

# Wickham Bishops Parish Council

## Parish Councillors

I D Wardrop (Chairman)  
Mrs A Mickelsen (Vice Chair)  
H M Bass  
P J Bates  
P D Layley  
S Morgan  
C Nappo  
J Williams



Winner Best Kept Village 2009, 2015  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place Essex Village of the Year 2015  
[www.wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org](http://www.wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org)

## Parish Clerk

Mrs L A Bailey  
Wickham Bishops Parish Council  
The Village Hall  
Church Road  
Wickham Bishops  
Essex  
CM8 3JZ  
07542 190176

[info@wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org](mailto:info@wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org)

Minutes of Statutory Annual Meeting of Wickham Bishops Parish Council held on Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Boardroom	
Item	Subject
24/072	<p><b>Election of Chairman</b> Cllr Bass proposed that Cllr Wardrop continue as Chairman, seconded by Cllr Morgan, all in favour. Cllr Wardrop duly signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.</p>
24/073	<p><b>Appointment of Vice Chairman</b> Cllr Wardrop proposed Cllr Mickelsen as Vice Chairman, seconded by Cllr Nappo, all in favour.</p>
24/074	<p><b>Those Present and Apologies for Absence</b> In the Chair: Cllr Wardrop Present: Cllrs Bass, Bates, Layley, Mickelsen, Morgan, Nappo, the Clerk and Cllr Durham. Apologies were received from Cllr Williams, delayed by transport difficulties. There were no members of the public.</p>
24/075	<p><b>Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework</b> DCllr Morgan would not take part in voting on planning as he may be required to do so at MDC.</p>
24/076	<p><b>Council Reports for 2023/2024</b> The Chairman had suggested this item as a way of updating those present on matters arising through the year.</p> <p><b>Chairman's Report</b> WBPC continued to function with a vacancy. The eight sitting Councillors were all re-elected at the local council elections in May 2023, with no additional candidates coming forward.</p> <p>Monthly surgeries continued in the Library, usually on the third Saturday of the month, between 11am and 12 noon. One surgery saw 15 residents who came along to discuss rumours of a proposed development behind Byron Drive.</p> <p>The long-awaited footway in Tiptree Road from Mackmurdo Place to Snows Corner was eventually completed with a central refuge at the Snows Corner junction, which has improved safety for pedestrians to and from Tiptree Road, Mackmurdo Place, Chantry Grove and Beech Green.</p> <p>Concerns about parking outside One Stop have not gone away.</p> <p><b>Highways &amp; Traffic Calming (Cllr Wardrop)</b> During 98 sessions, the volunteer Speedwatch team recorded 1147 vehicles speeding, 24% of these travelling at over 40mph. MDC's Community Engagement Team caught 611 vehicles speeding during the year.</p>

	<p><b>Planning (Cllr Bass)</b> During the year 2023-24 a total of 64 applications were received, including 8 appeals and 5 TPOs. MDC’s decisions differed from those of the Parish Council in only 9 cases.</p> <p>Despite concerns about development of land to the rear of Byron Drive and on the corner of Grange Road/Roots Lane, no formal applications had been received from MDC. The Parish Council agreed to keep residents informed as soon as there was any news.</p> <p>The second application for 50 houses on land behind 9 Church Road came before MDC’s North West Area Planning Committee in September and despite a recommendation from the planning officer to approve, District Councillors on the Committee voted to refuse. As expected, an appeal was lodged and this was currently with the Planning Inspectorate. Around 150 residents came to an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council in March 2024 when the appeal process and actions were discussed. The Parish Council put forward what it believed to be a strong argument, prepared by a planning expert engaged by the Parish Council, for the appeal to be dismissed. An Action Group, comprising concerned residents, also submitted its case for dismissal of the appeal. Dame Priti Patel MP, who made clear to MDC her support for WBPC and her objections to the application, had also written to the Planning Inspectorate. The Parish Council was grateful for the support of the Action Group, residents and Dame Priti.</p> <p><b>Finance (Cllr Mickelsen)</b> Recognising the need for financial prudence whilst also acknowledging rising prices, the Parish Council successfully managed to maintain the precept for 2024-25 at the same level as the previous year. The Clerk was thanked for her work in preparing the year end accounts which had resulted in a good internal audit report.</p>
24/077	<p><b>Appointment of Members to Committees and Specific Responsibilities</b></p> <p>Unable to commit to Friday meetings in future, members agreed to Cllr Mickelsen remaining on the Planning Committee and a mutually convenient day/time being sought when the need arose for a meeting. Committee membership and responsibilities were agreed as follows:</p> <p><i>Finance Committee:</i> Cllrs Mickelsen (Chair), Wardrop &amp; Williams  <i>Planning Committee:</i> Cllrs Bass (Chair), Mickelsen &amp; Wardrop  <i>Biodiversity Project Group/Environment:</i> Cllr Williams  <i>Traffic Calming &amp; Speedwatch:</i> Cllr Wardrop  <i>Parish Magazine Liaison/Publicity/Website Manager/Social Media:</i> Cllr Bates  <i>District Council Liaison:</i> Cllr Morgan  <i>Highways:</i> Cllr Nappo  <i>Public Rights of Way:</i> Cllr Williams  <i>BHSA:</i> Cllr Williams  <i>Amenities:</i> Cllr Layley  <i>Public Transport:</i> Cllr Layley  <i>Three Parishes Remembrance Day Event Committee:</i> Cllrs Bates &amp; Wardrop</p>
24/078	<p><b>Approval of Minutes</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 were approved as a true record, proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Layley, all in favour.</p>
24/079	<p><b>Chairman’s Report</b> Nothing to report.</p>
24/080	<p><b>Clerk’s Report</b></p> <p>Regarding the possibility of listing The Rectory, members noted that Tim Howson, MDC’s Conservation &amp; Heritage Officer advised that unfortunately the c1930 rectory would not meet the selection criteria for statutory listing.</p>
24/081	<p><b>Public Forum</b> There were no members of the public present.</p>

24/082	<p><b>Co-option of Councillor</b></p> <p>Members noted that the candidate had withdrawn their application having read in the Parish Magazine that WBPC were looking for younger members. The Chairman had assured him that his application would have been considered on its merits regardless of his age. It was agreed that the wording of the advert in the magazine could have been better. <b>Action:</b> Cllr Nappo and the Clerk to look at improving the current advert. In the meantime, Councillors were encouraged to speak to any suitable applicants in the village.</p>
24/083	<p><b>Planning Applications and Decisions</b></p> <p>It was noted that Cllr Morgan would not take part in discussions or voting on Planning Applications as he may be required to do so at MDC. Cllr Bass took the Chair for this item.</p> <p><b>24/00294/HOUSE 1 Heron Way</b> New vehicular access/driveway including erection of gates and necessary infrastructure. Members considered this amended application and acknowledged the email and photographs provided by the applicant. <b>Resolved:</b> Whilst the efforts made to secure the sight line required by ECC were acknowledged, WBPC still believed that the proposal would create a precedent and recommended REFUSAL (proposed Cllr Bass, seconded Cllr Wardrop, 3 in favour, 1 against).</p> <p><b>24/00041/LBC Mrs Salisburys, 2 The Street</b> Install double glazing to 4 x front upstairs windows, 2 x windows to the rear. <b>Resolved:</b> Members had no objection to the proposals and recommended APPROVAL. The Clerk to comment on the fact that the drawings showed a picket fence (no longer in place) close to the frontage of the building which was believed to be part of the listed building consent. The drawings are therefore misleading.</p> <p><b>24/00318/WTPO Pine Trees, The Street</b> Mature Oak, thin canopy by 30% and remove dead wood. Reduce lower major lateral limb back by 3m. Lift canopy by 1m. It was noted that the Tree Warden had no objection to the proposals. <b>Resolved:</b> Members recommended APPROVAL.</p> <p><b>24/00322/HOUSE 44 Byron Drive</b> Part garage conversion with new pitched roof. Changes to fenestration. <b>Resolved:</b> Members had no objection and recommended APPROVAL.</p> <p><u>The following decisions made by MDC were noted:</u></p> <p><b>HOUSE/MAL/24/00147 18 Church Green</b> Single storey rear &amp; side extension. <b>APPROVED</b></p> <p><b>WTPO/MAL/24/00152 Tors Wood Chantry Wood Witham Road</b> TPO 03/09 - Existing coppice within the 3.75 acre woodland; no more than 100 coppice stools situated primarily within the northeast corner of Tors wood. Re-establish coppice cutting on an annual basis. <b>APPROVED</b></p> <p><u>Land adjacent to Summer House, Back Lane - update on enforcement issues</u> The email response received from Matt Winslow MDC was disappointing. The meeting acknowledged it was unlikely that any enforcement action would be taken and noted receipt of a further Application 24/00319/HOUSE for retrospective approval for an additional roof light as yet another variation to the original planning permission.</p> <p>On the matter of damage to verges caused by contractors' vehicles, Matt Winslow was planning to visit and carry out an inspection. <b>Action:</b> The Clerk to pass on Cllr Layley's contact details.</p>
24/084	<p><b>Land rear of 9 Church Road – Planning Appeal – update</b></p> <p>WBPC's formal submission to the Planning Inspectorate was noted. Whilst it was considered the report was very good, the Chair was somewhat dismayed that Planning Direct had not taken up the suggestion to include more on Highways. The matter was now in the hands of the Planning Inspector.</p>

	<p>The response from ECC's Cabinet Member for Highways following our complaint about Essex Highways' response to the application was noted. No further action required.</p> <p>The letter from Matt Winslow MDC in response to the PC's concern over the planning officer's recommendation was acknowledged and noted. No further action required.</p> <p>The Freedom of Information response from ECC was considered. The response indicated that certain information could not be provided as it was exempt from disclosure. After much discussion, County Councillor Durham suggested WPBC write to the Monitoring Office at ECC, Paul Turner. <b>Resolved:</b> The Clerk to write to Paul Turner asking if this statement was reasonable and reiterating the fact that WBPC would like to see the report of the site visit made by the Highways Officer which surely should be available to view.</p>
<b>24/085</b>	<p><b>Traffic Calming &amp; Highway Matters update, if any</b></p> <p>Cllr Durham reported that the new Local Highways Panel had allocated the budget for 2024/25 and unfortunately Wickham Bishops had not been successful. However, Cllr Durham was pleased to report that an engineer would be carrying out a desktop survey to investigate the possibility of a pedestrian crossing on The Street. WBPC would still welcome the attendance on site of a highways officer to consider other issues concerning the Mitre junction.</p> <p>Cllr Durham reported that 12 new crews would be employed to deal with outstanding highway matters, and asked members to send him a list of the most urgent potholes, broken signage, vegetation etc.</p> <p>It was noted that so far one property in Great Totham Road now had 'H' markings along their driveway. Traffic problems continued around One Stop with delivery lorries regularly causing safety issues for pedestrians and other motorists. It was not known whether the owner of One Stop had applied for a dropped kerb. In response to WBPC's suggestion around the use of their car parks by those employed by the businesses in the village, BHSA explained that there were many occasions when parking at the Village Hall was inadequate for users and for that reason they felt unable to offer it more widely. The Library were more positive but had questions around how many spaces, which days, opening and closing the gates etc. Discussion took place with no resolution.</p>
<b>24/086</b>	<p><b>District Councillor Report</b> District Councillor Morgan gave a brief report on his recent trip to Lavenham to see a community-led housing development, £5m levelling up funds and the statutory annual meeting next week. <b>Action:</b> The Clerk to make contact with Laura Atkinson of RCCE to enquire about a Housing Needs Survey for Wickham Bishops, as suggested by DCllr Morgan.</p>
<b>24/087</b>	<p><b>County Councillor Report</b> County Councillor Durham was thanked for his written report, the contents of which were acknowledged and attached to these Minutes.</p>
<b>24/088</b>	<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p><b>Co-option Policy</b> With slight amendments, members agreed unanimously to formally adopt the Co-option Policy.</p> <p><b>Grants Policy</b> Members agreed unanimously to formally adopt the Grants Policy</p>
<b>24/089</b>	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>The meeting noted the following bank balances as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024: Current Account £6,550.19, Instant Access Account £10,307.61 and Equals Debit Card £26.45, a total of £16,884.25</p>

The following payments and receipts were agreed (proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded Cllr Layley, all in favour):

**PAYMENTS (AWAITING AUTHORISATION) LIST**

Voucher	Code	Date	Bank	Description	Supplier			Total
6	Planning Appeal (EMR)	22/04/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	9 Church Road Planning Appeal	Planning Direct	1,375.00	275.00	1,650.00
7	Audit	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Internal Audit	Heelis & Lodge	170.00		170.00
8	Streetligh Elec	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Streetlighting Electricity	NPower	84.97	4.25	89.22
9	Streetlight Maint	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Streetlighting Annual Maintenance Fee	A&J Lighting Solutions	120.00	24.00	144.00
10	Streetlight Maint	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Streetlighting Call Out	A&J Lighting Solutions	24.00	4.80	28.80
11	Outsourced Payroll	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Payroll Services Apr 2024	J&M Payroll Services	27.50	5.50	33.00
12	Outsourced Payroll	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Payroll Services Mar 2024	J&M Payroll Services	27.50	5.50	33.00
13	Grasscutting	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Grasscutting	D W Maintenance	85.00		85.00
14	Insurance	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Annual Insurance Premium	Zurich	396.00		396.00
15	Membership Subs	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	EALC & NALC Affiliation Fees	EALC	527.16		527.16
16	Clerk's Mileage/Travel	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Clerk's mileage to internal auditor	Mrs L A Bailey	19.80		19.80
17	Clerk's Salary	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Clerk's salary	Mrs L A Bailey	842.18		842.18
17	PC Office Allowance	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	PC Office Allowance	Mrs L A Bailey	25.00		25.00
18	Printing & Postage	23/04/2024	Debit Card	Postage stamps	Post Office	6.80		6.80
19	Printing & Postage	23/04/2024	Debit Card	Laminating pouches	PC Media Heaven	8.29	1.66	9.95
20	Training	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	SLCC AGM & Training Day	SLCC	25.00		25.00
<b>Total</b>						<b>3,764.20</b>	<b>320.71</b>	<b>4,084.91</b>
	Bank Transfer	07/05/2024	Unity Trust Current Account	Transfer to Debit Card	Equals Debit Card	100.00		100.00

**RECEIPTS LIST**

Code	Date	Description	Supplier			Total		
1	Donations and Awards	10/04/2024	Parish Paths Partnership reimbursement	ECC	16.94	3.39	20.33	
2	VAT Reclaim	25/04/2024	HMRC VAT reclaim	HMRC VAT	1,545.96		1,545.96	
<b>Total</b>						<b>1,562.90</b>	<b>3.39</b>	<b>1,566.29</b>

**Consider a grant of £50 to Beacon Hill Under 9's for new kit** As the application form had yet to be received, this would be considered at the June PC Meeting.

**24/090 Confirmation of Exemption from a Limited Assurance Review for Year Ended 31 March 2024**  
**Resolved:** The Chairman to sign the Certificate of Exemption, proposed by Cllr Nappo, seconded by Cllr Wardrop, all in favour

**24/091 Approval of Annual Governance Statement**  
**Resolved:** That the Chairman sign Section 1 of the Annual Return, proposed by Cllr Nappo, seconded by Cllr Layley, all in favour

**24/092 Approval of Annual Accounting Statement**  
**Resolved:** That the Annual Accounting Statement be approved and the Chairman sign Section 2 of the Annual Return, proposed Cllr Wardrop, seconded by Cllr Mickelsen, all in favour

**24/093 To receive Internal Auditor's Report for 2023/24 and note recommendations**  
The Internal Auditor's Report and recommendations were noted.

**24/094 Consider entering Essex Village of the Year competition (deadline 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)**  
**Resolved:** Members agreed unanimously to enter the competition. The Clerk to prepare a submission of 500 words to include photographs, parish magazine etc.

**24/095 Noticeboard outside Olios**  
It was noted that this had been removed by BHSa as the posts in the ground had rotted and it was considered dangerous. Debate took place over ownership. Cllr Bass believed that one third of the noticeboard belonged to BHSa with two thirds WBPC. **Resolved:** It was agreed that a replacement noticeboard should be erected in the same position, in liaison with BHSa and Olios.

	In the meantime, the Clerk to explore costings and enquire about the supplier of the new Great Totham noticeboard. Cllr Williams to liaise with BHSA.
<b>24/096</b>	<b>Update on gov.uk domain changeover</b> Cllr Bates advised there was nothing more to report. Richard Mundell had offered to assist with the changeover, recommended we continue with our current server and would look into the problems experienced by Cllr Williams in accessing PC emails.
<b>24/097</b>	<b>Progress Reports from Councillors – no decisions required</b> <b>Annual Report, progress</b> The Clerk reported that the Annual Report was in the process of being printed and she would arrange for copies to be delivered to the Parish Magazine for onward distribution. Consideration would be given to making a donation to the PCC at the June meeting. <b>Six Walks Footpath Booklet</b> Now that the weather had improved, councillors agreed to walk and check the paths as agreed.
<b>24/098</b>	<b>Correspondence</b> Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust survey of Rivers Pant & Blackwater – Cllr Bass had attended a restoration plan workshop on 2 <sup>nd</sup> May and had circulated the slides for information. A second workshop would be held in the autumn.  Dame Priti Patel MP had written setting out her support for various matters in her constituency and particularly for the Parish Council’s objections to the Church Road planning issue.
<b>24/099</b>	<b>Parish Council Surgeries</b> There had been no visitors to the April surgery. Attendance on Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> May would be Cllrs Mickelsen and Morgan. On Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> June Cllrs Layley and Wardrop would attend.
<b>24/100</b>	<b>General Village News and Events to Note</b> <b>Arbour Lane streetlight</b> The Clerk to report this as when lit it appeared as a strange purple colour. <b>Vegetation across the pavement in Great Totham Road near the dog waste bin</b> The Clerk to check whether BHSA could include this in their regular trimming. <b>Box Iron Corner verge</b> Cllr Bates reported the presence of Allium Triquetrum (three cornered leek) and explained it was an offence to grow this under the Wildlife & Countryside Act. The Clerk to ask our grass cutting contractor for advice.
<b>24/101</b>	<b>Date of Next Meetings:</b> Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2024, 7.30pm, Village Hall Boardroom Parish Council Meeting, Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024, 7.30pm, Village Hall Boardroom
<b>24/102</b>	<b>Close of Meeting</b> There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.05pm