

Minutes of a Meeting of Staploe Parish Council Held at 7.45pm on Wednesday 5th August 2026 in the Village Hall at Wyboston Village Hall.

Present: Cllr. J. Ibbett (Chair), Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. J. Thomson, Cllr. M. Clark, L. Crawford (Clerk)

Apologies for absence: Cllr. R. Arnold, Cllr. E. Meola

2026/046. Declarations of interest

None

2026/047. Vacancies

There is one vacancy. Applications would be welcome from any part of the parish.

2026/048. Open Forum

Cllr. J. Ibbett: regarding the burst water main on the Bushmead Road on 24th July 2026. Speaking as Chair of the Parish Council, on behalf of other residents and in her own capacity as a resident she wanted to know:

- Why the water main burst in the Bushmead Road when Anglian Water spent a lot of time and money and caused a lot of disruption replacing the pipe two years ago in June and July 2024.
- When the Bushmead Road was closed on 24th July this year why was the traffic diverted through Honeydon when we have an agreement with Bedford Borough Council Highways Department not to send diversions through Honeydon when the Bushmead Road is closed and in fact to erect "Road Closed Except for Access" signs at all entrances to Honeydon when the Bushmead Road is closed?
- What are Bedford Borough Council Highways Department going to do to repair the roads in Cadbury Lane and Lower Honeydon Lane which have been damaged as a result of all the additional traffic?

The Clerk will ask Bedford Borough Council.

She also asked if the Clerk could find out why Anglian Water have been pumping out the small sewage treatment plant in Honeydon more frequently than normal.

Cllr. J. Thomson: there is grass growing in the middle of Begwary Lane. The road needs to be resurfaced. The Clerk will report this to Bedford Borough Council.

During the road closure Keith Turner (who looks after the speed indicator device (SID) in Honeydon) reported that the SID ran out of battery in a single day. Normal volume of traffic is 200 per day but when the Bushmead Road was closed this jumped to 1200 vehicle movements per day with some traveling at 60mph. Residents were unable to walk in the village as there is no pavement and there was a constant flow of fast traffic, often mounting the verge. The Clerk will include this in her report to the Highways Department.

Cllr. J. Thomson also reported that there had been another accident on Bushmead Road on 3rd August and that a number of residents are proposing to start a campaign to reduce the speed limit to 40mph. The Clerk will inform the Borough Council and ask what our next steps should be or what the options are.

Cllr. J. Thomson asked what was happening about the HGV problems on Begwary Lane following the meeting in April. The Clerk reported that she had chased the Highways Department and the owner of Whitehouse Farm but received no replies. But she will chase again.

Cllr. G. Meola: suggested we invite Anglian Water to our next meeting to talk to us about the sewage system in our parish as it often raised when discussing planning. The Clerk will contact Anglian Water.

L. Crawford: she received notification of the following planning appeal for stationing caravans on the ex caravan site in Upper Staploe on 5th August (the day of this Parish Council meeting). As a result it was not on the agenda but Councillors had nothing to add to the comments made at the last application in 2025 so the Clerk will re-submit these to the inspector.

Application number	Type	Description	Location	Deadline	Link
6011389	Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate	Appeal regarding application 25/01596/FUL for the use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes, and dayroom and hardstanding ancillary to that use.	Land East of Chestnut Cottage Accessed from Bushmead Road, Staploe	10th September 2026	Link to comment on planning inspectorate website

2026/049. Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th May 2026.

Having been previously circulated the minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr. G. Meola and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.

2026/050. Planning

Report from the Clerk: the Council did not respond to this planning application as the deadline could not be extended to this meeting and Councillors did not have any comments.

Application number	Type	Description	Location	Deadline	Link
26/01028/FUL	Full Planning Application	Single storey rear extension, and new pitched roof to replace existing flat roof and new vehicle crossover.	1, Duloe Lane, Duloe PE19 5HP	30th June 2026	26/01028/FUL

Little Barford outline planning application (not in our parish - report from the Clerk)

26/01227/EIA Outline application (all matters reserved) for a mixed use phased and severable development, comprising residential (Use Class C2 and C3) development of up to 4,400 dwellings; commercial (Use Classes E, F1, F2, C1 and Sui Generis); public open space including sport and play facilities; education facilities comprising primary and secondary school provision (Use Class F1(a)); provision of Biodiversity Net Gain; transport and access infrastructure; a safeguarding zone for the delivery of East West Rail; retention, renovation and reuse of the on-site historic assets; and associated demolitions, parking, servicing, utilities, footpath and cycle links, drainage and other infrastructure.

Further information about this application is available on the Borough Council's planning portal: edrms.bedford.gov.uk/SearchResults.aspx?appNumber=26/01227/EIA

We are not a statutory consultee as this is not in our parish but it was resolved that the Parish Council should comment to request that water and sewage capacity and flooding be considered. Also, that traffic may be an issue if new developments at Tempsford progress and there could be impacts on the A1 and local roads traffic from disruption caused by the construction of new A428 and the East West Rail.

Bedford Borough Local Plan 2050

- The Borough Council has launched a "Call for sites" which will run until midnight on 30 October 2026.

- They are inviting all key stakeholders – landowners, developers, businesses, community groups, parish councils and residents – to suggest sites and development opportunities that could help shape the Borough's future these may include:
 - housing and employment sites
 - leisure, recreation and community facilities
 - town centre and retail uses
 - open spaces and biodiversity enhancements
 - renewable energy and regeneration projects.
- A public consultation on what the plan should include and how the Borough should engage with you during its preparation will start in September 2026.

Neighbourhood Plan

- Staploe Parish Neighbourhood Plan has now been formally “made” and is available on Bedford Borough Council’s website. [Staploe Neighbourhood Plan | Bedford Borough Council](#)

2026/051. Borough Cllr. S. Sira’s Ward Report and Ward Fund

- An application has been made for a pop up gazebo for social events on the playing field (£204.17), a new battery for the speed sign (£58.99) and a new swing seat for the play area (£60.06). Total application is £323.22
- The Ward Report is available in Appendix A of these minutes.

2026/052. Eastpark Community Benefit Fund

A decision is expected on Eastpark solar farm by March 2027. However, the developer has commissioned an organisation called Community Energy Pathways (CEP) to discuss the proposed Community Benefit Fund with the communities which will potentially be affected.

3 options have been set out for how this fund could be distributed:

OPTION A: A lump sum of £2 million would be made available at the start of the operational phase. No annual fund would be provided.

OPTION B: A lump sum of £1 million would be made available at the start of the operational phase, along with an additional annual fund of £75,000 per year throughout the operational phase. Total £4m

OPTION C: An annual fund of £150,000 per year would be made available through the operational phase. No lump sum would be provided. Total £6.4m

Communities will need to set out their priorities for the local and strategic funds. This will then guide the future investment into projects. The priorities can come from existing community plans, neighbourhood plans or you can develop a new Community Action Plan with CEPs support.

Consider how to respond to questions from CEP regarding the fund:

- Identify parish champions in each of the council areas (Councillors) available to attend a meeting in the third week of July
- What role does your Local Authority see itself playing in relation to Community Benefit Contributions (CBC) negotiations with the developer and the shaping of the Local/Strategic funds?
- What role, if any, does your Local Authority see itself playing in the administration of the fund?
- Do you have a view on how community priorities should be shaped – for example, community action plans along the lines of best practice in Scotland, or are there particular community priorities that should be considered?

- Would we prefer Option A, B or C?

It was resolved that Cllr. G. Meola will be the Parish Champion. Staploe Parish Council would like to be involved in decisions about what the community fund can be spent on and how it will be shared amongst those affected. We would like to administer our own share of the funds. We would like Option C to be paid from the start of construction, (not waiting until the start of operation) and we would like the funding to be index linked to CPI. We would like to know how the funds will be protected in any transfer of ownership. We would like the priorities to be linked to those identified in our Neighbourhood Plan.

2026/053. Social Events

- We had 40 people who signed up to the barbecue and rounders on the playing field on Sunday 28th June. It was a very hot day and so 6 didn't attend. The food was a great success and the Parish Council would like to thank the Meolas for their generous donation and the Arnolds for catering for us.
- Fish and chip night on Saturday 14th November. Starting at 7pm in Colmworth Village Hall. Codswallop will attend at 7.30pm. Jasper Squire aka the Mandolin Minstrel to provide live music for the token cost of two portions of fish and chips.

2026/054. SSE Contract Renewal

Consider contracts for electricity for street lights. Current contract with SSE is due to expire 30/9/2026. Options for low consumption on unmetered supplies are limited.

Business Name	Staploe Parish Council
Quotation Prepared By	Ricky Gosling
Contact Number	0191 691 0718
Date Quoted	05/08/2026



Current Contract

Supplier	Site	Contract End Date	Standing Charge (p/day)	Unit Rate (p/kWh)	Est Contract Cost (Excl VAT)
SSE	UMS Electricity	N/A	17.852	27.354	£552.61

Current Supplier Renewals

Supplier	Commodity	Contract Term (Months)	Standing Charge (p/day)	Unit Rate (p/kWh)	Est Contract Cost (Excl VAT)
SSE	UMS Electricity	12	151.221	32.005	£1,122.28
SSE	UMS Electricity	24	151.837	30.133	£1,091.18
SSE	UMS Electricity	36	152.465	29.836	£1,088.17

Alternative Supplier Quotes

Supplier	Commodity	Contract Term (Months)	Standing Charge (p/day)	Unit Rate (p/kWh)	Est Contract Cost (Excl VAT)
Valda Energy	UMS Electricity	12	80.000	38.500	£978.07
Valda Energy	UMS Electricity	24	70.000	38.000	£932.66
Valda Energy	UMS Electricity	36	70.000	37.500	£923.75
Valda Energy	UMS Electricity	48	70.000	38.000	£932.66
Valda Energy	UMS Electricity	60	70.000	38.500	£941.57

These are spot prices provided today so may change tomorrow. It was noted that the standing charges have increased by 9x with SSE and approx. 5x with Valda. The Clerk will find out the reason for such a dramatic increase. It was resolved to opt for the cheapest two year contract.

2026/055. Village Hall, Community Cabins and Playing Field

- Key safe has been vandalised. Fortunately the key was not in the safe. Following research the C500 Pro seemed a more secure replacement. Due to the meeting being postponed the Clerk used her emergency powers (with the permission of the Parish Councillors) to purchase this for £55.79 ex VAT. Around the same time (10th -12th July) the defibrillator cabinet was knocked off the wall of the cabin and emergency powers were used to reconnect it for £100 and also a picnic table with integrated benches was placed on the roof of the cabins and damaged. The Clerk and two kind volunteers were able to get the table down from the roof and paint anti climb paint on the roof. Again, emergency powers were used to purchase the paint (although this was approved once before in 2025 but not purchased). **It was resolved to approve the emergency spending and report this to the police.**
- The play area / playing field inspection checklist was reviewed and updated.
- Review the cabin hire agreements. Having been previously circulated these were reviewed and bouncy castle details added (see below).
- Consider whether to permit hirers to use bouncy castles on the playing field if they have their own insurance and risk assessments. Our insurer has advised that we should ensure that the bouncy castle is supplied by a professional company whose liability covers it for the duration of the hire including any accidents which may occur and the professional company are setting up and supervising the event for the duration of the hire. It was resolved to add these conditions to the Community Cabin Terms of Hire.

2026/056. Highways and Rights of Way

- Staploe speed sign – the grant application made to Awards for All has been refused. The reasons given were: “we understand the benefits of your project but would consider speeding prevention and speeding signs to be the responsibility of the Parish Council and Local Authority. The solar powered speed indicator sign may fall outside of statutory funding obligations. However projects which are more aligned with their expected activities are unlikely to be a priority for our funding.”
- As agreed at our meeting in May we have therefore proceeded with the purchase of a speed sign from Elan City at a cost of £ 2389,99 plus £34.10 for brackets for the sign. This was purchased using our remaining Community Infrastructure Levy funds (£2655.17). The Parish Council would like to thank Cllr. R. Arnold for fitting the sign to the pole for us.
- **It was resolved that we did not need to purchase a spare pole mounting bracket for the existing mobile speed sign as the existing one can be moved from the 30mph sign at the east of Staploe to the new pole in Duloe.**

2026/057. Donation to St Neots Museum

- St Neots Museum have requested a donation. We have £50 in our budget for this donation. **It was resolved to make this donation.**

2026/058. Finances

- The [performance against budget 2026-27](#) is presented on pp6-10. It shows that we are currently forecast to underspend vs budget by £273. Largely due to reduced grass cutting at the playing field and less maintenance than forecast to date.
- VAT reclaim. A reclaim of £1,864.09 has been made for VAT for 30th August to 31st March.
- The [receipts and payments](#) were examined against the invoices by Cllr. J. Thomson and Cllr. M. Clark and approved for payment. They are presented on p11
- The [bank reconciliation](#) was checked against the bank statement by Cllr. J. Ibbett and is presented on p12

2026/059. Policies

- Savings rates. Barclays savings 1.054% AER. Unity Trust Savings 1.96% AER
- FSCS cover of up to £120,000 applies to Parish Council accounts. Our insurance covers us for fidelity guarantees of up to £25K per employee / member.
- The data protection, GDPR and CCTV policies were reviewed and updated. A data audit was prepared and Cllr. J. Ibbett will provide the Parish Council with GDPR refresher training before our next meeting.
- Complaints procedure. This was reviewed without amendment.
- The Clerk confirmed that the required documents are published online as per the transparency code (all items of expenditure above £100, end of year accounts, annual governance statement, internal audit report, list of councillor or member responsibilities, details of public land and building assets, minutes, agendas and meeting papers of formal meetings).

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Staploe Parish Council

26 July 2026 (2026-2027)

Receipts and Payments Forecast

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/08/2026 and 31/03/2027)

01 Regular Receipts

Code	Title	Receipts					Payments					Net Position	Comments
		Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position	
2	Bank interest	400.00	102.13	300.00	402.13	2.13						2.13	
3	Community Cabin hire	500.00	143.00	375.00	518.00	18.00						18.00	Children's party July 2026
1	Precept	16,439.00	8,219.50	8,219.50	16,439.00								
SUB TOTAL		17,339.00	8,464.63	8,894.50	17,359.13	20.13						20.13	

02 Other Receipts

Code	Title	Receipts					Payments					Net Position
		Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position
76	Deposits											
6	Donations for campaigns											
9	Newsletter advertising											
10	Other (eg. refunds, book sales)											
7	Ticket sales for social events											
5	Ward Fund											
SUB TOTAL												

03 Staff Costs

03 Staff Costs		Receipts					Payments					Net Position	
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position	
12	Clerk's employment expenses (WFHA & mileage)						312.00	77.40	226.00	303.40	8.60	8.60	Not much mileage so far
11	Clerk's salary						6,463.08	1,539.02	4,924.06	6,463.08			Currently slightly under budget but pay review expected in September and will be backdated.
13	Clerk's training						50.00		33.36	33.36	16.64	16.64	
SUB TOTAL							6,825.08	1,616.42	5,183.42	6,799.84	25.24	25.24	

04 Grounds Maintenance

Code	Title	Receipts					Payments					Net Position	
		Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position	
15	Duloe Common grass cutting						156.00	65.00	78.00	143.00	13.00	13.00	
14	Playing Field grass cutting						1,944.00	810.00	972.00	1,782.00	162.00	162.00	Likely to be reduced due to drought
16	Tree surveys & works												
SUB TOTAL							2,100.00	875.00	1,050.00	1,925.00	175.00	175.00	

05 Community Cabins

Code	Title	Receipts					Payments					Net Position	
		Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position	
19	Community Cabin maintenance						450.00	97.28	300.00	397.28	52.72	52.72	Anti climb paint, warning signs & key safe
17	Electricity for cabins						441.00	174.43	294.00	468.43	-27.43	-27.43	
18	Water & sewerage for cabins						290.00	47.46	217.50	264.96	25.04	25.04	
SUB TOTAL							1,181.00	319.17	811.50	1,130.67	50.33	50.33	

06 Street Lights

Code	Title	Receipts					Payments					Net Position	
		Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position	
20	Power to street lights						604.42	141.84	402.96	544.80	59.62	59.62	
21	Street light inspection & repairs												
SUB TOTAL							604.42	141.84	402.96	544.80	59.62	59.62	

07 Asset Inspection & Maintenance

Code	Title	Receipts					Payments					Net Position	
		Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position	
60	CCTV maintenance						150.00		75.00	75.00	75.00	75.00	Due in October
24	Defibrillator costs						35.00	100.00	35.00	135.00	-100.00	-100.00	Refitting Duloe defibrillator after vandalism
25	Other maintenance						200.00		133.36	133.36	66.64	66.64	
22	Play area inspection						78.00	83.00		83.00	-5.00	-5.00	
26	Play area works (consumables / labour)												
59	Sundries for playing field							3.12		3.12	-3.12	-3.12	
SUB TOTAL							463.00	186.12	243.36	429.48	33.52	33.52	

08 Other Assets Purchased

		Receipts					Payments					Net Position
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position
27	Other assets purchased											
23	Play area works (assets purchased)											
SUB TOTAL												

09 Administration

		Receipts					Payments					Net Position
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position
28	Audit fees						460.00	250.00	210.00	460.00		
30	Clerk's other expenses (postage & sundries)						40.00	6.09	26.66	32.75	7.25	7.25
31	Councillor training						30.00		30.00	30.00		
29	Councillors expenses						30.00		20.00	20.00	10.00	10.00
34	Hall hire (meetings)						257.50	50.00	177.50	227.50	30.00	30.00
32	Insurance						650.00	710.72		710.72	-60.72	-60.72
												Increased due to new assets (playing field fencing, gate and play area surfacing)
58	Office costs						70.00	13.73	46.64	60.37	9.63	9.63
36	Other administration						60.00	47.00	16.64	63.64	-3.64	-3.64
33	Subscriptions						213.00	223.00		223.00	-10.00	-10.00
35	Web costs & IT						682.00	210.66	538.00	748.66	-66.66	-66.66
SUB TOTAL							2,492.50	1,511.20	1,065.44	2,576.64	-84.14	-84.14

10 Communication

		Receipts					Payments					Net Position
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position
37	Newsletter						190.00	96.00	94.00	190.00		
												We published our newsletter in April rather than March this year so it fell into this year
SUB TOTAL							190.00	96.00	94.00	190.00		

11 Social Events

		Receipts					Payments					Net Position
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position
38	Social events						70.00	52.00	18.00	70.00		
SUB TOTAL							70.00	52.00	18.00	70.00		

12 Donations

		Receipts					Payments					Net Position
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position
40	Other donations						50.00		50.00	50.00		
39	Village Hall support						50.00		33.36	33.36	16.64	16.64
SUB TOTAL							100.00		83.36	83.36	16.64	16.64

13 Other Payments

		Receipts					Payments					Net Position
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position
41	Other payments											
75	Ward Fund											
SUB TOTAL												

Subtotal of Regular Payments

276.21 We are currently forecast to underspend vs budget by £273.

14 Earmarked Reserves

		Receipts					Payments					Net Position
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Net Position
70	CIL (new)							2,424.09		2,424.09	-2,424.09	-2,424.09
SUB TOTAL								2,424.09		2,424.09	-2,424.09	-2,424.09

Summary

NET TOTAL	17,339.00	8,464.63	8,894.50	17,359.13	20.13	14,026.00	7,221.84	8,952.04	16,173.88	-2,147.88	-2,127.75
V.A.T.									807.21		
GROSS TOTAL				17,359.13					16,981.09		

Transactions for Approval in August 2026					
Receipts					
Bank	Payment Ref	Date	Customer	Description	Total
Barclays Main Account	035	13.07.2026	Danielle Vernon (Jason Atkins)	Community Cabin hire	18.00
Barclays Savings Account	024	08.06.2026	Barclays	Interest on Barclays savings	8.40
Unity Trust Savings Account	032	30.06.2026	Unity Trust Bank	Interest on Unity savings	93.73
Total					120.13
Payments					
Bank	Payment Ref	Date	Supplier	Description	Total
Barclays Main Account	021	20.05.2026	EDF Energy	Electricity for Community Cabins	35.14
Barclays Main Account	022	01.06.2026	Starboard Systems	Accounting software	43.20
Barclays Main Account	023	15.05.2026	Anglian Water Business	Water & sewerage for Community Cabins	7.24
Barclays Main Account	025	12.06.2026	Bradgate	Grass cutting Field & Common	420.00
Barclays Main Account	026	12.06.2026	Society for Local Council Clerks	SLCC subs	116.00
Barclays Main Account	029	16.06.2026	EDF Energy	Electricity for Community Cabins	64.67
Barclays Main Account	030	22.06.2026	SSE Energy	Electricity for street lights	33.21
Barclays Main Account	031	29.06.2026	Smartest Energy	Electricity for Community Cabins	8.57
Barclays Main Account	033	01.07.2026	Starboard Systems	Accounting software	43.20
Barclays Main Account	040	15.07.2026	Smartest Energy	Electricity for Community Cabins	41.61
Barclays Main Account	041	16.07.2026	Bradgate	Grass cutting Field & Common	210.00
Barclays Main Account	044	16.07.2026	Wyboston Village Hall	Wyboston Village Hall hire	25.00
Barclays Main Account	045	16.07.2026	Matthew Barnes	Defibrillator repairs	100.00
Barclays Main Account	046	16.07.2026	BATPC	BATPC subs	107.00
Barclays Main Account	047	21.07.2026	SSE Energy	Electricity for street lights	28.78
Barclays Main Account	048	17.07.2026	Information Commissioners Office	Data Controller Registration	47.00
Barclays Main Account	053	22.07.2026	Elan City	Elan City Sign Invoice	2,867.99
Barclays Payments (Debit Card) Account	034	10.07.2026	SIM Distributors via Amazon	Paper	16.48
Barclays Payments (Debit Card) Account	037	12.07.2026	Tesco	Bin bags for playing field	3.75
Barclays Payments (Debit Card) Account	038	14.07.2026	Screwfix	Anti climb paint & signs	45.95
Barclays Payments (Debit Card) Account	039	15.07.2026	Screwfix	Refund for signs	-14.97
Barclays Payments (Debit Card) Account	043	16.07.2026	Safety Signs 4 Less	Warning signs for anti climb paint	15.82
Barclays Payments (Debit Card) Account	050	21.07.2026	Amazon Supra UK Ltd	Key safe	69.95
Barclays Payments (Debit Card) Account	052	22.07.2026	Signeer	Speed sign clamps for Elan sign	40.92
Total					4,376.51

Staploe Parish Council

Prepared by: *Anthony Curfard* Date: 26/7/2026
 Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc) (Clerk)

Approved by: *Jo Ibbeck* Date: 5/8/26
 Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc) (Chair)

Bank Reconciliation at 26/07/2026		
A	Cash in Hand 01/04/2026	24,668.82
	ADD	
	Receipts 01/04/2026 - 26/07/2026	8,464.63
		33,133.45
	SUBTRACT	
	Payments 01/04/2026 - 26/07/2026	8,029.05
	Cash in Hand 26/07/2026 (per Cash Book)	25,104.40
B	Cash in hand per Bank Statements	
	Petty Cash 26/07/2026	0.00
	Barclays Main Account 26/07/2026	4,767.10 <i>54</i>
	Barclays Payments (Debit Card) Ac 26/07/2026	7.10 <i>54</i>
	Barclays Savings Account 26/07/2026	956.39 <i>54</i>
	Unity Trust Savings Account 26/07/2026	19,373.81 <i>54</i>
		25,104.40
	Less unrepresented payments	
		25,104.40
	Plus unrepresented receipts	
	Adjusted Bank Balance	25,104.40
A = B Checks out OK		

Appendix A

Wyboston Ward, Monthly Report 30 June 2026

Cllr Sharanjit Sira
Bedford Borough Council



This report provides an overview of key issues and developments affecting Wyboston Ward and North Bedfordshire.

East Park Energy – Examination Phase Update

The proposed East Park Energy solar and battery storage development remains under examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

Alongside the examination process, I have been liaising directly with Brockwell Energy, who have been appointed by the applicants to develop the proposed Community Benefit Fund associated with the project.

My involvement has focused on ensuring that, should the project ultimately proceed, the voices of residents across Wyboston Ward and neighbouring communities are properly represented. This has included working with Bedford Borough Council, neighbouring local authorities, parish councils and other community representatives to discuss how any future Community Benefit Fund could best support those communities most affected by the development.

I remain clear that my opposition to the scale of the proposed development has not changed. However, whilst the application remains under examination, I believe it is important that local communities are fully represented in all discussions relating to mitigation and any potential community benefits.

I will continue to keep residents updated as both the Examination and Community Benefit Fund discussions progress.

East West Rail (EWR) – Latest Update

The final public consultation for East West Rail closed during June, and the project team will now review the thousands of responses submitted before preparing the Development Consent Order application.

I know many residents took the opportunity to respond, particularly regarding concerns over the proposed northern route, its impact on homes, infrastructure, the environment and local communities.

I would like to thank everyone who took the time to submit comments. Community engagement remains one of the strongest ways of ensuring local voices are heard during nationally significant infrastructure projects.

I will continue monitoring progress closely and will keep residents informed as the scheme moves into its next phase.

Black Cat Roundabout & A428 Update

Construction of the Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvement scheme continues to progress, with residents continuing to experience overnight closures, temporary diversions and increased traffic through surrounding villages.

While these works inevitably cause disruption, the project will ultimately provide a safer, free-flowing junction and improve connectivity along one of the country's busiest road corridors.

I continue to monitor the impact on Wyboston Ward residents and raise concerns regarding diversion routes, traffic management and communication with National Highways wherever necessary.

Children Services Improving

Ofsted carried out a focused visit to Bedford Borough Council's children's services on 28 and 29 April 2026.

The findings in the letter show encouraging progress since the last full inspection. Inspectors found that, for children in Bedford, decisions about long-term homes are now mostly well-considered, with a strong focus on helping children live safely and securely with families wherever possible.

Ofsted highlighted several positive areas, including:

- More children living in or close to Bedford.
- A significant reduction in the number of children placed in unregistered homes.
- Most children in long-term foster care living in stable, well-matched homes.
- Positive adoption work, with thoughtful planning and strong family finding.
- The new Reconnect project, which is helping some children move from residential care into family-based care.

There are still areas where further work is needed, but this report shows very positive progress in a complex and demanding service area. Children's services continue to face significant pressures nationally and locally, so it is encouraging to see Ofsted recognise the improvements being made in Bedford.

Housing and Temporary Accommodation Team Recognition

Bedford Borough Council's Housing, Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation teams have been shortlisted at the MJ Achievement Awards 2026 for Best Council Services Team.

This is very welcome recognition for officers who work hard every day to support some of the most vulnerable residents in the Borough, often in very challenging circumstances.

The teams help residents facing homelessness, support households in temporary accommodation, and work to find more sustainable and cost-effective solutions for local families.

Their work has also been recognised through the independent CIPFA review, which highlighted progress through the Council's Housing Action Plan, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and Temporary Accommodation Property Acquisition Strategy.

These efforts are helping to improve outcomes for residents, avoid unnecessary costs, and reduce reliance on more expensive forms of temporary accommodation.

Town Centre Silver Street 24/7 Gambling Licence

Bedford Borough Council's Gambling Licensing Sub-Committee has granted a new premises licence for Future Leisure Ltd, trading as Royal Casino Slots, at 19 Silver Street, Bedford.

The decision was made by three councillors at the [Gambling Act 2005 Licensing Sub-Committee meeting held on Thursday, 28 May 2026 at 11.00am.](#)

For ease of reference, the councillors who sat on the Sub-Committee were:

- Councillor Jonathan Abbott, Committee Member
- Councillor Sue Abood, Committee Member
- Councillor Christine McHugh, Committee

The Sub-Committee itself accepted that the concerns raised were "real and credible" and described the location as a "challenging area within the Town Centre."

Bedfordshire Police also objected to the application, stating that the location was already affected by anti-social behaviour and the presence of vulnerable individuals. They warned that a 24/7 gambling venue could increase crime, disorder and pressure on police resources.

Children's Services and Public Health also objected, raising concerns about the risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults, particularly given the area's deprivation, nearby support services, high footfall and existing gambling density.

Despite these objections, the Sub-Committee granted the licence with conditions, including CCTV, Think 25 age checks, an overnight maglock door system, two staff on duty at all times, SIA door staff between 11pm and 7am, and restrictions on gaming machines being visible from the front windows.

Food and Waste recycling success

Since 1 December 2025, residents have been able to recycle glass using their existing orange-lidded recycling bins.

Early results are very encouraging, with more glass now being recycled through kerbside collections and less glass being taken to mini recycling sites. Between December 2025 and March 2026, an additional 779 tonnes of recycling was collected through orange-lidded bins.

The Council has also launched the new weekly food waste collection service, which started on 30 March 2026 for households across the Borough, including flats.

The service has got off to a strong start:

- In April alone, 442 tonnes of food waste was collected for recycling, slightly ahead of the expected monthly level.
- The positive momentum continued in May, with residents recycling more than 460 tonnes of food waste. This means that, in the first two months of the service, households across Bedford Borough diverted well over 900 tonnes of food waste away from black bins and into recycling.

This food waste is taken to an anaerobic digestion plant, where it is converted into renewable energy and fertiliser for local farms.

Adult Services Update

Bedford Borough Council is taking forward a major improvement programme for Adult Services.

The programme has been developed using evidence from residents, staff and service data, including resident reviews, staff workshops and five years of service information.

Alongside this, the Council is working with Newton through the THRIVE Adult Services Transformation Programme.

This programme is designed to improve outcomes for residents, support staff, make better use of data, strengthen partnerships with care providers, and help people remain independent in their own homes and communities.

Early progress is encouraging - the programme has reported strong engagement from staff and good early results in reablement, which helps people recover skills and confidence after illness or a change in circumstances.

There is also positive work underway for carers and safeguarding. A new carers' support provider and digital support offer have been introduced, carers can now self-refer online, and safeguarding focus days have helped reduce the safeguarding waiting list from 512 people to 441 people between 18 May and 1 June 2026.

Water Safety this summer

As a reminder, open water can be dangerous, even on hot days. Rivers, lakes and locks can remain very cold and may hide strong currents, sudden drops, weeds, debris or sharp objects.

Parish councils are encouraged to remind residents, families and young people:

- Do not jump from bridges, locks or high banks.
- Cold water shock can cause gasping, panic and difficulty swimming, even for strong swimmers.
- It is difficult to judge the depth of open water or see hazards beneath the surface.
- Look after your friends and think twice before entering open water.

If someone is struggling in the water:

- Call 999 immediately.
- Ask for Fire and Rescue if the incident is inland.
- Do not enter the water yourself.
- Encourage the person to float on their back.
- Throw something that floats if it is safe to do so.

Parish councils can help by sharing these messages on noticeboards, websites and social media, checking local warning signs, and encouraging visitors to respect riverside areas by taking litter home, parking considerately and following safety advice.

River Festival Returns

Bedford River Festival returns on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 July 2026, bringing a free, family-friendly weekend of entertainment to Bedford town centre and the riverside.

This is one of the biggest free festivals in the UK and will feature live music, river displays, arts and culture, the Festival of Motoring, food and drink stalls, sports activities, craft stalls, family workshops and much more.

The Council is continuing with its family-first focus and has introduced a dedicated area in St Mary's Gardens, with activities and workshops across both days for families and young children. The Council's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities team will also be on site to help make the festival welcoming and accessible.

A huge thank you goes to the Council's events team, volunteers, community groups, performers, traders and sponsors, including headline sponsors Gallagher Developments Ltd and Universal Destinations & Experiences UK.

Universal Destinations & Experiences UK update

Universal has started on-site enabling works for the Universal United Kingdom Resort, which will be its first theme park in the UK and Europe.

The resort is expected to bring major benefits both nationally and locally, including:

- Nearly £50 billion for the UK economy by 2055.
- The creation of around 20,000 jobs during construction and 8,000 jobs once the resort opens, with many opportunities in construction, hospitality, engineering, creative industries and technology.

The Council will continue to work closely with Universal to ensure Bedford Borough is able to make the most of this once-in-a-generation opportunity.

Rural Bulky Waste Collections

Bedford Borough Council has published the 2026 Rural Bulky Waste Collection Schedule for villages across the borough which sets out the temporary local collection points on set dates between June and September 2026.

Collections will take place in different villages on selected Saturdays and Sundays, with locations including village halls, car parks, greens, lay-bys and other local collection points. Some villages have one collection point, while others have two or three depending on the area being served.

Highways Data

For June Bedford Borough Council's latest Highways and Engineering Services data shows continued work across the road, footway, drainage and street lighting network.

Key works included:

- 17,761m² of carriageway resurfacing and patching
- 3,575m² of footway resurfacing
- 2,219m of carriageway relining
- 103 gully replacements
- 606 gullies cleansed
- 170m of kerb, channel and sett replacements
- 28 street light fault repairs,

On day-to-day highways maintenance, the Council completed 99 carriageway pothole repair orders and 2 footway orders. These are work orders and may include multiple defects, so they should not be read as the total number of individual potholes repaired.

Bedford Summer Sessions

Bedford Summer Sessions returns to Bedford Park from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th July, with performances from Deacon Blue, UB40 featuring Ali Campbell, Tom Grennan and Paul Weller.

To support visitors, Queen Street Car Park will remain open overnight on all event nights. Parking charges apply from 8am to 6pm, but parking will be free after 6pm.

All shows run from 5pm to 11pm. Visitors are encouraged to plan ahead and use the official parking available.

Fostering for Bedford Borough Council

Bedford Borough Council is looking for more local families to foster, helping some of our most vulnerable children grow up in a safe, supportive home environment.

If you are considering taking on this important role, you can find out more information at:

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/fostering/who-can-foster>

or contact:

fostering@bedford.gov.uk

Contact and Community Engagement

Please continue to contact me with local issues, concerns or ideas. I am here to support and represent residents across Wyboston Ward and North Bedfordshire.

If any residents would be willing to assist with wider community engagement and helping ensure local concerns are properly represented, I would be very pleased to hear from you.

Cllr Sharanjit Sira

Wyboston Ward, Bedford Borough Council

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