



Wickham Bishops Parish Council

Minutes of Wickham Bishops Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 6th January 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Boardroom

26/001 Those Present and Apologies for Absence

In the Chair: Cllr Wardrop

Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, Mickelsen, Morgan, Nappo, Williams and the Clerk. There were 2 members of the public present.

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Layley. County Cllr Durham was not present.

The Chairman explained that Cllr Clarke had tendered her resignation and thanked her for her time on the Council.

26/002 Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework

District Cllr Morgan declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Planning item and would not take part in discussion or voting as he may be required to do so in his role on the MDC Area Planning Committee.

26/003 Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd December 2025 were approved as a true record, proposed by Cllr Mickelsen, seconded Cllr Williams, all in favour.

26/004 Chairman's Report

It was noted that the problem of vehicles parking in Wellands close to the junction with Witham Road seemed to have resolved itself.

The Chairman had been approached by a resident concerned that recent changes to the 1 Heron Way vehicular drive (HOUSE/MAL/24/00294) may not have included piping of the ditch. **Action:** The Clerk was asked to let MDC know that this had been brought to our attention.

26/005 Clerk's Report

An email from the Diocese of Chelmsford indicated that they were satisfied that their contractor had trimmed back The Rectory front hedge. **Action:** The Clerk to explain that the chestnut paling fence was the boundary of the property and the vegetation should be cut back to that point.

ECC had written to confirm that formal retrospective consent had been given for the retention and maintenance of the Witham Road bus shelter.

26/006 Public Forum

The new owners of The Bear, formerly known as The Chequers, introduced themselves, explained the refurbishment progress and their plans to create a community pub.

26/007 Planning Applications and Decisions

Cllr Bass took the Chair for this item and explained that WBPC were merely consultees, the final decision rested with MDC.



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25/00989/LBC The Chequers Inn, 32 The Street Retrospective listed building consent for replacement beam and remodelling of toilets including opening up ceiling and restoring fireplace in female facilities. It was noted that the applicant had been in regular contact with MDCs Heritage Officer. **Resolved:** Members had no objection to the proposals and recommended APPROVAL.

25/00967/LBC & 25/00966/FUL The Chequers Inn, 32 The Street Erection of detached single storey cold store on side of main building, replacement of existing fence & pedestrian gate in front of proposed store. **Resolved:** Members had no objection to the proposals and recommended APPROVAL.

Members queried the time taken for Planning Applications to be processed. District Cllr Morgan explained that the Planning Department were experiencing staffing issues.

25/01103/WTPO 23 Heathgate Oak trees, height and lateral reduction. It was noted that the applicant was the neighbour at No. 22. **Resolved:** Members unanimously recommended APPROVAL with the proviso that the works were carried out by a qualified arboriculturist and that the applicant had liaised with and gained permission from No. 23.

25/01066/FUL Former Timber Yard north of Grove Wood, Mope Lane Erection of a detached dwelling. **Resolved:** Cllr Wardrop recommended REFUSAL, seconded by Cllr Bass, all in favour, on the grounds that it was outside the village development boundary, and represented overdevelopment of the site. On the matter of being a brownfield site, MDC would be made aware that this was never a timber yard but a store for firewood, and former piggery.

25/01054/HOUSE Ravello, Maypole Road Single storey side extension. **Resolved:** There were no objections to the proposals and members recommended APPROVAL.

The following decision made by MDC was noted:

25/00817/FUL Land At Five Corners Maypole Road Great Totham. Conversion of outbuilding into an annexe ancillary to main dwelling. **REFUSED**

26/008 Other Planning Matters

Yellow site notices – to note response from MDC and consider next steps

The email response from Michael Johnson at MDC was noted. Cllr Wardrop agreed to check that site notices were displayed for the two newest Applications in Byron Drive and Roots Lane.

Land rear of 9 Church Road – to note further developments, if any Nothing to report

26/009 Traffic Calming & Highway Matters

Cllr Wardrop reported that the CSW team were hoping to meet with Priti Patel MP at her monthly surgery to discuss the 'out of force' policy. With no satisfactory response on the matter of alleged behaviour and language of the Speedwatch team, Cllr Wardrop would continue to pursue.

Future road closures for works Church Road and Blacksmiths Lane The Chairman had written to ECC to express concern that Wickham Hall Lane had been allocated as a part of the diversion route, reiterating how inappropriate this was.



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26/010 Essex & Suffolk Water Masts Proposals, update

Cllr Nappo had no further news but would keep an eye out for developments.

26/011 Local Government Reorganisation – consultation (deadline 11th January)

On geographical grounds and similarities, Cllr Wardrop proposed the 4 unitary structure (led by Thurrock) as preferable, seconded by Cllr Williams, all in favour. **Action:** The Clerk to complete the consultation questionnaire.

26/012 District Councillor Report

District Cllr Morgan reported that an enforcement notice had been served on Magellans Rest, he had called in the Walden House Road application, quoted a recent example for housing at Wycke Hill where the Committee had overturned officers recommendation for approval and advised that the 5-year HLS had been recalculated to 4.5.

26/013 County Councillor Report County Councillor Durham was not present.

26/014 War Memorial/Remembrance Day Event

To reconsider the current arrangement and WBPCs financial contribution

Little Braxted PC's response was noted (estimates were not required as the figures involved were under £3,000 and the clerk sought to achieve value for money). As WBPC were paying 77% of the costs, members agreed that it was right and proper they had more involvement in the process and a say in the decision-making. **Resolved:** The Clerk to write to Little Braxted PC asking for more involvement in 2026 in both the War Memorial maintenance and the Remembrance Day Service, as well as sight of the war memorial insurance policy.

26/015 Biodiversity – Green roof on air raid shelter, consider and agree

Cllr Williams explained the intention of the Biodiversity Group to use a 2" x 2" timber frame, fill with a mixture of sand/soil and plant up with sedum etc, all of which would be removable and cause no damage to the existing structure. It was noted that just under £250 remained unspent in the biodiversity budget. **Resolved:** Cllr Mickelsen proposed we support the project, seconded by Cllr Bass, all in favour. The Chair and Vice Chair to read the lease documentation before work began.

26/016 Revision of Wickham Bishops boundaries – consider applying to MDC

Cllr Wardrop explained that the intention was to tidy up anomalies along the boundary, particularly in Kelvedon Road, Beacon Hill and Maypole Road although it was noted that consultation with residents would be required and it may affect council tax, postal addresses etc. **Resolved:** After discussion it was agreed not to pursue this idea at the current time.

26/017 Finance To note bank balances and agree payments for the month

The following bank balances were noted:

Unity Trust Current Account	£1,602.12
Unity Trust Instant Access Account	£18,936.79
Equals Money Debit Card	£8.97



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Resolved: Cllr Wardrop proposed the following payments and bank transfers be made, seconded by Cllr Williams, all in favour, including the sum of £334.19 to Little Braxted PC for war memorial maintenance. The receipt of bank interest was noted.

PAYMENTS (AWAITING AUTHORISATION) LIST

Voucher	Code	Date	Bank	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
80	War Memorial	02/12/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	War Memorial maintenance	Little Braxted Parish Council	334.19		334.19
84	Outsourced Payroll	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Payroll services	J&M Payroll Services	27.50	5.50	33.00
85	Outsourced Payroll	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Payroll services	J&M Payroll Services	27.50	5.50	33.00
86	Grasscutting	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Grasscutting	Wallace Arboriculture & Groundcare	95.00		95.00
87	Venue Hire	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Venue hire - football club	Beacon Hill Rovers FC	35.00		35.00
88	Chairman's Allowance	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Festive Thank You for volunteers	Cllr Ian Wardrop	140.19	13.31	153.50
89	Unity Bank charges	31/12/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	Bank charge	Unity Bank	6.00		6.00
90	Clerk's Salary	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Clerk's Salary	Mrs L A Bailey	895.10		895.10) £920.10
90	PC Office Allowance	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	PC Office Allowance	Mrs L A Bailey	25.00		25.00)
91	HMRC NIC & Tax	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Tax	HMRC	39.60		39.60) £260.67
91	HMRC NIC & Tax	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	National Insurance	HMRC	221.07		221.07)
92	Mobile Phone costs	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Clerk's reimbursements	Vodafone top-up	10.00		10.00)
92	Printing & Postage	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Clerk's reimbursements	HP Instant Ink	11.24	2.25	13.49) £28.49
92	Printing & Postage	06/01/2026	Unity Trust Current Account	Clerk's reimbursements	A4 White Paper	5.00		5.00)
Total						1,872.39	26.56	1,898.95

RECEIPTS LIST

Voucher	Code	Date	Bank	Description		
5	Bank Interest	31/12/2025	Unity Trust Instant Access	Bank interest	114.52	114.52

BANK TRANSFERS

Date	Description	From	To	Amount
06/01/2026	Bank to Bank Transfer	Unity Trust Current Account	Debit Card	100.00
06/01/2026	Bank to Bank Transfer	Unity Trust Instant Access	Unity Trust Current Account	5,000.00

26/018 Progress Reports from Councillors – no decisions required

It was noted that the resident in Wellands was now charging their electric car on their driveway.

26/019 Correspondence

RCCE Membership Event invitation – 26th February 2026. Noted.

26/020 Parish Council Monthly Surgeries Agree 2026 dates

Resolved: Councillors unanimously agreed to continue with surgeries on the third Saturday of each month with Cllrs Bass and Wardrop volunteering to attend on Sat 17th January 11am – 12 noon.

26/021 General Village News and Events to Note

The Chairman noted and everyone agreed that the Festive Thank You event held at the Football Club Bar had gone very well.

26/022 Date of Next Meetings:

Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 3rd February 2026, 7.30pm, Village Hall Boardroom
Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 3rd March 2026, 7.30pm, Village Hall Boardroom

26/023 Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.30pm.