

Swardeston Parish Council
Minutes of the July 2026 Parish Council Meeting
At Swardeston village hall, on Thursday 9th July 2026 at 7.30PM
Meeting 7/2026

Present:
Members - Derek Barber, Graham Jermy, Justin Barber, Wendy Middleton and Dominic Everett
Cllr Webber
2 members of the public attended

1.	To consider apologies for absence There were no apologies for absence.	
2.	To co-opt 2 members to fill the casual vacancy There were no nominations to fill the vacancies. The clerk had sent a blank co-option policy and it was agreed that a policy was not required but the document could be used for guidance.	
3.	To receive declaration of interests in items on agenda There were no declarations of interest.	
4.	Resolution to adjourn the meeting for public participation and district/county councillor reports Public Participation A lot of Holbrook trucks were coming through the village and concerns were raised that it was dangerous to walk on the pavements when they were passing. Councillor reports Cllr Webber presented a report which is shown at appendix a to these minutes.	
5.	To confirm minutes of the meeting held on 11th June and review matters arising Mr J Barber proposed the June 2026 minutes be agreed subject to an amendment in 19.4 to amend the date. as an accurate record, Mr Jermy seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. They were signed by the chairman. Matters arising The Bracon Ash Energy Farm grant application had not yet been decided. 4 people from APEX had presented to parish councillors, questions had been asked and answered. The public session had taken place at the Keswick Reading Room and had been very busy.	
6.	To consider any action on the national energy infrastructure projects There were no developments to discuss	
7.	To consider Swainsthorpe Neighbourhood Plan - Reg. 16 Consultation and agree any comments The neighbourhood plan had been circulated and was discussed. It was agreed not to submit any comments.	
8.	To review the draft deed for the Hall farm community fund and agree next steps The deed had been circulated by the clerk. Mr D Barber suggested that some plans needed to be put in place before the first money was received which was expected to be at least 2030 or later. It was proposed by Mr D Barber to accept the deed, Mr Everett seconded and agreed unanimously. A paper version would be requested for signing, the clerk would respond with the decision.	CJ
9.	To consider the provision of a bike rack at the village hall The village hall trustees had met with the owner of the common to discuss options and a location had been agreed.	
10.	To review and agree any changes to the financial regulations Mr Jermy had revised the financial regulations, Mr D Barber had gone through and checked against the previous version and identified a number of issues.	

	The previous version would be checked against the new version and updated for review at the August meeting. Two amendments were noted 1. The 2 people undertaking the bank transactions need to be recorded on the minutes in future to comply with the regulations. 2. The storage media needs to be amended to Dropbox. Mr D Barber said he would compare the 2025 version against the 2026 version and send a revised version round.	DB
11.	To review and agree a reserves policy as recommended in the internal audit report Two examples of other councils reserves policies had been circulated. Mr D Barber had annotated one example stating that general reserves should be 12 months of the annual precept. Earmarked reserves would be for repairs and servicing of assets. Mr Everett suggested the amount of precept be kept in general reserves and up to 50% in earmarked reserves. Unspent budgeted funds would be moved to earmarked reserves. Mr D Barber would draft a bespoke policy and circulate for agreement at the next meeting.	DB
12.	To check progress with the village hall The windows on the cricket field side of the social club had been ordered and were expected to be completed in September.	
13.	To check progress on the dog bin There had been no progress to report.	
14.	To review and agree comments on any planning applications received 2026/0664 14.1 2026/1662 Proposal: Replace existing wall and roof finishes, remove chimneys and install metal flues in lieu Location: 1 Manor Cottages Gowthorpe Lane Swardeston Mr J Barber proposed that no comments be submitted, Mrs Middleton seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. 14.2 Proposal: Replacement of roof and upper external wall finishes, removal of chimneys and installation of flues to serve wood-burning appliances. (Works to be undertaken in conjunction with works to adjoining property). Location: 2 Manor Cottages Gowthorpe Lane Swardeston Mr J Barber proposed that no comments be submitted, Mrs Middleton seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed.	
15.	To receive an update on the defibrillator The check had been completed and it had been found that the battery had been showing low power and needed to be replaced. A price had been sourced which was £199.17 +VAT, much less than other options. Mr J Barber proposed that the battery be purchased, Mr Everett seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. Mr D Barber would order the battery.	DB
16.	Finance 16.1 To review and agree the financial statement to 9th July 2026 The financial statement and bank reconciliation were reviewed. Mr J Barber proposed that the financial statement and the bank reconciliation be accepted as accurate records. Mr Jermy seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. 16.2 To check and verify the bank balances against the bank reconciliation	

	Mr Everett checked the bank balances on the on-line banking app against the bank reconciliation and verified they matched. 16.3 To agree an additional bank signatory This item was adjourned to the next meeting. 16.4 To agree invoices for payment in accordance with budget <table border="0"> <tr> <td>BACS £305.35</td><td>Norse Eastern Ltd</td><td>Grounds maintenance</td></tr> <tr> <td>BACS £124.83</td><td>C Jowett</td><td>Clerks salary</td></tr> <tr> <td>BACS £82.80</td><td>HMRC</td><td>PAYE</td></tr> <tr> <td>BACS £803.04</td><td>OLP</td><td>Playground repairs</td></tr> </table> Mr J Barber proposed the above payments be made, Mr Jermy seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. The payments would be set up by Mr D Barber and authorised by Mr J Barber. Repairs to the play area had cropped up unexpectedly and Mr D Barber had been pointed in the direction of OLP by the district council. A pallet of wood was due to be delivered to his home the following day. Payment would not be made until the goods had been checked. The play area needed an inspection which would be delayed until the repairs had been completed. The same inspector as last year would be used. The South Norfolk offer of a shared contract had been considered but it stated that gym equipment was to be a separate inspection potentially doubling the costs. OLP could undertake an inspection and provide quotes for any repairs or replacements required. The cost would be £120 + VAT and it was suggested that this be done in the Spring next year.	BACS £305.35	Norse Eastern Ltd	Grounds maintenance	BACS £124.83	C Jowett	Clerks salary	BACS £82.80	HMRC	PAYE	BACS £803.04	OLP	Playground repairs	
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17.	To consider correspondence received There were no items to discuss.													
18.	To adjourn the meeting for public participation No issues were raised.													
19.	To agree agenda items for the next meeting on 13th August 2026 at 7:30 To review and adopt a reserves policy as recommended in the internal audit report To review and agree any changes to the financial regulations To confirm the check on the defibrillator To check progress on the dog bin To review and agree comments on any planning applications received To consider any action on the national energy infrastructure projects To agree an additional bank signatory The meeting closed at 21:15pm													
Signed: Mr D Barber Chairman to Swardeston Parish Council https://swardestonparish.gov.uk														

District Councillors' Report for Swardeston Parish Council – 9 July 2026

Member Ward Grants

Requests for support with small projects (typically up to £1,000 per project) to benefit the local community can be made to your District Councillors. Please also discuss larger grants with your District Councillors (see Communities Action Fund and Communities Facilities Grants below).

Communities Action Fund (CAF) and Communities Facilities Grant (CFG)

Much larger grants (potentially up to £40,000) are also available from the District Council through CAF and CFG grants. Applications, via your District Councillor, are now open. The closing date is 16th August. Applications are more likely to be funded if matched funding is available from other sources.

In Bloom Grant

Applications for In Bloom Grants are open to Parish Councils and other community organisations until 15th November 2026. The grant is limited to £1 per resident and must be matched funded.

Community & Open Spaces Grant

Applications for this grant is expected to open soon. Up to £2.25 million of funding is available to support larger projects valued at over £200,000 which are led by Parish and Town Councils but support South Norfolk Council's strategic ambitions and wider place shaping ambitions. The local Council is expected to provide some matched funding. Applications are through a 2-stage process. At Stage 1 councils must complete an initial expression of interest. Successful projects for 26/27 are likely to be significantly advanced already.

Food Waste

Collections of food waste in Swardeston are on track to start in the week starting 28 September. Further information, caddies and bags will be provided to residents in the 2/3 weeks before the start date.

County Council Recycling Centres

From Monday 13 July, Norwich South Recycling Centre is able to accept all electricals for recycling including fridges and freezers.

Please note that there is a nationwide shortage of capacity for recycling fridges and freezers.

Local Government Reform and Devolution

Both Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk District Council are submitting applications for a judicial review of the Government's plans for the reorganisation of Norfolk into 3 Unitary Authorities.

While council officers continue to expect LGR to be implemented, with elections to the new authorities in May 2027, there are suggestions that the timetable for the necessary Parliamentary Structural Change Order is delayed until the end of 2026.

Hethel Roundabout Project

The confirmed dates for the full closure of Wymondham Road in Hethel are 14th July to 18th September. During this period Bridge Road in Wrenningham will be closed to all traffic apart from deliveries and local residents and businesses. Access to Browick Road from Wymondham Road will be controlled to ensure diversionary traffic does not use this route.

Apex Data Centre

There is an online consultation regarding a proposal for a large 150MW data centre at the "brown" field site between the A140 and the B1113, opposite Harford Bridge Tesco. The consultation closes on Sunday 12 July. The developer has indicated that it expects to submit a planning application in the summer. There is an existing planning approval for industrial/ commercial use of the site, which includes a new road to alleviate pressure at the existing junction. This is expected to be carried forward into the new application. The proposal is raising many environmental concerns locally. A full planning application is expected later in the summer. The consultation can be found at <https://www.apexnorwichdatacentre.co.uk/>.

East Pye Solar Farm.

Registrations with the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for this scheme are now closed. The timetable for the examination stage will now be set by the Planning Inspectorate.

EDF Energy Solar Park



EDF have submitted an application (2026/1819) for an EIA screening opinion for the 80MW Stoke Lane solar farm proposed on the East side of the A140 running from Dunston Hall Golf Course to the A140 junction with Church Road, Swainsthorpe – see image. Comments on the request can be submitted to SNC Planning until 14th July. Consultation events will be held later in the year.

‘Norwich to Tilbury’ Update

The National Grid’s Development Consent Order continues at the examination phase. This is scheduled to close on 10 August 2026, although an earlier close is possible. The initial public hearings have been completed and can be viewed online: [Examination timetable - Norwich to Tilbury - Find a National Infrastructure Project](#).

PylonsEastAnglia are continuing to campaign against the pylon proposals and are fundraising. For further information visit: <https://pylonseastanglia.co.uk/actions>.

Bob McClenning, Ian Spratt & Jim Webber

	<u>Councillor Contact Details</u>	
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