

**GREAT BLAKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Gt Blakenham Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 in the Parish Room, Stowmarket Road, Great Blakenham at 7.30pm.**

**Present: Cllr Steve Plume (Chairman), Cllr Debbie Kemp, Cllr Nick Leonard, Karen Grimwood (Parish Clerk), District Cllr Addrienne Marriott, SCC Cllr Chris Chambers.**

**MINUTES**

1. To elect the Chairman of Great Blakenham Parish Council – **Cllr Kemp nominated Cllr Plume and Cllr Leonard Seconded**
2. To elect the Deputy Chairman of Great Blakenham Parish Council – **Cllr Plume nominated Cllr Leonard and Cllr Kemp seconded.**
3. To receive and approve any apologies for absence. - **Cllr Will Durrant**
4. Declaration of any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests
  - a. Councillor’s declaration of interest appropriate to any item on the agenda. - **Cllr Plume to leave room on item 10d**
  - b. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interest (if any) - **None**
  - c. To grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate. - **None**
  - d. Co-option of parish councillor(s) / to sign declaration of acceptance. - **None**
5. Public Forum
  - a. To receive the report from the County Councillor – **See attached report Cllr chambers to advise on update to Chalk Hill Lane drain repair. Cllr chambers to advise on weed killing areas in the village.**
  - b. To receive the report from the District Councillor – **See attached report**
  - c. To receive questions from members of the public (allow 15 mins) - **None**
6. To approve the Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024.- **Approved**
7. To note the Clerk’s update from previous Meetings.
  - a. NSK Landscapes have been awarded the work to remove the soil from the soil stack at the cemetery. **Noted**
  - b. Port One community gain offer of solar panels and the Gipping Meadow project will hopefully be signed off imminently and then we should receive timeframes. - **Clerk to email MSDC to gain update and plans**
  - c. Lock stop plank replacement is going ahead but waiting for end of fish breeding season. **Noted**
8. Planning
  - a. To consider the following planning applications. - **None**

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- b. To note any planning determinations. - **None**

  
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c. Any other planning matters to note – None

**9. Growth, Highways, and Infrastructure**

a. Update on painting of white bridge – **Response from SCC - Repainting the parapets is a significant and costly undertaking due to the long length of the parapets, the sensitive location over the river, and the preparation works that will be required prior to painting. Unfortunately repainting of these parapets is not currently on our forward maintenance programme due to other higher priority works being required on other bridges throughout the County.**

**10. Governance**

a. Finance end of year reports – **The financial year-end reports have been authorized and signed off. The clerk will proceed to publish them on the website, send the signed CIL report to MSDC, and finalize all necessary forms for the internal audit commencing in the week of June 10, 2024.**

b. Finalise project budget allocation – **See attached finalised projects.**

c. Note Nest pension scheme set up and SALC managing contributions. - **Noted**

d. Chairmans allowance – **Cllr Plume left the room whilst attending Cllrs discussed and agreed to a 5% increase to the allowance. £1000.00 increased to £1050.00.**

**11. Allotments.**

a. Compost bins missing from allotment – **The Clerk was informed about the disappearance of composting bins on Plot 4. Upon visiting the allotment, the Clerk searched for any signs of them being mistakenly moved, but found nothing. It was brought to the Clerk's attention that the gate had been left open overnight on multiple occasions. To address this issue, the Clerk will send an email to all plot holders to remind them to close the gate.**

b. Note ongoing allocation of empty plots being arranged. - **Noted**

**12. Village Maintenance**

a. Discuss village maintenance – **The clerk should inform the maintenance contract regarding the tree damage caused during grass strimming and advise against cutting the grass during the blooming season of daffodils and tulips at Hackneys corner next year. It has also been observed that some litter is not being collected in the village.**

b. Improvements to Hackneys Corner – **Councilors agreed on enhancing the appearance of the area behind Budgens near the seating area due to its messy look. The clerk will post on social media to invite local landscapers to submit their quotes for the project.**

c. Hedgehog tunnels - **The Parish Council has acquired 50 hedgehog tunnels and has decided to distribute one tunnel per household. They are asking for a £1.00 donation on a first-come, first-served basis, with all proceeds going towards a local hedgehog sanctuary. Clerk to post on social media.**

**13. Churchyard and Cemetery.**

d. Burial fees review - **The councilors agreed that cemetery fees should be raised. The clerk presented a comparison of costs for cemeteries in Ipswich, Stowmarket, and Bramford to help them make an informed decision. The new fees will be included in the cemetery booklet, updated on the website, and posted on the noticeboard.**

e. Cemetery rules review - **The cemetery rules have been reviewed and agreed.**

**13. Training and Development for Councilors and Clerk**

a. Confirm numbers for cemetery training on July 17<sup>th</sup> 2024 – **Agreed that Cllr Leonard and Clerk**

to attend.

14. Finance

a. To consider approving and making the following payments:

Shades	B	Hackneys Corner Maintenance as per tender -2462	£135.00	LGA 1972 s111
Shades	B	Grounds Maintenance as per tender -2461	£507.50	LGA 1972 s111
Shades	B	Street Cleaning as per tender -2460	£1316.67	LGA 1972 s111
Monthly Payroll - Clerk	B	Month ending April 2024	£976.30	LGA 1972 s111
SCC	B	Street light maintenance - 9542812	£2168.18	LGA 1972 s111
Three	D	Mobile phone April 2024	£11.87	LGA 1972 s111
EE	B	Reimbursement for wifi/mobile to clerk	£26.00	LGA 1972 s111

15. Reports

To receive reports from Councilors assigned to the following:

- a. Gt Blakenham Village Hall – Cllr Debbie Kemp – **See attached report. Note that some trustee members have switched positions within the organisation.**

16. Correspondence

- a. Email asking what is being burnt at the new Pyrolysis plant. - **The clerk replied to the email, providing advice based on the information shared by the developers and Cllr Chambers, stating that it would have minimal effect on the village.**

17. Future meetings

- a. To note invitation for items to be considered in the next meeting.  
b. To note the date of the next scheduled Meeting on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and any items for the agenda.

Karen Grimwood  
Clerk to Great Blakenham Parish Council  
Email: [pc@greatblakenham.suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:pc@greatblakenham.suffolk.gov.uk)  
Phone: 07508830777  
Parish Council website: [www.greatblakenham.suffolk.cloud](http://www.greatblakenham.suffolk.cloud)  
Date: 0905/2023

SP.

**18. Future meetings**

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Date: 02/05/2023



April 2024



## Over 400 Suffolk roads set for upgrade as largest ever surfacing project gets underway

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Residents across Suffolk are set to benefit from 421 newly surfaced roads this year - almost doubling the number of roads completed last year, as Suffolk Highways' largest ever resurfacing programmes get underway.

With the start of the surface dressing programme beginning this week, 102 roads will be surface dressed, whilst a further 319 sites will benefit from a full machine resurfacing during the year.

Surface dressing is an efficient, sustainable and cost-effective maintenance treatment that prolongs the life of a road surface – it restores skid resistance and seals the road surface from water, whilst removing potholes and improving level differences of the road.

The surface dressing project sits alongside the programmes for reactively repairing potholes and machine resurfacing roads, all complementing one another. During the past six months, Suffolk Highways has repaired over 9,000 potholes and resurfaced 41 roads, with a further 278 roads planned for resurfacing in this financial year.

New for this year, Suffolk Highways' supply chain partner, Hazell & Jefferies, has invested in new vehicles which allow the new surface to be laid in a safer and more efficient way. For example, the new vehicles eliminate the risk of hitting overhead cables or structures.

- For more information on surface dressing and to view this year's programme, please visit: [Surface dressing](#)
- For more information on machine resurfacing and to view this year's programme, please visit: [Road Resurfacing](#)

## 99% of pupils receive a preferred primary school on National Offer Day

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99.36% of children were offered a place on National Offer Day at one of their three preferred primary schools and 96.52% were offered a place at their first preference school.

Suffolk County Council received 6,844 applications from parents and carers indicating which primary school they would prefer their child to join in September 2024.

Families who applied online can log in to the online service from today to see the school their child has been offered. They will also receive an email to confirm this offer unless they have indicated that they do not wish to. Letters will be sent to parents who made a paper application by second class post today (16 April 2024)

**Chris Chambers - County Councillor for the Gipping Valley Division**  
**Mob : 07595310290    E-mail : [chris.chambers@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:chris.chambers@suffolk.gov.uk)**



## Share your thoughts on the importance of nature in Suffolk

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A new survey has been launched to find out which aspects of nature in Suffolk are most important to you.

Your responses will feed into Suffolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy, a plan to help reverse the decline in nature across the county, and to connect and expand existing areas that are important for wildlife and the landscape.

- Nationwide, wildlife species have declined by 19% since 1970 ([State of Nature report](#))
- One in six species in Great Britain are at risk of extinction ([State of Nature report](#))
- Up to 70% of Suffolk's 22,000 ponds are neglected or abandoned ([Suffolk Wildlife Trust](#))
- Norfolk and Suffolk have over three times less ancient woodland than the national average ([Natural Capital Evidence Compendium for Norfolk and Suffolk](#))

To address this decline and to help nature recover, government has introduced legally-binding commitments. There are 48 of these Local Nature Recovery Strategies across the country, led in Suffolk by Suffolk County Council.

Together, they will form a national 'nature network', proposing actions such as the creation of wetlands, restoration of peatlands, planting of trees and hedgerows, and more sustainable management of existing woodlands and other habitats like grasslands.

Members of the public are invited to share their favourite nature spots to visit, what access is like, which habitats and species should be protected, and so on. You don't have to be a wildlife expert, but your thoughts will help the work to reverse the decline of nature in Suffolk.

Farmers, landowners and land managers are also encouraged to submit practical, achievable proposals to support nature conservation, as well as sharing how land is currently managed and any challenges faced applying for government funding schemes.

All responses will help build a picture across Suffolk to help protect and enhance our environment.

You can share your thoughts in the Suffolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy Survey by visiting <https://www.nsnrp.org/get-involved>, which closes on 30 June 2024.

**Chris Chambers - County Councillor for the Gipping Valley Division**  
**Mob : 07595310290    E-mail : [chris.chambers@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:chris.chambers@suffolk.gov.uk)**

## **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT MAY**

### **Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers update**

On 25<sup>th</sup> April the government announced an update on the Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers, setting out next steps to deliver this project.

Following feedback from industry and discussions with the devolved administrations, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has today confirmed the Deposit Return Schemes for drinks containers will be introduced in October 2027.

Defra has also published a UK wide – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales policy statement on joint registration, reporting, labelling, reciprocal returns, deposit level, minimum container size, and low volume products.

Additionally, the government has published a statement on glass drinks containers.

Councils are encouraged to share this information as appropriate.

### **Rapid Flood Guidance trial for England and Wales: sign up now**

On 14 May, the gov.uk Flood Forecasting Centre will launch a trial of the Rapid Flood Guidance (RFG) service which will run until 30 September.

The RFG service will give short notice updates for England and Wales to supplement the flood guidance statement.

The service aims to support the responder community to be better prepared to mitigate the impacts from rapid flooding. The service provides a new:

### **Voluntary National Insurance payments – online service launches**

On 29<sup>th</sup> April the government launched a new online service to make it easier for customers to check for and fill any gaps in their National Insurance (NI) record to help increase their State Pension.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/online-voluntary-national-insurance-payments-service-launches>

The Check your State Pension forecast – a joint service by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Department for Work and Pensions – now includes a fully end-to-end digital solution.

The service will show customers by how much their State Pension could increase and details of the voluntary NI contributions they would need to pay to achieve this. It allows most people under State Pension age to view gaps in their NI record and pay voluntary contributions to fill those gaps, if it will benefit them.

Those who are eligible have until 5 April 2025 to pay voluntary contributions to make up gaps in their NI record between 6 April 2006 and 5 April 2018. From 6 April 2025, people will only be able to pay voluntary contributions for the previous 6 tax years, in line with normal time limits.

Councils are encouraged to share this information as appropriate.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy guidance updated**

On 26<sup>th</sup> April the Department of Levelling Up and Communities updated the guidance explaining what the Community Infrastructure Levy is and how it operates.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy>



Councils are encouraged to share this information as appropriate.

### **Bluetongue virus – latest situation: End of the seasonal low vector period**

On 19 April, the UK's Chief Veterinary Officer urged farmers to remain vigilant for bluetongue virus after the disease was found in cattle and sheep in Kent, Norfolk and Suffolk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bluetongue-virus-detected-in-a-single-cow>

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and the Pirbright Institute identified the first case of the disease in November 2023.

Farmers should continue to monitor their animals for signs and make sure their animals and land are registered with APHA.

Bluetongue does not affect people or food safety. The virus is primarily transmitted by midge bites and affects cattle, goats, sheep and camelids such as llamas. More information about bluetongue is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bluetongue>

Councils are encouraged to share this information as appropriate.

### **Government launches fund to help farmers manage water resources**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> April the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and the Environment Agency launched a £1.6 million fund to help farmers to explore how they can better manage water for use in time of drought.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-fund-to-help-farmers-manage-water-resources>

The fund will support investigation of water demand and availability in the most water-stressed agricultural areas over the next 25-year period. Projects could include multi-farm reservoirs, treated waste-water recycling systems, water trading and sharing schemes.

Groups of two or more neighbouring farms are eligible to apply.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-water-resources-options-screening-studies-how-to-apply>.

The closing date for applications is 16 June.

The Department for Education (DfE) has published a blog showcasing the work of a primary school in delivering wraparound childcare within one of the early adopter areas:

<https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/2024/04/17/offering-wraparound-childcare-at-our-schools/>

If you have any questions, please contact [wraparound.programme@education.gov.uk](mailto:wraparound.programme@education.gov.uk)

*Adrienne Marriott  
Blakenham District Councillor  
30/04/24*

**Bank Reconciliation @ End of March 2024**

Opening Balance

01-Apr-23

Unity Trust Current Account	£215,610.85
Unity Trust Saver Account	<u>£0.00</u>
	<b><u>£215,610.85</u></b>

Add Total Receipts 1 April 2022 - 31.March 2023

£71,683.15

Less Total Payments 1 April 2022 - 31.March 2023

£84,736.55

**£202,557.45**

Closing Balance

31-Mar-24

Unity Trust Current Account	£197,320.48,
Unity Trust Saver Account	<u>£5,236.97</u>

**£202,557.45**

**CIL FUND**

Opening Balance

01-Apr-23

**£111,495.63**

Add Total Receipts 1 April 2022 -31 March 2023

£3,150.00

Less Net Expenditure 1 April 2022 -31 March 2023

£25,982.70

**£88,662.93**

**GENERAL RESERVE**

**£113,894.52**



13/05/24

**Receipts Ending 31.03.2024**

Precept	£49,488.00
Bank Interest	£87.07
CIL 22/23	£3,150.00
Cleansing Grant	£2,709.20
Cemetery Fees	£2,120.00
Other	£3,000.00
VAT	£11,128.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>£71,683.15</b>

**Payments: Ending 31.03.2024**

Wages	£10,890.08
Chair Allowance	£1,000.00
Mobile Phones	£323.24
Bank Fees	£71.10
Training	£77.00
Stationary	£462.18
Subscriptions	£707.89
Payroll Costs	£90.00
Audit Fees	£1,100.00
Election Costs	£184.11
Insurance	£1,008.59
IT	£1,137.29
Room Hire	£400.00
S137	£11,442.51
General Maintenance	£470.00
Street Lighting	£97.51
Dog waste Collection	£729.81
Bus Shelter	£4,130.00
Village Hall	£8,684.82
Speed Devices	£7,320.00
Tree planting/Wilding	£6,544.30
Defib Costs	£694.50
Other	£999.11
Cemetery General	£130.00
Allotment Water	£209.78
Allotment General	£1,256.89
General Maintenance	£885.00
Maintenance Contract- Street Cleaning	£15,716.69
Maintenance Contract -Ground Maintenance -	£6,090.00
Maintenance Contract - Hackneys Corner	£1,891.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>£84,736.55</b>



13/5/24.

**Great Blakenham Parish Council – Earmarked Reserves for  
Allocated Projects 24/25**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Budget Use</b>
Great Blakenham Village Hall	Complete works highlighted in sustainability report, redecorate and update toilet facilities	£50,000 Expectations are that the hall will raise alternative funds for the additional £50,000 to complete project.	CIL
Gipping Valley Bowls Club	To contribute towards costs of fitted kitchen, heating and flooring costs of new built pavilion	£25,000 Expectations are that the club will raise alternative funds for the additional costs to complete project	CIL
Barham Picnic Site Community Project	Rejuvenation of the Barham Picnic Site to include coffee shop, preschool, playground, planning costs	£10,000 Expectations are that the community will raise alternative funds for the additional costs to complete project	CIL
Great Blakenham Village Hall Recreation Ground	Purchase and install new outside Gym Trail	£10,000 Expectations are that the hall will raise additional funds to reduce our contribution	CIL
Parish Council Election	Election costs	£1,000	General Reserves

Total Cost = £96,000

13/5/24





Great Blakenham Village Hall & Recreation Ground  
Mill Lane  
Great Blakenham  
IP6 0NJ  
Reg Charity No. 304753  
[facebook.com/thenewgreatblakenhamvillagehall](https://www.facebook.com/thenewgreatblakenhamvillagehall)  
Tel: 07853 070495

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Subject: Nine month report to the Parish Council  
To: Cllr S Plume (Chair), Cllr D Kemp\* (Trustee Rep), K Grimwood (Parish Clerk)  
From: Chair or Trustees/Trustee Representative\*  
Date: May 2024

## Information

### Trustees/Member Representatives

In August 2023 the Chair of the previous Trustees had a vote of no confidence made against him, which was upheld and required him to step down with immediate effect.

Just prior to the vote the Vice Chair voluntarily stepped down, and after the vote the PC Rep/Trustee resigned, as did the Trustee who held the Premises Licence.

48 hours later a new Board of Trustees was established, with just one of those being a previous Trustee, however, she resigned within the first month.

Circa 12 Trustees was felt appropriate initially, as well as recruiting volunteers, to take on the roles left.

Nine months on the Board is made up as follows:

6 x Exec Cttee Trustees (5 currently active)

1 x Parish Council Trustee

3 x Trustees (1 currently active)

2 x Member Representatives (Church and Cycle Speedway)

It is clear and recognised that it is a priority to recruit more Trustees and Volunteers.

### Income and outgoings

The income comes from hall hire and bar sales and grants, most recently very generously given by the Parish, District and County Council, it must be noted that the financial support of the Parish Council, who are also Custodian Trustees, has resulted in the facilities being able to run currently.

The main cost of ongoing revenue costs is associated with utilities, electricity and water, and such things as rates, maintenance etc.

A dedicated Treasurer Trustee oversees all spend and other financial transactions in line with Charity Commission guidelines.

### **Current Priorities**

Following previous sustainability reports, with no actions followed up, we are seeking costs for 3 stages of necessary work, through requests to the Councils and through other match funding options.

Stage one will to ensure the building is weatherproof externally, we are aware of a number of issues and current expressions of interests have been sent to 5 local companies.

Once these works have been undertaken we hope Port One will continue with their proposal to add solar panels.

Stage two will look at energy efficiency and to make changes to public hygiene areas, such as power usage, water saving devices and toilets/kitchen facilities fit for purpose and diverse friendly.

The final stage, three, will be a full internal decoration to make it a venue to be proud of in the village, but also to generate interest in future hiring.

The other fundraising issue is around raising funds and at this time the Chair has submitted some applications and we are waiting to hear back, should the full amount of match funding be secured the three stages above could follow on as soon as possible.

### **Chair Update**

The last nine months has been incredibly demanding and equally remarkable around what has been achieved in that time by a handful of working volunteers, giving their time freely.

Areas in and around the hall are looking welcoming and far more professional and continue to be developed.

I have no doubt this village hall and recreation ground will flourish and be a venue for Great Blakenham and the surrounding area to be proud of, drawing in all ages, from pre-birth, toddler, young adults, the general public, and the more mature residents, especially those fighting loneliness and isolation.

Mike Grimwood

Chair of Trustees