



PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

LAXFIELD ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday 8 September 2025 at 7:00 pm in the Guildhall Parish Room

www.laxfield-pc.gov.uk

Peter Lowe, Parish Clerk

OPEN FORUM

Three members of the public attended the meeting.

Dave Jordan, the owner of the Land east of Bickers Hill Road and Land at Corner Farm (Banyards Green) developments wanted to apologise for the breach of planning conditions, which has just been granted retrospective approval by Mid Suffolk District Council (*see section 5 below for details*). Mr Jordan mentioned that Laxfield received a significant amount of CIL funding from his development and that he was keen to explore what support he could provide for the parish going forward. He also agreed to install gravel boards for hedgehogs around the perimeter of his development - and carrying out works to widen the road.

Reports were received from Cllr Linder, Cllr Lloyd and MSDC and these are available to view on the website.

Historic parish records are now digitised and can be accessed online, with over 400 years of information available, and millions of records dating back to 1538. In-person and online 'how-to use Ancestry' beginner sessions are now bookable at www.suffolkarchives.co.uk. Visit [From Parish Pews to Pixels](#) for more details.

On 15 September there will be an update on plans for the ongoing Local Government Reorganisation, followed by a final submission for the *Three Unitaries* proposal on 26 September - available at [ShapingSuffolkTogether](#) website.

Both SCC and MSDC have restated their objections to the National Grid's application to install pylons across East Anglia and they continue to make a robust case for undergrounding where the line crosses the Waveney Valley. The government now have 28 days to consider all applications and construction is likely to start in early 2027.

Councillors thanked Cllr Lloyd for arranging the meeting with SCC Highways and reiterated the need to get the bridge at the bottom of Church Walk repaired ASAP (see item 25/09/09 vi below).

MINUTES

1. **Attendees:** D Alchin, P Bicheno, O Hackett, D Martindale, R Smith, R Sutton (Chair), S Sutton, P Lowe (Clerk).

2. **Apologies and approval of absences :** C Baldry, S Ellis, H Scorey, L Sharman.

3. **Declaration of interests**

None.

4. **Approval of minutes**

25/09/01 The minutes from Parish Council meeting held on 14 July 2025 were agreed.

Proposed D Martindale, seconded S Sutton, AIF.

5. **Planning**

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

CONSENT GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS - DC/25/02580

Development proposal: Erection of 5 dwellings (following demolition of buildings and grant of planning permission DC/22/05731).

Location: Building Yard, Fourwinds Farm, Badingham Road, Laxfield IP13 8HT.

CONSENT GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS - DC/25/00453

Development proposal: Demolition and rebuilding of Mill House as a Self-Build House and associated landscaping.

Location: Mill House, Gorams Mill Lane, Laxfield, IP13 8DN.

CONSENT GRANTED - DC/25/03264

Proposal: Application for Listed Building Consent - Insertion of replacement windows (Retrospective).

Location: Laxfield Baptist Chapel High Street Laxfield Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8DZ.

PERMISSION TO REMOVE VARIATION OF A CONDITION - DC/25/02676 and DC/25/02679

Development proposal: Application under S73a for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/21/01133 dated 02/06/2021 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). To vary Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) to reflect the as-built status of fencing, brick piers and a clocktower as per plans and documents submitted.

Locations: Land East of Bickers Hill Road and Land at Corner Farm, Banyards Green, Laxfield, IP13 8ES.

This development has been a long standing issue for the Parish Council, in that it breached numerous conditions and requirements of the original approved plans. The overall effect of the extensive line of 1.8m fence panels gives the impression of a 'closed community' and does not reflect the very open 'vernacular' of Laxfield, where most properties have open road frontages. This is also in breach of Policy H17 which requires developments to 'Reflect Local Characteristics'. The planning committee felt that for the applicant to apply for retrospective planning permission, after the they had previously accepted specifications that ensured the development received approval, goes against planning procedure. The Parish Council therefore objected to the retrospective removal of breach of conditions, as there were concerns that this could set a precedent for future applicants.

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

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/25/03287

Proposal: Application to determine if Prior Approval is required for a Proposed 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.

Location: Manor Farm Badingham Road Laxfield Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8JA.

There is some concern that the development will generate a lot of HGV traffic from such a narrow road - as the movement of animals will require large vehicles on a regular basis. The Parish Council has asked for this application to go through full planning consideration and for Highways input on the potential traffic and access issue.

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/25/03297

Proposal: Application under S73 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents), Condition 10 (Parking and Manoeuvring), Condition 11 (Cycle Storage) and Condition 12 (Provision of Refuse/Recycling Bins) of planning permission DC/22/04908 dated: 03/02/2023 - Erection of 3 self-contained holiday lodges.

Location: Land South West of Station Road Laxfield, Suffolk.

The Parish Council supports this development and is keen to ensure that the arborist work on the site is completed, as per the original 2022 Preliminary Arboriculture Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.

- c. The following planning point was also discussed:

Hyde Development (Gorams Mill Lane): A meeting took place on 30 July, with the owner of the development and a number of neighbouring residents from Gorams Mill Lane to address a number of issues. Main points raised were:

- Early starts and traffic noise before the designated 8:00am threshold
- Damage to the verges on Gorams Mill Lane, as a result of not using the appropriate commercial vehicles; to match the size of the lane;
- Unloading material outside the Low House;
- Drone footage showing private land and gardens without permission.

6. Finance

- a. 25/09/02 BACs payments, direct debits and receipts as listed in Register of Payments for July and August 2025 were agreed. *Proposed R Sutton, seconded P. Picheno, AIF.*
- b. 25/09/03 Bank reconciliations for July and August 2025 were agreed. *Proposed D. Martindale, seconded O. Hackett, AIF.*

- c. 25/09/04 Performance versus budget and cumulative monthly spend up to August 2025 were reviewed. Currently running slightly over forecast spend, mainly due to us awaiting SCC funding. Over the next couple of months there are a number of planned key incomes and expenditures to note:

Pending Income

- +£3,700 from SCC to reimburse the costs of purchasing the Public Rights of Way maintenance tools;
- +£6,000 (approx.) for in-year VAT returns;
- +£26,500 for second 2025/26 precept payment.

Future CIL related spend

- -£14,850 for the New Cemetery works, currently underway;
- -£5,500 for installing a water connection and tap to the New Cemetery;
- -£1,000 for the village pond safety inspection and risk assessment;

A mid-year update on the 2025/26 CIL spend will be provided at the October Parish Council meeting.

7. Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan (PIIP)

25/09/05 Following the agreed action from the June Parish Council, regarding the need to review Laxfield's PIIP and prioritise all potential CIL schemes/projects, Cllr Ellis and Cllr Scorey carried a review using following four assessment criteria:

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|---|--|
| 1. Scheme alignment with the Neighbourhood Plan | 3. Scheme cost/size |
| 2. Potential to secure external funding | 4. Parish Council autonomy to deliver the scheme |

The prioritised list was approved, after one project was removed. Next step is for the clerk to develop cost estimates and check external funding potential for each scheme.

8. Councillor recruitment

25/09/06-07 - Following the resignation of Cllr David Alchin and the elapse of the advertised recruitment period on 28 July, no new applications for the vacant Parish Councillor role were received. Democratic Services also notified the Parish Council that they no requests from residents to call a local election. Therefore, following a previous application, it was unanimously agreed that Zoe Rushmore would be co-opted to fill the vacant post and become the 11th Laxfield Parish Councillor.

9. Roads, Footpaths, Infrastructure, Green Areas

- a. 25/09/08 Action points from the *Green Space Working Group* meeting held on 27 August 2025, were noted with no comments. The following points were also discussed:
- New Cemetery improvements and art installation* - Improvement works have now been completed, including:
 - Copper Plate artworks installation and expansion of the path leading to the Crematorium Garden.
 - A new path from the car park to the iron gates.
 - A new footbridge connecting the Public Right of Way to the cemetery.The next stage includes the installation of a water supply/tap near the entrance to the cemetery car park and a planting/furniture scheme around the art installation to create a 'Garden of Contemplation'.
 - Churchyard maintenance contract* – Item deferred.
 - PROW tools training and storage solution* - Rik Fox (Laxfield's Tree Warden) has agreed to provide the training and certification required for using specific *Public Rights of Way* maintenance tools. Andrew Jenkins, Graham Allison, Marc Godfrey, Rob Sutton and John Adley have agreed to undertake the training. RS is also examining options to build a permanent storage solution in the centre of the village to ensure the tools are easily accessible, secure and can be recharged.
 - Hedge survey and tree strategy* – A hedgerow plan for the churchyard and Church Walk/Villas is nearly complete and will be available to residents shortly. RS agreed to commission a tree survey and strategy for the conservation area of the parish in the coming months, as the last one was undertaken in 2022, and recommended that the next one should be done 3 years later.
 - Funding bid for Village Trail sign* – DM has held meetings on developing a new trail sign illustration using a flatbed camera, and agreed to undertake design work on any iterations. The aim is to develop a unique 'Historic Laxfield' style of sign, which highlights all the historic points in the village. The clerk is looking at options to secure funding to pay for the new Village Trail sign. The location is still planned to be outside

the Royal Oak, with the potential for a cover and lighting to enable evening viewing. Work to clear the site and remove foliage, will need to be done prior to installation.

- vi. *River Blyth pollution testing volunteers* - Cllr Baldry and Helen Lowe have volunteered to carry out regular testing of our local river Blyth to monitor pollution, as part of Laxfield Parish Council's commitment to work with the *Four Rivers Project* in Suffolk. The project builds on work previously done by volunteers to highlight sewage spills and other pollution, and will be backed by £200,000 of funding over the next three years. Readings will be taken downstream of the Laxfield sewage treatment plant, as well as further up the river, where it is supposed to be clean - to test the difference.
- b. 25/09/09 Action points from the *Highways Working Group* meeting held on 29 August 2025, were noted with no comments. The following points were also discussed:
 - i. *Proposals for speed limit change on B1117* – A number of Laxfield residents have been in regular contact with the Parish Council and SCC, to ask for a reduction in the current 60mph speed limit on the stretch of road that spans from the new cemetery to the B1116 junction. The concern is that vehicles, especially trucks and vans, speed regularly along the road - with several accidents occurring over the past 12 months, where vehicles have overturned into side ditches. This issue was discussed with SCC Highways at the August Highways Working Group meeting. Before any reduction can be considered, the Parish Council would be required to pay for speed surveys on the stretch of road. However, further investigation has shown that it is extremely unlikely that any speed reduction would be granted by SCC Highways, due to the stretch of road not meeting the criteria for a speed reduction, which requires there to be multiple junctions, bends and residential accesses points along the route. It was therefore agreed that no further action would be taken at this point.
 - ii. *Gateway signs for Laxfield village* - Agreed to purchase 2 new gateway signs to notify drivers they are entering the village and to act as a traffic calming measure. The signs will incorporate our Laxfield crest to reflect Laxfield's heritage and character. The cost will be approx. £2,600 and permission from land owners has now been agreed prior to installation. *Proposed O. Hackett, seconded D. Martindale.*
 - iii. *Primary school traffic calming sign* - SCC Highways have agreed to renovate or replace the school speed safety signs on Framlingham Road, which includes a "Twenty's Plenty" traffic alert - despite the road still being a 30mph zone.
 - iv. *New batteries for SIDS* - The Parish Council currently has *Speed Indicator Devices* on Vicarage Road and Station Road. Two of the batteries are now over 4 years old and are only powering the Vicarage Road SID for 4-5 days. Approval was given to purchase new ones at a cost of £175 + VAT. *Proposed R Sutton, seconded D Martindale.*
 - v. *Blacksmiths way* – Following a meeting between residents and maintenance contractors on 4 September, a number of outstanding issues were raised for action:
 - Failure to grow a wildflower meadow on the green area to the south of the developments, as per the original planning requirements
 - Failure to complete the "gennel" that connects Blacksmiths Way to Mill close and the wider village
 - Safety compliance for the tarmac path that links onto Framlingham Road
 - Advertisement for Beauly Homes has replaced the old Denbury Homes sign off Framlingham Road and this is leading to high numbers of cars and commercial vehicles entering Blacksmiths Way, thinking it's the Beauly Homes development on Cullingford Close.Clerk to follow up with Denbury Homes and contact MSDC Planning Team to address issues regarding extended garden that is blocking the gennel to Mill Close.
 - vi. *Fox Close and Church Walk Bridge* – DA raised the need for MSDC enforce planning conditions for the Fox Close development to include road widening and for SCC to repair the damaged bridge structure at bottom of Church Walk. Clerk to contact both local authorities and designate this as an urgent health and safety issue for prioritised action.
- c. 25/09/10 *Dog litter bin overflow* – In late September, a new XXL dog litter bin will be installed at the bottom Church Walk and the large litter bin (previously installed in June) will be moved further up Gorams Mill Lane to increase capacity on this popular dog walking route. The aim is to eradicate dog litter overflow in this highly visible area around Low House and Blyth bridge.

10. Correspondence and other issues

- a. 25/09/11 Laxfield 800 anniversary - David Leng provided an update on progress with the working group preparations, which now includes a snapshot of the planned events/activities over the weekend along with time/venue. Initial costs for some activities have already been identified and a budget is starting to emerge at around £2,500 - £3,000. External funding and sponsorship opportunities are now being explored, which could help reduce the final net cost. It was agreed that updates would be sent to Councillors before each parish council meeting, to improve discussion and inform future funding requests.
- b. 25/09/12 *Community Emergency Planning* - A number of councillors have met the MSDC Emergency Planning Support Officer to discuss developing a CEP (Community Emergency Plan) for the Laxfield Parish. In addition to national and regional support, Laxfield may need to rely on local residents and resources to respond quickly and to prioritise those in greatest need, following a critical event. A CEP would help us prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies more quickly. A key part of developing a CEP is to identify residents in Laxfield (or nearby), who would be willing to volunteer their time, equipment, specialist knowledge or practical skills during an emergency. There was unanimous agreement that we should start to develop a basic plan ASAP and also link up to existing arrangements, such as the Good Neighbour Scheme. OH and DM agreed to work with the Clerk on this.
- c. 25/09/13 *Parish Council Stall at September Community Market* - Flyers were handed out and really useful feedback was gathered from residents on three subjects; *Improving Laxfield Village Pond, new gateway signs for vehicles entering Laxfield* and *river Blyth pollution*. 30mph speed stickers for wheelie Bins were also distributed. There was overwhelming support to transform the pond into a wildlife venue and there was particular interest in local river pollution. Agreed that a special event should be organised at the village hall, to deliver the talk on river Blyth, that was given to the Council back in July. Proposals for the village pond could also be covered at the meeting (following the pending safety audit), to ensure consensus on next steps. Clerk to contact Anglian Water to ask if they could attend the meeting and develop monthly update Parish Council banners for future community markets.
- d. 25/09/14 *Fressingfield Scout Group solar panels funding* - The scout group is trying to raise £32,000 for a solar panel project that will reduce their carbon footprint, running costs and keep their annual subscription fee low. In order to access funding from Suffolk Climate Action Community, they need to demonstrate "*wider community support*". Agreed that some potential funding may be available from the scrap metal fund, but the scout group would need to apply alongside other local submissions. Clerk to also ask Cllr Anders Linder about potential funding from MSDC.
- e. 25/09/15 *Second village defibrillator installation* – OH is procuring steel frame and will carry out electric work for the installation of the defibrillator outside the Royal Oak pub, adjacent to the village square. Clerk agreed to arrange payment for PAT testing.
- f. 25/09/16 *Parish litter pick* - to be arranged for Saturday 8 November and clerk to advertise this on notice board, website and include in this month's Newsletter update.

11. Date of next meeting

- a. The date of the next meeting is **Monday 13 October 2025 at 7:00 pm** in the **PARISH ROOM**.

Meeting finished at 8:50 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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