

Ilketshall St. Andrew Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of 5 January 2026, 7.30 pm.

The Chair of the Parish Council (Gerald Godfrey) welcomed those present at the meeting, which included all 5 Parish Councillors (Gerald Godfrey (GG), Ian Braid (IB), Colin Ward (CW), Penny Ward (PW) and Rod Apps (RA). There were 7 members of the public present.

1. Statement regarding application of Standing Orders and conduct during the meeting.

GG made the following statement:

If necessary, the strict application of the Standing Orders for the Parish Council will apply. However, the Parish Council would very much prefer to return to the co-operative and inclusive style of meeting that has served both the Parish Council, and the members of the public attending, very well in recent years.

Members of the public will have the opportunity to speak on matters of concern to them under Item 4 of this evening's Agenda.

We are aware that there are several concerns on several matters. One of our priorities is to appoint a Parish Clerk (RA has only taken back the role on a temporary basis). The vacancy has been advertised on SALC, and pursuing various contacts, and we have had a response today from an individual interested in taking on the role. The individual is an experienced Parish Clerk, and we hope to have a meeting with her at the end of January or early February.

I would remind the meeting that decisions of the Parish Council are made by the Council as a whole, and therefore the principle of collective responsibility applies. Remarks directed at particular members of the Parish Council are therefore not acceptable.

We again have a full agenda to cover in 2 hours this evening, and therefore moving to Item 2 on the Agenda: apologies for absence:

2. Apologies – to consider accepting apologies for absence from the Councillors.

District Councillors Anthony Speca and Toby Hammond sent their apologies for the meeting.

3. To discuss and agree co-option for Parish Council vacancies.

RA noted that there had been two expressions of interest submitted to the Parish Council to fill the two vacancies, from Richard Hall and Andrew Ward.

IB proposed, and PW seconded, the appointment of Richard Hall and Andrew Ward as Parish Councillors, which was unanimously approved (with RA not voting).

RA undertook to make the relevant entries on the East Suffolk District Council website, and noted that RH and AW would need to complete the Register of Interest.

[Action: RA]

4. Declarations – Pecuniary and Other.

Andrew Ward declared an interest, in that he was responsible for the regular cutting of the grass at the Play Area.

5. Adjournment – Public Participation. [For information only: a total of 3 minutes per member, 15 minutes overall maximum.]

A member of the public asked why the “Public Participation” item had been shifted up the Agenda at the last meeting and at this meeting of the Parish Council, such that it was one of the first items.

RA responded that as a consequence of reviewing the Standing Orders, it became clear that the stated purpose of the item was to allow members of the public to speak on matters due to be discussed later on the Agenda. It therefore makes sense to have the Adjournment item at an early stage in the Agenda. Having said which, the wish of the Parish Council is that the meetings can revert to a more informal format with members of the public making valid contributions when appropriate.

A member of the public noted that the Parish Council meeting on 8 December had operated on a formal basis, without there being an opportunity for members of the public to contribute to the discussion or to reply to statements made.

A member of the public expressed the hope that everyone can now put what has happened in the past behind us, and can move forward cooperatively.

A member of the public noted that the Parish Council appeared to have misunderstood the assertion made by the Solar Farm Action Group that there was a conflict of interest between role of RA as a Parish Councillor and his role on the Land Management Company. It was noted that there was no conflict of interest on the basis of a personal benefit to any Councillor, but that there was a potential conflict of interest between the Parish Clerk’s role as Councillor and his role as Director of the LMC. While the Parish Council had decided that there should not be any discussions between the Parish Council and RES, the possibility remained open for the LMC to hold discussions with RES.

RH suggested that a number of Directors of the LMC representing Parishioners should not have voted in favour of holding discussions with RES given the vote by the Parish Council that it would not itself engage in such discussions. RA stated that the Parish Council decision referred only to itself and that it was not in any way binding on any Director of the LMC, with the LMC being a separate organisation, and therefore that there was no conflict of interest between the Parish Council and the members of the LMC. A member of the public maintained that the only purpose of the LMC holding discussions with RES was to negotiate. RA replied that this was incorrect. The Chair emphasised that it was important for the issues relating to RES to be put in the past, and a member of the public reiterated that it was essential to move forward in a spirit of co-operation.

6. Minutes of previous meetings

The Minutes of the meeting of 8th December 2025 were unanimously approved by the Parish Council, and signed by the Chair.

7. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 1st September 2025, the Minutes of 3rd November 2025, and Parish Clerks’ update.

RA noted that several items were identified in the Matters Arising element of the meeting of 8th December 2025 that he had not had time, since that meeting, to take further. He explained that

he would spend time identifying those items during this meeting, but would endeavour to take forward in due course.

[Action: RA]

[Item 7 of the Minutes of 1 September 2025 refers]: RA noted that he had finalised the bundle of documentation relating to this issue and has sent it to Land Registry. Receipt had been acknowledged, and the application is expected to be completed by 25 February 2027 (that is, 13 months from the current meeting).

RA noted that for the sake of clarity (due to there seeming to be some misunderstanding) what he had done – as Parish Clerk, on behalf of the Parish Council – had been to submit a claim for ‘adverse possession’ of the Village Hall car park. This is currently NOT part of the Village Hall in terms of within the Land Registry boundary for the Village Hall, but is part of Great Common. The general understanding was that the car part WAS part of the Village Hall, although it seems that the issue was raised at a Parish Council meeting 10+ years ago, and a decision made to do something about it, but nothing actually did happen. The intention is therefore that a piece of Great Common will – formally – be transferred from being with “no known owner” to becoming owned by the Parish Council. The Parish Council has been kept fully aware of what has been happening, and it has also been undertaken with the Board of the LMC’s full knowledge and approval. RA noted that the reasons for undertaking the ‘adverse possession’ claim for the car park included the possibility of the Village Hall insurance not covering events taking place on the car park, the difficulties associated with the Village Hall Management Committee should it ever want to build on the car part, and the possibility of someone objecting to the car park being on common land.

RA noted that the Village Hall car park was not the only area of Common land where the boundaries are unclear, with one such being a small area of Great Common at the end of the track leading down to Glebe Farm. That area had been fully enclosed for well in excess of 12 years, and had long been regarded as part of Glebe Farm. The issue is therefore directly comparable to that of the Village Hall, in that it constitutes an area of land that has been fully enclosed for in excess of 12 years. As in all such instances, the objective of the LMC is to be clear on what the actual boundaries of the Commons are, and therefore it had been suggested to the owner of Glebe Farm that a claim for ‘adverse possession’ of that piece of land be submitted. RA noted that – as a Director of the LMC, and with the full knowledge and agreement of the Board of the LMC – he had undertaken to assist in the submission of such a claim for ‘adverse possession.’

RA further noted that the whole issue of the certainty of the boundaries of the Commons arises as a consequence of the Commons having no known owner. As a consequence, the land is not registered with the Land Registry. The boundaries of the Commons are therefore not defined by the Land Registry boundaries for the Commons, but by the Land Registry boundaries for the neighbouring properties. In addition, RA noted that although the **ownership** of the Village Hall car park and the piece adjoining Glebe Farm would be transferred, they would still remain **common** land.

RH asked what the difference between the Glebe Farm issue and a recent, separate, application for adverse possession was. RA explained that while the piece of Great Common adjacent to Glebe Farm had been fully enclosed for well in excess of 12 years, this had not been the case for the previous separate application.

RH requested that an item on the agenda for the next Parish Council should be the responsibilities of the LMC relative to the responsibilities of the Parish Council. RA said that these issues had been very extensively aired, discussed, and decided upon in December 2024 and documented on the Parish Council website. GG suggested that if RH believed that there were instances of encroachment onto the Commons which others were not aware of, he could bring details to the Parish Council for investigation.

8. Opportunity for District Councillor and County Councillor to speak

The Parish Council noted that although Judy Cloke has circulated her monthly report earlier in the day, RA had not had time to forward it to the other Councillors, but would do so in time for the next meeting of the Parish Council.

Judy Cloke noted that a lot of time was being taken up by the issue of local government reorganisation, and the related issue of the potential deferral of elections. She also reported in issues related to the Fire and Rescue Service, which had been subject to some criticism but a more recent inspection had confirmed significant progress.

9. To discuss any Planning Applications and associated issues.

- a. DC/25/2109/FUL. Redisham Hall Farm solar farm proposal. Comments due by 9 January 2026.

RA noted that this appeared to be a submission by the developers in response to comments made since their original submission. A decision on the application by East Suffolk Planning had not yet been made.

The submission related to a slight relocation of the control room, and other associated changes, at the site of the solar farm. Those changes were not within the Parish Council boundary, and would probably not affect any neighbouring property within Ilketshall St. Andrew (either positively or negatively). There was no mention of the central issue that concerned Ilketshall St. Andrew – that of the cable route from the solar farm to the substation on Clarkes Lane. The Parish Council agreed that it therefore seemed that there is no change in the Parish Council's stance and the comments it made in its submission of 9 July 2025.

The Parish Council therefore agreed to request RA to submit comments to the East Suffolk Planning website that

1. Noted that the additional documentation still did not provide any detail regarding the intention to create an underground cable route between the site of the solar farm on Ringsfield Road and the electricity sub-station on Clarkes Lane, Ilketshall St. Andrew.
2. Noted the following comment made by Suffolk Highways in its submission of 28th October 2025:

“The cable laying route is a significant factor for the success of this development and is likely to have a significant impact upon the highway, it is therefore not appropriate for it to be condition as a separate CMP/CTMP. SCC as the Local Highways Authority has a duty to assess the extent of the impacts on the highways network and therefore all information should be provided within the application otherwise there is a presumption that these works will be accepted, removing the opportunity for a without prejudice review being conducted”

3. Noted that Suffolk Highways reiterated its stance in its comment on 30 December 2025.
4. Noted that the Ilketshall St. Andrew Parish Council therefore reiterated its objections to the original proposal that it made on 9 July 2025 and fully supported the contention of Suffolk Highways that the proposal should not be allowed to progress without there being a full planning application detailing the proposed arrangements for the creation of an underground cable route from the solar farm on Ringsfield Road to the site of the electricity sub-station on Clarkes Lane, Ilketshall St. Andrew.

[Action: RA]

10. To discuss and agree any highways issues

- a. To receive an update on Speedwatch on Top Road

The official data for November 2025 was as follows:

4x30 minute sessions, during which 4 speeders recorded. Two of these were first letters, 2 were second letters. It was noted that the 2 "second letters" could have received letters resulting from *other* Speedwatch groups, and not the one on Top Road.

Provisional data for December was as follows:

3x30 min sessions, with no speeders being recorded.

b. To receive any data from the Speed Indicator Devices.

For the VAS shared with Ringsfield & Weston, the Parish Council noted that for the period 17 November 2025 – 29 December 2025, with the device located at the eastern end of Top Road,

The maximum speed recorded was 55pmh, at 9.15pm on 17 November;

There were a total of 18,438 vehicle movements;

The average speed recorded for all vehicles was 32.1mph

The worst speeding day was Friday.

The Parish Council noted that there were issues with the recording of the data for the new VAS, which would hopefully be resolved shortly.

c. To discuss the possibility of purchasing a solar panel for the Speed Indicator Device.

PW had obtained a quote for a solar panel to assist in powering the new VAS, which came in at £434.23 plus VAT.

GG announced that he had secured £250 of funding from Dominic Parker towards the cost of the solar panel, and would himself contribute the remaining amount to meet the overall cost of £423.23.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed (with RA not voting) to purchase the solar panel for the new VAS.

[Action: RA]

11. To discuss and agree the finances:

a. Confirmation of payments made since the meeting of the Parish Council on 8th December 2025, and of payments due.

Payments made since 8 December:

- £66.00 Reimbursement to RA, defibrillator pads
- £60.00 Andy Ward, grass cutting
- £308.00 Phil Greener, School Road notice board and Play Area gate closures.

These had all agreed at meeting of 8th December.

- £6.00 Unity Bank service charge paid on 31 December

Payments due:

£86.75 reimbursement to RA for costs incurred with submission to Land Registry regarding the Village Hall car park. [Land Registry fee of £45; £20 solicitor's fee: £11.50 identity-proving photographs; £10.25 postage]

£60.00 Andy Ward, grass cutting [It was noted that RA had mistakenly only paid AW £60 in December 2025, whereas the agreed figure was £90; this new payment of £60 therefore constituted £30 of arrears and £30 for a further session.]

£180.00 website maintenance, due 1st February

£3,751.82 for basket-type swing, due at some point after 8 January 2026.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to make these payments, with RA not voting.

[Action: RA]

b. Update on Parish Council finances for 2025-2026.

RA circulated copies of the updated finances for 2025-2026, and noted that the total balances as at 1st January 2026 constituted **£9,308.79**

After payment for website maintenance and the basket-type swing, total balances would be £5,376.97. There was no constraint on any of these funds. The Parish Council would get £625.30 VAT refund on basket-type swing in due course, so for reference the total balances would then be £6002.27. As noted under item 10c, donations would cover the cost of the solar panel for the new VAS, and the only remaining major expenditure foreseen for the current financial year was the possibility of purchasing a screen and projector. It was agreed that even with this expenditure, the reserves would still be in excess of £5,000.

In the light of that information, the Parish Council unanimously agreed (with RA not voting) to confirm the decision that it had provisionally made at the 8 December meeting to submit a parish precept request of £9,000.

RA provide an update on the position with respect to the Barclays accounts. GG & RA had submitted a mandate change request in November 2025, but given that nothing had been heard since that date, RA had a lengthy telephone conversation with Barclays. It emerged that Barclays had made an error in the processing of the mandate change request, but with the possibility that could be corrected without going through a laborious process, the mandate change would be completed, the closure of the accounts achieved, and the monies transferred to the Unit Trust account. RA undertook to endeavour to complete the closure of the Barclays accounts and to facilitate the remaining funds to the Unity Trust account.

[Action: RA]

12. To agree action relating to the Play Area

a. To discuss arrangements for the installation of a basket-type swing.

RA informed the Parish Council that the basket-type swing was scheduled to be installed on Thursday 8th January, and that he would meet the personnel on-site to agree upon the positioning of the swing.

[Action: RA]

13. To receive and discuss Minutes from other Village institutions

a. Village Hall Management Committee

The Parish Council noted that no new Minutes had been received since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

b. Land Management Company.

The Parish Council noted that no new Minutes had been received since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

14. Revision of Parish Council Standing Orders

RA noted that he had circulated a revised version of the Standing Orders for the Parish Council to Councillors prior to the meeting, and noted that the revisions were all minor. RA outlined these as constituting:

3f; time limit of 15 minutes for public participation (was 3, which made no sense).

3i; remove requirement to stand when speaking

3x maximum of 2 hours for meeting, but can extend with unanimous agreement of all Councillors [Was 2.5 hours maximum, with no possibility of extending]

7a was 3 Councillors to submit a motion to reverse a prior decision of the Parish Council – now 2. This was proposed as a reflection of there only being 5 Councillors, although as of this meeting there would be 7.

Section 19; removal of references to committees and sub-committees, since the Parish Council does not have any.

After consideration of these changes, and after taking advice from Judy Cloke, the Parish Council unanimously agreed (with RA not voting) to adopt all the changes proposed, **with the exception of** the proposed changes to Section 19.

RA undertook to post new version alongside the old version on website for a period.

[Action: RA]

15. To agree the date of the next meeting
Monday 2nd March 2026 was unanimously agreed.

The meeting closed at 9.11pm.

Signed

Date