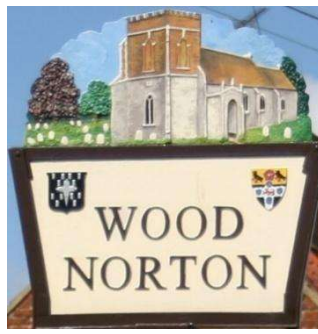




Wood Norton Parish Council

Chairperson: Marcus Crowe Parish Clerk: Joanne Madders clerkwoodnortonpc@gmail.com

Minutes of Wood Norton Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting **held in the village hall at 7.00 pm, Wednesday 20th May 2026**

Present: Cllr Marcus Crowe (Chair), Cllr John Jennings, Cllr Tim Lidstone-Scott, Cllr Tess Morley, Cllr Lorraine O'Keefe, Cllr Jean Johnson and Cllr Daniel Coe.

Clerk: Joanne Madders

Members of the public: 1

1. Welcome and receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from County Councillor Andrew Brown and District Councillor Mike Hankins in advance of the meeting and were accepted.

2. To agree and sign the Annual Minutes from the meeting held on the 21st May 2025.

These were approved and signed as a true record.

3. To receive the Annual Report 24-25 from the Chairman.

Cllr Crowe presented his report. (See appendix 1 for full copy of the report).

4. To receive a report from the County Councillor and the District Councillor.

No reports had been received in advance of the meeting and both councillors were absent.

5. To receive reports from village groups and organisations as follows:

a. The Village Hall Committee

Cllr Morley presented the village hall report. (See appendix 2 for full copy of the report).

b. The PCC

Cllr Crowe presented the PCC report received from Joanne Burd, Secretary to the PCC. (See appendix 3 for full copy of the report).

c. Wood Norton Community Orchard

No report had been received so Cllr Lindstone gave a verbal update.

The heritage fruit trees planted in 2012 have been disappointing. Later trees plantings have been known to give better fruit. Modern pears have recently been planted along with specimen trees. The water tub has been damaged and requires repair. The Blossom Party, Wassail and Apply Day all happened. The biggest expense is liability insurance. The landowner has offered to pay for a new kissing gate.

d. The Wood Norton Charitable Trust

No report had been received in advance of the meeting. The Chair reminded everyone of the taxi club.

6. To receive items from Wood Norton residents.

None received.

Meeting closed 7.15pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting of Wood Norton Parish Council held on 20th May 2026.

Chairperson.....

Appendix 1

Chair's Report 2025-26

This is now my fourth Annual report, another year flown by!

We have maintained a full complement of councillors yet again, thank you for your continued support, with all members playing an active role.

My thanks to Jo Madders our parish Clerk who started with us at this time last year, continues to support us, gaining experience to inform and challenge when necessary.

I am pleased to report once again our legal obligations of being insured have been met this year and our time critical HMRC payments have been paid. Necessary policies and annual inspections are continually being updated, with the clerk's and Councillor Lidstone-Scott's help for the latter, this all being aided by the annual action sheet administered by Councillor O'Keefe.

We have again prudently managed to spend within our annual budget, have reclaimed relevant VAT input tax helping us to end the year with a small surplus. However, when setting the precept for the 2026-2027 financial year, the majority of Councillors felt, with rising costs, a 5% increase was again necessary this year.

The end of year accounts will be presented at the meeting to follow, audited by Jason Jeary, my thanks to him.

During the financial year the Council updated its laptop which was funded from the precept. We also agreed to continue with a donation towards the PCC for churchyard maintenance. We received a credit for two years' worth of re-cycling from the clothing bank positioned in the Village Hall carpark, this was passed on to the Village Hall Committee. I encourage parishioners to use this facility, a small financial aid to one of your village amenities.

During the year Wood Norton has received five planning applications, three we have commented on, one was deemed lawful and one was a discharge of conditions both of which the parish council were not tasked to express an opinion on.

The now established annual litter pick held on the 14th of March was well supported by Councillors; their partners and parishioners. Hopefully we can attract even more residents to join us next year, many thanks to those who provided and served the refreshments. My thanks to Councillor Morley for once again organising the pickers, hoops, sacks and collection of rubbish for this event.

The biodiversity subcommittee organized a bird box construction event on the 21st of February to encourage us to look after our garden birds, thanks to the committee, those who donated materials and a special thanks to Councillor Lidstone Scott for his time spent in his man cave making the kits for construction on the day.

In March Steve Collin, from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, attracted possibly the largest ever attendance to a Wood Norton Parish Council meeting. He gave a basic outline of their plans for the new wildlife reserve in the village, possibly leading to future environmental projects for the village to be involved with!

As with all villages, flooding, roads and hedges remains a constant on our agendas. I again reiterate, all residents are responsible for keeping their drains clear to help alleviate this issue and hedges trimmed to allow free passage for all vehicles and pedestrians.

The blocked drain along Foulsham Road is unfortunately still taking time to rectify. The District Councillor and the previous County Councillor have been engaged to help with the situation, the latter even offering to help subsidise the work with funds from his budget. At the last communication in April with the highways engineer the work has been loaded onto the system and will be issued shortly.

Two road signs have been replaced on Rectory Road and Lyng Hall Lane. Mobile connectivity in our village has been highlighted as poor by the District Council who are trying to improve the situation. Vodafone & Three will be trialling a new system in conjunction with AST Space over the summer, we wait and see. Other providers state they will improve existing provision!

There are still many incidents of dog fouling within the village. I cannot emphasise strongly enough that your Parish Council, indeed you the parishioners pay for two dog waste bins to be regularly emptied, please use them!

For those of us interested in local politics it appears Norfolk and Suffolk will devolve to become a Mayoral body sometime in 2028, which will give it more influence at top government level at the council of nations. Local government reorganisation will lead to a level of authority being lost with amalgamation of County and District councils becoming a three unitary authority, this could well lead to more local decision making, however this may still be challenged following the recent County Council elections.

As your Councillors we are here to take onboard your comments, complaints and ideas for your village so, please do speak to us if you have anything you wish to discuss.

I again remind Councillors not to become complacent and challenge your fellow Councillors and Clerk if you don't understand or are not satisfied with a decision. We the Councillors are ultimately responsible for the decisions the Council makes for the village, the parishioners who reside here and the way public money is spent from the parish precept which we ourselves set.

My appreciation to my fellow Councillors and to our Clerk for supporting me and you throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all residents who belong to & support the councils, committees, trusts, clubs and societies that make Wood Norton the special place it is.

Here's to 2026-27

Any questions?

Appendix 2

Village Hall – Annual Report 2026

The village hall has experienced another year of increased bookings for the hall and well-attended events. Quiz nights and bar nights with food are always popular and this year the games night was also well attended. Whilst this has been the trend now for the last couple of years the committee has worked hard to get it to this point.

The 100 Club continues to be popular the hardest part is to collect the money! The hall is well-maintained, and the financial status is stable.

A section of the playing field continues as a wild garden to contribute to the village biodiversity plan. Although the village hall is in a good position, it is imperative that they do not become complacent. The costs associated with maintaining the playground and amenities field continue to increase along with heating oil and the general cost of living.

The main challenge as in previous years is the lack of members on the committee meaning events become more time consuming to organise as there are less helpers.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who assisted with the events, including setup, food, bar, and cleanup.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the events over the last 12 months by attending, baking and donating raffle prizes.

Most of you know I stepped down as chair last week but I would like to say thank you to all of the committee members past and present who supported me in this role and volunteered their time.

The new chair is Sue Ross who I hope you will all continue to support her.

Thank you!

Wood Norton PCC – Annual Report 2026

The usual events and services took place this year, supported by members of our community and from outside the village.

Community Outreach and Events

- Words and Music: an opportunity to enjoy a mix of music, poetry and readings.
- Café Pew: an opportunity for friends and neighbours to catch up over a light lunch.
- Cine Pew: ran during the darker/winter months, from October to April.
- Easter Gardens: were set up in the porch, as in the previous year.
- Plants and Book Sale: held in the church and churchyard (31 st May).
- Friends of All Saints/PCC helpers party: a joint event held on 12 th December.
- Turkey Supper: a joint fundraising event with the Village Hall (6 th December).
- Nativity: nativity figures decorated the porch and church windowsills, and local residents donated two Christmas trees.

Churchyard Maintenance Group

The Churchyard Maintenance Group continued to look after the churchyard.

Mid Norfolk Foodbank

The Mid Norfolk Foodbank collected 97kg of food in 2025, which helped to provide 12 three-day emergency food parcels for people facing hardship in and around Fakenham.

Church Services

These followed the normal service pattern throughout the year (1 st and 3 rd Sundays). Special Services included Choral Evensong, Remembrance Sunday, and the Christmas Carol service.

Joanne Burd, PCC Secretary