

Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 11th September 2025 at 7:00pm – 11:15pm at Blofield Courthouse.

PRESENT:

Sarah Dhesi (Vice Chair), Yvonne Burton, Joseph Scholes, Paul Culley-Barber, Will Crane and Eleanor Bannister (Clerk) and Sarah Osbaldeston (Clerk).

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE MEETING BY THE VICE-CHAIR

2. TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Paul Newstead, Stella Shackle and Stuart Smith and accepted by the Council.

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

Sarah Dhesi declared a pecuniary interest in item 7.1.

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

One parishioner was present and advised the council on the changes on planning application 2025/0779.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21st JULY 2025

The Council unanimously resolved to approve the minutes and they were duly signed by the vice-chair.

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

- The council has requested no dogs signage in children's play areas from the public spaces protection order at BDC.
- The new defibrillator case has been installed at Heathlands Community Centre with thanks to the Heart 2 Heart Norfolk charity.

7. PLANNING

The council resolved to ratify all comments below that have been submitted due to the change in council meeting date.

Application: 2025/2278

Proposal: Single Storey Extension & raised patio

Location: Gale House, Bullacebush Lane, Blofield, NR13 4SG

The Parish Council resolved to make no comments.

Application: 2025/2354

Proposal: Single storey rear extension

Location: Plow Cottage, Ranworth Road, Blofield, NR13 4PJ

The Parish Council resolved to make no comments.

Application: 2025/0779

Proposal: demolition of barn and erection of a self-build, eco-friendly dwelling & associated works - amendments

Location: Beatrice House, Garden Road, Blofield, NR13 4JL

The Parish Council submitted comments on 25th March and given there appears to be very limited revisions to the plans, we request that these be resubmitted i.e.:

The Parish Council would like to raise the following concerns/queries:

The council has concerns over another access to Garden Road being so close to the shared driveway adjacent to the proposed dwelling and wonder if there would be any highway issues. The replacement dwelling is considerably taller than the existing barn and would be equivalent in ridge height to the current dwelling. The height of the building could create overshadowing issues for the neighbouring properties, and this feels like overdevelopment of the plot. Amenity value of the existing property would be impacted and would question if there is sufficient amenity value for the proposed dwelling due to the length and width of the driveway.

In addition, is the drainage system sufficient to cope with another new property feeding into the main sewer system given the flooding regularly seen at the Kings Head junction?

Application: 2025/1423

Proposal: variation of condition 2 - alter design of the carport of consented permission

Location: Aldersbrook, Woodbastwick Road, Blofield, NR13 4QH

The Parish Council resolved to make no comments.

Application: 2025/2488

Proposal: Erection of self-build bungalow

Location: 2 Skedge Way, Blofield, Norfolk, NR13 4RY

As the council is unable to identify the revisions to this application, the council agreed to restate the comments made for this application in 2024 (number 2024/1602). The Parish Council agreed that it objects to the application on the basis that it appears to lack sufficient amenity space (gardens and green space) and there is limited parking - and limited ability for cars to manoeuvre. Further, the application was considered to potentially contribute to the over development of the area.

8. TO CONSIDER FEEDBACK ON ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT TO THE PUBLICATION OF THIS AGENDA AND NOTE ANY PLANNING UPDATES (INCLUDING 2020/0077)

The date of the planning committee is still unclear for application 2020/0077, it is hoped that Stuart Smith or Paul Newstead can represent the council and read out the pre-prepared report.

9. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM OUR SOLICITORS / NCC CHILDREN'S SERVICES REGARDING THE BLOFIELD PARK LAND TRANSFER TO THE PARISH COUNCIL AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

The council unanimously resolved to the reworking of the lease between the council solicitor and the NCC solicitor to liaise with the UKPN solicitor to allow no land dig restrictions over the 'brown area' shown on the map.

10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE FENCING INSTALLATION FOR THE FOREST SCHOOL AREA AND RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COST OF FENCING/GATES AND PLAY FENCING AT THE ENTRANCE TO BLOFIELD PARK AND DISCUSS FUNDING

The fencing installation has all been completed for the forest school area. This will be funded from the future capital projects reserve.

A quotation has been requested for the fencing required between the play area and car park and fencing/gateway at the entrance to the site. The council will then see if it possible to obtain social value funding for part of this work. There is some old fencing on the site that can hopefully be repurposed too, to reduce costs.

11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE NEW BLOFIELD PARK HUB ENTRANCE CREATION, CONSIDER MESH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

The new entrance to the community hub has been completed. It is accessible for buggies and slopes towards the carriageway to prevent flooding onto the hub site.

The council agreed to request NCC return the blackout to the site and resecure the Heras fencing to make it more stable. In addition, the council agreed to request NCC complete the clearance work on the site (such as old tyres, screws etc) and arrange for the hedge and grass cutting to be carried out. Clerk (EB) to request.

NCC Highways has informed the council the work has cost less than anticipated, so the council are awaiting information on the adjusted balance outstanding.

The council will revisit a possible working party on site and an open date for the play area in the October meeting.

The council unanimously resolved to approve up to £100 for the purchase of locks for the site.

12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE ROYAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE CORRESPONDENCE

The council would like to meet with the Royal Voluntary Service to understand more about their ideas. Clerk (EB) to arrange in Oct/November.

13. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE BLOFIELD PARK GREATER NORWICH GROWTH BOARD APPLICATION AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

The council have made their submission. Broadland District Council are liaising with the council with any queries, and we await the outcome of our application.

14. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MEETING WITH THE PRESCHOOL TO REVIEW RESPONSIBILITIES AND RENTAL RATES AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

Councillors have met with the preschool to discuss rental costs and they have taken these away to discuss with their committee. The preschool are visiting the site next week to look at the building again and forest school area, Clerk (EB) to attend with them.

15. TO DISCUSS A QUOTATION FOR THE AGREEMENT FOR LEASE AND LEASE BETWEEN THE PRESCHOOL AND PARISH COUNCIL

Eleanor Bannister detailed the works required and the associated costs. The Clerks recommended both an agreement for lease and then a lease between the preschool and Parish Council. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal at a cost of £3,500+VAT.

16. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT, NOTE COUNCIL FUNDS AND REVIEW INTERNAL MONTHLY CHECKS

The council unanimously resolved to approve payments #63 to #76 totalling £11,616.23. Clerk (SO) to action.

17. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MEETING WITH THE VAT CONSULTANT, PROVIDING ADVICE TO THE PARISH COUNCIL REGARDING VAT ON THE BLOFIELD PARK COMMUNITY HUB PROJECT AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

The council agreed there is a great deal of detail contained in this report and this will be reviewed and discussed in the October meeting.

18. TO CONSIDER ANY PARISH PARTNERSHIP SCHEME FUNDING BIDS FOR 2026/27

The council agreed to meet with Tom Cox, at NCC Highways to understand the cost of FP4 improvements and/or a trod in Marty's Marsh from the churchyard gate to the 'mini' bridge' on the site. These can then be considered for Parish Partnership Scheme Funding Bids. Clerk (EB) to arrange a meeting with NCC Highways to discuss.

19. TO AGREE REVISION TO THE GRANTS POLICY

The council agreed to make the amendment to the grants policy. One organisation cannot apply for a large grant and a small grant at the same time for the same item. Clerk (EB) to amend.

20. TO DISCUSS IT CLOUD TO CLOUD BACK UP

The council agreed to proceed with cloud to cloud back up for £14 per month and review this after a year. Clerk (SO) to confirm set up and payment by Direct Debit to Anglian Internet for this and the monthly support of £50 per month.

21. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON INSURANCE FOR THE BLOFIELD PARK SITE

Clerk (SO) to set up insurance for the new land once the land is transferred to the parish council. Insurance is required for the preschool building and 'works in progress' on the site too. Any entrance / car barrier solution will also require insurance.

22. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE NATIONAL LOTTERY APPLICATION PROCESS AND CONSIDER NEXT ACTIONS

Eleanor Bannister updated the council on her research on lottery grants. Following a brief discussion, the council agreed to look at making a lottery application once the designs are clear for the community hub and more cost detail is available.

23. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FOLLOWING THE QUARTERLY ALLOTMENT INSPECTION

Sarah Dhesi reported that the allotments are not as tidy as usual. Clerk (EB) to send a gentle reminder to everyone to keep their plots clean, tidy and prepare them for the winter. The council recognises that the dry summer and disruption caused by the A47 dualling has made things harder for the allotment holders.

Another inspection will be held in October.

The council noted the gate padlock has been replaced. Clerk (SO) paid the costs.

The pest control is proving effective, and the numbers have reduced significantly. The council unanimously resolved to continue with the same pest controller for the following year at the same cost.

24. TO NOTE COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE RECENT MEETING MINUTES, COUNCIL QUERIES AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

Clerks to investigate the requirements for a more formal agreement with the courthouse management committee, as recommended by Steve Parkinson advising the council on the new hub VAT requirements.

25. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE SOLICITOR'S ROOM REPAIRS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

The lime plastering and wooden panelling has been completed, however the walls are still damp, and the decorator has been unable to return to complete the remaining works. Clerk (EB) to chase for new date.

26. TO DISCUSS THE BDC OFFER ON ROSPA REPORTS

The Council unanimously resolved to accept BDC offer for £90 ROSPA reports for the community hub playground. Clerk (EB) to action.

27. TO NOTE UPDATE FROM THE A47 NATIONAL HIGHWAYS / GALLIFORD TRY MEETING

Will Crane provided a written report. Work has progressed over the summer and it is still planned that the new road will be open to traffic summer 2026.

28. TO NOTE PARISHIONERS CONCERNS REGARDING THE RECENT ROAD CLOSURES AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

The Council has received some letters regarding the recent closure of plantation road outside the doctors surgery. This has impacted the whole community. Clerks have issued responses to the parishioners and where necessary these have been referred to NCC Highways and those involved in the road works and closures. The Parish Council raise concerns

29. TO APPROVE REPLACEMENT OF A DOG WASTE BIN ON YARMOUTH ROAD

Following a traffic accident the dog waste bin on Yarmouth Road has been damaged. The council unanimously resolved to replace the bin and post. Clerk to arrange.

The council agreed to submit the bus shelter repainting costs to the bus shelter grant to see if any funding is still available. Clerk (EB) to action.

30. TO AGREE AND PLAN AN OPENING EVENT FOR THE NEW BLOFIELD PARK PLAYGROUND

This has been put on hold until the land transfer has been completed. The council are doing all they can to progress this land transfer as quickly as possible.

31. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MARTY'S MARSH, DISCUSS POLLUTION, HALLOWEEN TRAIL AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

Yvonne Burton reported a grey deposit on the weir water. She is carrying out some tests and reporting it again to Anglian Water to investigate further.

The Bure Valley Conservation Group has attended and cleared the meadow. A working party of volunteers is taking place this Saturday, and a moth survey has taken place onsite.

The council agreed to due to insurances a Halloween would not be possible.

32. TO DISCUSS FP4 BRAMBLE CLEARANCE AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

The clearance of brambles is proving tricky. The council agreed to meet with Tom Cox to discuss the footpath improvements again and also consider inviting community payback to work on the path over October half term.

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

Yvonne Burton provided a brief update on the Heathlands Management Committee.

The Council unanimously resolved to extend the meeting beyond 10pm in order to complete the agenda, following Standing Order item 17.n.

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

Sarah Dhesi updated the council that MHH are working hard on fund raising with a planned Ceilidh in November.

35. TO CONSIDER ENCLOSURES FOR THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

The Council discussed and agreed the detail for the Council Armed Forces Covenant. Clerk (EB) to add to the Council website.

36. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

Clerk (SO) to ensure the council are compliant with assertion 10 addition for 2025/26 audits.

Blofield Parish is a Mindful Village for Mental Health Awareness following training of a number of parishioners.

Woodbastwick Road, Blofield Heath - Pedestrian Crossing Assessment – work has been ordered by NCC Highways to add new SLOW markings, refresh the painted roundels on the village gateways and cut back vegetation and clean the speed limit signs and repeaters. This should increase awareness on the road ahead of any funding streams for the other works.

37. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

- Poppy Wreath approval
- Churchyard inspection for progression
- Meeting dates 2026

38. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Monday 13th October 2025 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

39. 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

The Council unanimously resolved to approve this resolution. No parishioners were present.

40. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TENDER PROCESS FOR RIBA STAGES 3-6, REVIEW SHORTLISTED COMPANIES AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

Sarah Dhesi provided an update to the council following the architect tender process.

Sarah Dhesi proposed (seconded by Paul Culley-Barber) the council appoint Big Sky Living to be the 'client liaison advisor' and 'clerk of works' for the lifetime of the project. They have been recommended by BDC and other parish councils. The Council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.

Following detailed discussion, the Council unanimously resolved to appoint Purcell as the Architects on the project. There will be a review incorporated after each RIBA stage to ensure the council are happy to proceed to the next stage before committing funds.

The Council resolved to allow the clerks to work with the client liaison advisor to have interviews with cost consultancy (QS), appoint as necessary and proceed with the necessary ground works inspections.

In addition, the Council agreed for the clerks to progress with structural and civil engineering and electrical and mechanical engineering interviews working with the chair/vice-chair.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11:15pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....