



Watton Town Council

Wayland Hall, Middle Street, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 6AG
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Town Clerk: Mrs Jane Scarrott clerk@wattontowncouncil.gov.uk

To Councillors: You are hereby summoned to attend the Town Council meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Wayland Hall on Tuesday 28th October 2025 at 7.00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Jane Scarrott Town Clerk

22nd October 2025

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence
2. To note Declaration of Members personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda
3. MINUTES
 - 3.1 To confirm that the minutes of the meeting held on 14.10.25 are a true and accurate record
 - 3.2 To receive an update on items from the previous meeting if not agenda items for this meeting
4. TO RECEIVE REPORTS
 - 4.1 Chairman's Report
 - 4.2 Vice Chairman's Report
 - 4.3 District Councillor's Report
 - 4.4 County Councillor's Report
 - 4.5 Clerk's Report
 - 4.5i Middle Street consultation
 - 4.6 Reports from Lead Councillors
 - 4.6i To consider replacing the Church Walk Working Group with a Biodiversity Working Group
5. To note the Works in Progress List
6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
7. FINANCE
 - 7.1 To approve payments for October 2025 (To follow)
8. Update on Devolution and Local Government re-organisation
9. To consider Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Scheme 25/26 and 26/27
 - 9.1 Norwich Road Trod
 - 9.2 Bridle Road dropped kerb
10. To confirm amendments to Grant Policy
11. To confirm Wayland Academy Class of '25 Achievement Evening sponsorship and attendance at the evening
12. To consider submission to Breckland Council regarding the options to transfer the Breckland owned car parks in the town to the Town Council
13. PLANNING To consult on planning applications received since the last meeting:

13.1	PL/2025/155 9/FMIN	Replacement windows and door	24a High Street, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6AE	https://publicportal.breckland.gov.uk/planning/index.html?fa=getApplication&id=198498&language=en
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14. To pass a resolution to Exclude the Press and Public to consider confidential Staffing matters:

Item 3.1

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday October 14th 2025 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: Gillian Tarrant – Chairman, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Sarah Humphries, Tina Kiddell, Graham Martin, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Jack White

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

7 members of the public present

Breckland District Council Officer and District Cllr Cowen in attendance to answer questions relating to item 8.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED from

Tony Bridges, Tina Cruz, Keith Gilbert, Tomos Hutchings

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on September 23rd 2025 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Update from the meeting held on September 23rd not agenda items for this meeting:

- Whole Council training took place on Thursday 25th September with eight Councillors attending.
- The Market Forum scheduled to be held on October 1st was cancelled due to lack of participants.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended:

10th September Charlotte Harvey Community Centre and Food Hub Meetings

12th September Battle of Britain 85th Memorial, County Hall

3rd October Rotary Club Charter Night Dinner, Broom Hall

12th October High Sheriff's Justice Service, Norwich Cathedral

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

As the Mayor was unavailable, the Vice-Chairman attended the Civic Leaders Tour at RAF Lakenheath on 17.09.25

4.3 Clerks Report

Written report presented in Councillors Agenda Pack:

Love Your Town Pride of Place – Watton Hare Trail

The Town Council has been awarded a grant of £4,800 from Norfolk County Council and Breckland District Council's Love Your Town Fund.

This initiative aims to increase footfall and engagement in the town centre by placing 12 hares around Watton. The project includes two large fibreglass hares at the High Street entrances and ten smaller wooden hares in shops and venues. The trail will encourage residents and visitors to explore the town, culminating in a Spring Fayre event with prizes for participants.

Church Walk Light

The Breckland Officer who was leading on the installation of the light and CCTV for Church Walk left Breckland just after completion of the project. Funding for the project was part of Safer Streets (Local concerns of safety and ASB).

Whilst the project did fund additional and upgraded lighting, unfortunately there was never any intention or agreement to place a light on the pole at the end of Church Walk. This was for CCTV only and this is backed up by invoices (this item is column, power ready for CCTV). The additional streetlight has been installed (singular not plural).

Unfortunately, there was connectivity issues for the CCTV so CCTV could not be progressed.

Therefore, there is a column with power, but nothing on it currently.

The original project and the funding opportunity expired some time ago and Breckland District Council has no budget for any additional works.

There may be other funding opportunities available, and Breckland is investigating.

Breckland has asked if Watton Town Council would have any funds available for the purchase of a lighting head and installation? *[this is not something the Town Council has budgeted for!]*

Breckland has offered to contact the original contractor to see if they would be able to provide a quote for this, to get an idea of cost and other enquiries are also being made.

The contractors who put the new footpath in at Church Road have verbally stated that the streetlight that was removed from the corner by the Church is to be replaced in November 25.

It is possible a head could be added to the pole at this time, but Watton Town Council would probably need to pay for it and there are complications in that the pole does not belong to the Town Council and the Town Council would not be paying for electricity. There may be an option of a solar light head but this needs investigation.

2026/7 AGAR What is Assertion 10?

With the 2025 edition of the Practitioners' Guide, the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) has introduced a new **Assertion 10: Digital and Data Compliance**, to sit alongside the existing assertions in the Annual Governance Statement.

PFR engagement pack and questionnaire

Parish and Town Councils in Norfolk that have been affected by flooding have been approached for opinions on existing Property Flood Resilience (PFR) schemes and how the County Council look at options to mitigate flood risk.

The current property flood resilience (PFR) process has been affected by the increased frequency of storm events, including Storm Babet, meaning resources were diverted to respond to flooding reports across the county. Norfolk County Council has taken steps to reduce any further delays by employing a dedicated Flood Risk Officer to deliver PFR schemes.

This has been passed to WASFAG.

Breckland Five Market Towns Meeting – 02.10.25

Clerk attended

- Devolution & Local Government Reorganisation
Stressed that any new authority would want to work at a neighbourhood level.

Information on Future Norfolk website: [Future Norfolk - Future Norfolk](#) including timetable. Decision re. unitary status expected in March 26 with elections for new authority in March 27.

- Car Parks

Delay over summer was due to Breckland investigating how to use the General Consent Order which would allow freehold transfer of assets.

Stressed that Breckland want to work with the Town Councils to see that the car park transfers do happen.

- Grants currently being offered to support Businesses and High Streets – includes Shop Front Redecoration Grants and Rural England Prosperity Fund Grants which aids start up businesses and established businesses to improve buildings and equipment.
- Breckland Council Town & Parish Council Forum – Narborough Village Hall 3rd November 2025 6-8pm.
- Thetford has been awarded 19.5million through the Pride in Place Government Initiative to enable delivery of re-generation. An independent board has been established to make decisions.
- Noted that Attleborough is seeing a good attendance at its weekly market with an average of 20 stalls each week.
- Swaffham TC reported ongoing problems with vandalism at its public toilets.
- Local Plan
The Local Plan is progressing as timetabled with formal consultation on the Issues & Options to begin on October 31st. Breckland planners will be holding surgery type events early in the consultation in each market town.

Sports Association AGM

Notification received that the Watton Sports Association AGM will take place at the Sports Centre on October 28th at 7.30pm.

4.4 Lead Councillors Reports

4.4i Report from the Lead Councillor for Heritage was included within the agenda pack for the meeting.

4.4ii Report regarding the High Street Footfall Cameras was included within the agenda pack for the meeting.

4.4iii It was resolved to postpone any decision regarding replacing the Church Walk Working Group with a Biodiversity Working Group until the next Full Council Meeting.

4.4iv Report from Events and Marketing Officer (EMO)

Fireworks event planning is going well. The food village will be stocked with a variety of different food vendors this year, and there will be free entertainment from Fire Frenzy on offer throughout the event. Both sets of Cadets are available and willing to assist with the event again this year, as well as the Rotary Club. Set up for the event will be managed by the EMO, Sue Dent, Steve Bryce and Councillors Stan Hebborn and Sue Hebborn. Councillors Gilbert and Prince are down as volunteers for the event, they will be manning the control and command centre/refreshments for volunteers/staff. The only payment that needs to be made prior to the event is for Hallmark (the toilets), all other payments have already been made or will be made at end of October (this will include donations to the groups attending/assisting with the event)."

It was agreed to pay the Hallmark invoice of £1624.50 for hire of toilets.

4.4v Report from Watton and Saham Flood Action Group presented with the agenda pack for the meeting.

Liz Whitcher, Chairman of Watton and Swaffham Flood Action Group (WASFAG) spoke to update on the WASFAG Report which had been included with the agenda pack for the meeting. It was noted that since the Report was compiled there has been further information received regarding

the WSP project. The hope is that flood mitigation measures can be put it at five sites in Watton, but due to continual funding gaps within the Environment Agency is it unlikely any action will be taken in the near future.

Item 8. – It was agreed that item 8 would be moved up the agenda so discussion could be heard prior to public participation.

Breckland Councillor Cowen and Ralph Burton, Breckland Assistant Director of Property & Projects were in attendance at the meeting to answer questions regarding the offers put to the Town Council regarding future management and ownership of the three currently Breckland District Council owned car parks in the town.

Councillors had been presented with the option letter in the agenda pack for the meeting and also provided with further information relating to the possible transfer of the car parks.

The Town Council would like the three car parks to be transferred from the District Council to the Town Council at nil value (option 2 as given by Breckland).

It was resolved that option 2 will continue to be investigated and a recommendation will brought back to the next Full Council meeting.

In the meantime a small working group of Councillors and the Clerk will meet to prepare the recommendation. It was suggested public opinion should be sought via a social media post.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public spoke in favour of the Town Council taking ownership of the three currently Breckland District Council owned car parks in the town.

6. DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR) –

Update within the Clerks Report.

All information received regarding devolution and LGR is shared with Councillors.

7. FINANCE

7.1 The minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 25.09.25 were noted.

7.2i It was resolved to pass the £100 income from stall fees from the 2025 VE Day event held at Watton Sports Centre to Loch Neaton to part cover the invoice received.

9. CAR PARKS – item moved to before public participation.

10. GRANT APPLICATION

Having received a grant application to support the Watton Christmas Hamper Appeal **it was resolved** to offer to purchase items to put in the hampers.

It was also resolved that in future only registered charities will be eligible to apply for a grant.

11. BOX TRAILER

It was resolved that as the Councils box trailer is being used for storage only it will be sold at auction.

12. CHARLOTTE HARVEY TRUST

Correspondence received relating to the Town Councils support for the Charlotte Harvey Trust was noted. This matter was considered in depth by the Finance Committee which felt valid points had been raised. The staff operating costs of the Community Hub is partly financed by the Town Council and this will be better reflected in future accounts of the Charity.

13. PLANNING

To note:

12.1 PL/2025/1400/TCA 75 High Street Watton. IP25 6AW Willow - W1 - Re-pollard to previous pollard points as last undertaken in 2022. At a height of approx. 5m from ground level.

12.2 PL/2025/1402/CLOPUD Watton Junior School, Brandon Road, Watton Proposed single storey timber clad and brick extension between block 2 and block 3. Ramp proposed on east elevation and ASHP, with roof turrets for mechanical plant on roof - certificate of lawfulness for proposed use

12.3 PL/2025/1448/DCA New Green Business Park Norwich Road, Watton, Norfolk Discharge of Condition 12 on PP 3PL/2022/0806/F

12.4 Update on enforcement ENF/064/25 Otterwood Kennels Dereham Road Saham Toney Unauthorised Development

12.5 PL/2025/1261/DCA 28a Thornhill Road, Watton (formerly plot 40A) Discharge of condition 7 on pp 3PL/2023/1206/F

12.6 PL/2025/1340/OMAJ Land to the rear of the Raj (formerly the Flying Fish), Norwich Road, Carbrooke Outline application with all matters reserved except for access for new commercial buildings

Noted this application is in Carbrooke

12.7 PL/2025/1437/FMIN basin extension Serco Transport Depot Norwich Road, Watton Extension to refuse vehicle and car parking areas at Serco depot and proposed attenuation

Watton & Saham Flood Action Group believe that a very thorough flood risk assessment has been undertaken

12.8 Proposed Change of use The Yard Griston Road, Watton, IP25 6DL Change of use from commercial/building land to storage for up to 50no cars & light commercial vehicles
Concern raised regarding possible increase in traffic within the Griston Road cul-de-sac which could result from this development

14. Resolution passed to exclude the public and press to consider staffing matters

13.1 The minutes from the HR meeting held on 25.09.25 were noted.

13.2 Recommendations from the HR Committee

13.2i **It was resolved** to engage Council HR and Governance Support to undertake job evaluation of Town Council staffing positions.

13.2ii **It was resolved** to engage Zivile Mauri to provide HR services to the Council for a period of 6 months at an estimated cost of £1250.

Item 3.2 Update from the meeting held 14.10.25

Agenda Item No.	Update
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hares are now ordered for the Watton Hare Trail• Quotes are being sought for a solar head light for the column at Church Walk
13.2i	Council HR and Governance Support engaged to undertake job evaluations. Waiting on how to proceed
13.2ii	HR consultant engaged to provide HR services is scheduled to spend a day in the office on November 6 th

Item 4.5 Clerks Report

Investigation Report into the County Wide Flooding

The Town Council has received a draft *Investigation Report into the County Wide Flooding from May to October 2024 (FIR079)*, drafted in accordance with Norfolk County Council's duty under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. As part of the report writing process, the County Council would be grateful to receive comments on the report. Any comments provided will be taken into account in the production of the final report prior to its publication. We are being asked to submit any comments by 3rd November 2025.

Information contained within the report will remain confidential until any contributions have been incorporated, and the report has been published on the Norfolk County Council website. We have, been asked therefore, not to share the report until it has been published.

However the report has been shared with the Chairman of Watton and Saham Flood Action Group and we will respond between us.

Watton Market Square Improvements

From the consultation with key stakeholder and local businesses, Norfolk County Council (NCC) has received a couple of questions which it would like the Town Councils views on:

- 1) The Kings Arms has asked whether license will be granted for them to have permanent outdoor tables and chairs? And if so would this conflict with the existing town's Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) relating to alcohol consumption in public areas?
<https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25523773.confusion-thetford-drinking-ban-red-lion-pub/>
- 2) One of the local traders has requested delivery access to the pedestrianised area, which had been anticipated prior to the engagement. There may be a need to consider giving all local businesses within the Market Square access to keys to allow deliveries to their premises. But the question would be how the Traffic Regulation Order can be best enforced on the ground to ensure access to unlock the bollards is not being abused?

NCC is preparing to carry out the full public consultation of plans for Market Square from the beginning of December. Does the Town Council have a preference on how this should be carried out? NCC will be writing to statutory consultees and local traders, and residents. The TC may wish to consider a Town Hall exhibition as well? NCC wish to know what is the TC opinion re. the options. The TC should receive the draft consultation letters/plans for review in a few weeks' time.

Play Areas

Following the 2025 annual RoSPA play equipment inspection reports the wooden multi-play log climber and the wooden activity trail at Bridle Road were both noted as high risk due to wooden posts being rotten.

Investigation is being undertaken whether the items can be repaired or if they need to be removed. Currently the Town Operatives are looking at how best to keep the items secure so they are not used until quotes are received to repair or remove.

It may be that the remaining amount of s106 money (£7627) being held by Breckland Council could be used to help replace one of the items.

The Norfolk Youth Justice Service Reparation Coordinator is looking at whether the Youth Justice Service can help re-paint some of the play equipment.

Wayland Hall

The Office was experiencing an horrendous smell from the downstairs toilet which had become so offensive staff did not want to be in the Office.

In an attempt to solve the problem a builder was called out and advised replacement of the toilet. It was felt either the toilet itself was at fault or there was a major blockage which would have been identified once the toilet bowl was removed.

The emergency decision to accept the quote of £750 to do the work recommended was accepted by the Chairman and the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

No work has yet been undertaken as the smell has disappeared which does indicate a blockage probably within the main drains.

However, it is suggested as the work has been agreed it would be beneficial to go ahead and replace the toilet as it has a low seat, looks in poor condition and does not flush well.

WTC: Biodiversity Working Group – Draft Documents

Action Plan:

(An overview of how a working group could proceed, as presented to Full Council on the 14/10/25 & 28/10/25).

I believe it would be best practise for councillors to form a working group to discuss matters relating to our biodiversity policy, so that their recommendations can be taken to full council with fresh and sustainable ideas. I would recommend the following tasks be undertaken:

1. **To review the biodiversity policy** before its stated review date, as suggested at the previous council meeting. To include discussion if policy is needed regarding solar farm development.
2. **To create a timeline of projects** (adjacent to the action plan) to understand and assess our current progress of the biodiversity policy which was agreed upon in January 2024. There should be a basic inclusion of heritage park and allotments which would require conservation between working groups.
3. **To agree upon a term of reference for the group.** To demonstrate an understanding of the wording in the Environment Act 2021. Exactly how we perceive the following term: ‘must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions’.
4. **To agree a framework** in which Watton Town Council **should interact with the community**. This should include implementation of communication methods with community groups, charities and business who have a vested interest in biodiversity. This doesn’t have to be extensive, but it is stated in our policy to have an active role.
5. **To discuss the role of the public**, and if we should be encouraging them to adopt responsibility or management. To discuss the possibility of reducing hours of contractors or the utilisation of town operatives, only regarding grass cutting, hedgerow trimming and other general maintenance to increase biodiversity while reducing expenditure.

Cross working group communication would be required for matters of allotments and Heritage Park, as well as preferring the expertise of any lead councillors whose role relates to biodiversity, such as youth lead for play parks.

As to not bring every item before full council for consideration, I strongly suggest a working group to consider the items raised above.

1. Policy Review

Watton Town Council BIODIVERSITY POLICY

Adopted 19th January 2024 (New additions in [Blue](#).)

BACKGROUND:

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, Watton Town Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective. This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

DEFINITION:

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet. Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value.

~~A number of studies have shown this value also goes further.~~ Biodiversity is the **building foundation** block of our 'ecosystems' that in turn provide us with a wide range of **goods and services essentials** that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include **essentials** such as food, fresh water and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives. **Going above and beyond what is required by law to enhance and protect biodiversity can save money, resources and in extreme cases, the lives of our residents.**

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area. The Full Council and any committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required. In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- Consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- Manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that ~~will~~ **can** promote biodiversity.
- ~~Support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.~~

(There is no recourse in the Council that can implement the pursuit of low impact / nature positive practises or maintenance by local business, especially as most local business do not have access to any green space.)

- Encourage and support other organisations within the town to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind. *

***(Encouraging organisations within the town to manage their areas of responsibility in mind is a passive practise that can be implemented in all levels of the Council.)**

- Support residents and local organisation activities, **and events** to enhance and promote biodiversity.
- **To ensure public footpaths within the geographical area are maintained to a proper degree of safety by the relevant authorities, and to signpost or inform to the relevant authorities if otherwise.**

ACTIONS:

Planning applications The Council will aim to:

- When commenting on planning applications, support ~~site and building designs~~ that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- Support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications. **Sensitive habitats are defined as the specific areas within the geographical area historically or currently occupied by a species or community of species in which are found those physical or biological features essential to the establishment or continued existence of the species and which may require special management, conservation or protection considerations.**
- Consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- Include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan. *

***Possible re-phrasing of this policy – 'The Watton Neighbourhood Plan must be considered when making expenditure on biodiversity so that our outcomes are aligned with the vision put forward by the neighbourhood plan.'**

Land and property management the Council will aim to:

- Carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings **as and when required by the Council or any committee of the Council.**
- Consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity ~~with regard to the management of its~~ **in** open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regarding to cutting and removal of vegetation,

application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the Government's regulations for plant protection products.

- Take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- Source sustainable, [or locally made](#) materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use
- Consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local community The Council will aim to:

- Raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website, ~~and newsletters~~ [the local newspaper, online and through collaboration.](#)
- Engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community ~~and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.~~ *

~~*(There is no recourse or specific expertise in the Council that can implement engaging and informing members of the community on how to 'assist and make a difference'. This does not prevent us from doing so on individual basis – but it is not something we can adequately fulfil.)~~

- Where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity [or grounds maintenance](#) projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making [or clearing invasive species.](#)

Partners:

The Council will seek to work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area. [Therefore, the Council should delegate by full Council or by a committee of the Council to communicate with important stakeholders in local biodiversity.](#)

It will review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

MONITORING:

This policy was adopted on 19th January 2024 (Minute reference 9) and will be reviewed in two years or sooner should legislation dictate... [or if required. Reviews of the biodiversity policy can be undertaken by a committee of the Council or full Council.](#) ~~/each year at the Annual Meeting. A summary of how the policy has been implemented will be published annually, with reference to the original biodiversity audit to show progress.~~ *

~~*As far as I'm aware, no summary on this policy has been made or implemented. There is no need for any report or summary to be made as parish and town councils are exempt from this legislation which requires larger authorities to comply with the full NERC Act 2006.~~

2. Timeline / Action Plan

Biodiversity Action Plan with suggestions:

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY	NEW SUGGESTIONS
Whole council area	Raise local awareness of Biodiversity.	Gain local support for action.	Ongoing	<p>Newsletter, social media, website.</p> <p>I believe the Watton Heritage map also accomplished the goal of raising awareness of local biodiversity areas.</p>	<p>Increase efforts to collaborate with the community to improve our knowledge of how to and what to raise awareness of.</p> <p>This should include W&S Flood Action Group, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, The Wayland Partnership, Loch Neaton, Watton Churches and should include other groups that don't yet have an environmental focus.</p> <p>We could raise awareness better with more knowledge, and so the Clerk or ideally Cllr's should be assigned to understanding local biodiversity efforts.</p>
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity.	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species.	Ongoing	Mapping	Consider a timeline of current projects (with a biodiversity increase such as heritage park) so that we can adequately plan for future projects.
Cemetery / churchyard	Prepare a plan to support wildlife and diversity whilst maintaining the site in a way which enables visitors to experience quiet and calm remembrance.	Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Encouraging insects particularly butterflies and bees.	-	A site visit during the autumn could result in a news-worthy article about biodiversity in churchyards.	<p>Norfolk Wildlife trust recently held a survey for inspecting plant species in churchyards. This could have been supported.</p> <p>Utilise youth participation to expand the range of impact of the policy.</p>

	<p>Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates.</p>				
<p>Bridle Road Play area</p>	<p>Sympathetically maintain hedging.</p> <p>Consider leaving some areas unmown. (Wildflower area)</p> <p>Use plants to provide extra habitats and food sources</p> <p>Leave Natural structures – wooden logs.</p>	<p>Food sources and cover encourage insects.</p> <p>Sustain and enhance natural habitats.</p> <p>Provides shelter and enhance natural habitats for animals</p>	<p>Consider a timeline of actioning the Annual Inspection alongside possible biodiversity improvements</p>	<p>Newsletter, social media, website.</p>	<p>Collect deadwood and sticks around the area and place in a stack near food sources, such as fruiting trees or berry bushes.</p> <p>These barriers can form natural boundary walls and be beneficial for a variety of animals.</p> <p>Consider bug or hedgehog hotels as budget friendly ways of improving biodiversity with natural resources. Possible collaboration between NWT and WTC as Wayland Wood has an abundance of bird cherry wood. Bird cherry wood is lighter and more finely textured than wild cherry and is used for making smaller objects, such as wooden boxes and tool handles.</p>
<p>Other open spaces:</p>	<p>Adopt a management plan for each site.</p> <p>Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.</p> <p>*Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after, making it clear what is expected e.g. peat free compost, no chemicals and possible bulbs</p>	<p>Sustain and enhance natural habitats.</p> <p>Protecting habitats.</p> <p>Regular attention.</p> <p>Engagement and ownership of biodiversity.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Newsletter, social media, website.</p> <p>Share an online poll on Facebook, our website and printed QR codes.</p>	<p>Remove encouraging residents to adopt areas. Due to difficulties and time associated with obtaining correct permissions and uncertainty around LGR. It was discussed when the Men's Shed approached us for a public parcel of land to garden on, that such a proposal could not be provided by us and Allotments are a suitable alternative. Of which aren't in strong demand.</p> <p>Engage residents by an online poll with questions about biodiversity. Consider using QR codes which can be put in newspapers, shared online, put on notice boards, shared with</p>

	<p>planting.</p> <p>Ask residents for their views</p> <p>on what they would like to be</p> <p>done to conserve biodiversity</p> <p>within the parish.</p>				<p>business and easily accessed by young people who are equal in population to those 60+ in Watton.</p>
Lovell Gardens Play Area	<p>Lovell Garden's recent renewal could be multiplied with additional biodiversity provisions that are unsusceptible to football or vandalism. Such as hedgerows, established trees, or diversifying ground cover with alternatives to grass.</p>	<p>New foliage would enhance natural habitats. Place without obstructing entry or view.</p> <p>Alternative ground cover could lower maintenance costs.</p>	-	<p>Newsletter, social media, website.</p>	<p>Council should consider the balance between recreational space and green space.</p>
Hares Green	<p>Ask residents their views.</p> <p>Seek to apply a biodiversity gain in alignment with a timeline of other projects.</p>	<p>Protecting and creating habitats.</p>	<p>When possible, with alignment with a timeline of other projects.</p>	-	-
Allotments	-	-	-	-	<p>Defer to allotment working group to complete action plan.</p>
Memorial Garden	<p>Encourage community engagement. Maintain current arrangements.</p>	<p>Sustain and enhance habitats.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	-	-
Jubilee Garden	<p>Has had recent biodiversity increase with trees and cleanup.</p>	<p>Protecting and creating habitats.</p>	<p>Completed?</p>	<p>Celebrated with Allotment open day?</p>	
Heritage Park					<p>Defer to Heritage Park working group to complete action plan.</p>

<p>The Built Landscape</p>	<p>Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries.</p>	<p>Protecting and creating Habitats.</p> <p>Extending habitats.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Defer to Neighbourhood Plan working group to review progress of the plan and to highlight biodiversity projects. If any timeline is created, it should bear this document I mind.</p> <p>Support any projects that benefit important sites in Watton such as our High St.</p>
<p>Increase community awareness of biodiversity</p>	<p>Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with publicity.</p> <p>Consider creation of a page on the parish council website for photographs / information / links to Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc. for residents' use.</p> <p>Discourage floodlighting.</p>	<p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Extending habitats.</p> <p>Protect nocturnal animals.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Newsletter, social media, website.</p>	<p>Adjusted a length of the action with the same meaning.</p> <p>Consider specific policy provision for singular species that are at risk such as bat species or newt. There are a great many rare animals who live in Watton as we are a rural town.</p>
<p>Support Community Projects</p>	<p>Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas.</p> <p>Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations including schools if possible.</p> <p>Stay informed with Watton and Saham Flood Action Group as they support projects which regularly result in biodiversity gain.</p>	<p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Sustain and enhance habitats.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Newsletter, social media, website.</p> <p>& having 2 Cllr's on the on the flood action is a form of biodiversity community engagement.</p>	<p>WTC supported adjustments for Cllr Claire Bowes tree proposals.</p> <p>WTC have acquired professional tree report for Cherry Trees to best protect them.</p> <p>Watton and Saham Flood Action Group has supported Reclaim the Rain in Watton Junior School with the installation of a new rain garden. This was also reported to The Wayland Partnership. This project extended to all 3 schools in Watton but has only recently seen WTC involved.</p>

3. Terms of reference: (New additions in blue.)

The name of the group is the ~~Church Walk Working Group (CWWG)~~ **Biodiversity Working Group (BWG)**

Purpose

The purpose of the ~~CWWG~~ **BWG** is to support the Town Council (TC) to **plan for expenditure of the biodiversity budget and** identify outstanding issues relating to ~~Church Walk~~ **Biodiversity, Sustainability and Public Footpaths** and report to the TC as appropriate, **so that we may act or signpost information to the relevant authorities.**

Membership

- The ~~CWWG~~ **BWG** will be made up of members of the Town Council, the Events and Marketing Officer (EMO) and Deputy Clerk (DC). **Representatives of local charities can be included if agreed by full council.**
- The Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Working Group will chair meetings of the ~~CWWG~~ **BWG** to help facilitate discussion and ensure that the process is inclusive, fair and non-confrontational.
- Following each meeting the Chairman or Vice Chairman will report progress to the TC.
- The Events and Marketing Officer/Deputy Clerk will take notes of meetings.

Dissolving the Group

- Once outstanding matters relating to Church Walk have been considered the TC and ~~CWWG~~ **BWG** will discuss any further working of the ~~CWWG~~ **BWG**.
- If the ~~CWWG~~ **BWG** wishes to dissolve it must notify the TC.
- The ~~CWWG~~ **BWG** will be reviewed periodically or on request from the TC.









4 & 5. Community and Public:








I suggest that one of the pressing matters for a biodiversity working group to consider would be:






To agree a framework in which Watton Town Council **should interact with the community**. This should include implementation of communication methods with community groups, charities and business who have a vested interest in biodiversity. This doesn't have to be extensive, but it is stated in our policy to have an active role.

To discuss the role of the public, and if we should be encouraging them to adopt responsibility or management. To discuss the possibility of reducing hours of contractors or the utilisation of town operatives, only regarding grass cutting, hedgerow trimming and other general maintenance to increase biodiversity while reducing expenditure.

Written by Tomos Hutchings

	Resolution	Date/ Agenda item	Action	Link to 4YP/NP	Lead	Current Position – 22.10.25	Status
134	Sell box trailer at auction	14.10.25 10	Book trailer in auction		Office	To do	
133	Commission further reports for Bridle Road, Lovell Gardens and Sports Centre play areas	23.09.25 12	Commission reports once the council has completed the remedial works it is able to do		Office	Remedial works on-going Asked preferred contractor to quote for some works required and 2 other play equipment companies	
132	Sought quotes for drone images	09.09.25 11	Sought quotes		Office	1 quote received so far	
131	To investigate Honours nominations for two residents	12.08.25 10.3	Investigate		Office	Awaiting information	
130	To proceed with the civil money claim relating to fees owed for use of Watton Cemetery	12.08.25 10.1	Proceed with claim		Office	To discuss with Finance Committee	
129	To submit an application for s106 funding to pay for the additional works identified at Bridle Road Play Area	12.08.25 4.4ii	Application to be made		Office	To finalise plans also refer to 126	
126	Apply to the Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Scheme 2025 to help fund a dropped kerb to allow easier disabled access to the Bridle Road Play Area site	08.04.25 10	Apply for funding		Office	Agenda item on 28.10.25	
124	That the Office should gather information on the provision of services for the elderly in Watton with the intention of presenting a report to Full Council in September 2025 to help enable the Council to make a proposal regarding how it	11.03.25 4.4i	Gather information		Office	EMO is currently collating a directory	

	might provide or support future provision						
120	Quote accepted to carry out the following works to the Clock Tower: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • site inspection of the tower • review of the present quinquennial survey • production of a list of works and discussion of the list with a view to producing a minor schedule of works. 	14.01.24 15	Accept quote and arrange works		Office	Site inspection of the tower took place 30.01.25 Building Surveyor report received and forwarded to contractor Awaiting date for works to be undertaken.	
116	To establish a working group to prepare a long term staffing strategy.	22.10.24 7.3iii			Fin HR	Refer to HR minutes 14.08.25	
114	To hold discussions with BDC regarding possibility that the Town Council can take over the car parks in the town	24.09.24 8	Hold discussions with BDC		Office	Agenda item on 28.10.25	
111	A policy relating to the use of Council resources, such as the market gazebos, should be compiled.	10.09.24 11	Compile policy		Office	Draft report compiled Market Working Group was held on 13 th August	
104	To produce a staff well-being policy	23.07.24 4.6	Compile policy		HR	All other HR policies have been implemented, Staff Well-Being Policy still to do	
85	Cllr Bridges to compile Play Area Policy	22.08.23 4.6i a,b,c,d	To present Policy to Full Council in 2025		TB	Awaiting Draft Policy – Cllr Bridge to liaise with the Office Report presented to council on 12.08.25	
82	Landscaping of Portal Avenue Community Land.	08.08.23 7.3	Research landscaping.	4YP NP	Office	EMO has started compiling a google sketch of ideas for Heritage Park	

68	Seats – to undertake audit of seats around the parish.	11.10.22 5	Undertake audit of seats.		Town	DC and TO have begun an audit of all street furniture Future project for EMO to populate Scribe Civility Asset Management Software	
45	All initial urgent repairs recommended by the Quinquennial Inspection Report on Wayland Hall for which the Town Council are responsible for will be undertaken.	14.09.21 6.1	Some works have been undertaken.	4YP	Office	Remaining works to be quoted by builders who are to repair the windows at Wayland Hall.	
21	To commission audit of energy usage in Council premises.	22.09.20 5.1		4YP	Office	Work to heating system at Wayland Hall has been undertaken. see 77 Audit of Energy could be incorporated within a review of the Sustainability Audit	
13	Watton Town Council will consider model Climate Change Awareness Policies for possible adoption.	6 12.11.19	Clerk to investigate and present model policies to Full Council.	4YP	Clerk	Sustainability Audit to include Climate Change Awareness Policies	
	To undertake a Town Council Sustainability Audit.	12 24.09.19	To undertake Audit.		Office		
4	To display photos of past Mayors in Council Chamber.	14/309	To collate photos and display.		Office	2 more photos to be obtained Note to be posted in the Chamber to state these 2 photos are unobtainable.	

Item 9.1 Norwich Road Trod

The Town Council submitted a Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership application for 24/25 to contribute towards a trod on the Norwich Road as below.

The scheme was not actioned as other works were taking place along the road and the Town Council was recently asked if it wanted to proceed with the application. The decision was to go ahead but the original price quoted of £7416 has now almost doubled! The cost to implement the scheme is now £13034 as below. The Town Council would submit half through the Parish Partnership Scheme - £6517.

Does the Council still wish to proceed?

SCHEME NUMBER	PLB213	
PARISH	WATTON	
LOCATION	EAST OF NEW LIDL SITE	
EASTING / NORTHING	SEE PLAN	
WORK DESCRIPTION	TROD	
Code	Description	
	Contractor compound	£608.77
	Supervision	£1,276.00
	Traffic Management	£1,087.59
	Excavation, labour and construction materials	£5,658.91
	Edging Kerbs	£1,793.82
	uplift for restricted working mon-fri 09.30 - 16.00	£2,609.10
		£13,034.19



Area for TROD highlighted in ORANGE



Surface: Breedon Gravel Type PA3A @ 50mm thick

Item 9.2 Bridle Road dropped Kerb

We have been informed by the Highway Engineer that the Town Council could submit an application for Parish Partnership funding to provide 50% of the cost of installing a dropped kerb at Bridle Road to give wheeled access to the path. Total cost for NCC to undertake the work £1389.88 – 50% £694.94. Work would be undertaken in the financial year beginning April 1st 2026 if the application were successful.

However, we have been advised that the pathway at Bridle Road is not Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant in that the path width for DDA compliance should be 1.2 meters, allowing for wheelchair access.

Item 10

Current Grant Policy states:

“The applying organisation should be a properly constituted voluntary or public sector body and should be either based wholly in Watton, or able to demonstrate that it benefits Watton residents”

And

“The types of organisation that can apply for grants are, for example, Charitable Organisations, Pre-school Playgroups, Youth Clubs, Sports Clubs, Art Groups, Advice Organisations etc.

Grants are intended to support projects that will benefit Watton residents as a whole.

Therefore there are cases when grants will not be given, including:

General Appeals (e.g. national/international disasters)

National Organisations without a locally based group

Individuals (e.g. sponsorship for individual sportsmen and women)”

It was agreed at the Full Council meeting on 14.10.25 that only registered charities should be able to apply for a grant, therefore the wording as above will need amendment and there will be a considerable restriction on what groups will be able to apply for a grant from the Town Council.

Suggested wording:

The applying organisation should be a registered charity and should be either based wholly in Watton, or able to demonstrate that its activities benefit Watton residents.

Item 11

Last year Watton Town Council sponsored a prize (£50) for the Academy Achievement Evening. Acknowledgements of sponsorship are listed on the programme.

Item 12

No.	Option	Notes
1	Freehold transfer at £nil value consideration with conditions	Charging: No charging would be allowed; the car parks would need to remain as free to use by the end-user. Town councils will need to produce written evidence demonstrating that there is an improvement to the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area. On production of this evidence, Breckland Council will determine if this meets the specific terms outlined in the Local Government Act 1972 General Disposal Consent 2003. If it does, then this option can progress, if not then this option would be withdrawn.

2	Freehold transfer at £nil value consideration without conditions	Charging: Subject to the review below, charging would be allowed. Town councils will need to produce written evidence demonstrating that there is an improvement to the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area. On production of this evidence, Breckland Council will determine if this meets the specific terms outlined in the Local Government Act 1972 General Disposal Consent 2003. If it does, then this option can progress, if not then this option would be withdrawn.
3	Freehold transferred at £market value	Charging: Charging would be allowed.
4	Freehold transferred at £market value. A separate agreement for the payment of an annual commuted sum to the Town Council for 5 years on an annual basis	Charging: Charging would be allowed. The commuted sums in Appendix B have been calculated from the revenue savings resulting from the receipt of the capital from the disposal of the car parks. This option is only viable if the transfer of the property assets has taken place by 31 March 2026.
5	Leasehold up to 7 years – at £nil value with option to purchase at £market value at any time during the leasehold period.	Charging: Charging would be allowed. The purchase price on option exercise will be the higher of the current market value of the car park or the market value at the time the option is triggered. This option is subject to valuing the premium payable for entering the option.

NB: In all options, no alternative use will be allowed, and a restriction will be applied accordingly.

Council is looking at option 2 as its preferred option.

Car park survey

Car park survey has been posted on social media, TC website and hard copies put in Adcocks, Banking Hub, Myhills, Mark Bunnings and TC Office. As of 21.10.25. 553 responses received with 87.3% in support of the Town Council taking on the car parks.