

Topcroft Parish Council

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Topcroft Pavilion

Monday 17th November 2025 - 7.30 pm

Attended: Peter Rout (Chair), Step Dye (Vice Chair), Daphne Beckett, Nicola Eastell, Robin Frampton & Trevor Potter

Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also present: District Councillor Martyn Hooton and 10 members of the public

PUBLIC FORUM

A. Public Forum – for Members of the Public

Parishioners attended the meeting and raised concerns regarding the formal proposal to build a Solar Farm in the neighbouring village of Hempnall, covering approximately 2,700 acres of farmland. The District Councillor was present and answered questions from attendees.

B. To Receive Reports from the County and District Councillor

County Councillor Barry Stone sent a report:

<http://topcroftpc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/category/polices/meetings>

District Councillor Martyn Hooton gave a verbal report and answered questions, main points:

- The new bin app, launched last week, is informative and allows residents to book slots at the recycling centre. A new kerbside collection bus booking system will begin next April, enabling residents to complete a form for the free collection of small appliances, up to the size of a vacuum cleaner, for recycling. Bulky collections will still need to be booked and paid for.
- Food waste bins will be introduced from 1st April, with further information to follow next month. Topcroft and Hempnall will be among the first parishes to use the new service.
- South Norfolk Council office site in Long Stratton has been demolished and cleared.
- There will be an East Pye Solar exhibition on 20th November in Dereham. The official proposal announcement is expected soon and is believed to be scheduled just before Christmas.
- The Chair thanked the District Councillor for his support.

MINUTES

1. To Approve Apologies for Absence

[Apologies were Approved and Accepted from Cllr Thomson.](#)

2. Declaration of Interests and Consider Requests for Dispensation

None

3. To Approve the Minutes and Decisions from the Meeting held on Monday 15th September 2025

[The Minutes from the Meeting held on Monday 15th September 2025 were confirmed unanimously as a True and Accurate record and were signed by the Chair.](#)

4. Finance

a) To Receive the Financial & Budget Reports and Approve the Income & Expenditure

[Councillors Approved the Financial & Budget Reports and the following Income & Expenditure:](#)

Signed

Date

Topcroft Parish Council

Date	Ref.	Income	Receipts	Payments
28/09/2025	S/O	Clerk's Salary - September		£ 158.06
28/09/2025	Fee	Bank Service Charge		£ 6.00
28/10/2025	S/O	Clerk's Salary - October		£ 158.06
30/10/2025	Fee	Bank Service Charge		£ 6.00
17/11/2025	11	Clerk's Expenses October-November		£ 12.00
		Total	£ -	£ 340.12
		Total Restricted Reserves		£ 852.21
		General Reserve		£ 3,358.54
			Total	£ 4,210.75

b) To Consider a Defibrillator Bleed Control Kit

Councillors Resolved to purchase a Bleed Control Kit for £49.50 for placement in the Defibrillator Cabinet. This kit will be registered on the [Bleed Kit Network - UK Emergency Bleed Control Registry](#) and advertised on the Parish Council website and in the parish magazine. The expenditure will be taken from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) reserve and additional signage will be added to the defibrillator sign on the road.

Action: Clerk

c) To Consider Village Sign's Fencing Chains Quotation

Councillors Approved the quotation to replace the broken chains at the village sign with black-coated metal chains at £3.95 per metre. Cllr Potter agreed to carry out the work and also replace some posts.

Action: TP

d) To Consider a Grant Request to Topcroft Sports Pavilion for the Annual Play Equipment Inspection Fee

Councillors discussed the Grant Request and the quotations forwarded by the Clerk and Approved to fund the Sovereign Play Equipment Inspections at £399, two per year, for the next five years. The funds to be reserved from the Section 137 Grant Budget, £200 this year and £200 next year.

This includes full safety reports and any quotations for repair or remedial work required. The next inspection will take place next year.

Action: SD

e) To Consider and Approve the Budget and Precept 2026/27

Councillors Resolved to Approve the Budget and Precept for 2026/27 (as attached). The Precept will increase by £350 to £4,100 for 2026/27, representing an annual rise of £3.37 for a Band D property. The Tax Base of 104 has yet to be confirmed by South Norfolk Council, although requested.

5. Planning Applications and Decisions (circulated as received)

Applications

a) SC Local Plan - Public consultation on Joint draft Supplementary Planning Documents

BDC, Norwich City Council and SNC are consulting jointly on two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) relating to policies in the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP)

Councillors noted the above, with no comments.

Cllrs noted the following:

b) 2025/1845

Details for conditions 13 & 14 of 2022/1803 - (13) - External Lighting & (14)

Proposed Lighting Spring Farm Spring Lane Hempnall Norfolk NR15 2NY

Councillors Resolved to Submit Light Pollution comments at the July meeting

c) 2025/0449

Location: Low Farm Snakes Lane Topcroft Norfolk NR35 2BU

Proposal: Notification for a prior approval for change of use, partial demolition and cladding of existing agricultural buildings to create 4 x dwelling houses

Application Type: Prior Notification - Agricultural to Residential

Signed

Date

Topcroft Parish Council

Status: Pending Consideration

Councillors Approved with comments

Decisions

d) 2025/0367

Location: Hill Farm Rectory Road Topcroft Norfolk NR35 2BT

Proposal: Conservation works and minor remodelling of the Grade II listed farmhouse with energy efficiency improvements. Demolition of two structures within the curtilage.

Application Type: Listed Building Consent - Status: Approval with Conditions

6. Village Issues

a) Highways

- Drains/Potholes/Gullies Issues

Flooding was reported at Barford Road by Cllr Eastell. The Clerk will send her a link so she can report the issue directly, including photographs. Action: Clerk

- Blocked Culvert at Long Wood – update

The ditch around the culvert has now been cleared, and the culvert is open. However, the culvert is deteriorating and may fall blocking the ditch, impeding water flow. The Land Agent has been contacted and asked for the culvert to be removed or repaired.

- Church Road New Gateway & Filled Ditch – update

Cllrs were pleased to report that the Church Road gateway and ditch have been completed.

- Footpaths

A parishioner raised a question regarding Footpath 3 and its route. The Chair confirmed that this route has been queried with Norfolk County Council's Footpath Officer many times over the years and that it is recorded on the definitive footpath map as running in the ditch.

Councillors requested the Clerk to write to the NCC Footpath Officer to obtain a definitive decision on the routes of Footpaths 3 and 5. Action: Clerk

b) Litter Picking

- Cllrs agreed to carry out litter picking in their respective areas and in various sections around the village.

- Councillors requested the Clerk to order four additional litter picking rings to be delivered to the Chair. Action: Clerk

7. To Note Correspondence Received

a) Parishioner Letter – Farmyard Oxnead Lane – update

A Councillor has spoken to a representative at the Diocese Office in Easton, who will be carrying out an inspection of the Glebe Land in Topcroft.

b) East Pye Solar Farm – update

- Hempnall Parish Council Meeting - 23 September 2025

Several Cllrs attended the meeting and have reported back to the Parish Council.

- Action Group

The Chair invited a discussion from parishioners regarding the East Pye Solar Farm proposals. He confirmed that the Parish Council has not yet commented, as a formal planning application has not been submitted. The Council will respond once an application is received.

He suggested that parishioners form a working or action group, which could send objections to the MP and submit personal objections to the planning application when it is submitted. He advised that it would be beneficial to coordinate with Hempnall Parish Council, as they are affected directly by the solar farm.

Cllr Eastell requested that parishioners leave their email addresses to form the Action Group and encouraged them to attend the Hempnall Parish Council meeting on 19th November 2025.

Signed

Date

Topcroft Parish Council

8. AOB (*For discussion only – the Council cannot make decisions on non-agenda items*)

a) **Defibrillator Training – update**

Cllr Dye reported that around 20 attendees participated in the defibrillator training on 6th October, including members of the Cricket Club, the Bike Active group and Councillors. The training was beneficial and provided free of charge by a volunteer.

b) **Remembrance Day**

A few Councillors and parishioners gathered at Topcroft's village sign on Remembrance Day, 11th November at 11am. Cllr Potter laid a wreath and read *We Shall Not Forget Them*, followed by a period of silent reflection to honour the sacrifice made by so many. A photograph has been added to the Parish Council website. The Chair thanks Cllrs for organising this tribute.

c) **Village Sign Hedge**

It was confirmed that the hedge around the village sign will be trimmed over the winter.

Action: NE

9. To Receive Items for the next Agenda

None

10. To Note the Next Meeting Dates

- Monday 19th January 2026 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 16th March 2026 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 18th May 2026 - 7.30 pm – Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting
- Monday 20th July 2026 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 21st September 2026 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 16th November 2026 - 7.30 pm

The meeting ended at 8.49 pm

Topcroft Parish Council

Topcroft Parish Council - Budget 2025-2026	
INCOME	Approved Budget 2026/27
Precept	4,100.00
VAT Reclaim 2023-24	160.00
Business Saver Interest	100.00
Total Budgeted Income	4,360.00
CIL Receipts	0.00
S106 Grants - VE Day	0.00
Total Income	4,360.00
Budget Variance	
EXPENDITURE	
Clerk's Salary	1929.00
Clerk's Office Costs	72.00
Clerk's Expenses	30.00
Dog Bin Charge x 3	440.00
S137 Grants	200.00
Village Maintenance/Grass Cutting	200.00
ICO - Data Protection Registration	47.00
Insurance	230.00
Internal Audit Fee	150.00
NALC Subscription, Domain & Website	210.00
Training	25.00
Miscellaneous	100.00
Pavilion Meeting Room Hire	70.00
Maintenance (Assets)	200.00
Bank Service Charge	72.00
VAT To Reclaim	160.00
To Build a Maintenance Reserve	200.00
Total Budgeted Expenditure	4,335.00
Budget Variance	
Grant to Topcroft Recreation Grounds	0.00
Clerk's Printer	0.00
Defibrillator Costs	0.00
Glasdon - Dog Bin	0.00
Total Expenditure	4,335.00
Total Variance	25.00

7.b) Topcroft Parish Council from Cllr Thomson

Signed

Date