
Upwell Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Upwell Parish Council, Monday 11th August 2025, 7pm

Committee Members: Cllr Aston, Cllr Gooch, Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Shorting, Cllr Pope, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Carr, Cllr Judd, Cllr Singh, Cllr Spikings, Cllr Fairbrother.

Those Present: Cllr Fairbrother, Cllr Aston, Cllr Shorting, Cllr K Harrison, Cllr Judd, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Pope, Cllr Carr, Cllr A Harrison, Cllr Gooch, M Hilton Clerk.

Public: four

Apologies Cllr Singh, CCllr Dawson, BCllr Rose, BCllr Spikings.

MINUTES

1. **Welcome and Opening remarks:** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **To consider and approve apologies for absence:** these were approved
3. **To declare any conflicts and pecuniary interests on any items on this month's agenda:** None declared
4. **Public Forum (ten minutes only):**
 - A parishioner recalled that about two years ago CCllr Dawson looked with him at the pavements from Lakes End village hall to the old Post Office, nothing has been done about the overgrowth and it is now even worse. Cllr Fairbrother will make enquires with CCllr Dawson and report back.
 - Another parishioner came to update the Council on his proposal regarding purchasing a small parcel of land at Small Lode. This will be an agenda item for September.
 - Cllr Gooch reported visibility at the top of Lakes Avenue is poor.
 - Cllr Judd reported the mirror near the bus stop in Lakes End has been removed. Cllr Fairbrother said this was removed by the SAM2 operator. The Clerk to find his contact details and ask for the mirror to be reinstated.
 - A parishioner came to observe a meeting with a view to applying to become a councillor
5. **To approve the Minutes from the last meeting:**

Cllr Pope disputed the cost of the railings in the minutes as the Council claims back the VAT. The Clerk said the full cost was as stated therefore the minutes stand. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.
6. **To discuss and consider the Action Log from previous meetings:**
 - The Neighbourhood Plan review, this will stay on the action log until more information is received when the Borough Council adopt the Local Plan.
7. **To approve the Equal Opportunities Policy:** Cllr Robinson said he had been speaking with Cllr Spikings regarding this and she said no other Councils have this policy, and if approved this would open a can of worms. The Clerk disputed this and explained it covered the Council for issues with disability, race etcetera. Cllrs Aston and A. Harrison disagreed with Cllr Robinson and said there was every point in having the policy and it had been in place for many years. The Clerk then responded by explaining the equality legislation; this would back the Council up, rather than hinder it. Cllr Fairbrother said the policy is in line with employment law. A vote was held and 3 were for the policy and 7 against.
8. **Reports from individual Councillors, Council Groups and Clerk**
 - i. To consider planning applications:
 - . Planning Application Consultation 25/01055/F. Erection of 2 semi-detached dwellings with demolition of existing dwelling and garage, and formation of access points at Holly Dene 1 Baptist Road Upwell PE14 9EU. The Upwell Parish Planning Group does not support this application. The proposed dwelling is contrary to UPNP Policy H3 Design; New residential development plots should not be over developed and should ensure that the building footprint including any outbuildings, provides for sufficient

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Upwell Parish Council

amenity space. The dwelling size is over development of the site. The proposed dwelling will overshadow the garden of 159 School Road to the north, and despite the use of obscure glass in the four north facing windows, the opening vents will afford views over the garden of 159 School Road. There is insufficient off-road parking provision for occupiers & visitors. This is a very narrow section of Baptist Road, which has frequent and regular daily use by articulated HGV's serving two established businesses, as well as large agricultural vehicles. There is an increase in vehicle movements during certain growing & harvesting seasons, with vehicle movements also taking place during the evenings (after dark). If permitted, there would without any doubt be conflict and confrontation during construction, and occupation going forwards, of the proposed dwelling, with vehicles parked on the road. The noise/disturbance generated by HGV/agricultural movements experienced by unsuspecting occupiers, will without doubt result in complaints about the noise & vibration caused by such vehicle movements. There is insufficient access to the rear of the proposed dwelling for future maintenance. Upwell Parish Council Planning Group would also refer to the previous application 23/01158/O which was refused by the Borough Council, especially the Planning Officer's Report, and subsequent decision, recommending refusal. The refused Outline Application was for a smaller proposed dwelling towards the east of the site. This application is for a much bigger, centrally proposed dwelling, with the same issues as 23/01158/O with regards to the size of the site which cannot be overcome. The proposed brick for construction is not appropriate and should reflect the character of existing neighbouring dwellings. The design limitations due to the size of the site are reflected in a rather bland, featureless design. If permitted, dummy chimneys should be added to each end of the proposed dwelling to reflect the character of neighbouring dwellings. Material Planning Considerations; Overshadowing/loss or outlook, Highway issues, Layout and density of building design. This is an example of where local knowledge (of nearby Parish Councillors) of the location and the existing/ongoing issues surrounding vehicle movements should be taken into consideration with this application. Issues that cannot be resolved.

- Planning Application Consultation 25/00773/F. Proposed Horse Arena (Menage) at 121 Small Lode Upwell PE14 9BL. The Upwell Planning Group supports this application. The previous owner used to keep multiple horse and animals on these paddocks, and the land was in a drastic state of neglect...This owner has made significant improvements. It is completely screened from the road by high hedges. Noted positive comments from environmental etcetera, it will make better use of this land without impacting the area.
- Planning Application Consultation 25/00983/F. Erection of part 2-storey and part single-storey extension including demolition with associated external works at Plawfield House 66 Baptist Road Upwell Wisbech PE14 9DU. Upwell Planning Group supports this application. The design is well laid out incorporating the existing dwelling, which will benefit from the overall modernisation into a family home. The site is adequately sized to accommodate the proposed extensions without being over developed. There are no Highways issues given there is already existing residential access to the site.

The Council approved the decisions made by the planning working group.

- ii. To discuss Low Side land sale: Cllr Robinson reported a parishioner will put in a proposal at the next meeting. There has been no response from a previous contact. Cllr Fairbrother said the sale of the land would need to go to tender and would need to be advertised.
- iii. To discuss agricultural land rent and Low Side land contract: Cllr A. Harrison said the land rent would be deferred until the next meeting.
The agricultural contract for Low Side is currently on a yearly rolling contract. He asked Council to consider changing this in line with the other land contracts, currently five years. Cllr Judd queried what crop was on March Riverside allotment. Cllr Fairbrother proposed a two-year contract Cllr Robinson said as another proposal was forthcoming for the sale of the land he did not think this was a good plan. This will be discussed after the proposal next month.
- iv. To discuss Cemetery report from the Clerk: The Chair asked Cllr Shorting to speak, she said a meeting had taken place at the cemetery. She is waiting for a third quote for repair of the tarmac path. Cllr Shorting is getting quotes to move the fencing between the allotments and the cemetery. The Clerk reported she still needs details regarding the trees for TPO that need cutting down.

The Clerk has recently been on a training course; she reported other cemeteries are lifting their 99-year leases and cutting down to 75 or 50 years as there is a shortage of burial grounds. The Council did not approve this for Upwell cemetery.

The Clerk reported a topple test is due on the gravestones and will be discussed by the finance committee at the budget meeting in October.

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12th August 2025

Upwell Parish Council

Currently there are no fees for change of ownership on Exclusive Rights of Burial (EroB) which is very time consuming the Clerk suggested £50 fees for parishioners and £100 for non-parishioners. The Council approved this.

9. To note any Health and Safety issues:

- Cllr Carr has trimmed overgrowth at School Rd/Workhouse Lane.
- The groundsman has cut the overgrowth at Dovecote Rd.
- The old garage on Croft Road is also overgrown again. Clerk will see if there are contact details. Cllr Shorting will speak with a neighbour to see if they can help with contact details.

10. Finance

i. To note payments made since last meeting: these were noted.

Payments for August 2025 Authorisation					
Payee	Goods/Services	VAT	TOTAL	DD/EP electronic payment /direct debit	Supplier/Service
Melanie Hilton expenses	191.00	33.00	224.00	EP	HMRC allowance for home working, SLCC Cemetery Training Course
Salaries	3002.09		3002.09		
Melanie Hilton				EP	105 Hours Clerk 10 hours village hall
Village hall cleaner				EP	31.5 Village Hall cleaner hours
HMRC	793.34	0.00	793.34	EP	Month 4
Nest Pension Scheme	128.47	0.00	128.47	DD	Clerks pension
Groundsman				EP	37 Groundsman Hours
Cemetery gardener				EP	10 hours garden cemetery
ASB	30.00	0.00	30.00	EP	Bus stops cleaned
EFS	44.82	8.96	53.78	EP	Black bin bags
Nurture	390.87	78.17	469.04	EP	Cemetery grass cutting June 25
Mundo Mac	6525.00	1305.00	7830.00	EP	Final invoice for riverside railings (pd 14/7/25)
Limetree	1037.23	0.00	1037.23	EP	Summer magazine printing
Middle Level Commissioners	1445.19	0.00	1445.19	EP	Agricultural drainage rates
Upwell Drainage Board	1016.95	0.00	1016.95	EP	Agricultural drainage rates
Needham and Laddus drainage board	119.13	0.00	119.13	EP	Agricultural drainage rates
Andrew Harrison	125.00	0.00	125.00	EP	New post and gate at allotments Stonehouse Rd
Outwell Timber	42.16	8.44	50.60	EP	allotment gate materials
Upwell Village Hall	27.50	0.00	27.50	EP	Hall Hire 14/7/25
Cozens	108.00	21.60	129.60	SO	Street Light Maintenance
WAVE	49.21	0.00	49.21	DD	Water for Cemetery
Veolia	171.00	34.20	205.20	DD	Waste disposal
TOTAL	15,246.96	1,489.37	16,736.33		

- ii. **To note income and expenditure balances reconciled from the previous month:** these were noted. Cllr Robinson asked where the recharge was for the cleaner. The Clerk explained the cleaner is paid by the Parish Council and is covered by their payroll provider. The cleaner's salary along with the waste contract is recharged to the village hall, this will show on September cashbook.
- iii. **To note income and expenditure balances reconciled for the Village Hall account:** these were noted.
- iv. **To discuss a new laptop for the Clerk:** a quote was circulated this was approved unanimously.

11. To propose any items for the next agenda: please advise the Clerk at least a week before the next meeting date.

- Freebridge bungalow at Small Lode
- Safety Cameras Team Partnership
- Lakes End pavements and traffic mirrors
- Financial Regulations
- Land rents and land to rear of 37 Small Lode

Cllr Carr said he had met with Sarah Taylor the Police Commissioner.

Cllr Shorting said one of the litterbins had been vandalised at the playing field.

12. To note the date of the next Parish Council meeting –8th September 2025 at 7pm at Upwell Village Hall.

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12th August 2025

Upwell Parish Council

13. Close: the meeting closed at 19.55pm

Signed by the Chair Date