

BUNWELL PARISH COUNCIL

www.bunwellpc.info

Chairman: J Chapman,
Tel: 07783 329833
e-mail: chapman.jdc@gmail.com

Clerk: Mrs Margaret Ridgwell,
Tel: 01603 871636
e-mail: bunwell-pc@live.com

MINUTES of the **Bunwell Annual Parish Council Meeting** held on Wednesday 7th May 2025 at the Village Hall, Bunwell.

Cllrs Present at the Meeting: Cllr M Booty, Cllr J Chapman, Cllr M Crouch, Cllr S Spooner and Cllr R Watson.

Also Present: Parish Clerk, County Cllr Catherine Rowett, District Cllr Suzanne Wateridge and 11 members of the public.

MINUTES	ACTION
1. To elect a Chairman and receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office - Cllr Chapman proposed and Cllr Watson seconded that Cllr Mike Booty be elected Chairman. This proposal was agreed by all and Cllr Booty signed the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office. He thanked the outgoing chairman, Cllr John Chapman, for all his hard work in working for the residents of Bunwell and wished him well in the future. To elect a Vice-Chairman – Cllr Booty proposed, and Cllr Spooner seconded, that Cllr Michael Crouch be appointed as Vice-Chairman. All were in agreement and Cllr Crouch signed the Vice-Chairman's Acceptance of Office.	
2. To receive apologies – Cllr Ward did not attend the meeting.	
3. To record declaration of interest from Council members in any item to be discussed – there were no declarations of interest.	
4. To appoint Defibrillator Warden, Footpath Warden and Play Area Warden – Cllr Watson agreed to take over responsibility for the defibrillators; Cllr Spooner agreed to carry on as Footpath Warden; and Cllr Crouch agreed to carry on his responsibility for the Play Area.	
5. To agree the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 2nd April 2025 - The minutes of the previous meeting on 2nd April 2025, pages 576-581, having previously been circulated to all members, were signed by the Chair.	
6. To discuss matters arising from the previous Meeting – 6.1. Village Emergency Plan – Cllrs Crouch and Chapman have prepared a document, as recommended by South Norfolk Council, which lists the most likely emergencies which the Parish Council might have to deal with, and gathered a list of residents who might have the resources needed in such emergencies. These include: Off-Grid Power - Solar Panels / LPG heaters / Generators / Batteries etc. - Preferably high Watt hour batteries, but if people are going to a Refuge Centre and can spare power banks of any type for their own use or the use of others, that would be most welcome. Labourers - Sandbags etc.	

MINUTES	ACTION
<p>Community Supporters - Help at Home - Anybody with care experience, formal or informal.</p> <p>Community Supporters - Supplies / Transport Cllr Chapman believes SNC regard this as collection of supplies for use during an epidemic, for example</p> <p>Refuge Centre Volunteers</p> <p>Social Media Administrators</p> <p>Vehicles - Tractors / 4x4s etc.</p> <p>Other resources (e.g. chainsaws, lifting equipment, compressors etc.)</p>	
<p>7. Matters Arising from the Annual Parish Meeting Minutes – There were no matters arising which were not dealt with in the meeting.</p>	
<p>8. Resident's Questions – A resident raised the question of outstanding planning enforcement issues and Cllr Wateridge confirmed that she is liaising with the Planning Enforcement Officer to ensure these matters are dealt with as swiftly as possible. It was also suggested that it would be a good idea to install a waste bin on the roundabout at Greenways to encourage residents to look after the area. The Clerk will investigate the cost of a bin and installation and write to Saffron Housing to get their views on the matter.</p>	Clerk
<p>9. To receive and discuss correspondence – emails received had been forwarded to Cllrs and dealt with as required.</p>	
<p>10. Working Groups – Up to date reports from the Planning Development Group and the National Grid Pylon Scheme Group had been received and presented to residents at the Annual Meeting.</p>	
<p>11. Highway Matters – It had already been reported at the Annual Meeting that the road surface down Bunwell Street was badly finished following the recent drainage work. NCC Highways are aware of the poor condition the road was left in, and they will be contacted to ask that this road be repaired and resurfaced as soon as possible.</p>	Clerk
<p>12. Footpath Warden Report - Cllr Spooner reported that all the evidence needed had been submitted to ensure that the footpath between Greenways and the ford on Barhams Lane will be added to the Definitive Map. She also agreed to inspect FP13 where a resident pointed out that the fingerpost is in the wrong position, and FP14 where a new fingerpost needs to be installed.</p>	
<p>13. Playground – There are no ongoing repair issues at present. The Annual RoSPA inspection will take place in June.</p>	
<p>14. Planning Applications – to discuss and vote on any new planning applications – No applications had been received which required comments from the PC.</p>	
<p>15. Finance</p> <p>15.1. Payments for the month had been circulated and councillors agreed to these transactions.</p> <p>15.2. Cashbook balance – this had been circulated to all Councillors and was noted.</p> <p>15.3. The Councillors had considered and approved the report from the internal auditor and agreed that the Annual Governance Statement of this year's AGAR be signed.</p>	

MINUTES

ACTION

15.4. The Councillors considered and approved the Accounting Statements in this year's AGAR.

16. To receive matters of importance from Councillors – there were no other matters of importance to be discussed.

17. To receive items for the next Agenda for Consideration – To follow up items raised above.

18. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 4th June, 2025 at 7.30pm

19. Meeting Closed at 9.10pm

UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT	
BALANCE AS AT 02.04.25	£21,820.10

RECEIPTS THIS MONTH –			
BALANCE AS AT 02.04.25			£21,820.10
DATE	RECEIVED FROM	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL AMOUNT
23.04.25	South Norfolk Council	Precept	7,750.00
BALANCE C/FWD			£29,570.10

PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL THIS MONTH: UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT					
BALANCE AS AT 02.04.25				£21,820.10	
PAY TYPE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL AMOUNT	VAT	PAYE
BACS	Bunwell PCC	Annual Donation for Churchyard	1,000.00		
BACS	SB Auditing	Annual Internal Audit	125.00		
BACS	Jason Goddard	Maintenance of SAM2	150.00		
BACS	Bunwell Village Hall	Hall Rental, March	30.00		
BACS	G's Gardening Services	Playing Field Grasscutting	350.00		
BACS	M Ridgwell	Apr Salary & Exps	318.95		
BACS	HMRC	PAYE to month 11	71.00		71.00
	Unity Trust	Service Charge	6.00		
		Total	2,050.95		71.00
RECEIPTS			7,750.00		
BALANCE C/FWD				£27,519.15	

CASHBOOK BALANCE: 07.05.25

Details	CR	DR	
Cash Book Balance Brought Forward			
Unity Trust Bank Current Account A	£21,820.10		
	Receipts this month (see listed above) B		
	Payments this month (listed above) C		2,050.95
	Cash Book Balance Carried Forward (=A+B-C)		27,519.15
	Unity Trust Balance		£27,519.15

Progress report

The ups are generally matched by the downs. The petition about safety on Upgate Street in Carleton Rode received the usual “we only care about making cars go fast” response from the head officer in highways. I’ve sent back a very angry response but I’m now working with my Highways team to try to find a solution. I am also very angry about the appalling meeting I had with National Grid where I supposed they would want to listen to my concerns about their change of route in Bunwell, but no.

I am extremely angry about the recent applications for additional energy infrastructure in Great Moulton, Dickleburgh and Rushall. None of these companies have had the courtesy to notify or consult the County Councillor, so I’ve only picked up info via others. The companies promoting them are lazy and ill-informed. The ones in Dickleburgh seem not to know which county it’s in; the ones in Great Moulton didn’t know which power line they were scheduled to connect to, nor where their grid connection was, nor how the land sloped, nor what homes or businesses were nearby. The rudeness and carelessness of these applications and their ignorance of local conditions and of the nature of Norfolk roads beggars belief. I have put in a detailed submission to the government’s consultation on a 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.

We’ve had a useful meeting with landowners regarding the location and accessibility of one of the footpaths in Winfarthing and are working to establish the exact route of the existing right of way in order to identify a mutually beneficial solution to the problems.

I’m awaiting delivery of road safety schemes in Burston and Bressingham. I’m pleased to see the arrival of new chevrons and paint on Station Road in Tivetshall. I now have another tranche of money to spend for this year, and will aim to use some of it for Upgate Street, but probably not before Highways have worked out how to mend the road there.

Devolution and local government reorganisation

I have responded in a personal capacity for my home address to the **online survey** to collect views about the best way to organise local authorities in Norfolk to make things accessible and straightforward for local residents. I need to see if I can also do a separate submission in my role as a councillor for the whole of the West Depwade division. Please also do your own submission and help less digitally connected people to get to it too. It’s open till 20th May. You can access the survey here: <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/public-engagement/lgrfeedback/>

Changes at County Council

Although we were not given a chance to elect new County Councillors across the county this year, there were three County Council by-elections on 1st May, in Thetford West, Mancroft Ward in Norwich, and Marshland North in the King’s Lynn area. Thetford West (formerly Labour) and Marshland North (recently Reform but formerly Conservative) elected their Reform candidate, (but in Marshland North this was Julian Kirk, who defected from Conservative to Reform earlier in 2025).

The Mancroft seat was retained by the Green Party, electing Serene Shibli by a substantial majority, so the Green Group is now back up to full strength. I continue as leader of the Green Group and have offered to stand for re-election as leader at our Green Group AGM this May.

We are waiting to see what committee places we shall get this year. The Conservative, Labour and Lib Dem groups are all depleted by one member each, since an independent member who was working with the Lib Dems has left that alliance now.

Info from County Council

Nature recovery strategy

A **consultation** on Norfolk's draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is open now and closes on 11th 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.

This initiative is part of the National Fire Chiefs Council's *Be Water Aware Week*, which aims to raise awareness about the risk of accidental drowning and provide water safety advice ahead of the warmer months. Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is part of the Norfolk Water Safety Forum, which is committed to educating the public and improving safety on our waterways and coastal areas. Other partners include Norfolk Constabulary's Broads Beat, the RNLI, HM Coastguard, and the Norfolk Community Safety Partnership.

Local Government Association Update

LGA climate change guidance

The Local Government Association (LGA) has released welcome new [guidance](#) for government on how to build collaboration with local councils to deliver on the shared ambition for responding to climate change. It focusses on empowering local councils with the necessary resources, regulatory authority, and financial support to drive climate action across key sectors, including housing, energy, and environmental protection.

The report recognises local councils' place-based expertise and argues that through collaborative governance, targeted financial mechanisms, and a skilled workforce, the government can achieve its climate commitments while delivering economic and social benefits locally. I'm keen to get to work on initiatives that will help people to keep warm in winter, cool in summer, and run their homes comfortably for far lower costs, with enough water, good flood protections and useful transport options.

Contact me

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

Catherine Rowett

3rd May 2025