

Assington Parish Council

Clerk Christine Hargan 4 Northfield Road, Onehouse, Stowmarket IP14 3HF –
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Minutes of the meeting of Assington Parish Council on Monday 28th July 2025

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Andrew Hill (Vice-Chair), Tony Howcroft, Bronwen Stacey & David Wiles.

In attendance: DCllr Lee Parker, CCllr James Finch, Christine Hargan (Clerk) and 2 members of the community.

25701 **Apologies** for absence
Cllr Simon Thorogood

25702 **Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation**
There were none

25703 Agree **Minutes** of Assington Parish Council meeting held on 2nd June 2025
Minutes were resolved to be accurate and signed by Cllr Hill. There were no Matters Arising

27604 County and District Councillor reports and **public forum**
County Council Report CCllr Finch having previously circulated his report updated the meeting on:

- Bus services. The County Council have gained additional funds and are seeking views from the community on the services offered. Currently there is a single bus stop in the village –the Parish Council need to confer with bus users to establish whether changes are required to the existing service. It was resolved to place a questionnaire in the bus stop as the most logical way to reach current users and request that responses are posted through Cllr Hill's door in order that responses can be distributed to CCllr Finch by the next meeting.
- Solar farms The CC objects to plans for North Suffolk Solar Farms,
- Funding for SEND pupils. There is sufficient additional support for 200 additional spaces for units schools throughout the county.
- A Dementia Marketplace has been held with information to help families and individuals to cope with dementia.
- Safer and Stronger Communities Board have endorsed a strategy for problems related to violence against women and girls marking a shift in attitudes toward personal safety in the home – it is acknowledged that men suffer from domestic violence and also need support.
- Exhibition at The Hold re Maritime Past until 27 September
- Fostering and adoption in the county is now part of East Anglian Group and currently is in need of 150 new foster parents. They are canvassing for additional families initially on a local level.
- National Grid working stations are now active and a local property in Leavenheath under the path of the cables has been compulsorily purchased allowing the elderly residents to move.
- Councillors asked whether a decision had been made on whether Norfolk and Suffolk Police will continue to enforce 20mph speed limits. CCllr Finch agreed to revert on the topic following further investigation. Historically the answer was always that they will if the resource is there. Cllr Wiles to forward the email correspondence from the local Police coordinator to CCllr Finch.

District Council report DCllr Lee Parker

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There are a couple of big items :

- Local government reorganisation. A decision following consultation with residents will be made before the end of the year as to whether there will be one or multiple unitary councils; it is likely to be a convoluted process. One perceived fear relates to the planning function. It has been confirmed that there will not be any government funding for developing Neighbourhood Plans. However, there may be an opportunity for funding from Babergh for Neighbourhood Plans that are currently in progress to help with an environmental impact study. It was noted that 95% of planning applications in the district are decided by the planning officer, but despite this, central government were seeking to reduce District Councillors' involvement in making planning decisions.
- CIL continues to be a concern but it does deliver.
Question Government is not changing the weight of NPs in the short term and weight and influence is afforded to those parishes with a plan. The housing targets have not changed at the moment, with Assington's target estimated to be 90 additional homes over 20 years. However, it may be that in the future that more housing is aimed toward the towns and this figure could realistically be considered a maximum one. Every application will be considered using the NP and the Joint Local Plan. Any additional development agreed prior to the commencement of the government figures will not be counted toward the new requirement.

Cllr David Busby sadly died on the 27th July. The Clerk was requested to record the Parish Council's thanks for his service over the years.

Public Forum

Two members of the public were welcomed and asked the following questions Why has Google Maps removed the name of Warmingford Road, from the map? The road is now listed as Small Bridge Entry. Cllr Howcroft submitted a request for a correction to Google during the meeting to correct the name.

25705

Planning:

a. Planning applications:

[DC/25/03140](#) Braes Farm Further Street Assington CO10 5LE

Application to determine if approval is required for a: Change of Use of Agricultural Units and Buildings to Dwellinghouses . Councillors discussed the detail of the application and saw no conflict with the neighbourhood plan, and so resolved no comment.

[DC/25/02952](#) The Nook The Street Assington CO10 5LW

Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/24/05303 - Conditions 5 (Materials), 6 (Landscaping Scheme) and 9 (Biodiversity Enhancement) Councillors discussed the detail of the application and saw no conflict with the neighbourhood plan, and so resolved no comment.

[DC/25/02903](#) Cotton Wood Barracks Road Assington CO10 5LP

Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/21/02579 - Condition 17 (Mitigation Licence for Great Crested Newt) Councillors discussed the detail of the application and saw no conflict with the neighbourhood plan, and so resolved no comment.

[DC/25/03224](#) Aisling House The Street Assington CO10 5LW

Application relating to DC/24/00438 variation of Condition 2 (Approved plans and documents) Councillors discussed the detail of the application

and saw no conflict with the neighbourhood plan, and so resolved no comment.

[DC/25/02981](#) 5 Woodfield The Street Assington Sudbury Suffolk CO10 5LN

Erection of a Single Storey side extension Councillors discussed the detail of the application and saw no conflict with the neighbourhood plan, and so resolved no comment.

b. Consider any planning application received since the agenda was posted
There were none

c. Status of **planning applications** were noted

Whilst the land at Meadow Way was granted planning permission, in part conflicting with the Neighbourhood Plan, Councillors noted that the NP still significantly influenced the development in terms of location, the type of properties built, and the protection of the remainder of the field.

25706 Agree actions on Correspondence and emails circulated to Councillors by the Clerk
One person has expressed interested in becoming a Councillor. Cllr Hill agreed to contact the person to establish if they are still willing. The further vacancy will be publicised via Facebook

25707 Agree any actions required after reviewing the Clerk's Report

25708 **Finance**

- Receive the RFO report.
Acknowledged
- Reconciliation of accounts against budget
Acknowledged
- Authorise payments made/to be made and note income received since last meeting
- Acknowledged

25709 **Review any issues raised for the Licensed Path, Footpaths and APC's Assets**

Resurfacing of the footpaths leading to the Village Hall, it appears that all of the titles to the land on which the footpath stands have been split since the agreement was signed and there is now an indeterminate number of landowners some of whom may not know they potentially own a section of the footpath. It was acknowledged that resurfacing the footpath is still required. Cllr Howcroft agreed to approach the land owners to establish permission between the village hall and the Assington Barn as a starting point.

A footpath warden has been found and gratitude has been expressed to them for taking on the role.

Cllr Wiles will meet with a representative from BDC this week to discuss whether an application from the Central CIL pot for accessible gates providing entry to the Thicks for people with disabilities would be worthwhile and ditto regarding gym equipment to the playing field. Clerk to contact Chair to establish whether he's discussed the matter with the land owner.

25710 **Neighbourhood Plan review**

A Working Party is to be established and will be led for the parish council by Cllr Hill. Following communication with the previous consultant Places 4 People the estimate is that the costs for updating the plan and including site allocations could be between £9,935

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and £11,825 +VAT. Given the importance of maintaining an up to date plan in the face of hugely increasing housing targets, it was resolved to initially apportion £10,000 of CIL money to cover these charges. Cllr Hill will commence the project.

25711 Shoulder of Mutton

On behalf of the Parish Council, Cllr Hill has been proactive in engaging with a number of parties regarding the pub and it is clear the only way to get it reopened quickly is for a new private tenant to lease the property. However, given the importance of the pub to the village (97% support at the time of the last neighbourhood plan survey) it is necessary to consider what the Parish Council could do if that fails.

Whilst the councillors are very concerned about the future of the pub, it was agreed that consultation with residents was needed to establish the support for any community initiative in running or owning the pub. It was also noted that for a community interest company to purchase or lease the pub, multiple independent valuations of the property would be required, and that any use of public funds to invest in the business would only be justifiable at the level of these independent valuations. Any options along these lines would take a significant amount of time to develop, and it was reiterated that a new private tenant taking on the pub was the best outcome in the near term.

DCllr Parker discussed the legal powers that the District Council has in relation to viable pubs left closed by their owners. It was noted that the pub had already been made an Asset of Community Value and would remain so until 2030, at which point the Parish Council expects that renewal would be sought to 2035 and beyond. It was also noted that the pub has very substantial protections against it being converted to private housing in the neighbourhood plan (which forms part of planning law upon which applications are decided).

Following discussion it was resolved for Cllrs Hill and Howcroft to form a Working Party with the aim of getting the pub up and running again, to gain information on, and if appropriate set up a community interest company for use in the future if needed. Cllr Parker agreed to enquire what if any help could be gained from Babergh District Council and has agreed to provide as much support as possible. Clerk had already forwarded information and advice from Simon Lanning (BDC Grants Department) and an offer for advice and support from one such business if required.

The Parish Council noted that the recent closure of the pub was of no fault of the owners, and wished to record their thanks to the owners of the pub for their very positive engagement with them throughout this difficult period.

25712 Parish Council website

Due to revised legislation, it is now necessary for Parish Councils to have a unique domain. Clerk has established the most economical route to gaining this with the current provider. A “.gov.uk” domain will cost £25, and can be used with the existing hosting package, part of which would include migrating the data from the existing site to the new site. Clerk costed the provision of 8 domain associated email addresses at £192. Bringing the total with hosting domain and 8 email addresses to £258 per year. The domain with hosting and a single associated email address for the clerk will bring the total to £116 per year, although the costs will need to be confirmed with the supplier.

Following discussion, the council resolved to do the necessary in order to comply with legislation and purchase a domain with one email address for the Clerk. All

correspondence will in future come via the Clerk and that will be the only email address published for the parish council.

25713 Questions to the Chair

The Parish Council wished to record thanks to Mr Braithwaite and his team for their work in clearing the front of the pub.

25714 Time date and place of next meeting Monday 29th September to be held in Assington Village Hall at 7.00pm.

The meeting was closed at 20.53 pm

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**Appendix
County and District Council reports**

[News » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#), [Council news - Suffolk County Council](#)

Status of Planning applications, Thain bungalow has been granted.

Actions

Minute	Action	Who	Complete
	Planning comments to BDC	Clerk/AH	✓
	Pay suppliers	Clerk/Cllrs	✓
	Review planning applications prior to meetings	AH	✓
24709	Contact Hartleys Gardens re advice on planting the two triangles to bear in mind that deer may graze on the plants and that there is a sign post in the centre of the triangle in and that vehicles park on the green close to threeways awaiting response from Hartleys Rose Green	Clerk	✓
25109	Roses in Rose Green hardy shrubs Mahonia Contact Hartley's Gardens to plant Roses on Rose Green and Mahonia shrubs on the other green also to cut the bushes at the wild life / conservation area in February and to add the paths into the cutting schedule for next Financial year.	Clerk	✓
24904	Consider projects requiring the use of Locality Budget	All	
25108	Send Precept demand to BDC	Clerk	✓
25106	Advise Kernos Centre that no grant is available	Clerk	✓
25306	Clerk received a report of water from a treatment plant in the village behind the conservation area potentially being discharged into the brook it is being investigated, AW is investigating job no 27301259 straight. Post meeting note. AW Issue closed fault is	Clerk	✓

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	with BDC. Environmental Health is investigating.		
25309	Contact Richard Hartley regarding hedges in the Street, the Allotments and conservation area to ensure that they are cut. And instruct him to liaise with Cllr Stacey regarding the two triangles at Rose Green and Threeways	Clerk	✓
25309	Contact Chris Mortimer contracts regarding surfacing the footpath between the village hall and shop to ensure that it is usable in all weathers	Clerk	✓
25309 25616	Enquire about a wheelchair accessible gate to be placed at the entrance to The Thicks. Gain permission from the land owner. And then gain quotations. Cllr Howcroft to establish land ownership. Clerk to forward agreement / licence to TH Clerk to establish additional names to quote Meet contractors on site	Chair TH Clerk Clerk DW	Ongoing ✓ ✓
25309	Report footpath sign being removed from the Meadow Way	Clerk	✓
25615	Send annual/audit related documents to relevant parties	Clerk	
25609	Appoint additional councillor(s) to review planning applications prior to meeting and further councillor to check accounts prior to internal audit		ongoing
25614	Wheelchair accessible gate to the Thicks Contact BDC re funding – post meeting note, preap	Clerk/ Chair	✓

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	complete feedback awaited Gain additional quotes and speak to land owner if appropriate		
25614	Complete unitary council questionnaire	AH	✓
25620	Update Financial Regs, Standing Orders and Internal Control and then publish on website.	Clerk	✓
25616	Report fallen/damaged signage to SCC	Clerk	✓
25616	Respond to resident re signage	Clerk	✓
25622	Discuss dangerous driving through village and lack of Police action with CClr Finch	DW	✓
25622	Neighbourhood Plan update, approach Consultant for costs etc	AH	✓
25704	Place a box in the bus stop for suggestions to improve bus services to the village	AH	
25704	Forward email to CClr Finch from Police relating to discontinuing speed monitoring in the Street	DW	
25706	Check whether Cllr Thorogood has spoken to the landowner re installing additional wheelchair friendly gates to the Thicks	Clerk	
25706	Contact potential Councillor to confirm whether still interested in the role	AH	
25709	Section of permissive footpath closest to Village hall, Ask home owners whether they will agree to the PC resurfacing	TH	
25710	Neighbourhood Plan - apportion £10,000 of CIL money toward the cost of a review.	Clerk	
25711	Set up a Working Party and	AH,TH	

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	subsequently consider a Community Interest Group, lest it is needed moving forwards in regards to the pub		
25712	Set up Parish Website with a .gov.uk domain and purchase a single associated email address for use by Clerk. All correspondence to be through that address and forwarded to Cllrs	Clerk	

8 Finance Report

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Bank Reconciliation to Date				
	2024 - 25		2025 - 26	
Income				
Balance Brought Forward from year end accounts	TBC	£88,874.16		£91,257.18
	Budget	Year End	Budget	YTD
Grants P3 grass cutting	400.00	385.68	400.00	0.00
Grants other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank Interest	2,000.00	2,427.01	2,000.00	565.60
Other = Donations, rebanked cheques Jubilee and Allot	360.00	360.00	360.00	360.00
CIL	0.00	1,599.50	0.00	4,589.04
Precept	10,000.00	10,000.00	9,600.00	4,800.00
VAT Repayment	0.00	1,154.19	0.00	0
Total Income	12,760.00	£15,926.38	£12,360.00	£10,314.64
Expenditure	s exclude VAT where paid as it is reclaimed, and is shown as VA			
Staff Costs, salaries, HMRC, Payroll, expenses	5,000.00	3,612.90	5,000.00	1,449.64
Admin	300.00	300.19	300.00	157.20
Subscriptions	294.00	282.69	294.00	0.00
Donations	1,100.00		1,100.00	0.00
Street Lighting	900.00	0.00	900.00	0.00
CIL	300.00	7,765.75		0.00
Insurance	460.00	264.00	300.00	0.00
Audit	1,200.00	170.00	460.00	170.00
Grass Cutting (P3 Scheme)	300.00		1,200.00	550.00
Licensed Footpaths	150.00		300.00	0.00
Cut Allotments and Wildlife Area	500.00		150.00	0.00
Contingency	1,400.00	0.00	500.00	
Maintenance	200.00		1,400.00	940.20
Water and associated costs Allotments / Conservation	65.00	0.00	200.00	5.91
Neighbourhood Plan		0.00	0.00	
Bank charges		71.40	65.00	18.00
VAT Paid		£1,076.43	0.00	302.54
Total Expenditure	£9,595.00	£13,543.36	£12,169.00	£3,593.49
Totals BF+ Income - Expenditure		£91,257.18	£24,338.00	£97,978.33
Unity Trust Current Account	31 March 2025	£4,922.97	22 July 2025	£705.18
Unity Trust Deposit Account	31 March 2025	£85,732.05	22 July 2025	£97,273.15
			Total held in bank	£97,978.33

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20485977 • Current T1

£ 705.18

Available: £ 705.18

20485980 • Instant Access

£ 97,273.15

Available: £ 97,273.15

CIL Budget					
	2021/22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25	2025 /26
	Full year	Full year	Start of year	YTD	YTD
Total received in year	£27,719.33	£20,694.71	8,901.31	£1,599.50	4,589.04
Total retained CIL (previous year retained plus new receipts)	£75,311.27	£85,141.28	71,255.86	£63,718.91	£60,542.20
Net retained CIL	£64,446.57	£62,354.55	£62,119.41	£55,953.16	£60,542.20

Payments to be made

- £730.78 Clerk Salary
- £330.00 Hartley Garden Services Footpaths
- £284.30 SALC annual subscription.
- £5.00 Babergh District Council rent for the Wildlife Area
- £49.00 Community Action Suffolk when invoice received for new Website

Payments paid since the last meeting

- As per the minutes
- £12.00 bank charges

Income Received since previous meeting

- £565.60 Bank interest
- £360.00 Allotment rental

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