

Blofield Parish Council

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 20th April 2026 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

PRESENT

Stuart Smith (Chair), Sarah Dhesi (Vice-Chair), Stella Shackle, Joseph Scholes, Yvonne Burton, Will Crane and Paul Newstead, Eleanor Bannister (Clerk) and Sarah Osbaldeston (Clerk)

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE MEETING BY THE CHAIR

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Paul Culley-Barber. These apologies were accepted by the Council.

3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Will Crane declared an interest in Blofield Preschool.

4. OPEN FORUM – FOR PARISHIONERS TO RAISE QUESTIONS ON AND/OR MAKE STATEMENTS ABOUT MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AND TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Three parishioners were present. County Cllr Andrew Proctor sent apologies. District Councillor Paul Newstead was also present. *Dist. Cllr. Paul Newman gave a brief update on the Local Government Reorganisation and related costs.* A parishioner raised concerns again on speeding on The Street and requested speed tubes to collect data, as suggested by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

[ITEM 21 was discussed at this point.]

A parishioner raised multiple concerns regarding planning application 2025/3580, 24 Yarmouth Road. The Chair of Margaret Harker Hall attended and shared concerns raised regarding bad language on the football pitch adjacent to the MHH play area. She advised that the hall has now been painted and provided an update on various MHH plans.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16th MARCH 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

6. TO REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA

FP4 adjoining permissive footpath – a lease has been received from NCC Property Services for the Parish Council to review and approve. The County Footpath Officer has commented on the lease and the Council unanimously resolved to approve the Clerks (EB & SO) progress and complete the lease while requesting a longer term of 10 years if possible.

Bus Shelter repairs and improvements - Clerk (EB) has arranged for the reroofing of the Blofield Shelter to take place in early May and the painting will follow afterwards.

A new bin post is required for the dog waste bin on the Danesbower Lane/Yarmouth Road junction. Clerk (EB) to action. Clerk (SO) to order lifebuoy for the Town Pit. Clerk (EB) to discuss lifebuoy location at bridge between Marty's Marsh and Cremer's Meadow with Brundall PC.

7. PLANNING

Application: 2026/0622 (relates to 2024/2451)

Proposal: Approval of reserved matters for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (plot 3- self build) following outline approval 2024/2451

Location: Land West Of Woodbastwick Road Blofield Norfolk.

At the meeting, the Parish Council agreed to submit the following comments and it requests more information to comment on as it agreed there was insufficient detail on which to comment.

- a) **Parking** - As this is a 5-bed dwelling, is there sufficient capacity to provide car parking spaces for 4 cars where they can exit onto the highway in a forward gear? (Blofield NP HOU 5)
- b) There appears to be **no reference to the existing Trod** which fronts the current land.
- c) **Scale** - Without measurements the Parish Council cannot tell if the height and massing is out of character for the surrounding area. (Initial indications would appear to suggest it could be imposing.)
- d) **Lack of any form of hedging** which is referenced in the Blofield Neighbourhood Plan under the Environment section. The Parish Council would welcome revisions to **include native hedging at the front to offset** the loss of the mature and species-rich hedging that has been removed.
- e) Outline planning conditions mentioned location of **at least one bird or bat box per dwelling**. This is not immediately visible on proposal; the Parish Council requests inclusion.
- f) Outline planning scale of each building - **no scale provided** that is accessible/easy to apply. The Parish Council requests clarity and confirmation in relation to the **main material intended for construction**.
- g) Outline planning – references to various points including: **Drainage, trod, 30MPH speed limit, water consumption of 105 litres per person per day, location of air source heat pumps, offsite highway works, constructors car park - but where can the detail be checked?**

Application: 2026/0823

Proposal: Approval of reserved matters for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following outline permission 20211844

Location: Land South Of Newstead Gardens Blofield Norfolk

The Parish Council agreed to submit the following comments on this application.

- a) *The Council is concerned it does not comply with the Blofield NP HOU 5 - Car Parking spaces, and this will result in a very cramped development in relation to parking.*
Blofield NP HOU5 states:
 - 1 bedroom * 2 should have two spaces. Therefore, plans should have provision for 4 spaces.
 - 2 bedroom * 5 should have two spaces. Therefore, plans should have provision for 10 spaces.
 - 3 bedroom * 6 should have three spaces. Therefore, plans should have provision for 18 spaces.
 - 4 bedroom * 8 should have four spaces. Therefore, plans should have provision for 32 spaces.
 - Total parking spaces as per NP HOU5 should be 64. Layout indicates a total of 54. Shortfall of 10 spaces.
- b) *Only 4 visitor spaces have been provided which is likely to result in parking issues. Can this be addressed?*
- c) *Is it necessary to remove a large section of hedge H3 which provides a natural border between the development and the adventure golf course?*
- d) *Additionally, the Council would welcome/recommend the addition of more natural hedging to break up the hardstanding areas.*
- e) *And the addition of Bat and Bird (Swift) boxes (if not already included).*

Application: 2025/3580

Proposal: Retrospective alteration of gable roof by raising ridge and eaves to allow for rooms in the roof, erection of single storey front, side and rear extensions, changes to boundary treatment, erection of outbuilding and new garage

Location: Blafelda 24 Yarmouth Road Blofield Norfolk NR13 4JS

The Parish Council agreed to submit the following comments on this application.

Blofield Parish Council met on 20th April when the above application and various previous iterations were discussed. (The PC understands that it is still 'called in' for scrutiny by BDC Planning Committee.)

At the meeting, the Council agreed to again re-state previous comments which do not appear to have been taken in to consideration in the latest application and again, request if this has not yet taken place that a representative of BDC Planning team visit the site so they are able to assess the issues being raised e.g. point 1 below.

[The previous comments submitted by the PC were on 16.02.2026, on 10.12.25 and on 15.10.25 (in relation to earlier version 2025/2899)] **It was also agreed to (re)highlight:**

- a) The amended site plan has omitted the fact there is an outbuilding constructed in the proximity of one of the car parking spaces. Therefore, need to ensure that there is sufficient space for vehicles to exit the site in a forward motion. In the latest amended plans the conservatory has been omitted. The PC requests that someone from NCC Highways attends the site to ascertain if the proposed parking spaces are in fact impossible to deliver due to the location of the conservatory. OR, if the built conservatory is removed to permit parking. *[Note also PC's previous comment on 16.02.26: A conservatory seems to have been added to the revised plans, and it was noted that the height of the proposed (but already built conservatory) is higher than the boundary fence. The lack of measurements on the plans makes it difficult to determine the impact on the surrounding neighbouring properties and the impact on their amenity; the Parish Council questions whether the new addition of a conservatory on what is now a cramped plot counts as overdevelopment?]*
- b) So as indicated, the PC questions **parking overall**. Is there is sufficient parking space for two vehicles to be adjacent to the garage and the property as built, compared to the plans, as the plans suggest the new garage would be wider than the existing garage – and as mentioned above, the 'new' conservatory is not indicated on the latest site plan and NCC Highways may not be aware that the actual conservatory will obstruct one of the parking spaces adjacent to the garage.
- c) The garage has been moved towards the rear of the property on the boundary line of the immediate neighbour. The PC requests confirmation that there is no loss of light or overshadowing in relation to the immediate neighbour on Yarmouth Road and the neighbour at the rear on Newstead Gardens whose amenity value could be impacted.
- d) The plans appear to still refer to a 0.8m block wall at the front of the property which does not exist; it was removed and replaced by a 1.8M close boarded fence with concrete posts, which has not been approved. (Site should adhere to the Blofield NP ENV2 'soft site boundaries and trees' as mentioned in email of 10.12.25 and NCC Highways comment SHC14 is noted.
- e) As per 12.02.26 re **proposed garage plans**: *Again, there are no measurements which makes it difficult to determine street scene impact, considering the neighbouring property has a flat roof. The Parish Council requests as essential, that the pitch roof is no higher than the neighbouring bungalow ridge height.*
- f) **The garage** has been repositioned to provide parking spaces but this then presents concerns for the neighbours around loss of amenity value, overshadowing and or loss of light. If the garage is to remain in the new location then could it be a flat roof construction to minimise material consideration concerns and conditioned to be brick rather than unfinished block as per the conservatory building.
- g) Questions have also been raised in relation to encroachment on to the public highway land, so the Parish Council would appreciate clarification if the front boundary, as indicated on the site plan, is correct?
- h) As noted on 16.02.26: *Looking at Google Street View images it would appear that trees were removed from the public highway as part of the development, so the Parish Council requests that the missing trees are reinstated as part of this application, along with the replacement of the (new) tall front fencing, with a lower fence or preferably, native hedging. Plus, repairs and remediation to the grass as it has been churned up by the development.*

8. TO CONSIDER FEEDBACK ON ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT TO THE PUBLICATION OF THIS AGENDA

No further applications.

PROJECTS

9. TO REVIEW COMMUNITY HUB PROJECT UPDATES AND PROGRESS REPORTS AND AGREE NECESSARY ACTIONS

- a. **UK Power Network lease and land transfer from NCC** – The lease between UKPN and NCC has been signed and a copy forwarded to the Parish Council. Clerk (EB) to contact UKPN regarding securing and re-fencing the UKPN substation before the site is developed and progressed further.
- b. **Land transfer** – The land transfer from NCC to Blofield Parish Council of the old school playing field, forest school, small carpark area and year six classroom has now taken place.
- c. **Design Team Meetings** – notes from 24th March design team meeting have been circulated. Clerk (EB) to chase for clarity on the car park dimensions and ensure there is sufficient space for hedging / fencing between the carpark and play area as the play area was incorrectly located on the maps.

- d. Programme / Timings & Risk Register** – The timeline has not been updated since last November, but the planning application submission date only slipped by a week and was submitted on 23rd March. The date by which public comments need to be submitted is 7th May 2026. The prequalification's (PQQs) for the tender have been reviewed by the Council and the Design Team and five contractors were selected following a detailed set of criteria for scoring. The specification for the works will go to the contractors in May and they will have until July (TBC) to return responses.
- e. GNGB Funding** – The GNGB funding has been confirmed. The Council is very appreciative of this funding towards the community hub project.
- f. Other funding applications** – the clerk (EB) has reviewed the NCC Early Years capital funding draft grant agreement and has some outstanding queries regarding some clauses. These were discussed and the Council agreed for the Clerk (EB) to raise them with the grant provider to clarify the points. The Council resolved for the clerks to progress once these matters have been resolved. The Council will continue to search for other grant funding opportunities.
- g. Cost forecasts / budget**
The Council has received a cost plan from the cost consultant. This is over budget and under review currently. The external works are costing a great deal more than expected; a significant part is due to poor drainage on the site. The Council agreed to arrange a meeting with part of the design team to discuss the detail. Clerk (EB) to arrange. Gary Waterton also circulated his cost figures for the Council's information.
- h. Additional costs / finances** - Biodiversity Net Gain survey (a requirement of the planning application) has been carried out at an additional cost of £495.
- i. Planning application**
2026/0809 is live and public comments are due back by 7th May 2026.
Clerk (EB) is reviewing all conditions on the first outline planning application to ensure they have all been met and discharged. This will speed up the current application process.
- j. Preschool** – the Council agreed the Preschool could organise a forest school working party of preschool parents. Clerk (EB) to organise and ensure health and safety procedures and forms are used. Clerk (EB) is working on the draft 'agreement for a lease and lease' documentation but more detail needs to be clarified before progressing.
- k. Grass cutting** – The grass on Blofield Park is still in urgent need of cutting. There are obstacles hidden under the grass that need to be removed by Norse and then it will be possible for them to do the grass cutting. Clerk (EB) to chase.
- l. Site Security and H&S**
Clerk (EB) to arrange a site visit to review all Health and Safety issues and understand what works need to be carried out in order that the site can be opened during the Summer of 2026. The grounds surveys company has left the land in a poor state and this needs to be addressed. The Parish Council has engaged Norse Security to carry out regular checks on the site and keep the site secure. The Clerks agreed this under delegated powers. The cost is £35 per visit. CCTV signs/Norse Security signage and a Parish Council notice have been displayed.
- m. Community Engagement**
The Council are receiving regular queries regarding the opening of the play area. The Council unanimously resolved to try and achieve this. It will require open and closure of the site, litter picking, play inspections, site security, and health and safety. The Council agreed to add monthly updates to the website/Facebook page where possible.
- n. Play Park and Grounds** – The Council has registered for a postal address onsite.

- o. **Kitchens** – No update.
 - p. **Insurance** – The year 6 classroom is covered by the insurance. Clerk (EB) to chase for monthly reports from Norse Security.
 - q. **Other** - Nothing further.
- 10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE FARMAN FIELD PLAY TRIM TRAIL INSTALLATION, DISCUSS SIGNAGE AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS**
- The installation of the new trim trail will take place on the 11th May. The delivery will be at 7:30am councillors Will Crane / Sarah Dhesi will open up and meet the contractors on site. The Council reviewed and approved the signage for the site. Benches to be installed after the play equipment is installed.
- 11. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT, NOTE COUNCIL FUNDS AND REVIEW INTERNAL MONTHLY CHECKS**
- The Council reviewed the proposed payments #1 to #24 totalling £26,870.09 and the Council unanimously resolved to approve these payments (Appendix A). No CIL funds have been received in April 2026.
- 12. TO NOTE THE AGREEMENT WITH NORSE FOR SITE SECURITY AT BLOFIELD PARK**
- The Parish Council has engaged Norse Security to carry out regular checks on the site and keep the site secure. (Agreed by the Clerks under delegated powers). The cost is £35 per visit, every two weeks and monitoring alarm system. The Parish Council noted their thanks to Norse Security for waving the key holders charge. It was noted that the site had been trespassed on one occasion so security had been stepped up and the Police informed.
- 13. TO CONSIDER NALC / NPTS MEMBERSHIP**
- The Council resolved for the clerks to choose their preferred membership option for this year and join. Clerks to action.
- 14. TO NOTE BDC SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PARISH DEPOSIT SCHEME**
- The Council noted the parish scheme deposit security/fraud checks they have in place. Clerk (SO) to raise a query around email scams and how they check against this.
- 15. TO DISCUSS SECTION 106 FUNDING**
- Clerk (SO) discussed the detail of the different S106 funds and GI funds and their required allocation areas. This detail has been passed onto the BDC S106 officer and noted.
Clerk (EB) to obtain a quotation for the Type 1 for 10m on FP2 in Blofield Heath and see if this work can be carried out at the same time as the two Parish Partnership Scheme footpath projects.
- 16. TO AGREE THE INSURANCE COSTS FROM JUNE 2026**
- Clerk (SO) to review conflicting insurance quotes and present in May.
The new Farman Field trim trail has been added to the Parish Council policy.
- 17. TO CONSIDER THE COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION DOCUMENTATION AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- The Clerks continue to gather information on this and will report back as soon as possible.
- 18. TO NOTE QUERIES REGARDING THE UNOPENED PLAYGROUND AND AGREE FURTHER COMMUNICATION AND NEXT ACTIONS**
- See item 9l and 9m.
- 19. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MARTY'S MARSH AND CONSIDER PARTICIPATION IN THE ORCHID DAY AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- Yvonne Burton reported that Garden Guardian has carried out their first cut and the ditch is lovely and clear; everywhere looks good. The friends' group have decided not to take part in the Brundall

Cremer's Meadow Orchid Day due to poor footfall last year but will hopefully have their own separate friends get together in mid-summer.

20. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON NCC HIGHWAYS MATTERS

The Council are unhappy with the village gateway proposed changes on Yarmouth Road. Clerk (EB) to advise and request an onsite meeting with NCC Highways Engineer to discuss further. Councillors and parishioners have noticed the new junction from Waterlow to join the A47 has a very short slip road and accidents are likely to occur. Can signage be added to the vicinity advising of a dangerous/new/changed junction to reduce the risk in this area. Clerk (EB) to contact Galliford Try.

21. TO NOTE THE COSTS OF SPEED TUBES AND A SPEED SURVEY IN BLOFIELD

Sarah Dhesi reported that air tube installation is approximately £270 per tube. However, to carry out a feasibility study of the data is £3,500 to £5,000. The Highways Engineer suggested leaving any data gathering until the A47 is open as data could be skewed.

Sarah Dhesi proposed the Council investigate the possibilities of installing speed hump/bumps with the NCC Highways Engineer as these come at a smaller cost than the data gathering and study costs. The Council agreed to consider submitting a Parish Partnership funding request later in the year depending on the outcome of investigations.

22. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON DEFIBRILLATORS

The charity Heart2Heart has again supported the Parish Council providing the Council with free (shorter life) pads for the Margaret Harker Hall defibrillator. The Parish Council noted its thanks.

23. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE WITH GALLIFORD TRY ENGINEERS REGARDING THE ALLOTMENT SITE

Sarah Dhesi provided an update from the meeting. She reported that the new road will be open by the 6th May 2026. They will then commence work on the allotments car park as access is currently severely restricted for allotment holders. Clerk (EB) to check with Galliford Try re: noticeboard.

24. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON BLOFIELD CHURCHYARD WALL REPAIRS AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

This work is scheduled for May 2026. Clerk (EB) to chase and update the churchwardens / Parochial Church Council on the works.

25. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE HEATHLANDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Yvonne Burton reported that there have been some parking difficulties on Saturday mornings.

26. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MARGARET HARKER HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Sarah Dhesi advised she will no longer be attending the MHH meetings, unless invited for a specific issue, as she is not a trustee and her presence is not required. She advised the Council that the old boiler room is now being used for storage and the back room, lobby area, and main hall have all been decorated.

27. TO NOTE THE LOCAL AUTHORITY CLUSTER MEETING AT 7PM ON 28TH APRIL 2026 AT CANTLEY AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS

Joseph Scholes and Stella Shackle will be attending. Stuart Smith will provide a brief update for them to share.

28. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

A parishioner has raised concerns regarding the boggy footpaths in Marty's Marsh.

A parishioner continues to raise concerns regarding the speeding on Woodbastwick Road and this will be shared with NCC Highways.

As a 'Mindful Village' with certification the Council can display the logo.

The Broadland District Council Community Awards 2026 are now open. Full details can be found here: <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/broadland-community-awards>

The Council unanimously resolved to nominate BADCOG.

Marty's Marsh Working Party update 2nd April 2026 - The working party met and tidied after the ditch work recently completed. Everyone is very pleased with the work carried out.

The Council would like to thank Galliford Try for the outdoor 8-seater picnic table and 60 wooden posts for the Blofield Jubilee Allotments.

Blofield Surgery will be having a warden patrolling their car park at school start/finish times and patients will be required to input their registration number on an iPad when they come in the surgery for an appointment / dispensary otherwise they may receive a penalty fine.

The Broads Authority is revising their strategic plan and is can be viewed on

<https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-us/how-we-work/strategy/broads-plan-2022>

29. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

The Tree Wardens Network / PC insurance

Advert for maintenance support

Courthouse constitution

Update from Tom Cox

30. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 18th May 2026 at 7:00pm at Blofield Courthouse followed by the monthly parish council meeting at 7:30pm

31. TO RESOLVE TO PASS A FORMAL RESOLUTION (UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES AND ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT 1960) TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC FOR THE REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS

32. TO DISCUSS COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE MATTERS RELATING TO THE COMMUNITY HUB AND APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTORS

Commercially sensitive matters were discussed regarding pre-qualification rounds for contractors, and community hub funding.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:30pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....