

Pirton Parish Council



**Minutes of Pirton Parish Council Meeting held in
Pirton Village Hall on 13 August 2026 at 7.45 pm**

www.pirtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Present:

Cllr Burleigh, Cllr Rogers, Cllr Topliff

In attendance:

Dr Janine Budd (Parish Clerk), District Cllr Claire Strong

26-92 To receive and accept apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence had been received and accepted from Cllr Rowe and Cllr Maple.

26-93 Public participation.

Four members of the public attended.

A member of the public representing PSSC urged the Parish Council to push NHDC to consider access to the Pavilion as a condition for granting permission for the Blakeney development. They said that the current access restricts activities that can be carried out at the Pavilion, such as the car rally.

A resident of Great Green, aware that a letter had been sent to the Parish Council about residents parking more than one car and not displaying parking permits, requested that the Parish Council enforce its Policy of putting a letter on the car windscreens before prosecution for trespass.

Two Cotman End residents attended the meeting. They explained that the residents have a WhatsApp group and that the letter that was sent to Cllr Rogers represented the unanimous opinion of all residents. They said that each resident has a legal right of way to access their properties at all times and for all purposes. The general feeling was that using Cotman End to access the recreation ground goes beyond the prescribed usage and therefore becomes a problem for them and for Blakeney Homes. The residents said that the road is fairly safe and is used by families by day and night. The residents were confused about why Cotman End was being considered as a route of access to the recreation ground as planning permission was granted for the Pavilion using the existing access. Cllr Burleigh said that the Parish Council and PSSC had always had the intention that proper access needed to be provided at some point, but that it was not necessary at the time of construction of the pavilion. The consensus amongst Cotman End residents is that the existing track be used for access to the recreation ground.

Another planning proposal has been submitted for four houses at 19 Walnut Tree Road. The owner has said that he would provide land to widen the existing access, but not necessarily throughout the length of the track. This planning decision for this application is lagging behind the Blakeney development; the planning committee meeting for this is

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: 13 August 2026

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

scheduled for 3 September, and a decision will be made on the plan available at that time.

Cllr Rogers shared the collective letter from Cotman End residents. They are unanimously opposed to the use of Cotman End to access the recreation ground, especially as it may prevent them from accessing their own properties. Small numbers of parked vehicles can obstruct the road, and the number of parked cars would increase if it was the official access to the recreation ground. Cotman End is a safe, quiet residential road where children can play safely. Increased traffic would affect their enjoyment of the road. The residents pay for the upkeep of the road and services, and they would not be prepared to continue to do so if it was used by more vehicles.

Cllr Burleigh asked the residents if they know if Blakeney Homes has ownership of Cotman End. At the time of the first Blakeney development, it was proposed that the Parish Council could have access to the recreation ground via Cotman End, but they were advised legally not to accept it because it was not for unrestricted access. Cllr Burleigh asked if the residents could find a copy of the conveyancing (general proposals around the right of way) and forward it to her or to the Clerk as it would be useful to know what rights Blakeney Homes retained. A member of the public representing PSSC thought that Blakeney Homes retains ownership of the road and that they intend to use it to access the other plot of land for the new development. At a recent meeting between Blakeney Homes and PSSC, there had been a discussion about redistributing the management fees so that all parties would share the cost of upkeep; the PSSC would be prepared to contribute to the cost. The residents of Cotman End had not appreciated that their road would be used to access the proposed development.

A member of the public representing PSSC suggested that if the Blakeney development goes ahead, then the Parish Council should push for access rights over Cotman End into the recreation ground as it would cost a lot of money to resurface the existing track and the single track could prove to be an obstruction to bookings. The PSSC has the intention to grow the Pavilion and its activities, such as bookings for weddings; they have the aspiration to build a sports hall and to extend parking.

A resident of Cotman End asked if there was an expectation for traffic to increase. The reply was that there is no concrete proposal at the moment to extend, but that there will be more visitors from outside the village. Cllr Rogers said that part of playing sport is that participants travel to play. One of the Cotman End residents said that a cricket club comes from Hitchin every Sunday, which brings in more cars. District Cllr Strong said that the ideal is that residents can access the facilities they want without the need to drive out of the village. Cllr Burleigh said that an application for S106 funds to mitigate the impacts of the development has been submitted.

District Cllr Strong said that this development is outside of the village boundary, but that NHDC is minded to consider all applications as they have a shortfall of housing. She said that the proposed access chicane looks out of character with other similar developments, but that Highways seems happy with it.

Cllr Burleigh said that the residents of Cotman End should have been consulted by Blakeney Homes about the proposed access through their road. However, she said this could postpone decision making but was unlikely to prevent development.

Cllr Burleigh asked the residents of Cotman End to try and suggest dates by the end of month when they and representatives of Blakeney Homes could meet with the Parish Council; it was proposed that the owner of 19 Walnut Tree Road and District Cllr Claire Strong be notified too.

26-94 To receive declarations of Interest from Councillors on items on the Agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation.

Declarations of Interest were accepted as those recorded in the book. Cllr Burleigh is a member of Wildabout Pirton.

26-95 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7 July 2026 as a true and accurate record.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 7 July 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Burleigh; seconded by Cllr Topliff. ALL AGREED.

26-96 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 9 July 2026 as a true and accurate record.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 July 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Topliff; seconded by Cllr Burleigh. ALL AGREED.

26-97 To receive the Net Position Statement, Bank Reconciliation and Financial Summary, and to approve accounts for payment.

- a. Bank account as of 13 August 2026 is £121,172.21
- b. It was **RESOLVED** that payments totalling £2,152.43 as detailed on the monthly finance statement (Appendix A) be made.

The Clerk drew attention to the previously circulated bank reconciliation and net position statements.

The Clerk had previously provided invoices and a payments awaiting authorisation slip to Cllr Rowe and Cllr Maple via email so that they could authorise the payments on the Unity Trust bank account.

Cllr Rogers is to see if she can find the forms necessary to allow Cllr Topliff to become a banking signatory. The Clerk is unable to access the online forms to add a new signatory, but is to telephone Unity Trust Bank to request the forms.

26-98 To receive the Clerk's report.

The Clerk reported that the external auditors PKF Littlejohn had requested a detailed spending breakdown for the pavilion, which she had supplied.

The Clerk is to undertake training on spending powers in September.

Setter Play has informed the Clerk that they will replace the hangers for each of the swings at the recreation ground, although a date for the repairs has not yet been provided.

The Clerk had received a letter from a resident about the damaged signs on Shillington Road and the weeds growing along the edges of roads. The Clerk responded that Cllr Burleigh had been informed that the signs were not a priority for repair at this time. The Clerk had provided the resident with the contact link for Highways and copied Cllr Barnard onto the message.

26-99 To co-opt two new members onto the Council.

The co-option of Jim Davis and Colin Bassnett onto the council was proposed by Cllr Burleigh; seconded by Cllr Rogers. AGREED BY ALL.

26-100 To receive the Pirton Pavilion Working Group report and Cash Flow projection

There was no report this evening.

26-101 Planning**a) To receive an update on the Gladman development.**

Cllr Burleigh reported that a couple of S106 letters from Sport England for pitches in Hitchin were now available on the website. S106 applications that the Parish Council has submitted are now on the portal. No date is available for the committee meeting. District Cllr Strong said that the delegation of planning applications is to change. If the number of houses is in excess of 150, the application goes straight to the Secretary of State.

b) To receive an update on the Blakeney development.

Cllr Rogers said that a representative of the Parish Council ought to speak at the committee meeting as well as a representative of PSSC. District Cllr Strong is to confirm the date of the committee meeting.

26-102 To consider Planning Applications (as in Appendix A).**i. 25/02064/OP Land Adjacent To 10 Hambridge Way, Pirton, Hertfordshire**

Cllr Burleigh had circulated a draft letter for submission to planning control focusing on drainage and biodiversity. Access is still an issue. Before the meeting, Cllr Maple had submitted a letter to the other councillors stating that improved access to the recreation ground was a priority for him. Cllr Burleigh proposed to once again raise that this is an issue for the village. Access for 50 houses has been proposed. The letter could also mention that the residents of Cotman End have not been consulted by the developers. In addition, access to the development and the effect on the recreation ground has not been adequately addressed. The Clerk is to submit the final version of the letter to planning control tomorrow.

26-103 To consider Planning Applications received since publication of the Agenda

There were no additional applications to consider.

26-104 To receive an update on the questionnaire responses from the residents of Cotman End.

Cllr Rogers read the letter that she had received representing the unanimous opinion of all Cotman End residents.

26-105 To confirm the appointment of April Skies Accounting to complete the 2026-2027 internal audit and sign the engagement letter.

Proposed by Cllr Burleigh; seconded by Cllr Topliff. ALL AGREED. Signed by Cllr Rogers. The Clerk is to return the signed letter to April Skies Accounting.

26-106 To confirm that April Skies Accounting is independent of Pirton Parish Council and has no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council.

Proposed by Cllr Burleigh; seconded by Cllr Topliff. ALL AGREED.

26-107 To receive an update on the response to the water leak at Pirton Pavilion.

The Clerk reported that PSSC staff and volunteers had acted quickly to turn off the water at the mains and to dry out the affected areas using a water vac and airing. Although PSSC had contacted Parrott Construction in the first instance and the original plumbers had replaced the faulty connection, Parrots had been advised by their insurers that the Parish Council should submit a claim through its insurers. A water-tracking survey had been carried out and the Clerk and PSSC Chairman Steve Smith had met with the loss adjuster. The loss adjuster is waiting for the report from Ridgefords Fire and Flood before they can advise on the work that is likely to be required. At the very least, the carpet tiles will

probably need to be replaced. PSSC should be able to schedule work around its booking commitments.

Cllr Bassnett asked if the Parish Council needs a procedure or policy for what to do in the event of future incidents. He asked if there had been a snagging report. This is to be checked with Cllr Maple. Cllr Bassnett also felt that it was worth another specialist checking the plumbing.

26-108 To discuss parking on Great Green.

The Clerk had received a letter about residents parking two cars and not displaying parking permits. The permit allows for parking of just one car per household. The Clerk is to send out the invoices, clarifying that a permit is for one car only and a valid permit needs to be displayed or potentially further action will be taken. Cllr Burleigh is to make enquiries of clamping and removal companies.

The Policy is to be shared with the new Councillors.

The Clerk is to check the policy, especially regarding parking on Three Closes.

26-109 To agree a long-term plan for improvements to Blacksmith's Pond.

Wildabout Pirton had provided suggestions for long-term management of the pond. Cllr Burleigh suggested that Wildabout Pirton put together a formal proposal at their meeting next week. Cllr Davis said that posts made of recycled plastic are often used for fencing on fishing lakes. Cllr Burleigh felt that wood filling and concreting of the fence might be sufficient to avoid replacing the fence, but that it was not worth doing until it looks like further flooding is unlikely. Cllr Topliff asked if Cllr Rogers had been able to find a Duck-crossing sign.

26-110 To agree a date for the Clean Up Day to tackle ivy at the allotments as well as overgrown hedges and verges around the village.

One fence at the allotment is being pushed into a neighbouring garden. The date was agreed as Sat 19th September from 10 am. Volunteers are requested, especially allotment keepers. The Clerk is to share information about the event with Cllr Topliff to post on Facebook.

26-111 To discuss the management of thistles on the Bury.

Cllr Burleigh was disappointed at the Bury Trust's management of the thistles, as they had resorted to spraying with pesticide rather than the strimming that had been previously agreed. Cllr Burleigh was not aware of the Bury Trustees asking for volunteers to help with the strimming. Cllr Burleigh had written to the Bury Trust about this matter, but had not received a response. Digging into the scheduled monument is not permitted, and it is difficult to remove the thistle roots. Cllr Burleigh is to ask Historic England about the possibility of using ragwort forks.

26-112 To discuss a variation of the governance arrangement for the Bury Trust.

As Cllr Rowe is not present, this item will be discussed at the September meeting.

26-113 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group.

Nothing to report.

26-114 To receive reports on the following:

26-115 Parish Paths Partnership (P3)

Nothing to report

26-116 S106 Projects

Very little money is left from previous applications. Cllr Burleigh has forwarded

submissions to NHDC for the Blakeney and Gladman developments.

26-117 Village Environment

Highways has carried out work on the ditch that receives the outflow from the pond. They will not clear the section where the beehives are; this will need to be cleared by hand. A future working party can be organised to clear the sections of the ditch that have not been cleared yet. Highways has said that the drains aren't blocked. How much more clearing needs to be done should become evident in the winter.

26-118 Bury Trust

Nothing to report.

26-119 Village Hall

The Village Hall now has a plan for enabling use of different sections of the hall without requiring an extension. Cllr Burleigh has sent their S106 application to NHDC. They still need to provide additional quotes.

26-120 To suggest items for the next Meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Thursday 10 September 2026 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm

- a. To review the reserves and identify priorities for spending.
- b. To discuss a variation of the governance arrangement for the Bury Trust.
- c. To begin to sort Parish Council Documents for long-term storage.
- d. To suggest items for the Newsletter
- e. To receive flooding and insurance updates
- f. To assign new Councillors to committees

Meeting closed at 21:50

Date of Next Meeting: **Thursday 10 September 2026 at Pirton Village Hall at 7.45 pm.**

Appendices

Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

Appendix A – Monthly Finance Statement

A	Bank Reconciliation at 31/07/2026		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2026		124,417.22
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2026 - 31/07/2026		121,297.07
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2026 - 31/07/2026		245,714.29 133,155.31
	Cash in Hand 31/07/2026 (per Cash Book)		112,558.98
B	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Pirton Parish Council Unity Trust 31/07/2026	112,558.98	
			112,558.98
	Less unrepresented payments		
			112,558.98
B	Plus unrepresented receipts		
	Adjusted Bank Balance		112,558.98
	A = B Checks out OK		

Pirton Parish Council

Pirton Parish Council
PAYMENTS (AWAITING AUTHORISATION) LIST

11 August 2026 (2026-2027)

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
79	Street Cleaner	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Street Cleaning	Tony Smart	Z	254.20		254.20
80	Website/IT	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council	QU-3500	Website planning tracker	TEEC	S	24.00	4.80	28.80
81	Room Hire	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Room Hire	Village Hall	Z	21.25		21.25
82	Water	19/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council	2600796	Allotments Water	Castle Water	Z	14.60		14.60
83	Village Greens	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Village Greens Grass	Andrew Burton	Z	320.00		320.00
84	Salary	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Salary	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	965.06		965.06
85	Room (Office Expenses)	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Expenses	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	30.00		30.00
86	Telephone	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Expenses	Melisa Janine Budd Clerk	Z	20.00		20.00
87	Clerk Pension Contribution	20/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Pension Contribution	NEST Pension Scheme	Z	31.90		31.90
88	Employers' Pension Contributio	20/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Pension Contribution	NEST Pension Scheme	Z	119.63		119.63
89	Employer's NI	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Tax & Employers NI	HMRC Clerk's Tax	Z	86.99		86.99
90	Training	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Clerk Training	HAPTC	Z	35.00		35.00
91	Grass Cutting Rec	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council	Pirton Recreation C	Rec Grass Cutting	A&B Gardening	S	187.50	37.50	225.00
Total									2,110.13	42.30	2,152.43

PIRTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: 13 August 2026

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Receipts

Pirton Parish Council
RECEIPTS LIST

13 August 2026 (2026-2027)

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Receipt No	Description	Customer	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
30	Football Foundation	10/07/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Football Foundation Pavilion Gr	Football Foundation	Z	12,179.00		12,179.00
31	Parking Permits	10/07/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Parking	Steve Kitchiner	Z	10.00		10.00
32	Parking Permits	10/07/2026		Pirton Parish Council		Parking	Steve Kitchiner	Z	10.00		10.00
33	Donations	13/07/2026		Pirton Parish Council	New Pavilion Fund	Donation	Pirton Film Club	Z	100.00		100.00
34	Donations	13/07/2026		Pirton Parish Council	new pavilion fund	Donation	B Critchley	Z	100.00		100.00
35	VAT Reclaimed	13/08/2026		Pirton Parish Council		VAT Reclaim	HMRC VAT	R		8,613.23	8,613.23
Total									12,399.00	8,613.23	21,012.23

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

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