Wreningham Parish Council
Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 13th January 2026
Margaret Preston Room, Wreningham Village Hall, 7:30pm

In Attendance: Cllr M Hill (Chair), Cllr H Glaves, Cllr K Morris, Cllr Tancred
Parish Clerk: Tina Higlett.
Seven members of the public in attendance

1. Apologies for absence. Cllr Lambert had sent her apologies. Council accepted.

2. Declaration of Interest for Items on the Agenda and Dispensations for Councillors with a Pecuniary Interest. Cllr Tancred Village Hall Solar project.

3. Co-opt onto the council. Chair invited Neil Wilson to introduce himself and to give information on his background and experience and why he wished to become a parish councillor. Members were unanimously in favour. Declaration of Interests and acceptance of office form were completed.

4. Approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 11th November 2025. These were unanimously approved, with no changes.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes
    1. Chairman advised he still has to review IT policy. **Action MH**

6. Open Forum, including reports from District & County Councillors.
    1. Pubic In attendance
       Member of the public asked if the top and sides of hedging on Church Road could be cut near properties owned by Saffron Housing. It was noted that management of the hedging is allocated to certain properties in their deeds. In this case it is plot 1 (a Saffron Housing house) which is responsible for the section of hedging mentioned. The Council will contact Saffron to advise the hedging has become unruly. **Action Clerk**
    2. District Councillors.
       Cllr Spratt gave a brief overview of his role for the benefit of new councillor.
       District report had been forwarded prior to meeting see Appendix 1.
       Cllr Spratt advised funding from Members Ward grants will open in April 2026.
       Cllr Tancred asked if the village hall committee could apply for a grant towards Solar panels. Full details of project to be forwarded to Cllr Spratt who will look into the Community Action Fund (CAF) for community initiatives which will require larger amounts of funding.
       It has been reported that the B1113 Swardeston, the flood solution near to the Battery Energy Storage System does not seem to be working. Water is coming off the A47 onto the road. Noticeable on the left-hand side as you drive into Norwich. Flood signs have been put in place.
       Chairman asked for an update on the South Norfolk Council EV charging point for village hall as council have not had any correspondence since showing an interest.

7. Responding to and working with other bodies
    1. Planning
        a) Applications commented on between meetings.
        1. 2025/3096. Agricultural Building South of High Common Farm, Wymondham Road, Wreningham. Proposal: Demolition of agricultural building and

erection of five dwellings and associated change of use of land from agricultural to private amenity. Appendix 2.

2. 2025/3365. Location: Burley Place Hethel Road Wreningham. Proposal: Erection of cart lodge. Application Type: Householder. No Comment.
3. 2025/0806. Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Wymondham Road, Hethel. Appendix 3.

b) Planning decisions

1. 2024/2266 Barn South East of High Common Farm Wymondham Road. Conversion of barn to one dwelling Decision: SNC Approval with Conditions.
2. 2025/3365 Burley Place Hethel Road Wreningham. Erection of cart lodge. Decision: SNC Approval with Conditions (Delegated)

c) Planning Enforcements and Planning Appeals.

Nil

2. Consultations
   a) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. Policing and Crime Act 2009. Sex Establishment and Sexual Entertainment Venues Legislation and Policy. Council duly noted.
   b) Consultation on Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk and Suffolk. Council duly noted. Consultation closed on the 11th January.

8. Finance
   1. The accounts showed councils current financial standing as £28,798.31.
   2. To approve payments
      a) T Higlett Dec/Jan salary £497.54
      b) HMRC Months 9 & 10 £119.60
      c) All Saints Church £500.00
      d) N Pink – Christmas tree £120.00
   3. Payments made between meetings
      a) Wymondham Windows £710.05
      b) Autella Payroll £102.00
   4. To finalise 2026/27 Budget
      a) Grass cutting.

         Cllr Morris proposed purchase of a ride-on-mower for use on parish owned land. Discussion covered need for volunteers, running costs, insurance, storage. Costs would be balanced by savings through not renewing the grass cutting contract. It may need to be licenced and roadworthy for relocation to different areas and footpaths in the village. Council decided to postpone any decision until The Farthings was transferred to its ownership.

         Budget discussion followed. K Lake has advised council he will need to increase his costs for 2026 by £100.00. Budget allowed 10% increase. Cllr Morris proposed council obtain quotes to compare. **Action Clerk**

         Cllr Tancred concerned that the £2000 reserve for play equipment (a 2 or 3 bay replacement swing) was insufficient. Council has reserves for asset management and CIL money £6395.00, this could also be used along with any grant funding. Council has proposed purchasing benches for the playing field as well. Chair and Cllr Morris have met with a

representative from Redlynch who specialise in play equipment to quote on replacement equipment.

Council voted on accepting the 2026/27 budget.
Proposed by Cllr Morris seconded by Cllr Glaves – all in favour.

5. To set Precept requirement for 2026/27.
   Council agreed to set the precept at £11,500.00 a 3% increase on 2025/26.

9. Village Organisations
   1. Village Hall solar panel project. Cllr Tancred updated members that she was in receipt of a quotation from Spartec. The quote shows costings with or without batteries and 40 panels on the roof. Quote received is £27,000. The revenue generated could enable the purchase of more batteries. Proposed a meeting with interested parties including supplier. **Action AT**
      Recently hiring of the village hall has declined and new lettings need to be sourced.
      The question was asked what happens if the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) are unable to run the Hall. The VHMC are trustees of the Hall charity. The terms of their lease with the Council, and which is lodged with the Charity Commission, requires the VHMC to meet and to record formally their intention to end their management of the Hall - this is a decision for the VHMC as a whole. The VHMC must then call a public meeting for the village to discuss that decision. If there is no alternative to ending its management role, the VHMC will pass management of the Hall and its contents to the Council.
      Cllr Tancred reported that a neighbouring village hall is just breaking even.
   2. Defibrillator Training - Another trainer has been sourced and will cover the use of a bleed control kit. Maximum of 35 people, on a weekday evening, between 6pm and 7pm. Village hall staff have already carried out training. Council will make donation to NARS. **Action AT**

10. Asset Management
    1. Playing field – play equipment replacement and update on funding.
       Inspection carried out by ROSPA and identified swing needs to be replaced. Council would also like to install 2 benches, table with seating. Awaiting quotes. Swing will be replaced with a metal frame with either 2,3 or 4 swings. If purchasing a 2-swing configuration then the matting will not have to be replaced. Cllr Morris spoke of setting up working parties to clean the equipment. **Action KM**
       It was reported that the ditch outside the playing field needs clearing out. There has been reports of flooding near the school.

11. The Farthings (Community Owned Land - COL)
    Chair advised he had spoken to South Norfolk Planning and was advised the S106 has cleared Planning and is now with interested parties' solicitors. Signing could be carried out by the end of the month.
    Chair proposed arranging a meeting with The Farthing's working party shortly after the signing. **Action MH**

12. Management of the Parish Council
    1. Meeting Dates for 2026. These have all been booked and can be found on the

parish website. The annual parish meeting will precede the annual parish council meeting in May. Invitations to be formally sent out to representatives of clubs/societies in the village.

2. FOI Policy review – This was formally accepted.

13. Date of next meeting – 17th March 2026.

Cllr Glaves thanked Cllr Tancred and volunteers for assisting in the decorating of the village Christmas tree. The tree had been sourced by N Pink and new lights by Cllr Glaves. Council is pleased to support the annual Christmas event at the Reading Room. Chair thanked all who took down the decorations and placed them in storage for another year, and, for removing/disposing of the tree..

Meeting closed at 21:05.

Appendix1.

District Councillors' Report for Wreningham Parish Council – 13th January 2026

Member Ward Grants

Requests for support with small projects (typically up to £1,000 per project) to benefit the local community can be made to your District Councillors. Member Ward Grants for 2025/26 are now fully committed. Further funding is expected to be available in April for the 2026/27 financial year.

Communities Action Fund Grants

South Norfolk Council provides funding to support local community projects via the Communities Action Fund. SNC Cabinet is being asked to approve a further £150,000 in funding for the current financial year. If approved, applications can be made from 12th January until mid-February. This would bring total CAF funding to £300,000 for 2025/26. Applications are made by District Councillors; please contact Bob, Ian or Jim to discuss your project.
Initial budget discussions suggest that CAF funding for 2026/27 could be materially above £300,000. Projects are more likely to be supported if there is a material level of funding from other sources.

Local Government Reform and Devolution

There have been no new announcements regarding the timetable for LGR and devolution. The Government's consultation on the three different proposals for local government reform in Norfolk closed on Sunday 11th January 2026. The consultation can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-norfolk-and-suffolk/proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation-in-norfolk-and-suffolk

The consultation is non-binding. The Government is expected to announce its conclusion in March with the enabling legislation laid before Parliament in the Spring, with elections to the new shadow Council(s) in May 2027.

Local councils are being consulted on whether planned local elections (including the already deferred County elections) should be held in May 2026.

Tasway Energy Park

Tasway Energy Park has been awarded a Gate 1 offer following the recent review of Grid Connections by the National Energy System Operator. This means that the project has no confirmed grid connection point and connection date at present.

The Company states: 'The project team will now be reviewing next steps for the Tasway programme and how this outcome will affect this. This outcome will mean there will be a delay to the planning submission process until the project has better visibility of a grid connection point.'
Previously the Company indicated that a planning submission might be made in early 2027.

Further information can be found on: https://taswayenergypark.co.uk/

East Pye Solar Farm

This solar proposal has received a Gate 2 offer meaning it has a firm offer (date and place) for connection to the Grid. The developer has announced that it plans to submit its application to the Planning Inspectorate in February 2026. The Inspectorate has 28 days to decide on whether to accept the application.

'Norwich to Tilbury' Update

The National Grid's Development Consent Order remains in its pre-examination phase. The date for registration with the Planning Inspectorate as an interested party has passed. The next stage is for the Inspectorate to announce the dates of the examination. https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020027

PylonsEastAnglia are continuing to campaign against the pylon proposals and are fundraising. For further information visit: https://pylonseastanglia.co.uk/actions.

Appendix 2.

Wreningham parish Council comments on 2025/0806 - Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) on Wymondham Road, Hethel

Introduction
These are the comments from Wreningham Parish Council.

Managing Fire on site
Literature (see https://doi.org/10.1016/j.est.2024.111288, 15 May 2024, accessed 13 December 2025) addressing Lithium-Ion battery fires indicates significant risks from explosion, heat, dangerous out-gasing and toxic compounds.

The outline battery safety management plan (2025_0806-OUTLINE_BATTERY_SAFETY_MANAGEMENT_PLAN-8714504.pdf) does not address steps to communicate with and protect nearby residents (closest are with 450 metres; Hill House Farm and Top Row houses are about 700m distant; Bird in Hand will have a good view) in the event of fire gaining hold in the BESS site and spreading across the batteries?

On-going Maintenance and Decommissioning
The site is planned to be in place for 35 years perhaps longer. The application does not provide information about how the site is to be managed over this period. Information such as addressing on-going maintenance, replacement of equipment (batteries will be replaced every 10-15 years), etc. There are references to potential decommissioning in 35 years but no actual proposal as to how this may be done.

Extra Vehicle activity
Once the site is commissioned, what is the frequency and nature of routine vehicular access. Wymondham Road is a single lane road with a few passing places. Will the passing places be improved to accommodate the additional traffic both during construction and post commissioning? All traffic accessing the site should do so via B1113.

Visibility
We welcome that the applicant is to ensure sufficient planting to minimise the visual impact of the site from all vantage points. However, relying on plant (tree) growth to soften sight lines to the site means that this will not be effective for 6 to 8 years. We suggest that mature trees are planted to the South and West of the site.

Fencing / Lighting
Security fencing should be unobtrusive and designed to enhance the site and not create an overwhelming industrial compound presence.
The site is in a relatively dark area. It should illuminated only when work is required on-site; night time lighting should be minimal / non-existent; no lights to be left permanently on.

Appendix 3.

2025/3096 – Demolition of agricultural building and erection of five dwellings and associated change of use of land from agricultural to private amenity

Introduction

Wreningham Parish Council does not support this application.

However, we acknowledge that our input is unlikely to sway the SNC planners as they have already approved several applications relating to the general site (2023/3087, 2023/3219, 2023/3836, 2024/0606, 2025/1186, and 2024/2266(pending)), and especially as this application presents an apparently superior option when compared to the original (conversion of an agricultural shed/building to residential buildings).

We offer suggestions to improve the application for the benefit of the Parish, the neighbours and the putative inhabitants.

Benefit

The supporting literature from the developer states that this development will be of benefit to Wreningham. We beg to differ as it offers more large and expensive housing to the village. WPC have consistently stated a preference for smaller (and consequently cheaper) houses to provide for first homes and retiring households.

We believe that there is a marvellous opportunity for the developer to really deliver material, substantive and sustainable benefits for this community:

1. Create a new public footpath heading north/south to connect between the existing PF15 and Wymondham Road – thus creating an additional circular walk within the Parish
2. Donate and Install a number of benches for public use on/near #1 above or within the parish
3. Plan to improve general BNG by using the land between the site and Wymondham Road to offer an upgraded wildlife habitat – new woodland, improved general planting and attention to the pond. This will deliver a net positive impact for the development.
4. Implement a passing place approximately where the proposed new access point would be (see next section).

We are concerned that the temptation will exist for in-fill building in later years creating an expanding mini-settlement away from the main settlement area of the village. So retaining the area of land between the site and Wymondham Road as a permanent wildlife site provides benefits for the new occupants of this site, supports item 3 above, but also inhibits an additional residential centre a some distance for Wreningham village.

Access

The first application for this site was an agricultural road to the West and behind the site. We suggest that this is used for access to the site instead of the proposed north/south direct connection to Wymondham Road. This has the following practical benefits:

- The resources for upgrading this roadway into a residential access will be provided by not using them for the proposed direct access road
- No new access onto Wymondham Road.

- Provide access for waste management vehicles to the site
- Remove the need (as suggested) for 5 collections of 3×240ltr waste bins and 1 food waste bin to be sited beside Wymondham Road – potentially a large hardstanding of 20+ wheelie bins or the like.

Building height

We suggest that none of the buildings being considered have a roof height exceeding that of the agricultural building being replaced.

Highway/Transport

Wymondham Road is a single track road with some passing places – a number of them informal as people pull into access points along the highway. Bearing in mind that the projected development of so many houses will bring many vehicles (domestic, commercial, etc.) onto this road, we do not consider this road to suitable for vehicles associated with this development.

Furthermore, the turkey factory/farm on the opposite side of Wymondham Road is in constant use with employees' vehicles, lorries and articulated trucks visiting each and every day. A recent application by the owners of this site for permission to store and use hazardous chemicals indicates an acceleration of use in the near future.

Flooding/Drainage

Local knowledge is that these drains that feed from this site will need to be designed to take account of the fact that the drains into which they feed, on either side of the Wymondham Road are prone to filling and flooding.

Lighting

We support the CPRE campaign to ensure that light pollution does not become a factor as a result of development of any kind. Especially in rural areas. In particular Wreningham is a dark village and wishes for it to remain so. Thus, SNC should condition any response to the applicant such that there is minimal domestic and site lighting.

Site Construction Traffic – avoidance of congestion/nuisance within Wreningham

We expect that SNC will require all construction traffic to avoid travelling through Wreningham Village via Wymondham Road, Church Road and Mill Lane. All construction traffic must be required to access the site from B1135, Bridge Road and Wymondham Road.