

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held on Thursday 21st May 2026, commencing at 7pm. in the Village Hall.

Present:

In the Chair: Cllr Jane Ranzetta. Cllrs: Alison Bourne, Frank Domoney and Michael Sherman. Nineteen members of the public.

1. Opening Statement by the Chair:

Vice Chair of the Parish Council (PC) Cllr Jane Ranzetta explained that she was chairing the meeting on behalf of the new PC Chair Cllr Jack Norman. Cllr Norman had a pre-booked holiday and unfortunately it the dates had clashed. She sends her apologies.

The Chair outlined that this is an opportunity for parishioners on the Electoral Roll for Lavenham to raise any matters of concern to them that relate to local matters and for the electors to receive reports from community organisations. The Chair explained that the meeting will be recorded for the purpose of minute taking only and that once the minutes are approved, at the next Annual Meeting, the recording will be destroyed. She asked all to ensure that their 'phones were on silent.

2. To approve as accurate minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 15th May 2025

The Chair introduced the minutes saying that these had been on the PC website for a year and that the PC had reviewed these minutes shortly after the Meeting and had not identified any concerns.

Motion: to approve as accurate the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2025.

Proposed: Danielle Twitchen **Seconded:** Alison Bourne

Decision: The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2025 were approved as accurate with no votes against.

3. Reports by County and District Councillors**Report from County Councillor Robert Lindsay**

The Clerk delivered Cllr Lindsay's report. Cllr Lindsay was at the Suffolk County Council AGM.

Cllr Lindsay is pleased to have been re-elected as Lavenham's County Councillor and is looking forward to continuing to represent the village's residents for the remaining two years of the County Council's life.

He is pleased to have been able to assist getting the long desired pavement along Melford Road built to allow residents of Green Willows to walk or wheel to the rest of the village. The project was one of the first to use Babergh District Council developer levy money to pay for Suffolk County Council to build a pavement. As such Babergh needed reassurance over cost over runs and required some extra funds from his locality budget to cover an investigation by BT to check their inspection hatch would not be impaired by the pavement.

He was delighted that his and Parish Councils combined requests and lobbying for a bus service between Hadleigh and Stowmarket had come to fruition in April with a six times a day service, running every week day. He commented that the service appears to have already attracted a core of regulars and has been widely welcomed. In his opinion the County Council has no serious plan for prioritising where bus investment needs to go and so, when bus investment money does become available, it is left to County Councillors and Parish Councils to lobby for the services they want.

He reported that the Wattisham airbase sewage sludge processing site had been shut down. Residents and local workmen at a business park had complained of a stench from a sewage sludge processing site near Wattisham Air Base which had been causing retching. After lobbying the Council's enforcement team issued a full stop notice to this site earlier in the new year and the company, a contractor to Thames Water cleared the site and departed, without appealing the notice.

He explained that the Government's plan to force local councils to merge into much larger councils and install a Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk has dominated much of the County Council agenda during the year. He is pleased that the Government has chosen what he considers the least bad option of three unitary councils rather than the single Unitary Council as proposed by Suffolk County Council.

He noted that the new Reform administration at the County Council is threatening a judicial review of this decision commenting that he considers that they are not clear what they think is wrong with it and they will have to continue negotiations with the Government to prepare for three unitaries in case their legal action fails.

Report from District Cllr Clover

Cllr Clover commented that Reform is seeking to challenge whether due process and consultation was followed concerning Local Government Reorganisation and that he and Cllr Maybury had also worked to get the Melford Rd pavement built.

He reported that Council has been dominated this year by Local Government Reform (LGR). Two options were proposed for the new Unitary Authority (UA) model to serve Suffolk. Suffolk County Council had presented the case for one Unitary Authority whilst Babergh District Council alongside other District Councils had proposed three Unitary Authorities.

The Secretary of State had decided that three Unitary Authorities would best serve Suffolk. Lavenham and Sudbury will be covered by the Western Suffolk Unitary Authority with approximately 60-66 Councillors.

Elections for the new Councillor positions will be held in 2027 and a year-long transition will follow in which the new Unitary Authority Councillors will work to create the new administration. Babergh District Council will cease to exist in April 2028. During that year the Unitary Authority Councillors will not be involved in the day to day duties covered by County and District Councillors.

He reported that following the 'Call For Sites' the first list of accepted sites is expected to be published very shortly. This list will then be refined to sites that are suitable for development alongside the content of adopted and emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP's).

He explained that the merits or otherwise of a particular site should be considered with reference to the overall new housing target set for the parish and the new Joint Local Plan for 2026-2045. A full understanding of these individual elements will be required in order to present the best case for the parish. Indicative housing requirements for NDP's will continue to evolve in 2026. It will probably be 2029-30 before the final list of sites is agreed.

He told all present that with the Government's stated mission to build 1.5 million new homes by the end of their term, all communities will be affected by this saying that it is therefore important that all possible measures are implemented in order to help manage this expansion in housing stock in local communities.

Babergh District Council is focusing on increasing affordable housing through its Homes and Housing Strategy and a Joint Local Plan aiming to meet housing needs up to 2037. Key plans include building on council-owned land, utilizing s106 developer contributions for affordable units, and supporting community-led housing to address a significant increase in housing targets.

He reminded all that a list of the Ward issues which your district councillors have interacted with, over the year has been included in his report which is on the Parish Council website.

4. Annual Report of the Parish Council by the Chair and a statement on the Parish Council Accounts for year ending 31 March 2026.

Chairs Report: The Vice Chair read out the Chairs Report.

The Chair reported that we currently have our full complement of eleven Councillors:

Unfortunately, this year we lost Councillor Mary Morrey, Mary had been on Council many years serving as Vice Chair for two and a half years. Mary was a diligent and caring Councillor who gave good advice and kept a cool head.

Her passing created a vacancy and an election was requested. Jack Norman was the only candidate to come forward and so she was duly elected and took up her position in February. This is Jack's third term on the Parish Council and comes with over twenty years' experience. Jack has now been elected by her fellow councillors to be Chair for the year. She thanks them for putting their faith in her and is looking forward to having a successful year in office.

Some items have been resolved from the minutes of last year.

A new footpath connecting Green Willows to the rest of Lavenham has been built. With support from Cllr Robert Lindsey, Suffolk Highways and Babergh's Local Cycling and Walking implementation team Babergh District Community Infrastructure Funds were obtained. Unfortunately, the bid for District Community Infrastructure Levy funds could not cover the installation of a street light in this area. The Parish Council voted to purchase this light for approximately £4,000. This light has been installed and will be paid from the Parish's Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Funds.

A long-running issue is the incidence of over-sized vehicles using the A1141 eastbound. A multi-agency meeting was organised by our MP James Cartledge last May to explore what options were available to manage this traffic. Some new signs were erected on the junction of the A134 at Bradfield Combust and on the junction at Calais Street Hadleigh. We cannot stop all lorries as some service businesses the area along the route but we feel there may have been a reduction in using the route as a perceived shortcut.

Babergh District Council made the decision to introduce parking charges in our two largest car parks from the beginning of 2025. We continue to monitor the impact of Babergh's decision during our busiest times – for example Hidden Gardens. For this event, First Meadow was open for car parking. We had a report from Babergh District Council in January that informed us that Supermarket spending was down 3% and Hotel and hospitality spends were down 27% and 24% respectively since the introduction of charges in the previous 9 months. We will be asking for further report going forward particularly as Babergh have announced that it has raised £890,000 from its car parks and have now increased their charges.

The imposition of parking charges has had an impact upon the finances of the Parish Council. Donations for use of the car parks and toilets has dropped by approximately 80% which will cost us about £12,000 this year. We are looking at ways to reduce costs with the running of the public toilets and cutting down the number of cleans during the winter and in lower traditional foot fall times and ramping them up during the summer season. We have also made the decision to purchase extra bin emptying to twice a week.

Two Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) costing £8,000 were purchased by the Parish Council in 2025. These have been installed on Melford road in such a way that they will alert motorists of their speed on entering the village and exiting. We are now considering further purchases in the next few months particularly Bury Road.

At last year's meeting we advised that a motion had been passed at the Parish Council to invite members of the public to request a poll as to whether they would like a village poll regarding the possible installation of a 20mph scheme. The proposed question was "Should the Parish Council ask Suffolk County Council to implement the proposed 20 mph scheme at a cost of £24,065.46 +VAT at 2024/25 prices? (There will be an inflationary uplift to 2025/26 prices.)"

A poll was requested by the required 10 parishioners, this was subsequently held on 24th June 2025 and a decisive result of the poll was returned. 350 people voted of whom 78% were against the proposal. The Parish Council subsequently determined not to proceed with the scheme.

We are proceeding to have the EV chargers in our car parks taken over by Suffolk County Council. Water Street is underway, Prentice Street will be completed when the legal papers have been signed by Babergh District council.

Late last year and earlier this year Babergh District Council announced a "Call for sites". This was for landowners to express that they are willing for their sites to be considered for future development of housing and business. This had produced some consternation amongst local residents.

Babergh is compelled to produce a Joint Local Plan which will be in place until 2045. The call for sites is part of that and does not mean that all sites submitted by landowners will be used. A rigorous process of suitability will be undertaken before moving forward to consideration.

Lavenham alongside this is working on a revised neighbourhood plan. Three Parish Councillors Michael Sherman, Alison Bourne and Jack Norman and some volunteers from the village have been working on the revised Neighbourhood plan after the defeat of the previous proposal. A questionnaire went out to the village in March and two open days were held. To date we have had 644 responses out of a possible 1,150 residences. This is well over the 50% desired. The committee is currently working through the responses and will report in due course. Having a Neighbourhood plan gives us as a village a say in what is built, design and infrastructure. We cannot stop development but we can have a say in how it is handled. Decisions however on the JLP are not governed by the Parish Council.

We were consulted during the year by Babergh Council concerning 47 individual planning applications:

- a) 37 times our recommendations were accepted by Babergh District Council.
- b) 5 times the PC did not make comment as the applications were very specialist 4 of which were approved by Babergh and one withdrawn.
- c) 5 times Babergh approved applications contrary to our recommendation to refuse.

Of the 5 times Babergh approved applications against PC recommendations to refuse:

- a) 1 of the applications was where we recommended refusal due to the absence of a replacement tree. Babergh passed this application with the condition a replacement tree was provided.
- b) 1 was approved on the submission of further documents by the applicant to BDC which eliminated our reason for refusal.
- c) 2 were for the felling of trees which we recommended refusal but BDC approved.
- d) The final one was the building of an extension but the design was within Babergh's planning policy so was passed by them.

The Chair said that she considered that the Planning Group on the Council should be commended.

The Chair spoke next concerning other matters:

After a rigorous tender process, in April 2025, we renewed our street cleaning and green maintenance contract. This contract includes an increased focus on weed and moss removal from our streets. Weeds and moss are issues which have previously caused public concern.

We had to undertake some emergency tree works this year after advice was received that some of the trees in the public realm were a cause for concern. Work has taken place cutting back and removal the relevant trees and we will now be holding regular inspections. We very kindly received grants from Councillor Maybury and Councillor Clover from their locality budget to support some of this work.

A number of sewerage issues arose in the Prentice St car park in 2024/25. The Parish Council paid for repairs to the sewer pipe in Spring 2025, there has been no reoccurrence of these issues.

The Council had been pleased to be able to make a grant £1,500 to the new Light Up Lavenham Committee, a small version of the Christmas Fayre was held in December and was so successful the Committee was able to reimburse the Parish Council the full amount. We thank them whole heartedly and look forward to hearing from them in the future. We would also like to give personal thanks to Matt Nichol who we are sure does far more in the setting up of the Christmas Lights than we get billed for. The whole job is quite an undertaking

Lavenham Allotments Grant: The Parish Council has agreed, in principle, to a grant of £2,500 towards the community allotments. Formal agreement has been given to the access across the railway walk for vehicles delivering to the new site. She thanked the Allotments Group for the work they have done organising their association and preparing themselves. The legal arrangements will take time to finalise saying that she is excited that progress is being made.

She expressed her thanks to all the volunteers who have worked together to make the village more presentable and a better place to live and visit. She explained that she would especially like to thank the many residents who quietly volunteer without any public recognition for example litter picking while out walking, maintaining our defibrillators, those who maintain floral displays outside their properties and those who help other organisations with the transporting of furniture and erecting marquees for events in the village. All of these actions enhance the environment in which we live and work.

She said that the Clerk and Councillor Muckian have spent much time working on queries from members of the public this year and thanked them for their hard work and diligence saying that it is a difficult undertaking keeping all the wheels moving in the office of Parish Council.

She concluded by thanking all councillors for their contribution in the last year, expressing a hope that moving forward we can grow together for the good of the parish saying that we are truly privileged to live in such a wonderful place and it is our duty as custodians of the village to make sure it runs for the benefit of everyone.

Clerk's Statement on the Parish Council's Accounts

The Clerk reported that Full Statements of Income and Expenditure and Receipts and Payments have been tabled and discussed at each Parish Council Meeting this year and so he would not repeat the full detail.

He reported that, financially, this last year 2025/26, was a difficult year for the Parish Council

The Council has been really squeezed by two decisions made by Babergh Council. The first decision was to implement Car Parking charges from January 2025 meaning this Council could only collect donations for using the toilets and the second decision was to reduce by 50% and within two years completely remove the Cleaning Grant which we have traditionally received from Babergh. Together these decisions have reduced this Council's Income by some £20,000 per annum

Councillors, he said, had been very aware of the Cost of Living pressures felt by many and not passed this £20,000 shock plus annual increases for general inflation, which would have been a further £10,000 or so, onto Council Tax Payers. Council Tax increases, he said, have been approximately half of this.

He explained that the abolition of the County and District Councils i.e. the shift to unitary Councils is very unlikely to alleviate these pressures. Support for Parish Councils and very local initiatives will in Unitary Councils compete for funding with Special Educational Needs, Adult Care and Pothole Repair etc in a way that it did not do within the budgets of District Councils. Across the nation Parish Councils are stepping into the gaps left by District and County Councils. He reminded all that before these decisions there was the closure of the Tourist Information Centre and the transfer of the then dilapidated Public Toilets to the Parish Council.

He reported that concerning the Accounts for the year just finished:

- a) Donations to the Council for the use of the Car Parks and Toilets in 2025/26 were over £8,000 less than in the previous year.
- b) This was only partially offset by the 1st April 2026 2.8% increase in Council Tax Revenue which raised the Council's income by a little over £3,000. And indeed, that increase in Council Tax was not an increase in the amount paid by a standard Household it was because second homes now pay double.

And so, Council's income fell by £5,000 last year.

He reported that things had also been very difficult on the Cost Side.

Council's costs had increased by some £26,000 the key reasons being:

- a) Council incurred costs of £7,000 answering very detailed Subject Access requests raised by Members of the Public.
- b) The costs of Green Maintenance and Street Cleansing increased by £8,000. Council had benefitted from a three year Fixed Price Contract which ended on 31st March 2025 which contained no annual increases despite the considerable increases in Minimum Wage. Inevitably therefore on renewal the cost of buying these services increased.
This Contract was fully tendered and reviewed in scope and a new contract was entered into but the increases in Minimum Wage and scope increased the annual cost of this contract by some 30%
- c) Tree Maintenance. Expensive safety work maintaining and in some cases felling trees was incurred in both the Cemetery and First Meadow. £7,000.
- d) Reduced Community Grants given (£2,000) and reduced costs of Christmas celebrations due to the efforts and success of the Christmas Committee (£1,000). The Christmas Committee not only repaid the Grant given to it but provided the tree in the Market Place.

Council had therefore made a deficit for the year of some £4,000 as compared to a surplus in the previous year of some £27,000

The Council has budgeted this year to make a loss of nearly £15,000 meaning its reserves will then be at the bottom of the 6 to 9 months range recommended by the relevant bodies.

Council, he said, has some £52,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy funding. This will be used primarily to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan Team have the resources they need to prepare the Plan and argue the Village's case in the context of the Governments Housing Target and the requirement on Babergh to rewrite its Local Plan to be in line with the Governments Housing target. The remainder will be used for new Capital Projects designed to leave an impact for many years making the village a better place to be. Councillors will shortly determine what these are going to be.

5. Reports by local organisations

The Clerk read out reports submitted to him by Organisations unable to be present at the meeting.

The Hub:

'We are happy to report that the Trust ended its year in a stronger financial position than in previous years. The generosity of residents supporting us, either by making a donation or joining the Easyfundraising project continues to be appreciated. These funds have given us a reasonable financial start for the year ahead. There were amazing fundraising efforts during the year which include, the Hidden Gardens Group, the 'Robin' project masterminded by Jeremy and the walking tours devised and run by Michael, a Hub volunteer, with his friends Malcolm and David.

The Hub is an important facility for the village not only welcoming visitors but also, more essentially, providing space for the Outreach Post Office. To ensure the service continues we need more volunteers to join our friendly and enthusiastic team. Pop in and speak with us for more information.

We are pleased to announce that, with effect from 1st June 2026, Tracey Brinkley will become Chair of the Trust. Membership of the Trust is open to all members of the community. Application forms are available from the Hub at 2 Lady Street.

Our message to everyone is 'Use it, support it or lose it'

Lavenham Carpet Bowls Club:

'Lavenham Carpet Bowls Club meets at 2pm every Wednesday afternoon and 7pm on Thursday evenings. We welcome new members to come along at either session and try Carpet Bowls. All equipment is provided as well as instruction and tips as to how to get the bowls closest to the small white ball known as the Jack, avoiding the round block in the middle of the 30 feet Carpet. The first 2 sessions are free to try Carpet Bowls and learn how to do this'.

Lavenham Woodland Project:

'I would like to begin by thanking all the volunteers and trustees who contribute freely over 400 hours a year of their precious time. Whatever the weather they help us care for our 1,400 trees, 600 metres of hedging and 2,000 metres of footpaths.

Before Easter we installed our shelter which was partly funded by Lavenham Parish Council.

In June we had a visit from a Judge for the Green Flag Award Scheme and we met the criteria standards in all areas of the evaluation. His summary said: " *Dyehouse Field Wood is a community managed site. It is very well managed and a valuable resource for the local community*" There were only two Green Flag Community awards in Suffolk this year.

We had a community event in July, to celebrate 21 years since we planted our hawthorn hedges. Over 150 people in ages ranging from 2 months to over 90 years old came to the event and enjoyed a range of activities and demonstrations. On the day we also had a Grand Draw which raised over £2,000 with all the prizes generously donated by businesses and people in Lavenham. We are hoping to use the money to further develop our Outdoor Activity, Area and are trying to recruit someone who can make sure the area is used regularly throughout the year.

In September we were very pleased that Lavenham Primary School were again able to visit our Forest School Area. The children engaged in, and hopefully enjoyed, a variety of outdoor sessions in the woodland over a six-week period. The Forest School Leader who led the activities was very sad to learn that about 50 % of the children had no or little experience of outdoor activities.

Early in 2026 we had new gates installed with money kindly donated to us from Lavenham Hidden Gardens. We have also had two benches given to us from folk in the village who have recently lost family members. One of them was to commemorate the life of John Knight the inspiration behind Lavenham Woodland Project.

Can more people come along the 2nd Sunday of every month to help us maintain Dyehouse Field Wood for everyone to enjoy?'

The Church:

The Reverend Simon Pitcher spoke of the T500 celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the Tower saying that they had tried to encourage the whole community to realise that the church is there for everybody.

He thanked District Cllr Maybury for her grant to refurbish the children's corner. The idea was to provide a safe, free place for children to play. He reported that almost every day of the week mothers and children have come in and spent time enjoying being in the church, playing and having a good time.

The scaffolding has finally disappeared from the church. £150,000 has been spent repairing the fabric of the church, mostly funded by the people who come to the church, but also using grants.

The Good Neighbours Scheme and the Dementia Alliance:

Doreen Twitchett explained that both schemes are still working very well, having a tally of 15 drivers is a great improvement on last year. New parking arrangements at West Suffolk Hospital are working well, our drivers are able to park free by automatic vehicle recognition. The Group has been kept very busy mainly with doctors and hospital appointments.

The Group has received some generous donations this year from the Lavenham Society, Jeremy Reed from the sale of his Robins, from Steve Richards from the sale of goods and also received a grant from the Suffolk Community Foundation.

The Good Neighbour Scheme and the Dementia Alliance have combined the afternoon teas and coffee mornings that they provide for our older residents. They are supported very well and are mostly full to capacity. They have a very full agenda throughout the year. All this, she said, helps our older generation with socialising and reducing isolation as many live alone.

The Dementia Alliance is always available to those caring for or living with dementia and to help or signpost to contacts. Very generous donations to the Dementia Alliance have been received from Justin Smith, Steve Richards, Jeremy Reed and the Lavenham Society.

Trips to Felixstowe and other places and talks from beekeeping to home safety, wood turning, quiz, film, bingo, fish and chip lunches and of course the Christmas lunch at the Cock Horse have been enjoyed by many.

Lavenham Community Land Trust:

Tracey Brinkley explained that the Group's aims are to provide and manage well designed, high quality and energy efficient affordable homes and to provide other community assets to help employment, skills and to help our community remain sustainable.

She explained that many people find it difficult to find homes because of lack of affordable housing with Lavenham having high house prices and comparatively low wages,

The CLT owns and runs the Peak Close development on the Melford Road and continues to look for new sites

Lavenham Community Allotments Association:

Francesca Tatum explained that the Association was formed last year to help run the allotments proposed in the Railway Walk. They have agreed a Constitution, assigned roles, developed policies and procedures and met with the developer and the PC to discuss the required arrangements.

They have been gifted money from the Lebanon Hidden Gardens 2025 and the PC has approved, in principle, a Grant.

The PC has agreed to take on the lease of the land allocated to the allotments with the association to manage on site on their behalf. The PC is arranging the lease to be drawn up by the solicitors so the land can be passed on from the developer. Once this has been signed off by all parties and all the relevant documents have been agreed and in place, we will be able to start getting the plots ready and inviting local residents to apply for plots. We are hopeful that this will be done before the end of the final season.

The Gardening Club:

The Club reported that the Group continues to thrive with around 70 members. Meetings are held in the village hall on the last Wednesday evening of the month. Guest speakers are regularly invited. Non-members are always welcome to our meetings.

They hold an annual plant sale in May in the Marketplace, which this year was a great success helped by the weather. The club holds a summer garden party in July for our members, the venue normally Little Hall Gardens. The Club arranges coach trips for members throughout the year to gardens in the area and beyond with a visit coming up on the 17th June to Nick Hamilton's Barnsdale Gardens.

The club continues to donate and support Lavenham Preschool and maintain the Village Hall Garden.

Frank Domoney spoke of his work as the Lavenham hornet-warden including helping with the identification of invasive species attacking our bee population

Frank Domoney spoke of his role as Chair of the Riverside Allotments Association saying that as a result of food security issues consequent of recent events the Association has increased the speed of construction and rollout of the phase two beds and is deciding what to do with the land earmarked for phase three. He is planting any unoccupied beds with beans, tomatoes and fruit dishes to cover the surfaces and watering the beds daily. He is encouraging their plot holders to overproduce from their beds and has agreed to share any surplus projects with food banks, soup kitchens etc,

He is going to talk to the Imam, Father Anthony in Sudbury and Redmond Pitcher about donating two slow cookers that they can pass on to people who need to be able to cook the free food that the Group gives away.

He spoke also that he is working on what he calls 'prepper pages' to supplement government advice to prepare for civil emergencies in case we have a major power outage like is happening in Ukraine and is trying to re-establish the activities of the first responders and increase first aid training so that people know what to do if they fall downstairs and hurt themselves etc.

Lavenham Pre-School:

Ella Zlotek explained that in recent years, following increasing demand, the school has grown and extended the services which they are offering to satisfy the needs of the local families.

Since August 2021 they have introduced a breakfast and afternoon club, extended the opening hours from 9 to 3 to 8 to 5, introduced 3 weeks of holiday club during the summer for children aged 3 to 10 and lowered the age of the children accepted to our preschool to 20 months.

They have introduced the Climate Action Plan to teach children about recycling, composting, planting and care for environment and living creatures. They have also introduced additional classes to the children at no extra cost to the parents, like ballet classes, sport classes and visits from a therapy dog.

They are making big investments in our staff and their professional development and are implementing the government-focused programmes like Maths Champion and Talking Boots to increase children's knowledge and help them at a very early age stage of their development.

They will start the new academic year in September 2026, fully booked, with a waiting list for September 2027. If anyone is planning to sign up their children, the time is now.

With help from many local organisations including the PC they successfully introduced and then significantly extended the forest school site located behind the Village Hall. Children have a chance to enjoy the zipline, use age-appropriate swings, hammocks and slides, as well as observing the tadpoles changing into frogs in the little pond. Under close supervision, children are also learning how to use tools, simple tools like palm drills, hammers and small saws as well.

They have installed a new mud kitchen and planted a variety of different herbs and plants for children to use when they are preparing their soups and potions in the mud kitchen. They are currently working on installing the new sandpit and preparing all the bikes which we have in our storage to give children more opportunities to practice their gross motor skills.

They also looking for new trustees to join our group.

6. Invitation to the public to raise any matters of interest.

The Chair agreed with a Member of the Public who, commenting that every Group struggles with getting volunteers, that events could be held in the Village Hall, Market Place or High St, perhaps a different individual stall each week, to encourage volunteering and publicise all the different Groups.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.