



PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

LAXFIELD ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday 10 November 2025 at 7:00 pm in the Guildhall Parish Room

www.laxfield-pc.gov.uk

Peter Lowe, Parish Clerk

OPEN FORUM

Two members of the public attended the meeting. Reports were received from Cllr Linder, Cllr Lloyd and MSDC and these are available to view on the website.

Submissions deadline for Community Governance part of the Local Government Reform ended on 7 November. A cross-party working group is being set up to carry out the review from 17 November onwards, with a package of devolution recommendations developed by March 2026. Further consultation will then take place throughout April and May. Suffolk County Council agreed to create a new mayoral combined county authority (MCCA) for Norfolk and Suffolk, which will bring £1 billion to the counties over the next 30 years. This includes a £37.4 million government investment fund to support a wide range of long-term, locally-driven projects that will boost economic growth, improve infrastructure and enhance the quality of life for residents. Elections for the new mayor should take place in May 2026.

MSDC have introduced monitoring fees for creating 'Biodiversity Net Gain' for new housing developments, which will range between £11,000 to £25,000, depending on the number of homes built. The recently published *State of the District* report shows that 87% of residents are satisfied with living in Mid-Suffolk, compared to national average of 74%. The Essex & Suffolk Water Supply projects consultation is now underway and residents can attend a session at Dennington Village Hall between 1:00pm and 7:30pm on 19 November.

A local resident raised 4 points:

- Confirmation was provided that the war memorial bollards were installed by Frank Davy based on highways regulatory recommendations and that they had the relevant licenses.
- The footpath area on Bickers Hill needs to be cut back and cleared. A plant survey had recently been completed by the Wildlife Group and it was agreed that work will now take place to clear plants away from the line of the tarmac edge.
- There is some significant damage along Gorams Mill Lane, due to large delivery vehicles cutting up the edges. Clerk to report to SCC Highways and ask that repairs take place ASAP.
- There are a number of potential planning requirements that may need to be clarified for the Royal Oak pub. These include the recent exterior painting and sign replacement and the two gazebos in front of the building. Clerk to contact MSDC Planning and Trust Inns to get further information and check whether the correct procedures were undertaken – and whether future applications are needed.

MINUTES

1. Attendees, apologies and approval of absences:

Attendees: C Baldry, S Ellis, O Hackett, D Martindale, H Scorey, L Sharman, R Smith, R Sutton (Chair), S Sutton, A Linders (MSDC), Henry Lloyd (SCC), P Lowe (Clerk).

Cllrs Zoe Rushmore and Pen Bicheno sent their apologies.

2. Declaration of interests

None.

3. Approval of minutes

25/11/01 The minutes from Parish Council meeting held on 13 October 2025 were agreed.

Proposed R. Sutton, seconded S. Sutton, AIF.

4. Planning

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

Consent granted - DC/25/03557

Proposal: Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/25/01214 - Condition 4 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy)

Location: Wheatside, Rowes Hill, Laxfield, Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8HZ.

Consent granted - DC/25/04190

Proposal: Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - T1 - European Lime to be crown raised by 1.5m-3m over the Suffolk House garden, lower limbs to also be target pruned. T2- small Eucalyptus to be reduced in height, small Himalayan Birch to be removed to ground level to allow the larger more appropriately planted tree to flourish. T5 - Hornbeam to be crown raised by 1-2m and crown reduced by 1-1.5m. T6 - Eucalyptus to be removed to ground level. T7- small weeping judus tree to be target pruned to bring back shape. T8- Large Walnut to be removed for safety.

Location: Suffolk House, High Street, Laxfield, Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8DU.

Consent granted - DC/25/04180

Proposal: Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area; T1 - Weeping Willow fell to ground level. Re-plant new 4m Cherry in garden to replace amenity value.

Location: 1 Pump Lane, Laxfield, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP13 8FA.

Planning permission partially granted - DC/25/04115

Proposal: Application for Non-Material Amendment relating to DC/21/05042 - Alterations to layout, windows and doors, external patio, decking, and pond. Changes to layout, windows and doors, external patio and decking were approved by MSDC. However, the proposed re-location of the pond is considered material and cannot be approved. The pond in its approved location assimilates with the new mixed native woodland, creating a wildlife focused corner within the site. The newly proposed location of the pond appears more an aesthetic garden feature and will have significant visual impact upon the appearance of the domestic garden.

Location: The Hyde, Gorams Mill Lane, Laxfield, Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8DN.

Comments: Cllr Baldry also highlighted that the proposed location of the pond was also a drainage feature for the development, so what will now be the mitigating issue for water capture?

Planning permission granted - DC/25/04510

Proposal: Non-material Amendment to OL/88/03 / Reserved Matters 1356/03 to include reference to the originally approved drawings.

Location: The Brambles, The Street, Laxfield, IP13 8DZ.

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

Application for planning permission - DC/25/04637

Proposal: Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - T1- Cordyline - Removal of 2x main leaders to bring back to shape. T2- Dead tree(species unknown)- removal to ground level T3- Hazel-removal of lower over-extended limb.

Location: Dairy House High Street Laxfield Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8DU.

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

Application for planning permission - DC/25/04656

Proposal: Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - T1 a Horse Chestnut – removal.

Location: All Saints Church, Church Walk Laxfield Suffolk.

Comments: After consultation with the Laxfield Tree Warden, there are no objections to this application. The tree needs to be removed, leaving a 2m base of the original stump. Sections of wood should also be placed around the Churchyard to provide habitats for fauna. The remainder of the tree should then be chipped to provide mulch for local residents/allotments.

c. The following planning points were also discussed:

- i. *Royal Oak*: A number of residents have asked about planning regulations for the outside gazebos and whether planning permission was sought for the recent exterior painting and pub sign replacement. A resident has also asked if the lighting on the outside of the Royal Oak could be softened, as it is currently omitting a lot of light pollution to neighbouring households. Clerk to investigate further by speaking to MSDC Planning and Trust Inns, before reporting back to the December planning committee.
- ii. *Bickers Hill development proposal*: Beaulieu Homes presented outline proposals to the 29 October planning committee, to build 17 homes on a meadow south east of Bickers Hill Road. Six of the homes would be social/affordable housing. The planning committee highlighted a number key issues/areas that need to be considered, prior to deciding whether to submit a planning application to MSDC. These included, adequate drainage and surface water capture; what happens to sewage/foul water from the site; site access to and from the proposed development; and ecological factors relating to the site/public footpath. More details are available in Oct Planning meeting minutes.

5. Finance

- a. 25/11/02 BACs payments, direct debits and receipts as listed in Register of Payments for October 2025 were agreed. *Proposed S. Sutton, seconded H. Scorey, AIF.*
- b. 25/11/03 Bank reconciliations for October 2025 were agreed. *Proposed L. Sharman, seconded C. Baldry, AIF.*
- c. 25/11/04 Performance versus budget and cumulative monthly spend up to October 2025 were reviewed. Total spend after 7 months is £71,014, with £60,173 in receipts. Spending is still within the forecast annual budget, net of CIL related spending and the pending VAT reclaim.

6. Mid Suffolk District Council Infrastructure Team visit on 27 October

- a. 25/11/05 There is currently £44,672 of section 106 money available for funding leisure, recreation and open spaces related capital schemes. Any projects using this funding must be completed before July 2028. There are also other funding schemes available through an evaluated application process – including District CIL funds of up to £100,000. Grounds Committee to review development options at November meeting

7. Village Consultation event in January 2026

- b. 25/11/06 Agreed to hold a village consultation event in the late January 2026 to discuss three key areas of improvement:
 - River Blyth pollution in Laxfield - with presentation from Wil Harvey (Four Rivers Project)
 - Village Pond safety improvements and change of use – following risk/safety audit by RLSS in November.
 - Pavilion and playing fields capital schemes – to feed into section 106 money and potential District CIL funding application.Clerk to find suitable/available date and book village hall.

8. Roads, Footpaths, Infrastructure, Green Areas

- a. 25/11/07 *EV Charging bays suspended scheme*: SCC contractors currently used for EV charging bay schemes (Connected Kerb) have suspended all pending and future projects, due to cost changes. Laxfield Parish Council had already completed the lease documentation and the Cluster Agreement to install the 2 parking bays at the back of the Pavilion, but until the situation changes this work cannot go ahead. Clerk to incorporate this delay into capital schemes work to be undertaken by the Grounds Committee.
- b. 25/11/08 *Tree Survey*: Treeology Services Ltd have completed a comprehensive tree survey of three areas (Church, Cemetery and High Street). This was scheduled from previous survey back in 2022 and identifies trees that need maintenance, cut back or removal – for both safety and ecological reasons. The next step is to gather three quotes from Arborists to carry out the work over the coming months.
- c. 25/11/09 *Unfinished path between Billingford Grove and Mill Close*: The case for completing the path has become more urgent, due to erection of 2m fence on neighbouring properties, making it even more restricted and inaccessible for local residents. The gap is now very tight and the path is muddy/slippery in wet weather. The Parish Council has sent additional information to MSDC Planning and the Tenancy Management department, showing the costs vs benefits of completing the path and Cllr Anders Linder has agreed to support the proposal.
- d. 25/11/10 *New Village Sign*: The Suffolk Shared Prosperity Fund grant awarded Laxfield £1,000 towards the planned replacement project, which is estimated to cost £1850. The new sign will be larger and will provide

more information about the village's history, heritage and key buildings. Clerk is also examining potential to include information on walking trails around the wider network of walks connecting neighbouring villages (Dennington, Badingham, Ebberston, Cratfield, Huntingfield, etc).

9. Correspondence and other issues

- a. 25/11/11 *Laxfield 800 anniversary update*: Snapshot of proposed activities on the anniversary day was provided, together with the current costs. Still no progress on potential sponsors, but further work will be done to develop an anniversary flyer as a prelude to a booklet that could include advertisements.
- b. 25/11/12 *Remembrance Sunday*: Laxfield had a very large turnout for event. The Parish Council contributed £80 for the Parish wreath and the British Royal Legion Poppy appeal, including proceeds from the coffee morning, raised £785.50. Councillors expressed their gratitude to Mr and Mrs Sands.
- c. 25/11/13 *Autumn Litter pick*: Around 35 residents attended the pick. A large number of dog litter bags were collected on some routes, despite Laxfield having a high number of dog litter bins located across the parish. Dog owners are encouraged to always bin their dog poo, or take it home if there is no litter bin nearby.
- d. 25/11/14 *Funding requests from Community Groups and Voluntary Organisations*: The following financial contributions were approved, using funds collected via the Scrap Metal and Good Neighbour schemes:
 - Agreed to provide £200 to Parochial Church Council following request for subsidy towards Newsletter
 - Agreed to contribute £200 to the Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau, following funding request
 - Agreed to provide £250 to Laxfield FOALS to support their disco and Easter event
 - Agreed to provide £150 to Fressingfield Scouts, as part of their community match contributions to secure external funding for their Solar Panels project
 - Agreed to fund the £60 village hall hire fees for the Pre-school's children's Christmas party on 18 Dec.
 - Pre-school donation towards purchasing the Easter Eggs for the children's Egg hunt in March 2026.

Proposed H. Scorey, seconded O. Hackett.

Councillors also approved a request for an upfront £1200 allocation for Laxfield Christmas Dinner, which will be funded from the Snook Bequest account. *Proposed S. Sutton, seconded D. Martindale.*

- e. 25/11/15 *Parish Council meeting venue*: There was a discussion on how we improve the venue experience for future Parish Council meetings, particularly with the onset of winter. The Parish Room can get very cold, there are no toilets and no tea/coffee making facilities in the museum. There is also a lack of seating for residents who want to come along to speak at an open forum. Clerk to carry out further work on options, including the cost and availability of the Village Hall.

10. Date of next meeting

- a. The date of the next meeting is **Monday 12 January 2026 at 7:00 pm** in the **PARISH ROOM**.

Meeting finished at 8:35 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.

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