

Parish Clerk & RFO Report September 2026

- 1) **Re the Clerk's Report July 2026: PKF Littlejohn LLP (PKF) External Auditor and Audit 2025/26:**
Following an exchange of emails with PKF, and despite their conclusion that they would not be raising an 'except for' matter regarding the Parish Council's email address, so that there was no future confusion, the Parish Council agreed to change the email address to clerk@copdockandwashbrook-pc.gov.uk and to ask Suffolk.cloud, now Pear Space, to arrange and manage this new email address.

Having contacted Suffolk.cloud, it then became apparent that in order to sign up for a gov.uk email address, we would also be required to change the web address to gov.uk.

The Council will therefore keep arrangements as they currently are and will re-visit the matter in the future should it become necessary.

2) **Budget Forecast to the Year End**

As the charges for grass cutting now include a surcharge for fuel costs, not budgeted for in the accepted quote, together with some additional works, I thought it would be prudent to undertake a budget forecast.

The budget forecast for grass cutting, to include the additional charges, shows that it is on target to end the year with a very short surplus, £31.00.

I then took the opportunity to draft a budget forecast to the year-end across all headings. This demonstrates that we should end the year within budget however I would ask the Council to be mindful when considering unbudgeted expenditure.

3) **Allotment Waters Rates**

As reported in the August 2026 Clerk's Report, I'm continuing to research alternative providers.

4) **Mill Lane Play Area Additional Funding**

18th August 2026 I have completed and submitted an application to The National Lottery for grant funding of £20k and the Suffolk Community Foundation for grant funding of £5k.

5) **Pheasant Rise**

A resident recently contacted CWPC to ask if someone could take a look at two of the largest trees on the Green, Pheasant Rise. The trees are pushing up through the driveway of some of the properties and causing the paving slabs to crack and lift.

I advised the resident this would be a matter for Babergh DC but, so that we would be in-the-loop should any actions be taken, I contacted BDC Public Realm myself.

The matter has been passed to the Public Realm tree officer who has advised that as the issue relates to a potential 'trip hazard' in the concrete crossover, he has asked the BDC's Civil Engineering Surveyor to make a visit to give their comments and to take action if needed.

The parishioner having been updated, has thanked CWPC for taking action.

6) **Stiles**

The Parish Council has recently received the following with regards to an incident at a field stile. An elderly lady, assisted by her neighbour, were walking to Church Meadow to see the eclipse, when the lady missed her footing on the stile going into the field and fell. The neighbour is wanting to make us aware that the stile is quite high with a big step down. Ten days after the fall, the lady was taken to A&E as she was still in pain. Thankfully there appears to be no broken

bones; the lady who fell does not want to make a fuss, but both are keen for the Council to know what has happened.

7) Footbridges

The Brook at Gladwells

The footpath from Whights Corner to Gladwells is closed currently due to the damaged bridge. The bridge is owned and maintained by Suffolk County Council (SCC) Farms, who advise that a structural engineer has been appointed to survey the bridge.

The Brook, Jubilee Meadow

The Parish Council has been notified of an incident of a wheelchair user being tipped onto the bridge because of a broken plank.

The bridge is owned and maintained by SCC Farms but whilst it's their responsibility, they have asked that we organise an immediate repair. In the meantime, SCC Farms will commission a broader assessment of the bridge and what other action might be required.

The Parish Council has arranged for an immediate repair to be undertaken.

8) OLR Incident

Following the incident on 22/23 August, at the Whight's Corner end of the OLR, the damage to the gate was reported to SCC.

It appears that temporary red barriers and tape have been installed. In the meantime, SCC has logged the matter with their Asset Team for replacement, who will need to assess the requirements, identify a source of funding and determine how best to progress the scheme.

SCC has advised this will be progressed under a planned programme of works; the team will need time to consider the details before they are able to provide any firm information regarding delivery timescales.

Sue Frankis, Clerk to the Parish of Copdock & Washbrook