

WICKHAM SKEITH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19 January 2026 in
Wickham Skeith Village Hall

Councillors Present: Harriet Bowes (Chairperson) (HB), Jeanette Creasey (JC), Tamsin Little (TL) and Thomas Rowe (TR).

In Attendance : Tina Newell (TN) (Clerk), Andrew Stringer (AS) (County Councillor), Rowland Warboys (RW) (District Councillor) and five members of the public.

- 190126/01 Councillors noted there has been no call for an election following the Casual Vacancy (due to the resignation of Tim Thorogood) and disappointingly noted there had been no applicants. It was agreed to continue advertising the position and consider any applications at the next meeting.
- 190126/02 Councillors received apologies for absence from Amanda Noler (AN) and Richard Palmer (RP) prior to the meeting.
- 190126/03 All Councillors voted and accepted apologies from AN and RP.
- 190126/04 There were no declarations of interest or dispensations to consider.
- 190126/05 Councillors confirmed receipt of the draft minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 3 November 2025 and resolved to accept them as a true record of the decisions made (pages 10-14).
- 190126/06 Councillors noted receipt of County Councillor Andrew Stringer's report prior to the meeting; the County Council had an interesting debate when trying to get a motion passed to protect the rights of rivers; progress on the SEND provision offered by the County Council is improving however it is slow (the budget for SEND is allowed to have a negative reserve). The full report is attached.
- 190126/07 TR asked if there is an update on the reservoir; AS replied no.
- 190126/08 TR asked what is the number of houses that are required to be built in the Parish over the next 25 years; AS confirmed an idea of the target number will be available at the next Parish Council meeting and that Wickham Skeith fall low on the sustainability criteria.

- 190126/09 TL asked if there was any perceivable benefit in Wickham Skeith having a Neighbourhood Plan; AS suggested waiting until the target number is known.
- 190126/10 AS's meeting with Highways in November 2025 confirmed ditches along Daisy Green Lane have been filled in without inspection chambers. The cost to now add inspection chambers is high and may not solve the issue but simply provide confirmation where the issue is. It was agreed every landowner has a riparian responsibility to discharge water which is enforceable.
- 190126/11 TL confirmed there is still leakage at Dodmans Pightle; it was noted TN is pursuing Anglian Water for a copy of a report they have previously produced.
- 190126/12 Councillors confirmed receipt of District Councillor Rowland Warboys (RW) report prior to the meeting; following the recent cabinet meeting Suffolk County Council will request the County elections, due May 2026, are postponed; the District Council approved a package of funding of £1.8m over the next three years for nature recovery and biodiversity; a new Youth Council for Mid Suffolk which will aim to provide an avenue for young people to have their views heard and to better understand and engage with the political process is hoped to be operation September 2026. The full report is appended to these minutes.
- 190126/13 RW will send a link to the nature recovery and biodiversity fund.
- 190126/14 A resident requested the purchase of two sets of defibrillator pads; it was agreed the cost of these is funded through the defibrillator reserve account.
- 190126/15 A resident confirmed Wickham Skeith are aligned with 'Love the Dove'.
- 190126/16 A resident advised the Council of a potential planning application; all Councillors were advised they could make no comment and thanked the resident for attending the meeting.
- Reports from groups/Councillors:**
- Biodiversity:**
- 190126/17 Councillors noted the draft policy has been re-written following the recent meeting of the working group; after much discussion it was agreed to consider the adoption of this at the next meeting.
- 190126/18 Councillors received the action plan and supported the clearance of the 'scrub land' on The Village Green taking place on 28 February 2026.

- 190126/19 **Community Emergency Plan:** JC confirmed before the plan can progress an agreement with the Village Hall Committee needs to be made to allow the use of the hall as a Community Emergency Centre.
- Community Infrastructure Levy:**
- 190126/20 Councillors confirmed receipt of the working groups Terms of Reference and agreed to adopt it.
- 190126/21 After a lengthy discussion all Councillors resolved for the working group to distribute/advertise a survey (both on line and on paper) asking residents what they would like the Parishes Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) spent on giving a choice of previously identified projects and the option to suggest others. Councillors agreed to review the results at the next meeting.
- 190126/22 Councillors noted replacement bin lids have been installed; JC informed there is a panel missing from a bin and agreed to ask a contractor to replace this.
- 190126/23 **Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP):** After discussion all Councillors agreed for TL and TN to liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils to formulate a response to the consultation (using the previously submitted responses) and to attend the open floor hearing on 10/11 February 2026 and if necessary the issue specific hearing on 13 February 2026.
- Road Safety:**
- 190126/24 Councillors noted a further Speed Indicator Device (SID) has been received and is operational. TN confirmed that has added this to the asset register. HB gave thanks to District Councillor Warboys for funding this and thanks to a resident who has been involved for many years with the road safety.
- 190126/25 Councillors noted earlier in the meeting there is still no update from Anglian Water regarding a report on the flooding at Dodmans Pightle.
- 190126/26 AS suggested the speed safety strips either had been out and the survey completed or the safety survey is imminent.
- 190126/27 **Tree Safety:** All Councillors agreed to defer the survey to the next meeting.
- Village Hall:**
- 190126/28 Councillors noted the new notice board has been erected on the exterior wall of the village hall.

190126/29 Councillors noted due to the issue with Barclays Bank the previously agreed quote for a storage container lapsed and a new quote had been requested. All Councillors agreed to the increase in cost to £2,320.00 (net) for the purchase of a storage container from the company 'Adaptainer'. It was agreed the payment would be set up and authorised tomorrow (20 January 2026).

Planning:

190126/30 Councillors noted there were no planning applications made to the District Council relating to Wickham Skeith since the last meeting.

190126/31 Councillors note there has been no determinations made by the District Council relating to Wickham Skeith since the last meeting.

190126/32 Councillors noted a claim was made in 2000 for ownership of 'The Village Green including the Grimmer' and after a lengthy debate all Councillors resolved to proceed with registering the village green to include the Grimmer..

Finance (all supporting paperwork appended):

190126/33 TN confirmed the Parish Council has cash available of £29,512.86 as at 31 December 2025 supported by bank reconciliations and bank statements; £0.00 in Barclays Premium, £12,887.51 in Barclays Community £0.00 in Unity Savings and £16,625.55 in Unity current.

190126/34 Councillors confirmed receipt of the budget to actual report and noted the removal of payments from 'CIL' and the additional receipts the Parish Council are working within budget.

190126/35 Councillors confirmed receipt of the reserves account at the meeting with no questions.

190126/36 Councillors noted earlier in the meeting the inclusion of the speed indicator device on the asset register.

Councillors noted the following two receipts since the last meeting:

190126/37	Mid Suffolk District Council	Locality Grant	£2,500.00
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190126/38	Unity Trust Bank	Compensation	£75.00
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Councillors ratified the following payments made since the last meeting:

190126/39	BT	Broadband (dd)	£38.56
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190126/40	BT	Broadband (dd)	£38.56
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190126/41	Elan City	Speed Indicator Device	£3,000.00
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- 190126/42 All Wood Village Hall Noticeboard £1,425.00
- 190126/43 BT Broadband (dd) £38.56
- 190126/44 Various Salaries (Nov, Dec and final salary) £890.60
- 190126/45 Unity Trust Bank Fee £4.20
- 190126/46 Councillors noted day to day banking is now operational with Unity Trust Bank with TN as administrator and HB, AN and JC authorised users.
- 190126/47 After a lengthy discussion all Councillors resolved to set the budget for 2026/27 at £7,272.44.
- 190126/48 Noting the only receipt to support the budget is from the Precept and noting the tax base has a 2.5% reduction on last year, it was agreed to increase the precept to £7,272.44 resulting in an increase on an average band D residence of £9.87 a year.
- 190126/49 HB and TN completed the 'direction to Mid Suffolk District Council' to pay £7,272.44 to the Parish Council in two equal instalments of £3,636.22: one no later than 30 April 2026 and the other no later than
- Governance:**
- 190126/50 All Councillors agreed to adopt Model Standing Orders.
- 190126/51 All Councillors resolved to adopt Model Financial Regulations.
- 190126/52 Councillors agreed to adopt the Model Code of Conduct.
- 190126/53 Councillors received and reviewed policies and procedures relating to employment and GDPR amongst others:
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|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Co-option | Complaints | Compassionate Leave |
| Data Breach | Data Processing | Dignity at Work |
| Data Protection | Disciplinary | Document Retention |
| Equal Opportunities | Grievance | |
| Information Technology | | Internet banking |
| Lawful basis for processing data | | Lone working |
| Privacy Model | Publication Scheme | Reserves |
| Sickness absence | Subject Access Request | Safeguarding |
| Vexatious Complaints | | |
- 190126/54 Councillors noted the risk assessments have yet to be reviewed and agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

- 190126/55 It was agreed for HB as the Chairman to undertake the annual review of the Internal Controls.
- Councillors noted Assertion 10 ‘Digital and data compliance’ will form part of the Annual Governance Accountability Review for this financial year (2025/26) and to give a positive response the Parish Council needs to have taken the following actions:
- 190126/56 Email management – every authority must have a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain; Councillors noted the Parish Council is compliant with the introduction of wickhamskeith-pc.gov.uk emails.
- 190126/57 Councillors noted its website must meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA and the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018; Councillors noted TN carries out regular checks using ‘Wave website extender’ and agreed any issues are to be passed to the web host (One Suffolk) for action.
- 190126/58 All websites must include published documentation as specified in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Transparency code for smaller authorities (where applicable and smaller authorities must follow the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018; All Councillors noted with the adoption of policies earlier this meeting the Parish Council are now compliant.
- 190126/59 All smaller authorities must process personal data with care and in line with the principles of data protection. The DPA 2018 supplements the GDPR and classifies a Parish Council as both a Data Controller and a Data Processor; Councillors noted the policies were agreed earlier in the meeting.
- 190126/60 All smaller authorities must have an IT policy explaining how everyone should conduct authority business in a secure and legal way when using IT equipment and software. This relates to the use of authority-owned and personal equipment; with the adoption of the IT policy earlier at the meeting Councillors agreed the Parish Council is compliant.
- 190126/61 **Other matters for inclusion on a future agenda:** Neighbourhood Plan, Litter pick.

- 190126/62 To note the date for the next scheduled meeting is 2 March 2026. JC offered apologies for the next meeting.
- 190126/63 HB closed the meeting at 21.29pm.