

WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD AT 19:30 HRS ON TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2025
WICKEN MISSION HALL

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted):
Cllrs R Barnes, A Cogan, S Hill, L Houghton, P Rash J Rogers and County Councillor Hawker-Dawson
and 2 parishioners.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs C Robinson, M Hawes, B Pepper and District Councillor Vellacott. In the absence of the Chair the meeting was chaired by Vice Chair Cllr J Rogers.

2. To Receive Declarations of Interest

- a) Councillors to declare any personal interest in any items on the agenda.
- b) Councillors to declare any prejudicial interest in any items on the agenda and to inform the Chairman if they wish to speak on the matter during public participation.
- c) Councillors to declare any pecuniary interest in any items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Public Participation.

The meeting will be adjourned for up to 10 minutes to allow any members of the public and Councillors declaring a prejudicial interest to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting.

Two representatives attended the meeting from Wicken Amateurs Football Club and requested additional cuts to the football pitch and for the surface to be rolled.

4. County and District Councillor Reports

District Councillor Vellacott had provided a written report in his absence updating on the following subjects:

- Would be meeting Mayor Bristow on 7 November to discuss improvements to Wicken public transport.
- Planning matters
- The Councillor Surgery which one Wicken parish resident attended to discuss the BESS.
- The Bess should be discussed at the November or December planning committee.
- Updates on the 3G pitch at Soham Village College and the new floor at the Ross Peers Sports Centre
- Local Government Reorganisation - ECDC was supporting Option B
- Residents survey put ECDC as the best Council in Cambridgeshire

County Councillor Hawker-Dawson had provided a written report and also updated on the following subjects:

- Quality of Life Survey
- Community Digital Hubs
- Cambridgeshire Youth Work Conference
- Environment and Green Investment Committee

- Highways and transport
- Had attended the LHI meeting and advised that the Redit Lane LHI bid had been approved.
- Local Government Reorganisation – CCC would be supporting Option A
- Would be holding regular Councillor Surgeries on the second Tuesday of every month at St James’s church in Stretham.

Cllr Hawker-Dawson left the meeting at 8pm

Item 9 was brought forward. Review of the Grass Cutting Schedule

Increasing the number of cuts on the recreation ground was discussed in full. Only 1 cut had taken place in September instead of 2 as the contractors had already used 12 of the 14 cuts and were concerned about cuts in October. The clerk would ask the contractors to advise why they had changed the schedule. The Parish Council had previously agreed that the clerk could have an additional 3 discretionary cuts, and this was confirmed with one additional cuttings collection if needed. If further cuts were required, this would need to be agreed by the Parish Council. Rolling of the pitch was approved and the clerk would arrange for a 3-4 tonne roller to be hired. The clerk was also asked to obtain a price for the aeration of the pitch as an indication for if this may be needed in the future.

This was proposed by Cllr Houghton and seconded by Cllr Barnes. All were in favour.

2 parishioners left the meeting.

The results of the Neighbourhood Plan survey had been received on 14 October 2025, and the natural environment and residential development had scored highly in the survey. The data had not been fully analysed, and it was therefore agreed that the grass cutting schedule would be added to the November 2025 agenda once the views of the parishioners were known and circulated to councillors for consideration.

5. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 9 September 2025

The minutes were approved as a true and correct copy and signed by the Chair.

6. Progress Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes 9 September 2025

6.1 Painting of the Parish Benches – This was ongoing with 1 bench to be painted.

6.2 Lode Lane 20mph Signs – The clerk had provided the speed data with CCC and had requested an update on the repeater signs along Lode Lane. The clerk would also ask for any suggestions to stop the increased overtaking in the village since the 20mph limit was implemented.

6.3 Trees on the allotment – The clerk had written to allotment holders to remind them of the reduction in the height of trees on the allotments.

6.4 NLOW small pond on the Recreation Ground – Cllr Hill would arrange a working party to clear the pond near the changing rooms, along with the pond on Pond Green. The Parish Council formally thanked Jerry Woofroffe for building, installing and donating the new duck house on the village pond. This replaced the duck house previously built and donated by his father, John Woodroffe.

- 6.5 War Memorial – this was ongoing.
- 6.6 Church Road Drains – The Church Road drains had been cleared.
- 6.7 Facebook request for a dog park – The Parish Council had not yet received a proposal regarding a dog park.
- 6.8 Changing Rooms Project – The planning permission had been approved. The clerk would ask for an update on the tendering process.
- 6.9 Church Footpaths – the grids had been installed, and feedback was positive. The Parish Council thanked James Peterson for completing the work before the Harvest Festival as requested.
- 6.10 Painting of the Cemetery Railings – Cllr Pepper would meet with James Peterson in November to discuss the project further.
- 6.11 Land rear of 28 Stretham Road – the clerk had reported the new access which had been created from Lower Road. ECDC had confirmed that this would be investigated as part of the ongoing enforcement investigations.
- 6.12 The MUGA - this would be on the November agenda.
- 6.13 Vehicle short cut Wicken to Soham – This had improved with a banksman now in place at the entrance. This would continue to be monitored.

7. Planning Matters

7.1 To vary condition 1 (Approved Plans) and 4 (Drainage) of previously approved 22/01016/FUL dated 21 October 2022 for construction of dwelling with detached garage, revisions to previously approved 22/00500/FUL. Plot 1 Land South of 3 Old School Lane, Upware. Ref 25/01012/VAR

The drainage crosses the Upware Open Space and whilst Wicken Parish Council acknowledged that there is a covenant to cross the land for drainage the amendment to the plans had not been raised with the Parish Council as landowner. The Parish Council would like a condition applied that damage and timescale must be kept to a minimum and all methods of drainage explored to keep damage to a minimum, for example moling. There was no scope of works included with the application. The Parish Council wish to be informed of the exact dates so that the Open Space can be closed to the public with the least impact as possible and agree the scope of works with the applicant.

7.2 To vary condition 2 (Approved Plans) of previously approved 24/01119/FUL as approved by APP/V0510/W/25/3363980 dated 15 August 2025 for erection of 2 detached 4-bedroom homes with garages, off-street parking and associated landscaping. Site to the East of 38A Chapel Lane, Wicken. Ref 25/01044/VAR

The Parish Council objected to this application due to the following reasons:

- Over development of the site
- Did not appear to be a turning circle to allow vehicles to enter and leave in forward gear.

The Parish Council has concerns about the overuse of the already failing sewage system.

Should approval be granted, the Parish Council would like the ridge height to be in line, level or subservient to the existing dwellings at 38 and 38A Chapel Lane.

7.3 To Vary Condition 1 (Approved Plans) of previously approved 23/00217/VAR, dated 10 May 2023 for to vary conditions 1 (Approved Drawings and Documents), 3 (External Materials), 10 (Foul and Surface Water Drainage) and 12 (Energy & Sustainable Strategy) of previously approved 22/00137/FUL for the construction of a detached dwelling, new vehicular access point, and pedestrian footpath. Land Southeast Of 9 Stretham Road Wicken Cambridgeshire. Ref 25/00936/VAR

The Parish Council had no objections.

7.3 Update on Planning Applications Approve/Refused by ECDC

Approved/refused.

Approved

- To vary conditions of previously approved 20/00225/FUL for the construction of 1no dwelling with garage. 12 Back Lane, Wicken. Ref 25/00788/|VAR
- Tree works at 5 Chapel Lane, Wicken. Ref 25/00915/TRE
- Tree works at Millhaven, 29 High Street, Wicken. Ref 25/01046/TRE

8. Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Neighbourhood Plan results had been received 14 October 2025 and there had been a return rate of 34% which was extremely good for a neighbourhood plan survey. The Working Group would be meeting on 27 October 2025 to discuss and analyse the results. The survey would be circulated and the analysis presented to the Parish Council at the November meeting. Cllr Cogan suggested that the Cambridgeshire Quality of Life information for Wicken was considered. The clerk would enquire if the data from the Cambridgeshire Quality Life could be obtained for Wicken Parish.

Item 9 had previously been discussed.

10. Christmas Tree on the Maids Head Green. Cost and Decision on Whether to Purchase

Cllr Rogers had obtained a quote for a 20ft spruce which would be around £100 but would need collection, installation and removal. Further quotes would be obtained, and this would be on the November agenda.

11. Review of the Risk Register

The risks were reviewed, and it was agreed that the risk levels should remain the same. It was agreed that risk 26 'injury' should also include risk to Councillors whilst carrying out duties and projects.

12. Kingsway Solar Statutory Consultation for Burwell Garden Land

The one acre Garden Land in Burwell owned by the Parish Council would be affected by the Kingsway Solar project. The clerk had advised the consultants that the land was rented and had provided the details of the tenant and shared the consultation details with them. The clerk would view the consultation documents at Burwell Library. The clerk would also look into wayleave as this would need to be paid to the council not the tenant.

13. Financial Matters

13.1 Bill payments

Rachel James	Clerk wages October 2025	£703.08
HMRC	Employers PAYE	£179.60
Nest Pension	Employees Contribution	£2
Nest Pension	Employers Contribution	£11.33
HMRC NI	Employers NI for October 2025	£72.12
RH Landscapes	September cuts	£888.00
Wave	Water bill 3.6.25 to 2.9.25 for the recreation ground	£15.97
Wave	Water bill 3.6.25 to 2.9.25 for the Butts Lane allotments	£79.03
Roland Fletcher	Late season footpath cuts	£842.40
SSE	Streetlight electric July 2025	£36.21
Balfour Beatty	Maintenance contract for streetlights	£540.00
CAPALC	Training for Cllr Barnes and clerk	£50.00
Burwell Print Centre	September to November Around and About	£257.09
CCC	Half year allotment rent	£1068.00
PWLB	Loan repayment for Mission Hall	£2640.77
British Gas	Changing room electric 10/8/25-12/9/25	£29.16
British Gas	Changing room electric 12/9/25-12/10/25	£28.55
James Home and Garden	Labour for church footpaths	£320.00
DJ's Sand and Ballast	1 tonne of peashingle (delivered)	£54.30
Wicken Mission Hall	Rent for July, August and September	£90.00

13.2 Monthly Finance update

The monthly finance report showed the Parish Council was in a stable position.

13.3 Bank Reconciliation to 29 September 2025

This had been circulated and noted.

14. Items for Information

Cllr Barnes raised the need for repair to the 'no parking on the greens' signs.

Cllr Hill raised the need for repair or removal of the bench at the Maltings. This was a popular bench and had been previously discussed with reinstalling being difficult due to erosion of the bank. The clerk would contact EA to see if they could stop the erosion of the bank.

Cllr Rash had attended the National Trust Community Liaison Forum at Wicken Fen on behalf of the Parish Council, and the following was discussed:

- Cycle bridge over Burwell Lode – this would not be suitable for horses.

- A new chair was needed for the forum – anyone interested should contact the National Trust at Wicken Fen.

Cllr Rash reported that the hedge to Upware was dangerous. The clerk would contact the landowner who has previously ignored requests to cut it back. If they failed to respond again, Highways would be asked to take steps to ensure it is cut back.

The Parish Council thanked Cllr Rash for his ongoing repairs to the Maltings footpath. Cllr Rash would also look to repair the Maids Head green track.

Cllr Rash asked whether a plaque could be installed to remember Tony Day. This would be considered.

Cllr Houghton reported that she and the clerk had met with the principal contractor for the Wicken to Soham cycle path. The project was progressing well and was on track to be completed just prior to Christmas 2025. The Parish Council was requesting that the Wicken loop section be opened as this was a popular route for Wicken residents. It is not within the gift of the contractor to open the route early, this lay with CCC, who had indicated only reopening the route once it is fully completed. The clerk would contact CCC and would ask Cllr Hawker-Dawson for his assistance with this.

There were no further business and the meeting closed at 10.25pm

Minutes accepted as a true and correct copy.....