SEDGEFORD PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES 24th SEPTEMBER 2025

1. Welcome by the Chair.
2. The Public Session: None.
3. Present: Cllr Crump, Cllr Ward, Cllr Clark, Cllr Wilce, Cllr Coleman, Cllr Maddox and NCC Councillor Chenery, who arrived at 7.20pm.
   Apologies: Cllr Miller, Borough Cllr Parish and Borough Cllr Jamieson
   Absent: None
4. To receive declarations of interest on agenda items – Cllr Wilce recused herself from item 6.6 and Cllrs Ward and Coleman recused themselves from item 6.14.
5. Confirmation of the minutes – Parish Council Meeting July 16th 2025 proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Coleman and agreed by all.
6. Matters arising**:**

   6.1 River Heacham – A meeting has been arranged at the Village Hall where Anglian Water will provide details of their action plan for the River in the village. The meeting is scheduled for Thursday November 6th. Time to be confirmed.

   6.2 Former School – Please see item 8.1 below.

   6.3 Bank Account Interest Rates. The Clerk advised that both Barclays and Hinckley & Rugby Building Society (HRBS) had lowered their rates following the recent base rate cut. The PC now receives 1.75% on the HRBS Easy Access account and 2.2% on the HRBS 45-day Notice account. This compares favourably with the Barclays rate of 1.1%

   6.4 Broadland – The Clerk advised that he has spoken to Oliver Brice, the Rural Housing Enabler, who is liaising with Broadland. Oliver will carry out the affordable housing needs analysis and should know the outcome by the end of November. He will be including neighbouring villages such as Docking and Heacham in his analysis.

   6.5 Speed Sign – The new SAM2 has been installed on Heacham Road. The Clerk will be liaising with NCC Councillor Chenery regarding his contribution towards the cost and submitting a bid to the Parish Partnership for the remainder of the cost.

   6.6 Arboricultural Survey – Carried forward to October.

   6.7 Devolution/Local Government Reorganisation – Formal submissions have been circulated regarding the three options – 1 unitary authority, 2 unitary authorities or 3 unitary authorities. The Government will make a decision shortly.

   6.8 Cemetery – Headstone maintenance – Further to the motion agreed at the previous meeting, the necessary maintenance work has been carried out. The Clerk also explained that a recent article in the Clerks and Councils Direct magazine suggested it would be prudent to have a Memorials Inspection Policy and Procedures in place. The Clerk circulated a draft prior to the meeting. A small amendment was suggested to the policy. Cllr Clark proposed adopting the amended Policy and Procedure, this was seconded by Cllr Crump and agreed by all.

   6.9 IT Policy – Further to the Clerk's recent training course on Assertion 10 Digital & Data Compliance for Councils, the Clerk advised last month that as from the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for 2025.2026 it will be mandatory for all parish councils to have an adopted IT policy. The Clerk circulated a draft to councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Maddox proposed adopting the Policy, this was seconded by Cllr Wilce and agreed by all.

   6.10 Accessibility Statement for Parish Council Website - Further to the Clerk's recent training course on Assertion 10 Digital & Data Compliance for Councils, the Clerk advised last month that our website Accessibility Statement must be compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 AA. The Clerk has contacted NALC who host our website regarding this matter. Updating the Accessibility Statement will involve an accessibility audit. NALC have offered to carry out an accessibility audit on our website at a cost of £55 +VAT. Cllr Ward proposed requesting NALC to carry out the audit, this was seconded by Cllr Coleman and agreed by all.

   6.11 Churchyard Liabilities. The Chair and Vice-Chair, together with the Clerk, have met the relevant officers at the Borough Council to discuss likely implications of any transferal of liabilities. The Chair and Vice-Chair, together with the Clerk, will meet with the Vicar and Church Warden on October 9th.

   6.12 Annual Litter Pick – Next year's event has been booked for Saturday 21st February 2026

   6.13 Woodland Trust – The Clerk has ordered 105 saplings on a free offer from Woodland Trust. They will arrive between 4th and 14th of November. The Clerk is arranging planting sessions for the mornings of Monday 17th and Tuesday 18th November.

   6.14 Cllr Ward, who is the Chair of the Village Hall Committee (VHC) has approached the Clerk for assistance. The VHC would like to enclose the adult gym equipment at the Hall with railings to stop dogs urinating/defecating next to the equipment. They are yet to obtain quotes for the work but asked if the Parish Council would manage the project and potentially contribute towards the cost. The Clerk confirmed he is happy to manage the project as the Parish Council owns the site. but that Parish Council funds were extremely tight. Councillors discussed the issue. Cllr Clark proposed that the Parish Council manage the project, this was seconded by Cllr Wilce and agreed by all. The project will be revisited once competitive quotes are obtained.
7. Standing Agenda Items:

   7.1 Police report - Circulated as and when received by the Clerk.

   7.2 Footpath Warden Report- Reports circulated.

   7.3 Village Hall Rep Report – Cllr Ward advised that the bell has been installed in the hall just waiting for a plaque to go up.

The clock is now installed on the south wall and working. Cllr Ward hopes councillors will be supporting the next music event with Bojangles which will take place on Friday 3rd October 7 for 7.30pm.

7.4 Meetings Attended written/verbal – None.

7.5 Clerks training written/verbal– None.

7.6 Councillors training written/verbal – None.

8. Planning matters:

8.1 25/00641/FM Change of use of Former Sedgeford Primary School, Ringstead Road, from education (Class F1a) to residential use (Class C3), subdivision of headteachers cottage, alongside demolition of ancillary structures, erection of new dwellings, creation of new access, cycle parking, car parking, hard and soft landscaping, plant, and associated works.

Prior to the meeting the Clerk highlighted changes made by the applicants. Plots 10,11 & 12 have been changed to 3/4 height, with dormers and Velux to match other neighbouring properties.

All cladding has been replaced with brick and carrstone detailing and it has been confirmed that the roads within the site will be adopted. However, a number of key points had been ignored. Councillors discussed the issues in detail. Cllr Coleman proposed that the application should continue to be opposed with the following response – "Sedgeford Parish Council continues to be extremely disappointed to see this application has just the market housing box ticked. The Borough Council's policy of 20% ''affordable' housing on developments of 10 or more houses outside of King's Lynn, has been ignored or set to one side.

When this site became available and we had a number of meetings with Repton Property Developments Ltd (owned by Norfolk County Council) we made it clear on several occasions that we wanted affordable and/ or social housing to be prevalent on this development of a village asset. The primary objective of the Sedgeford Neighbourhood Plan is to provide new housing that will meet the needs of the community. Norfolk County Council owns this site and apart from the purchase of the former headmaster's house, has incurred no land costs. To say that it is not viable to develop the site with affordable housing is beyond belief. Surely Norfolk County Council has a moral responsibility to ensure development takes into account the needs of local people? While this might not be a 'rural exception site', we contend that the point in NP Policy H4 relating to provision of affordable housing should apply to this development.

How can KLWNBC Planning Department ever hope to enforce their affordable housing requirement to applications from corporate/private developers if local authority colleagues are not held to the same obligations.

The Planning Department's standard percentage only relates to new properties so the renovation of the existing school buildings into apartments does not count. However, 20% of the new houses, of which there are twelve, equates to 2.4. So at the very least two of these properties should be designated as affordable homes.

When the Neighbourhood Plan came into force in 2019, data showed that only 10% of the village's housing stock was social-rented, well below the figure for West Norfolk, which was 14%. House prices and private rents in Sedgeford are high. Local residents cannot afford to rent or purchase houses in Sedgeford at full market price. Affordable housing is in great need and is a non-negotiable.

For that reason Sedgeford Parish Council objects to this application.

Although some changes have been made to the application, we make the following objections/concerns and request that, should planning permission be granted, rectifying these issues is conditioned in the agreement document.

Policy H6 of the Neighbourhood Plan relates to the quality of the built environment. Sedgeford benefits from a relatively spacious pattern of development and very few dwellings have a plot coverage, taken together with existing outbuildings, of more than 40%. The spaces between dwellings also help to retain the important relationship with the surrounding countryside. The Parish Council feel that the number of houses on this planned site results in a cramped appearance and risks undermining the rural character of the village.

The Parish Council has serious and ongoing concerns regarding the lack of adequate and properly located parking provision within the proposed development, particularly in respect of the new apartments. Policy H7 of the Neighbourhood Plan clearly states that for refurbished or extended properties – such as the school buildings – sufficient space must be retained for off-street parking in line with Norfolk County Council standards. This application demonstrably fails to achieve that.

Ringstead Road is already a heavily trafficked road including large agricultural vehicles, and during the peak holiday season it becomes extremely congested, with large volumes of visitor traffic and residents' cars all competing for space. Any additional on-street parking caused by this development will create severe disruption, road safety hazards, and unnecessary obstruction for local residents.

Of particular concern is the site entrance, which lies almost directly opposite the access to Parkside. Any cars parked on Ringstead Road in this location will pose a dangerous obstruction to visibility and movement, creating a significant accident risk. In addition, it is highly likely that the prospective owners of plots 10, 11 and 12 will opt to park on Ringstead Road rather than in their designated spaces, as those bays are inconveniently located behind the houses and require an unnecessarily long walk to the front entrances. This design flaw alone almost guarantees additional roadside parking in an already overstretched location.

All skylights/velux windows on the development should be conditioned to be fitted with glazing that has a Visible Light Transmission (VLT) of no more than 0.65 VLT to protect the night skies from light pollution, in accordance with Policy E6 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
In accordance with Policy H8 of the Neighbourhood Plan, new open market housing should be conditioned that the homes are occupied only as the primary/principal residence.
The Parish Council is also concerned about who will be responsible for maintaining the common areas of the proposed development, as well as the boundaries. Will potential residents be required to join a management committee? Will the road be adopted by NCC Highways?
The continued reluctance to save any more of the established trees on the site is also very disappointing." This response was seconded by Cllr Clark and agreed by all.
25/00202/TREECA - T1 Spruce Tree - Fell tree in a Conversation Area that is now presenting risk and dangers to i) the property due to the large size and height and the close distance ii) the occupant and visitors as the path to the property is directly under the tree - Jacobs Folly, Heacham Road – Noted.
8.2 Planning outcomes –
25/01082/PART14 - Application to determine if prior approval is required for proposed: Installation, alteration or replacement of other solar photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the Roofs of Non -domestic Buildings schedule 2, Part 14 Class : Installation of photovoltaic panels on top agricultural building (103.74 kWp) - Whin Close Farm Office, Docking Road - Prior Approval - Not Required - 31 July 2025 - Delegated Decision.

To consider plans since publication:

9. County Councillor update – NCC Councillor Chenery had circulated a number of updates prior to the meeting. A full vote on the local government reorganisation will take place on Thursday 25th September. Cllr Chenery will provide the Clerk with details of the new Community Fund.

10. Borough Councillors update: None.

11. To approve accounts and payments this month:

11.1 Approval and payment of invoices: Proposed by Cllr Clark seconded by Cllr Wilce and agreed by all.

Name	Business	Net	VAT	Gross	Recoverable VAT
K and M Lighting (STO)	Street Lighting Maintenance Sept	16.17	3.23	19.40	All
Currys (DDR)	Laptop Cover	8.00	0.00	8.00	None
Stuart Large (STO)	War Memorial Maintenance	72.00	0.00	72.00	None
Npower (DDR)	Street Lighting Electricity (Apr)	60.38	3.02	63.40	All
Npower (DDR)	Street Lighting Electricity (May)	52.45	2.62	55.07	All
Npower (DDR)	Street Lighting Electricity (Jun)	45.47	2.27	47.74	All
Npower (DDR)	Street Lighting Electricity (Jul)	49.13	2.46	51.59	All
Npower (DDR)	Street Lighting Electricity (Aug)	58.22	2.91	61.13	All
Nurture Landscapes	Grounds Maintenance Aug	537.03	107.41	644.44	All
Parish Clerk	Payment Sept (See Log)	0.00	0.00	0.00	None
HMRC	Sept (See Log)	0.00	0.00	0.00	None
Parish Clerk	HP Ink	5.41	1.08	6.49	All
Parish Clerk	Expenses	57.64	0.00	57.64	None
Westcotec	Speed Sign- Previously authorised and paid via BACs	3845.00	769.00	4614.00	All
MB Howell	Headstone Maintenance - Previously authorised and paid via BACs	395.00	79.00	474.00	All
K and M Lighting (STO)	Street Lighting Maintenance Aug - Previously authorised and paid via STO	16.17	3.23	19.40	All
Currys (DDR)	Laptop Cover- Previously authorised and paid via DDR	8.00	0.00	8.00	None
Stuart Large (STO)	War Memorial Maintenance Previously authorised and paid via STO	72.00	0.00	72.00	None
Nurture Landscapes	Grounds Maintenance Jul - Previously authorised and paid via BACs	537.03	107.41	644.44	All
Parish Clerk	Payment Aug (See Log) - Previously authorised and paid via BACs	0.00	0.00	0.00	None
HMRC	Aug (See Log) - Previously authorised and paid via	0.00	0.00	0.00	None

	BACs				
Parish Clerk	HP Ink - Previously authorised and paid via BACs	6.66	1.33	7.99	All
Parish Clerk	2026 Diary Ink - Previously authorised and paid via BACs	8.32	1.67	9.99	All
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit Ink - Previously authorised and paid via BACs	210.00	42.00	252.00	All

11.2 Financial Statements for July and August 2025– both issued – noted.

12. Correspondence, to consider any correspondence/communication received:

12.1 Neighbourhood Plan Update – Carried forward.

12.2 The Clerk confirmed that the second half of the annual Precept, £6497.13, was received via BACs on 15th September 2025.

13. To consider any Correspondence received after publication: None.

14. Any other business (for information only) and any items to carry forward to next month for the decision of the council: The Parish Council six monthly report will be circulated with the newsletter. The newsletter will also advise residents that the old railway line from Ringstead Road towards Docking will be closed to the public from 1st October until 2nd of February.

15. Any further public contributions to the meeting – None.

16. Proposed Date of Next Meeting –15th October 2025 at 7.00pm.

17. Close – 8.02pm