

WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD AT 19:30 HRS ON TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026
WICKEN MISSION HALL

In Attendance (a minimum of 3 Councillors must be present for business to be conducted):
Cllrs R Barnes, A Cogan, M Hawes, S Hill, L Houghton, B Pepper, P Rash, C Robinson, J Rogers,
District Councillor Vellacott and Sarah Harris from the National Trust.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from County Councillor Hawker-Dawson.

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.

There were no requests to speak.

4. Presentation by the National Trust

Sarah Harris from the National Trust presented the Wicken Fen 10 years and Beyond Project. This project focuses on nature, people and carbon. The ancient fen is deteriorating and a big issue for nature is water. There has been an increase in development around South Cambs and Waterbeach.

The Fen had 60k paying visitors last year but many use the wider reserve and this is seen as a missed opportunity to engage with people which is needed for the Fen to be sustainable. The new project plans to address this were shared.

The Parish Council thanked Sarah Harris for the very informative presentation and asked that issues with parking in the village and a request for signage to show that pedestrians have priority over cyclists along Wicken Fen rights of way be considered.

Sarah Harris left the meeting at 8.15pm

5. County and District Councillor Reports

District Councillor Vellacott had submitted a written report and discussed the following:

- The ECDC Local Plan would be staying in place
- CIL money will be abolished following the Local Government Restructure
- There will be a Skills Hub at Soham Town Rangers
- Further discussions with the developers regarding the cut through from the A1123 to Soham had taken place and a site visit would be taking place on 23 June 2026
- Work on the gravel on the cycle path had been agreed

- Support for the dualling of the A10 had been put forward as a motion and supported by ECDC.

County Councillor Hawker-Dawson had submitted a written report. It had been raised at the last meeting that a social media presence would be beneficial. Cllr Hawker-Dawson confirmed that he is on Facebook and can be contacted via [Facebook](#) or via email:

tom.hawker dawson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or phone via 01223 699 831

The Council commented that they hoped Cllr Hawker-Dawson would be present at the next meeting as there are various outstanding matters waiting to be discussed.

6. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 12 May 2026

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

7. Progress Report on Matters Arising from the Minutes 12 May 2026

7.1 Painting of the Cemetery Railings –The clerk is obtaining additional quotes. Cllr Pepper will meet with the contractors.

7.2 Erosion of the bank on the lode at the Maltings – The Chair had emailed David Smith from the EA and awaited a reply. The Community Fund Committee had agreed to donate the money for a replacement bench. This would also include a plaque commemorating Sir Joseph Pope

7.3 Upware hedge –This had been reported to Highways who had confirmed that they had contacted the landowner.

7.4 Christmas tree lights – The clerk would be meeting with the Chair of Stretham Parish Council regarding their lights. Cllr Hill would also attend.

7.5 BESS – Cllr Houghton had received a positive response from the developers regarding a contribution to the community but this would be long term and not be considered until the facility was “energised”.

7.6 Cemetery Car Park Maintenance – The Parish Council thanked Cllr Rash for completing the work on the cemetery car park. A resident of Cross Green had repaired the potholes.

7.7 Maids Head tree – The Parish Council thanked Cllr Pepper for removing some branches on the tree at the entrance to the Maids Head to improve visibility.

8. Planning Matters

8.1 To Vary Condition 1 (Approved Plan) of previously approved 23/00071/VAR for to vary condition 1 (approved plans). Condition 13 (access crossover) & condition 12 (visibility splays) of previously approved 16/00024/OUT for Demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of 5 No detached and 2 No semi-detached houses with associated access road. 34 Chapel Lane, Wicken CB7 5XZ Ref 26/000507/VAR

There were no objections.

8.2 Update on Planning Applications Approved/Refused by ECDC

Approved

The removal of the leylandii hedge. 9 Back Lane, Wicken ref 26/00030/FUL

9. Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Working Group was in the process of completing the character assessment. The Working Group would be meeting with Places4People is taking place on 18 June 2026. The current timeline is:

- Summer 26 – Assessment of Sites, collection of remaining evidence
- Late Summer/Autumn – Consultation on Sites
- Autumn – Selection of site(s) and drafting Plan
- Winter – Consult on draft Plan
- Spring 27 – Submit Plan to ECDC

An update on the cost would also be obtained along with more definitive milestone dates.

10. Replacement Screen for the Speedwatch Sign on Church Road

A quote of £185 plus a delivery charge of £65 had been received for a replacement screen for the Speedwatch sign. It was agreed that this should be purchased and replaced.

11. Review of the Grass Cutting Schedule

There had been some confusion with No Mow May. The cutting schedule will be reviewed at the September meeting with a view to making it simpler. The bulb planting proposal will be also discussed at the September meeting.

12. Changing Rooms on the Recreation Ground

Cllr Hawes had received quotes for replacement windows and doors. The Recreation Committee would meet to agree a schedule of works.

13. Purchase of a Parish Council Mobile Phone

The clerk currently used her personal telephone for Parish Council business. It was agreed that a mobile phone should be purchased which could be handed to a Councillor when the clerk was on holiday. The budget for this was set at £150.

14. Extension of Wicken Cemetery

It was agreed that enquiries should be made regarding an extension to the cemetery. Cllr Houghton would make enquiries with CCC who own the land directly behind the cemetery.

15. Recreation Ground Wooden Post Installation

Following an electric cable accident, it was agreed that a wooden post should be installed on the recreation ground to protect the tension wire supporting a telegraph pole. Cllr Pepper agreed to install the post with reflectors.

16. Financial Matters

16.1 Bill payments

Rachel James	Clerk wages June 2026	£703.08
HMRC	Employers PAYE	£179.60

Nest Pension	Employees Contribution	£15.11
Nest Pension	Employers Contribution	£11.33
HMRC NI	Employers NI for June 2026	£72.12
RH Landscapes	Grass cutting May 2026	£1706.55
RH Landscapes	Ash tree Lode Lane removal of large limbs	£690.00
Roland Fletcher	Early season cut of footpaths	£1040.40
CAPALC	E Learning Course	£14.00
Parish Online	Mapping software licence	£108.00
Wave	Water 3.3.26-2.6.26 Butts Lane Allotments	£99.98
Wave	Water 3.3.26-2.6.26 Cemetery	£19.11
Wave	Water 3.3.26-2.6.26 Rec	£19.11
SSE	Streetlight electric April 2026	£63.96
CAPALC	Chairperson course	£50.00

16.2 Monthly Finance update

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

16.3 Bank Reconciliation to 30 May 2026

This had been circulated and noted.

16.4 East Anglian Air Ambulance Donation

With a limited donations budget, it was agreed that further donations will be reviewed closer to the end of the financial year. The amount for donations in the budget would also be discussed when the council agreed the precept in December. A decision for EAAA was deferred.

17. Items for Information

Cllr Houghton had been trying to obtain wayleave for the pole on the Mission Hall car park since the repair of the manhole cover. Enquiries had been unsuccessful and it was agreed that this would not be taken further.

The hedges along Bier Way were encroaching on the footpath. Cllr Houghton would contact one of the residents and Cllr Pepper the other.

There had been a report of poor visibility when exiting the Maids Head Green opposite Kings Way. Cllr Pepper will investigate.

Cllr Robinson asked for permission to plant a home-grown tree in the Millenium Wood. This was granted.

Cllr Pepper had met with John Hughes from the National Trust who had informed him that the new bridge over the Burwell Lode has been delayed due to the increase in costs. The estimated cost is now £4m, twice what was originally thought. The National Trust will cut the hedge on Lode Lane back after the nesting season.

There were no further business and the meeting closed at 10.06pm

Monthly Task List

- Cllr Houghton to start enquiries about purchasing land for an extension to the cemetery.
- Cllr Pepper to install a wooden post on the recreation ground
- Cllr Pepper will investigate the issue of visibility when exiting the Maids Head green

