

Scarning Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2025 at Scarning Village Hall

Councillors Present: S Bunn (Chair), T Abel, M Blackburn, M Eveling, C Hewson, H Manning, N Parsons, M Steward. **In attendance:** N Hartley (Parish Clerk), Cllr L Turner (Breckland Council), A Glister and Y Long (Scarning Village Hall Trust), S Lee (Secretary to the Village Hall Trust) C Farnham (Scarning Playing Field Committee).

Public Participation

Members of the Village Hall Trust and Scarning Playing Field Committee had been invited to the meeting regarding the project for a car park on Shipdham Lane playing field and the formation of a committee. The Hall Trust had written to the Council setting out the proposed phases of the project, these being a permissive footpath at the side of the Village Hall connecting the playing field to the village hall/Dereham Road, a visibility splay for the car park and the car park. The Hall Trust had obtained quotes in March 2023 that varied between £26,000 and £30,000 (plus Vat). Mr Glister said he hoped the Parish Council would fund the visibility splay. He said that Norfolk County Council had not been willing to meet members of the Trust about the visibility splay. Mr Glister suggested a contract was drawn up between the three groups. Council members did not agree with this.

Cllr Turner suggested a meeting with the Planning Officer to determine the best way forward. This was agreed by all parties. Cllr Turner said she would be willing to attend the meeting. The clerk will request a meeting and copy the request to the Village Hall Trust Secretary.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Bradford, Cllr Hewett (Breckland Council) and Cllr W Richmond (Norfolk County Council).

2 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Manning in item 13 (sale of land at Daffy Green) as she has been approached by the estate agents and invited to bid for the land, following the withdrawal of the purchaser.

Cllr Hewson in all matters relating to Scarning Playing Field Committee.

3 Shipdham Lane Car Park Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs Abel and Bunn to the Committee.

4 Shipdham Lane Car Park Committee

See above under Public Participation.

5 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2025. The Chair signed the minutes.

6 Matters Arising

None.

7 Report from District Councillors

A copy of Cllrs Turner and Hewitt's report is attached to the minutes.

8 Breckland Local Plan (Regulation 18 Consultation)

The following submission had been sent to Breckland Council.

The Council is of the firm view that small sites should be welcomed and are needed. Large sites, namely S W Dereham, would bring huge pressure on infrastructure and services which are already stretched. Such development is likely to be unpopular with residents and users of the area eg Mid Norfolk Cycleway, joggers, walkers and dog owners. In addition there is a severe lack of support services such as doctors, dentists and school places within the wider town area and this would need addressing.

The Council felt the most important housing need was for small starter homes of 2-3 bedrooms, for younger people especially. This should take a priority over large "executive" houses.

On S106 money, the Council felt that would depend upon the size of the development. SW Dereham with 1400 new homes would require major infrastructure such as schooling, GP, public transport and especially major improvements to the dangerous A47/Drayton Hall Road intersection. The Council believes this is vital as it will be the first single carriageway junction after a 25 mile dual carriageway. If large areas of countryside are lost then appropriate public park and woodland should be included for children, walkers, joggers, cyclists and dogs who would lose the use of the current country lanes.

For smaller developments provision of improved double width pedestrian paths and cycleways eg Scarning Church to Scarning School to provide safe healthy travel.

Scarning Parish Council would be happy to take on any such new facilities, subject to the appropriate funding for maintenance.

Other than that the footpath/cycleway above a footbridge and cycleway over the A47 at Draytonhall is urgently needed.

9 Finance

9.1 The Council approved the following payments to be made in accordance with the Budget:-

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £1,000 (Standing Order)
HMRC, clerk's Paye, £143.74
A Glister, to supply and install Christmas tree outside Scarning church, £170
Marnick Landscapes Ltd, strim hedge Black Horse Close to Hill Rise, £100
Norfolk County Council, legal costs re Daffy Green sale of land, £73.44
TT Jones Electrical Ltd, street light maintenance, £73.82

10 Grant Application Update

Cllr Manning noted that further information was being provided to the National Lottery. The deadline is 5 January 2026 and it will be a further three months before the Council receives a decision. It was noted that NGF Play Ltd had increased its quote to £123,504.43 (inc Vat) and that this increased cost had been factored into the Lottery bid.

11 Annual play safety inspection report

It was **RESOLVED** that, pending a decision from the National Lottery, the Council will monitor the remaining items from the report, but will have repairs made to the play area gate so that it closes properly.

12 Council's Budget for 2026 and Precept

The Council considered its Budget for 2026/27. It was **RESOLVED** to add £5,000 toward the Shipdham Lane car park and £5,000 toward play equipment at Blackthorn Drive. It was **RESOLVED** to agree the Budget and set the Council's Precept at £59,000.

13 Sale of land at Daffy Green

The Council had been informed that by Cruso Wilkin that they have had instructions from the solicitors to approach the other interested parties as it appears that the original purchaser is not proceeding. The two interested parties have been contacted.

14 Retentions of Documents policy

The Council considered the adoption of a Documents Retention policy in response to guidance from Norfolk Parish Training & Support. The guidance was in relation to a request from Cllr Bradford to see the clerk's timesheets. The guidance made clear that Cllr Bradford was not able to see the timesheets and nor were other councillors. Councillors had been sent this guidance in advance of the Council meeting. Cllr Bradford subsequently sent a further email to the clerk and councillors about timesheets.

Cllr Bunn said that it had been made clear to Cllr Bradford several times that he was seeking a 'reset' of the Council and that what he wanted was constructive input.

Councillors were frustrated by Cllr Bradford's continued focus on processes and procedures instead of the more constructive business of the Council. Cllr Eveling said that he saw a group of people on the Council who were focused on working together for the benefit of the community. He added that he

did not want to be the recipient of emails such as the most recent email sent to all councillors by Cllr Bradford.

Councillors asked if there was any facility to remove Cllr Bradford from the Council. It was noted there was not. However, it was noted that a member of the public had indicated they would be making a complaint about Cllr Bradford to Breckland Council's Monitoring Officer. It was felt that the Council had been brought into disrepute, particularly when Cllr Bradford had effectively prevented the Council from carrying out any business from November 2024 (when councillors had passed a Vote of No Confidence in Cllr Bradford) to April 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt a Document Retention policy.

(Cllr Bradford disagreed with the minute, when the minutes were signed.)

15 Items for the next agenda

An update from the car park committee.

Ideas for projects in 2026.

16 Next Meeting

The next Council meeting will be in the Village Hall at 7pm on January 19, 2026.

The meeting was closed at 8pm.

Signed Chair

Date

District Councillors' Report

There are now 13 Mindful Towns and Villages in Breckland – including Shipdham and through this initiative we able to offer Warm Packs to help those in need stay warm and well through the winter. Packs are available from a number of sources including the Pop Up Pantry that visits Shipdham, or www.breckland.gov.uk/community/warm-and-well

Following a public meeting in Dereham re NR19 Hotel – a multi agency Dereham Task Force will be set up. A full public briefing about the responsibilities of Councils for homeless and vulnerable people is available on the BDC website or via social media. But in summary, emergency accommodation is provided when we (BDC) have a duty to do so. BDC houses currently houses 10 individuals/couples at the NR19 (no families) all with a local connection. The premises is monitored and visited every week by officers.

Norfolk/Suffolk Mayoral Election delay – we have been advised this has been postponed until May 2028. The joint West cross-party proposal has written to express its dismay at the delay. As far as we know at the time of writing, Local Government Reorganisation will continue as planned. Residents are encouraged to continue contributing to the surveys re LGR.

Inspiring Communities newsletter and other useful links for residents, communities and businesses on Breckland Council website and in the Winter edition of Your Breckland.

Winter safety – please keep an eye on your neighbours and vulnerable people – lots of advice such as gritting routes on both NCC and BDC websites.

Breckland Christmas/New Year opening hours and emergency contact numbers are on its website, and have been sent to all Parish Clerks