

MINUTES

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Woodham Walter Parish Council.

Held at 8.00pm at Woodham Walter Women's Club.

Monday 8th December 2025

Present:

Cllr. John Brown (Chairperson)

Cllr. James Bunn

Cllr. Joanna Symons

Cllr. Peter Warren

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk/RFO)

2 members of the MDC Community Engagement Team (in attendance from 9-9.30pm)

Public: 1

3542. Welcome Cllr. Brown welcomed those present to the meeting. No one declared that they would be recording the meeting.

3543. To report, approve and record apologies for absence

RESOLVED - apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Emel Fowler, Cllr. John Tompkins and County Cllr. Jane Fleming.

3544. Disclosure of Interests/Consideration of Dispensations

3544.1 To disclose the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs), Other Registerable Interests (ORIs), or Non-Registerable Interests (NRIs) relating to items of business on the agenda having regard the Code of Conduct for Members. (Members are reminded they are also required to disclose any such interests as soon as they become aware should the need arise throughout the meeting).

There were no interests declared and the register was duly updated.

3544.2 To receive and consider any requests for dispensations.

None

3545. Public Forum

There was one member of the public present who wished to observe the meeting.

3546. To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 10th November 2025.

RESOLVED - the minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

3547. Matters Arising - Progress report (not for resolution)

3547.1 The report compiled by the Clerk was noted. Matters for report are contained within the agenda.

3548. Local Government Reorganisation Consultation

To consider which proposal the Parish Council supports and encourage residents and local businesses to also respond to the consultation – it was noted that information about each proposal is available here:

<https://www.essexlgrhub.org/stronger-greater-essex>.

Update received: The Government has announced that it is minded to postpone the Greater Essex Mayoral election, originally scheduled for May 2026, until May 2028. The Government has stated that the delay is to allow more time between setting up their new Mayoral Strategic Authorities and holding the first mayoral elections, and for partners to work together and build strong collaboration before a Mayor takes office. This announcement does not relate to local elections, and we expect further clarity from the Government on what this means for those elections in due course.

Significant progress has already been made across Greater Essex in preparing for the new combined authority, which was due to launch in 2026. Councils remain committed to working together towards the revised timetable to ensure devolution delivers for our region. Devolution represents a major opportunity to drive growth, attract investment, and create prosperity across our communities.

The consultation remains active and residents and local businesses are encouraged to take part.

Summary of discussion:

- All proposals are considered to take local government too far away from local areas.
- The areas proposed in the 5 Unitary authorities proposal are more geographically and socially associated with this area

RESOLVED to respond to the consultation and state that this Parish Council supports the 5 Unitary Authority proposal.

3549. Planning – APPLICATIONS RECEIVED (for consideration or report)

3549.1 25/00827/TCA The Bell Public House

ACD Ash trees - reduce by 3m. B Silver Birch -reduce by 2m. E Tree of Heaven - reduce by 2m

RESOLVED to raise no objections subject to the Conservation and Tree Officer's opinions.

3549.2 25/00932/HOUSE 4 Brook Close

Single storey side extension.

RESOLVED to support the application which councillors agreed to be in keeping and will improve the property.

3549.3 25/00947/WTPO Warren Golf Club

(TPO 06/20) T17 – Oak tree – crown lift to 2.5m above ground level.

RESOLVED to raise no objections subject to the Tree Officer's opinions.

3549.4 25/01011/TCA St Michael's Church

(A) Yew - lateral reduction by 2m to both sides. (B) Horse Chestnut - Reduce by 3m and remove dead wood.

(C) Oak - reduce 1.5m from branches encroaching on broadband lines. (D) Cherry - reduce 1.5m from branches encroaching on broadband lines, (E) Lime trees – re-pollard to previous pollard points by reducing 3m.

RESOLVED to raise no objections subject to the Conservation and Tree Officer's opinions.

3549.5 There were no other planning applications received.

3550. Planning – DECISIONS (for consideration or report)

3550.1 25/00888/PN Land between Beightons and Barrow Cottage, Bassetts Lane PA Not Required

Prior notification of a temporary recreational campsite between 4 July 2026 and 31 August 2026.

To note that the Parish Council were not consulted on this application. The Clerk has written to the officer to ask that the officers report be corrected to say that the Parish Council were not consulted, not that we did not send a response. We cannot respond to something we don't know about.

3550.2 25/00880/TCA Severn House, The Street

ALLOWED TO PROCEED

T1-T3 Crab Apple trees – height reduction by 3m and width reduction by 2m.

3550.3 Decisions Awaited

a) 25/00524/FUL

Land adjacent Barrow Cottage (and Elwy Cottages), Bassetts Lane

b) 25/00578/OUTM

Land west of the Cemetery, London Road, Maldon

3550.3 Appeal Decisions

25/00418/PACUAR

Highfields. Bassetts Lane

APPEAL DISMISSED

Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/W/25/3372803

3551. Other Planning Matters /Other MDC Matters (for consideration or report)

3551.1 Enforcement – there were no updates or reports.

3551.2 Maldon District Culture & Heritage Survey – encourage responses.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MaldonDistrictCultureHeritage>

3552. Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan – Update from Cllr. John Tompkins

The completed draft of the NP has now been with Simon Milson at MDC since the 7th November and we are awaiting his comments. When they have been received the Section 14 document will be subject to final revisions and then put to public consultation.

3553. To receive reports of the County and District Councillor's.

There were no representatives at the meeting.

It was noted that various reports had been received and shared with councillors and where relevant the public via village email.

3554. Financial Matters (for consideration or report)

3554.1 To receive the Summary of Accounts to date. This includes transactions since November meeting

Date	Unity Trust Instant Access Account	Transaction Detail	Amount In	Amount Out	Balance
31/10/2025	Balance				46,194.27
11/11/2025	Transfer to Current Account (November Debits)			1,400.00	44,794.27
08/12/2025	Transfer to Current Account (December Debits)			1,600.00	43,194.27
					43,194.27

Date	Unity Trust Current Account	Transaction Detail	Amount In	Amount Out	Balance
31/10/2025	Balance				1,184.38
11/11/2025	Transferred from Instant Access Account		1,400.00	-	2,584.38
11-30/11/2025	November Debits #106-113, 115-117			1,405.72	1,178.66
30/11/2025	Outstanding Debits #19, #114)			300.00	878.66
08/12/2025	Transferred from Instant Access Account		1,600.00		2,478.66
08/12/2025	December Debits #118-132			1,393.17	1,085.49
					1,085.49

RESOLVED to accept the summary of accounts.

3554.2 Summary of Payments for December

Ref:	Payee	Method	Net	VAT	Gross
#19 (Apr Deb)	Printing (Bus Flyer/questionnaire) (await - estimate)	BACS	100.00	20.00	120.00
#114 (Nov Deb)	Point Graphics Ltd Danbury Focus Magazine (December Bus Advert)	BACS	150.00	30.00	180.00
#118	A&J Lighting Solutions	DD	21.00	4.20	25.20
#119	Mrs J Bannerman (Salary/Allowance)	BACS	792.97	-	792.97
#120	Nest Pension (Employer £55.40 Employee £88.64)	DD	144.04	-	144.04
#121-126	Barclaycard	DD	48.10	3.50	51.60
#127	Woodham Walter Village Hall (Walter's)	BACS	30.00	-	30.00
#128	Unity Trust Bank (Charges)	DD	6.00	-	6.00
#129	Point Graphics Ltd Danbury Focus Magazine (January Bus Advert)	BACS	150.00	30.00	180.00
#130	Plusnet (Women's Club Broadband)	DD	28.99	-	28.99
#131	Npower	DD	96.71	4.84	101.55
#132	Information Commissioner's Office (Data Protection Fee renewal)	DD	47.00	-	47.00
	Total		1,364.81	42.54	1,407.35

Date	Barclaycard Payments (Estimated November Statement)	Net	VAT	Gross
29/10/2025	Amazon (Gate Closer part payment)	1.63	0.33	1.96
06/11/2025	Parking for Maldon Town & Parish Forum	3.40	-	3.40
07/11/2025	1st Money (Payroll)	14.90	0	14.90
12/11/2025	Longacre Garden Centre (Bulbs)	15.82	3.17	18.99
19/11/2025	Central Connect Transport (Bus to Meeting)	3.10	0	3.10
16/11/2025	Walter's Refreshments (Estimate)	9.25	0	9.25
	48.10	3.50	51.60	

Date	Barclaycard Payments (December Statement)	Net	VAT	Gross
07/12/2025	1st Money (Payroll)	14.90	0	14.90
16/12/2025	Walter's Refreshments (Estimate)	10.00	0	10.00
02/12/2025	John Lewis (Laptop)	499.17	99.83	599.00
	524.07	99.83	623.90	

- It was noted that the new laptop has been purchased.
- It was noted that a query had been raised with Npower regarding approx. 30% increase in usage on last 2 bills (compared to last year) resulting in increased bills even though the price p/kwh has remained the same. However, the response received was that the invoices are correct after two MPANS were consolidated into one.

e.g. November 2024 147.500 £77.73
 November 2025 192.700 £101.55

RESOLVED to share last year/this year bill with Cllr. Warren who will do some more analysis. The bills are for a non-metered supply. Also ask how they calculate the usage.

All invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO. Where estimated, the Clerk will await final invoices. The BACS payments will be drawn up by the Parish Clerk and require authorisation by two councillor signatories by Payment Date of 12th December 2025 or as soon as possible.

RESOLVED to accept the payments listed in the payment schedule.

3554.3 Review of Bank Statements, Credit Card Statements and Account sheets for November.
Cllr. Bunn confirmed he had reviewed the documents and found them to be reconciled correctly.

3554.4 Budget 2026/2027 and Forecasting report for 2025/2026

It was noted that the budget has been drafted in Scribe (accounting software) and the Clerk/Chairman will meet to analyse and refine. It was noted that the estimated Tax Base figure has been received from MDC @ 289.8
It was agreed to arrange a virtual meeting with all councillors to discuss the budget in detail on Monday 5th January. The full budget will be finalised for adoption at the January meeting.

3554.5 Expenditure items for consideration

- Canva subscription £100 (Annual). It was agreed that the Clerk should subscribe.

3554.6 Grant Funding Applications Update – MDC Where Quality of Life Matters/ECC Community Initiatives Fund - both ruled out due to criteria. However MDC do have a fund which may be suitable for Walter's and Clerk is engaging with relevant department about the Livewell Grant. Consider asking County Councillor re: bench o/s Tadpoles. Discussion regarding the desired bench was agreed to be of traditional design with cast metal ends and possibly composite slats.

Love Your Bus Grant – on-going

3555. Other Council Matters (for consideration or report)

3555.1 Community Engagement Team (CET)

(a) November Report awaited

(b) Discussion with team if present regarding security patrols (see minute ref: 3557.5c) . Clerk had conversation and they are able to include alternative routes around the village as part of their patrols – although to note that they are unable to deal with any incidents, and these will be reported to the Police.
RESOLVED to stick with the current 5 hours

3555.2 Woodham Walter Common – Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT). To receive any updates.

- Woodham Walter Common – comment re: map confusion (noted)
- Woodham Walter Common – comment from rider about poor maintenance of bridleways (noted)

3555.3 Chelmer Valley Landscape Group. Date of next meeting: to be advised

3555.4 Climate Action – There were no updates available

3555.5 Allotments Report – To receive any updates – it was noted that 1 ½ allotment plots have become available. The Allotments Association have requested joining the NSALG themselves in order that they may benefit from insurance discount. Currently it is the Parish Council who are the members.
RESOLVED the Parish council are happy for the Allotment Association to take over the membership.

3555.6 Beeleigh Abbey Estate –Await dates from Estate with regards to Councillor tour.

3555.7 Queen Victoria Pub – owner is very happy for councillors to attend for meeting. Date to be arranged.

3555.8 Parish Councillor vacancy

- It has been confirmed that there were no requests for a by-election, so we may proceed to co-option.
- RESOLVED To advertise position.
- RESOLVED To defer the appointment of the Vice Chairman to the next meeting
- To appoint bank signatory RESOLVED to appoint Cllr. Peter Warren
- To appoint Allotment representative RESOLVED to appoint Cllr. Peter Warren.

3556. Highways, Transport & Infrastructure (for consideration or report)

3556.1 Various matters on-going as detailed in the Highways log

- Noted West Bowers Road closure – chased up ESW as repairs appeared to have been completed but road remained closed – informed that the repair needs to set and be inspected before road can be reopened. The road subsequently re-opened the following day.
- Noted potholes filled along Little London Lane (submitted to CC Members list)

3556.2 99 Bus Service

- Clerk had attended a Passenger Transport Meeting
- Works towards Love Your Bus Grant application on-going.

3557. Local Issues (for consideration or report)

3557.1 Bell Meadow & Memorial Garden

(a) Football Goals

- Anchor positions, the ground conditions have improved and Cllr. Bunn will attempt to install.
- Comment from local resident re: football training, concerns expressed about parking (Noted).

(b) Playground Report

- Comment from local resident re: playground, request for equipment suitable for older children.

It was noted that the equipment was designed to be for primary age children and to be reasonably challenging whilst also not creating a significant public liability issue. The school and village children were consulted during the design phase. The remaining field offers opportunities for older children to run around and use the football goals. RESOLVED councillors do not support the request.

(c) Bell Meadow – No issues raised.

(d) Memorial Garden

It was noted that Shelley Rand and the Chairman had kindly planted daffodil bulbs along the memorial garden. It was suggested that if any local residents wanted to donate any additional bulbs, Shelley would be happy to plant them next year. Shelley will supply a list of suggested bulbs.

3557.2 Footpaths Report – To receive report from footpath officer

Cllr. Warren reported that the paths are now getting muddy in places. The bridge on FP14 from Church at East end as it meets FP16 has been temporarily fixed. The slats have been replaced so it is sound for now but is on the list for replacement in the future.

3557.3 School Report – representative on Governing Body –Cllr Symons reported on Head Teacher's update. They have had a safeguarding audit, training day and been engaging with the parents and also showing prospective parents around. They have a new admin assistant. They have taken part in Children In Need.

3557.4 Woodham Walter Women's Club – Cllr. Symons reported that some progress is now being made, the insurance has been changed to include Trustee indemnity and they have 4 new volunteers willing to become trustees, once all the forms have been completed this will trigger Land Registry to update. They will then be able to consider the next steps.

3557.5 Essex Police/Crime Reports/Neighbourhood Watch Report.

(a) It was noted that Various general reports and newsletters had been shared

(b) Meet the Police at Walter's Café, they attended in November along with MDC Community Safety team and plan to attend in December.

(c) There were no reports of crimes in the Parish.

(d) To report on follow ups from last meeting .

- Query if the Maldon District Council Community Engagement Team (CET) provide after hours patrols.
- Ask the CET to vary their routes in/out of the village for extra visibility.

Two members of the Community Engagement Team were in attendance. A summary of the reasons for the request was given by the Chairman. The team are happy to differentiate their routes to take in a wider coverage of the village during their patrols. They are in the process of updating to electric vehicles which are awaiting sign writing. They will also provide walking patrols and hope to engage with more residents. A suggestion of routes will be forwarded to them. They are keen to engage as local people are the eyes and ears for local issues such as dog fouling and they also have a close working relationship with the Maldon Town Police team and are able to feed any information to them. The team will soon be responsible for investigating fly tipping and abandoned vehicles. They confirmed that the team are also able to do evening patrols. They would be happy to join the Village Neighbourhood Watch group so that they are aware of any incidents in the village. Clerk will speak to the coordinator. They will attend Walter's Café as and when they are able to. Clerk to send dates.

3557.6 Litter

- Re: local resident dumping garden rubbish - Community Engagement Team advised: In terms of fly-tipping the garden waste, the advice would be if it continues, to write to the resident to advise him of the possible consequences of fly-tipping [Fly-tipping | Fly-tipping | Maldon District Council](#) and provide him with information about the green bin service. The team will also keep an eye out during their patrols.

3557.7 Walter's Third Thursday Community Café

- Thursday 20th November – Essex Police with MDC Community Safety & Neighbourhood Plan info available, Maldon & District Culture & Heritage Survey info.
- Thursday 18th December – Community Officer from Maldon CVS (with free Slipper upgrades), Essex Police with MDC Community Safety, WW School choir with Christmas songs, Neighbourhood Plan info available. It was noted that the Village Hall have kindly donated some mince pies, tea and coffee to the café.

3558. Correspondence – Various items of correspondence have been received and shared with Councillors and where appropriate the public via the website and village emails.

(a) Various Essex Police Newsletters	(b) CVS Newsletter
(c) EALC County Updates/News/Info/Training	(d) Maldon Members Bulletins & MDC Info
(e) Essex Warbler Newsletter	(f) Village News & Events
(g) Other local events	(h)

3559. Points of Information/Items for future agenda

3560. Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:

Ordinary Parish Council Meeting – Monday 12th January 2026 at 8pm in Woodham Walter Women's Club.

3561. The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.35pm

Signed

Date: