

HEMPNALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 20 January 2026 at 7:00 in The Mill

Present

Chairman Mr David Hook, Mr Phil Bates, Mr Richard Delf, Mr Robert Elliott, Mr Hamish Rose and the Clerk Mr Ian Nelson.

Members of the public present

County Councillor Alison Thomas, Mr R Shingleton and Mrs S Shingleton

Apologies

Apologies were received from District Councillor Michael Hooton, Mrs Joan Cann, Mr Mike Turner and Mr Peter Workman.

Declaration of interests

Mr Hook declared a non-financial interest in the East Pye Solar Project as he is a trustee of CPRE Norfolk.

Minutes of the previous meeting

Mr Elliott proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was unanimously agreed the minutes of the meeting on 16 December 2025 be approved.

Public Participation

See below re Willow Drive planning application 2025/3524.

County Councillor Update

Mrs Thomas reported that large pothole in the Krons should have been filled today but she was unsure if it had and would welcome feedback. She will chase up the repair if it is still outstanding.

There are a number of potholes on the B1527 which will have temporary repairs carried out. She was made aware of the need to resurface the B1527, especially between the recycling centre and the Krons where there had been an accident due to the lack of surface dressing. Complaints have been received by motorcyclists/ car and lorry drivers alike and the parish council had reported the matter to NCC already. The Clerk will email her NCC's response to follow up.

IN

NCC Highways are recommending refusal of the NSIP application for the Field BESS in Gt Moulton.

Mrs Thomas is passing on information received from BEPS on to the relevant officers for information to help NCC's response as to the adequacy of the EPS statutory consultation. Mr Hook asked Mrs Thomas to find out what NCC has done in regard to preparing its objection to the adequacy of the statutory consultation and to report back to the parish council. Furthermore, he asked that she finds out from Stephen Faulkner, the NSIP officer for NCC, the procedure and timetable that NCC need to follow in order to effectively produce and present its objection to the adequacy of the statutory consultation. The Clerk to follow up.

IN

There is still uncertainty as to whether the local council elections will or will not take place in May 2026.

NCC is setting a balanced budget later this month and it will result in the maximum increase in council tax allowed.

Chairman's initials _____

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District Councillor Update

Mr Hooton sent a report via the Clerk as follows:

“Both Daniel Elmer and I have received an email from Dr Annetta Berry about whether and/or when South Norfolk Council will need to make a decision on whether the Statutory Consultation for East Pye Solar has been adequate and to report this decision to the Planning Inspectorate.

This sits with Daniel at the moment as Leader of the Council and he has asked the head of planning at SNC to report back to him.

I will also be raising the issue with Daniel when I next meet with him.”

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk write to Mr Hooton strongly expressing the wish for SNC to tell ensure it highlights the inadequacy of EPS Consultation and asked for details of the procedure and timetable for them objecting.

IN

Willow Drive and planning application 2025/3524

Mr Hook and the Clerk had written to SNC enforcement to ask if it is correct procedure for SNC officers to set aside commitments/conditions attached to the planning permission.

The Clerk had circulated the unsatisfactory response to our queries received from SNC to councillors prior to the meeting.

Mr & Mrs Shingleton pointed out that there is an obligation for Hempnall Properties Ltd to maintain the required hedging, and it had not done so. He said that Watsons were the agents for the management company.

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk and Mr Hook respond to SNC’s last email and ask whose responsibility it is to ensure planning conditions are fulfilled.

DH/IN

Planning Applications

New applications since the last meeting:

There were none.

Applications approved since the last meeting:

There were none.

Applications withdrawn since the last meeting:

There were none.

Applications refused since the last meeting:

There were none.

Applications outside the parish boundary since the last meeting

The Field Battery energy storage system (“BESS”) in Great Moulton

Mr Bates proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk and Mr Hook object to this application on planning grounds.

DH/IN

East Pye Solar

BEPS Update

Mr Bates reported that BEPS has formed itself as a “group of six” so has the right to register as an interested party when the NSIP application is made.

There was a meeting last week to brief all parish councils and volunteers as to the next steps in the campaign. He explained the processes involved to put together the data / evidence

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which will be required for responses to the Planning Inspectorate. There are 6 people helping with this in Hempnall.

Mr Bates will be contacting other parish councils in his capacity as a Hempnall Parish Councillor highlighting the urgency for further support.

PB

Engagement of landscape planning consultant to cover the visual intrusion and landscape aspects

Mr Blackledge of Landscape 2B Consultancy, had confirmed the pricing based on the scope previously outlined. He will be engaged at the relevant time.

DH

Shotesham PC has engaged Lisa Finch of Classic Landscape Architecture, and Mr Hook will liaise with her to coordinate responses.

DH

Letter from Parishioner

A letter from Mr Shurmer had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting re EPS and net zero.

Mr Elliott proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was agreed with one abstention, that the Clerk respond to Mr Shurmer noting his comments.

IN

East Pye Solar Targeted Consultation

Mr Hook and the Clerk had sent in the council's response.

Mr Hook and the Clerk had written to NCC Highways (cc NSIP officer, Stephen Faulkner and County Councillor Thomas).

Wheels 4 Less / Boyland Nursery School lighting

Mr Hook wrote to Andy Baines, SNC's planning enforcement officer, many months ago following his review of the various planning consents in detail and had listed all the suspected non-compliance issues in a 7-page letter to SNC enforcement officer. The letter was acknowledged, but we have not had a response since. Mr Elliott proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk chased for a response.

IN

Consultation on the new National Planning Policy Framework

Mr Hook has seen the draft document and volunteered to respond on behalf of the parish council. There are several major concerns about the weakening of existing rules and policies which protect the countryside.

Mr Bates proposed, Mr Rose seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that Mr Hook send a response in line with existing parish council policies and views.

DH

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – completed

Play area – bench

The Clerk had purchased a bench to replace the wooden bench which is in poor condition. Mr Delf volunteered to install.

RD

Tennis Club rental

The Clerk had issued the invoice to the club.

Budget/Precept 2026/27

The Clerk had informed SNC of the required precept.

Consultation on local government reorganisation in Norfolk

The Clerk had responded to the consultation stating that the status quo should be retained.

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Dog Bin – Busseys Loke

The Clerk had written to the parishioner to let them know of the previous meeting's decision.

Hempnall PC BEPS coordinator

Mr Bates had commenced the role.

Cumulative Impact Map – costings

The Clerk had paid Mr Walker.

Public consultation on Joint draft Supplementary Planning Documents - 10/11/25-19/12/25

Mr Hook and the Clerk had responded to the consultation.

Willow Drive attenuation ditch

The Clerk had responded to the parishioner who asked the question regarding responsibility for maintenance of the ditch.

Phone Mast Request

Mr Bates had drafted a suitable article on the matter for the next newsletter, and the Clerk had responded to the parishioner with details of suitable alternative solutions.

In addition, Mr Bates had requested network providers antennas are added pointing at Hempnall.

Mr Bates is also pursuing O² to see if there is a solution.

PB

Police – Operation Radium

The Clerk had responded to the police.

New Defibrillator at The Mill

The Clerk and Mr Bates had arranged for the defibrillator to be registered to the parish council. Mr Bates had arranged for the unit to be mounted on the outside wall of the Mill and added the unit to the national database and briefed the caretaker of the Mill about the monthly maintenance checks. He had also drafted an article for the newsletter.

Litter Picking

The Clerk had written a thank you letter and make payment to Mr Cracknell.

South Norfolk Public Spaces Protection Order (Dog Control) Signage

The Clerk had arranged for the small children's play area to be covered by this and for suitable signs to be erected.

Firework Night Parking

The Clerk had written to the school to inform them of the issues and asked that they are taken into account when organising next year's event.

Chevrons

The chevrons on the B1527 near the bridge had been replaced and roadside marker posts moved to a more effective position.

HPC Newsletter

The Clerk and Mr Bates had drafted and published.

Playingfield hedge cutting

Mr Hook reported that the hedges had been cut.

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Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – for discussion.

Flood Management – contact with Mornigthorpe & Fritton PC

Mr Bates will continue to pursue this via a Morningthorpe & Fritton parish councillor. No feedback received so Mr Bates talk directly to Mr P Rodger.

PB

Road safety in the village – Police in-action

Mr Elliott reported that he had liaised with a safety officer who was stationed at the war memorial. The officer said that he was not catching very many offenders and Mr Elliott pointed out that was because he was stationed at an inappropriate place as vehicles had to slow down for the corner. Mr Elliott had suggested the officer stand in the vision splay at Old Market Way and the officer had agreed to see if this was possible. Mr Elliott to follow up.

RE

It was noted that Richardson's lorries had been observed travelling too fast on Mill Road. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the company's Morningthorpe depot manager to highlight the problem and request they ask drivers to slow down. Mr Delf to supply contact details to the Clerk.

IN
RD

Play area shelter

Mr Delf reported that SNC had informed him that planning permission is not required as it is covered by permitted development by a parish council, however this is to be verified as is the potential rate liability. The cost is currently likely to be in the region of £31,000 plus VAT. This matter was carried forward.

RD

Football pitch static goal

Mr Delf reported that a static goal could be situated in the area between zipwire and the tree plantation and a suitably resilient goal would cost in the region of £300 to £700 + VAT. This could be paid for from CIL funds. Messrs Delf and Hook will meet with Mr Shurmer on site to consider further.

RD/DH

Bus Shelter – Broaden Lane

The Clerk had made arrangements within budget with a supplier and obtained a street furniture licence from NCC. He will submit the grant application later this week in order to meet the deadline.

IN

Footpath Cutting

The Clerk had written to NCC PROW requesting footpaths 6 and 29 be maintained to a higher standard. They responded as follows: *"I'm sorry but I am not going to be able to assist with these requests. Currently the maximum cuts we can provide on paths included in our cutting contract is two per annum (unless they are Trails managed and funded by the Norfolk Trails Team, then they usually receive a third cut). The funding allocated to the annual surface vegetation cutting contract is finite and it would be necessary for a path currently included in the contract to be removed in order to add a different path of similar length."*

Mr Bates volunteered to talk to Mr Rodgers about cutting footpath 29.

PB

Use of footpath (Long Lane) as a bridleway.

Concern was expressed from parishioners about horses using this public footpath as a bridleway. PB volunteered to ask some riders to have consideration and not to churn up the footpath surface.

PB

Correspondence

Items given directly to Councillors or representatives since the last main meeting were:

Various police crime summaries
Various planning applications
Various "solar" emails

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Relevant notices/agenda and minutes
Various SNC Planning Monthly Enforcement Reports
Correspondence from parishioners
Quarterly Police and Crime Commissioner's Newsletter
Notice of Hearings Commencing on 13th January 2026 for the South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan (VCHAP)
MHCLG Consultation on LGR – Norfolk - SNC
Launch of consultation on local government reorganisation in Norfolk – NCC
Norwich to Tilbury - November 2025 Project Update
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Policing and Crime Act 2009 Sex Establishment and Sexual Entertainment Venues Legislation and Policy
Trevor Shurmer's letter to B Goldsborough MP
Information About Works - B1527 Bungay Road, Hempnall – Carriageway Resurfacing Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Norwich to Tilbury Project - Invitation to the preliminary meeting and notification of hearings
East Pye Solar - Parish Councils to create & lead local volunteer groups for next phase - 14th January 2026 @ The Mill, Hempnall
Hempnall - Upcoming Temporary Road Closures of B1527 Bungay Road and C204 Alburgh Road to facilitate resurfacing works by Norfolk County Council (My Ref: STRO13174)
Norwich to Tilbury - January 2026 Project Update

No further matters were raised from the above.

Items placed directly onto the Parish notice boards were:

Relevant notices/agenda

No further matters were raised from the above.

Website &/or Facebook

The following changes had been made since the last main meeting:

Added relevant notices/agenda and minutes.

Added various papers to be tabled at meetings.

No further matters were raised from the above.

Correspondence from Parishioners

Suspicious White Van

The Village Hall committee reported that there is concern that a white van which had been seen looking at properties in Hempnall was also acting very suspiciously in the Village Hall Car Park. The police had requested to view the CCTV of the car park and there was footage of the van with another vehicle passing over something.

Cinema Club

The Village Hall committee reported that if the cinema club continues to attract more customers the Village Hall would consider upgrading the screen and PA system.

Speed reduction – Alburgh Rd

A parishioner had written with concerns about speeding traffic on Alburgh Road and the Clerk had circulated the letter prior to the meeting.

Mr Turner had already reported to the Clerk that the SAM2 unit will be put up in that area as part of the rota and the Clerk had authorised the purchase of another bracket for the unit to assist in this.

Mr Elliott proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk

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contact NCC Highways to request that there be more 40mph repeater signs and that they be the larger size type. The Clerk will also respond to the parishioner

IN

Bus Service to Harleston

The Clerk had circulated requesting a bus service to/from Harleston

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk responded to state that we have in the past tried to get a bus service reinstated but without success as the routes are not profitable. However, we will be contacting Alburgh and Denton PC to see what they are doing regarding the possibility of a service to Harleston. It was noted that there is a Borderhoppa bus service which can be contacted on 01379 854 800 - <http://www.borderhoppa.org/>

IN

Streetlight on cut-through path

A parishioner had written to indicate the streetlight above was on all night. The Clerk had already asked the installers to correct this to dusk to midnight in accordance with our original order and they said they would attend to it this week. The Clerk to inform the parishioner.

IN

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the Clerk ask the supplier if the heads can be altered to go off at 23:00.

IN

Financial Statements

Movements since last meeting

The Clerk presented the financial statement attached to these minutes showing the movements from 14 November 2025 to 16 January 2026. The statement was not materially out of line with the annual budget. Mr Bates proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was unanimously agreed the statement be accepted.

Quarterly Budget Report

The Clerk presented the quarterly budget report showing the movements for the quarter ended 31 December 2025. Mr Delf proposed, Mr Bates seconded and it was unanimously agreed that the statement be approved.

Speedwatch Report

Mr Elliott reported that there had not been any activity due to the weather. There is one new prospective member.

Mr Turner had informed the clerk that he had been in contact with Westcoteck about the data loss issue with the SAM2 units and they had informed him of a possible solution and at the moment that SAM2 is on test at the Mill Centre location.

MT

It was agreed to chase up NCC Highways on their promised safety improvements such as painting slow and speed limit on road. The Clerk to also check conditions re Parish Partnership to see if it covers such expenditure.

IN

IN

Parish Meeting

This will take place at 7pm on 17 March 2026. The Clerk to send out notices and request reports.

IN

Items for next newsletter

The Clerk to draft and publish, when appropriate, articles on the following:

- Precept kept the same

IN

Items for next main meeting

- Parish Meeting

IN

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Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council meetings will take place as follows:

17 February 2026 at 7.00pm in The Mill – planning meeting

17 March 2026 at 7:00pm in The Mill – parish meeting

17 March 2026 at 7:45pm in The Mill - main meeting

IN

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 21:16

Signed _____ Date 17/02/2026

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FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Transactions to 16/01/2026

Current Account

(Payments)/Receipts since last meeting:		£
11/11/2025	NPower - streetlight power	(41.06)
30/11/2025	Ian Nelson Salary	(499.67)
30/11/2025	Ian Nelson use of home as office	(30.00)
28/11/2025	Hinkley Interest - 90 day	153.67
28/11/2025	Hinkley Interest - 45 day	57.57
28/11/2025	Hinkley Interest - Instant	22.89
30/11/2025	Ian Nelson broadband	(4.00)
01/12/2025	VFM - payroll and accounting	(20.56)
03/12/2025	W Walker re visualisations	(200.00)
03/12/2025	Excite Solutions - grass cutting	(136.80)
05/12/2025	D Cracknell - Litter Clearance	(945.00)
05/12/2025	NSIB Interest	227.75
14/12/2025	Delfs Garage - mesh fence	(75.96)
19/12/2025	NPower - streetlight power	(43.64)
20/12/2025	D Hook - Copy Diss - ESP maps	(34.55)
20/12/2025	D Hook Expenses	(45.23)
22/12/2025	Tr BPA to c/a	1,000.00
31/12/2025	Ian Nelson Salary	(499.67)
31/12/2025	Ian Nelson use of home as office	(30.00)
31/12/2025	Ian Nelson broadband	(4.00)
31/12/2025	VFM - payroll and accounting	(20.56)
05/01/2026	NSIB Interest	235.35
22/01/2026	NPower - streetlight power	(46.96)
		<u><u>(980.43)</u></u>
Closing Balance Current A/c		<u><u>1,422.93</u></u>

Business Premium Account

(Payments)/Receipts since last meeting:		£
08/12/2025	BPA interest	197.58
22/12/2025	Tr BPA to c/a	(1,000.00)
		<u><u>(802.42)</u></u>

Closing Balance BPA	<u><u>15,840.89</u></u>
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Investments

NSIB Instant	85,000.00
Hinckley Instant	10,000.00
Hinckley 45 day	20,000.00
Hinckley 90 day	40,000.00
	<u><u>155,000.00</u></u>

Total funds	<u><u>172,263.82</u></u>
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Matters arising awaiting others

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – awaiting others

Policy for use of chemicals

Mr Bates reported he is running a trial at home to determine the best options.

PB

Outside Toilets at recreation ground

Mr Bates had made initial enquiries with the Village Hall Committee who had no objection if the toilets were not attached to the hall. They were prepared to consider use of the hall's utilities to connect the toilet block. The cost of maintaining the toilets was thought to be significant and would need to be quantified before progressing. Given the time required to attend to the EPS issues, it was agreed to postpone further consideration of outside toilets until after the conclusion of the solar planning application.

PB

Football club container

The Clerk had written to the football club explaining that the container is beyond economic repair and needs replacing, asking them if they were minded to raise funds for a replacement. They will consider further and respond in due course. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Himalayan Balsam (“HB”)

The trustees of the Church and Town Estate Property Charity had asked the Parish Council to request other landowners upstream of Krons Meadows remove their HB. It was agreed that the Clerk put an article in the April edition of the newsletter to ask households/landowners along the watercourses to take action. In addition, a leaflet would be prepared and hand delivered to relevant properties at that time.

IN
IN

Harassment

Mr Bates had reported on 21/10/25 that he had been no progress from the police nor the Crime Commissioners. Mr Bates to monitor.

PB

The Mill Solar Panels

The Clerk awaits the Mill's paperwork re the installation of the panels before paying the donation of £5,000.

PB/IN

EPS planning application time limit extension

When the EPS application is issued the Clerk should apply for an extension to the 28 days to respond in order to allow time to consider the vast quantity of papers.

IN

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Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – awaiting NCC

Traffic calming at Broaden Lane

Again, any kind of artificial road narrowing was ruled out by Mr Overland. The extension of the 30mph limit had also previously been ruled out. However, it was agreed that he would ask his team to look at placing a new 30mph reminder in sightline of incoming traffic not far past the bus stop and he would look favourable on the placing of the SAM2 unit on that post in order to catch traffic sooner.

Mr Elliott said that he thought that “Slow” or “30” painted in road and remove the white lines. Mrs Thomas thought she may be able to use some of her highway’s budget to fund small measures like that. The Clerk had asked Mr Overland to consider painting “30” on the road and requested NCC to remove the central white lines on the road after just entering the village from Saxlingham.

IN

Footpath 12 finger post

The Clerk had asked NCC to erect a figure post at the junction of footpath 12 where it turns into a bridleway with one figure pointing to the footpath and another the bridleway. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Nobbs Lane Spur

Mr Hook had submitted the application to NCC, and we have received confirmation of compliance. The Clerk chased 08/07/25 and 14/10/25 and 12/01/2026 – NCC state that they will not even start to look at it until at least July 2026. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

New 30mph sign

The new sign pole and 30mph repeater signs for Broaden Lane have been programmed and will be installed in the next 8 to 10 weeks (by end of September 2025). The Clerk to Monitor.

IN

Flood Barriers

The Clerk had let Mrs Thomas know we would be interested in barriers in future if they were available. Mrs Thomas said that the mobile flood defences are being assessed and if effective she is prepared to use her budget to supply more to help parishes. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Parish Partnership – SAM3 Unit

The Clerk had provided the datasheet to Mr Turner for review.

The Clerk had received support for our application from the county councillor and NCC Highways and submitted a bid for a third SAM unit. We await notification of the outcome in March 2026. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

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HEMPNALL PARISH COUNCIL

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – awaiting SNC

Wheels 4 Less planning issues

Mr Hook had reviewed the various planning consents in detail and listed all the suspected non-compliance issues in a 7-page letter to SNC enforcement officer. The letter was acknowledged, and they intend to carry out a site visit - We await a further response.

IN

Millfields Exception Site

We await the outcome of the survey. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

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