

MINUTES BERGH APTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WEDNESDAY 7th JANUARY 2026 AT THE
VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00 PM

Parish Councillors Present: Sue Price (Chair), Guy Warde-Aldam, Janet Skedge, Hugh Porter, Martin Graystone, Clerk: Renata Thornber and 0 members of the Public

1. To receive apologies for absence and Declarations of Interest. **Apologies received from Kay Mason-Billig, Angela Whiskerd and Steve Mitchell**
2. To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th November 2025.

Proposed: Guy Warde-Aldam Seconded: Sue Price

Minutes Accepted and signed by Sue Price

3. Presentation of County Councillor Kay Mason-Billig and/or District Councillor John Fuller: Parish Report of Kay Mason Billig received on 6th November 2025 as circulated to Parish Councillors and put on the website but not specific to Bergh Apton. **Noted.**
4. To receive any questions or comments from members of the Public on matters on the agenda. **None.**
5. To report progress on items on the agenda arising from the last meeting (Clerk's Report):
 - (i) Bus Shelter Lighting Work completed, confirmation that this is in good working order following inspections by Sue Price. **Sue Price has inspected and is happy with the installation. It is noted that the system does not work on cloudy days. It is activated by passing traffic therefore the sensors need repositioning.** **ACTION:** Sue Price will contact Redhill who dealt with the installation.
 - (ii) Signage for Play Area to be dealt with. Sue Price was speaking with the Parish Council at Alpington as they had a very good sign which was very good to establish where this has been sourced. **Sue Price has obtained a quotation from Wensum Print for a sign in same terms as that Alpington has on their play area. This has been circulated to all Councillors who are happy with this and also agree the blue background for the sign is preferable. Cost £75.00 plus VAT agreed**
 - (iii) Repairs to bus shelter completed by Ed Reynolds who has been paid for this work in the agreed sum of £75.00 **Noted**
6. Latest position regarding rocks on the play equipment following inspection by Martin Graystone. **Martin has sourced these and is presently sourcing appropriate fixings then he can complete this repair work. Martin will confirm when the work has been done. Clerk requesting that Martin submit the receipts for his expenses so he can be reimbursed.**
7. Update on Lectern Works. John Lster preparing the installation. John Ling's recommendations to delay installation until the spring as per his email of the 9th December 2025 as circulated to the Councillors and John Ling's notification of additional costing for this work from £329.78 to £372.50 (excluding Labour Charges), agreed by Councillors unanimously. **Following a request by John Ling that there should be some sort of ceremony when the installation is complete the Parish Council agreed this and that photos should be taken and submitted to Jenny Lovatt so an article can be placed in the village newsletter.** **ACTION:** Clerk to notify John Ling of the Parish Council's agreement to this and that a Council member be in attendance.

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8. Assertion 10 requirements in connection with Agar and adoption of IT policy. Steve Whitby's report following his training as contained in his email of the 9th December and recommendations for compliance. Clerk's Training 22nd January 2026. An Information Audit is apparently required and the Clerk will establish the significance of this at her training. Draft already circulated to Councillors. **The Clerk has drafted the Information Audit in preparation for her training.** **ACTION:** Clerk to establish with NPTS of anything specific that the Councillors themselves need to be aware of/actions to perform.
9. Request for additional bus shelter at Prospect Place A146 **A resident at Prospect Place had contacted Thurton about a bus shelter here. Prospect Place straddles the boundary for Bergh Apton/Thurton. A bus shelter would be required each side of the Road. For Bergh Apton the cost of such bus shelter would be IRO £7820.00 plus VAT plus any necessary traffic management.** Sue Price advises that Abel Engineering could assist and it may be possible to apply for some funding from Norfolk County Council. However, there are risk assessments and safety issued to be considered. It is noted there are no such bus shelters at other bus stops on the A146 such as The Feathers and Highways Nursery. Whilst the Parish Council are sympathetic to this request, overall, considering risks, positioning, safety issues etc, they did not feel it would be practical to consider such action.
10. Speed on the A146 and Thurton Pedestrian Crossing. Sue Price attended a meeting with representatives of Thurton. Thurton has had survey done on the crossing at bottom of Thurton dip on the A146. The Parish Council have had expressions of interest shown by residents in the village of Bergh Apton who use the crossing to get to the school in Thurton and appreciate the difficulties. Enhanced refuge which has previously been discussed would provide greater protection for people crossing the A146 but does not address the difficulties of crossing. The costings for an enhanced refuge would be IRO £75000 and with addition of a signalling system the cost would be IRO £500,000 and presently there is regrettably no budget available.
11. Request from Headway Suffolk for donation. This Charity supports individuals affected by brain injury and their families. **Note that the Councillors voted unanimously to decline on this occasion as resources are currently limited.**
12. Request from Lori Lain-Rogers on behalf of BYRUS – Gary Watson provides youth work support for children in school years 5 to 8 (coming from any village in the local area) running Explorers in Thurton with support from local church volunteers. Donations by local parish councils go towards cost of village hall hire and the youth worker. **This is a Youth Group within the Benefice.** **ACTION:** Clerk to investigate previous contributions to this charity and advise Parish Council so they can consider the request further.

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13. Planning Applications:

13.1. To note the status of all current and recently closed planning applications in the Parish:

13.1. (a) L Boyle, application for Planning application for 3 sheds and installation of hard standing and entrance gates (part retrospective) Ref 2025/2709. **Full planning granted.**

(b) J Hemmant Application Change. **No further information received by Parish Council.**

(c) R Forman's application Lane East of Village Hall Cookes Road. **Revised Consultation Date still awaited**

(d) J Gribble application for self-contained living accommodation for family on hard standing adjacent to main dwelling 2025/2823. **The Council consider that a Caravan at the back of the property will have no detrimental impact as plenty of outbuildings there.**

(e) Application by Mr D Theobald for alterations to outbuildings, patio, driveway and parking area at White Willows, The Street 2025/3247. **Granted with conditions.**

(f) Ms Emily Hewkin – Planning Permission for Change of use of land for educational purposes at Land South of Mill Road Bergh Apton 2025/2623. Council requested extension of time to discuss at this meeting. **Extension granted to 14th January 2026 for us to respond. ACTION: Sue Price to draft letter with thoughts of the Parish Council to be submitted to South Norfolk**

(g) Philip Lodge application on behalf of Depot T Farrow Construction Welbeck Road 2025/2026 Request for Planning for Steel Framed storage building. **The Parish Council understand that ecology and bat surveys are being considered presently**

(h) 2025/1397 Full planning permission with conditions granted on 23rd December 2025 for demolition of The Cottage at Threadneedle Street. **Noted.**

13.2. Any planning applications which are pending the Council making comments?

13.3. Consider any Planning Applications that come in after agenda is posted.

14. South Norfolk Village Clusters Plan. Notice of hearing commencing 13th January 2026. Councillors referring to Minutes from Meeting on 1st March 2023 in respect of this matter in association with proposed blockworks planning proposals. **The entry in the Minutes for the meeting on the 1st March 2023 were ready out by Guy Warde-Aldam. It is considered that the amount of proposed units on this development is excessive taking into account the limited village infrastructure, lack of footpaths resulting in traffic increase with taking children to school by car, lack of school spaces, use of the Doctors surgery etc. Council recommended reduction from 25 houses to 12 but the Council will possibly not reduce the number of houses, this being a viability issue not a planning issue. Existing buildings and land may be contaminated. It was however considered that houses**

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were a preferable option to other possible uses. Passing places should be considered. Parish Council considering if we go to these hearings or wait until Blockworks planning is being dealt with. The Parish Council do not want more traffic down The Street and prefer access to the site to be on the roads leading onto the Poringland Road at the Dove. We are cluster 2 hearing 10.00 15th January 2026 ACTION: Clerk to ask if we can provide written submissions to these hearings.

15. Targeting introduction of 30 MPH on the Street – Update and next steps. Thurton Parish Council advise Sue Price that Kevin Allen safety officer for Highways at Norfolk County Council may be able to assist and provide some ideas. Martin Graystone that and Sue Price overseeing this confirm that Gary Overland advises that any possible/potential speed reduction needs to be linked to a planning application. ACTION: Clerk to establish how we can contact Kevin Allen
16. Biodiversity Report: Tree Survey Report awaited. – Update from Hugh Porter/Sue Price. Hugh Porter and Janet Skedge were in attendance with Sue Price concerning this matter. Steve Whitby has been requested to add in various items on the most recent draft document. Decided to link Church Yard Survey to the document rather than incorporate this into the report would make it too lengthy. This Report could also be used in planning applications. There should be links to the Village Conservation Trust. ACTION: Sue Price to obtain outstanding information with a view to finalizing this Report for adoption at the Parish Council meeting in March. A 5 year Review date would be appropriate for this item.
17. New Community Engagement Officer – Following inviting our local beat officer PC K Cadwell, she is unable to attend either the January or March parish council meetings. No responses from the Police despite numerous requests for them to attend a Parish Council Meeting. Hugh Porter has had plasterboard dumped in his wheelie bin when it was at left out at the end of his driveway for emptying. He feels we should be advised of any changes or matters, such as the delivery fraud of which we should be made aware and recommendations for preventative measures. Crime statistics would also be helpful. ACTION: Clerk to contact the Police and provide dates of future meetings and ask for a Report for the Annual Parish Meeting.
18. Ranger service – Rangers invited to correct leaning sign posts. Waiting to hear. ACTION: Sue Price will inspect the Footpath signs concerned.
19. Draft Budget/Precept application – Sue Price, Renata and Steve Mitcell reviewed budget and Precept set at £8247.00. Steve Mitchell has researched comparisons on South Norfolk website and we are very competitive with the precept. Historically there was a 5 year plan when the level of the Parish Council's reserves was considerably higher and the Parish Council made contributions to the Parish running costs whereby keeping the precept artificially low. The Parish Council does not currently enjoy the same level of reserves and can no longer subsidise.

Proposed: Guy Warde-Aldam

Seconded: Martin Graystone

Precept Application signed by Sue Price as Chair

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20. Finance: Accounts Reconciled and Reconciliation Statements circulated to Councillors. Payments:

- (i) Monthly payments to Ionos for website and cloud storage £6.50 and £15.99
- (ii) SCS Payroll fee of £15.00
- (iii) Payment to HMRC Tax on R Thornber Salary for months of October & November
- (iv) Receipt of funds from SNDC for bus shelter lighting £1367.20 and subsequent payment to Redhill for the installation works £2050.80

21. CORVUE enforcement reports. **As circulated to the Parish Councillors 5th January 2026**

22. Items of Confidential Nature:

23. Items for the Agenda for March meeting :-

- (i) **Clerk to invite village organisations to the Annual Parish Meeting 20th May 2026.**
- (ii) **Grants Policy. Budget for charitable donations for the next financial year.**

Next Meeting Wednesday 4th March 2026 at Bergh Apton Village Hall at 7.00 pm

MEETING CLOSED 8.30 PM