

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Wortham & Burgate Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 17th March 2026 in Wortham Pavilion at 7.15pm

Councillors present: Susan Wright, Nick Castle, Kirsty Neve, Jenny Piper Chris Williams
In attendance: Clerk - Jane Wright, David Appleton Tree Warden & 5 members of the public.
Apologies: Cllr Judd, Cllr Bradley Absent: Cllr Beckett-Doyle

1. Chair's Welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Wright welcomed everyone to the meeting, but due to a hearing issue handed the Chair to Vice Chair, Cllr Castle, for the duration of the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Bradley, Cllr Judd and Cllr Beckett- Allen were approved unanimously. Apologies were noted from Cllr Fleming and Cllr Warboys.

2. To approve the draft minutes of the previous Parish Council meetings

2.1 Parish Council Meeting held on 17th February 2026 - approval proposed by Cllr Wright, seconded by Cllr Piper and approved unanimously

2.2 Planning Committee Meeting held on 17th February 2026 - Meeting did not go ahead due to be inquorate.

3. To record declarations of Interest from members on agenda items - None

4. To consider dispensations from members on agenda items - None

5. To adjourn the meeting for public participation - 7.18pm

5.1 To receive residents questions or comments - A resident expressed concern that the emails she has been forwarding to the Parish Council regarding the Pylons have not been replied to. There was assurance that this matter will be sorted and was asked to bear with the clerk due to a huge backlog. There was disappointment that no one from the Parish Council was in attendance at the recent meeting. The National Grid have now submitted a report but this doesn't really answer the questions that have been asked. There was a request for funds to assist with stopping the pylons. It was suggested that a formal request be made and it will be added as an agenda item in the future. Cllr Castle explained that the Parish Council have on more than one occasion raised its objection to the pylons.

5.2 To receive an update from David Appleton, Tree Warden - David updated the Parish Council on the progress that is being made in respect to Wortham Ling. Car parking issues were raised with MSDC in 2021 when a letter was sent outlining their responsibilities but not gone any further. Significant funds were raised from various sources to appoint a solicitor. A copy of the solicitors letter was given to the Chair and is available on request. MSDC have now agreed to carry out the car parking work in the next financial year.

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It was noted that car parking is increasing on the Ling to non car parking space. A request had been made to the Parish Council previously to register the Ling as an Asset of Community Value but unsure of the progress.

5.3 To receive reports from District and County Councillors - Reports from Cllr Warboys and Cllr Fleming can be found as Appendix 1 and 2

6. **To reconvene the meeting** - 7.33pm
7. **To receive the Chairs Report** - The Chair welcomed the new clerk and updated Councillors on the serious backlog of work.
8. **To receive the Clerks Report and o/s actions from the last meeting (for information only)**
The Clerk thanked the Chair and Councillors for a warm welcome and highlighted the problems that will need to be addressed, namely the accounts and year end.
9. **To consider, agree and /or note new planning applications -**
 - 9.1 **To receive an update DC/26/00187** - Householder Application - Alterations to existing garage To form a new annex and erection of a new cart lodge. Oak Wood House, Long Green, Wortham IP22 1RD - **Awaiting Decision**
 - 9.2 **To receive an update DC/25/03257** - Planning Application - Construction of ground mounted solar panel arrays and associated infrastructure which will have the ability to export 49.9MW (AC) Electricity. Construction of new vehicular access (EIA Development) Land at Stone Cottages, Bury Road, Botesdale IP22 1QH - **Awaiting Decision**
10. **To discuss options for the AGAR for the financial year 2024/2025** - It has come to light since the handover to the new Clerk, Jane Wright that the Financial Accounts for the year 2024/2025 are outstanding. PKF Littlejohn, External Auditor were approached and the options were to complete the outstanding accounts or to issue a Public Interest Report in respect of the non-compliance. For transparency it was agreed to complete the accounts for 2024/2025. PKF Littlejohn to be informed of the Council's decision. Proposed Cllr Wright, seconded Cllr Castle, approved unanimously.
Clerk to contact PKF Littlejohn and prepare accounts for submission
11. **To agree to appoint Trevor Brown as Internal Auditor for 2025/2026** - Proposed Cllr Piper, seconded Cllr Williams and approved unanimously.
Clerk to contact Trevor Brown
12. **Wortham Pavilion Improvement update** - The kitchen and the Parish Office have now been completed. The electrician is due to carry out a full audit of the electrics and change the lights for LEDs. The showers, urinals and taps in the changing rooms have all now been replaced. Steven Frost very kindly removed and disposed of all the rubbish. A reduction of £20 was given from his invoice as a donation for the old table tennis table. It was agreed unanimously to donate the £20 to the Air Ambulance. The whereabouts of key for the storage cupboard beside the Pavilion is unknown. Cllr Castle to make some enquiries. The concept drawing for the potential enlargement of the Pavilion were circulated and discussed. The initial draft was well received. Cllr Wright will liaise with The Village Hall Committee and then go back to the architect with the suggestions made.
Clerk to arrange a donation to Air Ambulance

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- 13. Illegal grazing on the Common** - Grazing is still an ongoing issue. Ponies were on the road at the weekend, the police were called and the ponies were then tethered up. Signage for the Common to be discussed at Minute item 14.
- 14. To consider quotations for signage for the illegal grazing on the Common** - A quote for 12 signs "Private Land, No Grazing Allowed Without Written Permission" to be placed on the common were circulated to councilors. The cost of 12 signs was considered to be expensive at £5119.00 It was decided that 12 signs would be too many. Cllr Castle proposed that 3 signs be purchased at a cost of £1275 inc VAT, seconded Cllr Piper, agreed unanimously.
Clerk to place an order for 3 signs
- 15. Commemorative Twinning Partner Plaque** - A plaque to commemorate the Twinning Partnership with Badbergen and placed at the Pavilion was discussed. Cllr Wright proposed that a plaque be purchased up to the value of £100, seconded by Cllr Castle, agreed unanimously.
Clerk to place an order for Commemorative Plaque
- 16. Wortham Primary School Working Group update** - The situation with the access track and parking at the school has been ongoing for a very long time with various ideas suggested. There has been some query over which parts of land are actually owned by the Parish Council although this is being looked into.
Clerk to speak to Cllr Bradley to see what progress is being made.
- 17. Village Maintenance Committee update** - Cllr Castle reported the sign at The Manor House had been damaged in the winds and had the potential to cause serious damage. Star Pubs have Advised that they will send someone out to look. Clerk to check with Waterfields if the work at the Post Office Track is on schedule to commence next week.
Clerk to make enquiries for the grass verge between the school and Mellis Road to be cut. The access track at Wortham Village Hall is in a dreadful state. A representative from the football Club has very kindly offered to help with laying planings. This is obviously not a long term Solution but will help in the interim until a more permanent solution is found. Cllr Castle proposed that 20 tons of planings be ordered at a cost of £30.50 plus VAT per ton. Seconded Cllr Neve and agreed unanimously.
Clerk to contact Waterfields and liaise with the Post Office. Clerk to make enquiries for verge Cutting. Cllr Castle to organise the planings.

18. Accounts

18.1 Account balances as of 12th March 2026

18.1.1	Current Account	£47397.65
18.1.2	Reserves Account	£75860.48
18.1.3	Commons Account	£10307.09

18.2 Account Payments

18.2.1	Safe & Sound Inv.11678	Mole Control	£60.00
18.2.2	Steven Frost Inv.915	Alterations to the Pavilion	£4070.26
18.2.3	Steven Frost Inv.916	Repairs to the Pavilion	£4814.47
18.2.4	Firesite Inv.IN28338	Fire Servicing at Pavilion (Aug 25)	£160.80
18.2.5	Wave	Water for Pavilion	£88.66
18.2.6	Burgate PCC	S137 Payment 2025 (Agreed March 2025 but unpaid)	£450.00
18.2.7	Burgate Church Hall Inv 25/04	Use of Church Hall June, July & Sept 2025	£80.00

18.3 Direct Debit Payments

18.3.1	EON	Electricity Pavilion	£492.05
18.3.2	O2	Mobile Phone	£36.48

Additional payments/receipts received prior to the meeting

18.2.8	March Admin	N Hinton Salary	£116.00
18.2.9	March Admin	N Hinton Holiday Pay 25/26	£167.04
18.2.10	J Wright	March Expenses	£72.49
18.2.11	Top Garden Services Invoice 2910	Grass Cutting April 2025	£324.00
18.2.12	Top Garden Services Invoice 2911	Grass Cutting May 2025	£216.00
18.2.13	Top Garden Services Invoice 2912	Grass Cutting June 2025	£216.00
18.2.14	Top Garden Services Invoice 3136	Grass Cutting July 2025	£216.00
18.2.15	Top Garden Services Invoice 3137	Grass Cutting Aug 2025	£216.00
18.2.16	Top Garden Services Invoice 3138	Grass Cutting Sept 2025	£216.00
18.2.17	M W Grass Cutting	Cutting of Wortham Common	£1200.00

It was proposed that all payments were approved en bloc - Proposed Cllr Castle, seconded Cllr Wright - unanimously approved. It was proposed by Cllr Wright that the salary for N Hinton and holiday pay be made although the clerk currently has no access to HMRC. March salary for the Clerk will be carried over to April and once access is obtained any adjustments will be made. Seconded Cllr Castle and approved unanimously

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19. To receive items from Committees/Working Groups/ Councillors (for information only)

- 19.1 Playing Field Committee - Updated quotes are being sourced for the repairs required to the cable line and the Rocking Horse.
- 19.2 Commons Committee - Cllr Williams asked for an update on the bridge that has been damaged in Burgate by a bushwacker and asked if the abandoned cars have been reported. **Clerk to make enquiries regarding the bridge and cars**
- 19.3 Finance Representative - See minute item 10
- 19.4 Employment Committee - The new clerk has now taken up her position.
- 19.5 Planning Committee - None
- 19.6 Redevelopment of the Pavilion Working Group - See minute item 12
- 19.7 Village Maintenance Committee - See minute item 17
- 19.8 VHMC - None
- 19.9 Rights of Way - None
- 19.10 Councillors - None

20. Correspondence Received - An email has been received from a resident raising concerns about the access track at Wortham School. See minute item 16.

21. To receive items for the next Agenda - Update on Accounts for 2024/2025

22. Date and time of the next Meeting Tuesday 21st April Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm followed by the Parish Council meeting

Meeting close 8.42pm

