

BACTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7 July 2025 held in
Bacton Village Hall, Bacton.

Councillors Present: Vanessa Kingsley (VK) (Chairperson), Gail Wigglesworth (GW) (vice Chairperson), Jill Dowsett (JD), John Kingsley (JK), Graham MacAusland (GM), Paul Merry (PM), David Ryding (DR), James Steed (JS) and Paul Wigglesworth (PW)

In Attendance : Tina Newell (Clerk) (TN), Andrew Mellen (AM) District Councillor, Andrew Stringer (AS) County Councillor and nine members of the public.

070725/01 **Apologies for absence:** All Councillors were present therefore no apologies were given.

070725/02 **Declarations of Interest and Dispensation considerations:** All members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any interest in respect of any matter contained or brought up in this meeting in accordance with the Councils Code of Conduct; GW and PW declared a non pecuniary interest in the item relating to North Close; no other interests were received and no declarations of interest to consider.

070725/03 **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors accepted the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9 June 2025 as a true reflection of the decisions made and authorised VK as Chair person to sign them as such (090625/01 to 090625/64).

Public Forum:

070725/04 District Councillor Andy Mellen (AM) highlighted two recent successful motions: the first will see the District Council write to the County Council asking to simplify and expedite the process where communities are keen to have 20mph speed limits installed to improve road safety, the second motion proposed that the

District Council appoint an accessibility champion and was approved unanimously. The full report is appended to these minutes.

- 070725/05 AM confirmed any assets the Council owns will be decided after a decision on the Local Government reform is made.
- 070725/06 AM confirmed there are some problems delivering the new Taxi Bus service essentially due to the recruitment of drivers maybe due to Sizewell C recruiting local PSV and HGV drivers however signage for the scheme has been asked for Bacton.
- 070725/07 PW asked about the money held with 'The Friends' groups of the libraries noting the libraries is now under the County's control; AS said 'The Friends' groups will still be there.
- 070725/08 County Councillor Andrew Stringer (AS) suggested there will be cost savings from the £1.9m being spent from Council reserves towards the cost of work the County Council needs to undertake to set up the new mayoral authority with Norfolk County Council and to prepare its business case for a single unitary council, which needs to be submitted to the government in September; the development on Broad road will be coming back to full strength shortly and an order has been put in for the footpath with an expected date around October 2025 - it is thought the District Council are looking to purchase eight of these dwellings as emergency homes; AS will seek funding for the project at North Close from officers at Suffolk County Highways; the report in full is appended to these minutes.
- 070725/09 AS confirmed Suffolk County Highways will need to negotiate with the land owner before the sign on entry to Turkey Hall Lane is replaced.
- 070725/10 JS asked AS when the vegetation along Wyverstone Road at the former Middle School Site will be cut informing all present pedestrians are having to walk in the road due to the overgrowth: AS confirmed this question will be asked at his meeting regarding the site on 10 July 2025
- 070725/11 A member of the public spoke as the applicant's niece in support of a request for a new memorial bench in the Cemetery to be discussed later in the meeting.

Reports from working groups:

070725/12 **Bacton Green:** A local farmer who has maintained the arable land owned by the Parish Council whilst under a government stewardship suggested that the left field is largely self managing and will be fine as it is whilst the right field would benefit from the grass being cut and removed as hay. This should be a largely cost neutral exercise as it can work it in with other areas they cover. After a brief discussion all Councillors agreed to ask E J Barker to continue managing these two fields.

070725/13 Councillors confirmed receipt of two land agents sales proposals for the sale of both the arable land and the equestrian land suggesting to market as three fields and offer the allotment land to the tenant as a private sale; Councillors noted Lacy Scott & Knight suggested a guide price for all three fields of £300k with a fee of 2% (minimum £2,500) and Clarke & Simpson recommended a guide of £295k with a fee of 1.75% (minimum £2,500). After much discussion and noting the arable fields are cost neutral and the equestrian land brings in income with very little intervention all Councillors agreed to hold onto these as assets until such a time as money is needed to fund a community project when it could then be considered for sale to help fund a project.

Beacon Green:

070725/14 A meeting has been arranged with representatives from Taylor Wimpey (TW) for 9 July 2025 to discuss the issues as reported in the June Parish Council meeting.

070725/15 Further to a suggestion last month to consider a footbridge from Beacon Green to Wyverstone Road and after a lengthy discussion all Councillors agreed not to pursue this idea.

070725/16 GW proposed to light the Beacon at 9.30pm on Friday 15 August 2025 in celebration of the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II; TN will advertise the event and VK, as Chair person of the Parish Council, will make a short speech.

Cemetery:

070725/17 **Footpath Redirection:** All Councillors noted the Primary School have agreed to pursue an application to divert the footpath that currently enters the primary school from the road to pass the church, the Garden of Reflection and through the Cemetery agreeing to offer administration support as required.

- 070725/18 All Councillors noted agreement has been given from the Chief Operating Officer at Oxlip academy for work to repair the footpath leading to the rear of Bacton Primary School w/c 11 August 2025 (weather allowing).
- 070725/19 VK, JS and TN met with the owners of the fir trees that border the cemetery access road on 05 July 2025 who expressed a willingness to contribute to the cost of cutting the firs back to allow the grave diggers, grass contractors and funeral cars easy access to the cemetery. After discussion all Councillors agreed to obtain three quotes from tree surgeons with interaction/agreement from the land owner and to bring back to the September meeting unless the work was deemed more urgent when an extra ordinary meeting would be called.
- 070725/20 Councillors noted the parking area has been redressed with tarmac and the weeds on the cemetery footpath sprayed again.
- 070725/21 Councillors received a report from the working party and agreed now the school has erected a new fence and wire has been removed from the top of the wooden fence no further work is required; TN will inform Top Garden Services and instruct them to carry out regular maintenance to the 'hedge' that borders the primary school (previously not done due to its potential removal).
- 070725/22 Councillors noted whilst work to one of the memorials requiring urgent attention has been commissioned the remaining two now have notices saying the Parish Council are undertaking the emergency work; the stone mason will repair these soonest.
- 070725/23 Councillors noted Spencer Wix Stone Mason erected a memorial stone in breach of the Cemeteries terms and conditions. After consideration and noting the letter of indemnity, and without wishing to add additional trouble to the family, whom this ultimately affects, all Councillors proposed to allow the memorial to remain. With all Councillors in favour TN will sign the indemnity contract.
- 070725/24 Having considered a request to erect a wooden memorial bench in memory of Mr Paul Jeffries in the cemetery all Councillors agreed to grant this request; the Parish Council will purchase two 4ft benches from 'Jeff Bowers' up to a cost of £1,200.00 for both and these will be placed either side of the cemetery gate; the family will pay for the required inscription and contribute towards the cost of one

bench whilst the second bench will be offered as a memorial bench should a request be received.

Community engagement:

070725/25 For the Parish Councils stand at the Annual Bacton Fayre all Councillors agreed to ask visitors for thoughts on locations of bins in the Parish and to have on display a map of the current street lights and ask if more/less are required; the Neighbourhood Plan group will have use of half the space in the marquee to inform and communicate with visitors on the plan to date and how this will move forward. It was agreed VK and TN will man the stall.

070725/26 It was agreed to host the next 'Village Voice; bringing the community of Bacton together' on the evening of Friday 26 September and daytime Saturday 27 September to consult on the Neighbourhood Plan and to advertise this soonest and widely agreeing for the Neighbourhood Plan group to run this event.

070725/27 Councillors noted the next Parish Liaison meeting is on 8 July 2025 hosted by Haughley Parish Council and agreed to ask for experience in dealing with the practicalities of unlawful encampments. TN will attend and offer apologies from GM.

Cow Green:

070725/28 Councillors noted no proposals had been received from the residents and no feedback from previous minutes.

070725/29 A E Waterfield have been sent photos of the condition of the track and suggested if this work is carried out with their team are at the Bacton Primary School there will be no charge however if the work is required sooner the charge will be £250 plus VAT; all Councillors agreed to have the work undertaken at the same time as work to the primary school path noting there would be no charge.

Garden of Reflection:

070725/30 The working party met and an agreement with the group, the Parish Warden and a resident has been made which allows the resident to maintain areas including the lavender borders and the Parish Warden to look after the rest including the lawn; the contractor will remain responsible for the hedging.

070725/31 Councillors supported the idea of allowing brass memorial plaques on the centre oak frame and agreed to only allow plaques purchased from and placed by the Parish Council; TN will provide a policy and procedure including an application form for consideration at the September meeting with any requests received.

070725/32 All Councillors agreed to the idea of hosting an official opening event later in the year and agreed to bring this to the next meeting.

Neighbourhood Plan:

070725/33 Noting the government has withdrawn funding for Neighbourhood Plans all Councillors agreed the working group have put much energy and time to getting the plan to where it is and resolved to allocate funding of £6,850 to 'People4Place' to allow preparation of the plan to referendum stage noting costs after this would be borne by the District Council.

070725/34 **North Close:** All Councillors noted work to the patio area will commence 14 July 2025 (weather allowing) and all residents have received confirmation of this date and the plan. It was noted a magnolia tree currently encroaching on this space from a private dwelling will be cut back to the edge of the path to allow work to commence.

Pedestrian Safety Project:

070725/35 After noting the new plan had failed a safety audit VK proposed to move away from pedestrian safety crossings and focus on other work that is more easily achievable to help maintain pedestrian safety in the Parish. All Councillors agreed with VK's proposal and it was noted a meeting with the newly appointed Highways Engineer for Bacton is planned for Monday 14 July at which TN and VK will walk the parish and discuss/point out areas of concern that could have a more easily, quicker resolution for residents safety.

070725/36 Councillors noted the road painting has not been completed in accordance with the order; TN to progress. .

070725/37 All Councillors agreed to arrange a meeting with AS and residents living along Turkey Hall Lane in mid September to discuss concerns with traffic noting this will allow time to gather traffic information both during and after school holidays.

Shop Green:

- 070725/38 PW has spoken with the contractor replacing the electricity socket who confirmed the job will be done although no time frame given.
- 070725/39 After consideration all Councillors resolved to obtain quotes to undertake maintenance to the pond at Shop Green including removal of reeds and cutting back vegetation in and around the pond for presentation at the September meeting.

St Mary's Playing field:

- 070725/40 All Councillors noted there had been a delay in the manufacturing of the ramps, outside of the Parish Council control and a new installation of 20 July 2025 has been agreed. It was agreed to have an official opening on 22 July 2025 and to advertise this widely inviting the press and suppliers to be involved. TN will contact residents to cut the ribbon.
- 070725/41 Councillors agreed plans for new play equipment had been displayed at recent 'Village Voice' events and resolved to share these plans with the Primary School for consultation with pupils; details from this will be available for the September meeting.
- 070725/42 Whilst Councillors liked GM's idea of procuring a 'real' tractor and boat it was agreed health and safety issues would probably prevent this becoming reality; Councillors therefore agreed not to move this forward.

- 070725/43 **Parish Warden:** No issues reported.

Planning:

- 070725/44 Councillors noted there have been no planning applications made to Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) relating to Bacton since the last meeting.
- Councillors noted the following determinations made by MSDC relating to Bacton since the last meeting:
- 070725/45 DC/25/01928 Malt Barn, Station Road, Bacton
MSDC: GRANTED BPC: Supported.
- 070725/46 DC/25/02346 Bacton Technology Park, Broad Road, Bacton
MSDC: GRANTED
- 070725/47 Councillors noted there is no update on the two outstanding CIL liabilities relating to Land to the rear of The Bull and Land to the rear of Mizpah, Broad Road. .

070725/48 After discussion all Councillors agreed they have a responsibility to the residents to pursue a claim against the District Council for their failure to pass on the Parish Councils expression of interest to land for a community facility on Ivy Fields. PW proposed to contact Mills & Reeve solicitors to take further advice upto £1,500.00. This proposal was seconded by JS and supported by all Councillors.

Finance (all supporting papers previously issued):

070725/49 All Councillors confirmed receipt of the finance reports including bank reconciliations for the period ended 30 June 2025 prior to the meeting. GM, as a non-bank signatory verified the bank statements agreed to the bank reconciliation as presented confirming the total cash available £324,117.73; £73,953.81 in Barclays Community, £31,283.71 in Barclays Premium, £0.00 in Unity savings, £16,598.63 in Unity current, and £202,281.58 in GB Bank, HSBC and Hampshire Trust Bank within 'Flagstone'.

070725/50 All Councillors accepted the budget to actual payments and receipt without questions.

070725/51 Councillors received the reserves account and agreed to vier £5k from general reserves to a new line 'Unlawful Encampments' to allow commencement of necessary proceedings without delay should any encampments appear in the Parish.

Councillors noted the following receipts since the last meeting:

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|-----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 070725/52 | Barclays | Interest | £244.37 |
| 070725/53 | Tenant | Rent | £250.00 |
| 070725/54 | HMRC | VAT refund 2024/25 | £9,567.36Andre |
| 070725/55 | Andrew Bingham | EroB/internment | £895.00 |
| 070725/56 | Flagstone | Interest, monthly | £662.70 |

Councillors ratified the following payments paid since the last meeting:

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|-----------|----------------|------------------|---------|
| 070725/57 | Defib Supplies | Replacement pads | £132.00 |
| 070725/58 | Barclays | Bank charges | £6.00 |
| 070725/59 | Nest | Pension | £63.23 |

070725/60 Councillors approved the following payments confirming invoices and supporting documents had been seen prior to approval:

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|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| 070725/61 | Employees | Salaries | £1,915.13 |
| 070725/62 | J Lawes | Top soil (GoR and Dog area) | £29.70 |
| 070725/63 | J Lawes | Strimmer wire | £3.95 |
| 070725/64 | J Lawes | Staples | £2.95 |

070725/65 After discussion and noting a request to add TN has not been actioned (on going since September 2024) all Councillors agreed to close both Barclays bank accounts and to move all funds to a new account within Flagstone.

070725/66 Noting the amount of printing and the cost of using third party printers all Councillors resolved to purchase an A3 colour printer at a cost up to £200.

070725/67 All Councillors agreed to purchase three flags to mark VJ Day (Friday 15 August 2025) at a cost of £150 and to have these flown on Beacon Green and lighting of the Beacon at 9pm on Friday 15 August 2025.

Councillors considered the following financial requests:

070725/68 After much discussion and agreeing the village hall is well used by local groups GM proposed to support a financial request from Bacton Village Hall for £840.75 to fund wi-fi for two years. JK seconded the proposal with VK, PM and DR also agreeing with the proposal, PW, GW and JD disagreeing and JS abstaining the majority of five in favour carried the proposal.

070725/69 All Councillors noted a request from Bacton Utd to fund footballs and/or first aid supplies from £129- £387 had yet to be completed and therefore all Councillors resolved to defer this decision until a completed grant application form had been received.

Governance:

070725/70 All Councillors were in favour of adopting the recently reviewed risk assessments noting the Financial and St Marys Playing Field risk assessments are still under review:

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Speed Indicator Device | Lone worker | Cemetery |
| Cow Green | Tailors Green | Shop Green |

070725/71 Councillors noted all documentation has been submitted to PKF for the annual limited assurance review and confirmation of receipt received; it was noted there

is additional work required to validate the variance in salaries from 2023/24 to 2024/25.

070725/72 Councillors noted the movement of the reserve agreed earlier in the meeting and the policy agreed at the last meeting and agreed they are in strong position should there be an unlawful encampment in the Parish.

Correspondence:

070725/73 Councillors noted there has been no correspondence that hasn't been considered as an agenda item.

070725/74 **Items for inclusion in future meetings:** Pulhams Lane, noticeboards, streetlights, waste bins, road safety, play equipment, annual insurance renewal and land vulnerability.

070725/75 All Councillors noted the date of the next meeting as Monday 8 September 2025.

070725/76 VK as Chair person closed the meeting at 8.46pm.