



## BATTISFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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### MINUTES of BATTISFORD ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held at Battisford Village Hall on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026.

Meeting started at 7.55 pm

#### Present:

Cllr J Cook (Chair)                      Cllr J Pope  
Cllr Durrant                                Cllr Newman  
Cllr Card  
Clerk: Julia Stephens-Row    Mr Wicking Playground Volunteer

#### Apologies:

District Cllr Pratt and Cllr Ince (the latter were received after the meeting.)

#### 2026/42 Meeting Administration – The previous Chair Cllr Cook opened meeting

- a) It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Pope that Cllr Cook be nominated to be the Chair of Battisford Parish Council. This was agreed unanimously. It was proposed by Cllr Card and seconded by Cllr Durrant that Cllr Pope be nominated to be Vice Chair of Battisford Parish Council. This was agreed unanimously.
- b) All Cllrs present signed the Acceptance of Declaration of Office & Data consent forms
- c) District Cllr Pratts apologies were given as he was at three meetings this evening, the Councillors noted this and the apologies were accepted. The Clerk also advised that there is a new County Cllr Gary Keogh in position.
- d) Cllr Wilson had resigned which was received on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2026. The Chair thanked Cllr Wilson for all the work she had undertaken over the years, particularly her support in her role as Vice Chair. Cllrs requested that the Clerk commence the process of filling the vacancy. **Action Clerk**
- e) There were no Declarations of Interest or Gifts and Hospitality to be noted.
- f) There were no requests for dispensations
- g) It was proposed by Cllr Durrant and seconded by Cllr Newman that the minutes of the meeting of the parish council meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026 are accepted as a true and correct record. This was agreed unanimously.
- h) The following items were considered as these were not on the agenda.  
2025/95 a) Cllr Cook advised that he is sourcing an element for the light in one of the defibrillator boxes **Action Cllr Cook.**  
2026/18 d) The Clerk had made contact with the landowner who has agreed for a please clean up after your dog sign to be placed on the corner of Nayland's Drive and Mill Road take **Action Cllr Cook**

2026/24b) Jubilee Bench. This has been reinvigorated as part of the playground working party. Some repairs are still required. **Action Denis Wicking.** It was agreed

that it can now stay in situ. Cllr Pope updated that £400 cash has been donated by “Monday teas “which she will give to the Clerk to pay into the bank via the Post Office. **Action Cllr Pope and Clerk.** Cllr Pope to provide information on the seat to the Clerk. **Action Cllr Pope.** The location is still to be determined. Cllr Pope to organise a plaque referencing money donated from residents attending “Monday Teas”. **Action Cllr Pope.** Cllr Durrant to explore a similar seat which will be a family donation. **Action Cllr Durrant**

2026/26 e) Cllr Ince has made some changes to the website following the accessibility report however he has advised the Clerk that he has been unable to make the other changes and advised her that it might be prudent to go back to Suffolk Cloud to ask them to undertake the work which they had previously quoted for. This was agreed by the meeting. **Action Clerk to contact Suffolk Cloud.** 2026/26 f) The Clerk had tried to contact the residents by phone to seek their views regarding the noticeboard being moved from the side of the pub however there has been no reply. Cllr Durrant confirmed that she is content with accessing the noticeboard where it is. No further action required now.

2026/34c) SALC AGM is taking place on 9<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm electronically and Cllr Pope has indicated that she is prepared to attend. **Action Clerk to register Cllr Pope for this event.**

2026/35d) Safe to be installed at the Village Hall. The clerk advised that she was liaising with those who were donating to get it transported. **Action Clerk**

2026/35e) Cllr Pope advised that she had not got a laptop to return. The Clerk advised that she had received a quote to get the old laptops cleansed and destroyed of approximately £60. This was agreed. **Action Clerk**

2026/36d) As Cllr Ince not at the meeting this item regarding the Facebook page will be deferred. **Action Cllr Ince**

i) Following the Annual Parish meeting earlier this evening it was agreed to hold the next Annual Parish Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2027 at 7pm. Speakers and format need to be considered. **Action all**

j) The meeting agreed to continue with the Employment Panel which is chaired by Cllr Newman and of which Cllr Pope is a member. Currently there is a vacancy following Cllr Wilsons resignation. Agreed to wait until a new Cllr was appointed to fill this vacancy. **Action Clerk to add to a further agenda**

k) The dates for the exercise period of public rights. It was proposed that this is 4<sup>th</sup> June – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2026 . This was agreed. *Subsequent to the meeting the Clerk identified that this should be 3<sup>rd</sup> June – 16<sup>th</sup> July 2026*

l) Review & Approve Internal Auditor Report. It was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Durrant that this report be accepted and approved. This was agreed unanimously. The Clerk was thanked for all her work in ensuring the audit information was submitted and a satisfactory report received. The recommendation to consider establishing “ear marked reserves” to be added to the next agenda. **Action Clerk**

m) Review & Approve Bankers. It was proposed by Cllr Card and seconded by Cllr Newman that the Parish Council continue to bank with current bankers Unity Trust bank. This was agreed unanimously.

n) To review & approve the Annual Governance & Accountability Return Section 1. It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Durrant that this be approved. This was agreed unanimously.

o) To review & approve the Certificate of Exemption. It was proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Durrant that this be approved. This was agreed unanimously.

p) The Clerk advised that Clive Nicholas was willing to carry on volunteering for monitoring the Defibrillator. Denis Wicking advised that he was willing to carry on

volunteering for the Playground, however his qualification runs out in September and that it may be more appropriate for someone else to gain the qualification and take on this role. Agreed that a role profile be developed to go in the community newsletter etc. **Action Clerk and Mr Wicking** . The thanks of the Parish Council were expressed to both volunteers for the work they undertake throughout the year.

**With the agreement of the meeting this item was brought forward on the agenda.**

**2026/46 To agree that the following activities need to be carried out.**

a) To review the playground inspection report received on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026 and decide on the next steps. Mr Wicking summarised the report and a number of the issues identified are to do with the age of the structures, the wood drying out etc. Last year the basket swing was removed from the frame because of cracks in the post. The report identified that several of the items of equipment had a 1-3 year life expectancy. Some can be repaired but some items may be better being replaced. Consideration needs to be given as to what equipment maybe needed, for example adult training equipment and equipment for small children and the views of residents sought. Also need to pick out areas from the report of moderate risk for action and repairs and painting. **Action Mr Wicking**. It was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Durrant that a working group of the parish council be formed to take this forward and report back to the parish council in 6 months' time. **Action Cllr Durrant, Cllr Cook and Mr Wicking** to meet and invite some interested residents.

**2026/43 Public participation session (15 minutes) to include Police, District and County Councillors Reports.** There were no reports to be considered.

**2026/44 To receive updates on ongoing issues**

a) Chairs report. Cllr Cook wanted to express and have recorded his thanks and on behalf of the council to County Cllr Oakes for her support and input to the council over recent years. He also wanted to record his thanks to Cllr Wilson particularly in her role as Vice Chair for the help she had given him.

b) Councillor reports. Cllr Durrant had nothing to update. Cllr Pope advised that Mr Pope had offered to repaint the dates on the cemetery gates. This offer was kindly accepted. Cllr Card shared an outline of an email which she had received regarding damage to items on a specific grave in the cemetery. She shared some photographs with Cllrs. Cllr Card commented that when she had visited the cemetery to inspect the grave in question it had been very windy. Cllr Durrant offered to install a wildlife camera for a week to see if any wildlife activity can be captured. It was agreed that the Clerk would write a response in consultation with Cllr Card. **Action Clerk and Cllr Card**. Cllr Newman had nothing to report.

c) Clerk report. The Clerk reported that she had attended a Clerks event which had been looking at the benefits and risks of using AI. There is a company which offers a package to access AI to summarise reports etc however there is a cost to this. The Clerk did not consider that the Council would benefit at this time from signing up for this.

d) Local Government Reorganisation / Devolution. A SALC forum is taking place on 2<sup>nd</sup> June electronically however no one is available to attend. The Clerk to circulate any information which follows. **Action Clerk**

e) Norwich to Tilbury pylon installation. The Clerk checked that all Councillors are signed up to receive the updates. There is no capacity to attend meetings etc

**2026/45 To review and agree changes and updates to any relevant policies etc.**

a) None considered at this meeting

**2026/47 To consider the following planning applications –**

Battisford Hall Church Road Battisford Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 2HG

[https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage#:~:text=a%20new%20window\)-\\_DC/26/01576,Battisford%20Hall%20Church%20Road%20Battisford%20Stowmarket%20Suffolk%20IP14%20HG,-Received](https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage#:~:text=a%20new%20window)-_DC/26/01576,Battisford%20Hall%20Church%20Road%20Battisford%20Stowmarket%20Suffolk%20IP14%20HG,-Received). Due to the convoluted nature of this request and the historical nature of the application and the fact that recommendations and comments from the senior environmental management officer have been ignored in the past Cllrs considered that they could not comment any further. This was agreed unanimously.

Erection of ancillary outbuilding [part retrospective]|The Bellows Burnt House Lane Battisford Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 2ND

[https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage#:~:text=a%20new%20window\)-\\_DC/26/01540,The%20Bellows%20Burnt%20House%20Lane%20Battisford%20Stowmarket%20Suffolk%20IP14%202ND](https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage#:~:text=a%20new%20window)-_DC/26/01540,The%20Bellows%20Burnt%20House%20Lane%20Battisford%20Stowmarket%20Suffolk%20IP14%202ND). No comments to be made on this application. This was agreed unanimously.

DC/26/01653 and DC//26/01654 - Erection of a cart lodge / annexe and listed building consent Old Stoke Farmhouse Straight Road Battisford Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 2NB

[https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=TDS0N7SHIDX00&activeTab=summary#:~:text=a%20new%20window\)-\\_DC/26/01653,Old%20Stoke%20Farmhouse%20Straight%20Road%20Battisford%20Stowmarket%20Suffolk%20IP14%202NB,-Back%20to%20search](https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=TDS0N7SHIDX00&activeTab=summary#:~:text=a%20new%20window)-_DC/26/01653,Old%20Stoke%20Farmhouse%20Straight%20Road%20Battisford%20Stowmarket%20Suffolk%20IP14%202NB,-Back%20to%20search)

[https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?previousCaseType=Application&keyVal=TDS0N9SHIDY00&previousCaseNumber=DC%2F26%2F01653&activeTab=summary&previousKeyVal=TDS0N7SHIDX00#:~:text=a%20new%20window\)-\\_DC/26/01654,Old%20Stoke%20Farmhouse%20Straight%20Road%20Battisford%20Stowmarket%20Suffolk%20IP14%202NB,-Planning%20Application%20DC](https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?previousCaseType=Application&keyVal=TDS0N9SHIDY00&previousCaseNumber=DC%2F26%2F01653&activeTab=summary&previousKeyVal=TDS0N7SHIDX00#:~:text=a%20new%20window)-_DC/26/01654,Old%20Stoke%20Farmhouse%20Straight%20Road%20Battisford%20Stowmarket%20Suffolk%20IP14%202NB,-Planning%20Application%20DC)

No comments to be made on these applications. This was agreed unanimously.

**2026/48 Finance**

a) To receive the Finance Report

i. Receipts and Payments since last meeting.

*Receipts*

14 <sup>th</sup> April	Virr memorial stone	£25.00
30 <sup>th</sup> April	VAT refund for 2024/25	£632.05

*Payments*

Clerks Salary and expenses	£400.28
HMRC	£260.37
Reimbursement to Cllr Wilson	£17.04
Pear Space formerly Suffolk Cloud for website hosting etc	£210.00
SALC membership subscription for 2026	£303.23
Bank Charge	£7.00

These were noted in particular the VAT refund.

b) To authorise payments as listed below:

i.	Clerk Salary	£358.81
	<i>should be £358.41</i>	
ii.	Clerk expenses	£100.20
		total £ 459.01
	<i>should be £ 458.61</i>	
iii.	Employers HMRC contribution	£265.83
iv.	SALC for Clerk cemetery training	£60.00
v.	Heelis and Lodge	£230.00

These payments were approved unanimously. *Subsequent to the meeting the Clerk advised the Chair and Cllr Card of a miscalculation on the salary and the overall total – see above in italics*

An Invoice from Redwood Tree surgeons for £350.00 for work undertaken in March had not been received. Agreed that this could be paid in between meetings if received by delegated authority granted to the Chair and Vice chair.

**2026/49 Correspondence for Information.** To receive information on the following new correspondence and decide further action where necessary.

- a) Invitation to attend Battisford Village Hall Annual General Meeting (AGM) which will be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 7.30pm. Cllr Pope offered to attend. **Action Cllr Pope**
- b) Information from SALC on Suffolk Community Awards. It was agreed to place this on the next agenda. **Action Clerk**
- c) A survey had been received concerning outdoor sports facilities which it was agreed that the Clerk should compete. **Action Clerk**

**2026/50 Items for consideration for inclusion on the next agenda**

- a) To consider the guidance received from SALC on declarations of interest
- b) Review and Approve Internal Auditor for 2026/27
- c) Discuss Locality Budget(s) and other grants in relation to objective(s) set for year ahead
- d) Review the Parish council grants application policy
- e) To discuss & consider next steps from Internal Auditor Findings & recommendations
- f) To review the Cemetery regulations and fees
- g) Complete limited assurance review – submit AGAR Exemption
- h) Publish Accounts and Public Rights on Website and Noticeboards
- i) Half Yr Staff Review

These items were confirmed

**2026/51 Date of next meeting**

To confirm the date of the next parish council meeting which is currently scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 7.15pm. This was confirmed. Cllr Pope advised that because of family commitments that she needed to give her apologies. Cllr Card also advised that she may be away.

The meeting finished at approx. 9.32 pm

Planning Link: <https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/>