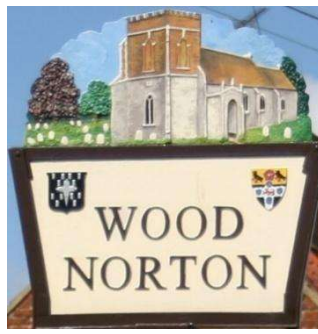




Wood Norton Parish Council

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

Minutes of Wood Norton Parish Council Ordinary Parish Meeting **held in the village hall at 7.30 pm, Wednesday 8th July 2026**

Present: Cllr Marcus Crowe (Chair), Cllr John Jennings, Cllr Tim Lidstone-Scott, Cllr Tess Morley, Cllr Jean Johnson and Cllr Daniel Coe, Anna Clarke NNDC Community Housing Enabler

Clerk: Joanne Madders

Members of the public: 0

2026/68 To consider accepting apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Lorraine O'Keefe (unwell), County Councillor Andrew Brown and District Councillor Mike Hankins in advance of the meeting and were accepted.

2026/69 To record Declarations of Interest from members on any item to be discussed.

None.

2026/70 Minutes:

a. To discuss any matters from the minutes not listed on the agenda. (For information only).

2026/48 The Chair contacted Steve Collin, NWT, for an update who advised there was nothing new to report as they are still in the planning stages.

2026/53 The Clerk responded to the planning application.

2026/60 The Clerk contacted highways regarding overgrown verges at B1110 junctions.

b. To approve and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th May 2026.

Resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record. The Chair signed the minutes.

2026/71 To receive reports from the County Councillor and District Councillor.

District Cllr Mike Hankins was absent from the meeting but had emailed his report:

Affordable Housing update, Swanton Novers Community Land Trust [CLT].

Congratulations to Swanton Novers pc on the completion of the affordable houses provided by the CLT Project, this is commendable given the delays experienced with the project, this has been made possible by the determination and persistence of the pc and in particular councillor Gary May.

Broad Band Roll Out.

I have been informed that Open Reach have informed the County Council of their intention to pause the roll out of fibre to some North Norfolk locations, Hindolveston has been identified as impacted by

this decision, I am keen to understand more of their intentions and will be writing to Open Reach and liaising with the CC who appear to be leading on this matter.

You will be aware that broad band reception is poor to very poor across the Stibbard Ward , with Hindolveston classed as poor in our survey.

Please see attached a mail from a Hindolveston resident and a reply from Stuart Quick of NNDC that sets out more detail on this decision.

I would appreciate an update on the effectiveness of this roll out for Stibbard.

Mobile connectivity was classed as adequate in our recent survey.

I understand that through the intervention of our CC Victoria Holiday, Open Reach are considering a teams meeting for parish councillors to present their future plans and to answer questions on their plans.

Anglian Water Update.

At the recent meeting with AW, we learnt of their improve plans to reduce discharges [much improved] and their plans to meet the additional houses included in the local plan.

I am pleased to report that there has been a change of tone at these meetings to a desire to work in a more collaborative way in partnership with the council.

Please see attached a copy of their report.

Councillor Community Grant Fund.

I have circulated details of the Councillor Community Grant Fund, please consider this opportunity and contact me if you have any questions, or need assistance in preparing an application.

New Local Plan.

The council has commenced preparation for the next plan review and has called for nominations for development sites.

Cllr Mike Hankins.

County Cllr Andrew Brown was absent from the meeting but emailed his report:

Reform cuts local highways and community funding

Norfolk CC's new Reform administration has announced the end the annual Local Members' Fund and the Community Fund available to councillors. The decision was taken using the leader's executive power, with no debate or vote whatsoever. The Local Members' Fund has been particularly useful in supporting small-scale highways schemes in our villages, many of which would otherwise have gone overlooked. In recent years, it has helped fund or support SAM2/3 signs, vehicle- activated signage, enhanced road signage, drainage schemes, speed monitoring surveys, feasibility studies for speed limit reductions, footpath and pavement improvements, pedestrian crossings and much more. These schemes are often brought forward in response to serious local concerns, including accidents and, in some cases, fatalities. I am very concerned that this decision will mean far fewer local highways improvements are possible, particularly in villages and on B and C roads, which already too often feel overlooked. Several villages had schemes that I was keen to support, and this will now be significantly more challenging. My group will be challenging this decision at the next Full Council meeting, in the hope that funding can be returned to councillors and communities who understand local issues best. The future of Parish Partnership Funding is also expected to be reviewed by the new minority administration.

Police and Crime Commissioner by-election

It is difficult to get enthused by the forthcoming Police and Crime Commissioner by-election. The process is expected to cost around £2 million and will fill a post that is due to be abolished in two years' time. My Liberal Democrat group called for the by-election not to take place, with the existing Police and Crime Panel continuing the functions of the Police Commissioner for the next 2 years instead. In my view, that money would be far better spent on frontline policing.

Local Government Reorganisation

The new Reform UK administration has launched a judicial review against the Local Government Reorganisation process. This is expected to cost a significant amount of money and is widely considered to have little chance of success. The Government announced its "minded to" position back in March, proposing that three unitary councils replace Norfolk's eight district councils and one county council.

This was widely considered the "least bad" option, although many of us remain sceptical about the logic of these changes altogether. At this stage, I believe we should be working towards the smoothest possible transition to a new council structure, rather than adding further risk and uncertainty. I will keep you updated as things develop.

Children's Services Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support plan

Norfolk has published a three-year plan to improve support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The Norfolk Local SEND Reform Plan has been developed following extensive engagement with children and young people, families, schools, early years settings, colleges, the NHS and the voluntary sector.

The plan responds to a request from the Government for all areas to submit a Local Plan by 19 June. It focuses on support that can be introduced now, ahead of national legislation which will bring further change, and builds on work already under way through the council's multi-million-pound Local First Inclusion programme to transform SEND education. If approved by Government, the plan could see 90%, around £195 million, of the council's historic Dedicated Schools Grant SEND deficit repaid.

Stalham Extra Care Scheme reaches topping-out milestone

A topping-out ceremony has marked a key milestone in the delivery of 61 Extra Care homes for over-55s in Stalham, to be known as Albion Gardens. The scheme, delivered by Housing 21 with Norfolk County Council and North Norfolk District Council, will provide modern one- and two-bedroom apartments with 24/7 on-site care, supporting independent living. The development will include communal facilities and is due to open in spring 2027, helping meet growing demand for flexible adult social care housing in the local community.

Parish Council meetings

With multiple town and parish councils creating many diary clashes, I will not always be able to attend every parish council meeting much as I would like to. However, I am very happy to meet councillors and clerks outside the usual meeting schedule, and I have already been pleased to do this with a number of parishes.

Contact details

WhatsApp/Phone: 07970 298695 / 01603 224293

Email: Andrew.Brown.Cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

2026/72 To receive presentation from Anna Clarke, NNDC Community Housing Enabler

Anna Clarke gave a presentation to the meeting. There is an affordable housing crisis. North Norfolk is a tricky area for housing being a high retirement and tourist area. 49% of properties are owned outright in the district. House prices are a challenge as the average income is £24,000 per year but the average house price is over 12 times this salary standing at £300,000 meaning it is almost impossible for local people to buy. North Norfolk has the second highest percentage of second homes in the country at 13% - only London has more. There are approx 58,000 properties but approx 100,000 population. A third of the population are over 65. It is a beautiful place to live but difficult for local people. NNDC houses are rentals including social rentals. There are just over 13,000 on the housing register. A recent refresh means that people have had to reapply and be reassessed.

Most affordable housing is built on allocated sites. Alternatives can be built on rural exception sites. The National Planning Policy framework may bring market housing to an end. Affordable housing needs to fit in with the area and can be costly. Swanton Novers is now complete and are affordable rentals. West Beckham have 2 small sites built by Broadland. Salthouse have 5 properties. It is a difficult area. New affordable housing needs to be within the village, not outside. Anna gave the meeting some paperwork which shows 22 households have local need for Wood Norton. These are usually for 1 and 2 bed properties but also 4 bed for larger families. Right to Buy no longer exists on rural exception sites.

Swanton Novers is community lead housing. They chose Broadland Housing. The Community Land Trust own the land and have a long lease with Broadland. Anna will email a link to the clerk with information about community lead housing. Land is often gifted for this. Blakeny and Wells are also community lead. Average site sizes are 12 properties. Planning will not allow larger sites. Wood Norton would be classed as countryside so is unlikely to be allocated under the local plan. Highways would be an issue as well as no sewerage network.

NNDC aim for 100 affordable homes each year.

Anna Clarke left the meeting 8.10pm.

Councillors discussed the points made. There is no land available unless residents are approached. Councillors agreed to discuss further at the September meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

2026/73 Parishioner open forum

Not required.

2026/74 The Chair/Clerk to provide an update on any information, actions or correspondence since the last meeting.

- i. **North Norfolk Local Plan Review & Call for Sites email 1/6/26**
Noted.
- ii. **Claire Stone – Pond for every parish email 4/6/26**
Noted. Wood Norton do not have any accessible ponds.
- iii. **Supporting older people in your community this Loneliness Awareness Week - Age UK Norfolk email 19/6/26.**

Noted. Wood Norton do not wish to endorse any particular organisation.

2026/75 Finance.

a) To receive the current financial position.

The Chair/RFO advised the following:

Community A/C £2,904.37. 9 transactions noted since the last meeting.

Community (Defib) A/C £836.70. No transactions since the last meeting.

Business Premium (Village sign) £1,418.07. £4.03 interest received since the last meeting.

Business Premium (Investment) £4,752.19. £13.50 interest received since last meeting.

b) To approve payments to be made:

- i) **Clerk's home working allowance**
£53.99 approved
- ii) **Zurich Payment for Insurance 2026/27**
£214 approved
- iii) **To consider purchasing gift for auditor**
Approved to the value of £20

2026/76 To review recent planning applications and note any decisions made.

LA/26/0764 Erection of two detached and freestanding ancillary buildings within the curtilage. A detached garage to the south, and stable block to the east at Wood Norton Hall, Hall Lane, Wood Norton, Dereham, Norfolk, NR20 5BE. Withdrawn.
Noted.

2026/77 To receive an update on Norfolk Police OP Radium

No further updates received.

2026/78 To receive an update on VETS

No update since last meeting.

2026/79 To receive an update on drainage issues (including Foulsham Road)

The Chair advised that the Foulsham Road repairs are on the contractor's schedule but no updates.

2026/80 To receive an update on highways issues

Road markings have been refreshed in the centre of the village. There was some discussion about whether these were the same as the previous worn markings. A google earth inspection confirmed the marking are the same.

2026/81 To receive an update on the replacement of the village sign seat

Cllr Lidstone-Scott now has the wood so can progress.

2026/82 To review the Biodiversity policy and plan

The Biodiversity team need to meet to review. Cllr Lidstone-Scott will organise this.

ACTION: Cllr Lidstone-Scott

2026/83 To review the Code of Conduct Policy

Councillors reviewed and agreed the currently NALC model policy. No changes were made.

2026/84 To consider adopting a Media Policy

The Clerk sent draft wording to councillors by email on 26th May. Councillors agreed to use this as a media policy. The Clerk will prepare the policy and circulate.

ACTION: Clerk

2026/85 To consider adopting the NALC Records Management Policy and Appendices

Councillors agreed to adopt the NALC model policy. The Clerk will prepare and circulate.

ACTION: Clerk

2026/86 To review the Action Plan

Councillors reviewed the action plan and current points were discussed. The Clerk needs to complete VDU assessment.

ACTION: Clerk

2026/87 To discuss any other urgent Items.

An email received from Norfolk Resilience Forum on 6th July 'Fire Safety campaign - Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service' was discussed. Councillors agreed to display a poster on the noticeboard, orchard and will ask the village hall to display too.

2026/88 To receive any items for inclusion on the next Agenda

Seat on village sign, VETS update, Biodiversity, IT Policy review, Affordable Housing

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 16th September at 7.30pm.

Meeting closed 8.40pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting of Wood Norton Parish Council held on 8th July 2026

Signed by the Chair.....