
Upwell Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Upwell Parish Council, Monday 13th July 2026, 7pm

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

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

Public: two

Apologies: None

MINUTES

- 1. Welcome and opening remarks:** Cllr Spikings welcomed everyone to the meeting. Cllr Kiddell was introduced to members.
- 2. To consider and approve apologies for absence:** No apologies this month.
- 3. To disclose any conflicts or financial interests related to items on this month's agenda:** Councillor Spikings has declared an interest in all planning applications.
- 4. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting:** Cllr Pope referred to the new Standing Orders, reference 17m, which states that a councillor may request a recorded vote so that each councillor's vote is recorded in the minutes. This request should be made either immediately before or immediately after the vote. The Chair approved and signed the minutes.
- 5. Public Forum (15 minutes):**
 - A member of the public asked whether item 11i would be discussed at the meeting. The Clerk explained the planning application procedure and invited the parishioner to raise any concerns with the Council. They declined and left the meeting.
 - Cllr Kiddell advised the Council that Community Fund money had been allocated to the Fire Service and that Members' Highway Fund money had been ringfenced to support more cost-effective spending.
 - She had recently attended Upwell Academy, where pupils had completed a survey on road traffic and speeding. She will take the findings to a Highways meeting on Tuesday 14th July. She also noted that Upwell Academy is not in a 20mph zone and will raise this with Highways.
 - Recycling Centres update: from Monday 13 July, all electrical items, batteries, light bulbs and fluorescent tubes will be accepted. A question was raised about whether Crimplesham Recycling Centre could open on Wednesdays.
 - Cllr Kiddell has a meeting with Middle Level Commissioners in August, where she will discuss riverbank cutting along St Peters Road and Town Street.
 - Cllr Carr asked that Cllr Kiddell be made aware that large tractors are passing the school and ignoring the weight restrictions.
 - She gave an update on Dodds Stile: this was from an email with the Countryside Access Officer, it said: Dodds Stile footpath crosses land owned by a parishioner. There is an ongoing dispute about the width and position of the footpath which was triggered by the parishioner installing a gate which there was no previous record of. Eventually it was decided to 'decide' these matters with the parishioner submitting a DMMO application, as he states in his email to the Council. That case is currently being researched by the Legal Orders Team and we hope will be adjudicated upon soon. NCC only owns the surface of the land for the purposes of its maintenance. The parishioner owns the freehold ownership of the subsoil.

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NCC view is that they don't think it is appropriate to pursue installing a noticeboard on the right of way. Cllr Kiddell wished to make everyone aware that although she does not live locally, she is always available by telephone or email.

6. To discuss and consider the Action Log from previous meetings:

- Townley Close grit bin: Cllr A. Harrison will complete this work.
- Cemetery trees: to be discussed under item 10.
- Dodds Stile: discussed under public forum.
- High-risk headstones have been laid down. It was agreed that yellow tags would remain on the identified medium-risk gravestones until Christmas 2026, so relatives who may visit only once a year are made aware of any headstone issues.

7. To note and discuss any correspondence:

- Dodds Stile: this was discussed under public forum.
- Old streetlamps: a parishioner asked whether, if a particular streetlamp is ever replaced, they could have it for their collection. The Council approved the request.

8. To discuss writing to owners of neglected graves:

- Cllr Judd will prepare a list and pass it to the Clerk.
- A bench was identified as requiring attention. The Clerk will write to the owner.
- Recent grave-digging work by AJ Coggles at Upwell Cemetery caused concern for neighbouring grave owners. The Clerk will write to AJ Coggles and ask them to be more considerate in future.

9. To discuss PROW cutting: Cllrs Judd and Robinson will inspect the condition of the PROWs, and the matter will be discussed at the next meeting.

Parishioners identified two locations, Marmont Lock and New Road, both of which have been cut by Cllr Judd.

10. To receive an update on the CIL applications: the Clerk informed the Council that both applications had been successful.

- Work to trim the cemetery trees and repair the roadway can now begin.
- Village Hall works were discussed in detail. Cllr Carr asked whether resin had been applied to the front wall when it was insulated. Cllr Fairbrother confirmed that it had and will check whether resin will also be applied before future insulation works.

The vote in favour of the works was as follows: proposed by Cllr Pope and seconded by Cllr Fairbrother. Cllrs A. Harrison, K Harrison, Hartley, Rose, Judd, Aston and Robinson approved; Cllrs Shorting, Spikings and Carr abstained; and Cllr Gooch voted against.

11. Reports from individual Councillors, Council Groups and Clerk

i. To consider planning applications:

- Planning Application Consultation 26/00580/OM. Outline application with some matters reserved for proposed residential development of up to 15 dwellings at W J Brighty & Son Ltd St Peters Road Upwell PE14 9EN. Upwell Parish Council Planning Group initially object to this application. Whilst it is appreciated that this is an Outline Application with some Matters Reserved, Upwell Parish Council are of the opinion that a proposed development of this size requires much more detail with regard to foul and surface water disposal. With regards to foul water

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disposal, there are ongoing issues with the adjacent Blunt's Orchard development, including a current planning application for two new dwellings. Given the close proximity of this proposed site, Upwell Parish Council believes similar concerns exist, therefore more details are required. Can the existing vacuum mains sewage system cope? With regards to surface water disposal, the proposed attenuation pond is close to the Upwell Cemetery, which is monitored for water levels, which may have an impact on future burials. Details of the attenuation pond and subsequent overflow system should be submitted to satisfy the requirements of the Internal Drainage Board. Surface water disposal was also an issue with the adjacent Blunt's Orchard development. The access onto St Peter's Road is not suitable with the current condition of the road, in particular the camber towards the river and damaged curbing as a result of years of HGV traffic in & out of the proposed site. There is restricted visibility to the north when cars are parked outside the row of terraced houses, and cars also being parked close to the site access. With no off road parking for these dwellings, this issue cannot be easily overcome and therefore poses a risk for vehicles exiting the development. The Parish Council also believes there are insufficient local employment opportunities to warrant another large development, with new residents having to travel further afield for employment, which in turn does not benefit the existing local community. Upwell Parish Council would reconsider its response if more details of the above were submitted at Outline rather than Reserved Matters, so that there is clarity on these issues.

The Council had a discussion regarding this, saying the adjacent dyke had not had water in for many years. Regarding parking the row of terrace houses nearby also do not have any parking facilities.

- **VARIATION OF CONDITION 2 OF PLANNING PERMISSION 25/00008/F:** Demolition of existing conservatory and separate garage building, with erection of single storey rear extension with attached garage and new sunroom to side at Sunningdell 23 Town Street Upwell PE14 9AF. The Upwell Parish Council Planning Group supports this application as there appears to be no material considerations.

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

- ii. **To discuss recent planning training provided by King's Lynn Borough Council:** *Cllr Spikings*. Cllr Spikings asked which Planning Working Group members had attended the Borough Council training. Cllr A Harrison attended in person. Cllr Aston said the link had not worked but that she had since received and completed the online training. Cllrs Fairbrother, Gooch and Hartley had not completed the training. Cllr Spikings asked Cllr Hartley how he could make an informed judgement on planning applications without completing the training. Cllr Hartley said he noted the point. Cllr Spikings said this reflected poorly on the Parish Council, which serves more than 2,000 parishioners. Neighbourhood CIL monies also need to be considered. Any councillor interested in planning may attend the training when it becomes available.

Cllr Gooch said she would resume responding to the Planning Working Group on future planning applications soon.

It was agreed that future planning applications for five or more dwellings will be considered by Full Council. As planning applications have a 21-day response period, an extraordinary meeting may be required.

- iii. **To receive an update on Upwell cemetery:** *Cllr Rose*

Cllr Rose provided paperwork to councillors to support an informed decision. He reported that conveyancing is now in place and that the Land Registry process will also be completed. A planning application will be required to change the use of the land. It was approved that the land should include 10 metres on either side for cremated remains, with a 1.5-metre footpath running through the centre. Cllr Rose will complete the planning application as the next step. When the allotments are needed for burials or cremations, tenants will be given one year's notice and offered a new allotment at March Riverside.

- iv. **To receive an update on War Memorial:** *Cllr A Harrison*

Weed treatment: During the week commencing 15th June, weed killer was applied to the grassed area of the War Memorial. The spray was supplied by Cllr K Harrison and Cllr A Harrison completed the work free of charge. This removed the majority of perennial weeds.

Grass cutting and general maintenance: During the week commencing 29th June, Tim completed the first War Memorial grass cut for some time. The delay was largely due to the wet start of June, followed by hot, dry weather.

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During the same week, the boundary hedges were cut and the path was swept. The yew hedge is expected to be trimmed to shape this week.

Ongoing monitoring: The grass will be monitored for further weed growth and treated as needed. Some ground-cover weeds may require a second spray. Further grass cutting is unlikely until sufficient rain has fallen, reached the grass through the Scots pine canopy, and allowed it to regenerate.

Fence and pillar capping: The War Memorial fence and pillar capping have not been painted for several years and would benefit from cleaning and repainting. The Community Payback Team is believed to have completed the last painting work. Councillors could assist with this task, as there is no budget for a contractor, although the Council would need to cover the cost of materials.

Contractor availability: It was noted that Tim does not work solely for, and is not contracted exclusively to, Upwell Parish Council. When work falls behind due to circumstances outside anyone's control, he must also accommodate other customers. He empties the bins regularly and aims to keep other tasks as consistent as possible.

v. To receive an update on the allotments: *Cllr A. Harrison*

Initial fly-tipping incident: A few weeks ago, wood chippings and silver birch trunk sections and branches were dumped in the allotment car park. The timber was cleared by Cllr A Harrison and one tenant, while other tenants took the wood chippings. Empty drinks cans and bottles were also found among the dumped material. It is suspected that the gate had been left open while a tenant was working out of sight at the far end of the allotments. All tenants have been asked to close the gate while working on their plots.

Second incident: Two weeks ago, a further load was dumped after the culprit drove over the flimsy fencing at the side of the access. This consisted of conifer chippings and unchipped conifer sections. The incident occurred late one afternoon. Cllr A Harrison believes he may have seen the culprit driving along Town Street shortly before a tenant arrived at the allotments and alerted him. An appeal for information was posted on Facebook, as at least two unmarked tree-surgery gangs had been working nearby that day, but no useful information was received.

Access improvements: On Friday 3rd July, Cllr A Harrison installed a line of timber posts set in concrete. The work was difficult because of rubble and cobbles just below the surface, followed by very hard ground. Cllr K Harrison loaned a generator so a breaker could be used to dig holes to a suitable depth. Outwell Timber supplied heat-damaged posts and post mix at a reduced cost, as the bent and warped posts were unsuitable for retail sale. An allotment tenant, Yvan Seth, kindly fixed surplus wire fencing from his plot to the posts. The sides of the access should now be more secure. However, if the culprit returns, there is a concern that material may be tipped in front of the gate, which would be harder to clear quickly without suitable machinery.

Plot use and waiting list: All allotment plots are in good use, except for one recently vacated double plot and one overgrown plot. The tenant of the overgrown plot has been made aware of its condition, and it will be monitored. There is currently no waiting list.

vi. To receive an update on Upwell village hall: *Cllr Aston*

Bookings and events: The hall continues to attract event bookings alongside its regular hirers. The latest Spiritualist evening was well attended.

The planned Fen Spirits event had to be cancelled due to low ticket sales. This was disappointing, but a minimum number of bookings is needed for the event to run. It is hoped that the event can be tried again in the near future.

Yard Sale: With support from Brian and Linda Carr, the hall is organising its own Yard Sale on 13th September. Planning is well under way. The hall will be available for residents living outside the centre of the parish, giving them an opportunity to take part.

The response to the Yard Sale will be reviewed before deciding whether to hold similar events in future.

Flooring works: The planned replacement flooring in the vestibule and kitchen has been completed. At the last meeting, it was agreed that the flooring in the gents' toilets should also be replaced, both to improve appearance and to make cleaning easier.

Refurbishment plans: The committee is looking forward to beginning the hall refurbishment now that the CIL grant has been awarded. The work will include insulation, decorating, installing lights kindly donated by committee member Pat Moat, and updating the reception area, including lowering the ceiling. The hall may need to close for a few weeks while the work is carried out, although tradespeople may be able to work around existing hires. The work is unlikely to begin before January 2027, when the hall is usually quieter.

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Future priorities and funding: The refurbishment list continues to grow. Not all items are major works, and the committee will continue fundraising to cover many of the smaller items without needing to ask the Council for support.

All refurbishment works will be prioritised according to urgency and merit.

Car park markings: The parking lines in all tarmac car parks have been repainted. The Playing Field Committee organised the work, and it was agreed that the hall spaces should be included.

Hall manager role: Some committee members felt the cost of the hall manager's services was too high, so an hourly rate was offered instead. The hall manager has decided to step down but will remain in post until a replacement or alternative arrangement is found.

12. Health and Safety Issue:

- It was noted that weeds are growing prominently in front of many properties. It was suggested that an article be included in the parish magazine.

13. Finance

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

Payments for July 2026 Authorisation

Payee	Goods/Services	VAT	TOTAL	DD/EP electronic payment /direct debit	Supplier/Service
Melanie Hilton expenses	42.71	2.75	45.46	EP	HMRC allowance for home working, paper
Salaries	2979.26	0.00	2979.26		
Melanie Hilton				EP	105 Hours Clerk 12 hours village hall
Charlotte Hilton				EP	31 hours Village Hall cleaner hours
HMRC	1038.05	0.00	1038.05	EP	Month 3
Nest Pension Scheme	136.75	0.00	136.75	DD	Clerks pension
Upwell Village Hall	24.00	0.00	24.00	EP	Hall hire paid into wrong bank acct by Outwell PC
Tim Dewdney				EP	42 Groundsman Hours
Kelvin Judd				EP	5 hours garden cemetery plus £10 spray
HHA	400.00	80.00	480.00	EP	Grass cutting for June at cemetery
British Heart Foundation	235.00	47.00	282.00	EP	battery for defib at village hall (pd 10/6/26)
Upwell Computers	30.00	0.00	30.00	EP	Carry out full system clean to remove unwanted search engine extension
Limetree	937.23	0.00	937.23	EP	Summer magazine printing
Purple Graphic Design	265.00	0.00	265.00	EP	Magazine design and production
WAVE	35.06	0.00	35.06	DD	Water for Cemetery
Cozens	108.00	21.60	129.60	SO	Street Light Maintenance
Veolia	189.68	37.94	227.62	DD	Waste disposal
SSE	264.56	13.23	277.79	DD	Street Light Energy
TOTAL	6,685.30	202.52	6,887.82		

- ii. **To note income and expenditure balances reconciled from the previous month:** these were noted.
- iii. **To note income and expenditure balances reconciled for the Village Hall account:** these were noted.
- iv. **To note signing of month end bank statements.** Cllr Spikings checked the bank statements against the cashbook, confirmed them as correct, and signed them accordingly.
- v. **To discuss changing insurance providers:** the Clerk presented a report explaining that a three-year deal had been secured to significantly reduce insurance costs. The proposal was made by Cllr Aston, seconded by Cllr Fairbrother, and unanimously approved by the Council.

14. For agenda item proposals: kindly notify the Clerk no later than one week prior to the upcoming meeting date.

- Cemetery
- PRoW's

15. To note the date of the Full Council Meeting – 10th August 2026 at 7pm at Upwell Village Hall.

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16. Close: the meeting closed at 8.28pm

Signed by the Chair Date