

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 21st July 2026 at 7.00pm

The Parish Hall, Church Lane, Ufford

Present

Cllr. Vincent Smith (Chair)

Cllr. Keith Bennett

Cllr. Tim Buxbaum

Cllr. Nick Crocker

Cllr. Pat Edworthy

Cllr. Rilla Forge

Cllr. Angela Linforth

Cllr. Nigel Smith

Cllr. Murray Thomas

Cllr. Tig Thomas

County Councillor Stephen Molyneux

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

No members of the public were present

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Apologies for absence:

- a) To Receive Apologies: Apologies had been received from Cllr. David Findley (away). District Councillor Sally Noble had also sent her apologies.
- b) To Accept Apologies: The apologies of Cllr. Findley were proposed as accepted by Cllr. Forge, seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in agreement.

2. To receive any:

- a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - None
- b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - Cllr. V Smith – Item 11 - Treasurer to the Community Hall
 - Cllr. P Edworthy – Item 11 – Trustee to the Community Hall
 - Cllr. Forge – Item 10. f) vi. – As recipient of a refund
- c) Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items
 - None
- d) Declarations of Gifts or Hospitality received over the value of £50.00
 - None
- e) Notification of Lobbying with reference to any Planning Application to be discussed
 - None

3. Public Session:

- a) Reports or comment from any member of the public (notes only):
 - N/A
- b) Reports or comment from ESC and SCC Councillors (notes only):
 - East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble had sent her apologies but her report had been circulated

Chair's initials.....

- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Molyneux's report had been circulated and he expanded on the following items:
 - Locality Budget Grant - £450.00 had been agreed to support the Stocks and Whipping Post refurbishment
 - Work to Ufford Hole - Keen to support and happy for email address to be passed on to LDOG
 - Council Committees – Training continues and committees are now in place
 - Local Plan – Call for Sites for Minerals and Waste is currently underway [see item 8. c)]
 - Energy Technical Summitt - attended
 - Housing – Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils working together and looking for social housing providers to take part in research and monitoring.

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 16th June 2026:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 16th June 2026 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. M Thomas and all Councillors, who were in attendance at the meeting, were in agreement that they be signed. The Clerk agreed to publish the minutes on the website.

Action: Clerk

5. Recreation Ground/Woodlands:

- a) To discuss correspondence from a resident of Ufford Place regarding clearance of paths in Parklands Wood – Correspondence from a resident of Ufford Place had been circulated to all, with reference to clearance of a path behind their property. Cllr. Forge, acting as a representative of the Friends of Parklands Wood, gave details of how the woods had been managed since the 1970s (by Suffolk Coastal before being purchased by Ufford PC), producing maps and photographs from five different eras. She detailed how two formal Public Rights of Way in the wood, were supplemented with a number of other 'permissive' paths, allowing access to the woods for both leisure and woodland management purposes. The maps and aerial photographs showed the location of the paths had not changed with time.

The Management Plan (made in conjunction with the Forestry Commission) of 2015 and the new Plan of 2025, spoke specifically of the need to 'thin' the vegetation on all the pathways and to keep them clear to allow access and for the purpose of managing the woodlands, to fell dead wood and remove invasive species. Cllr. Forge reported that the FPW were a small group of volunteers and could not keep all paths open all of the time. The path closest to Ufford Place had become overgrown but was due to be cleared in the autumn. There would be no new path, just the clearing of the path that had been there since at least 1973.

It was acknowledged that many of the properties in Ufford Place were close to the woods and most had 6' fences with gates for access. It was also acknowledged that the property in question was the closest to the woods but that the owners had chosen not to erect a fence.

Members noted that, following an earlier request from the homeowner, some screening plants had been planted in the last couple of years, but they had not progressed well due to the stony nature of the soil in that location. The Council discussed the possibility of planting hedging plants along the fence line of the property in question but it was agreed that these were unlikely to ~~would not~~ grow due to an amount of rubble behind the property, possibly from the original build, its more recent re-development that enlarged the property, or from the army in the 1940s.

In conclusion, Cllr. Forge proposed that the FPW were given permission to continue to follow the Management Plan in clearing the existing paths within the woods, for the proposed of leisure and management purposes. This was seconded by Cllr. M Thomas and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to draft a reply to the resident and send to all for review.

- b) To receive an update on Woodlands Management (report from Cllr. Forge) – Cllr. Forge reported:

- Management of the paths and brambles continues
- Dog poo continues to be an issue
- 611 'Man-hours' completed in 2026 so far

- c) To receive update on non-authorised activity in Parklands Wood – The Clerk reported that she had had contact from two people regarding the activity next to Redwood Terrace, who were apologetic for the planting of the non-native trees and who were looking forward to the new trees being planted.

- d) To review proposal from BMX Manager on improving the track – The Clerk had circulated a request from the manager of the Ufford BMX track who wished to explore the possibility of improving the surface of the track. Members felt strongly that the facility should remain as it was a good facility for the young people of Ufford. However, there was concern about it growing further into the woodland and attracting many more users from outside of the village, which may result in parking issues, additional noise for local residents and additional litter. In conclusion the Clerk was asked to write to Mr Lynch to request pictures of the style of track he would like to see and ask him to come along to the September meeting to give more details of the project.

Action: Clerk

6. Community Emergency Plan Review – To receive details from working group:

The Clerk reported that Cllrs. M Thomas, Edworthy and Bennett, along with herself, had met to discuss the existing Community Emergency Plan (CEP) and how it could be updated. Cllr. M Thomas had had a great deal of experience in EPs and had suggested a number of ways the document could be improved.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk should work with Cllr. M Thomas to amend the document and send for review at the next meeting.

It was agreed also that the Clerk should investigate the Fridge Magnet Preparation Guides previously available from the Joint Emergency Committee and that a 'Desktop Run-through' of the Plan would be needed each year.

Action: Clerk

7. Planning To discuss and agree responses to the following Planning Applications:

- a) DC/26/2305/TCA - 1no. Walnut (T1 on plan) - Fell - Rosemary Cottage, Lower Street, Ufford – The following comments were made:
- [Comments from the Tree Warden had been circulated]
 - It is a shame to lose any tree but it is far too close to the property and will start to cause damage soon.
 - The tree has a lot more growing to do
 - Conclusion: '**No objection**' (Prop: Cllr. Bennett, Sec: Cllr. Linforth, all in agreement).
- b) TPO/246/2026 - Land Between 1 and 3 Nicholls Close Ufford – To receive notification and to discuss whether to comment to ESC – The Clerk notified Council that she had acknowledged the TPO on the day that it had been made and it was agreed that no further comment needed to be made.

Action: Clerk

8. Other Planning Matters:

- a) To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions – There were no further comments about this report.
- b) To receive update on the refurbishment of the Stocks and Whipping Post – The Clerk reported that the £450.00 grant from Cllr. Molyneux had been agreed and should be received shortly. Cllr. Buxbaum reported that he had not had time to submit the planning application for the work, but would do as soon as possible. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Robertsons to accept the quote to carry out the necessary technical specification work. It was acknowledged that the project was on the Projects List [see item 10. d) and that £5,000 had been estimated.
- c) To discuss the SCC Call for Sites for Minerals and Waste – After discussion it was agreed that Ufford PC had no further role to play in this matter.
- d) To discuss requesting to speak at the ESC Planning Committee (South) meeting on 28th July 2026, with reference to the Yarmouth Road Care Home application (DC/25/1483/OUT) – Cllr. V Smith reported that he had requested to speak at the ESC Planning Committee (South) meeting on 28th July 2026 and was waiting to hear if permission had been granted. If permitted to speak, he would base his speech on the Neighbourhood Plan and how the application was in contradiction to it.

- e) Additional Item - DC/25/3572/OUT – Cllr. N Smith reported that there was still no site notice at this application location. The Clerk was asked to write to the head of Planning and Coastal Management at ESC, to ask for the fact to be recorded on the portal and for the Council's concern about process to be logged.

Action: Clerk, and Cllr. Buxbaum

9. Highways:

- a) Ufford Hole Breach and PRoW – To receive update on the breach and consider a request for a grant towards initial costs – Cllr. V Smith gave a summary of a report produced by Cllr. Findley regarding the first stage of the project to restore the River Deben, the Weir and the Public Right of Way at Hawkeswade Bridge (aka Ufford Hole). This stage involved the de-silting of the river and would cost in the region of £5,500. £1,000 of this cost had already been donated and the Lower Deben Owners Group (LDOG) were asking the Parish Council for a contribution.

Members discussed the situation at length and the following comments were noted:

- This is a very important amenity for Ufford residents
- This is private land but it forms part of a very heavily used circular walk for many people
- This will not reinstate the bridge but the project has to be tackled in stages

In conclusion, Cllr. V Smith proposed a grant, from CIL funds, of £1,500. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.

- b) To discuss next steps to take with reference to implementing a 20 Mph speed limit within the village – The Clerk reported that Melton PC had enquired of SCC as to the possibility of implementing a 20Mph zone and had been quoted £12-15k for the project by SCC, as long as no traffic calming measure were required. After discussion it was agreed that Ufford residents should be asked through an informal poll for their opinion on this subject, and if they were in favour, what roads would be suitable. The Clerk agreed to work with Cllrs. V Smith and T Thomas to produce a draft article for the PUNCH and PUNCHLine, explaining the costs and the impact this would have on other projects.
- c) To receive the latest Footpaths Report and to answer questions raised – The Footpaths warden was thanked for her report. It was suggested that contact should be made with the letting agency of the holiday let in Spring Lane where vegetation was overgrowing the footpath. The Clerk agreed to investigate.
- d) Additional Item – Spring Lane Grit Bin - It was reported that the Grit Bin at the junction of Spring Lane and Barrack Lane had accidentally been hit by the SCC contractor cutting the verges. The Clerk was asked to contact SCC to request a replacement (Cllr. V Smith to provide a photograph).

Action: Clerk and Cllr. V Smith

10. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree Accounts to 30th June 2026 – The Accounts had been prepared and circulated. There were no further comments or questions.
- b) To acknowledge the CIC Quarterly check for Q1 2026/27 – Cllr. Bennett had carried out the role of Councillor Internal Controller on the accounts for the first quarter of 2026/27 and found them to be in order. Cllr. V Smith wished thanks to Cllr. Bennett to be recorded for his work.
- c) To review CIL funding currently held and expiry date for usage – The Clerk had circulated the list of CIL income and expenditure between Oct 2016 and March 2026; and provided a breakdown of the excess funds and spend time limits. The members concluded that there was no urgent requirement to allocate the funds.
- d) To review the Projects List in relation to funding allocation – The Projects List was reviewed and a number of amendments were made. The Clerk was asked to update the list and circulate to all.
- e) To resolved to adopt the new HMRC Mileage Rates from 1st April 2026 – Details of this amendment to HMRC advice had been circulated and Cllr. V Smith proposed the new rates were adopted by the Council. This was seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in agreement.
- f) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
- | | |
|--|---------|
| i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses) | £954.88 |
| ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension) | £196.52 |
| iii. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE and NI) | £205.38 |
| iv. Coastal Building Supplies Ltd (Materials to repair play equipment) | £17.95 |
| v. Mr S Churchyard (Tool for Woodlands Group) | £18.50 |
| vi. R Forge (Petrol for Woodlands Tools) | £10.02 |
| vii. PKF Littlejohn LLP (External Audit) | £252.00 |

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. M Thomas, seconded by Cllr. Bennett with all Councillors voting in favour that the payments be paid. Cllrs. Edworthy and Bennett agreed to authorise the online payments and inspected the invoices.

- d) To note Payments made since last meeting:
- i. None
- e) To note Payments received since last meeting:
- | | |
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| i. Alford Storage (Clothes Bank) | £4.00 |
| ii. Lloyds Bank Plc (Interest) | £5.60 |
| iii. CCLA Investment Income | £102.16 |

The Clerk was asked to contact the Clothes Bank company to ask why contributions had dropped considerably, when donations appeared to have increased.

Action: Clerk

Chair's initials.....

11. Community Hall - To receive monthly update on management of the Hall:

Cllr. V Smith reported that he was still investigating the replacement of the Hall heaters and a full committee meeting would be held shortly to discuss options.

Action: Clerk

12. To receive reports on meetings attended on behalf of the Council:

- River Deben Partnership Meeting – Cllr. V Smith reported that he had attended this meeting in place of Cllr. Findley. It had been reported that the mouth of the Deben was silting up and could cause issues in the future.
- Suffolk Enhanced Passengers Group – Cllr. N Smith reported that he had attended this meeting, which was mainly a lobbying group, Chaired by Simon Barnett , and focused on buses. The meeting was interesting with a number of unusual facts imparted regarding new houses and bus services. Members were asked to alert the Clerk to missing bus timetables at designated stops, as these would be replaced by Mr Barnett.

Action: Clerk

13. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (18th August 2026 (tbc) or 15th September 2026):

It was agreed that a meeting in August would only be held if a planning application needed to be commented on; and that the meeting, if it went ahead, would only focus on planning matters unless there was a very important item to discuss.

It was agreed to include the following items on the agenda of the August or September meetings:

- Conclusion of Audit

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 8.50pm

Signed:.....

Cllr. Vincent Smith - Chair

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....