

Wickham Bishops Parish Council

Parish Councillors

I D Wardrop (Chairman)
Mrs A Mickelsen (Vice Chair)
H M Bass
P J Bates
R Clarke
P D Layley
S Morgan
C Nappo
J Williams



Winner Best Kept Village 2009, 2015
3rd Place Essex Village of the Year 2015
www.wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org

Parish Clerk

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Minutes of Wickham Bishops Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd September 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Boardroom

Item	Subject
25/169	Those Present and Apologies for Absence In the Chair: Cllr Wardrop. Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, Clarke, Layley, Mickelsen, Morgan, Nappo, Williams and the Clerk. There were no members of the public present.
25/170	Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework District Councillor Morgan declared a non-pecuniary interest in 25/175 and would not take part in discussion or voting as he may be required to do so in his role at MDC. Cllr Clarke declared a non-pecuniary interest in 25/00644/HOUSE as the applicant is known to her.
25/171	Approval of Minutes The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1 st July 2025 were proposed as a true record by Cllr Layley, seconded Cllr Wardrop, all in favour. The Minutes of the Extraordinary PC Meeting held on 5 th August 2025 were proposed as a true record, by Cllr Wardrop, seconded by Cllr Layley, all in favour.
25/172	Chairman's Report Nothing to report.
25/173	Clerk's Report The Clerk had arranged for large nitrous oxide canisters found by a Blacksmiths Lane resident in her kerbside shrubbery to be collected by MDC and safely disposed of. A resident had notified the Clerk of a vehicle without tax or MOT parked in Holt Drive, reported to MDC but with no action having been taken. The Clerk had also reported it. District Cllr Morgan agreed to chase. He would also chase up the white van abandoned in Kelvedon Road, reported months ago but still there.
25/174	Public Forum There were no members of the public present.
25/175	Planning Applications and Decisions Cllr Bass took the Chair for the next two items. 25/00644/HOUSE Friars Lawn, 12 Witham Road Front and rear extensions including rooms in roofspace with alterations to fenestration, addition of rooflights and balconies. Resolved: Members had no objection to the proposals and recommended APPROVAL, proposed Cllr Bass, seconded Cllr Wardrop, all in favour.

	<p>25/00671/WTPO 4 Wellands Oak tree, crown reduce by 1.5m. Resolved: Members had no objection to the works provided a qualified arboriculturist carried out the works, and unanimously recommended APPROVAL.</p> <p>25/00525/HOUSE Endeavour Cottage, 16a School Road Single storey rear extension with glazed link connection with the existing dwelling, first floor side extension with addition of dormer. Alterations to fenestration. Resolved: Members had no objection to the works and unanimously recommended APPROVAL.</p> <p><u>The following item delegated to the Clerk was noted:</u></p> <p>25/00625/LDP 19 Church Green Claim for lawful development certificate for a proposed porch. No comment.</p> <p><u>The following decisions made by MDC were noted:</u></p> <p>25/00558/VAR 27 Holt Drive Variation of conditions 2 & 3, 25/00034/HOUSE. APPROVED</p> <p>25/00491/FUL Land at 35 Church Road Detached 2-storey 3-bed house. APPROVED</p> <p>25/00552/LDP Ravello Maypole Road Claim for lawful development certificate for proposed single storey side extension. REFUSED</p> <p><u>The following Tree Preservation Order made by MDC on 19th August was noted:</u></p> <p>TPO 07/25 Land adjacent Crispins, Grange Road It was acknowledged that this was in response to the application made by WBPC.</p> <p>Action: On the subject of yellow Planning Notices, the Clerk was asked to write to MDC and express dissatisfaction with the current situation whereby notices were either not being posted at all or placed in locations nowhere near where the actual works were proposed.</p>
25/176	<p>Land rear of 9 Church Road – to note further developments, if any</p> <p>It was agreed that Cllr Bass attend and speak at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meeting on Thursday 4th September at which MDC's response to the Planning Inspector's request regarding the 9 Church Road Planning Appeal was being considered. It was understood a member of the Action Group would also speak. Cllr Bass and the Action Group to liaise.</p>
25/177	<p>Traffic Calming & Highway Matters</p> <p><i>To note road traffic collisions and response from Cllr Cunningham at ECC re Five Corners junction and whether a formal approach to the LHP should be pursued</i></p> <p>Members agreed unanimously to continue to push ECC for a 30mph speed limit. Resolved: The Clerk to write to Great Totham PC asking for their support. Resolved: The Clerk to make a Freedom of Information request to Essex Highways to establish why the Traffic Regulation Order had been cancelled and what objections had been received.</p> <p><i>Closure of Station Road 1st – 5th Sept and correspondence between Chairman and Cllr Cunningham about diversion through Wickham Hall Lane</i></p> <p>Noted. The Chairman had made it clear that diversions through Wickham Hall Lane were totally inappropriate and unacceptable.</p> <p><i>Update on Community Speedwatch, correspondence with Essex Police and Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner</i></p> <p>Cllr Wardrop had received a holding response from the Deputy Commissioner. It was unanimously agreed that a full and satisfactory answer from the Commissioner should be</p>

	<p>pursued particularly in respect of the allegation relating to behaviour and language by the CSW team. It had been suggested that the “Out of Force” policy should be pursued through TV publicity, e.g. BBC Look East. Members considered that the full response from the Commissioner should be received before any such action was pursued.</p> <p>To note additional traffic due to Langford Road closure/diversion, Highways response to Blue Mills temporary traffic light suggestion and correspondence from residents Members were disappointed at the negative response from Highways. The road had now re-opened.</p> <p>Surface water alleviation works, Church Road. It was noted that the works had been postponed.</p> <p>To note closure/diversion Bridleway 19 due to unsafe bridge. Noted. Action: The Clerk was asked to write to ECC insisting that they clear the ditch out as this would have a bearing on the bridge.</p> <p>Closure of Blue Mills Hill for 3 days for new water connection. After liaising with the bus company, it was noted that works were scheduled to take place overnight, meaning the road would not require closure.</p> <p>Cllr Bass was concerned about the number of road traffic signs in the village (for which ECC was responsible) that were broken, obscured by vegetation or in need of some attention. He put forward a suggestion that members carry out a survey around the village. Action: Members to note and take photographs of such signs, to be considered at the October PC Meeting.</p>
25/178	<p>Bus Shelter, Witham Road – to note request from ECC to apply for a licence ECC were currently looking to ensure that all Parish Council-owned bus shelters located on Highways land were properly licenced. Resolved: The Clerk to complete the paperwork.</p> <p>It was noted that the ‘real time display’ sign at the Snows Corner bus shelter was not working properly and merely listing the time of the next bus as per the timetable. Action: The Clerk to report to ECC.</p>
25/179	<p>Essex and Suffolk Water Masts Proposals, update and report on progress Connexin had offered to meet the Parish Council and Action Group for a progress update. Resolved: The Clerk to respond that Thursday 18th September, 2pm was the preferred date. Cllrs Wardrop, Bass, Clarke and the Clerk to attend. Cllr Nappo to attend, work commitments permitting.</p>
25/180	<p>District Councillor Report District Councillor Morgan reported on the ongoing Local Government Review and briefly outlined the various options. Planning Committee changes were being considered by MDC and on the subject of the Local Development Plan, the housing mix and the need for 1-2 bed houses in the district was being discussed.</p>
25/181	<p>County Councillor Report County Councillor Durham was not present.</p>
25/182	<p>Finance To note Final External Auditor Report and agree action, if necessary The External Auditor had formally concluded the audit, and the appropriate Notice of Conclusion of Audit had been posted on the noticeboard.</p>

Resolved: Following the Auditor's query on Asset Register items, members agreed to keep a closer check and make sure this was thoroughly reviewed annually.

The following bank balances were noted:

Unity Trust Current Account	31/08/2025	5,561.71	
Unity Trust Instant Access	31/08/2025	23,687.93	
Debit Card	31/08/2025	11.20	
			29,260.84

Cllr Wardrop proposed the list of payments for the month be agreed, seconded by Cllr Mickelsen, all in favour:

Voucher	Code	Date		Description	Supplier		Total
45	Unity Bank charges	31/08/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	Bank charge	Unity Trust Bank	6.00	6.00
46	Streethgh Elec	02/09/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	Streethlight Electricity Jan - March	NPower	87.63 4.38	92.01
47	Streethgh Elec	02/09/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	Streethlight Electricity April - June	NPower	59.32 2.97	62.29
48	Audit	02/09/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	External Audit fee	PKF Littlejohn LLP	210.00 42.00	252.00
49	Grasscutting	02/09/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	Grasscutting x 2	Wallace Arboriculture & Groundcare	185.00	185.00
50	Biodiversity	02/09/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	Refreshments, Biodiversity event	Cllr Jane Williams (Tesco)	16.16	16.16
51	Parish Paths Partnership	02/09/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	Safety boots x 2, footpath volunteers	Richard Sceats (Jewsons)	80.00	80.00
52	Clerk's Salary	02/09/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	Clerk's Salary inc back pay	Mrs L A Bailey	996.86	996.86
52	PC Office Allowance	02/09/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	PC office allowance	Mrs L A Bailey	25.00	25.00
53	Printing & Postage	02/09/2025	Unity Trust Current Account	HP Instant Ink	Mrs L A Bailey (HP Instant Ink)	11.24 2.25	13.49
Total						51.60	1,728.81

TRANSFERS

Date	Desc	From	To	Amount
01/09/2025	Bank to Bank Transfer	Unity Trust Current Account	Debit Card	100.00
Total.....				100.00

25/183

To note traffic management costs for Remembrance Day as obtained by Little Braxted PC

LB PC Clerk had forwarded a quote from TCMC Ltd to provide 1 x Traffic Management Operative with vehicle to implement road closures on Sunday 9th November in the sum of £785 + VAT.
Resolved: Members agreed to accept the quote for 2025. They would have preferred to see 3 quotes for comparison but acknowledged there were few companies providing this type of service.

Discussion took place around the possibility of holding a 2026 Remembrance Service at the Church, the many benefits of which would be: protection from the weather, easier access for young and old, comfortable seating and toilet facilities, easy car parking, avoid road closures and associated safety risks and cost, space for tea, conversation and connection afterwards, something not easily done roadside. **Resolved:** The Clerk to write to the Church. Finance Committee to review the budget at the November Meeting.

25/184

Governance

To review and formally re-adopt the Equality & Diversity Policy

Resolved: Cllr Wardrop proposed, seconded by Cllr Mickelsen, all in favour that the Policy be re-adopted.

To formally adopt a new IT Policy (as per changes to Practitioners' Guide 2025)

Resolved: Cllr Wardrop proposed, seconded by Cllr Bates, all in favour that the IT Policy be adopted.

25/185	<p>Progress Reports from Councillors – no decisions required</p> <p><i>The Pant & Blackwater Restoration Plan</i> Cllr Bass reported that the 2025 Pant & Blackwater Restoration Plan was now complete.</p> <p><i>Footpath Volunteers, allocation of paths, tools etc.</i> The Clerk reported that the volunteers had allocated footpaths to themselves to walk several times during the year, identify any problems and report them to the PC, where a decision could be taken as to whether the work could be carried out by volunteers or notified to ECC.</p> <p><i>Six Walks Footpath booklet</i> Cllr Wardrop and Williams had walked and checked some sections and passed amendments to the Clerk who was compiling the final draft.</p>
25/186	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EALC AGM, Thursday 25th September 6.30pm – 9pm. An email today indicated that the AGM would now be held online, the Clerk to forward details to members. • Public consultation on Essex Transport Strategy (deadline 24th September). Noted. • Supported Local Bus Services 2025 Consultation (deadline 27th October). Noted that the proposed changes did not affect WB.
25/187	<p>Parish Council Surgeries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note July & August surgery requests. A request for replacement dog fouling signs in Chantry Grove had been received. The Clerk had made enquiries through MDC. • Witham Road pavement, overgrown vegetation near Village Hall. Action: The Clerk to write to BHSA. • The Rectory, Church Road, overgrown hedge. Action: The Clerk to write to the Diocese Board of Finance as this was encroaching on the carriageway. • Saturday 20th September surgery – Cllrs Clarke and Mickelsen agreed to attend.
25/188	<p>General Village News and Events to Note None.</p>
25/189	<p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 7th October 7.30pm, Village Hall Boardroom</p> <p>Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 4th November 7.30pm, Village Hall Boardroom</p>
25/190	<p>Close of Meeting There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.40pm.</p>