

HOCKWOLD-CUM-WILTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Hockwold
on Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 7.30pm

Open Forum

Sue Annear thanked the Parish Council for the grant to help maintain St James churchyard, and informed the council that there is a 'Whats in the church yard' event this Saturday from 10 am to noon.

Members of Press and Public are invited at this time to voice their comments and concerns to the Parish Council.

54. To receive and approve apologies for absence NONE

55. To receive any declarations of interest from Members & consider requests for dispensation NONE

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

56. Reports

a. RAF Lakenheath

- Over 280 athletes from surrounding communities attended the annual Joan Mann Special Sports Day at RAF Mildenhall on 4 June. This event is supported by tri-wing volunteers of both RAF Mildenhall and RAF Lakenheath, is hugely supported by the community and is run solely on donations. It is one of the biggest community relations events of the year.
- On 6 June, MSgt Hill of the 48th Logistics Readiness Squadron represented the 48 FW at the D-Day Commemoration Service in Bury St. Edmunds.
- On 7 June, Maj Chandler of the 48th Operational Support Squadron represented the 48 FW at the Kings Lynn Civic Service and Reception.
- On 10 June, volunteers from RAF Lakenheath supported the Sports Experience Day in Thetford.
- On 20 June, volunteers from RAF Lakenheath supported the Leeway service users with a decorating project in Norwich.
- On 20 June, the RAF Lakenheath Fire department supported the Feltwell Fete.
- On 26 June, the RAF Lakenheath Chaplain represented the 48 FW at the Bishop of Ely's Garden Party.
- On 28 June, the Deputy Wing Commander Col Jurewicz represented the 48 FW at the West Suffolk Civic Service.
- On 10 July, Col Michael Alfaro assumed command of the 48 FW from Brig Gen Arthaud.

b. Norfolk County Council Cllr Sue Prigg

County Councillor Sue Prigg provided an update on matters affecting Norfolk County Council. She advised that the former Local Member Community Fund is no longer available to individual county councillors, with funding having been redirected to support the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service. She also highlighted the increasing number of lithium battery fires and the environmental and public safety concerns associated with their disposal and use. Cllr Prigg reported that changes had also been made to the former Highways Local Member Fund. Rather than individual allocations to county councillors, funding is now held within a countywide highways budget of approximately £1 million, divided between four operational areas, with priority being given to outstanding highways works. She invited parish councils to provide details of unresolved highways issues. The Parish Council requested that the Clerk prepare and submit a schedule of outstanding highways matters within the parish for Cllr Prigg's consideration. Cllr Prigg also provided an update on the ongoing Judicial Review relating to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). She explained that the application

HOCKWOLD-CUM-WILTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Hockwold
on Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 7.30pm

is currently at the permission stage, during which a judge will determine whether the case has sufficient legal merit to proceed to a full Judicial Review hearing.

c. Borough WNKL Council, Cllr Martin Storey

Borough Councillor Martin Storey provided an update on current Borough Council and county matters. Cllr Storey advised that elections are expected to take place in May 2027 as part of the Local Government Reorganisation programme. He explained that, subject to the completion of the legislative process, these are expected to be elections for the new shadow unitary authorities rather than the existing borough and district councils, but this is not decided yet. He also referred to the new Prime Minister's continued commitment to devolution and Local Government Reorganisation across Norfolk. Members were informed that Colin Sutton had recently been elected as Norfolk's Police and Crime Commissioner. Cllr Storey expressed concern regarding the deteriorating condition of road markings, including white lining, across a number of local parishes. He encouraged parish councils to continue reporting defects and maintaining pressure on Norfolk County Council to secure the necessary maintenance works. The Borough Council's programme of community projects is currently at its busiest, and members were encouraged to view the Borough Council website for information on activities and events taking place across the borough. Cllr Storey highlighted the recent award of Green Flag Awards for parks and open spaces in King's Lynn and Hunstanton. Members were advised that Freebridge Community Housing operates a community gardening fund to support local environmental projects. Although the current funding round had closed on 20 July, the Parish Council agreed that future funding opportunities should be monitored so that suitable applications can be submitted when the scheme reopens. Cllr Storey concluded by advising that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn replacement programme remains on schedule.

d. Chairman

Chairman Royal reported that he had attended the RAF Lakenheath Change of Command Ceremony on 10 July 2026, representing the Parish Council. He also provided an update on the outstanding Monitoring Officer complaints. He advised that the final decisions had now been received and confirmed that all three complaints had concluded with no further action. Chairman Royal noted that one of the decisions also corrected an allegation made within a complaint concerning him personally. The Monitoring Officer's decision stated: "To correct a statement made in the complaint, it is not correct that the previous ... decision indicated improper prejudice by the Councillor." The Council noted the report.

e. Clerk;

British Gas Business Electricity Billing Incident

The Clerk presented a report regarding a significant billing issue affecting the Parish Council's British Gas Business electricity account for the parish street lighting. Members noted that an unexpected Direct Debit of £23,251.41 had been collected from the Council's bank account. Following a formal complaint by the Clerk, British Gas advised that the consumption data received appeared to be incorrect, had authorised a refund of £22,674.35, and confirmed that the matter had been referred to its specialist Half-Hourly Team for investigation. Members noted that, at the date of the meeting, the

HOCKWOLD-CUM-WILTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Hockwold
on Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 7.30pm

refund had not yet been received, no corrected bill had been issued, and the investigation remained ongoing.

Environmental Information Regulations Request – Murfitts Industries

The Clerk reported that the Council's response to the Environmental Information Regulations request relating to Murfitts Industries had been completed. The response comprised a covering letter, a Disclosure Bundle and the disclosed documents, prepared following a detailed review of the information held by the Council. Where necessary, limited redactions had been applied in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and applicable data protection legislation.

Chairman Royal reminded members that, whilst the Council has a duty to respond to Freedom of Information and Environmental Information requests, the legislation also contains provisions to protect public authorities from disproportionately burdensome requests and allows charges to be made where permitted. Members noted the update.

Other Items

- The clerk has yet to get the VAT return from January 2026. I have sent emails and attempted calls. I will continue to chase.
- There have been two resident emails with concerns and complaints over the increasing number of Freedom Recycling Lorries and other lorries. I have explained that unfortunately, the Parish Council does not hold information on why individual vehicles choose particular routes or whether they are travelling to or from a specific destination. I am therefore unable to confirm why lorries or construction vehicles are using these roads. I emphasised that whilst the Parish Council actively represents residents' concerns and submits requests for improvements, responsibility for speed limits, traffic calming, HGV restrictions, road signage and all changes to the public highway rests with Norfolk County Council as the Highway Authority. I supplied links and information if they would also like to raise these matters directly, encouraging them to contact the Norfolk County Council Highways Department.
- The External Auditor requested explanation with actual amounts to explain the over 15% rise in the precept. I completed that and sent it in. This is normal to get requests for clarification, and no further questions.
- All grants awarded have been paid into the confirmed accounts.
 - Cllr Newman wanted clarification on the total amount approved for the Village Hall.
- The loud sewer cover on Main Street was attended to.
- The Parish File cabinet will be moved to the Village Hall. Concerns over the damp in the room. The contents will be moved to the county archives when time allows the clerk to go through the old files. The PC file system is almost all digital now, making the paper file cabinet more of an archive.
- Clerk notified the council of her two upcoming annual leave dates.

57. To approve minutes of the Council meeting held 9th June 2026 It was resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record.

58. Matters arising (for information only)

To report progress on matters arising from previous minutes (not elsewhere on agenda)

HOCKWOLD-CUM-WILTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Hockwold
on Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 7.30pm

- 59. To confirm receipt of NALC, CAN and other correspondence** All Councillors present received their updates and correspondence. Clerk informed the council that she had found out why they weren't getting the same emails. Our new email providers had an AI filter system. It auto sorted emails and there were over 700 in random folders.
- 60. To discuss Flag of the Fens request** The Council considered the request to endorse the Flags of the Fens initiative based on the information provided. Members agreed that further information was required before a decision could be made and requested that the Clerk include the matter on the September agenda to allow the organisers to provide a more detailed presentation.
- 61. To hear update on vandalism of the village gateways and possible resolutions** Item to be put on September's agenda as no update was provided.
- 62. To hear updates on the village stone marker plaque on Main Street** The Council received an update on enquiries into the history of the village stone marker plaque on Main Street. Chairman Royal reported that he had spoken with the retired Headteacher, who had no recollection of the marker. Cllr Rumsey recalled being taught about it while at the local school. Cllr Newman advised that the current property owners can't remember it being on their deeds, but would 'check'. Cllr Baker advised that a local history booklet had been published and contains a page relating to the marker. The Clerk to search the Parish Council files for any relevant information and include the matter on the September agenda for further consideration.
- 63. To discuss working group for beautification project/event** Cllr Sismey and Cllr Newman agreed to meet with the Clerk to begin developing the village beautification project and report back to the Council at a future meeting.
- 64. To discuss a possible PC presence at the Village Fete** Cllr Sismey provided an update on arrangements for the Village Fete and advised that planning was progressing well. She asked whether the Parish Council could have a presence at the event to enable residents to meet councillors and ask questions. Members discussed the proposal but noted that, due to prior commitments, planned holidays and the current vacancies on the Council, it would not be possible to provide sufficient attendance this year.
- 65. To discuss allotments, including new contracts** The Council considered the draft Allotment Tenancy Agreement and proposed two amendments: changing the word "quit" to "vacate", and replacing "Clerk" with "Parish Council representative" in the inspection section. The Clerk to make the amendments and present the revised agreement to the September meeting for approval. The Clerk advised that, once approved, all existing allotment holders would receive the new agreement and accompanying notification, but the revised agreement would apply to existing tenants from 2027.
- 66. To hear update on the on Church Lane** Cllr Baker reported that following the recent cutting back of the overgrown bushes and trees near the church gate on Church Lane, the resulting tree and bush cuttings had been dumped on the opposite verge. The Clerk to report the matter to the Norfolk County Council Rangers for investigation and removal.
- 67. Planning Matters**
- a. To receive results & updates of outstanding applications**
- i. NONE**

HOCKWOLD-CUM-WILTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Hockwold
on Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 7.30pm

b. To receive new planning applications relevant to the village and make comment

i. NONE

68. Finance

a. To agree payment of July's invoices Accounts agree and approved.

Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council PAYMENTS LIST

14 July 2026 (2026-2027)

Date	Minute	Bank	Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
14/07/2026		Current Account		Office phone and internet	Hilary Cox	Z	26.00		26.00
14/07/2026		Current Account		GRANT	Hockwold Village Hall	Z	1,500.00		1,500.00
14/07/2026		Current Account		GRANT	Hockwold Parochial Church	Z	1,000.00		1,000.00
14/07/2026		Current Account		GRANT	Friends of the Lode Group	Z	600.00		600.00
14/07/2026		Current Account		GRANT	Friends of Hockwold Site A	Z	300.00		300.00
14/07/2026		Current Account		GRANT	Hockwold Bowls Club	Z	500.00		500.00
14/07/2026		Current Account		GRANT	Hockwold Friendship Club	Z	100.00		100.00
14/07/2026		Current Account		Wages	Hilary Cox	Z	1,295.68		1,295.68
14/07/2026		Current Account		Employer National Insurance C	HMRC	Z	264.30		264.30
14/07/2026		Current Account		Employee Pension Contribution	NEST	Z	64.61		64.61
14/07/2026		Current Account		Street Lighting Maintenance	K & M Lighting Services	S	89.31	17.86	107.17
14/07/2026		Current Account		Misc. Admin Costs	Hilary Cox	Z	19.57		19.57
Total							5,759.47	17.86	5,777.33

Accounts agree and approved.

Hockwold cum Wilton Parish Council RECEIPTS LIST

14 July 2026 (2026-2027)

Vouche Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Receipt No	Description	Customer	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
3 Bank Interest	08/06/2026		Business Premium A		Interest Earned	Barclays	Z	20.97		20.97
Total								20.97		20.97

69. Items for the next agenda

- To discuss working group to look at cost for clerk home office/business office for Parish Council.
- To discuss Flag of the Fens request
- To hear update on vandalism of the village gateways and possible resolutions
- To hear updates on the village stone marker plaque on Main Street
- To hear update from working group for beautification project/event
- To discuss allotments, including new contracts
- To hear update on the on Church Lane

70. To confirm date and times of the next Annual Parish Council Meeting on 8th September 2026 starting at 7.30 pm. Meetings take place in Hockwold Village Hall, Main Street IP264LW

Distribution:

One copy to each Councillor. Copies to Sue Prigg Norfolk County Councillor, Martin Storey Borough of West Norfolk, Squadron Leader Eaton RAF Lakenheath and one copy for the website.