



Starston Parish Council

Chairman: Philip Astor

Parish Clerk: Joanne Madders

Email: starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk

Minutes of Starston Parish Council Meeting held in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30 pm, Monday 16th March 2026

Present: Cllr P Astor, Cllr C Sparrow, Cllr O’Keeffe, Cllr J Stone (Cllr from 2026/23)

Clerk to the Parish Council: Jo Madders

Members of the public: 1

Local Councillors: District Cllr C Hudson, County Cllr M Wilby

2026/19 To consider accepting apologies for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr S Griffin, Cllr J Broadhurst and Cllr V Baker.

2026/20 To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest from members on any item to be discussed and consider any dispensations.

None.

2026/21 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2026.

Amendment made to 2026/15 to clarify that it is SNDC that makes decisions on planning applications, not the Parish Council; the Parish Council just notes the decisions once made.

Resolved to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting. The Chair signed the minutes.

2026/22 The Clerk to provide an update on the matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting and provide any other information on actions that have been undertaken since the last meeting.

Completed Actions:

2026/8 Chair has organised purchase of additional dog waste bins for the village

2026/9 Clerk has organised new gov.uk email system with Parish Online

2026/11 Clerk has contacted Gary Overland regarding fallen bollard

Incomplete Actions:

2025/113 Cllr Spiers to investigate Nature Conservation Grant

2026/12 Clerk in investigate possibility of using new website for Emergency Plan

2026/23 To discuss plans to co-opt a new councillor

In line with the Co-option Policy, an application had been received from Mr Jake Stone, who was present and gave a brief account of his desire to contribute. The Chairman recommended that he be co-opted.

A vote unanimously resolved for Mr Jake Stone to be appointed with immediate effect.

The Clerk will arrange for the Declaration of Acceptance to be signed after the meeting.



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Action: Clerk

2026/24 To receive reports on matters of interest to the parish from District and County Councillors.

Cllr Thompson was absent from the meeting.

Cllr Hudson gave a verbal report. Registering for the Community Litter pick scheme gives parish councils £50 for taking part and entry into a prize draw to win £500. Council tax bills have arrived. Cllr Hudson, along with many others, agreed with the increase. The Community Action Fund has been increased from £150,000 to £500,000. There is also a new £500,000 fund called the Community Facilities Fund. There is a new fund called Communities in Bloom where there is now match funding also.

Cllr Hudson was on BBC LookEast recently at The King's Head in Pulham talking about Grade 2 listed buildings, trying to educate people regarding the value of listed buildings.

The Parish Councillor award nominations are open until May. The new gym in Diss has been approved and will hopefully start in the next 6-9 months.

Cllr Wilby read his report; see Appendix 1.

He also advised that he will be standing down as County Councillor in May and thanked everyone for their help and support over the years. The Chairman wished Cllr Wilby well, and thanked him for his regular attendance and thoughtful contributions at Parish Council meetings over very many years.

2026/25 Parishioner open forum.

One resident attended the meeting with concerns over the amount of road works and diversions in the local area. A discussion was held over problems on Railway Hill, Starston Bridge and other highways issues. Despite the parish council raising issues previously with NCC, and making suggestions and proposals, little has changed, apart for some improved signage. There does not seem to be a commonsense approach to road closures and diversions, and the timing of these. This also increases incidents of speeding and dangerous driving. Starston Lane appears to have become an official diversion route into Harleston but is unsuitable. Residents and the parish council would like to see a more joined-up approach from Highways when ratifying road closure works or that there is someone who takes responsibility for this at NCC. TMOs are approved but there is no oversight from NCC.

The Chairman has been in touch with the police regarding the recent incident involving a car ending up in the Beck, and the police advised that they have also raised concerns with NCC Highways.

The Starston speed watch team no longer operates, and the Police Officer on speeding duty does not appear to be working in the small villages anymore.

The member of the public present agreed to provide the Clerk with a list of his concerns, and the Chairman undertook to make contact with the Director of Highways, Graeme Bygrave, and possibly the current cabinet member for highways, Graham Plant.

Action: Clerk/Chair

The Chairman recently met with a resident to discuss the email she had sent to the Clerk on 9th February. Councillors considered the principal points raised, notably the suggestion that residents



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might apply stickers to their rubbish bins highlighting the 20mph speed limit. However, it was noted that most properties only put their bin beside the road on a Thursday and take it back on a Friday. It was concluded that the proposed measure would have limited effect. It was agreed that the Chairman should continue his dialogue with Norfolk Highways, with a view to improving the speed reduction measures in the village, particularly on the approach to the bridge.

Litter in the verges will be discussed at the next meeting as the Litter Pick Coordinator was not present. The Chair will respond to the resident. The Clerk will contact the resident who is responsible for the SAMS machine to ask for an update.

Action: Chair/Clerk

2026/26 To receive and ratify matters relating to the finances

a) To receive the current financial position

Unanimously agreed, and the listed future payments approved. The Warm Welcome Grant of £300 needs to be removed from the budget spreadsheet as this is not parish council money. The Clerk has included a commitment and notes column on the new budget spreadsheet. Bank fees have increased from £6 per month to £7 per month. The repairs to the fence (following damage from the car in the beck) will be paid for by the driver's insurance. The Chair is organising the repairs.

b) Clerk's time sheet

Unanimously agreed.

c) Clerk's expenses from 20th January to date

Unanimously agreed.

2026/27 To review and approve the Action Plan 2026-27

Minor amendments were made during the meeting to update the action plan. The Clerk will number each point on the plan for ease of reference.

Councillors approved the action plan following the amendments being made.

Action: Clerk

2026/28 To consider matters relating to village maintenance, PROW and highways

Discussed at 2026/25. As regards Bunns Lane, it was noted that it was likely to be still in the ownership of NCC, and that Gary Overland was the person at Norfolk Highways to contact regarding its regular maintenance. The Chair undertook to add this to his list of matters to raise with Mr Overland.

Action: Chair

2026/29 To receive an update from the Emergency Plan Co-ordinator

The Emergency Plan Co-ordinator was not present.

Action: Clerk



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2026/30 To receive an update on tree matters.

Cllr Stone agreed to be the Tree Warden. He recently attended the environmental conference held by MP Adrian Ramsey but did not feel much was applicable to Starston. He had made notes regarding possible funding opportunities.

2026/31 To consider the appraisal and grant awarding policies.

The Chair has made amendments to the policy. **Councillors agreed the new policy to start from 1st April 2026. Applications had been received from two local groups, and awards were approved to Jubilee Hall for £400 and Pigeon Post for £100.**

2026/32 To consider planning applications received

2025/3392

Pleasure Farm Cross Road Starston Norfolk IP20 9NH

Demolition of existing cottage and outbuildings and construction of new self-build replacement dwelling and cartlodge

Approval with Conditions (Delegated)

6 March 2026

Councillors noted that the application has been approved.

2026/33 To receive an update on the 'Warm Welcome' initiative

Warm Welcome continues, with attendance growing. Some attendees are not from Starston but have links to the village.

2026/34 Correspondence received

- Review of the Greater Norwich Local Plan – Call for Sites
Clerk to opt out of emails as this is not applicable to Starston

Action: Clerk

- South Norfolk In Bloom
Cllr Stone to investigate.

Action: Cllr Stone

- Information About Works: Road Closure – The Street, Starston
Noted.

- Non-intimate stalking event by Norfolk & Suffolk Victim Care – Norfolk ALC
Noted.

- Big South Norfolk Litter Pick 2026
Cllr Baker to investigate.

Action: Cllr Baker

- Free Support for Self-Funding Older Adults in Your Parish
Clerk to advise residents by including in next edition of Pigeon Post.

Action: Clerk

- Sustainable Communities: Parish Climate and Nature Action Survey
Cllr Stone to look at completing survey, to be considered again at the next meeting.

Action: Cllr Stone



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2026/35 The Clerk to provide and receive items for the next agenda, and confirm the date and time of the next Parish Council meeting, to be held on 18th May 2026 in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm.

Noted.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting of Starston Parish Council held on 16th March 2026.

Chair

DRAFT



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BANK RECONCILIATION & FINANCE DETAIL SHEET as at 28 FEBRUARY 2026					
			Payments Total	Receipts Total	Bank Actual
		Balance B/F			15,216.89
1 Jan 26 - 28 Feb 26	Total Payments		1,871.19		
1 Jan 26 - 28 Feb 26	Total Receipts			450.00	
		Bank Closing Balance 31st October 2025			13,795.70
		Earmarked Reserves			
		Norfolk Community Foundation Covid 19 Grant	£ -		
		CIL Money	£ 1,711.02		
		Neighbourhood Plan	£ 1,613.01		
		Warm Spaces Grant	£ -		
		Keep it Going Grant	£ 300.00		
		Total Money Held	£3,624.03		
		General Reserves i.e. Bank reconciled balance less monies held			10,171.67
		Payments Details			
06-Jan-26	HMRC	HMRC Clerk Salary Dec 2025		63.20	
06-Jan-26	J Madders	Clerk Salary Dec 2025		253.20	
21-Jan-26	Jubilee Hall	For website		120.00	
21-Jan-26	Jubilee Hall	Paying WW Keep it Going Grant		300.00	
21-Feb-26	J Madders	Clerk Expenses		36.00	
30-Jan-26	J Madders	Clerk Salary Jan 2026		253.00	
30-Jan-26	HMRC	HMRC Clerk Salary Jan 2026		63.40	
31-Jan-26	Unity Bank	Service Charge		6.00	
19-Feb-26	J Madders	Clerks expenses for new Laptop and MS licence		453.99	
27-Feb-26	J Madders	HMRC Clerk Salary Feb 2026		63.20	
27-Feb-26	J Madders	Clerk Salary Feb 2026		253.20	
28-Feb-26	Unity Bank	Service Charge		6.00	
		Total Payments		1,871.19	
		Receipts Details			
23-Feb-26	NCC	NCC Warm Welcome Grant via Crowdfunder		450.00	
		Total Receipts		450.00	
		Future payments to be approved by Council			
	NPTS	2026 Subscription		99.02	
	Jubilee Hall	Contribution towards website		345.00	
	Parish Online	New email package		192.00	
		Total Future Payments		636.02	



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Appendix 1

Report from County Councillor Martin Wilby

Elections for all 84 divisions of Norfolk County Council will now go ahead on 7th May, following a late reversal by the Government to withdraw its previous to postpone the vote. The original postponement had been announced to allow councils to focus on preparations for local government reorganisation and devolution. However, the sudden change of direction has created uncertainty for local authorities across the country.

NCC has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting local communities with the approval of 99 new highway improvement schemes for 2026-27, delivered in partnership with town and parish councils across Norfolk. The parish Partnership, now entering its fifteenth year, gives local communities a voice in shaping the highways enhancements that matter most to them, whether that's improving pedestrian safety, slowing vehicle speeds, or making it easier to walk, cycle or access local services. This year 68 small highway projects such as village gateways, new roads, signage, surfacing, benches, and access improvements were approved, along with 31 vehicle activated speed signs (VAS/SAM2) projects, helping encourage safer speeds through our villages and towns.

NCC is delivering targeted support for the county's vital hospitality sector, launching a £250,000 package at the recent Norfolk Market Towns Conference as part of a wider £1m investment in our high streets. Building on the success of the council's High Street Matters initiative, the new programme will offer bespoke training for pubs, restaurants, hotels and independent retailers. Businesses can access practical workshops, both in-person and online, covering marketing, bookings, menu development and staffing, alongside business improvement grants of up to £1,000. To find out more visit www.newangliagrowthhub.co.uk/norfolk-high-streets-matter

NCC is once again shining a spotlight on the county's outstanding enterprise as nominations open for the prestigious Norfolk Rural Business Awards 2026. From pioneering food and drink producers to forward-thinking farming innovators, and dedicated community champions, the awards celebrate the very best of rural Norfolk. Businesses, individuals and organisations are invited to apply across nine categories, with finalists honoured at a special ceremony during the Royal Norfolk Show in June. All details can be found at www.norfolk.gov.uk/business/norfolk-rural-business-awards

Your Norfolk magazine has recently been delivered to every household across the county with the usual information and updates. In addition to our printed magazine, get news delivered direct to your inbox with Your Norfolk Extra, our monthly digital newsletter. Your Norfolk Extra rounds up NCC news and offers an easy way to stay informed about local services, events and community developments across the county.

Best Wishes

Martin