

**EAST FARNDON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AT THE VILLAGE HALL
GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

WEDNESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2025 COMMENCING AT 7.15PM

PRESENT: Mr B Fallon (Chair), Ms M Duke, Mr T Knott, Mr P Hodgetts, Ms S Beesley
Mrs C Burton (Clerk to the Parish Council)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: WNC Councillor Irving-Swift and one resident

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received and accepted from Councillor Curtis.

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on 7th July 2025

The Minutes of the above meeting were agreed by all Councillors.

4. Matters Arising

ACTION	PROGRESS
Councillor Fallon to organise repairs to the bus shelter.	Ongoing
Councillor Fallon to organise repair to Clerk's laptop keyboard.	Ongoing
Councillor Knott to investigate the cost of cleaning the War Memorial.	Done – due to the costs involved, the PC agreed to not pursue this.
Councillor Duke to draft articles on ridge & furrow, and the scheduled monument.	Carried over
Councillor Beesley to progress options for a new village sign.	Carried over
Councillor Fallon to seek further feedback from Professor Ollerton on the biodiversity policy and action plan.	No further action
Councillor Fallon to lead a Spring Renovation Working Group.	Carried over
Clerk to organise a new quote for amended Spring renovation work.	Done – added to agenda
Councillor Fallon to progress speed reduction measures.	Added to agenda
Clerk to email Councillors to inform a response to application 2025/2509/TPO Works to Trees (Preservation Order) - Glebeland 1 Rectory Court East Farndon LE16 9SU	Done. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council supported the application.
Clerk to draft a website article on how to report issues with rights of way.	Done
Councillor Fallon to update Clerk's Outlook settings to clerk@eastfarndon-pc.gov.uk .	Carried over
Clerk to organise publication of the amended policies on the website.	Done
Clerk to sign the NALC Civility and Respect Pledge.	Done
Staffing Committee to organise a contract of employment for the new Clerk and agree a start date and handover period.	Done – added to agenda

ACTION	PROGRESS
Clerk to organise induction training for the new Clerk.	Done – see agenda item 'Appointment of New Parish Clerk'
Clerk to re-advertise for applications for co-option as a Parish Councillor.	Done
Clerk to register Councillor Knott as the Climate & Nature (CAN) Champion with NCALC.	Done
Clerk to register Councillor Knott for the NCALC Annual Conference.	Done
Clerk to ensure that the Marston Road closure on 8 September 2025 is publicised.	Done

5. Public Participation - None

6. Roads and Transport

• **Speeding Reduction Measures Update**

Notice has now been officially given that WNC proposes to make an Order to introduce a 40mph speed limit on Harborough Road. Councillor Fallon confirmed that Highways had advised that the Parish Council should allow this Order to be enacted before requesting moving the 30mph speed limit further down Harborough Road.

Councillor Fallon reported that he had spoken to the Police, who advised that they would monitor speeds and provide education/advice to drivers for up to four weeks after the new speed limit has been put in place, after which they would begin enforcement.

ACTION: Councillor Fallon to progress speed reduction measures.

7. Planning and Development

• **Applications granted**

2025/2509/TPO Works to Trees (Preservation Order) - Glebeland 1 Rectory Court East Farndon LE16 9SU

This application was approved on 11 August 2025.

• **Applications for consideration**

2025/3498/FULL 2 padel courts, parking and associated infrastructure - The Hay Barn Land South of Marston Trussell Road, Market Harborough

The Parish Council sought the following confirmation from the applicant, in attendance, as follows:

- There will be no lighting, so the courts will only be usable during daylight hours
- There will need to be toilet facilities, which may be a portaloo (or similar) connected to a septic tank
- The traffic impact assessment showed no significant impact
- The development is over 500 metres from the nearest houses, so there is no noise impact (or light impact, if lights are introduced)

The Parish Council agreed that whilst the development is outside the village confines, under planning regulation RA3 B iii, they supported the application on the grounds that the development contributes towards and improves the local economy, subject to a condition that if the business ceases, the land should be returned to its original use.

ACTION: Clerk to respond to planning application 2025/3498/FULL 2 padel courts, parking and associated infrastructure - The Hay Barn Land South of Marston Trussell Road, Market Harborough.

8. Other Matters

- **Footpath Report**

The Clerk reported that Mr Jonny Dargie, the Footpath Warden, had provided a full report, which has been circulated to Councillors. The summary is:

- The collapsed bridge on the route out to Marston Trusell starting from behind 1868 house at the top of the hill has been replaced.
- The collapsed gate on the footpath that runs from the road to Marston Trusell at the top of Back Lane when you turn right opposite the Flat roof house has been replaced.
- Overall the ROW network is in good shape.
- The village hall path remains the main outstanding issue – there has been no response from the council contractors to date although the issue was reported on Street Doctor by Councillor Duke and is apparently scheduled for repair.

- **Burial Ground Committee Report**

The Clerk reported the Burial Ground is in good order. The second hedge cut of the year is scheduled to take place during September. The burial of Jacqueline Dunnill took place on 4 August 2025. The Burial Ground Committee will carry out grave levelling, if required, in the coming months. Thanks are due to Councillor Curtis who has recently constructed a sturdy wooden cross which will be used from now on to clearly mark plots for digging before burials take place. An issue has arisen with a small cross memorial near the church porch which was laid down for safety reasons following push tests carried out earlier in the year in both the Burial Ground and Churchyard by the Burial Ground Committee; someone has stood the cross up on the grass leaving a risk that it could fall over and injure a child, a dog, or someone's foot – so it has been laid down again.

- **Tree Warden Report**

The Trees Warden confirmed there was no update from the July 2025 meeting. As regards the yew tree in the churchyard that has a large branch overhanging the path to the church door, the Parish Council agreed to the quote provided by Andy Brooks, who will undertake the work when he next cuts the hedges.

- **Police Liaison Representative (PLR) & Neighbourhood Watch Report**

Councillor Fallon reported that he has circulated all relevant PLR/NHW emails. There is a NHW online conference on 24 September 2025, which is unable to attend; no other Councillor can attend.

- **Appointment of New Parish Clerk**

Following the recruitment campaign, the Parish Council resolved to agree the appointment of Sarah Gresly as Parish Clerk. A contract of employment has been agreed and Ms Gresly will commence on 22 September 2025.

The existing Clerk has prepared induction training and handover papers, and is due to meet with Ms Gresly on 22 September 2025. The existing Clerk will continue to undertake such work as necessary to ensure a smooth handover until 31 October 2025.

- **Village Hall Noticeboard**

As the new Parish Clerk does not live in the Village, Councillor Duke (who already holds a set of noticeboard keys) has kindly agreed to put up Parish Council notices as directed by the Clerk. However, it was agreed that two other sets of keys should be held by Councillor Beesley and the Clerk in case Councillor Duke is not available.

ACTION: Clerk to have a set of noticeboard keys cut for Councillor Beesley.

- **Parish Councillor Vacancy**

The Parish Councillor vacancy had been re-advertised with a closing date of 10 September 2025, but no applications were received. It was agreed that rather than re-advertise again, all Parish Councillors should actively encourage villagers to consider the Parish Councillor vacancy.

ACTION: All Councillors to actively encourage villagers to consider the Parish Councillor vacancy.

- **WNC Biodiversity Grant Scheme**

The Parish Council has been invited to apply for a biodiversity grant, up to £2,500. The council must spend the grant by 31 March 2026 and must submit a short report and photos to WNC to show what the money was spent on. The deadline for applications is 30 September 2025.

ACTION: Councillor Hodgetts to obtain a quote for creating a wildflower garden in the burial extension, and Councillor Knott to apply for a WNC Biodiversity grant.

- **Fixed Asset Audit**

Councillor Knott carried out the Fixed Asset Audit on 12 September 2025, and reported as follows:

- The lamp post (2) on Lealand Corner has a potential slight lean - advise no action required, but monitor
- The bus shelter has signs of water ingress to roof – this is already on the action plan
- The Burial Ground noticeboard needs attention

ACTION: Burial Ground Committee to investigate a replacement Burial Ground noticeboard.

- The Spring Trough needs attention – this is already planned
- The defibrillator needs new pads (as detailed below)
- The Clerk's laptop needs three keys replacing – this is already on the action plan
- Village Green Posts – three are missing tops and one has a cracked top, so recommend monitoring

- **Update on Defibrillator**

Councillor Knott reported that the Parish Council has added its defibrillator to “the circuit” – a national scheme operated by the British Heart Foundation, that keeps a list of publicly accessible defibrillators available for the Ambulance Service, as well as members of the public. For more information about the circuit national defibrillator network, you can visit <https://www.thecircuit.uk/> (and you can visit <https://www.defibfinder.uk/> to find local defibrillators). As part of the registration, the Parish Council has placed a sticker on the defibrillator itself and on the cabinet to show it is registered, and this will also allow the defibrillator to be returned should it be used in an emergency.

Additionally, the main set of pads for the unit expired at the end of July 2025, and as such the spare set have been hooked up to the device – usually, the Parish Council would keep a main set and a spare set with the device at all times; however there are some ongoing supply issues, and the Parish Council are awaiting delivery of the spares.

- **Climate Action Policy Amendment**

Following a refocus of WNC's sustainability work and the removal of local climate targets, the Parish Council agreed that the second paragraph of its Climate Action policy should be removed.

ACTION: Clerk to amend Climate Action policy and arrange for the updated policy to be placed on the website.

- **The Spring Renovation**

The current plan is:

- Remove the old mortar on top of the spring trough (left from the old coping stones)
- Place a metre wide path of paving blocks in front of the spring trough (to clearly delineate the spring trough area from the hardstanding on which cars park)
- Place edging around the sides of the spring area, to stop the vegetation spreading onto the hardstanding; we discussed the options for edging and you advised that upended paving slabs would be the best option, as they are cheap and durable. The alternatives discussed were timber sleepers (cheap, but would require repair/replacement in 15 years roughly) and brick walls (too expensive)
- Change the fixed drain cover to a removable one, to make the unblocking of the spring drain easier

The Clerk had met with Phil Cooper from BRM and obtained various quotes. The parish Council agreed to accept the quotes for:

- Removal of old mortar on the top of the spring trough, and any re-mortaring of the trough that is needed
- Installation of edging (upended paving slabs) around the sides of the spring area, including groundworks including spoil removal
- Change the fixed drain cover to a removable one

ACTION: Clerk to confirm acceptance of BRM quotes for Spring work, and obtain a timescale for the work.

ACTION: Clerk to provide a list of Spring Renovation Working Group volunteers to Councillor Fallon.

- **Remembrance Sunday 2025**

It was confirmed that for Remembrance Sunday on 9 November 2025, given the new War Memorial plaque for the airmen paid from the War Memorial renovation fundraising efforts, Richard Everard will be laying a wreath on behalf of the villagers, as well as a wreath being laid by Corporal Burton on behalf of the Parish Council. The road closure had been obtained and the wreaths ordered. There will be refreshments at the Village Hall afterwards.

Councillors agreed to help with the refreshments and road closure points.

A query was raised by a resident regarding the bushes behind the War Memorial.

ACTION: Councillor Knott to assess work needed to the bushes behind the War Memorial, and organise work as necessary.

- **Parking on Pavements**

Following the ongoing issue of vehicles parking on pavements, Councillor Fallon has contacted the Police, and they have provided an updated letter that the Parish Council can put on offending vehicles, from PC Lee Stevens who heads up the Brixworth Neighbourhood Team. In addition to this, the Police will visit the village and target the offending vehicles including issuing Fixed Penalty Notices and, if they deem it to be dangerous, removal of vehicles (although this will be a last resort).

- **Caravan on Marston Lane**

Following a planning query regarding a caravan on Marston Lane, Councillor Fallon contacted the owner. They advised that their planning consultant has been looking into the caravan for seasonal workers on their behalf and spoken to a planning officer. WNC have confirmed under permitted development rights, they are allowed to house a seasonal worker in the yard and our season is from February to November/December with winter and spring drilling.

- **Flags on Parish Council Assets**

A flag has recently been attached to a Parish Council streetlight column without its knowledge. The flag has been removed. Following NCALC advice, the Parish Council agreed it should update its risk assessment regarding attachments to Parish Council streetlight columns.

ACTION: Clerk to update the risk assessment regarding attachments to Parish Council streetlight columns.

- **Donation to the Church Flower Festival**

It was noted that the leftover refreshments from the Annual Meeting of the Parish had been donated to the Church Flower Festival, but were not needed, so will be used at the Marriott Green fundraising event on 7 November 2025.

- **Emergency Plan and Volunteers**

The Clerk noted that whilst there is a list of Emergency Volunteers (as part of the Parish Council's Emergency Plan), it could be expanded. It was noted that villagers do not appear to respond to communications inviting volunteers, and that the Parish Council needs to be more pro-active by directly contacting villagers; this was done at the Annual Meeting of the Parish, and everyone asked agreed to be an emergency volunteer.

Additionally, the Parish Council has been asking for general volunteers, again without success.

ACTION: Councillors Duke and Hodgetts to agreed volunteer roles required for Parish Council.

9. Finance

- **Bank Reconciliation (as at Close of Business on 16 September 2025)**

Balance as at 7 July 2025

Current account	£9,856.68	
Deposit account	<u>£11,895.75</u>	£21,752.43

Income

VAT Refund	£755.81	
Interest	<u>£20.96</u>	£776.77

Expenses

NCALC	£36.00	
C Burton	£936.88	
Valda Energy	£79.62	
Lloyds Bank	£4.25	
NCALC	£55.20	
West Northamptonshire Norse	£846.22	
Valda Energy	£81.37	
Lloyds Bank	£4.25	
C Burton	£819.00	
Valda Energy	<u>£115.24</u>	-£2,978.03

Balance as at 16 September 2025

Current account	£7,634.46
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Deposit account

£11,916.71

£19,551.17

The bank reconciliation was checked and signed by Councillor Knott.

Actual v. Budgeted Spending as at 16 September 2025

	Precept Agreed	Expenditure to Date	Balance
Streetlighting and Maintenance	£1,400.00	£441.18	£958.82
NCALC	£300.00	£291.52	£8.48
Insurance	£1,000.00	£692.63	£307.37
S137 Spending	£400.00	£0.00	£400.00
Training	£100.00	£111.00	-£11.00
Mowing of Burial Ground/Hedges	£3,600.00	£1,000.00	£2,600.00
Clerk Gross Salary	£4,171.00	£2,730.58	£1,440.42
Parish Council/Clerk Expenses	£1,140.00	£265.00	£875.00
Bin Collection	£705.00	£705.18	-£0.18
Defibrillator Expenses	£200.00	£135.00	£65.00
Election Expenses	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00
TOTAL	£13,516.00	£6,372.09	£7,143.91
Spending from Reserves (see below)		£801.35	
VAT		£218.79	
TOTAL PAYMENTS		£7,392.23	

RESERVES		Receipts	Payments	Balance
Renovation of Village Spring	£1,500.00			£1,500.00
Burial Ground/Churchyard Maintenance	£3,500.00	£500.00	£80.00	£3,920.00
War Memorial Maintenance	£3,026.63		£721.35	£2,305.28
Fixed Asset Spending	£954.00			£954.00
Village Sign Development	£400.00			£400.00
TOTAL	£9,380.63			£9,079.28

- The following payments were agreed by all Councillors

Payee	Reason	Amount	Chq No.
NCALC	Training	£36.00	Online
C Burton	Salary/Expenses June/July 2025	£936.88	Online
Valda Energy	Street Lighting Electricity	£79.62	Direct Debit
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	£4.25	Online
NCALC	Training	£55.20	Online
West Northamptonshire Norse	Bin Collection Fees	£846.22	Online
Valda Energy	Street Lighting Electricity	£81.37	Direct Debit
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	£4.25	Online
C Burton	Salary/Expenses Aug/Sept 2025	£819.00	Online

Valda Energy	Street Lighting Electricity	£115.24	Direct Debit
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10. Correspondence

- The Parish Council has been invited to attend a workshop on 11 October 2025, on a broad vision for a 'Green Wheel' for Market Harborough - the rim of the wheel would be a traffic-free, fully accessible Greenway path encircling the town, much of it passing through woodland planting. The Parish Council agreed it supports the initiative and looks forward to hearing about any developments, but no-one is able to attend the workshop.
- WNC has launched an initiative to increase the number of electric vehicle chargers across West Northamptonshire, particularly in rural areas. It has secured funding for this through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) initiative and is inviting suggestions for suitable locations for electric vehicle chargers in our parish area. The funding aims to increase the number of chargers which are available to areas without off-street parking, and WNC are prioritising the deployment of lamppost chargers. The Parish Council agreed it had no suitable locations in the parish.
- The PCC has asked whether a Parish Councillor would like to read one of the lessons at the Carol and Christingle service on 21 December 2025. Unfortunately, no Councillor is available.
- All other relevant correspondence (e.g. NCALC Newsletter) has been circulated to Councillors and shared on the village website and Facebook page where appropriate.

11. Any Other Business

- WNC Councillor Irving-Swift advised that if there were issues not dealt with via Street Doctor, they could be escalated to her.
- WNC Councillor Irving-Swift advised that she can deal with cases regarding personal problems with WNC services. Councillor Duke agreed to publicise the offer, as appropriate.
- The Parish Council thanked the Clerk for her commitment and hard work over many years.

12. Date of the next meeting – 17 September 2025

Provisional meeting date – 16 August 2025

13. Closure

The meeting closed at 8.58pm.

Signed that the Minutes are a true and accurate record

Chairman _____

Dated _____