

Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 15th June 2026 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

PRESENT

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

One parishioner was present in the public gallery. County Cllr Jan Davis also attended.

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 Joseph Scholes and accepted by the Council.

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

Sarah Dhesi declared an interest in application 2026/1493 (item 7) and abstained from the vote on that application.

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

County Cllr Jan Davis gave an update following the recent Norfolk County Council AGM, covering the new administration and committee appointments. He noted the Police and Crime Commissioner election taking place on 16th July 2026. One parishioner spoke and raised concerns regarding planning application 2025/3580.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AND ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES HELD ON 18TH MAY 2026

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 18th May 2026 were unanimously 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

The Council noted that a meeting with Galliford Try regarding the allotments car park, signage on Yarmouth Road and the noticeboard would take place on 23rd June 2026.

It was also noted that the request for life buoy relocation at Marty's Marsh would be considered at the next Brundall Land Management Committee meeting on 9th July 2026.

7. PLANNING

Application: 2026/1493

Proposal: New front entrance porch, single-storey rear extension including external cosmetic alterations, landscaping including new widened driveway entrance automated entrance gate, new car port.

Location: Brook Hill, Brundall Road, Blofield, Norfolk, NR13 4LB

The Council resolved to request that the loss of any mature tree(s) is offset with additional biodiversity measures. Sarah Dhesi declared an interest and abstained from the vote.

Application: 2026/1458

Proposal: New front boundary wall, rear flat-roofed extension and associated works.

Location: Lynford, 24 Blofield Corner Road, Blofield, NR13 4RT

The Council resolved to submit the following comment: That the application is conditioned to ensure the loss of greenery (to create parking spaces) is offset with additional shrubs or planting, and that the mature front hedging is retained where possible.

Application: 2025/3580

Proposal: Retrospective alteration of gable roof by raising ridge and eaves to allow for room 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 Council resolved to submit the following comments:

- *The various revised plans presented continue to appear to be adjusted to reflect elements of the build that have already been built.*
- *From the latest plans, it appears (in one of the plans) that the garage is set further back, which may now encroach onto the neighbouring property boundary line. Can this be reviewed?*
- *Overlooking of the neighbouring properties to the rear and their amenity impact from the unapproved first floor bedrooms still appears to be an issue. The Parish Council requests that if Planning approves the as-built amendments, that the windows are changed to frosted glass to minimise such material consideration concerns.*
- *Outbuilding ridge height is higher than the boundary fence so impacts the amenity value of the neighbours to the rear. The Parish Council believes this should be lower than the fence height. Can this be reviewed?*
- *The Garage proposal indicates a ridge. It would now be more in keeping with the neighbouring property and street scene for the garage roof to be flat. Can this be addressed? [The Parish Council is aware that it previously stated that the garage ridge height should be no higher than the neighbouring dwelling ridge height, but this was when the garage was in its current location at the front.]*
- *The Parish Council requests reparations need to be provisioned for the loss of 4 small trees that were on Highways land that the applicant removed during construction. Further, the front Highways area needs to be made good with replaced grass and trees, and as previously requested, a soft site boundary for native hedging.*
- *The Parish Council also noted that it is still unclear if the front boundary is in the correct place; it may have encroached onto Highways owned land. Please can this be reviewed.*

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

Application 2026/1630 (non-material amendment to the Council's own application 2024/3727): the Council resolved to support this application.

Application 2026/1522 (works affecting lime trees): the Council resolved to make no comment.

**9. TO CONSIDER REDUCING THE HEIGHT OF THE BOUNDARY HEDGE OF BLOFIELD
PARK**

The hedge is currently 8–10ft high. Garden Guardian have recommended reducing it to approximately 4–5ft (just above the existing 4ft chain-link fence), which would make ongoing maintenance considerably easier and cheaper. PCSO Jackie Chambers confirmed there were

no security concerns with reducing the height. The Council agreed that cutting back the hedge should be considered once nesting season has ended in the autumn, ahead of contractors starting on site. Clerk (EB) to obtain quotes for cutting the hedge back to just above the fence line.

10. TO REVIEW THE OPENING OF BLOFIELD PARK FOR THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS, REVIEW OUTSTANDING ITEMS, INCLUDING A GATE AND OPENING/SHUTTING REQUIREMENTS

The Council agreed the Park would be unlocked daily between 9am and 6pm over the summer holidays. The Council agreed to pay Norse to do this each day. CCTV cameras will be installed. It was agreed the opening would be publicised via the preschool and school newsletters rather than on Facebook, to manage early numbers. Various actions were agreed below:

Signage was agreed, Clerk (EB) to arrange printing. No rubbish bins will be provided due to the short length of opening; parishioners will be asked to take their rubbish home. A full detailed playground inspection took place last October, a further operational inspection check will be required, and a risk assessment will be completed before opening. Items identified by the inspection will be actioned. The log pile will be removed by the preschool to their forest school area. The entrance gate will be secured to allow only pedestrian access (no parking is available on site) and notices will be erected requesting considerate parking. Clerk (EB) to chase Chris Griggs regarding the outstanding full site clear-up, including removal of paint cans. The Council agreed to the grass should be cut every two weeks, Clerk (SO) to contact Garden Guardian.

11. TO AGREE THE INSTALLATION OF A BENCH AT 'THE PADDOCKS' ON BLOFIELD CORNER ROAD

The Council unanimously resolved to approve the installation of a bench at The Paddocks on Blofield Corner Road. Cllr Yvonne Burton to approve the location with the development management company, Clerk (SO) to arrange installation and order bench.

12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE FARMAN FIELD PLAY TRIM TRAIL INSTALLATION, DISCUSS OUTSTANDING ACTIONS, DISCUSS DOG FOULING NOTICES AND DISCUSS INSTALLATION OF BENCHES AT FARMAN FIELD AND REVIEW INSTALLATION COSTS

Dog fouling notices have been received from Broadland District Council for installation. Cllrs Sarah Dhesi and Eleanor Bannister and three residents identified four possible bench locations; the Council agreed it would be preferable to install fewer benches with better quality concrete bases and agreed one or two benches with arms. The Council resolved to approve the spend on this basis. Clerk (SO) to obtain quotations for the bases and arrange installation in the most cost effective way. The Council also asked that Sovereign be approached to confirm whether checks of the trim trail should be weekly or monthly, Clerk (EB) to action.

13. TO DISCUSS THE RECENT WORK ON BLOFIELD CHURCHYARD WALL AND CONSIDER THE EPICORMIC LIME GROWTH

The recent churchyard wall repairs on the next section have been completed. The epicormic lime growth was not cut in time for these works and will be carried out in May.

14. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON HOWES MEADOW AND CONSIDER AN ANNUAL DONATION OF £250 TO BADCOG FOR MAINTENANCE

The Council resolved to approve a donation of £250 to BADCOG for maintenance of Howes Meadow. Clerk (SO) to request an open day at the site for parishioners to visit.

15. TO NOTE THE FOOTPATH WALKS TAKING PLACE IN JULY IN THE PARISH

The Council noted the footpath walks are taking place on 9th July (Blofield) and 16th July (Blofield Heath).

16. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON WYNGATES AREA 1, PERGOLA REVIEW, NOTE THE RISK ASSESSMENT AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS

Clerk (EB) advised that a risk assessment has been carried out for Wyngates area 1 and she reported that the pergola, now approximately 9–10 years old, is wobbly; it has been taped off pending further investigation. A semi-circular bench was suggested as a possible alternative. Clerk (SO) to investigate removal of the pergola and replacement options.

17. TO REVIEW GARDEN GUARDIAN MAINTENANCE FOR WYNGATES AREAS 1 AND 2

It was also noted that the hedging and planting in Wyngates Area 1 has not been fully maintained with some weeds and there is a sycamore growing through. Clerk (EB) to contact Robert at Garden Guardian.

18. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE PLANNED FOOTPATH WORK FOR FP4, FP2 AND MARTY'S MARSH AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

Clerk (EB) will install signage on the fencing near FP4 regarding the permissive path. Work will commence shortly on the Marty's Marsh path and the type one on FP2 pathway in Blofield Heath.

19. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MARTY'S MARSH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

The planned working party has been cancelled owing to the site closure. The Council noted an ongoing issue with dogs entering the run opposite the bridge, causing erosion, and that the bank may need to be built up as a result; the working party will consider how to do this.

20. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON FURTHER BUS SHELTER REPAIRS TO BLOFIELD HEATH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

Cllr Stuart Smith has checked the Blofield Heath shelter and found the fascia boards are rotten and the roof felt needs stripping; the rear of the shelter is currently inaccessible due to an overgrown bush. Clerk (EB) to obtain a quote from Mr Flat Roofer. The Council agreed to apply for the 2026/27 bus shelter grant, covering the re-roofing of the Blofield Heath shelter and also a possible bicycle shelter/cover at the Community Hub site. Clerk (EB) to take this application forward.

21. TO NOTE A PARISHIONER REQUEST FOR BOLLARDS TO BE INSTALLED ON VERGES ON MILL ROAD AND REPORT BUS COMPANY BEHAVIOURS

A parishioner raised concerns about parking on verges on Mill Road by the local bus company. Clerk (EB) to follow up with Highways Engineer at NCC and with First Bus company and advise the parishioner does the same.

22. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MEETING WITH NCC HIGHWAYS

County Cllr Jan Davis has met with NCC Highways to discuss broad parish council concerns across his district.

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

This was discussed in item 13.

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

Cllr Paul Newstead provided an update from the Heathlands Management Committee.

25. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

The Council noted the circulated management committee minutes.

26. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION REVIEW

Clerk (EB) to arrange a meeting with the Courthouse Management Committee to discuss the draft constitution papers that the clerks have produced following guidance from various organisations including Community Action Norfolk / the parish council tax adviser / council solicitor and advisor in small voluntary organisations.

At 10pm the Council resolved to suspend standing orders.

27. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE DISCHARGE OF CONDITION 12 FROM THE FIRST HUB PLANNING APPLICATION

Clerk (EB) is still working on the discharge of condition 12 with BDC planning department.

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

- a. Design Team Meetings – No updates this month.
- b. Programme / Timings & Risk Register – These remain unchanged, the programme remains dependent on the outcome of the tender process.
- c. Funding Application – Clerk (EB) confirmed that the GNGB funding board will consider further funding to the parish council of £150,000, and there is an option for an associated CIL loan of up to £100,000 for the parish council. The Council also continues to explore any other grant opportunities including National Lottery funding.
- d. Cost Forecasts / Budget – The revised cost plan has increased by £18,000 over the past month, taking the projected shortfall from £250,000 to £268,000. The final position remains dependent on the outcome of the tender process.
- e. Additional Costs / Finances – No further update.
- f. Planning Application 2026/0809 – Update still awaited from the planning department.
- g. Tender – The project is now out to tender.
- h. Preschool – No separate update.
- i. Legal update on shared land access – No update.
- j. Site Security and H&S – The Council resolved to approve the installation of a fire gate from the preschool site onto the shared land. The Council resolved to approve this in September/October. Clerk (EB) to action. Paint to be removed from the forest school due to further forest school damage - Clerk to contact NCC as this matter is still outstanding.
- k. Community Engagement - The Council noted a vacancy has arisen following the resignation of a long-standing councillor.

l. Play Park and Grounds – considered in item 10 above.

m. Kitchens – No update.

n. Insurance – No update

o. Other – No update.

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

The Council reviewed the proposed payments #51 to #73 totalling £35,706.25 and the Council unanimously resolved to approve these payments (Appendix A). Clerk (SO) to make payments. The Council noted the monthly internal review carried out by Sarah Dhesi.

30. TO REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S CURRENT RESERVES POSITION

The Council reviewed the current reserves position in advance of tender documents being received in July and reviewed in August.

31. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE GNGB FUNDING, CONSIDER A COUNCIL FUNDING LOAN AND AGREE ACTIONS

The Council ratified the decision to apply and accept a further GNGB funding of £150,000 in June 2026 and the associated CIL Loan of £100,000 (at 3.75% interest from Broadland District Council). However, the Council hope that existing CIL reserves can be used towards the project rather than taking a loan. The Council awaits the tender applications and cost certainty before this can be determined. Clerk (EB) to confirm to Joel accordingly.

32. TO CONSIDER WIP INSURANCE COVER

The Council agreed to defer consideration of WIP insurance cover to the July meeting.

33. TO APPROVE AI SUBSCRIPTION OF CLAUDE FOR 6 MONTHS

The Council unanimously resolved to approve a 6-month subscription to Claude at a cost of £18 per month, noting a discounted rate of £15 per month would be available on an annual subscription for future consideration. Clerk (SO) to arrange payment to Clerk (EB).

34. TO DISCUSS FURTHER BUS SHELTER GRANT APPLICATION

The Council agreed to apply for a further bus shelter grant, see item 20 above.

35. TO CONSIDER APPOINTING A WYNGATES AREA 1 AND 2 REPRESENTATIVE

The Council resolved to appoint Will Crane as the Wyngates Area 1 & 2 representative.

36. TO CONSIDER APPOINTING SUE LAKE AS THE COUNCIL AUDITOR FOR 2026/27

The Council unanimously resolved to appoint Sue Lake as the Council's Internal Auditor for 2026/27.

37. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING REVISED POLICIES

- a. General Data Protection Regulation Policy and General Privacy Notice have been combined into the Data Protection Policy for the Council.
- c. Civility and Respect Policy.
- d. Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit Control.

The Council unanimously resolved to approve the above policies, with effect from June 2026. Approval of the Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit Control will also enable the Clerk to confirm formally to Broadland District Council.

38. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

The People's National Emergency Briefing film is taking place at Heathlands, Yvonne Burton to attend.

A parishioner raised a request for a cycle/path from Blofield Heath to Blofield. The Council continues to explore options for this, but this requires local landowners to assist.

The Greater Norwich authorities (Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council, working with Norfolk County Council) are now preparing a new Local Plan.

The Greater Norwich Local Plan 2045 call for sites is open from Monday 15th June until Monday 13th July 2026, closing at 5pm.

Sarah Dhesi and Eleanor Bannister met with a parishioner adjoining the Forest school site to discuss the boundaries. No school site land that has been passed to Blofield Parish Council can be sold.

Playing for Cake / Making Melodies thanked the Parish Council for the £300 grant.

A parishioner has requested dog waste bins on Charles Marler Way on the Hopkins Homes estate. This has been referred to the site management committee.

A wobbly fence near Marty's Marsh has been referred to NCC Highways. Broadland District Council land management has reviewed the Trim Trail, Farman Field installation and are happy this is a natural safe space for children and adults.

A parishioner has raised concerns regarding verge deterioration and bus holding near their property on Mill Road. This has been referred to the NCC Highways Engineer and the bus company.

39. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

AI Policy, Grit Bins, Allotments update, Pergola update, Hedge cutting quotes, Memorial gravestone safety check.

40. TO CONFIRM THE DATES OF THE NEXT TWO PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Monday 20th July 2026 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

Monday 10th August 2026 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

41. 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 formally pass the resolution (under the Public Bodies and Admission to Meetings Act 1960) to exclude the press and the public for the remaining agenda items.

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

One commercially sensitive matter was discussed at this meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:45pm.

Signed..... Dated.....