

**BUNWELL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MILL HOUSE, LENWADE MILL, NORWICH, NR9 5QA**  
**www.bunwellpc.info**

**Chairman:** J Chapman,  
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**MINUTES of Bunwell Parish Meeting** held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at the Village Hall, Bunwell.

**Cllrs Present at the Meeting:** Cllr J Chapman, Cllr M Crouch and Cllr S Spooner

**Also Present:** Parish Clerk, County Councillor Catherine Rowett, District Councillor Suzanne Wateridge and 7 members of the public.

MINUTES	ACTION
<b>1. To receive apologies</b> – apologies were received from Cllr Booty, Cllr Ward and Cllr Watson.	
<b>2. To record declarations of interest from Council members in any item to be discussed</b> – there were no declarations of interest.	
<b>3. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024</b> – the November meeting had had to be cancelled, so the minutes of the last meeting held on 2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2024, pages 545-550, having previously been circulated to all members, were agreed and signed by the Chair.	
<b>4. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting</b>	
4.1. Update on Village Emergency Plan – Cllr Chapman and Crouch will bring more information to the next meeting.	<b>Cllrs Chapman &amp; Crouch</b>
4.2. Update on applying for Winters Pressure Grant – Cllr Crouch had been in touch with the Bunwell Pools Charity Committee who said they would be happy to collaborate with the PC if a grant was forthcoming. Unfortunately, the funding for this year was depleted by applications before a request could be submitted, but an application will be submitted to ensure our name is at the top of the list for next year’s allocation.	
<b>5. To receive the District and County Councillors’ Reports</b>	<b>Cllr Crouch</b>
5.1. County Councillor, Catherine Rowett, had sent a full report which is attached to these minutes. She said that among other highways matters, she is pursuing the plans for possible improvements to road safety for pedestrians crossing The Turnpike outside the Village Hall. She is also continuing to meet with NCC Energy Plan leaders to get sensible provision for clean energy and energy storage with good benefits for local communities. Information from NCC included the impasse between NCC and Central Government over proceeding with the Norwich Western Link road, the consultation on the CC budget for next year (details on the NCC website) and speculation about likely changes to local government structures. Information from Central Government included new powers for the police being introduced to combat anti-social behaviour such as road racing, and the need to improve the availability of dentists.	
5.2. District Councillor, Suzanne Wateridge, reported on solar energy provision in the area south of Gt Moulton, details of which are in her full report. She also gave details of another smaller project which will feed directly into Simpsons Malt in	

Tivetshall/Great Moulton, as well as local residential properties and businesses. She spoke of the Council's Community Engagement Van which is coming to Bunwell Village Hall on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December and will be there from 10am to 4pm every Thursday until 20<sup>th</sup> February. It's a new very successful initiative pioneered by the Communities Team. The van is a confidential space where you can come on board to talk one-on-one with a member of the trained team. Staff will listen to needs and provide guidance and signposting if appropriate. Subjects covered are wide-ranging: money and debt worries; benefits; parenting, relationships and domestic abuse; health and wellbeing; bereavement support; employment and housing or home improvements. More information can be found here: <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/communities/community-engagement-van>. An appointment can be made to talk to Adrian Ramsey, MP, by emailing [Adrian@waveneyvalley.greenparty.org.uk](mailto:Adrian@waveneyvalley.greenparty.org.uk), or on 07534 933356. Cllr Wateridges's full report is attached to these minutes.

**6. Resident's Questions** – There were no questions.

**7. To receive and discuss correspondence** – emails received had been forwarded to Cllrs and dealt with as required.

**8. Working Groups** – to receive updates from:

8.1. Planning Development Group – there are no updates to report at the moment

**9. Highway & Footpath Matters** –

9.1. Update on NCC Highways Department drainage system work – Due to delays to this work, this is now due to be completed on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December. This work has been extremely difficult due to the difficulties of working with uncharted underground pipework, but Highways have done an excellent job. The many residents of Bunwell Street who were affected by frequent flooding in the past will be relieved and thankful that this will not happen again in the future. Even so, their house insurance has increased by around 30% due to past flooding and this 'risk' will show up on property searches for some time, affecting house values. It is regrettable that the contractors carrying out this work, and members of the Drainage Working Party, have been subject to abuse from people complaining about the inconvenience, but the Parish Council are grateful that this long-awaited repair work is almost complete.

9.2. The crossing signs opposite the Village Hall, which were damaged in a vehicle accident, have now been replaced and should help to make motorists aware of the possibility of pedestrians crossing The Turnpike. Following discussion, it was felt that a central island would not be beneficial in improving safety and could even be more dangerous. It was suggested that a 40mph roundel on the road could remind drivers of the speed limit, as could flashing signs operational at school start and finish times. Cllr Rowett will consult Highways to see if these suggestions could be put in place and ask about the possibility of introducing an advisory 30mph speed limit at school times.

9.3. The Footpath Warden confirmed that all the necessary evidence had been collected to enable the footpath from Greenways to Barhams Lane to be added to the Definitive Map.

**10. Playground/Village Hall** –

10.1. No comments had been received from residents concerning the removal of the adult gym equipment on the Playing Field and it was suggested that the equipment be advertised on social media sites to try to sell items, rather than have to skip the equipment incurring cost to the Parish Council. Cllr Crouch

**MINUTES****ACTION**

agreed to advertise the items on several media sites. It was suggested that a clean-up operation be organised for the Spring and residents be invited to help.

**Cllr  
Crouch**

**11. Planning Applications – to discuss and vote on any new planning**

**applications** – applications received since the last meeting included: 2024/3275 – 75 Bunwell Street, variation of condition 2 of 2023/3005 amendment to approved plans; 2024/3303 – 70 Bunwell Street, erection of annexe; 2024/3493, The Bungalow, Wymondham Road, replacement of existing bungalow with new self-build 2-storey dwelling with detached garage.

**12. Finance**

12.1. Payments for November had been circulated and councillors agreed to these transactions. The payments for October had previously been sent to councillors and agreed by email. The Cashbook balance was noted.

12.2. Items of expenditure were considered for next year's budget. The proposed Budget for 2025/26 had been forwarded to councillors for their consideration before the meeting and this will be agreed at the January meeting.

12.3. It was proposed that Cllr Booty be added to the list of signatories for Unity Trust Bank transactions and this was agreed. The necessary forms will be sent to Unity Trust for action.

**13. To receive matters of importance from Councillors** – there were no matters of importance which had not been covered above.**14. To receive items for the next Agenda for Consideration** – To follow up items raised above.**15. Date of next meeting** – Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7.30pm**16. Meeting Closed 8.35pm**

<b>UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT</b>	
<b>BALANCE AS AT 02.10.24</b>	<b>£25,884.24</b>

<b>RECEIPTS AS AT 02.10.24</b>			
<b>DATE</b>	<b>RECEIVED FROM</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ACTUAL AMOUNT</b>
<b>BALANCE C/FWD</b>			<b>£25,884.24</b>

<b>PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL IN OCTOBER: UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT</b>					
<b>BALANCE AS AT 02.10.24</b>				<b>£25,884.24</b>	
<b>PAY TYPE</b>	<b>PAYEE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ACTUAL AMOUNT</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>PAYE</b>
BACS	Norfolk PTS	Autumn Seminar M Booty	56.00		
BACS	Bunwell Village Hall	Hire of Hall, Sep	30.00		
BACS	Bunwell Village Hall	Hire of Hall, Oct	30.00		
BACS	Nurture Landscapes	Playing Field Grasscutting, Sep	323.33	53.89	
BACS	Nurture Landscapes	Playing Field Grasscutting, Oct	323.33	53.89	
BACS	Jason Goddard	SAM2 Maintenance	50.00		
BACS	F H Easton Ltd	Annual Playing Field Rental	30.00	5.00	
BACS	Microsoft	Microsoft 365 Annual Fee (Pd by MR)	59.99	10.00	

BACS	M Ridgwell	Oct Salary incl backpay & Exps	454.30		105.00
BACS	HMRC	PAYE to end period 7	310.80		
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1,611.75</b>	<b>122.78</b>	<b>105.00</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>					
<b>BALANCE C/FWD</b>			<b>£24,272.49</b>		
<b>PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL IN NOVEMBER: UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT</b>					
<b>BALANCE AS AT 06.11.24</b>			<b>£24,272.49</b>		
<b>PAY TYPE</b>	<b>PAYEE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ACTUAL AMOUNT</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>PAYE</b>
	Unity Trust	Service Charge	6.00		
BACS	Norfolk PTS	Training M Booty	55.00		
BACS	M Ridgwell	Nov Salary & Exps	297.60		71.20
		<b>Total</b>	<b>358.60</b>		<b>71.20</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>					
<b>BALANCE C/FWD</b>			<b>£23,913.89</b>		

**CASHBOOK BALANCE: 04.12.24**

Details		CR	DR	
Cash Book Balance Brought Forward (Unity Trust Bank Current Account)	<b>A</b>	<b>£24,272.49</b>		
Receipts this month (see listed above)	<b>B</b>			
Payments this month (listed above)			<b>C</b>	<b>358.60</b>
Cash Book Balance Carried Forward (=A+B-C)				<b>23,913.89</b>
<b>Unity Balance</b>				<b>£23,913.89</b>

County Councillor report 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024, from Catherine Rowett

02/12/2024

Work in Progress

I've been pleased to see progress on some Highways projects, especially the arrival of the village gates in Forncett, and finding extra road safety money to fund flashing school signs for Burston. I've seen and checked new plans for moving one of the lorry signs in Tabernacle Lane and adding two more at the other ends of the roads where lorries enter from the South. I've seen and checked plans for the new signage and road paint for Furze Green. It turns out that what was supposed to be a natural spring in Spring Lane in Forncett was actually a leaky water pipe, which has now been repaired. But there is still other water on the road, from what is probably a natural spring! New projects I'm now working on include a desperate need for speed limits and other safety measures on Upgate Street and Rode Lane in Carleton Rode. We are also awaiting major work on Upgate Street to deal with the collapsed sides of the road, and similar work is now needed on Hunts Green (both aggravated by the traffic bypassing the closure of Bunwell Street). I'm looking to schedule a site visit to these sites and also to Bressingham and Fersfield to negotiate the exact locations for the new speed limit provisions that need to be submitted for new traffic regulation orders. I'm also working on footpath issues in Winfarthing and Great Moulton. The crossing equipment that used to be on the Turnpike in Bunwell, before it was damaged in an accident, is to be replaced in the near future.

New buses

There's a super new bus service running between Diss, Long Stratton and Norwich. The Simonds bus number 82 (formerly 2) operates six days a week and runs roughly every hour and right into the late evening, providing a really superb service for residents in Dickleburgh and Tivetshall to go North to Norwich (an evening out in Norwich for £2 each way!) or to head to Diss for the railway station or the town centre. The last bus back from Norwich is at 10.15 pm (or 5 minutes earlier on Saturdays). During the middle of the day on weekdays these buses also continue to and from Norwich railway station. Please use these new buses as much as possible.

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Disappointingly the timetables for the 84 service to Pulham (formerly 584) and the Bressingham circular bus haven't improved.

#### Energy infrastructure and energy saving:

I'm keeping pressure on to get sensible (rooftops first) provision for clean energy and energy storage with good benefits for local communities, while pushing the government to commit to mandating rooftop solar on new build housing (alongside other zero carbon, low running cost provisions like insulation and solar gain). We won't make sufficient progress on these things unless incentives to export power to the grid are restored to make rooftop solar pay for itself. We also need adequate grid connections and substations for Norfolk communities and businesses, and if there are to be local solar projects, they should be community or public owned so that the profits come directly to the people hosting them, along with access to the energy from local substations or batteries. We're keeping our eyes on the Norfolk energy plan which needs to make a case for more community or council owned schemes rather than foreign companies that will siphon the money out of Norfolk. We're currently seeing masses of speculative applications for solar farms in South Norfolk, far more than is appropriate for this area. There are potential benefits for farmers and local residents from some moderate developments: having a patch of solar panels can make a farm profitable so that the farmer can practise better and more sustainable kinds of agriculture. They provide a reliable income alongside smaller scale and more varied cultivation that's more resilient to seasonal disruption, they provide wildlife corridors and help with regeneration of the land, allowing depleted soils to recover and get their organic matter, worms and substructure of fungi and micro-organisms back. They're not smelly, noisy, nor polluting to our rivers. They can be combined with rewilding, wildflowers, traditional hedges, sustainable agriculture, bee keeping, footpaths, regenerative farming. They will keep land from being developed for housing estates or industrial estates. As climate change disasters increasingly destroy harvests and remove soil, this additional source of income for our Norfolk farmers, alongside agriculture, is very helpful to tide them over if the crops are lost. Energy security is also immensely important, but there is good reason to prefer solar farms that are combined with food production (e.g. grazing) and I'm looking into how reliable are the mechanisms for holding applicants to account for providing this for the entire life of the project. Again, community owned and publicly owned schemes would surely have a better chance of delivering what the local community expects. I have submitted a response raising the local community's concerns to Norfolk County Council's input to the current consultation on East Pye Solar.

#### Info from Norfolk County Council

**Norwich Western Link road** The Council has got itself into a self-made mess over this road, having studiously ignored the information and scientific advice brought by campaigners since the various proposed routes were first put up for consideration, and refused to hear the arguments brought by opposition groups on the Council. The result is that the cabinet has spent huge amounts of money in advance, in expectation of government funding to complete the road, which will now be impossible since there is no prospect of getting permission for the planned route which passes through protected habitats. The current cabinet is gazing into the abyss and calling on the government to do something, but there is no legal way out of their impasse.

**Council Budget:** The county council has opened a consultation on three "savings" that it has proposed to help with the expected shortfall in Council funding next year. The detail, and the response form, can be [found here](#). The consultation is open till 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Devolution:** There's a good deal of speculation about likely changes to local government structures, with rumours that the government is looking to form a Norfolk/Suffolk unified authority with the same kind of status as metro-mayors in other regions. We await further details, but need to watch out that this does not reduce our local democratic rights with respect to planning etc.

#### Info from Central Government

### Antisocial road racing etc

The government is introducing new powers for police as part of the forthcoming Crime and Policing Bill, which will be piloted first, prior to a national rollout. They will be given stronger powers to seize vehicles involved in anti-social behaviour with officers no longer required to issue a warning before seizing the offending vehicles. This will allow police to deal swiftly with unlicensed e-bikes and e-scooters, e-scooters on pavements, street racing and cruising.

### Dentists

The previous government published a “dental recovery plan” in February this year. Unsurprisingly the [National Audit Office \(NAU\) report](#) finds that the plan was completely useless and couldn't deliver the improvements needed. The current government is going to have to come up with something that works. We could give them some advice (the problem is actually to do with the NHS dental contract) but they will probably not ask (or if they ask, will they listen?).

Contact me

[Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk). See also my Facebook page [here](#).

## Bunwell District Councillor Report December 2024

### Solar Projects

We spoke about East Pye back in October – the closing date for the non-statutory consultation is this Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December. Catherine and I attended the in-person information event in Great Moulton and have submitted our responses. Obviously, as you would expect being Green Party councillors, we are hugely supportive of renewable energy but in the right place, which for solar panels is ideally rooftops. Unfortunately the government appear to be less keen on this approach. It's about getting the balance of solar projects right across the country so they are not all focused on Norfolk, which of course is very appealing to speculative energy companies as the land is flat and the weather is sunny, but understandably less popular with those of us who live here.

We have also had a presentation from another solar project recently, Station Road Solar, which is not an NSIP so will go through the usual planning process at the Council. This one is particularly appealing as it is small scale and will feed directly into Simpsons Malt in Tivetshall/Great Moulton, as well as local residential properties and businesses. There is a public information evening at Simpsons on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December from 3pm to 7pm. More information can also be found here <https://www.stationroadsolarfarm.com>

### Help Hub Van

The Council's Community Engagement Van is coming to Bunwell Village Hall on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December and will be here from 10am to 4pm every Thursday until 20<sup>th</sup> February. It's a new initiative pioneered by the Communities Team and has been hugely successful elsewhere in the county. The van is a confidential space where you can come on board to talk one-on-one with a member of the trained team. Staff will listen to needs and provide guidance and signposting if appropriate. Subjects covered are wide-ranging:

- money and debt worries
- benefits
- parenting, relationships and domestic abuse
- health and wellbeing
- bereavement support
- employment
- housing or home improvements

More information can be found here:

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/communities/community-engagement-van>

## **Becoming a Parish Councillor**

I attended the Town and Parish Summit at the Council offices last month. It was a really positive and inspiring session with discussion and presentations on issues affecting parish councils – I highly recommend attending if you haven't already (they are yearly, and of course there is the monthly online meeting too). The council has launched a recruitment drive to encourage residents to become a parish or town councillor, with a nice little video published online featuring Mo Negm from Great Moulton Parish Council:

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/become-a-town-or-parish-councillor>

There's a lot of information on there if you know of anyone who is interested or thinking about it, whether here or elsewhere in South Norfolk.

## **Broadland & South Norfolk Business Awards 2025**

As I'm sure you all know, these annual awards are a really good way to gain exposure and accolade for your business, local pub or retailer. Please note you can only nominate your own business, not anyone else's, but anyone can nominate a pub or retailer. Will the Fox and Hounds in Great Moulton make it 3 in a row I wonder?! The deadline for nominations is Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December and if you do vote, you are put in a draw to win £100 of shopping and pub vouchers.

These are the categories:

Business Growth

Business Innovation

Employer of the Year

Environmental Impact

Food and Drink Producer of the Year

Excellence in Advance Manufacturing and Engineering

Excellence in Insurance, Financial and Professional Services

New Business

Small Business of the Year

Tourism Business of the Year

Pub of the Year – open for public vote only

Retailer of the Year – open for public vote only

Further details and the nomination forms can be found at [Broadland and South Norfolk Business Awards categories | Broadland and South Norfolk](#)

## **Adrian Ramsay News**

Adrian is holding his Bunwell surgery on Friday afternoon (the 6<sup>th</sup>) but the village hall here was booked so he'll be at an alternative local venue. I believe there is still one slot left if anyone has any pressing issues they'd like to discuss with him face-to-face. His team have reminded me that he also holds regular online appointments and the next one is on 11<sup>th</sup> December. Please contact [waveneyvalleyoffice@parliament.uk](mailto:waveneyvalleyoffice@parliament.uk) for more details or to book.

## **Cllr Suzanne Wateridge**

**Member for Bunwell Ward, South Norfolk Council**

m 07943 180556 [suzanne.wateridge@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:suzanne.wateridge@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)