

Draft minutes not yet accepted

**WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD
AT 19:30 HRS ON TUESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2023
WICKEN MISSION HALL**

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted):
B Pepper, P Rash, M Hawes, L Houghton, J Rogers, R Barnes and 2 members of the public.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs S Hill (work), C Robinson (holiday), S Wilson (holiday) and District Councillor Vellacott.

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.

Cllrs Rash and Rogers declared an interest in agenda item 7.1.

Cllr Barnes declared an interest in agenda item 17.

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.

A member of the public thanked Cllr Pepper for running the Speedwatch at the Stretham end of the village and advised that speeding along that stretch of road remained concerning.

4. Presentation on Neighbourhood Plans by Emma Knight from ECDC.

Unfortunately, Emma Knight was unable to join the meeting due to illness. This would be rearranged.

5. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 12 September 2023

One amendment was required for agenda item 12. Cllrs Robinson and Hill would discuss whether the Pride of Place grant would be beneficial for future plans of the Pond Green meadow which may include an information board. With this amendment the minutes were agreed as a true and correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

6. Progress Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes 12 September 2023

6.1 Mission Hall BT manhole –The Chair advised that there was a possibility that wayleave should be paid for the BT pole and manhole. Without wayleave, technically, BT cannot undertake works to their equipment. This would be looked into.

6.2 Parking on the Village Greens – This would continue to be monitored. Sadly a resident had died and his family had asked if cars could park on the green for the wake. This was agreed.

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6.3 Offer of bark chippings – Cllr Pepper had sourced some free chippings. The chippings from the tree which needed to be removed on the Mission Hall Green could also be used. Cllr Pepper would arrange for the chippings once it was known how much was required.

6.4 Pond Green Play Area – The safety surface had been replaced.

6.5 CIL Money – The clerk had contacted ECDC regarding spending the CIL money. This could not be used to repay the public works loan which had been taken out to purchase the Mission Hall. The CIL money could be used to refurbish the changing rooms on the Recreation Ground.

6.6 Wicken Amateurs Club Update of Agreement – A Recreation Committee meeting was due to take place on 11 October 2023 and the agreement would be issued to the football club for signing.

6.7 Church Yard Paths – There had been more work than first anticipated which had increased the cost. The footpaths had been replaced but the Church Warden felt that the stone was now too deep for wheelchairs etc. It was agreed that this would be monitored and reviewed after there had been a substantial amount of rain. The stone may need to be bonded to make the surface harder. This would be on the November agenda.

6.8 Hedge Adjacent to Wicken Mission Hall Car Park – The clerk was waiting to hear from the owner regarding a convenient date to meet.

6.9 Speeding tractors through the village – The clerk had written to G's, Greens and Pretoria regarding the speeding tractors in Wicken and Upware. The clerk would report to the police via 101.

7. Planning Matters

Cllrs Rogers and Rash left the meeting at 7.58pm

7.1 Demolition of existing outbuilding and replacement with a triple garage, garden room and gym. 6 Butts Lane, Wicken CB7 5XU. Ref 23/00770/FUL

Wicken Parish Council had the following comments:

- Ridge height to be subservient to the existing nearby dwellings
- Future use of the property. – The Council would like a condition added that further planning permission should be submitted if there was a change of use to residential in the future.
- Ensure that the property was not built over the former ditch that had been piped.

Cllrs Rogers and Rash returned to the meeting at 8.07pm

7.2 Update on Planning Applications Approved/Refused by ECDC

There had been no updates from ECDC.

8. County and District Councillor Reports

Cllr Vellacott had emailed a report which had been circulated to Councillors. The information was noted.

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9. Pride of Place Grant

Information on the Pride of Place grant had been shared with the Upware Residents Association. Cllrs Robinson and Hill would discuss in more detail and bring ideas back at a future meeting.

10. Redit Lane Highways Issues

The residents of Redit Lane had raised concerns regarding large vehicles trying to use Redit Lane. This had been brought to Highways attention in December 2020 when the Parish Council asked for a sign to be erected stating the road was not suitable for large vehicles. Due to the lack of space to place a suitable sign Highways had not been able to proceed further. The Parish Council would raise this again with the idea of signs approaching the turn saying 'next turning not suitable for large vehicles'. [Clerk's note – the resident stated after the meeting that she would be happy for a sign to be attached to her property in North Street] The clerk would contact Highways.

11. LHI Bid 2024/25

The LHI Bid for 2024/25 would be opening shortly. The Councillors were asked to think of any projects.

12. Inonnotus Hispdus Tree, Mission Hall Green

The report on the tree and a quote for the work had been received from RH Landscapes. The inspection had found that the tree had a fungal bracket, Woodpecker holes, decaying cavities and general decline and advised that the tree was removed. As the tree was in the conservation area, permission from ECDC tree officer was required. It was agreed that the tree should be removed but as much of the trunk as possible should remain. The clerk would apply for permission to remove the tree and contact RH landscapes once permission was granted.

13. Memorial Stability Testing

The Clerk was concerned about safety of some of the headstones in the cemetery and churchyard. A quote for stability testing had been received from the CDS Group which was £1600. It was agreed that the Burial Board would meet at the cemetery to review and risk assess the headstones by doing a visual inspection and a gentle hand pressure test up to 25kg.

14. Parish Council Coffee Morning

The coffee morning would be taking place on Saturday 14 October 2023 between 10.30am and 12.30pm.

15. Church Wall

A section of the church wall had fallen down which had left a gap of around 2 meters. Following previous concerns from the church warden and prior to the section falling, the clerk had met with CJ Murfitt's to discuss repairs to the wall replacing the whole of the church wall. It was found that the wall had been patched a number of times over the years with around 10 different

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styles being visible on inspection. A large part of the wall did not have any foundation brick work which was not helping with stability. The clerk had received a quote to replace the church wall from the churchyard entrance to the small wall next to the lych gate. The quote for the work was £22,500 plus VAT. Although the Parish Council had CIL money, the CIL rules state that this cannot be used on the church or the chapel. It was agreed that the clerk would contact the Diocese surveyor as permission would be needed to work on the wall and only certain materials could be used. The clerk would arrange a site meeting.

16. East Cambridgeshire Growth and Infrastructure Fund

The Recreation Ground Committee was meeting with Dan Hardingham on 11 October to discuss the refurbishment of the changing rooms. The Parish Council could apply for a grant from the East Cambridgeshire Growth and Infrastructure Fund to help with this work. However, this was time limited, and the project might not be at the correct stage before the deadline.

17. Request to Use the BBQs by the Hall Committee

The Hall Committee had requested to use the BBQs at the Hall Christmas Fayre. Permission was granted.

18. CCC Weed Spraying Policy

CCC had implemented a change to the roadside weed management policy which was being assessed following a large number of complaints. A survey had been sent out for feedback on the management policy. Wicken Parish Council felt that the weeds growing on the side of the roads and on the paths were a safety issue and were contributing to the build-up of dirt which was making the road sweeping ineffective. The lack of cleaning of the grips was contributing to the roads flooding following heavy rain as they were not taking the water away. The clerk would answer the survey.

19. Financial Matters

19.1 Bill payments

Rachel James	Clerk wages October 2023	£475.06
HMRC PAYE	PAYE October 2023	£118.60
RH Landscapes	September cuts	£1260.00
SSE	Streetlight electricity September 2023	£51.04
British Gas	Electric for changing rooms September 2023	£21.21
British Gas	Electric for changing rooms August 2023	£25.32
James Home and Gardens	Clearing damaged church wall and broken glass on bus stop	£80.00
CAPALC Ltd	R Barnes Councillor training	£75.00
CAPALC Ltd	R Barnes planning training	£50.00
CAPALC Ltd	Affiliation fee 1/4/23-31/3/24	£375.48
Caloo Ltd	Safety surface in Pond Green play area	£7005.50
Youngs Agricultural	Repair to swings in Pond Green play area	£172.34
Roland Fletcher	Footpaths last cut of season	£705.60
Wicken Mission Hall	Rent for July, August and September	£90.00
James Home and Garden	Churchyard footpaths labour	£800.00

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Border Farm Timber Ltd	Wood for path edging (card)	£124.00
DJ Sand and Ballast	Teram and peashingle (card)	£224.70
DJ Sand and Ballast	1 tonne peashingle (card)	£54.30
DJ Sand and Ballast	1 tonne peashingle (card)	£54.30

14.2 Monthly Finance update

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

14.3 Bank Reconciliation to 29 September 2023

The bank statements and reconciliation reports had been circulated. These were noted.

15. Items for Information

James Day had contacted the clerk asking if he could use some of the Parish Council road planings to build up the passing places along Padney Road. The Parish Council agreed and thanked Mr Day for completing this task.

Cllr Houghton advised the sale of The Maids Head lease had been advertised on Facebook. This had included 'a large front garden and ample parking'. The Parish Council asked the clerk to contact Mr Holland and ask him to correct the particulars of the post as the large front garden was actually village green and parking was not allowed on the green without permission from the Parish Council.

Cllr Rogers reported that the bridge over the ditch on the north side of the allotments was slippery. Cllr Barnes would donate some chicken wire and Cllr Pepper would attach this to the bridge to improve grip.

Cllr Barnes advised that the edging of the path installed by the builders for the new houses along Church Road was steep and dangerous. The clerk would report to Highways.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.32pm