

Norton Lindsey Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held in the Church Room, Norton Lindsey at 7.00pm on Tuesday 8 April 2025

Present: Cllr J Stobart (Chairman); Cllr N Brown; Cllr K Elmhirst; Cllr R Pocknell (for part of the meeting)
WCC / WDC Cllr J Matecki (for part of the meeting)
J Bendall (Clerk/RFO)
5 members of the public

2025NLPA/01 Record of those present

Noted.

2025NLPA/02 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr M Neale and Cllr J Gilmore. WDC Cllr Phillips also sent his apologies.

2025NLPA/03 Report from WCC Cllr J Matecki

WCC Cllr Jan Matecki presented the Warwickshire County Council report (see Appendix 1).

2025NLPA/04 Report from WDC Cllrs J Matecki / P Phillips

WDC Cllr Matecki read out the District Council report prepared by Cllr Phillips (see Appendix 2). There was a discussion regarding progress of the South Warwickshire Local Plan and how the potential unitary authority would affect the outcome of the SWLP. Also discussed was the potential impact of a unitary authority on Norton Lindsey, the Poultry Farm and the travellers site.

2025NLPA/05 Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 16 April 2024

The Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 16 April 2024 were discussed, confirmed and signed.

2025NLPA/06 Matters arising

None.

2025NLPA/07 Chairman's report

The Chairman presented his report (see Appendix 3). He expressed sadness at the news that former Parish Council Chairman Nick Burns had recently passed away, and paid tribute to Nick's commitment and dedication to the parish over many years.

2025NLPA/08 Action Plan update

See Chairman's report.

2025NLPA/09 Treasurer's report

The Clerk/RFO presented the Treasurer's Report and Accounts for 2024/25 (see Appendix 4). There was a brief discussion regarding the Parish Council reserves.

2025NLPA/10 Open Discussion

- There was concern about hedges growing out over the pavement on Main Street, and it was noted that it is ultimately the responsibility of Warwickshire County Council to ensure that pavements are kept clear. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the next NLPC meeting.
- Concern was also raised about the safety of trees on the playing field where ivy is growing up the trunks. This is to be passed on to the Village Hall Committee.
- The plaque on the Millennium Green stone needs cleaning.

- There was a discussion regarding the potential Hatton development, and it was agreed that the NLPC responses to the consultation (both as an individual parish council and the joint response with four other parish council affected by the development), would be uploaded to website.
- The residents attending the meeting thanked NLPC for the work it does for the parish.

2025NLPA/11 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

APPENDIX 1

Warwickshire County Councillor's Annual Report - April 2025

I'm delighted to begin with our educational achievements. In September 2024, Oakley School in Bishop's Tachbrook opened its doors—a state-of-the-art, £60 million all-through school that spans from nursery right through to secondary education. This flagship project, the largest capital programme the County has ever undertaken, welcomed its very first reception, Year 7, and Year 8 students. This bold new start not only equips our children with outstanding facilities but also marks an enduring commitment to the future of our young people.

Turning to our environmental goals, significant strides have been made. With nearly £864,000 secured from the Local Authority Treescape Fund, we have approved 24 community orchards—half of which are already flourishing. Alongside this, we've reduced our carbon footprint by almost 1,760 tonnes through innovative energy-saving measures in Council buildings, improved streetlighting, and smarter business travel policies. Looking ahead, an investment of £3.3 million will further accelerate the shift to greener transport by funding electric vehicle charging points across both urban and rural areas, providing accessibility to some 700–800 new points and 1,500 charging sockets.

Our commitment to sustainable transport continues with our expanding electric bus fleet. We now have 27 electric buses operating locally—plus an additional 11 for inter-county routes. The growing success of our IndieGo Plus demand responsive service and the impactful Companion Plus One scheme, which supports those who need a carer to travel safely, further underscores our dedication to ensuring that every journey is efficient and inclusive. In tandem, our proactive 'find and fix' pothole gang has nearly doubled the pace of road repairs this year, demonstrating that preventative care makes a real difference in our everyday lives.

Of course, we also recognize the challenges we face. Home-to-school transport now serves around 12,000 pupils a day—a 20% increase in just three years. As we work to manage rising costs while maintaining high-quality service, rest assured that every child's safe passage remains a priority.

Our children's services have seen remarkable growth as well. By joining forces in the Families First for Children Pathfinder Programme—with partners like Warwickshire Police and the Integrated Care Board—we've established locality-based family help teams and opened four new Ofsted-registered children's homes. These initiatives not only streamline service delivery but also help ensure that vulnerable children remain close to their families and communities.

As we navigate proposals for local government reform and the transition toward a single Unitary Council, we remain focused on addressing financial pressures and upholding sustainable long-term strategies. While discussions continue at the national level, we are committed to shaping a future that reflects local needs and secures a better tomorrow. A joint submission was sent to the government with proposals for a single unitary submitted by the County, and a North and South Warwickshire proposal by the districts and boroughs. It is expected to have feedback from the government on these proposals in May.

On a more local level, the proposed 20mph speed limit along Main Street has been delayed due to the design team not preparing drawings for the scheme. These are now being worked on and it is hoped that the formal consultation will be issued in the very near future, with completion later in the year.

I was also pleased to be able to help Wolverton School with a grant for an outdoor teaching area for the children to enjoy, and to learn in a different environment.

Finally, I have not given up stopping the poultry sheds ever getting built. I believe that all the planning conditions set out in the planning approval cannot be met, and this includes some very significant conditions that will prevent the building out of the site as a poultry farm.

Cllr Jan Matecki
08 April 2025

APPENDIX 2

Warwick District Councillors' Annual Report - April 2025

I'm Peter Phillips, one of your Warwick District Councillors, alongside Jan Matecki, who has also been your County Councillor for the last four years. My apologies for not being with you in person in Norton Lindsey. Unfortunately this meeting clashes with the equivalent meeting in Barford, and as a Parish Councillor of that Joint Parish Council, I have had to attend that meeting.

Our report back is dominated by one issue for the whole of Budbrooke Ward – the South Warwickshire Local Plan, which sets out the housing plans for the next 25 years. The current Green/Labour administration at Warwick District have put forward a total of 26,885 houses in Green Belt around Budbrooke ward, Kenilworth and the north of Leamington, of which 8,200 were proposed around Hatton, and Hatton Park.

So while Norton Lindsey was not directly affected by one of those large sites, the spillover effect on the village could be massive, with for example, significantly increased traffic using Norton Lindsey as a rat run, pressure on local schools, hospitals, GP surgeries, the water supply etc. The fabulous community pub, the New Inn, and the community shop, might pick up more trade, but it's a huge price to pay. (I should add as an aside, that Jeremy Wright, our MP, specifically visited the New Inn and the Community Shop a couple of months ago and was very impressed with how the community has pulled together to create two successful enterprises).

Back to the Local Plan. I won't bore you with detailing all the scores of meetings that Jan and I have attended over the last 12 months in support of the opposition to these proposals, including public meetings, meetings with the portfolio holder and planning officers, with the Keep Hatton Station Rural team, even the developer, as well as at parish councils and knocking on doors to talk directly to residents, getting information, answering questions and encouraging residents to respond, but it has been our key focus this last year. I'm pleased to say there were at least 23,600 responses across South Warwickshire and these are now being processed by officers. I have no doubt that you in Norton Lindsey played your part.

We can expect further consultations later this year and we will continue to keep you all informed of these as and when they arise.

Also an issue of increasing concern has been the siting of solar farms on agricultural land in the Green Belt. We look at each proposal individually on Planning Committee, on which I sit, and see if there are exceptional circumstances to approve these on Green Belt land. For instance, I note that there are masses of rooftops in and around our District that could provide solar as well, so I will continue to keep an open mind, but for me to support such a proposal it has to be truly exceptional and I have not seen one that meets that criteria yet.

Jan and I continue to respond to the ongoing normal issues that come up across the ward, realising to the individual and families concerned that it is far more important than just "day-to-day." It would be inappropriate to go into details in a public forum, but suffice to say that if any resident has an issue that they want help with from the District Council, please get in touch with me or Jan.

Jan has been spearheading the responses to the Chicken Farm and I will let him detail where we are, but we will continue to fight on behalf of Norton Lindsey residents on this matter.

I will briefly cover the government's proposal to create a unitary authority in Warwickshire – that is merge all 5 District/Boroughs plus the County into one new unitary council. In principle, I support this – yes, a turkey voting for Christmas – as there is complete confusion on many doorsteps as to which council does what. As an example there are some county council candidates from a different party to me, who believe that they are responsible for bins. This is a district matter, not county. And this list goes on and on.

Simplifying the structure will both make it easier and be more cost effective for the residents of Warwickshire. But the cackhanded way the government has gone about this, means we have no idea how, when, or even if there will be changes, which creates a great deal of uncertainty, especially for the District Council's employees.

Thank you again for your ongoing support of our work as Councillors and we look forward to working for you over the coming 12 months.

Peter.Phillips@WarwickDC.gov.uk

APPENDIX 3

Chairman's Report 2025

It has been another busy year, mostly with routine matters, many of which fall under the various headings in our Action Plan.

[1] Roads and footpaths.

We are still awaiting further movement with getting a 20mph speed limit along Main Street. The scheme has been approved and will be funded from Cllr Matecki's budget, but progress is proving frustratingly slow. More generally, we continue to monitor the condition of roads and footpaths. Wolverton Road was resurfaced, which dealt with some of the potholes, but led to at least one accident; several footpaths have become almost unpassable and these have been reported to the WCC Rights of Way team., Where those footpaths cross into neighbouring parishes we will work with those parishes to address the worst problems.

Flooding has eased a little recently, but the high winds brought down two trees and closed both Warwick Road and Snitterfield Lane at one point. We have encouraged the District Council to consider a similar policy to that which it adopts with gritting – trying to keep open at least one route into the village.

[2] Sustainability and quality of the environment.

Our efforts have been fairly low key to date, but we are currently part of a Warwick District Council scheme to loan householders a thermal imaging camera so that they can assess areas of heat loss from their homes – and hopefully be prompted to take remedial action. We have also encouraged parishioners to be considerate in their use of outdoor lighting to avoid excessive light pollution.

[3] Improving communication with parishioners.

In addition to our monthly update in the parish magazine and communicating via Facebook, we have introduced an email subscription scheme that provides a way for people to receive regular updates, especially about planning matters. We have also switched to a .gov domain to ensure a more stable platform for the website and our email communication. Of course, everyone is welcome to attend our monthly meetings.

[4] Managing heritage assets.

These are an important part of our village. We are currently working to determine who is responsible for maintaining the Jubilee signpost on Main Street and ensuring that it receives the attention it needs.

On top of this, we have dealt with ten planning applications – a smaller number than in recent years and mostly for extensions, changes of use, etc. The power of the Parish Council to influence planning decisions is limited. However, by raising objections where appropriate, we can ensure that applications are discussed by the Planning Committee at WDC and thus receive fuller scrutiny.

We considered three notably large and/or contentious applications.

- [1] The planning application for new chicken sheds to be erected on Warwick Road was granted permission on appeal. The applicant has to meet various conditions and, as yet, little work has been done on the site, beyond it being cleared – of itself, a welcome development
- [2] A retrospective planning application was submitted for the travellers' site on the Henley Road. Both it and the subsequent enforcement notices served by Warwick District Council are to be heard by the planning inspector in the coming weeks. We will continue to liaise closely with WDC and neighbouring parishes to determine the best course of action.
- [3] The appearance on the Local Plan for South Warwickshire of a huge housing development centred on Hatton Station has caused considerable anxiety and anger. Nothing has been decided, of course: this site is being assessed along with a number of others. We are working closely with neighbouring parishes to resist this development, our own representations centring on the negative impact on traffic flows, with potentially huge numbers using Norton Lindsey as a rat run.

Finally, I would like to note with great sadness the recent death of Nick Burns – a long-time resident of Norton Lindsey who served for many years on the parish council, including as chair. He was responsible for championing several important developments in the village, most notably the new Jubilee signpost at Red Horse Corner.

APPENDIX 4

Treasurer's Report 2025

The Receipts and Payments on display are self-explanatory, but a few items of note are:

The bulk of the Depot Fund is still invested in our 95-day notice account which offers a better rate of interest than the accounts we hold with NatWest. The balance of the Fund stands at £10,295.99.

Our general reserves include sums retained for election costs (£3,200) and our Asset Fund, which is for the inspection, repair, replacement and purchase of assets, and which currently stands at £8,449.53.

Receipts during the year included:

- the Precept which increased to £10,750,
- £768.02 in bank interest
- The return of £2,500 which had been granted to the Cricket Club, but which they had not used.

NORTON LINDSEY PARISH COUNCIL	
PARISH ASSEMBLY 8 APRIL 2025	
Receipts and Payments April 2024 to March 2025	
BROUGHT FORWARD	
Brought Forward: Current Account	£ 8,019.50
Brought Forward: General Reserves and Depot Fund (includes sums retained for possible electoral expenses and asset register renewal)	£ 25,968.37
TOTAL BROUGHT FORWARD	£ 33,987.87
RECEIPTS	
Precept	£ 10,750.00
Bank Interest	£ 768.02
Return of unused grant	£ 2,500.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 14,018.02
EXPENDITURE	
RUNNING COSTS	
Subscriptions (WALC, ICO, SLCC)	£ 298.00
Insurance	£ 300.00
Clerk's salary	£ 4,137.12
Administration costs	£ 423.35
VAT (to be reclaimed)	£ 93.61
Total NLPC Running Costs	£ 5,252.08
DONATIONS / GRANTS *	
Section 137 Payments	£ -
Grants under discretionary powers	£ 1,011.10
Total NLPC Donations	£ 1,011.10
SPECIAL ITEMS	
Grit Bin	£ 260.95
Biannual Parish Council Report	£ 299.00
Total Special Items	£ 559.95
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 6,823.13
CARRIED FORWARD at 31 March 2025	
Current Account	£ 14,446.37
General Reserves and Depot Fund (includes sums retained for possible electoral expenses and asset register renewal)	£ 26,736.39
TOTAL CARRIED FORWARD	£ 41,182.76

Regarding expenditure, our running costs showed an increase on the previous year. The WALC subscription increased by £13.00, but the ICO fee and the Clerk's subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks remained the same as the previous year. Our insurance remained at £300, and staffing costs increased due to an NJC national salary award for 2024/25, which was back dated to 1 April 2024. Administration costs showed a significant increase on the previous year due mostly to the cost of printing the biannual Parish Council report which cost £299, and payment of £264.50 for Church Room hire which covered "historic" charges. Again, there was no audit fee to pay as we were able to declare ourselves exempt from sending the completed Annual Government and Accountability Return to the external auditor for a limited assurance review.

Finally, the grants awarded in 2024/2025 are detailed below:

*** DONATIONS AND GRANTS**

Section 137 payments

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Grant payments made under Discretionary Powers

Norton Lindsey Playground	Donation towards running costs of playground	£ 400.00	Local government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19
PCC / NL Church Clock	Donation to cover the costs of servicing	£ 234.00	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
PCC / NL Churchyard	Donation towards maintenance costs	£ 250.00	Local Government Act 1972, s.214(6)
Christmas Tree and decorations/sign	-	£ 77.10	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Millenium Green Maintenance	Donation towards costs incurred while maintaining Millennium Green	£ 50.00	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9-10

NOTE:

NLPC has agreed a donation of £100 towards the cost of materials required to create large poppy displays that can be used on an annual basis. This will be paid during the 2025/2026 financial year.	£ 100.00	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
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