



# Wickham Skeith Parish Council

**MINUTES** of the **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held **MONDAY, 10 MARCH 2025** at the Village Hall, Wickham Skeith.

**Councillors present:** T Rowe (TR), A Noller (AN) and J Creasey (JC).

**In attendance:** David Rayner (DR) (Wickham Skeith Parish Clerk), and 7 members of the public. R Warboys (RW) (District Councillor) and Andrew Stringer (AS) (Suffolk County Councillor) both joined the meeting later.

1. 10/03/25 It was resolved that T Rowe (TR) be elected chairman.
2. 10/03/25 R Palmer (RP) and T Thorogood (TT) sent their apologies which were accepted by all Councillors.
3. 10/03/25 a). To receive members' Declarations of Interest on Agenda items- None received b). To consider requests for dispensations. None received.
4. 10/03/25 **The minutes of the meeting** of the Council held on 13 January 2025 were approved and signed.
5. 10/03/25 **Village Forum:** It was reported that the notice board at the village hall was in a bad state of repair and it was asked if this could be replaced using CIL money. Quotations will be sought for a replacement noticeboard and reported back at the next Council meeting.

It was also requested that an area of the village green be left to allow wild flowers to grow as it was some years ago. TR will speak to TT to get this arranged with the contractor.

It was agreed that TR would speak to TT to get the dried pond weeds moved to the allotments.

No fishing signs are ready but need concreting in place.

It was pointed out that on Google Maps, the whole way round the Green has become "The Broadway". RW to look into this and report back.

Water is still running down Grange Road and is very smelly. Also, the water running down the road is staining the road. TR to report the issue to Essex and Suffolk Water as Chairman of the Council.

A question was asked if the village was hosting any events for the 80-year celebrations of VE and VJ day.

6. 10/03/25 **District Councillor report:** RW reported that the budget has now been agreed with the housing budget being the most challenging part of the process. A record investment of £36m is being made in the area with 70% of that being in rural communities.

Suffolk and Norfolk devolution is going ahead with elections for the mayor to be held 7 May 2026. There will be a reorganisation of the County and District Councils and SCC have employed KPMG to advise on a single Unitary authority for Suffolk. The District and Borough Councils have also employed KPMG to look at a single Unitary authority as well as 2 or 3 Unitary authorities. Suffolk's residents' number about 750k people, and the Government think a Unitary authority should be about 500k people. By going to 3 Unitary authorities, they would be supporting about 250k people which is small by what the Government recommend but is the average size of a Unity Authority across the Country.



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There is a Norfolk and Suffolk Devolution Consultation document on the Government website which closes on 13 April 2025.

There is a new 600acre Solar Farm proposal in MidSuffolk DC area, EcoPower Suffolk, which will link to the Yaxley connection.

TR asked what impact the new Government house building targets would have on Wickham Skeith. RW replied that an announcement would be made on 21 March 2025.

TR thanked RW for his report.

- 7. 10/03/25 County Councillor report:** AS mentioned that SCC have agreed to hire a director to oversee the details of the devolution plan on £160k per annum.

The Suffolk Fire and Rescue service had an inspection which brought to light that some policies were not fully embedded in all levels of the organisation.

AS mentioned, the ongoing situation regarding the library services and the reports in the media regarding their future.

AS also mentioned, the challenge of meeting the new Government housing target and stated that there would be an initial number of houses for each village and town released on 21 March 2025. AS pointed out that the number of new homes allocated to each village is the starting point of a discussion not the final position. He will explain at the next Council meeting.

TR thanked AS for his report and also thanked his for the equipment used for the recent litter pick.

- 8. 10/03/25 Planning Matters:**

- a) **DC/25/00779** | Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/24/03177 - Condition 8 (Bat Mitigation Class Licence for Bats) and Condition 9 (Great Crested Newt Method Statement) - Allfield Farm Daisy Green Lane Wickham Skeith Eye Suffolk IP23 8NB **WSPC noted**
- b) **DC/25/00878** | Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/24/03177 - Condition 8 (Bat Mitigation Class Licence for Bats) - Allfield Farm Daisy Green Lane Wickham Skeith Eye Suffolk IP23 8NB **WSPC noted**
- c) **DC/25/00877** | Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/24/03178 - Condition 3 (Detail of Bricks), Condition 4 (Eaves and Verges), Condition 5 (Fenestration Details), Condition 6 (Vents and Pipework) and Condition 8 (Finish Colour) - Allfield Farm Daisy Green Lane Wickham Skeith Eye Suffolk IP23 8NB **WSPC noted**
- d) **DC/25/00893** | Application for Approval of Reserved Matters following submission of DC/21/04804 and subsequent appeal. Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 as amended - Erection of 1no. two storey dwelling and construction of new vehicular access - The Orchard Kitchen Close Wickham Skeith IP23 8LZ **WSPC no issue**

- 9. 10/03/25 Finance**

- a) The bank reconciliation, budget vs actual and reserves position were agreed by all councillors.
- b) Councillors noted there were no receipts since the last meeting.



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c) Councillors approved the following payments:

| Invoice date | Supplier                    | Details                | Amount |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------|
| 01/01/2025   | Wickham Skeith Village Hall | Hall Hire              | 16.50  |
| 25/03/2025   | David Rayner                | Clerks' salary - March | 263.90 |
| 25/02/2025   | BT – Paid by DD             | Hall Wi-Fi             | 35.65  |

d) Councillors noted that the precept request has been acknowledged by MSDC.

e) All Councillors agreed the reappointment of Heelis & Lodge as internal auditor for 2024/25 at a fee of £130.

**10.10/03/25 To review and agree the following updated policies:** The revised Financial regulations, Standing orders and code of conduct were all approved by the Council.

**11.10/03/25 Power and BT lines in the trees:** TR has checked the power lines and the trees are cut well back from them. WSPC have arranged for the trees on the Green to be cut back from the BT lines later this month. There are two other areas where the BT lines are in the trees. Two other sites have been observed where the BT Lines are through the trees. A further notice will be put in the parish magazine reminding landowners of their responsibilities.

**12.10/03/25 Litter bins in village:** DR to check bins and fixings. A non-industrial bin with a lid is all that is needed for the two bin replacements.

**13.10/03/25 CIL Report:** A CIL meeting was held on 4 February 2025. DR to look into the purchase of 20 litter picking kits. Two replacement benches for the village green will be organised from Orwell Mencap. Other suggestions were mentioned and will be assessed at a future meeting. There is damage to a Kissing Gate

**14.10/03/25 Village History Board:** No update available.

**15.10/03/25 Village Hall storage container:** It was agreed to purchase a container from Adaptainer for a price of £2,210 including delivery and also to fund the base at an estimated cost of £300. All invoices to Wickham Skeith Parish Council.

**16.10/03/25 Norwich to Tilbury pylons adjacent to the village:** There has been a slight amendment to the plans which is shown on their website.

**17.10/03/25 White Elm Solar Farm:** No further updates available.

**18.10/03/25 Resilience and Emergency Plan Update:** No update available.

**19.10/03/25 Speeding through the village:** The ANPR camera is scheduled to be in the village in the near future.

**20.10/03/25 Dodmans Pightle:** No updates available.

**21.10/03/25 Correspondence:** A letter has been received from Barclays Bank advising the new reduced interest rate we will receive on our deposit account.

**22.10/03/25 Dates of future meeting:** The following dates have been agreed for the Council meetings, 15 May (Annual Parish meeting and annual general meeting), 8 September and 10 November 2025 and 12 January, 9 March and 12 May (Annual Parish meeting and annual general meeting) 2026.

**23.10/03/25 Next Parish Council meeting:** The next meeting is the Annual General Meeting which is scheduled to take place on Thursday 15 May 2025 at 19:30 and is preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting at 19:00.

**24.** 10/03/25 The Chairman closed the meeting at 21:16.