



LAXFIELD ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday 12 January 2026 at 7:00 pm in the Guildhall Parish Room

www.laxfield-pc.gov.uk

Peter Lowe, Parish Clerk

OPEN FORUM

One member of the public attended the meeting. Reports were received from Cllr Linder, Cllr Lloyd and MSDC and these are available to view on the Parish Council website.

- A new skills bursary for Sizewell C has been launched, designed to remove barriers to training and employment, so local people can gain the skills needed to get high-quality jobs. The fund will provide £15,000 annually for next 10 years, with individual up to £1,000 bursaries available covering costs such as travel, accommodation, childcare, specialist equipment, study materials and course fees.
- The potential postponement of the May elections has been discussed at MSDC and SCC, with both Councils against it and indicating that a delay would also have an impact on resources. Any delay should not affect the Mayoral elections, as the new role works in partnership with both Councils. The Government are expected to make a decision on the local elections in early February.
- Initial feedback on the proposed *Water Recycling, Transfer and Storage* project near Laxfield is now being considered, with Councillors reiterating the need to avoid any damages to households in our area. Further information has been requested to provide more accurate maps of the proposals. The non-statutory consultation is now ending and the next phase (scoping and statutory consultation) is starting.
- Further information on £40m being awarded in Mid-Suffolk for business and active travel; Loft insulation scammers fined for targeting vulnerable Suffolk residents; Launch of consultation on the costal power link, can be found at the following link: <https://www.henrylloyd.co.uk/p/january-county-report-2026>

Kevin Dunkley also provided an updated on the Seniors Christmas Lunch – see item 9b below.

MINUTES

1. Attendees, apologies and approval of absences:

Attendees: C Baldry, P Bicheno, S Ellis, O Hackett, D Martindale, Z Rushmore, L Sharman, R Smith, R Sutton (Chair), S Sutton, Anders Linders (MSDC), Henry Lloyd (SCC), P Lowe (Clerk).
Cllr Hayley Scorey sent apologies.

2. Declaration of interests

None.

3. Approval of minutes

26/01/01 The minutes from Parish Council meeting held on 10 November 2025 were agreed.
Proposed P. Bicheno, seconded S. Sutton, AIF.

4. Planning

- The following decisions made by Mid Suffolk District Council were noted:

Agricultural Determination - DC/25/04819: Erection, Extension or Alteration of a building for Agricultural or Forestry Use. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A - Erection of livestock building. *MSDC decided that formal planning approval for this development was not required. Location: Manor Farm, Badingham Road, Laxfield, Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8JA.*

Consent granted with further highways related action - DC/25/04644: For a Non-Material Amendment relating to DC/22/03993 - Southeast elevation to timber cladding to match rest of dwelling; Relocation of airing cupboard

internally; Update to the glazing panels for the windows (all openings remain the same size); Replace patio door on Northeast elevation with a window to match the kitchen window; and Relocation of access on to private track.
Location: Little Meadows Farm, Banyards Green, Laxfield, Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8EU.

Consent granted - DC/25/04637: Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - T1- Cordyline removal of 2x main leaders to bring back into shape, T2- Dead tree removal to ground level, T3 - Hazel-removal of lower over extended limb. *Location:* Dairy House, High Street, Laxfield, Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8DU.

Consent granted - DC/25/04656: Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - T1 a Horse Chestnut removal. *Location:* All Saints Church, Church Walk, Laxfield, Suffolk.

Consent granted - DC/25/02226: To determine if Prior Approval is required for a proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings to Dwellinghouses (C3) and for building operations reasonably necessary for conversion. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q - Conversion of Agricultural Building surplus to farm use to new Dwelling.

Location: The Pack House , Badingham Road, Laxfield, Woodbridge IP13 8JA.

Consent granted - DC/25/04993: Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/21/05042 - Conditions 4 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy) and 7 (Surface Water). *Location:* The Hyde, Gorams Mill Lane, Laxfield, Suffolk IP13 8DN.

Consent granted - DC/25/04896: Application under S73 for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Reserved Matters 1356/03 Dated 12/04/2004 and subsequent Non-Material Amendment under DC/25/04510 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Severance of Land for Residential Development, Erection of 5No. Dwellings. Approval of Reserved Matters Under Outline Permission OL/88/03 - To vary effective Condition 1 (Approved Plans and Documents) as granted under NMA - to substitute amended site layout drawing and design proposals for 'Plot 2'. To replace approved drawing 2658 - Proposed Block Plan with drawing no. 25188 2 Proposed Block Plan. To replace approved drawing 2658 - Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations - Plot 2 with drawing no. 25188 1 Proposed Block Plan Plot 2. *Location:* The Brambles, The Street Laxfield Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8DZ.

Consent granted - DC/25/05443: For a Non-Material Amendment relating to DC/25/02580 - Fenestration Amendments. *Location:* Building Yard, Fourwinds Farm, Badingham Road, Laxfield IP13 8HT.

Consent granted - DC/25/04403: Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/25/02580 - Conditions 3 (Landscaping Scheme), 5 (Sustainability), 8 (Materials), 11 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy), 12 (Wildlife Sensitive Design Scheme), 13 (Habitat and Monitoring Plan), 16 (Construction Management Plan), 17 (Air Source Heat Pumps), 18 (Foul Drainage Scheme), 19 (Access Surface), 20 (Access Drainage) and 23 (EV Charging).

Location: Building Yard, Badingham Road, Laxfield, Suffolk.

b. The comments submitted to Mid Suffolk District Council regarding the following applications were noted:

Application for planning permission - DC/25/05211: Notification of works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order T1/438 - Oak target prune over extended limbs to bring back natural shape, clean up areas of 'bad tree surgery', remove deadwood. *Location:* 9 Felgate Close Laxfield Eye Suffolk IP13 8FF.

Comments: This application was referred to the Laxfield tree warden and there were no objections.

Application for planning permission - DC/25/05169: Householder Application for erection of a new Woven Willow Fence. *Location:* Blyth House Bickers Hill Road Laxfield Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8EZ.

Comments: No objections

c. The following planning point was also discussed:

i. *Path linking Mill Close to Billingford Grove:* Clerk met with the MSDC Tenancy Management Team at the site on 9 January, to go through the case for completing the path and to discuss options current obstructions, prior to asking SCC if they are willing to fund the works.

5. Finance

- a. 26/01/02 BACs payments, direct debits and receipts as listed in Register of Payments for November and December 2025 were agreed. *Proposed R. Sutton, seconded D. Martindale, AIF.*
- b. 26/01/03 Bank reconciliations for November and December 2025 were agreed. *Proposed L. Sharman, seconded S. Sutton, AIF.*

c. 26/01/04 Performance versus budget and cumulative monthly spend up to December 2025 were reviewed. Total spend after 9 months is £87,330, with £61,821 in receipts (including both precept instalments).

Based on forecast spend for quarter 4 of 2025/26, spending will still be just within budget, after adjustments for CIL related spending and a pending VAT reclaim. Main reason for tight margin this year is due to increased energy/water costs, an additional month's clerk salary in April, asset survey/inspections and lower forecast income.

6. Budget setting for 2026/27

a. 26/01/05 In addition to the increased costs mentioned in item 5 above, the Parish Council is currently spending around 75% of the annual precept on fixed costs, covering Village Hall loan repayments, insurance, utilities, internal/external audit street lights electricity/maintenance, dog bins, printing and the clerk's wage. These fixed costs exclude cemeteries and churchyard maintenance, playing fields maintenance, cleaning, street litter picking and community group support. The Parish Council also often needs to undertake expensive surveys/inspections, which need to be completed every 3-5 years. A small part of this increased cost pressure can be offset by grant and fees income, or by fundraising. However, the Parish Council is now having to curb some essential maintenance work to avoid overspending. To address this, the Finance Committee proposed increasing the annual precept by +£5,000. This was calculated to reflect:

- a 3.8% increase in inflation, based on September RPI and an estimated increase in the Laxfield population
- ongoing increases in utility/maintenance costs and pressure to cover services that parish that would traditionally be covered by SCC Highways;
- a need to build up small operational reserves for contingencies and periodic one-off costs.

A Full Council vote was taken and was unanimously agreed. Proposed R. Sutton, seconded L Sharman, AIF.

7. Village Consultation event in January

b. 26/01/06 The consultation will take place at the Village Hall on Saturday 24 January, between 2:00pm to 4:00pm. Flyers have been posted on PC website and various noticeboards and in the Laxfield Newsletter. The following people agreed to facilitate the discussions:

- *Village Pond*: Sarah Ellis, Peter Lowe
- *Playing Fields & Pavilion*: Ollie Hackett, Sarah Ellis, Marcus Payne
- *River Blyth Pollution*: Dr Wil Harvey from the Four Rivers Project



8. Playing Field and Pavilion improvements

a. 26/01/07 To ensure the parish effectively utilises Section 106 funds and potential District CIL match funding from MSDC, the Grounds committee has identified three project options for upgrading the Pavilion and/or resurfacing the access road/car park. These projects will be discussed in more detail at the forthcoming Village Consultation event on 24 January, to ensure any improvements meet the needs of local residents. The Grounds committee are also developing a masterplan for the playing fields and Pavilion site, to ensure any future improvements are completed in the right area and order.

Project	Est cost	Note
Project A: Pavilion Repurpose Completely renovate and extend Pavilion for more activities and wider community use	£150,000 to £250,000	Requires significant additional funding to be secured. <i>Will take 2 years</i>
Project B: Pavilion Extension Extend and improve covered porch area to Pavilion and purchase outdoor seating – would also make some repairs to inside and exterior	£50,000 to £80,000	Inside area would remain small and would limit inside activity. <i>Will take 18 months</i>
Project C: Access Road and Car Park Resurface from Noyes Avenue entrance through to large car park. Would include edging, drainage, lighting and will incorporate 2 x EV Charging bays.	£40,000 to £90,000	Cost varies significantly depending on tarmac with stone edging, or aggregate spray <i>Will take 6 months</i>

9. Roads, Footpaths, Infrastructure, Green Areas

b. 26/01/08 *BAP Progress report*: Mike Turton (on behalf of the Wildlife Group), provided Councillors with an update on progress towards delivering the Laxfield Biodiversity Action Plan. This included the survey of the churchyard hedge, collecting wildlife records and mapping existing habitats/wildlife corridors in the parish.

- 26/01/09 *Village Pond Safety and Risk Assessment*: The RLSS carried out an assessment in December, which highlighted a number of recommendations for addressing medium to high-risk issues. This includes replacing the lifebuoy with a new compliant type that has a proper housing and replacing or partially repairing rotten deck planks on the wood platform. There is also a significant slip risk, due to algae build-up. Further improvements, including changes to usage, addressing longstanding ecological issues and running education programmes, will be discussed at the Village consultation event on Saturday 24 January. Clerk to identify which organisation or body owns the pond and who is responsible for maintaining/improving it.
- c. 26/01/10 *New SID for Framlingham Road*: Cllr Henry Lloyd has provided Laxfield with capital funding from the SCC local highways budget, to purchase a new SID (Speed indicator Device) on Framlingham Road (just down from the primary school). The Highways Working Group recommend the purchase of a face activated sign from *Message Making Displays*, as well as a new Directional Finger Post for the Banyard Green junction, which was badly damaged and removed in June. The Clerk will gather the final costs for final approval at the February Full Council meeting.
- d. 26/01/11 *New Village Historic Information Sign*: The replacement sign will change from a *Village Trail* sign to a *Historic Information* sign, but will remain in the Church Plan location. Quotes have now been finalised for the sign and a suitable housing. Mike Beard is doing the photography and will stylise the final images. Cllr Martindale has agreed to do the design work for the final montage.
- e. 26/01/12 *Church Walk and Villas hedge planting*: Work has started on removing the bamboo section of the hedge identified in the recent survey, and new plants have already been ordered. This year's maintenance will only go as far as the Church Tower. It should be noted that, where hedging or trees overhang a public right of way, this will be cut back.



10. Correspondence and other issues

- a. 26/01/13 *Bus consultation*: The Transport Made Simple Group, who operate Konectbuses' and Simonds' buses, have been awarded £500,000 by the DfT to fund their new Bus Service Improvement Plan for the region. Parish Councils can set out proposals for improvements and funding, including increasing bus frequency, changing running times and improving the condition of bus stops/shelters. Laxfield Parish Council will gather feedback, prior to submitting any proposal and RS asked for this to be included at the January village consultation event. More information is available at: <https://www.suffolkonboard.com/bus-service-improvement-plan-where-should-the-money-be-spent/>
- b. 26/01/14 *Seniors Xmas Lunch*: Around 60 residents attended this year's lunch, with an additional 13 volunteers. The cost was paid from the Snook Bequest fund (*working out at approx £14 per head*) and thanks were expressed to all those involved - in particular the Baptist Church for the use of their facilities and Monica Wilkins, who coordinated the food and kitchen.
- c. 26/01/15 *Laxfield 800 anniversary update*: A basic outline flyer for the event has now been produced and will be designed into a tri-fold leaflet. Some sponsorship has now been secured and we are awaiting a decision on additional funding from Heveningham Hall and the MSDC Locality Scheme. A large event banner will also be produced and All Saints Church will be approached to ask for permission to have it displayed.
- d. 26/01/16 *Spring litter pick*: 21 March is preferred date and Sally Clarke has agreed to coordinate the event. The newsletter advert and posters need to be ready by February. Clerk to contact Royal Oak about preparing pre-pick food and refreshments.

11. Date of next meeting

- a. The date of the next meeting is **Monday 9 February 2026 at 7:00 pm** in the **PARISH ROOM**.

Meeting finished at 8:19 pm

If you would like to attend a parish council meeting, please come along. Alternatively, if you would like to raise a matter of concern, please do not hesitate to contact the parish clerk or a member of the council.

Peter Lowe (Parish Clerk), 21 Talbot Road, Laxfield, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP13 8FP

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