



Preserving our Heritage. Protecting our Future.

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Minutes of the meeting of the Trust on Tuesday 4th August after the town council's meeting in Council Chamber at Town Hall

Present: Joseph Athorn (Chair), Barry Darch, Philippa Drew, John Greig, Jeff Harris, Alan Hopley, Samuel Hunt, Tarek Lahin, Daniel Smith, Richard Stubbings

In Attendance: Paul Cunningham, Secretary

Apologies: Gillian Birrell, Krista Booker, Stephanie Bubb, Nathalie Chidley, Peter Shannon, Christine Wheeler

Absent: None

Members of public: No members of the public.

1 - To receive apologies for absence

Received from Krista Booker, Peter Shannon, Christine Wheeler, Nathalie Chidley, Stevie Bubb and Gillian Birrell.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

2 - To receive declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in items on the agenda

There were none.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

3 - To approve the minutes of the Beccles Fenland Charity Trust meeting held on Tuesday 7th July 2026

Motion to approve minutes proposed by Cllr Hunt.

Seconded by: Cllr Greig.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To accept for accuracy and adoption the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7th July 2026.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

4 - Matters arising from these minutes

There were none.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

5 - To receive the Responsible Financial Officer's report and agree the payment schedules for July 2026

Motion to approve the payment schedules: Cllr Stubbings

Seconded by: Cllr Smith

Councillors voted unanimously in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To receive the RFO's report and to agree the payment schedules for July 2026.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

6 - Draft minutes of Assets and Estates Committee meeting held on Wednesday 15th July 2026

Mayor noted that Jill Featherstone had attended the meeting to ask about dredging of ditches. He noted that the meeting had also considered a request to repair the fencing at the top of the bank at the rear of the Quay field, as the existing fence is broken. Cllr Greig suggested that this could be funded by a grant application to East Suffolk Council's 'Thriving Places' fund.

Motion to receive draft minutes proposed by Cllr Stubbings.

Seconded by Cllr Harris.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To receive for information the draft minutes of the Assets and Estates Committee meeting held on Wednesday 15th July 2026.

Councillors considered the following recommendation from this meeting:

To accept the quotations for urgent tree works at the Quay and Marsh Trail.

Motion to accept the tree work quotes proposed by Cllr Stubbings.

Seconded by Cllr Hunt.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour and it was therefore
RESOLVED To accept the quotations for urgent tree works at the Quay and Marsh Trail.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

7 - Draft minutes of the Development and Commerce Committee meeting held on Monday 6th July 2026

Cllr Stubbings asked about storage at Waste site. Secretary reported that four containers were now let and that other items, including a caravan and some trailers, are also being stored at the site. Cllr Stubbings also asked if Beccles Medical Centre had approached the Trust about using storage space. Secretary confirmed that no such approach has been received.

Motion to receive draft minutes proposed by Cllr Athorn.

Seconded by Cllr Stubbings.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To receive for information the draft minutes of the Development and Commerce Committee meeting held on Monday 6th July 2026.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

8 - Draft minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 27th July 2026

Cllr Stubbings noted that the meeting had declined to cover the VAT costs for the refurbishment of tennis courts as this would have pushed the Trust above the reclaimable threshold. He also noted that the meeting had requested that the town council cover the costs of overspends on CIL projects. Cllr Stubbings also noted that the Duck Race winners would be offered vouchers for local shops.

Motion to receive draft minutes proposed by Cllr Stubbings.

Seconded by Cllr Hunt.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To receive for information the draft minutes of the Finance and Commerce Committee meeting held on Monday 27th July 2026.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

9 - Any other Fenland Trust business

Cllr Stubbings noted the fire risk at the Common and he suggested that the Trust publish warnings about no barbeques, smoking or glass bottles on the Common. He also suggested that volunteers from Aviva were willing to remove ragwort on the Common.

Secretary reported on a request for short-term free parking from a resident of Dunwich who had been temporarily displaced to Northgate following the recent wildfires for short-term free parking at Quay car park.

Cllr Greig proposed that this request be agreed, subject to the individual providing evidence of their situation.

Seconded by Cllr Stubbings.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour and it was therefore **RESOLVED** To agree to a request for short-term free parking at Beccles Quay car park for a resident of Dunwich who had been temporarily displaced to Northgate following the recent wildfires, subject to the individual providing evidence of their situation.

Cllr Darch noted that the programme of events for Heritage Open Days (11th to 20th September) includes a walk with a tree enthusiast to look at trees at the Quay, alongside Cllr Darch giving information about the history of the Fen.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

10 - To agree the date of the next meeting as Tuesday 1st September 2026 after the town council meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 1st September 2026 after the town council meeting.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

11 - To consider confidential items

Councillors noted that no members of the public were present.

What?	By Whom?	By When?

12 - To consider a request from new Warren Lodge School (the old Ravensmere infant school site) for 25 term-time only parking spaces in Quay car park.

Councillors discussed the request from Warren Lodge School. Cllr Stubbings suggested that any 'whitelisting' of the vehicles be for term-time only.

Cllr Stubbings proposed that the Trust allocate 25 car park spaces at Quay car park term-time only to Warren Lodge School at an agreed price, with the arrangement to be reviewed annually.

Seconded by Cllr Smith.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour and it was therefore **RESOLVED** To allocate 25 car park spaces at Quay car park term-time only to Warren Lodge School at an agreed price, with the arrangement to be reviewed annually.

What?	By Whom?	By When?