

GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 17th. September 2025 at 7pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs P. Bagby (Chair), K. Brazier (Vice-Chair), A. Cooper, D. Green, ECC Cllr P. Schwier, BDC Cllr D. Holland and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk). There was no member of the public present.

078/2024 Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr G. Carey

079/2025 Co-option

Councillors are requested to receive written applications for the office of Parish Councillor and co-opt a candidate to fill the vacancies for the Gestingthorpe Parish Council

The Candidates having completed a short application form and confirmed their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules (Local Government Act 1972 section 79).

Cllr A. Cooper proposed accepting both Terence Flower and Michael Green onto the Parish Council

Cllr K. Brazier seconded. **All Agreed**

Terence Flower and Michael Green then signed their declaration of Acceptance of Office, E Consent form and were given the Register of Interest form (which is to be returned to the Clerk within 28 days)

Cllr T. Flower and Cllr M. Green then took their seats as a Parish Councillor

080/2025 Declaration of Interest

To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda

Cllr M. Green declared in interest in item 092/2025 (c)

Cllr P. Bagby declared an interest in item 086/2025 (25/02047/HH)

081/2025 To approve the Minutes of the last meeting of Gestingthorpe Parish Council

To receive and agree the minutes of the GPC meeting held on 16th. July 2025 **All Agreed**

082/2025 Chairman's report and any update since last meeting

Although still in the last dregs of summer, the weather has turned very autumnal with much welcome rain although the recent wind not so welcome. Luckily there appears to be no resulting damage to homes or trees in the village and surrounds.

I don't have anything to report as all will be covered by the various councillors' reports or included on the agenda and I would prefer not to duplicate information and add no value. With this in mind, going forward I will restrict myself to the Chair's welcome and not provide a separate report

083/2025 Essex County Councillor report – ECC Cllr Peter Schwier

Local Government reorganisation ECC meetings happen very frequently. All information has been sent to the Clerk for distribution.

Cllr P. Schwier spoke about

- Highways - Over 62,000 drains cleared across Essex ahead of winter months
- Highways works Tilbury Rd Gt Yeldham
- Essential - Safety - Landowners urged to cut vegetation now bird nesting season is over.
- Voi announced as new e-scooter trial operator in Essex
- Highway Highlights July 25
- Highways - North End Rd Gestingthorpe - drainage improvements Sep 25
- Highways - Innovative 'Roadmender' method is faster, more cost effective and better for the environment.

Essex election for Mayor will be May '26

Councillors asked Cllr P. Schwier if a "Slow" sign could be painted on the road just before the public house in Gestingthorpe. Cllr P. Schwier thought that this would need to go through LHP (which is a very slow and expensive process). However, BDC LHP will not be taking any new projects for 2026-2027

Cllr P. Schwier left the meeting

084/2025 Braintree District Councillor report – BDC Cllr David Holland

Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy – It is an important document. Cllr D. Holland talk about the 124 page document. This document has been adopted by Essex County Council. The Clerk asked Cllr D. Holland if he could send him the document. To view document go to Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy at

<https://gestingthorpe-pc.gov.uk/local-news-road-closure/>

Local Government reorganisation. The mayor will head-up strategic departments. Powers from Westminster is being devolved to Unitary Authorities

BDC Full Council met on Monday and discussed future shape in Essex producing either 2, 3, 4 or 5 Unitary Authorities. The decision was to go with 4 Unitary Authorities. Uttlesford, Braintree, Tendring and Colchester The changes will be made before May '26

National Grid – Have to provide Community Benefit structure. An allocation of a Community Fund in total of £4m.

085/2025 Public Participation Session No questions were asked

086/2025 Planning Applications

25/01769/TPO - Thorpe Barn Church Street Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AX

Notice of intent to carry out works to tree protected by Tree Preservation Order 7/98 Oak tree to have a full crown reduction of 2-3m

Due to the planning response time constraints, the Parish Council submitted the response below on 5th.
September 2025

Gestingthorpe Parish Council has no objection to this planning application subject to the tree officer's approval

25/02047/HH - 1 Audley End Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AU

Proposed side extension

RESOLVED: Gestingthorpe Parish Council has no objection to the application in principle but would make the following comments

- The materials should be specified
- The side extension would be better set back from the front facade to differentiate the extension from the existing front elevation

087/2025 Update on changeover to .gov.uk both the Councillor emails and Website

The Clerk informed the meeting about the new email and website

088/2025 Representative reports

- **Highways** – TBC

Cllr M. Green was asked to undertake Highways in Gestingthorpe

- **Playing Field** – Cllr A. Cooper

I walked around the Playing Field this evening. Everything appears to be in good order with nothing new to report. The longer standing issues of overhanging branches and decaying wire along the eastern edge remain. It was lovely to see the grass looking so green again. Let us hope that some of the trees which have been suffering from the drought, will gain new vitality as moisture returns.

- **Footpath** – Cllr K. Brazier

Footpath 23 Gestingthorpe was reported as requiring repairs to ECC following a member of the public raising the issue of a damaged bridge to the Parish Council.

Repairs have been undertaken and the bridge looks very sturdy.

There are no other reports of issues with footpaths in our locality.



- **Village Hall** – Cllr D. Green

Improvements are still ongoing with the village hall, most recently the small hall has been painted, and new bookshelves have been put up, giving easier access to the books.

The committee have agreed not to replace the existing shed, the shed will be cleared out and any items that are not currently of use will be disposed of, hopefully giving more room to store other items.

There was some barn paint left over from when the Pavilion was painted and if the councillors don't object, the village hall could use the left-over paint to re paint the shed.

Fund raising for the proposed new kitchen have begun with a cocktail evening on the 5th. July 2025. Further fund-raising projects will be continued into 2026.

The Village Hall Charity place for the 2026 London marathon is being run by Rachel Patten.

Coffee mornings are still well attended by the villagers.

26th. September 2025 McMillan coffee morning which will be held by Chris and Rose Harman.

Late summer BBQ 19th. September.

- **Defibrillator** update - Cllr K. Brazier

- **ROSPA 2024 play inspection report** – Cllr D. Green

Cllr Karen Brazier and I visited the playground yesterday. The ROSPA report was completed June 2025 and there were some recommendations made by them.

Seating/benches- strimmer damage to posts. There is damage to the bottom of the posts, but I cannot see a solution as the grass needs to be cut around the bottom.

Fencing (perimeter) – moderate repairs needed. Some of the fence is now working loose and there are a few fence panels missing causing large gaps in the fence. The top of the fence posts is also very worn.

Litter Bin (bus stop) Missing – this has been replaced.

Signing (bus stop) - this needs to be updated with new contact telephone numbers.

Adventure Trail – Chain links notched. We could not see where this was apparent on the chain. We did note that on the wooden steps that there are some caps missing exposing holes and rough metal.

Timber decaying- all the timber posts are showing wear and tear.

Wire Exposed on cargo net – there are a few places where the rope has worn away exposing some of wire beneath, it would not cause any injury as there are no sharp jagged edges.

Cap Missing- There is a plastic cap missing on one of the pieces of equipment, exposing sharp metal edges.

Swing – Junior 1 bay 2 seat with barrier rails. – Bird fouling- this is now not present.

Loose swing seat bolt – We could not find loose bolts on any of the swings.

Distance between the swing and support is insufficient- The report does not indicate what this distance needs to be and there is no practicable action.

Slide with ramp- Timber is decayed they recommend and penetration test (at cost). Most of the timber is showing wear and tear and could benefit from being re-painted. There are some loose wood panels at the side.

Finger Entrapment- eliminate the entrapment. The report shows potential finger entrapment on the base at the top of the steps due to the design of the area.

Adult Fitness Cross Trainer- Minimum instructions are not attached. Identification of manufacturer will need to be found to see if there are any instructions available.

Rocker Digger – Hand Grip not firmly fixed. The top metal handrail is loose and spins around.

Rocker Dog – No issues.

Multi-Play Toddler- Slide bar not fitted across the access to the slide. There is no bar.

Swing Junior 2 bay 4 seat with barrier rails- Timber decayed, bird fouling, Loose swing eye bolt, Chain wear. Timber is showing wear and tear but nothing to have concern over, bird fouling is no longer present, there is a loose eye bolt on one of the swings, could not identify any chain wear, just surface rust which easily comes off onto your hands.

Rocker Seesaw- Wear In the bearings. The seesaw does appear to have some wear in the centre and is easily moved side to side.

Basketball post-no signage and over hanging trees preventing use. There is no signage, and the tree branches are overhanging making it unusable.

Football Goal- Item is damaged, angle bar is missing. The football post does need to be replaced.

Rubber Tiles are lifting, and gaps are appearing causing trip hazard. All the rubber tiling around the play equipment has started to lift and large gaps are appearing with grass growing up in between.

All around this area there is many badger holes.

- **Pavilion** – Cllr D. Green

Since the last Parish Council meeting there is not much new to report in relation to the Pavilion.

The cricket club remain the main user, and the season has now finished.

I will be collating the number of home matches they have played this season and then the parish can raise an

invoice to the cricket club.

The lights in both sets of changing rooms are still not working. I have left messages with the electrician who still has not come back to me, I will continue to chase.

The cricket club are in possession of the new kitchen units which I believe are stored up at Hill Farm. Richard Sillitoe has given a verbal quotation of £800.00p to fit new cabinets and clear away the old ones. He is currently on holiday and can supply a written quotation on his return. I do not have a time scale.

Photographs and information regarding the village hall still need to be completed for the new website; I propose to complete this after the new kitchen cabinets have been fitted.

The football team have not been in contact this year, so we must assume that they no longer wish to use the facilities or the pitch.

089/2025 Village events committee generally for 2026

- Form new committee of residents to decide and plan fund raising and community events in the village
- Potentially raise funds for Village Hall, Village amenities (Parish Council), Church and other village groups as & when requested
- Minimum 1 PC rep, 1 VH rep & 1 church rep. Other village representation
- Village Events bank account managed by Chris Harman. Has approx. £1000 available can be used to pay up front event costs.
- All funds into Events account with disbursement to relevant parties after all costs have been paid. 1% disbursement determined up at start of each event planning.
- Possible village fete in 2026 as first event. Possibly a bi or tri-annual event.
- Other events to be determined by committee.

090/2025 EALC Training for Councillors Training courses have been circulated to Councillors

091/2025 To bring the Defibrillator into the ownership of the Parish Council

This item to be deferred to the November meeting

092/2025 Finance

a) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31st. August 2025

Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31st. August 2025

b) To receive the comparison of Actual to Budget for 2025/2026

Councillors noted the comparison of Actual to Budget for 2025/2026

c) To approve the payment of Accounts for August & September 2025 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Councils financial requirements **All Agreed**

d) Cllr P. Bagby proposed purchasing for £30 a Poppy Wreath. Cllr K. Brazier seconded. **All Agreed**

093/2025 Items for Next Agenda

Poppy Wreath – Lorraine Abbey

Convex mirror at junction

094/2025 2026 meeting dates: 21.01: 18.03: 20.05: 15.07: 16.09: 18.11.26

Councillors noted the 2026 meeting dates

095/2025 Date of next meeting is on Wednesday 19th. November 2025 at 7pm

096/2025 Closure of the Meeting

To close the Meeting having considered and determined all items of business.

The Chair then closed the meeting at 9pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

P Bagby

P. Bagby - Chair

19th. November 2025