



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 13 April 2026 at Benwick Village Hall

Meeting opened: 19:30

Present

Cllrs M Chapman (Chair), R Few, L Keppel-Spoor, R Emmitt and R Taylor.

Cambridgeshire County Councillor M Fisher, Clerk A Barnes and 5 members of the public.

198/25-26 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Lowry and Ablewhite.

199/25-26 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

200/25-26 Public Participation

Public time opened: 19:31

A resident raised concerns regarding ongoing noise disturbance from a property on High Street/Doddington Road, including loud music and barking dogs. Cllr Fisher recommended contacting Environmental Health, Planning Enforcement and the Valuation Department. The Clerk will assist the resident with the relevant contact details.

The overflowing clothing recycling bin and an abandoned fridge near the village hall were reported. The village hall committee is aware of the issue.

A resident commented positively on the improved condition and maintenance of the cemetery.

Public time closed: 19:56

201/25-26 Confirmation of Minutes

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED, to approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 2 March 2026.

202/25-26 County & District Councillors' Reports

Cllr M Fisher provided an update to the Council, including:

- local neighbourhood policing contacts had been circulated;
- no decision regarding Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is expected until November, with Fenland District Council endorsing Option B;
- highways repairs remain a priority.

The Council also discussed the lack of clarity regarding the footbridge repair works. The Clerk will forward the relevant information to Cllr Fisher.

203/25-26 Action Log

The action log was reviewed and updates were noted under the relevant agenda items.

Cllr Chapman updated the Council regarding the war memorial and proposed that he led on the structural recommendation works relating to the memorial itself, with the railings to be considered separately at a later date as they do not form part of the listed structure. This was AGREED.

Regarding the village defibrillators, Cllr Taylor informed the Council that Turf Fen had offered funding to cover the cost of consumable parts. Cllr Chapman seconded the proposal to accept the offer and this was AGREED.

204/25-26 Dog Fouling Posters

The Council discussed involving residents and Benwick Primary School pupils in designing artwork for dog fouling awareness posters to be displayed around the village. Cllr Chapman will speak with Benwick Primary School regarding the initiative. Cllr Keppel-Spoor suggested widening participation to include all young people in the village. The Clerk will obtain information from Fenland District Council regarding signage options and associated costs. The Council also discussed providing two prizes as part of the initiative, one for a school entry and one for a resident entry. Formal agreement on this will take place at a future meeting.

205/25-26 Highways Matters

The Clerk confirmed that the order will now be placed for the MVAS unit approved within the current financial year budget (minute ref 155/25-26).

206/25-26 Cemetery and September Gardens

Cllr Taylor reported that the allotment gate is in poor condition. The Clerk will obtain quotations for a replacement gate and allotment signage.

207/25-26 Prospective Councillor Training

The Council discussed promoting prospective councillor training in advance of the 2027 parish council elections. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that details of the free training course should be published on the parish council website.

208/25-26 CAPALC Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Impact Assessment

The Council discussed the Benwick-specific LGR impact assessment received from CAPALC. It was AGREED that a Land Registry search should be undertaken to clarify ownership of the park area believed to have been provided for the benefit of the village.

The Clerk will also:

- investigate the permitted use of Section 106 funding;
- contact Doddington Parish Council regarding neighbourhood planning;
- locate and circulate the previous parish plan.

It was further agreed that LGR impacts should be a periodic future agenda item.

209/25-26 Citizens Advice Correspondence

The Council discussed recent correspondence received from Citizens Advice. Cllr Chapman will obtain information regarding the cost of a potential drop-in session and invite a representative to attend a future parish council meeting.

210/25-26 Risk Register Review

The Council reviewed the Risk Register as at 1 April 2026. Cllr Chapman proposed approval of the Risk Register and this was AGREED.

211/25-26 Asset Register Review

The Council reviewed the Fixed Asset Register as at 1 April 2026.

Cllr Chapman proposed approval of the Asset Register and this was AGREED.

The Clerk will also confirm that the Council's insurance policy reflects current replacement and repair costs rather than the historic values retained for AGAR reporting purposes.

212/25-26 Clerk's Report

The Clerk updated the Council regarding activity on the parish council Facebook page.

Information relating to the TIGER On Demand transport service will be added to the website and social media.

The Clerk also confirmed that external encrypted storage devices are now in use and that the Council has received the latest JPAG guidance documentation.

213/25-26 Income & Expenditure

Cllr Chapman proposed, and it was AGREED, to approve the following payments:

Pre-authorised by Council:

N Power – Electricity consumption 01/02/26–28/02/26 (direct debit): £155.99

Authorised for payment:

CAPALC – Affiliation fee and Data Protection Officer scheme: £497.45

Clerk's salary and expenses (March 2026): £698.00

Cemetery maintenance (March 2026): £273.00

Total expenditure authorised: £1624.44

It was further AGREED to approve the March 2026 bank reconciliation. This was signed by Cllrs Chapman and Keppel-Spoor at the close of the meeting.

214/25-26 Q4 Budget Review

The Council reviewed income and expenditure for the period 01/01/2026 to 31/03/2026.

Cllr Chapman queried the underspend within the cemetery maintenance budget. The Clerk clarified that this resulted from budget estimates being based on previous contractor rates, with savings subsequently achieved during the re-tendering process.

No further actions were required.

215/25-26 Correspondence

The following correspondence was noted:

- FDC Press Releases (09/03/26 x2, 16/03/26, 30/03/26)
- FDC Cabinet Agenda (16/03/26)
- FDC Textile Recycling Banks correspondence (09/03/26)
- NALC Chief Executive's Bulletins (09/03/26 x2, 16/03/26, 23/03/26, 30/03/26, 07/04/26)
- Combined Authority Members Newsletter (09/03/26)
- Doddington Diary (09/03/26, 07/04/26)
- Cambs ACRE Staying in Touch (30/03/26)
- Cambridgeshire Matters Newsletter (30/03/26)
- CCC Holiday Activities and Food Programme (09/03/26)
- CCC Highways TTRO 26-20101 Ramsey Road, Benwick (09/03/26)
- CAPALC Newsletter (16/03/26)
- CAPALC Local Assistance Schemes (07/04/26)
- SLCC News Bulletin (09/03/26)

- Alzheimer's Society – Cambridgeshire Dementia Support (23/03/26)
- Legra Internal Audit 2025/26 requirements (25/03/26)

216/25-26 Planning

There were no planning applications for the Council to review at this meeting.

217/25-26 Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives

Cllr Keppel-Spoor advised that additional planting would again be undertaken at the mooring area this year.

218/25-26 Next Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 11 May 2026.

Agenda items should be submitted to the Clerk by Friday 1 May 2026.

Meeting closed: 21:05



Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation				Financial Year ending 31 March 2026	
Benwick Parish Council					
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)					
Date		10/04/2026			
Approved by		Chair			
Date		13/04/2026			
Balance per bank statements at end		31/03/2026		£	£
Current Account (Santander)				0.00	
Current Account (Lloyds)				11,854.40	
Cambridge and Counties Bank				44,770.18	
					56,624.58
Less: Unpresented Cheques					
Cheque Number	amount				
					0.00
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit					0.00
Net bank balances end				56,624.58	
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-					
Opening Balance (01 April 2025)				54,357.37	
Add: Receipts to date				22,863.67	
Less: Payments to date				20,596.46	
Closing Balance				56,624.58	

Earmarked Reserves:

Verge Planting	£100.00		
Cemetery Extension	£3,324.40		
Street Lighting	£9,426.58		
The Pound	£1,000.00		
Village Sign	£0.00		
War Memorial	£4,720.00		
Mooring	£3,905.24	EM TOTAL	£23,176.22
Allotments	£700.00		
General Reserve	£33,448.36		