge problem in rural South Norfolk but as we know, these sorts of incidents can happen anywhere, such as the recent indecent exposure in Bunwell for example. The Police and Crime Commissioner has launched a campaign, in tandem with the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, to drive awareness of street harassment and upskill and empower bystanders across Norfolk to deal with all harassment types. They are offering free training for staff and businesses via a 30 minute webinar on June 18<sup>th</sup> at midday. Follow this link for more information or to sign up <https://www.norfolk-pcc.gov.uk/news/suzy-lamplugh-trust-offers-free-stand-up-against-street-harassment-training/>

Cllr Suzanne Wateridge  
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