

SOUTH WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Assets Committee Meeting held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 3rd December 2025 in the Parish Office Meeting Room.

- 1. Present:** Mr M Narborough (Chairman), Mrs M Albinson, Mr S Scales, Mr D Goddard, Mrs D Gotts, Mrs T Cornwell (Clerk) and Mrs M Kirby (Assistant Clerk).

Apologies: Mr H Hofmeister, Mrs T Banks and Mr R Williamson.

2. To confirm the Minutes of the last Meeting held on 4th September 2025:

Mr Narborough proposed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting; this was seconded by Mr Goddard, with three abstentions, all other members were in favour, and they were signed by the Chairman.

3. To record declarations of any Interests, personal or prejudicial: None

4. To receive questions from the Public: None present

5. To discuss matters in relation to:

Allotments:

Update: Mr Narborough explained that following the switching off of the Allotments Water Supply at the beginning of November, it has appeared that following a recent bill from Anglian Water, the meter may still be running.

Mr Narborough stated that he would revisit the Allotments in the morning to investigate the situation, and Mrs Kirby would inform Anglian Water if there is a problem.

Mr Narborough was pleased to report that work to complete the fencing in the rear corner has started today and will be finished in the next few days. He added that it will be good to see this job complete.

All members were happy.

Village Hall:

Heating in the Village Hall Toilets: Mrs Cornwell informed members that currently there is no heating provision in the Village Hall Toilets, she said that we have a lovely Village Hall and felt that heating in the Toilets should be considered.

Comment was made that the Village Hall has a Gas Boiler system, so installation of radiators in each of the Toilets should not prove difficult and the work could be paid for via Parish Council CIL Funds.

Mr Goddard stated that Electric Heaters could possibly be considered and these may prove to be a more cost-effective alternative, he added that whilst CIL Funds could be used, these need to be spent responsibly.

Mrs Cornwell said that she had concerns regarding the use of Electric Heaters as they would need to be switched on and off after use and take time to heat up.

After further discussion, **Mr Narborough proposed that the Parish Council investigates the installation of Heating in all three Toilets within the Village Hall and obtain some quotes for the work, this was seconded by Mr Scales with all members in favour.**

Doors to the Caged area: Mrs Cornwell informed members that following the recent Structural Survey, it had been highlighted that the double doors that lead through to the caged area would benefit from having smoke seals fitted.

She referred to the circulated quote received from Mr Gary Smith and explained the two options which had been quoted for -

Option 1 – To repair the existing doors, router in new smoke seals to cage room (as structural survey report) adjust doors to suit new seals - £248 +VAT.

Option 2- To replace pair of doors to match the Hall entrance pair - Oak foil fire rated doors with smoke seal and new fire rated hardware including kick plates to reduce future damage - £885 + VAT.

Mrs Cornwell commented that the double doors are not in a very good condition, she added that they have become tatty looking and have been in place for many years, she felt that a new set of doors would look good.

After discussion, **Mr Scales proposed that the Parish Council should go ahead and replace the doors as per the Option 2 quote, this was seconded by Mr Goddard with all members in favour.**

It was confirmed that the cost of the new replacement doors would be paid for via Parish Council CIL funding.

The Green and Open Spaces:

Pond Dredging Update (CIL Funds): Mrs Cornwell informed members that subject to the weather, the work to dredge the Pond has been scheduled in for

the week commencing Monday 8th December, all associated machinery and equipment will be brought onto site on Saturday 6th December.

All Members were happy.

Bus Shelters – (CIL Funds) Outside Acadia House, Grimston Road – Consultation Response: Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the proposed new Bus Shelter for outside Acadia House on Grimston Road and explained that following consultation with neighbouring residents, the circulated letter of objection had been received from a resident who lives close by.

It was said that the resident was objecting to the siting of the Bus Shelter on the grounds of safety and visibility and added that various services, such as gas, electricity, water and telephone lines lie beneath the grass verge at the proposed location.

All members confirmed that they had read the objection letter and had considered the points within it.

Mr Narborough stated that he had also visited the proposed site and taken a number of photos and had felt that the location of the new proposed Bus Shelter would pose no visibility issues.

Both Mr Goddard and Mrs Cornwell stated that they had also been to look at the site and had also felt that the proposed new Bus Shelter would pose no issues.

Members commented that the Parish Council wants to encourage the use of Buses and felt that a Cantilever type Bus Shelter at the location would benefit its residents.

Mrs Cornwell added that if the Parish Council decides to proceed, she would still have to carry out the usual Norfolk County Council Highways consultations and gain the relevant permissions/Licences. She added that the Bus Shelter would qualify for Parish Council CIL Funding.

After discussion, **Mr Narborough proposed that the Parish Council goes ahead and applies for the relevant licence for a Cantilever type Bus Shelter to be sited at the Bus Stop outside Acadia House, Grimston Road, and NCC Highways be informed of the residents' objections, this was seconded by Mrs Gotts with all members in favour.**

New Replacement Bench on The Green, adjacent to Nursery Lane: Mrs Cornwell explained that a letter had been received from a resident requesting that the old bench, formerly situated at this location, be replaced.

It was explained that some time ago, (possibly three years), a group of youths had unfortunately vandalised the bench and it had subsequently been removed.

It was explained that the location of the replacement bench, on The Green, adjacent to Nursery Lane is away from the road, where parents can sit with their children and they can play safely on The Green.

Mrs Cornwell added that a replacement bench would cost £848.19 +VAT and it could have a plaque placed on it in the name of John Smallwood, as he lived opposite the location.

Mr Goddard stated that The Green could be made better so that more residents could use it and enjoy it. He suggested that a Pagoda type Band Stand could be considered. Mrs Cornwell said that there are very strict Bye-Laws relating to the Village Green.

Mr Narborough was concerned that the bench may become a gathering place, however, it was acknowledged that groups of youths no longer seem to congregate in the area.

After further discussion, and confirmation that the exact location of the bench would need to be agreed, **Mrs Albinson proposed that the Parish Council should replace the bench, this was seconded by Mrs Gotts, with one member against the proposal and one abstention, the remaining member was in favour, and the proposal was carried.**

Cemetery:

St Mary's Church Wall Repairs - Update: Mrs Cornwell confirmed that work is continuing to take place on the renovation of the Church Wall and things are looking good.

Mrs Cornwell confirmed that the cost of the work is being paid for via Parish Council CIL funds.

All members were happy.

Proposal for a Pergola / Gazebo in Cemetery – Letter of Objection: Mrs Cornwell referred members to the circulated letter of objection which had been received from an Oak Avenue resident and explained that the resident who visits twice per day, once in the early morning and again later in the early evening is concerned that the Pergola may attract and become a place for youths to gather.

Mr Goddard stated that he had read the objection letter, however, had felt that the Pergola would make a nice feature within the Cemetery and would provide a nice, sheltered area for people visiting the Cemetery in inclement weather.

Mrs Cornwell explained that she had made several attempts to get an architect to design an appropriate brick Pergola, however, no-one has been willing to take on the work. It was said that a brick structure would need suitable plans drawn up to be put forward to obtain Planning Permission.

Mr Goddard suggested that a brick-built Pergola may cost in the region of £40,000.

Mrs Cornwell stated that quotes for a wooden Pergola had been received at £13,000, however, it was said that the Parish Council had previously agreed that a wooden Pergola was not suitable as it could pose a fire risk.

Mrs Gotts stated that if members had concerns about vandalism to a bench being sited in an open area on The Green, they should also be concerned about a Pergola being placed in the Cemetery.

After further discussion, **Mrs Albinson proposed that the Parish Council abandons the idea of a Pergola / Gazebo for siting in the Cemetery, this was seconded by Mrs Gotts, with one member in favour of the proposal and the remaining two members against, the proposal was carried.**

It was confirmed that the proposal would be put forward at the next Parish Council meeting for ratification by all members.

Extra Cuts of the Cemetery Bank: Mrs Cornwell explained that at present the Grass Banks within the Cemetery are only cut twice per year, in March and again in July.

She explained that the same lady who had objected to the Pergola had suggested that if the Parish Council has money to spare it should consider improving the condition of the Cemetery, by clearing grass and hedge clippings and weed spraying the paths.

Mrs Cornwell added that the Cemetery Banks also grow quite long and look untidy at times and more regular cuts would improve the area.

She referred members to the circulated quote from Nurture Landscapes and confirmed that to cut the Grass on the Banks within the Cemetery on seven occasions per year would cost £748.44 +VAT. She added that in dry periods, if a cut is not required, the Parish Council is not charged.

Mrs Cornwell spoke briefly regarding the Cemetery Bank and explained that in the near future, the Parish Council will take on the area of additional Cemetery Land provided by Persimmon Homes and stated that the Bank may have to be removed to create additional Cemetery Space.

She added that the whole area will need to be looked at and made private and enclosed by way of a possible post and rail fence and appropriate hedging.

Mr Goddard suggested that when the time comes and the land becomes under Parish Council ownership, it may be a good idea to consider employing a Landscape Specialist to ensure the best use of the space.

Members discussed the additional cuts and **Mrs Albinson proposed that the Parish Council ask Nurture Landscapes to cut the Grass on the Banks within the Cemetery on seven occasions per year at a cost of £748.44 +VAT, this was seconded by Mr Goddard with all members in favour.**
(Clerks Note: This can be paid for by Parish Council CIL Funds)

Cemetery Fees: Mrs Cornwell referred members to the circulated Cemetery Fees Comparison Sheet and explained that she had produced the sheet following research with other local Cemetery providers.

Mrs Cornwell went through each of the individual fees in depth and explained that to keep our fees similar and in line to those charged by the Borough Council a 40% increase would be needed across all fees.

Members were concerned that with North Wootton having no Cemetery provision and the Borough Council being close to capacity, if South Wootton Cemetery Fees are a lot less than what is charged elsewhere locally, we may see a high demand in people wanting to come here and the Parish Council must ensure that adequate space is maintained for its own residents in the future.

Mrs Cornwell stated that as currently, and usual in other areas, non-residents are charged double fees.

With all members happy, **Mr Scales proposed that the Parish Council increases its Cemetery Fees as per the circulated sheet from 1st April 2026, this was seconded by Mrs Gotts with all members in favour.**

Mrs Cornwell stated that if the full Parish Council are happy with the proposal, she would inform the local Funeral Directors/Stone Mason's accordingly.

CIL:

Possible CIL Suggestions - Replacement of Lighting Columns: Mrs Cornwell explained that no new CIL Suggestions had been received, however, she added that the Replacement of the Lighting Columns within the Parish is ongoing with work completed in the Avon Road area (Including Avon Road, Rushmead Close, Ebble Close, Bourne Close, Briar Close and Hazel Close).

It was said that several areas within the Parish need upgraded Lighting Columns, and it was suggested that as there are only a few Lighting Columns within the Meadow Road, Bracken Road and Greenacres Close area, possibly Church Lane, St Mary's Close, Hall Lane and The Boltons should be included in the next phase.

It was suggested that following that, the next area should include, Appledore Close, Bramble Drive, Common Lane and Nursery Close, then moving onto the Oak Avenue Estate.

Mrs Cornwell informed members that she had spoken to Maurice at K&M Lighting Contractors to provide her with a quote for the next phase, she added that she would chase this up.

All Members were happy.

Emerald Homes Development: Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the new Emerald Homes Development and explained that correspondence had been received from NCC with details of the proposed Footway Lighting Scheme.

She explained that the Developers would install the lighting, and then later down the line the Parish Council will take on their maintenance.

Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the Footway Lighting and asked if the Parish Council would like it dimmed in the evenings from 12 midnight until 5.00am. She stated that if so, the option needs to be included at the manufacturing stage.

Mr Goddard suggested that as the Development sits opposite an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and with Light Pollution being a problem, dimming of the Footway Lighting would be a good idea.

Comment was made that the dimming of the Lighting would also reduce electricity costs.

With all members happy, **Mr Narborough proposed that the Parish Council request that the new Footway Lighting on the Emerald Homes Development is dimmed from 12 midnight until 5.00am, this was seconded by Mr Goddard with all members in favour.**

Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the replacement of the Lighting Columns within the rest of the Parish and asked members if they should also be manufactured with the dimmable option.

Members agreed that this would be a good idea.

Wootton Park:

Update: No Report

SWiB:

Update: Mrs Albinson informed members that work on the Church Garden is ongoing and various general tidying up is taking place.

She added that no plans have yet been made for next year, however, more funding and help would be of benefit.

Mr Goddard suggested that the Purfleet Trust maybe able to assist in some way and get involved, he said that he would contact them and make some enquiries.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.00pm.

6. Next meeting: To be held on **Wednesday 4th March 2026** at 7pm.

4th March 2026

Chairman