

**Minutes of a meeting of Carbrooke Parish Council
held in Carbrooke Village Hall on 10 June 2025**

Councillors present: N Defew (Chair), K Jones, W Leport, L Poole, G Redfern.

In attendance:- N Hartley (Parish Clerk), P Arrowsmith (Community Hub), Cllrs H Crane and P Bate (Breckland Council). Twelve members of the public.

Public Participation

Residents expressed their concerns over planning application PL/2025/0730/FMIN (see below). It was noted that the application falls outside the Settlement Boundary. Concerns were expressed regarding drainage and an increased likelihood of flooding.

The Chair noted that the Parish Council has limited powers regarding planning. As well as the Parish Council's response (see below), residents were encouraged to log their views on the Breckland Council website.

A resident asked if the kerbs at the junction of Summer Lane and Norwich Road could be widened to accommodate lorries and buses using Summer Lane.

A resident asked who owns the cul de sac off Church Street, as the road needs resurfacing and the grass needs cutting. The Council said it would make enquiries and come back to them.

A resident said planning application PL/2025/0623/OMIN (see below) had been put forward in response to the Call for Sites. She said a party was interested in developing the site and left photographs of the proposed development with the Council.

A resident said the whole of the churchyard is not being cut. The Parish Council noted that it provides a grant to cut the grass and directed them to the Parochial Church Council.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Borrett and Page, and Cllr Bowes (Norfolk County Council).

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2025. The Chair signed the minutes.

4 Matters Arising

None.

5 Report from Breckland and County Councillors

A copy of Cllrs Crane and Bowes' reports are attached to the minutes.

6 Planning

6.1 The Council considered the following applications:-

Quarter Barns, Norwich Road
Construction of five new dwellings

PL/2025/0623/OMIN

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council had no objection to the application.

Summer Lane Kennels, Summer Lane
Mobile home (caravan) sited in breach of temporary condition on pp 3/95/0276/F - certificate of lawfulness - existing use

PL/2025/0631/CLEUD

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council objected on the basis that the temporary permission was for three years and should have been removed. The Council had made numerous objections, none of which appeared to have been taken into consideration.

2 Cranwell Road
Proposed semi detached dwelling (self build)

PL/2025/0596/FMIN

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council had no objection to the application.

Land to the west of Shipdham Road, Carbrooke
Full planning approval for the erection of seven detached bungalows, with associated external works

PL/2025/0730/FMIN

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council strongly objected to the application. The Council was concerned by the increased risk of flooding, as the ditches cannot currently cope with the amount of water. The property is outside the Settlement Boundary. The entrance/exit to the houses would be on to a 60mph road and the properties would result in increased traffic through the village.

7 Finance

7.1 The following payments were approved in accordance with the budget:-

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £796.48
HMRC, clerk's Paye & Hub manager's Paye (May), £850.12
Gorts Gardening, grass cutting Carbrooke churchyard, £500 (Section 137)
Millennium Green Trust, grant, £527.46
Square Deal Storage, purchase of container for the Hub, £2,910

7.2 The Council noted the following payments received:-

HMRC, Vat refunded, £2,937.06

Carbrooke Parish Council (Hub account), payment for manager's Paye (June), £241

7.3 The meeting received a report of Actual to Budgeted Expenditure

8 Adoption of a gov.uk email

It is a condition of the audit process that parish councils and councillors have gov.uk emails. It was **RESOLVED** to use NALC.

9 Procurement Policy

It is a condition of the audit process that parish councils have a Procurement Policy. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt a Procurement policy.

10 Hub Manager's report

A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

11 Hub Finance report

A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

12 Resurfacing the path on Lancaster Avenue Playing Field

The Council considered quotes to resurface the path across the playing field and to create a new small area of footpath near Lancaster Avenue. It was **RESOLVED** that in principle the Council will agree to resurface the path, but would like another quote before making a final decision.

13 Resurfacing Lancaster Avenue play area

The Council considered quotes to resurface designated areas of the play area. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint NGF Play Ltd. The Council will apply for funding.

14 Play Area Safety Report

The Council considered its annual safety report. The report recommended a number of works. The Council has applied to contractors for quotes.

15 Replacement of the Toddler Swings in Lancaster Avenue play area

The Council considered quotes to replace the toddler swings. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint NGF Play Ltd.

16 Repairs to the Roundabout Safety Surfacing

The Council considered quotes to repair around the edges of the roundabout. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint NGF Play Ltd.

17 Cut back Undergrowth on the Power Substation Footpath

The Council considered cutting back the undergrowth next to the footpath. It was **RESOLVED** to seek further quotes.

18 Installation of a Solar Light on the Power Substation Footpath

The Council considered further a proposal for a solar light on the power substation footpath. It was **RESOLVED** not to install a light.

19 Hedge by the Propeller War Memorial

The Council considered quotes to cut back the hedge by the Propeller War Memorial. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Top Garden Services to carry out the work.

20 Memorial Bench at Blenheim Grange

The Council considered a proposal to purchase a Memorial bench for Blenheim Grange. It was **RESOLVED** to purchase a bench and to install it at the Community Hub.

21 Memorial Bench on the Millennium Green

The Council considered a proposal to install a Memorial bench on the Millennium Green. It was **RESOLVED** to install a bench, subject to the approval of the Millennium Green's trustees.

22 Fencing at the front of the Village Hall

The Council considered a quote to install fencing along the front of the Village Hall car park. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Woolleys Fencing.

23 Fencing next to the Village Hall Car Park

The Council had received a request from the residents of an adjoining property to replace fencing on the boundary between the properties. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council had no issue with this. The Council also accepted an offer from the same party to remove the shingle and to make a donation to a parish organisation of their choice (not the Parish Council). See below item 25.

24 Village Hall Car Park Electric Vehicle Charging Point

The Council considered the installation of an Electric Charging Point at the Village Hall and making good its land in the car park for the installation. It was **RESOLVED** to obtain quotes for two car parking spaces.

25 Removal of the Shingle heap from the Village Hall Car Park

The Council considered removal of the heap of shingle from the car park to allow for the installation of two Electric Vehicle Charging Points. See item 23 above.

26 Pollard Trees in the Village Hall Car Park

The Council will return to this at the next meeting.

27 Maintenance of the Village Hall Car Park

The Council will return to this at the next meeting.

28 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Poole stated that only a limited number of policies would be required and further information from potential consultants would be sought. The Council will return to this at its July meeting.

29 Parish Magazine

A resident had offered to edit a parish magazine. It was noted that printing costs are approx £168 per 500 copies. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council would support a parish magazine for an initial two issues (to be produced quarterly) and the Council would own the magazine. It was agreed to fund up to £1,000.

30 Representatives' reports

Cllr Defew noted there had been vandalism on the Millennium Green.

31 Items for inclusion on the next agenda

Included in the above.

32 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in the Village Hall on 8 July at 7pm.

The meeting was closed at 8.30pm.

Signed Chair

Date

Cllr Crane's report

On the 20th May Breckland Council arranged an in person and teams meeting with Town and Parishes to start the engagement on the New Local plan. Villages have been invited in clusters to come to Elizabeth House and look at the sites that have been brought forward by landowners through the call for sites process. I know that the cluster Carbrooke is in clashed with your Parish Council meeting. However Carbrooke will be invited to the one with Watton.

It is really important to engage with this process and I hope one or two Councillors will be able to attend. The amount of housing that has to be delivered through the plan period has increased by 45% and we need to do this with input from our Town and parish Councils. I have spoken with planning policy team regarding the neighbourhood plan for Carbrooke which primarily is to ensure that there continues to be a strategic gap between the two parts of the village. A suggestion of a country park with a commuted sum from the developer for maintenance is one idea. Please do either get in touch with the promoter of the site or the team at Breckland to talk about the needs and wants for Carbrooke. This site was a preferred option before the pausing of the plan and I see no reason why it would not continue to be so.

You may have seen in the press that NCC has released a report favouring a single unitary Council for Norfolk. Breckland along with 5 other District Councils has a differing view. Our vision is for a three unitary model for the County, which will deliver significant benefits for our communities, including public service outcomes, local economic growth and stronger democratic representation. A single unitary in Norfolk would make it the second biggest Council in population size to Birmingham and second by land mass to Yorkshire. Decision making should be at a local level by those closest to our communities.

Cllr Bowes' Report

Roadworks; (and fines for non-compliant roadworks in Norfolk)

I am aware that of late we seem to have had a simultaneous onslaught of various road works and closures in and around Watton, and whilst I am the last person to criticise the delivery or upgrade of infrastructure, I do understand the frustration that has been experienced by motorists and businesses alike. I am therefore awaiting some clarification regarding co-ordination and scheduling for such works.

However on the more positive side you may be interested to know that the County Council has issued fines totalling £685,000 in a year for non-compliant roadworks as part of its ongoing efforts to reduce the impact of roadworks upon Norfolk's communities.

The Council's role is to coordinate and manage street works across the county. In 2024/25, they issued over 44,000 street and roadwork permits, with 75% of these relating to works by utility companies and developers. Of these, 7,000 were emergency works, which often cause the most disruption. The Council rejected 5,400 permit proposals that were unacceptable. However, their powers remain limited under national legislation, so 79 utility companies have a legal right to carry out works on public highways – and in emergency situations, can begin this work before notifying the Council.

The Council does have the power to issue Fixed Penalty Fines (FPNs) to utility companies for breaches such as working without a permit or failing to comply with permit conditions.

In 2024/25, Norfolk County Council issued 2,809 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for breaches such as working without a permit or failing to meet permit conditions—raising nearly £340,000 in fines. A

further £345,000 was recovered from 306 cases where works overran, causing 1,317 days of disruption across Norfolk's roads.

In addition, the Council successfully prosecuted two utility companies, resulting in court-imposed fines of nearly £100,000, with full costs awarded to the Council.

No Waste Wednesdays

From the beginning of June 2025 all recycling centres closed on a Wednesday in line with Suffolk's recycling centres and on the quietest day of the week. All recycling centre visits now require a booking and from 4 June customers will only be able to select bookings during the new opening hours either by using the online booking system www.norfolk.gov.uk/recyclingbookings or by phoning 0344 800 8020 or by visiting a local library.

Since the introduction of the recycling centre booking system in November 2024 over 400,000 bookings have been made to use the recycling centre service. The recent spring hazardous waste events, which previously generated significant traffic queues, were successfully managed with advance bookings and have revived positive feedback from customers. The Council has also been able to monitor and ensure fair use of its DIY and trade waste services and contact customers regarding service issues.

A number of residents have raised concerns over the impact of the Council's service changes on fly tipping. Most recent data, up until March 2025, currently does not show any evidence of an associated increase of fly tipping and NCC will continue to monitor data on incidents generated by the District, City and Borough Councils in their roles as waste collection authorities.

In the last year, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service has helped more people than ever before stay safer in their homes.

Between April 2024 and April 2025, the service's Prevention team, fire crews and volunteers completed 8,164 in-person Home Fire Safety Visits, which is a 139% increase on 2023-24 and the highest on record for the service. Home Fire Safety Visits are free, in-person visits designed to reduce the risk of fire and improve safety and wellbeing in homes across Norfolk. They identify potential hazards, raise awareness and influence safer behaviours and also serve as a gateway to wider health and wellbeing support - with teams able to make onward referrals to services such as social care, mental health support and assistive technology providers.

"Unearthed: The Power of Gardening" is a free display which began in Norfolk's Museum of Norfolk Life at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse at the end of May and continuing to Dereham Library, Norwich's Millennium Library and Fakenham Library this summer. The display explores the transformative and enriching power of gardening. Inspired by the British Library's major exhibition (2 May - 10 August 2025), Norfolk Library and Information Service is one of 30 library services celebrating gardening through the UK-wide Living Knowledge Network. To celebrate the launch of the exhibition, 'Unearthed' formed the theme of Gressenhall's [May half term activity programme](#). **Unearthed** will connect with The Reading Agency's 2025 Summer Reading Challenge: Story Garden - Adventures in Nature and the Great Outdoors. The Story Garden Summer Reading Challenge launches in Norfolk libraries on Saturday 5 July 2025.

New independent living housing in Harleston underway

Saffron Housing Trust is to extend its affordable living portfolio into Harleston, with the development of 107 brand-new Independent Community Living homes for individuals aged 55 and over with additional care needs.

The Housing Association celebrated alongside its partners on 28 May with a traditional 'breaking ground' ceremony - held to mark the formal start of building works.

Norfolk County Council has provided £4.37m of capital funding to support the scheme named by local children and now known as The Oaks - as part of its Independent Community Living programme to build more modern, attractive, and sustainable homes for later life across the County. Funding has also been awarded to the development by Homes England.

As part of a wider housing development being created on the site, the Independent Community Living will deliver a mix of one and two bed affordable apartments and shared ownership bungalows. On-site, 24/7 care and support will enable people to remain independent in a home of their choice. Facilities on site will include a hairdressing salon and communal gardens.

Further information, including how to apply to rent an apartment at the scheme, or purchase a shared ownership property, will be published prior to the scheme being completed in the autumn of 2027.

Local Government Reorganisation

A new report says that replacing Norfolk's county and district councils with one county wide council would save £36.2m per year and deliver the biggest benefits to residents:

The report makes the argument that one unitary council for Norfolk would save £36.2m per year and repay start-up costs within a year. It would join up services and avoid disruption, risks and costs caused by splitting up county-wide services. If there was more than one council, the authority covering the west of Norfolk could be financially unviable from the start. Having one council would cut costs, join up services for residents and ensure strong financial foundations, according to the draft options appraisal report from the County Council.

The current Government wants to replace existing county and district councils in England with fewer, unitary councils. It has therefore tasked District and County councils with submitting unitary proposals only, for local government reform.

Norfolk County Council has studied data and evidence on the pros and cons of one, two or three unitary councils and asked the public what mattered to them about local councils and services. As a result it is proposing that it's preferred option is one unitary council, covering the whole area.

Norfolk residents were asked to select their top priorities, from the Government's criteria for local government reorganisation:

- The top priority (67.2 per cent of respondents) was to ensure Council Taxpayers got value for money from efficient services.
- The second priority (53.3 per cent) was improving local services.
- The third priority (42.6 per cent) was ensuring that services are not unnecessarily fragmented/split up

The County Council's report states that the key benefits of one council for Norfolk are:

- A single Council would mean consistent services, delivered across the whole of Norfolk, with equal levels of Council Tax, service quality and services available, wherever you live
- It would save £36.2m per year, by cutting duplication, reducing the number of chief officers and councillors and having economies of scale when purchasing services. Start-up costs would be repaid in a year
- It avoids the risks and costs of splitting up complex, county-wide services like adult social services, children's services and highways - which would incur extra costs of between £20.4m and £33.6m per year, if there were two or three unitary councils
- It recognises the role of greater Norwich as an economic centre of activity for the whole county and highlights the importance of not creating an artificial boundary around it, which would stifle growth
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The report's conclusion says: "We have an opportunity to create a new Council for Norfolk which can:

- Be a powerful advocate for Norfolk - speaking up and influencing as one voice for local communities, creating more impact, both with any Norfolk/Suffolk mayor and with the Government, businesses and investors
- Be accountable - our residents would know that one council was responsible for all of the services, removing confusion. There would be one set of locally elected councillors, with one set of elections
- Be efficient - removing duplication and bureaucracy and joining up services to deliver better value for money
- Enable devolution - through a single, clear and concise set of strategic priorities for Norfolk and simplifying decision-making
- Avoid the use of untested models for delivering critical services to children, families, older people and some of the most vulnerable of our residents"
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The Council's Strategic and Corporate Select Committee will consider the report when it meets on Wednesday 18 June. Cabinet will then meet on Monday 23 June to consider the report and the committee's comments, before selecting a preferred option.

Once a preferred option is selected, there will be further engagement. The preferred option will be developed into a detailed proposal, to be submitted to the Government by 26 September. Government Ministers will take the final decision on what council structure to adopt.

Both the select committee and cabinet meetings will be available to view, live or afterwards, on YouTube.

Community Hub Report

Bookings Payable hours and Community Hours

	May	June	July
Total Paid Hours	112	116	110TBC
Total Community Hours	28	20	30

The lighting improvements have been delayed again due to faulty switch will be completed ASAP.

New container Storage installation is moving forward; the ground works have started and due to be completed in 2 weeks. The container will be of great use to the Hub I would like to thank the Parish council for agreeing to purchase of the container.

Everything is running well at the hub the booking appears to be stable with more enquiries being made for future use.

I have had feed back from people using the path by the sub-station.

People are saying that they don't feel safe as it is difficult to see as there is no light.

Bikes ride though there at a fast pace and they do not see people and have come very close to being ploughed down (didn't say what type of bike)

It just isn't a nice place to walk

I spoke to about 20 people using the path and most were the concerned about their own safety and how the path was overgrown in places.

There is graffiti on the building which isn't a good sign of a well looked after area. (I don't think the building is the Parish Councils responsibility)

Please could I also recommend that the bushes /brambles and overhanging trees are cut back to allow a more open feel to the area.

Pam Arrowsmith