

GREAT MASSINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Great Massingham Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Monday 18th August 2025, at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors, K Hobart (Chair), R Arbenz, K Frazer, P Harries. P James, O Locke, S Nash, M West and the Clerk, Sarah Harvey.

Member of Public: 7

1. The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
2. **Apologies:** it was AGREED to accept apologies for absence from Cllr A Brun.
3. **Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items:** Cllr K Frazer declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 16b.
4. **Minutes**
The minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on the 21st and 31st July 2025 which were circulated before the meeting were PROPOSED by Cllr O Locke, SECONDED by Cllr P Harries and AGREED as a correct record of the proceedings and signed by the Chair, Cllr K Hobart.
5. **To consider the Clerks Report (Matters arising for information only):**
Cllr R Arbenz made reference to the Parish Council minutes of the meeting held on 21st July, specifically agenda item 8b regarding Christmas Lighting. He explained that he had been undertaking the majority of the actions assigned to the working group, in line with its agreed terms of reference. Cllr R Arbenz further observed that the wording of the minutes relating to this item appeared harsh.
6. **Parishioners Questions and Statements:**
A parishioner expressed concern regarding an incident in which two vehicles were seen driving across the village greens, resulting in the death of birds that were clearly visible at the time. The parishioner highlighted this as part of a wider issue, noting that cars were frequently accessing the greens in the vicinity of Scotsman's Pit. It was emphasised that such activity presents a significant safety risk to local wildlife and undermined the protection of these natural areas.
A parishioner presented a historical map of the village centre in order to demonstrate that Scotsman's Pit is not subject to erosion. Instead, the evidence suggested that the area of the Pit has gradually diminished in size over the years.
7. **To receive reports from the County and Borough Councillors:** no reports were received.
8. **Working Group Updates**
 - a. **Biodiversity Policy & Action Plan – to receive an update and approve recommendations:**
Cllr O Locke advised that at the present time there was no further update.
Cllr K Frazer enquired, in anticipation of possible questions from parishioners, when the vegetation surrounding the ponds was scheduled to be cut back. It was confirmed that maintenance work would commence in early autumn. Cllr S. Nash further reported that a number of complaints had already been received regarding the overgrown vegetation around the Post Office Pit. Following discussion, it was proposed that the matter of clearance works at the Post Office Pit be included as an agenda item for the next Parish Council meeting.
 - b. **Christmas Lighting – to receive an update and approve recommendations:** Cllr R Arbenz reported that himself and Cllr A Brun had met with representatives from Cozens UK Ltd and King's & Barnhams to discuss and finalise plans for the provision of Christmas lights and their power supply. Two quotations were subsequently received, both based on an identical specification, with power to be sourced from the Pub and fitted with appropriate protection. It was further agreed that battery-operated lights would not be considered for this year's installation, though they may be reviewed as an option in future years. Following consideration of the quotations, Cozens UK Ltd was selected as the supplier. Their quotation totalled £3,132 including VAT, covering the supply and installation of 35 sets of low-voltage warm white LED lights, along with the catenary wire and electrical connection to the external socket at the Dabbling Duck.
It was resolved to accept the quotation from Cozens UK Ltd (QU-0866) at a total cost of £3,132 including VAT.
Cllr R Arbenz was formally thanked by the Council for the time and effort he has dedicated to progressing the Christmas Lighting project.

- c. **Play Area – to receive an update and approve recommendations:** the Access Plan and the Carbon Savings Plan (as circulated) were presented to the Council for consideration. It was noted that the adoption of these two policies is a specific requirement for securing National Lottery funding.

It was RESOLVED, with Cllr S Nash abstaining:

- To adopt the Access Plan as presented.
- To adopt the Carbon Savings Plan as presented.

Cllr P Harries provided an update on current funding applications. Submissions had been made to the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), the Awards for All programme, and to the FCC Communities Foundation (with a November deadline). It was noted that the FCC application required a Contributing Third Party (CTP) contribution of £10,750. To date, pledges of £1,000 had been received from the Village Stores and the Cart Shed Tea Rooms, leaving a balance of £9,750 to raise locally.

It was further RESOLVED that a fundraising village fete be organised for Sunday 12th October at the Village Hall, with proceeds directed to the playground project fund.

In addition, recommendations will shortly be brought forward regarding a School Engagement Plan. This would involve establishing contact with the local school to seek their input and ideas in relation to the project and obtaining letters of support. Cllrs M West and K Frazer AGREED to liaise with the school on behalf of the Parish Council.

9. Finance

- a. **To note accounts for payment under the Late Payments Interest Act (1998):**

Great Massingham Village Hall (Grant, Car Park Resurfacing)	1000.00	BACS
Minuteman Press (550 A5 Parish Magazines (June 2025)	162.00	BACS
Mrs Julia R Lodge (Delivery of May Mallard)	60.00	BACS

- b. **To approve the accounts for payment (list at meeting).**

Scottish Hydro (Street Lighting, June Account)	683.20	BACS
Cozens (UK) Ltd, Street Lighting Maintenance (July 2025)	54.00	BACS
E.Edgley (Mud Magnet – Cleaning of Play Area Equipment, 22 nd July)	160.00	BACS
Glasdon Uk Ltd (2 x Dog Waste Bins + Fixings)	406.51	BACS
Greenbarnes Ltd (2 x Noticeboards)	2,628.13	BACS
HHA Grounds Maintenance Ltd (Grass Cutting July 2025)	831.60	BACS
Hayes & Storr Solicitors (Village Greens, Weasenham Rd)	768.00	BACS
S Harvey (Mindray MR62 Electrode Pads for Defibrillator)	74.59	BACS
Clerk's Salary & Expenses (21 st July to 17 th August)	886.72	BACS
HMRC (Income Tax Payment)	34.20	BACS

It was PROPOSED by Cllr O. Locke, SECONDED by Cllr R. Arbenz, and unanimously AGREED that all payments as presented be authorised. The Clerk further advised that, in addition to these payments, two internal transfers would be arranged in respect of the noticeboards and legal fees. These transfers would enable the relevant sums to be drawn from earmarked reserves, thereby ensuring that the associated costs are met from the funds previously allocated for these specific purposes.

- c. **To note the finance received during July 2025:**

Fishing Receipts	100.50
NCC Parish Partnership Scheme 2025/26 Refund	3,175.00
NCC Parish Partnership Scheme 2024/25 Refund	510.93
The Mallard Accounts (Interest accrual)	0.91

- d. **To approve the July 2025 financial statement:** it was PROPOSED by Cllr R Arbenz, SECONDED by Cllr P James and AGREED that the financial statement for July 2025, should be approved and signed by the Chair.

- e. **To note the July 2025 Budget vs Actual Financial Review:** the Council noted the Budget vs Actual Financial Review for July 2025. No concerns were raised, and the figures were reviewed as presented.

- f. **To note the Local Government Pay Scales increase with effect from 1 April 2025 and the increase in the Clerk's Salary from £15.84 per hour to £16.35 per hour at 8 hours per week:** It was RESOLVED to implement this adjustment in line with the nationally agreed pay scales, and that the revised salary be backdated to 1st April 2025.

10. General Data Protection Regulations

- a. **To note data protection advice for Councillors:** an advice note was provided to all Councillors outlining their responsibilities to ensure that individual's personal data whether it is stored electronically or as a hard copy is protected.
- b. **To review and adopt a General Data Protection Policy:** the Council noted that the draft policy set out the requirements for the Parish Council to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. Following consideration, it was AGREED that the reviewed policy be adopted. It was further agreed that the adopted policy would be published on the Parish Council website for public reference.
- c. **To review and approve a GDPR Privacy Statement:** the Council reviewed the draft GDPR Privacy Statement. It was noted that the statement clearly set out for members of the public how the Parish Council may collect, hold, and use personal data in accordance with statutory requirements. Following consideration, it was AGREED that the Privacy Statement be approved and that it be published on the Parish Council website for public reference.
- d. **To review and approve the Information Audit:** the Council noted the requirement to undertake an Information Audit, setting out the personal data held by the Parish Council, its source, the purpose for which it is retained, and details of any parties with whom the information may be shared. Following consideration, it was AGREED that the Information Audit be approved and that it be published on the Parish Council website for public reference.

11. Planning Matters

- a. **To consider Planning Applications received:** None.
- b. **To consider plans since publication of agenda:** None.
- c. **Applications approved/refused by Borough Planning Control:** None.
- d. **Neighbourhood Development Plan: to receive a progress update:** it was reported that in April 2025 the Government announced that no further grant funding would be made available for the development of Neighbourhood Plans. In order to ensure that progress on the Parish's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) could continue, the Steering Group requested financial support from the Parish Council.
Following consideration, it was PROPOSED by Cllr K Frazer, SECONDED by Cllr P Harries and AGREED (with Cllr S Nash abstaining) to provide this support. For the financial year 2025/26, funding of £1,900 would be allocated to cover:
 - Specialist consultancy from Collective Community Planning to review progress to date and advise on next steps.
 - Printing, hall hire, and other costs associated with consultation activities.It was noted that further financial support may be required in 2026/27 to meet the costs of technical advice, future consultation exercises, and the referendum process.
The Parish Council would review the likely funding requirements for 2026/27 as the NDP progresses, with updates to be brought back to Council in due course.

12. Highways

- a. **To note highway matters requiring attention and to receive any updates:**
Overgrown Private Hedges – Impact on Pedestrians and Road Users: it was AGREED that letters be sent to two specific property owners where hedgerows are obstructing visibility at junctions. In addition, a general reminder regarding hedge maintenance will be circulated to all residents in The Mallard.
Concerns were raised regarding potholes around the Weasenham Road/Sandy Lane junction. These had been marked for action by Highways a considerable time ago but were still to be attended to.
It was reported that reflective bollards on Abbey Road, dislodged by a vehicle, and a blocked road drain on Weasenham Road have been reported to Highways.
Updates were provided on ongoing matters: costs had been requested from Highways for the proposed roundels at Weasenham Road and Castle Acre Road, for the installation of "Caution – Pedestrians in Road" signs along Castle Acre Road, and for replacing reflective bollards on Abbey Road with wooden bollards. Responses were expected in September.
- b. **To consider potential bids to the NCC Parish Partnership Scheme 2026/27:** the Council received details of the proposed scheme. It was suggested that, should the Council wish to proceed, an application for external funding be considered to help offset the cost of installing new

wooden bollards at Abbey Road and, if viable, the provision of a new pedestrian warning sign on Castle Acre Road.

c. **To consider an upgrade to the SAM2 Sign to allow for data transfer via Bluetooth:**

Cllr P. James reported that he had been unable to download data manually from the new SAM2 sign, as no connection lead had been supplied and the unit was not Bluetooth enabled. The Council noted that the cost to upgrade the sign with Bluetooth capability would be £575.00 + VAT, plus £55.00 + VAT carriage.

It was AGREED to make enquiries with Westcotec Ltd as to why the sign had been supplied without the facility for manual data download. An update on this matter will be brought to the September meeting.

d. **To receive a summary of recent Speed watch activity and note the latest SAM2 traffic monitoring data:** Cllr P James provided a summary of recent Speed Watch activity and reported on the latest data obtained from the SAM2 sign. Members were advised that the full traffic monitoring data is available to view on the Parish Council website.

13. **Street Lighting**

- a. **To receive reports of any lighting problems:** it was noted that streetlights 9003, o/s 84 Station Road and 9024 – next to 46B Station Road had been reported as requiring attention prior to the meeting. It was noted that the streetlight outside 51/53 Castle Acre Road was not working.

14. **Correspondence**

- a. **Email from Parishioner, Wildlife and Safety concerns on Village Greens:** both the contents of the email and the Clerk's response to the parishioner were noted. It was noted that the wider issue of how the village greens were used required a more detailed review to ensure compliance with current legislation and relevant guidance. It was therefore agreed that a full discussion on this topic be included on the agenda for the September meeting.
- b. **Email from Member of the Public, Scotsman's Pit:** both the contents of the email and the Clerk's response to the parishioner were noted.
- c. **BCKLWN, Local Government Reorganisation Briefings:** noted.
- d. **Email from Parishioner, Parking on the Village Sign Green:** noted.
- e. **Email from Parishioner, Village Green Parking:** noted.

The Clerk advised that confirmation had been received from Norfolk County Council that the village greens in question were officially registered as such. It was noted that a clear policy for the future use and management of the greens should be developed to ensure compliance with legislation, incorporate professional guidance, and protect these community assets. Similar policies adopted by other parish councils were referenced as good practice.

It was resolved that this matter be included on the agenda for the September meeting and that a draft proposal be prepared for consideration.

- f. **Great Massingham Anglers, Scotsman's Pit:** both the contents of the email and the Clerk's response to the parishioner were noted.

15. **Open Spaces**

- a. **To receive an update on the boundary agreement at Weasenham Road and to consider and approve the associated surveyor costs together with the anticipated additional internal costs required to progress the matter:** The Council was advised that the property owners had been cooperative and had provided copies of their title register to assist with progressing the matter. Two surveyor quotations had been received:

- Purslows Building Surveyors: £500–£705 + VAT
- Brown & Co: £4,000–£5,000 + VAT

A further quotation from Topographica Ltd had been awaited; however, following consideration of the quotations received, the Council AGREED to appoint Purslows Building Surveyors to carry out the survey work.

It was noted that an invoice has been issued from Hayes & Storr for work completed to date, totalling £626 + VAT plus small disbursements, which remained within the previously approved budget of £800 + VAT. Additional internal costs were anticipated at approximately £500 + VAT to cover the instructing and liaising with the appointed surveyor, reviewing their report, and reporting back to Council. These additional costs were APPROVED. Provided no further objections were raised by neighbouring parties, the matter was expected to then proceed to the property department for completion of the first registration application.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr K Hobart, SECONDED by Cllr R Arbenz and RESOLVED (with Cllr S Nash abstaining):

- To appoint Purslows Building Surveyors to report on the true boundary line at Weasenham Road.
- To approve the additional internal costs of approximately £500 + VAT in order to progress the matter, in addition to the expenditure already incurred of £626 + VAT (within the previously agreed budget).

b. **To review and approve the draft licence agreement for parking at 9 Rectory Row:**

The draft licence agreement for parking at 9 Rectory Row was reviewed by the Council. Following consideration, it was AGREED that the draft licence be approved in principle.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr K Frazer, SECONDED by Cllr K Hobart and resolved (with Cllr O Locke objecting):

- To circulate the draft licence to the property owners for their review and feedback.
- That, once all comments have been received and any necessary amendments made, the document be finalised to ensure it is ready for formal approval and signing.

16. Ponds/Village Greens

- a. **Scotsman's Pit: To consider any further information, actions and updates:** it was noted that a branch had broken off and was currently lodged within the upper foliage of the Ash tree at the north-west corner. The branch was positioned over the water and did not appear to present an immediate hazard; however, Robert Miller was informed on 12th August and had been asked to arrange for the branch to be safely removed at a convenient time to prevent any potential future issues.

Cllr K Hobart noted that he had requested that Houghton Estate undertake an annual inspection of the trees in the autumn, as per the management agreement.

b. **To review the current fishing signage around Scotsman's Pit:**

Cllr R Arbenz proposed that vegetation on the property side of Scotsman's Pit should be cut back and cleared to the existing fence line, that three swims be reinstated, and that vegetation and trees on the north side of the Pit should also be cleared.

Cllr K Frazer requested that the property owners of 49, 51, and 53 Station Road be informed of the planned works and that the works be carried out sensitively and in partnership with those owners. Following discussion, it was AGREED—proposed by Cllr R Arbenz, seconded by Cllr O Locke, with Cllr K. Frazer abstaining—that the review of signage be deferred until the costs of the proposed works had been identified.

It was RESOLVED:

1. That Cllrs K Hobart and R Arbenz prepare a specification for the proposed works in order to obtain quotations.
2. That Cllr K Hobart liaise with Robert Miller to explore any works that could be undertaken by Houghton Estate at Scotsman's Pit.

It was AGREED that Standing Orders be suspended (9.30pm).

17. Play Area

- a. **To note any issues arising from the Play Area weekly visual inspections:** no issues noted.

b. **To consider and approve the cost to replace the swing unit for the single point swing:**

The Council considered the quotations received for the replacement of the single point nest swing seat at the playground. Following review, it was AGREED to appoint Online Playgrounds to carry out the works in accordance with their quotation, at a total cost of £1,773.60 including VAT.

It was noted that a total of £1,807.45 has been ringfenced in the budget for improvements to the play area, which may be applied towards the cost of this replacement equipment.

It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation from OLP and to proceed with the works as specified.

c. **To note and consider costs for a larger litter bin at the Play Area:**

The Council noted the costs for providing a larger litter bin at the play area. Options considered included wheelie bin covers, similar to those used on the village green, with prices starting from £499.99 for sizes ranging from 120L to 360L. It was reported that the estimated cost for a 240L bin would be just under £700

It was PROPOSED by Cllr P Harries, SECONDED by Cllr O Locke and AGREED that provision of a larger bin should form part of the costs for the new under 5's scheme for the Play Area project.

18. **To note reports of any village incidents:** it was noted that the defibrillator located at The Dabbling Duck had recently been used in response to a cardiac arrest. The incident was also attended by the air ambulance.
19. **To propose items for the Mallard and Parish Council website:** Play Area Project & Hedging.
20. **To note the date of the next Parish Council Meeting** – Monday 15th September at 7.30 p.m.

With no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.50 pm.

..... Chairman, 15th September, 2025

THESE MINUTES ARE UNCONFIRMED UNTIL APPROVED BY FULL COUNCIL