



WOODNEWTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 7th September 2026, 8pm, Village Hall

(DRAFT) MINUTES

Present: Cllr Blackmore (Chairman) Cllr Phythian, Cllr Kisiel, Cllr Guttridge, Cllr Brookes and Amy Miller (Clerk and RFO)

1. Declarations of Interests from Councillors

None

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Neville and Cllr Swallow

3. Public Time

Eleven residents attended the meeting. The majority wished to discuss the proposed NNC/Connected Kerb EV charging partnership, which had also been discussed at the previous Parish Council meeting on 6 July. It was noted that, at that meeting, no formal Parish Council response had been made, as the Parish Council had not been formally consulted by North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) and the public consultation process was being managed by NNC.

Residents raised a number of concerns regarding the proposed locations for EV charging infrastructure, including the following:

- **Pavement width and accessibility:** Concerns were raised regarding the available pavement width at the proposed Orchard Lane location. A resident with significant mobility difficulties lives close to the proposed site, and it was noted that the existing pavement is already restricted, with a width of approximately 1.6 metres at its widest point. Concerns were expressed as to whether the proposed arrangement would provide sufficient space to meet accessibility requirements and maintain appropriate pedestrian and disabled-user access.
- **Road safety:** The proposed Orchard Lane location is situated on a blind bend in the road, in an area where a serious three-vehicle collision has previously occurred. Residents also noted that the road is regularly used by large agricultural vehicles, which already have to negotiate parked vehicles and may consequently need to move towards the centre of the carriageway. Concerns were therefore raised that the introduction of a charging bay could result in additional vehicle movements and parking at a location where visibility is already restricted.
- **Historic environment:** The proposed location on Main Street is immediately adjacent to St Mary's Church, a Grade II listed building. Residents expressed concern that Woodnewton has a particularly sensitive historic character and that the setting of the church forms an important part of the village environment.
- **Evidence of local demand:** Questions were raised as to whether there is sufficient evidence of local demand to justify the provision of public kerbside charging infrastructure in Woodnewton. Residents noted that the stated objective of the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) programme is to provide kerbside charging in rural areas where a significant proportion of households do not have access to off-street parking. Based on the 2021 Census, Woodnewton has approximately 195 dwellings. Residents questioned whether the proportion of households without access to a driveway or off-road parking in Woodnewton was sufficient to support

the proposed infrastructure and expressed the view that the actual proportion appeared to be significantly lower than the general assumptions applied to rural areas.

- **Local charging requirements:** Residents expressed the view that there appeared to be limited local demand for the proposed charging facilities, particularly given the prevalence of off-street parking within the village. It was noted that residents with off-street parking are generally able to install charging facilities at their properties, potentially providing faster and more cost-effective charging. Residents also noted that faster public charging facilities are available locally, including at Warmington and Peterborough Services on the A605.
- **Consultation process:** The consultation process was raised as a significant concern. Residents expressed disappointment that the Parish Council had not been consulted directly and that some residents felt they had been insufficiently consulted. Several residents reported difficulties in responding to the consultation, including not receiving the consultation postcard and, where postcards had been received, experiencing difficulties with the format of the consultation questions and being unable to provide responses outside the prescribed questions. Residents expressed frustration that they had been unable to fully articulate their views or concerns.

The Parish Council noted the concerns raised by residents and agreed that these would be taken into consideration when writing a formal response to the proposed EV charging scheme.

Bonfire Site

Several residents expressed concern and disappointment regarding the permanent closure of the village bonfire site, which has been the subject of discussion over a number of months.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted a number of neighbouring Parish Councils to establish how similar facilities are managed locally. Responses received, including from some of the larger local parishes, indicated that Parish Councils generally do not directly oversee or manage such facilities. However, examples were identified where similar facilities are managed by the local church or by a separate committee or community working group, which assumes responsibility for the management and subsequent clearance of the site.

Allotment Measurement

A resident asked when the formal measurement of the allotment plots would be undertaken, noting that this matter had been raised previously and appeared not to have been prioritised. The Parish Council noted the query and agreed that the matter would be addressed in due course.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 6th July 2026.

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

5. Matters arising from Previous Minutes (not covered elsewhere on Agenda)

None.

6. Church Yard and Cemetery (Cllr Phythian)

It was noted that unauthorised works were being carried out on areas managed by the Parish Council. Concerns were raised regarding the Parish Council's duty of care, the need to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place, and the potential implications for the Parish Council's insurance arrangements in the event of an incident arising from such unauthorised works. It was agreed that the matter would be revisited as an agenda item at the next Parish Council meeting to formally address this matter.

It was **RESOLVED** to liaise with Crowson's regarding the remedial works required to a particular grave within the cemetery. As Crowson's would already be attending the cemetery, it was agreed that the necessary works would be undertaken at that time and that Crowson's would invoice the Parish Council directly for the works carried out.

7. Vehicle Activated Speed Signs (Cllr Kisiel)

All vehicle activated signs are working well.

8. Playing Fields/Playground

(a) There was no playground check report this month.

(b) A brief discussion took place regarding remedial works required to the play area, in particular the trip hazards caused by sections of the safety surfacing around the slide becoming loose and lifting. An indicative cost of replacing the affected area, approximately 50m², could be in the region of £7,000–£11,000. This would include the removal of the existing surface, subject to the underlying concrete base being suitable for reuse and bringing the area up to current safety standards. This may require an increased depth of safety surfacing and the installation of a higher concrete retaining edge. It was suggested that alternative, more cost-effective options could be explored, including the availability of grant funding or the involvement of volunteers to remove, clean and reinstate the existing surface, subject to the work being suitable and compliant with relevant safety requirements. It was noted that the relevant play equipment would need to be securely cordoned off and prevented from use while any remedial works were being undertaken.

9. CAN (Climate and Nature Champion)

No update

10. Planning

No planning applications were received.

11. Accounts

As at 31/08/2026 the bank balance stood at £32,605.00

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

Clerk Salary (July)	£587.20
Clerk Salary (August)	£587.20
SSE DD (June usage)	£72.20
SSE DD (July usage)	£76.74
Robinsons Gardening (1481)	£235.00
VH hire	£21.00
H J Horticulture	£2,946.67
Allotment taps	£18.98
Wave Allotment water	£138.69
Village Notice Board	£1,320.00

To **Note** the following remittances:

VH rental	£5.00
Woodnewton Players Rent	£12.00

12. Quarterly Financial Review

Having been previously circulated and signed off by Cllr Guttridge the quarterly reconciliation and budget to actual update for the first quarter April - June 2026 was **REVIEWED** and **APPROVED**.

13. Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (29/05/26)

The project partnership between NNC and Connected Kerb to install a network of EV charge points of which four sites were noted in Woodnewton was discussed extensively in Public Time and the resident's responses noted above.

The Parish Council agreed to assimilate a letter voicing all residents views and requesting further information regarding the planning and consultation process. This

letter would then be sent to Sarah Naylor (Service Manager Digital Infrastructure) of the EV team, the local MP, Cllr Fairhall, Connected Kerb CEO and the Chief Exec of NNC.
Copy of the letter to follow.

14. Street Lighting Electricity Contract

Following the clerk sourcing three quotes pending the expiration of the current contract it was **RESOLVED** to accept the VALDA quote which was the cheapest and a fix for the next three years at £996.35 pa compared to our current contract of £1028.16 commencing 01/11/26.

15. Village WhatsApp Group

The Parish Council discussed and **RESOLVED** the use of WhatsApp as an additional means of disseminating information to residents, subject to the adoption of a suitable policy governing its use. It was noted that WhatsApp communication would be supplementary to, and would not replace, the Parish Council's statutory obligations relating to the publication of agendas, notices of meetings, minutes and other information required by legislation.

16. Village Hall Noticeboard (Cllr Kisiel)

The new noticeboard has arrived and when the ground becomes softer the installation team will be engaged, this is expected to be a Village Clean Up day task.

17. Allotments (Cllr Brookes)

Previously obtained costings for works to the Coronation Fruit Orchard, estimated at approximately £1,200, were discussed. The Parish Council confirmed that it was prepared to fund the proposed works, while also considering whether grant funding could be sought to enable additional improvements to be undertaken.

A dead-hedging and ecological approach was discussed as a potential option. This would provide an opportunity to utilise some of the garden waste generated from the forthcoming clean-up day and on an ongoing basis, while also helping to protect the orchard from deer.

If successful, the approach could then subsequently be extended to other Parish Council-managed areas such as the allotments, to assist in protecting these areas from deer damage. Cllr Guttridge volunteered a quantity of willow stems which could be utilised as stakes for the dead hedge and, subject to suitable growth, could subsequently develop into a living hedge.

It was **AGREED** unanimously to maintain the allotment rents at £22 per plot for the forthcoming year. This decision will be formally ratified at the next Parish Council meeting.

18. Village Maintenance (Cllr Swallow)

A date was discussed and agreed for the Autumn Village Clean Up day to be held October 17th, 10am at the Village Hall.

19. 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) Children's tree planting scheme
- (c) Neighbourhood Plan\consultation on the local plan from Feb 2026 (expected 2028)
- (d) Newsletter articles.

20. Correspondence

- (a) EV charging currently not progressing with sites in Woodnewton
- (b) Next PC cluster meeting 28th Sep 2026
- (c) Various correspondence re AGAR going digital from next year

(d) A resident expressed concerns over the dry rewilding areas in the church yard and potential fire risks – this was cut late August.

(e) Lee Barron MP re emails and enquiries being unanswered by NNC, potential escalation routes and the Local Government Ombudsman and the drive towards own correspondence portal. Clerk to offer the support of Woodnewton PC.

21. Councillors' Opportunity to Update Colleagues

Cllr Blackmore proposed the usage of a new coded padlock for the gates to the allotments.

22. Woodnewton Newsletter

It was agreed the next Newsletter feature be a flyer advertising the next Village Clean Up Day to be held 10am October 17th, meeting at the Village Hall.

23. Date of next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Monday 5th October 2026.

24. Close of Meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21.45

Chairman's Signature.....

Date 5th October 2026

Prepared by Amy Miller Clerk and RFO

E-mail: clerk@woodnewtonparish.gov.uk

Telephone 07767 308859

23rd September 2026