



WOODNEWTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 1st September 2025, 8.00pm, Village Hall

(DRAFT) MINUTES

Present: Cllr Blackmore (Chairman), Cllr Neville (Vice Chairman), Cllr Phythian, Cllr Guttridge, Cllr Brookes. Cllr Kiesel, Amy Miller (Clerk and RFO) and 4 members of the public.

1. Declarations of Interests from Councillors

None

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Swallow

3. Public Time

Four members of the public attended. Two residents were concerned with the safety of the three large conifers, on the edge of the allotments, for the surrounding neighbours. The Parish Council notes this and has asked for an agenda item for the next meeting to formalise a tree audit within the village.

One resident noted that over the years a gate into the allotments had deteriorated and was no longer there and wondered if that encouraged dogs on to the allotments leaving dog waste behind. It was pointed out all dogs should be on a lead in this, and the playing field area, and that a sign near the gateway should be placed to remind people of their dog responsibilities.

Two residents wished to champion artists within the village through possible workshops and collaborations and were looking for support from the Parish Council. It was agreed that a working party would need to be formed within the artists community so a more detailed plan could be presented to the Parish Council in the form of what support may be required and the potential appetite for such an initiative in the village.

4. Minutes of Meeting Held on 7th July 2025.

Having been previously circulated, were **AGREED** and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5. Church Yard and Cemetery (Cllr Phythian)

It was agreed that previous discussions held regarding the safety of headstones in the church yard needed more traction and a headstone audit would form part of the village clean up day, this would be led by the clerk who would record any issues to be addressed on a future agenda.

The final cut and raking of the rewilding areas in both the church yard and cemetery were discussed, it was **RESOLVED** that the contractors would be notified to carry out the works, soonest.

It was **AGREED**, to keep costs down and due to issues with mixed waste being left in the bin, that the brown bin would be removed from the cemetery, leaving the black and green ones for use.

6. Speeding in and through the Village

All vehicle activated signs are working well – no further update.

7. Playing Fields/Playground

(a) The annual playground inspection had been carried out by RoSPA in June and Cllr Guttridge's monthly report reiterated these issues with an update on works that would be carried out to address them before the weather deteriorates. A number of minor repairs had already been carried out in August and Cllr Blackmore had contacted Wicksteed re costs for new components including plugs and bolt caps, rubber seat assembly for the zip wire, fittings for the swings and a cross beam for the "pick up sticks" climbing unit which had decayed and split. The original beam has been removed for safety until a replacement has been sourced and installed.

It was also recommended that the tyres were removed from the aerial slide, repairs made to a number of areas of safety matting and potential finger entrapment points were filled, these were all identified in the ROSPA report and would be incorporated into the work to be done at the next village clean-up day. It was estimated there was circa £500 of works to carry out.

(b) It was agreed that once the latest repairs are completed there would be a feature article in village newsletter to update residents on the significant amount of work carried out all year round (mainly by volunteers) to maintain our very popular play area.

8. Planning

(a) NE/25/00795/FUL – The Oak Barn, Woodnewton Road, Fotheringhay – One and a half storey extension to barn conversion – No comment

(b) NE/24/01000/FUL – The Old Smithy Pound Lane – Planning Appeal – Appeal Dismissed

9. Accounts

As at 31/08/2025 the bank balance stood at £32,265.00

The following payments were **AGREED** and signed off

Clerk Salary (July)	£553.28
Clerk Salary (August)	£553.28
NCALC training	£63.60
RJC grass cutting (IV5020)	£276.00
HJ Horticulture	£2,930.67
SSE DD	£94.96
HMRC DD	£61.30
Co-Op CC	£105.98
Wave (allotment water) DD	£174.99

The following remittances were **NOTED**:

10. Financial Quarterly Reconciliation

Having been previously circulated and with oversight from Cllr Guttridge the first quarter's reconciliation was **REVIEWED** and **APPROVED**. Budget to actual were on target and no further questions were raised.

11. Allotments (Cllr Brookes)

Following the issues raised at the last meeting regarding deer damage, the following costs were discussed.

For the Orchard: tree guards and posts to deter deer damage came in at circa £461. It was noted that the 6 trees were in good health, 4 had died and 5 were struggling. It is difficult to determine if the cause is due to deer damage or the incredibly dry spell that has been problematic for trees nationally, or a combination of both.

The cost of deer fence protection for the allotments requiring about a 435m circumference was circa £3,200 using metal deer fence but if plastic deer mesh (1.8m high) was used, at £150 per 100m and £5.80 per post, circa £2,200 to fence off the allotment area excluding the cost of access gates etc.

Another suggestion, to keep the costs more manageable, was to use plastic deer mesh fencing along the back of the allotments, playing fields and the first few meters of Ashby's Drive circa 123m at a cost of around £750, then to naturally fill gaps with tree saplings; there are no gate requirements for this option.

Any deer fencing erected would be on the understanding that the allotment community would volunteer their services to knock in posts and erect the fencing. This would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

With regards to trimmer guards on the play equipment Cllr Guttridge will check the number and diameter needed. It was assumed plastic composite would be sufficient. Following a lengthy discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the allotment rents would be increased for the year commencing 1st October, to £22. This is to help cover the increasing water costs as the price per cubic meter has increased from £1.9334 to £2.5227 this financial year and usage has increased due to the prolonged dry weather.

12. Village Maintenance (Cllr Swallow)

The bonfire site was discussed. The clerk had met with a resident for advice on the easiest and most cost-effective way to deal with the bonfire remnants. It was **RESOLVED** the best course of action was to trim and clear the site, then level the remnants. One of the first jobs on clean-up day would be to pick the rubbish (bed springs, beer bottles) from the levelled site prior to its 2025 opening.

A **REMINDER** that the village clean up date is 18th October, 10am.

13. The Village Pound

Having successfully registered the Parish Council's ownership of the allotments and playing fields on the Land Registry, it was **DISCUSSED** whether we should do likewise for the Village Pound. It was **AGREED** the clerk should seek further advice.

14. The Northants CALC CAN: Climate and Nature Scheme

The Scheme acts as the council's key point of contact and advocate for environmental sustainability, biodiversity, and climate resilience. It is a voluntary role supporting the council in identifying, promoting, and coordinating local action on climate and nature. After **DISCUSSION** Cllr Blackmore formally nominated Cllr Pythian, seconded by Cllr Neville and agreed by all, Cllr Pythian accepted. Further discussion was held about how this role would shape and be communicated to residents. Cllr Pythian hopes to include an article in the village newsletter around the role soon.

15. Ongoing

A rolling agenda item to **CONSIDER** which topics should be included on future agendas, discussed when relevant. This will be titled "rolling agenda items" to ensure items are remembered, although they may not be addressed at every meeting.

- (a) Village Information Boards
- (b) Continuing support of biodiversity projects and schemes
- (c) Children's tree planting scheme
- (d) Refurbishment\replacement of the village hall notice board- Cllr Kisiel to investigate costs for a new notice board and possible sources of funding.
- (e) Newsletter updates – ongoing CAN role article

16. Correspondence

- (a) Confirmation and notification of exemption from the external auditor.
- (b) City Fibre response – ongoing
- (c) Request from North Northants SEND Information Advice Support Service to attend a meeting – possible for Annual Parish Meeting? (21/08/2025)

17. Councillors' Opportunity to Update Colleagues

Cllr Kisiel updated on the PLR and said out of all communication received there was nothing of note.

18. Woodnewton Newsletter

It was agreed the next Newsletter feature would update residents on works being done to the play area.

19. Date of next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Monday 6th October 8.00pm.

20. Close of Meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 22.04

Chairman's Signature.....

Date 6st October 2025

Prepared by Amy Miller Clerk and RFO

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6th September 2025