

LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

To: Members of Lavenham Parish Council

You are duly summoned to attend the next meeting of Lavenham Parish Council to be held at 7pm on Thursday 2nd July 2026 at Lavenham Village Hall, Church Street, Lavenham.

Public Attendance

Members of the public and press are welcome to attend. At item 6 the public will be invited to give their views/question the Parish Council on issues on the agenda or local matters. This item will generally be limited to 10 mins. duration.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies and, if applicable, approval of absences**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
- 3. To consider requests for dispensations**
- 4. Minutes**
 - 4a To approve as accurate minutes of the Council meeting held on June 4th 2026**
 - 4b To record no objections to the draft minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on May 21st 2026**
- 5. Chair's Announcements**
- 6. Public participation session (10 minutes)**
- 7. Local Authority Councillors' Reports**
- 8. Clerk/RFO report**
 - 8.a Motion to approve Accounts for month ending 31st May 2026**
 - 8.b Motion to approve Receipts and Payments for month ending 31st May 2026**
- 9. Planning**
 - 9a Planning Register: Report**
 - 9b Planning Group: To receive reports and recommendations**

9c Motion to change Terms of Reference for Planning Working Group

9d Motion to write to Babergh DC concerning the status of a recent document submitted to Babergh DC with respect to Planning Application DC/26/01302 (Erection of a Wellness Centre)

10. Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan 3: Minutes and Report

11. Motion concerning Bullying and Harassment Policy

12. Motion concerning possible improvements to local bus services

13. Report and Motion concerning purchase of Speed Indicator Device Brackets

14. Report concerning the maintenance of trees

15. Report and Motion concerning the proximity of water courses to First Meadow

16. Part 2 Closed Session of the Council – Public will be asked to leave the meeting

17. Report and Motion concerning Land Boundary.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 6th August 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Smith
Clerk to the Council
Parish Office
Church St
Lavenham

Date: 26th June 2026

9a			BDC	LPC
Apr-26				
04033/4	Hall, Hall Rd	Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent Proposed replacement entrance gates	Refusal. Appealed, Allowed	Approval
00924	24 The Paddocks	Erection Gym and Music Room Variation of Condition	Approval	Approval
01173	30 High St	Reducing size of an Ash tree	Approval	Approval
00941/2	1 Bakers Mill	Installation of an electric vehicle charging point on the internal wall of the garage	Approval	Approval
May-26				
01137/8	Blaize Barn, 5 Bears Lane	Off street parking space and new boundary screen walls	Approval	Approval
01566	Woolstaplers	Fell Goat Willow and Alder	Approval	Approval
04172	41 Water St	Rear Extension	Approval	Approval
Jun-26				
00674	Land north east of Briarside	Single storey dwelling and garage	Approval	Approval
01509	De Vere House Water St	Listed Building Consent: Replacement render and insulation	Approval	Approval
01962	The Old Manse, Barn St	Pollard a sycamore tree	Approval	Approval
01986	Perseverance House, 47 High St	Reduce crown of two trees, fell one tree and trim a tree	Approval	Approval
05163	Pegtile Court	Installation of an Air Source Heat Pump	Approval	Approval
01475	Pegtile Court	Installation of Air Source Heat Pump	Approval	Approval
01076	23 Prentice St	Listed Buiding Consent: Repairs	Approval	Approval
01738/9	Barn Cottage, Barn St	Retrospective pernission re refurbishment works	Approval	Approval
Open items:				
05426	Chilton Woods, Sudbury	Reserved Matters 269 dwellings	Ongoing	No Comment
01057/1060	40 Prentice St	Demolition of garage and excavation of garden area to form parking spaces	Ongoing	Refusal
01302	Second Meadows Stables	Erection of a Wellness Centre	Ongoing	Refusal
01594	The Angel Hotel	Listed Building Consent: Refurbishment	Ongoing	Approval
01886	The Hall, Hall Rd	Listed Building Consent: Gates	Ongoing	Approval
01871	Land west of Park Rd	Change arable field to Dog Walking area	Ongoing	Refusal
01921	The Church	Solar Panels	Ongoing	Approval
02367	The Lavenhams, Bridge Street Road	Listed Building Consent for internal alterations	Ongoing	Ongoing
01817	Perseverance House, 47 High St	Listed Building Consent - installation of a small fibre broadband box	Ongoing	Ongoing

Lavenham Parish Council Planning.

Planning Applications for consideration at LPC meeting on 2nd July 2026

Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/26/00674 - Condition 3 (Landscaping Scheme), Condition 7 (Refuse Presentation), Condition 8 (Boundary Treatment)

Show more description

Land North East Of Briarside Bridge Street Road Lavenham CO10 9SH

Application. No: DC/26/02534 | Received: Thu 11 Jun 2026 | Validated: Wed 17 Jun 2026 | Status: Awaiting decision.

Decision to be made at the meeting if any comments are needed

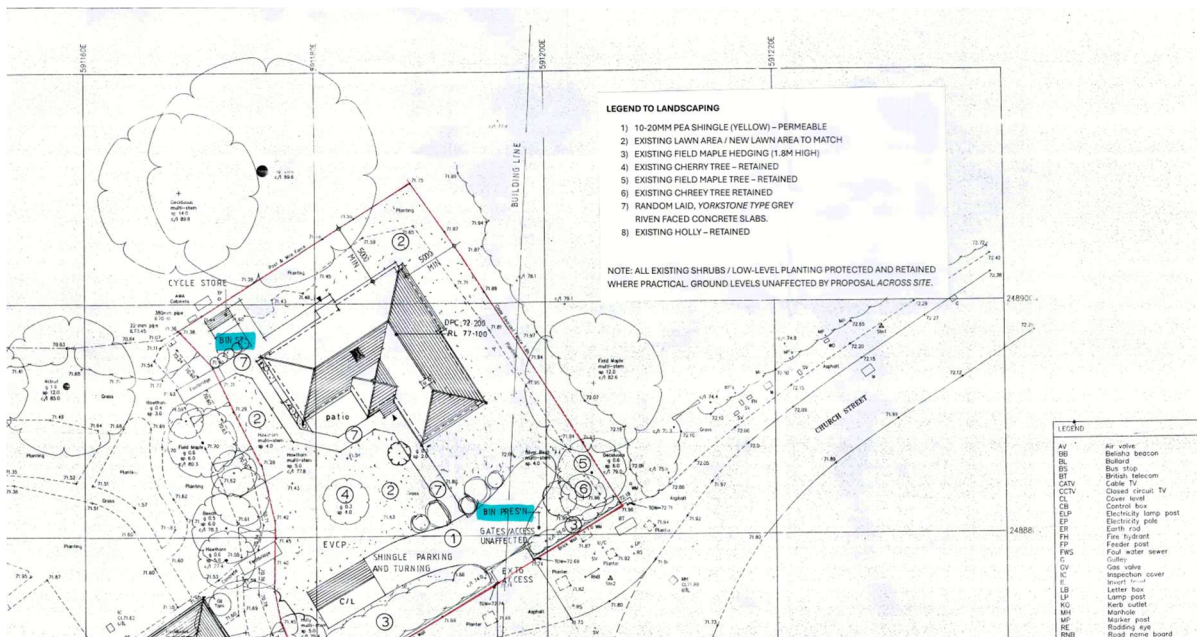
The Agent has written to the LPA as below:

We would respond to the conditions on DC/26/00674 as follows:

- 1) Acknowledged.
- 2) Acknowledged.
- 3) *Landscaping* - See attached drawing.
- 4) Acknowledged.
- 5) Acknowledged.
- 6) Acknowledged.
- 7) *Refuse presentation* - See attached drawings (as originally submitted / approved)
- 8) *Boundary Treatment* – No new boundary fencing / walls are being proposed.
Walls, fences and hedges to remain 'as-is', *where existing*. Existing frontage walls and gates unaffected, for the avoidance of doubt.
- 9) Acknowledged.
- 10) Acknowledged.
- 11) Acknowledged.
- 12) Acknowledged.

We trust the above and supporting information to be sufficient for your information and approval.

Should this not be the case please do not hesitate to contact us at your earliest convenience.



The Clerk circulated this application to all members of the Planning Group and received one response suggesting that 'the PC recommends that Babergh ask for the drawing to be amended so that it clearly shows the bins being presented for collection outside the gate but in the recess abutting the pavement'.

Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/25/02700 - Conditions 4 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy) and Condition 5 (Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Scheme)

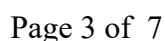
Show more description

75 Church Street Lavenham Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9QT

Application. No: DC/26/02344 | Received: Wed 03 Jun 2026 | Validated: Wed 03 Jun 2026 | Status: Awaiting decision

Decision to be made at the meeting if any comments are needed

Appendix A: Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy



Application for Listed Building Consent - Internal alterations to boot room and principal bedroom including removal of partition between boot room and cloakroom; infill of window between cloakroom and porch; new opening to principal bedroom from stair hall infill opening in original rear wall (hall to principal bedroom)

Show more description 

The Lavenhams Bridge Street Road Lavenham Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9SJ

Application. No: DC/26/02367 | Received: Wed 03 Jun 2026 | Validated: Thu 04 Jun 2026 | Status: Awaiting decision

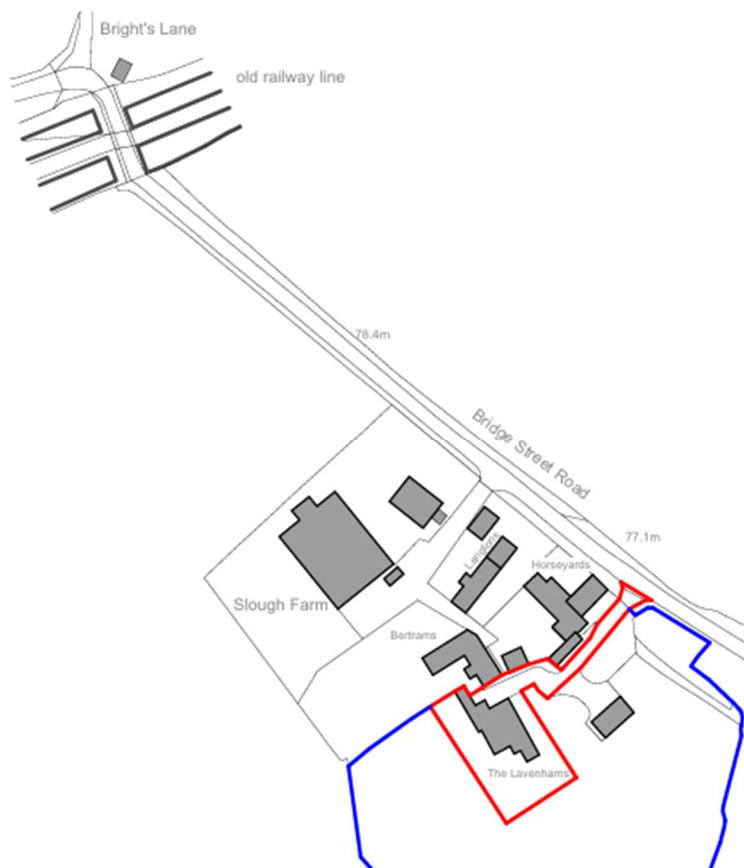
The property is Grade II listed – details of the Heritage Assets are given in the document attached to the application.

Ground floor changes are to remove a cloakroom added in 2015 and modify a 1970's doorway giving access to the Plant room from the Utility room.

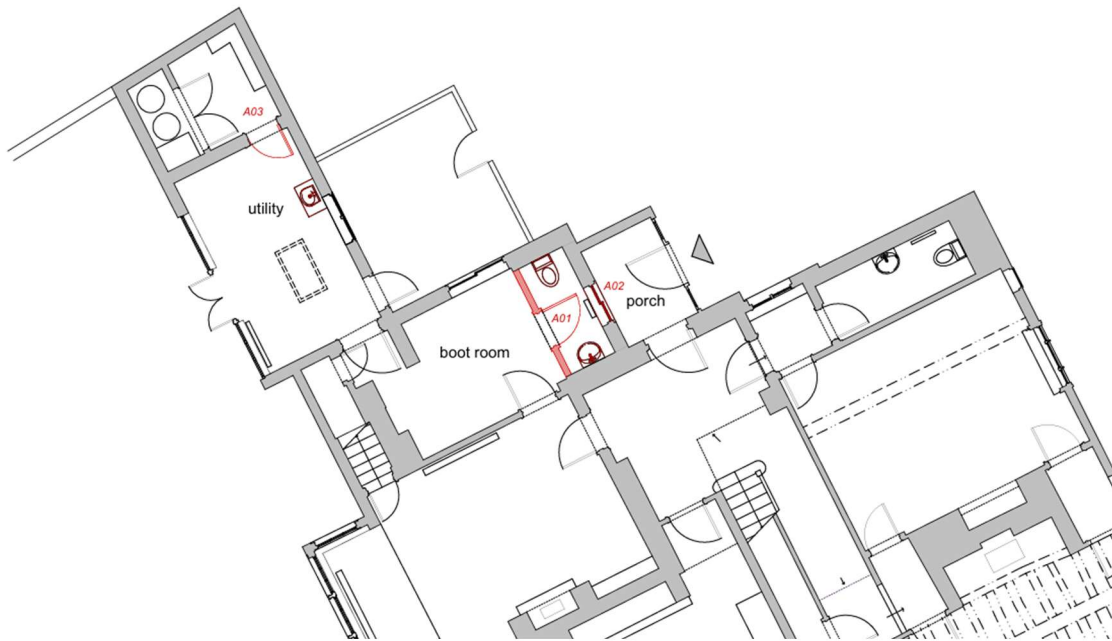
First floor changes are to the Principal Bedroom Suite that was created as part of the extension added in 2015.

No Historic features are affected as indicated in the Design & Access Statement.

Recommendation to be made at the Parish Council Meeting



Ground floor changes

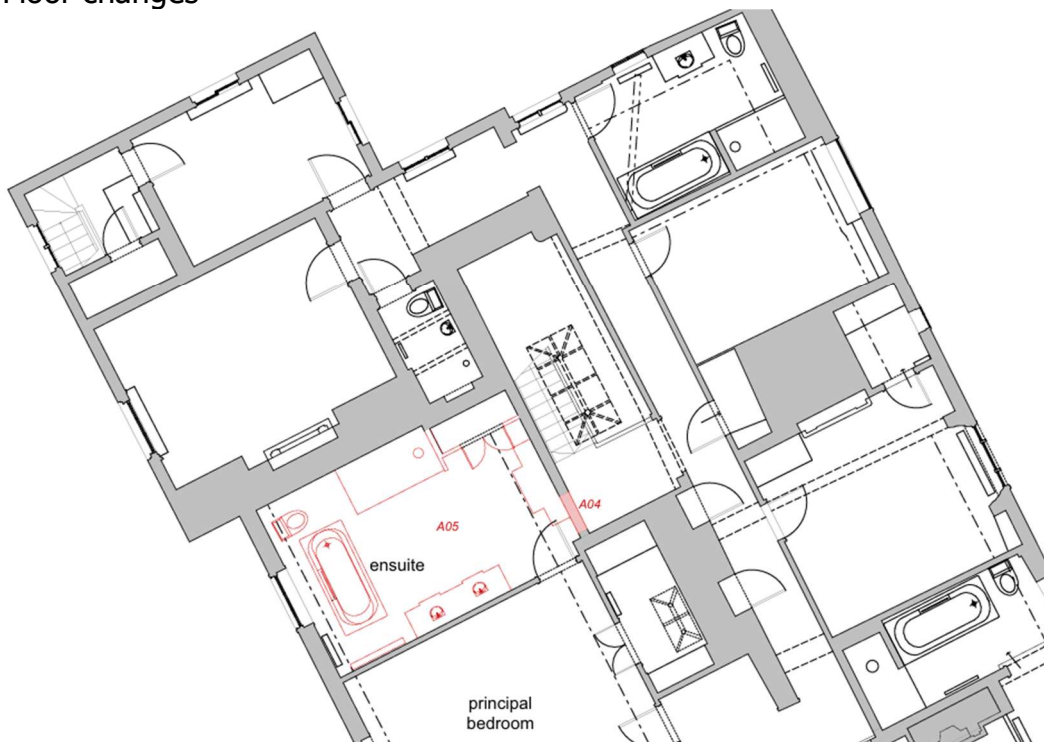


A01: Strip out existing cloakroom fittings.
Remove internal partition, door and lining between boot room
and cloakroom

A02: Remove existing window between cloakroom and
porch.

A03: Remove existing internal door

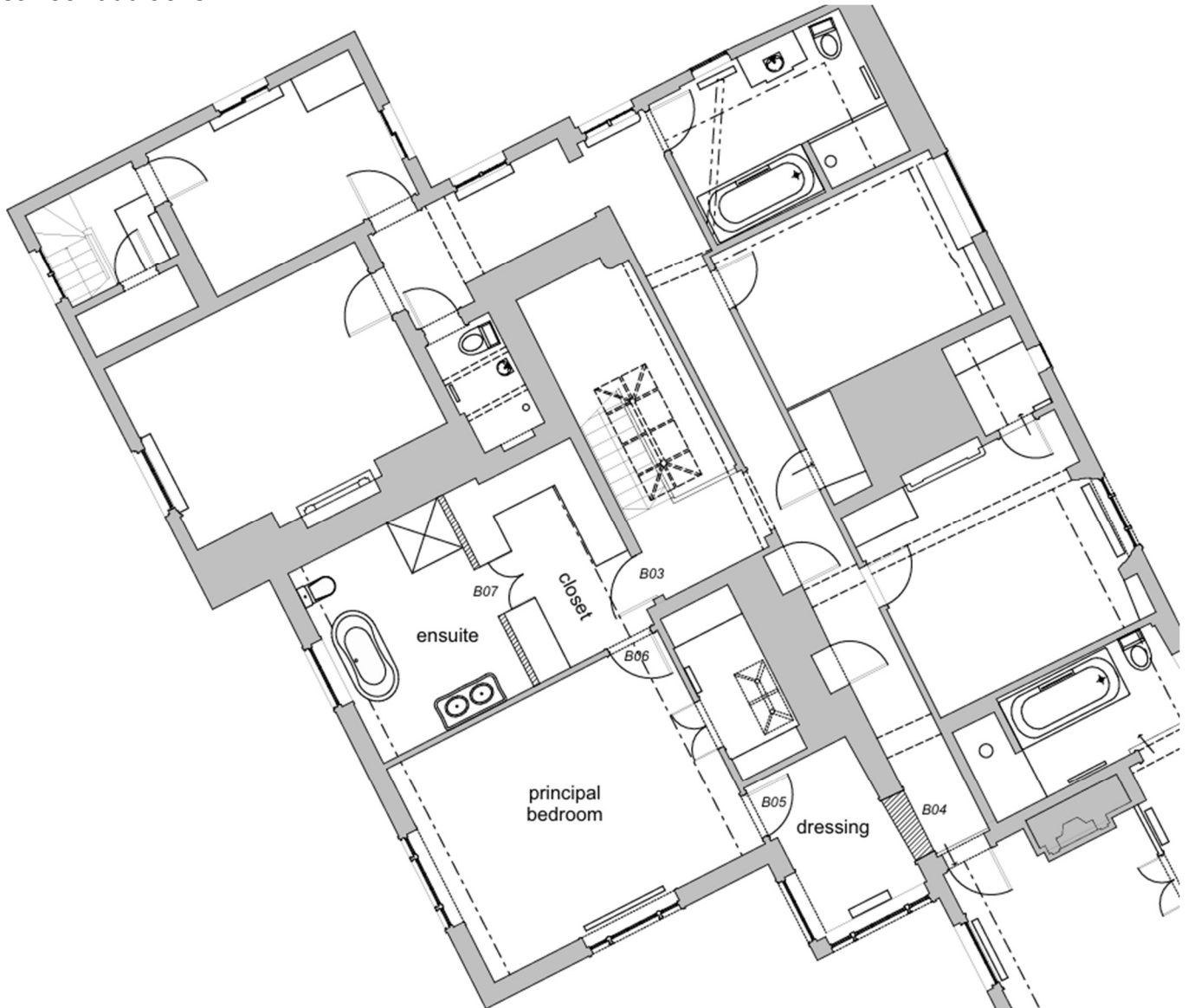
First Floor changes



A04: Form new internal door opening in existing partition into principal suite

A05: Strip out existing ensuite and dressing room furniture

First floor additions



B03: New timber door panel in formed opening

B04: Infill existing opening to principal suite and make good

B05: Rehang door to swing inward

B06: Rehang door to swing inward

B07: Divide room with new stud wall to form principal ensuite & closet.
Double doors from dressing room to be formed within fitted dressing
room furniture

Application for Listed Building Consent - installation of a small fibre broadband box at a low level, on the front elevation of the house, positioned adjacent to the existing telecommunications entry point into the cellar.

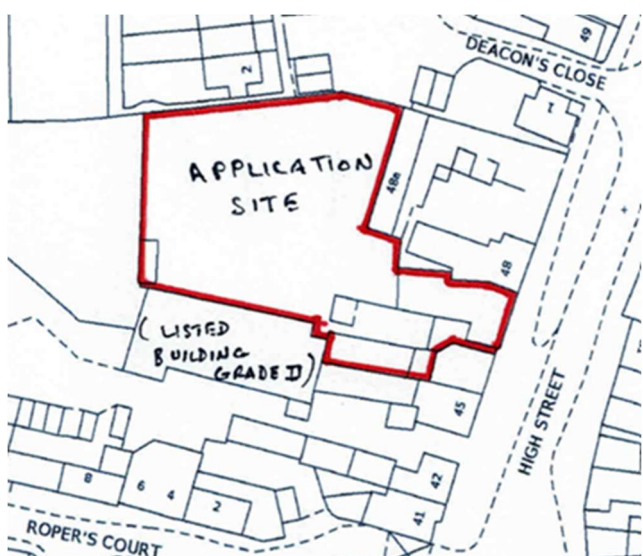
Show more description 

Perseverance House 47 High Street Lavenham Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9PY

Application. No: DC/26/01817 | Received: Wed 29 Apr 2026 | Validated: Fri 12 Jun 2026 | Status: Awaiting decision

The building is Grade II listed. Broadband box to be installed in location as indicated.

Recommendation to be made at the Parish Council Meeting



Terms of Reference Working Groups

Background:

The Terms of Reference of the Planning Working Group were last reviewed in June 2024.

Current Terms of Reference:

1. Purpose of the Group

The purpose of the Group is to provide advice to the Council in its role as a Statutory Consultee on all matters concerned with formal Planning Applications and the Joint Local Plan. The Group is not empowered to make decisions other than to make recommendations to the Council.

Proposed Change: to delete 'and the Joint Local Plan'. Draft Council responses as a Statutory Consultee to proposed changes to the Joint Local Plan will be prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Group.

2. Specific Tasks

2.1 Process and Procedure

- Review each year the processes and procedures as detailed in 'The role of the Parish Council in Planning Matters' ensuring that it is updated for changes in legislation and best practice.
- Regularly review the training needs of the Group and request funding from the Council as required
- Request funding from the Council, under delegated powers, to obtain specialist advice when it deems such advice required including asking specialist advisors to present to them and meet with them when it deems such action appropriate.

Proposed Changes: None but the annual review of the 'The role of the Parish Council in Planning Matters' was deferred by Cllrs and has not taken place. The Clerk will circulate the current document to all Cllrs for comments and will include formal review of this on a future agenda.

2.2 Review of Planning Applications

- Scrutinise planning applications in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Joint Local Plan, Lavenham Local Neighbourhood Plan and any other relevant legislation.
- Prepare a report for the Council each month containing recommendations for approval or rejection of all planning applications
- Draft a Consultee response to the Planning Authority for each planning application detailing compliance and non-compliance with the relevant legislation

Proposed Changes:

- *Draft a Consultee response to the Planning Authority for each planning application detailing compliance and non-compliance with the relevant legislation and recommending whether the Local Planning Authority approve or refuse each application. Council may choose not to respond or make a recommendation.*

2.3 Joint Local Plan and Other Consultations

- When required, prepare draft responses to consultations issued from the local Planning Authority or other bodies, as requested by the Council

Proposed Change: delete.

3. Membership and Quoracy requirements

- comprise a minimum of 3 Councillors, one of whom shall be designated 'Lead'.
- be quorate when 2 Councillors are present.

Proposed Changes: this section will read

- *Comprise all Councillors*
- *be quorate when 2 Councillors are present.*
- *One of the Cllrs will be designated 'lead' and will be elected at a Council Meeting for a period ending at the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council*
- *If there are planning applications to consider the group will meet in the Parish Office prior to the Parish Council Meeting should any Cllr, who intends to attend the Group meeting, wishes the Group to meet.*
- *Should a Cllr who calls for the Group to meet in the Parish Office then not attend that meeting they will lose the right to call a meeting for the remainder of the period to the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.*

Motion:

The Clerk is instructed to:

- a) make the changes detailed above to the Terms of Reference of the Planning Working Group and
- b) to circulate the current version of the document 'The role of the Parish Council in Planning Matters' to all Cllrs for comment and return to Council with a revised draft or drafts of that document.

Application for Outline Planning Permission (All Matters Reserved) - Erection of a Wellness Centre (Sui Generis Use) and removal of existing structures Second Meadow Stables, Brent Eleigh Road, Lavenham

Background:

The Parish Council observes that on 15th June 2026 the LNP Revision survey report was published on the Babergh District Council planning portal in connection with the above planning application.

There is no covering note and therefore the source of this submission is not known. The Chair of the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan Revision Group has confirmed that it was not posted by his team.

The Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body, is the owner of the report which it published on the Parish Council website.

The status of the report is that it is a working document to inform the preparation of a revised Neighbourhood Development Plan. It serves no other purpose.

As the document has been submitted to the planning portal without explanation or clear purpose, the Council is asked to inform the Local Planning Authority, that it should disregard any commentary from the applicant or consultees where reference is made to the content of the survey report. The LPA should also be informed that no Needs Assessment has been conducted in this Parish concerning a Wellness Centre.

Motion:

Council instructs the Clerk to inform the Local Planning Authority that the LNP Revision survey report should be disregarded and specifically, any findings of the LNP Survey Report cannot be construed as needs assessment of any matter including a Wellness Centre.

Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan Revision Group

Steering group meeting 9th Jun 2026

Attending: Michael Sherman, Alison Bourne, Savanna Bourne, Danielle Twitchen, Tracey Brinkley, Jack Norman, David Theobald, Charles Posner and Carroll Reeve.

Apologies: None

Minutes of previous meeting: Agreed

Matters arising: Treasury report update report provided by Danielle. To date we have spent £6,820.82. In line with budget.

Parish Council feedback: Survey feedback full report and Newsletter agreed by PC.

Confirmation sought from all attending that no potential conflicts or pecuniary interests appertain to this agenda: confirmed.

Socio-economic demographic reports, as below, now all circulated,

Area Profile	Danielle
Demography	Carroll
Housing	Tracey
Economic Activity	Alison
Deprivation	Savanna and David

Survey.

Full report and residential Newsletter circulated to PC for their meeting on 4th June. Both circulated.

620 responses received, 128 respondents commented or 20.6 %. Freeform comments ranged across many topics, including; the need or otherwise for further housing, availability of infrastructure, scope and content of the survey and criticism of the Parish Council. All comments are included in the feedback report now on the PC website and would be noted and where relevant incorporated into NP process.

Residents can follow-up by attending a drop-in event at the Guildhall on Wednesday the 8th July between 4:30 and 7 o'clock.

Lavenham Society.

Paper and correspondence circulated.

The Society's committee considered that; heritage be placed at the centre of any future planning for Lavenham, housing to be kept to a minimum and then small scale and of high quality, supported by adequate infrastructure. Other questions and issues were raised as to the construction of any plan.

In general terms the Society' concerns need not be in conflict with the NP revision. However, much of the information and explanations called for can be found on the Parish Council website, such as published Newsletters, minutes, third-party reports, et al. The bottom-up and robust evidence base approach to preparing the NP revision remains. As is the need to conform with the Locality Act, central and local government guidance and directives.

AoB

It was reported that should any group (new or existing) consider running a village event such as a Carnival, then they should seek to do so under the auspices of the Lavenham Community Council.

Next meeting; 14th July at 6 o'clock.

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Background:

On 22nd April 2026 the Clerk wrote to all Councillors saying 'In response to a request from Cllr I said that I would, well in advance of the May meeting, prepare a draft Bullying and Harassment policy for comment and feedback well before sending out the Working Papers. Please find attached'

Recent Events:

On 6th May 2026 Cllr Mawford responded:

'I am grateful to the author(s) of the draft Bullying and Harassment Policy, attached to your 22/04 email below. It is much easier to suggest redrafting changes to a draft document than to prepare an initial draft Policy. Having carefully read the previously circulated draft Policy, I wish to propose the attached redraft. This draws heavily on the earlier draft, but I hope provides greater clarity to some aspects of the Policy.'

The Clerk prepared Draft and the Cllr prepared 'Redraft' are attached as Appendices.

Motions:

- 1) Council approves the draft Bullying and Harassment Policy prepared by the Clerk.

OR

- 2) Council thanks the author(s) of the earlier drafts for their contributions but:

- a) **Adopts** the redrafted Policy.
- b) **Notes** that the Councillors' Code of Conduct says to all LPC Members –

[It] applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor, which may include when:

- *You misuse your position as a councillor*
- *Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public, with knowledge of all the facts, that you are acting as a councillor'*

As part of any consideration of when the second bullet point above applies to LPC Members, **the Babergh District Council Monitoring Officer is formally requested by LPC** to include situations where the Code would apply, when the LPC Member is:

- (a) attending and participating in a Lavenham local event; or
- (b) speaking/corresponding (by letter, email, WhatsApp, etc.) with a Lavenham resident; or
- (c) communicating via his/her personal social media or any Lavenham local business social media (such as *Lavenham Business & Community Hub* and *Lavenham Suffolk* Facebook pages); AND

The subject matter of the interaction(s) has relevance to LPC.

This is because Lavenham is a small and well-integrated village, which suggests the likelihood would be high that a reasonable member of the public, with knowledge of all the facts, would recognise a LPC Member as acting as a (parish) councillor – always providing that the subject matter of the interaction(s) has relevance to LPC.

1. Introduction

All Councillors, staff, contractors and volunteers should be able to work in an environment free from harassment and bullying and be treated with dignity and respect.

For Councillors behaviour according to this standard is mandated by the Code of Conduct.

The Parish Council does not tolerate bullying or harassment. This is the case for events on Council property or elsewhere, whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether done purposefully or not.

The Council does not tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying.

2. Culture and behaviour

Whilst both staff and Councillors jointly determine what the working culture is like Councillors are key in demonstrating what is and isn't acceptable behaviour.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable. All must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity.

Bullying in accordance with the ACAS Bullying and Harassment at Work Guidance (June, 2014), may be characterised as: offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse/misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient.

Harassment as defined in the Equality Act (2010), is unwarranted conduct related to a relevant, protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that individual. A 'reasonable person' test applies, which means that an objective person would reasonably consider the conduct in question to be severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive work environment. This means that, whilst offensive comments cannot be justified by a defence of being "banter" or "only a joke", there is also protection against spurious or over-sensitive complaints.

Examples of bullying and harassment include (but are not limited to):

- Physical conduct ranging from touching to sexual advances and serious assault.
- Verbal abuse or offensive (including lewd or suggestive) comments.
- Jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- Comments about a person's appearance.
- Unwanted nicknames, especially related to a person's age, race or disability.
- The use of obscene gestures.
- Treating someone differently because they have, or are perceived to have, a 'protected characteristic' or are associated with someone who does.
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone.
- Subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts.
- Picking on someone or setting them up to fail.
- Encouraging others to engage in any of the above activities

Bullying does not include appropriate criticism of behaviours or proper performance management.

You should also be aware that if a court or tribunal finds that you have bullied or harassed someone, in some circumstances this may be a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

The Council will take appropriate action if any of our staff or volunteers are bullied or harassed by staff, Councillors, Members of the Public or suppliers.

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the Parish Council's Complaints Policy which is on the Parish Council's website. <https://www.lavenham-pc.gov.uk/the-council/procedures/>

3. Informal resolution

If you are being bullied or harassed you may be able to resolve the situation by explaining to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to our policy and must stop.

An attempt at informal resolution is not required from those who feel that they are being bullied or harassed. If all parties agree Council may consider organising mediation. The trained mediator will help the parties have an open and honest dialogue with the aim of identifying a mutually acceptable outcome. If this is the case, the mediator will encourage parties to draw up an agreement.

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about the harassment or bullying if the behaviour was not from a Councillor.

If the behaviour was from a Councillor you will need to raise your concerns with the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer, not the Clerk or other Councillors, is responsible for assessing Councillor behaviours. The 2018 Ledbury case makes it quite clear that local councils cannot use internal grievance procedures to sanction councillors for bullying or harassment. Such matters must be handled strictly under the formal, statutory Code of Conduct framework.

It must be recognised that the Chair, the Vice-Chair and the Clerk have no powers concerning the behaviour of Councillors or Members of the Public that are not held by any person beyond the steps that the Chair can take to ensure the orderly conduct of Council Meetings.

Should an issue be resolved informally that will usually be the end of the matter but in exceptional circumstances, should Council become aware of the issue, the Council may decide to investigate further and take more formal action.

4. Formal Resolution

The Complaints Policy <https://www.lavenham-pc.gov.uk/the-council/procedures/> states that:

- a) A Formal Complaint, using the Complaint Form, must be submitted to the Clerk or Chair.
- b) The Formal Complaint should cover as much detail as possible and enclose any relevant supporting documentation.
- c) The Clerk, in consultation with the Chair (or in the absence of the Chair in consultation with the Vice-Chair) of the Parish Council, will ascertain the category of the complaint and take the relevant action detailed in Table 1 of the Complaints Policy.

Table 1

	Complaint	Action
A	Criminal activity	The Clerk should refer the Complainant to the Police.
B	Councillor Conduct	A complaint against an individual Councillor is not covered by this Complaints Policy. See the 'Making a complaint about a Councillor' policy. Note the Monitoring Officer can only deal with complaints about the behaviour of a Councillor. The Monitoring Officer will not deal with complaints about matters that are not covered by the Councillors Code of Conduct, complaints that are about people employed by the Parish Council, incidents that happened before a member was elected or chose to serve on the Council, incidents that happened before the authority adopted its Code of Conduct, the way an authority conducts or records its meetings, the way an authority has or has not done something, a decision of the authority or one of the services it provides.
C	Employee conduct	As an internal disciplinary matter. The Complainant should contact the Chair this will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedures. A complaint against a member of the Council's staff could result in disciplinary action or in cases of gross misconduct, dismissal from the Council's employment. The Council, will not under any circumstances, enter into any correspondence or discussion with any complainant about any action taken, formally or informally against any member of staff. This is expressly to protect the employment rights to which all employees of the Council are entitled.
D	Planning Recommendations	The Council is a statutory consultee for all planning applications within the Parish and decides whether to recommend Approval or Refusal to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). There are strict timescales for comments on each application. The Parish Council will not respond to complaints on its recommendations for planning applications, as it is not the decision-making body and would not be able to offer a timely remedy or redress.
E	Council decisions	The Council recognises that there may be occasions when the public disagree with the consequence or impact of a decision reached by the Council. Decisions will vary from setting a precept through to frequency of grass cutting. The Council cannot investigate complaints about the content of its decisions as mostly they cannot be reversed. The Council will however, investigate complaints <i>of how it reached those decisions</i> which are covered in Category F.
F	Other	Complaints which are expressions of dissatisfaction about the Council's services or procedures and administration. These will be heard at stage 1 by the Panel.

If you feel you are being Bullied or Harassed by a Member of the Public or supplier (as opposed to a colleague) please raise this with the Clerk or a Councillor in the first instance. They will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

5. Disruptive behaviour at Council Meetings

Councillors can vote to exclude the person and the Chair can terminate the meeting if they refuse to leave.

6. Victimisation

Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

7. False allegations

False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Staff and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations. False allegations made in bad faith by staff may constitute a disciplinary offence.

8. Disclosure and confidentiality

We will treat personal data collected during this process in accordance with the data protection policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing data is provided in the employee privacy notice.

9. Use of the disciplinary procedure

Harassment and bullying constitute serious misconduct. If, at any stage from the point at which a complaint is raised, we believe there is a case to answer and a disciplinary offence might have been committed Council will establish a Disciplinary Panel. Any employee found to have harassed or bullied a colleague will be liable to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.

10. Complaints against Councillors

It is critical to ensure that where an employee of the Council has made the complaint, that the Council agrees with the employee reasonable measures to protect their health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties, change of work location, not attending meetings with the person to whom the complaint has been made etc.

LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY CLLR MAWFORD DRAFT

1. Introduction

Lavenham Parish Council (LPC) deplores Bullying and Harassment. All Council Members, staff and volunteers should be able to work in an environment free from these behaviours and should be treated with dignity and respect.

LPC also deplores retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment and/or bullying.

2. Description of Bullying and Harassment

ACAS Bullying and Harassment at Work Guidance (June 2014) says these behaviours may be characterised as: offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse/misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient.

Harassment, as defined in the Equality Act (2010), is unwarranted conduct related to a relevant, protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that individual.

A 'reasonable person' test applies, which means that an objective person would reasonably consider the conduct in question to be severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or offensive work environment. This means that, whilst offensive comments cannot be justified by a defence of being "banter" or "only a joke", there is also protection against spurious or over-sensitive complaints.

Examples of bullying and harassment include (but are not limited to):

- Physical conduct ranging from touching to sexual advances and serious assault.
- Verbal abuse or offensive (including lewd or suggestive) comments.
- Jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- Comments about a person's appearance.
- Unwanted nicknames, especially related to a person's age, race or disability.
- The use of obscene gestures.
- Treating someone differently because they have, or are perceived to have, a 'protected characteristic' or are associated with someone who does.
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone.
- Subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts.
- Picking on someone or setting them up to fail.
- Encouraging others to engage in any of the above activities

LPC also recognises that bullying and intimidation are no longer confined to face-to-face interactions and may increasingly occur through digital and social media platforms. This may include:

- Repeated publication of provocative commentary
- Targeted criticism, filming or recording individuals without their consent
- The sharing of audio or video material online in a manner perceived to be intimidating or inflammatory
- The use of social media to publicly undermine councillors, staff, or members of the community.

LPC's Social Media Policy [[link to LPC Website](#)] provides guidance about behaviour on social media. It states that Councillors must avoid:

Engaging in personal attacks, online fights and hostile communications as these may constitute bullying or harassment and could bring the Parish Council into disrepute.

Whilst transparency and freedom of expression remain important principles, these must be balanced with dignity, respect, privacy, and the wellbeing of all members of the community. Behaviour which creates fear, distress, humiliation, reputational harm, or a hostile working environment should not be tolerated in any form, whether in person or online.

If a Court of Law or Tribunal finds that someone has bullied or harassed another person, in some circumstances this may be a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment. But Bullying does not include appropriate criticism of behaviours or proper performance management.

3. Lavenham Parish Council and its interactions

LPC is a Parish Council with 11 Members and (currently) one member of staff (the Parish Clerk). Other people may also be undertaking voluntary tasks for LPC. Regular interactions take place between these people.

As a democratically elected body, LPC Members, the Clerk and volunteers similarly have many interactions with Lavenham residents and other members of the public.

In addition, LPC as a corporate body has interactions with other organisations. These include other parish/town councils, local authorities, central government agencies, and other public, private and third sector bodies. These as well include bodies which supply goods and/or services to it, and bodies to which it provides goods and/or services.

All these interactions should take place in a dignified and respectful manner. But, if an interaction has involved bullying and/or harassment, the victim of this behaviour should generally be able to make a formal complaint. Although the route by which complaints are processed is not the same in all cases.

4. Bullying & Harassment Complaints against LPC Members

All LPC Members are required to abide by the Councillors' Code of Conduct [\[link to LPC Website\]](#). They are also required to follow the LPC Standing Orders [\[link to LPC Website\]](#).

The Code of Conduct addresses Bullying and Harassment in its Section 1 (Respect) and Section 2 (bullying, harassment, discrimination).

Standing Order 2 (disorderly conduct at meetings) and Standing Order 3 (meetings generally) address the conduct of all the people present at formal meetings (LPC Members, the Parish Clerk and members of the public). Disorderly conduct could include bullying and/or harassment.

The Code of Conduct is operated by the Babergh District Council Monitoring Officer, to whom formal complaints should be made [\[link to BDC website\]](#).

5. Bullying & Harassment Complaints against Members of the public

LPC has no powers over the actions of Lavenham residents and other members of the public, except in relation to disorderly conduct at LPC meetings. These very limited powers are derived from LPC Standing Orders (see above) and apply to everybody present, including LPC Members and the Parish Clerk.

At such meetings, the Chair and LPC Members have powers to ask a disorderly person to improve his/her conduct, to exclude that person from the meeting, and to take further steps to restore order. In particularly difficult circumstances, the meeting could be suspended or closed.

Formal complaints about the application of these powers will be dealt with as set out in the Council's Complaints Policy and Procedure (Category F) [\[link to LPC website\]](#).

6. Bullying & Harassment Complaints against LPC Staff

All formal complaints against LPC staff will be dealt with as an internal disciplinary matter, as set out in the Council's Complaints Policy and Procedure (Category C) [*link to LPC website*].

7. Bullying & Harassment Complaints against LPC as a corporate body

Such formal complaints are expressions of dissatisfaction with the Council's services and/or procedures and/or administration. This dissatisfaction could be because Council actions were perceived as bullying and/or harassing. Such complaints will be dealt with as set out in the Council's Complaints Policy and Procedure (Category F) [*link to LPC website*].

8. Bullying & Harassment Complaints against Other Organisations

Any such formal complaints should be directed to the other organisation(s) concerned.

9. Informal Resolution

An alternative to formal complaint and resolution is informal resolution. If (and only if) all parties involved with a complaint agree to adopt this approach, the Council (at its sole discretion) may consider mediation.

A trained mediator would help the parties to have an open and honest dialogue, with the aim of identifying a mutually acceptable outcome. If this is the case, the mediator would strongly encourage the parties to draw up and sign an agreement.

10. False Allegations and Victimisation

False accusations of harassment and/or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Everybody in any way associated with LPC has a responsibility not to make false allegations.

Conversely, complainants who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith should not be treated less favourably as a result.

11. Disclosure and Confidentiality

LPC will treat any personal data collected during the application of this policy in accordance with its Data Privacy Policy [*link to LPC website*]. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing data is provided in that Policy's Privacy Notice.

Funding for Buses

At its 2nd April 2026 meeting, the Council unanimously passed the following Motion:

The Clerk is instructed to advertise an invitation to people living in or near to Lavenham to send him – by letter or email no later than 30th April 2026 – their ideas for improving local bus services. Those responding to this invitation are asked to say whether they live or work in Lavenham parish – and, if not, the area where they live.

Response to Invitation

I am pleased to report that our invitation was well responded to by Lavenham residents, who have shared some interesting ideas about bus service improvements. These are summarised below (not in any priority order):

1. The quality of information about services and the quality of the bus vehicles used were both heavily criticised, including –
 - a. The failure to replace many bus stop timetable boards showing the Chambers services that operated until August 2025, with Konnect Buses services that have operated from September 2025
 - b. The failure to provide any information at some bus stops
 - c. The inaccessibility of 'real time' service information at bus stops or online
 - d. Dirty old buses, with no onboard service information

These failures were compared with some First Bus services currently operating in Essex, which featured clean new buses, featuring 'real time' service information on board, online and at bus stops. Why can't our services in Suffolk be more like those First Bus services in Essex?

2. The service is unreliable with too many disruptions. And, for those would-be passengers who have the Konnect App, notification of a service cancellations which should have been made beforehand is often only provided after the bus was due! Why can't we have enough drivers to provide the timetabled service, and to cover problems like staff sickness?
3. Why is there not a more frequent service between Sudbury/Long Melford and Bury St Edmunds via Lavenham, at something like weekday/Saturday daytime 'clockface' hourly intervals – with extra buses at peak periods, a continued evening service, and more buses on Sundays?
4. Why do pupils from Lavenham Primary School, when they move on to secondary education, have to pay to travel to/from their feeder school, which is Thomas Gainsborough Academy and is where they have guaranteed places?
5. Could we have an additional bus stop in High Street, at its junction with Roper's Court/Spring Street? This is near to the highest point in High Street. It would specifically serve passengers from the Spring Street estate, Trinity Guild and Roper's Court. It would also help other passengers who would otherwise have to walk up/down High Street to reach the bus stops at its junction with Preston Road, which are near the lowest northern point in High Street.

LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL:

6. Could we have additional bus shelters at bus stops in Sudbury Road, southbound at the Whitegates junction and northbound at the Melford Road junction? These are well-used stops with space for a shelter to be erected.
7. The Konnect Buses timetable introduced in September significantly improved our bus service connections in Sudbury southwards towards Colchester. Could improvements be made to our service connections at the Bury St Edmunds end?
 - a. Could some services to/from Lavenham be extended to terminate at Bury St Edmunds train station?
 - b. Alternatively, could connections be timetabled for our services between Bury St Edmunds bus station and Lavenham with services to/from the bus station and train station?

This could provide connections for our bus service westwards towards Cambridge, northwards towards Ely, and eastwards towards Ipswich.

Central Government's Local Authority Bus Grant

As noted in my report to the 2 April 2026 meeting (see Appendix), Suffolk County Council (our local transport authority, LTA) has been awarded £27m of funding for bus services from the Government's Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG). This funding has been spread over three financial years 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29.

The Grant includes both revenue and capital funding, And, in the Government's own words: *The money represents a consolidated allocation that LTAs can spend however they want on buses.* So, it could apparently be used to implement any of the ideas listed above.

Next Steps

I propose that the Council should contact our neighbouring parish and town councils along the bus route between Sudbury and Cockfield, to ascertain whether they have submitted their own LABG bid. We should ask:

- If they have submitted a bid, how is it progressing, and can we learn things about bidding from them
- If not, would they be interested in working with us in a joint bid (which might be more successful than separate bids from individual town/parishes)

We should also remain open to further ideas from Lavenham residents and workplaces, develop initial draft proposals, and make initial contact with the County Council about bidding. The results of these contacts and draft proposals should then be brought back to a future Council meeting, for further consideration.

Motion:

The Clerk is instructed to progress this matter, as set out above in Next Steps

Proposed: Councillor Roy Mawford

Funding for Buses

Lavenham can benefit again from government grants for bus service improvements. County Councillor Robert Lindsay reported to the 8 January 2026 Council meeting:

Suffolk has been awarded £27m of funding for bus services from the government's Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG), this can be used for routes, ticketing or improving infrastructure like bus stops and shelters. Previously known as the Bus Services Improvement Grant, communities in Suffolk will be able to suggest improvements in their area and 'bid' for funding. Because funding is spread over three years, there is no deadline as such.

Previous funding rounds in past two years were far smaller - of the order of only £5m – but, as you know, it secured extra services on the route between Sudbury and Bury via Lavenham and now a new daily peak time route between Hadleigh and Stowmarket is in the offing thanks to the earlier round of money. Our area is still very underserved by bus routes so worth thinking about what extra services or extra bus stop facilities would best serve Lavenham residents.

Given our area is still very underserved by buses, we should be taking up this further opportunity to improve all aspects of our bus services, including:

- Bus Timetable Improvements
- Bus Shelters
- Accurate Service Information Boards
- New/relocated Bus Stops

To gather suggestions from members of our community about improvements that the Council should be seeking on their behalf, I suggest we should invite people to write or email our Clerk with their ideas by the end of this month. These can then be worked up into draft proposals for the Council to consider at our next meeting on 14 May 2026.

Good bus services improve people's lives:

- They are particularly important for households that have no private motor vehicle (car or van). The figure for Lavenham is 16% of households overall, but this rises to 26% and 31% in the areas where social housing predominates.
- They are also important for households that have only one private motor vehicle. The figure for Lavenham is 46% of households – and, where such households include more than one driver, vehicle availability to each driver is likely to be limited.
- They help residents to travel for work, education, pleasure and accessing other services. They can be the difference between being able to hold down a job or not – and between getting to appointments at a particular time or not.
- They also help people who work or shop in Lavenham but don't live here, as well as tourists and other visitors, to get here.

Motion:

The Clerk is instructed to advertise an invitation to people living in or near to Lavenham to send him – by letter or email **no later than 30 April 2026** – their ideas for improving local bus services.

Those responding to this invitation are asked to say whether they live or work in Lavenham parish – and, if not, the area where they live. (This is to help us to understand the routes and locations where ideas for service improvements are concentrated.)

Proposed: Councillor Roy Mawford

Purchase of Speed Indicator Brackets

Background:

The Parish Council at its meeting of 4th June 2026 resolved that:

'The Clerk was asked to bring a motion to a future meeting concerning the purchase of brackets to make moving the SIDs easier. The Clerk agreed to ask Suffolk County Council whether the Bury Rd SID post can be used and report the Suffolk reply to Council.'

Subsequent Events:

- a) Suffolk County Council has written to the Clerk in response to this pic and others being sent to them:



Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your email.

The post in the pictures you have sent is a SID post. You are more than welcome to use it for SIDs

Kind regards,

- b) The manufacturer of the SIDs installed on the Melford Rd has replied: 'You can purchase an additional backplate and clips, please see quote attached'. I've attached the user manual should you need it. This manual is attached as an Appendix.

Item	Image	Part Code	Description	Qty	Unit Price	Total
1		Additional Backplate with Clips	Additional Backplate with Clips	1	£103.00	£103.00
2		CAR35	Large Parcel - 1005 x 660 x 200 (NOT OFFSHORE OR HIGHLANDS) (660 x 1005 x 200)	1	£15.00	£15.00
Sub Total						£118.00
VAT						£23.60
TOTAL						£141.60

Motion:

Council instructs the Clerk to purchase an additional backplate with clips for the SID post on the Bury Rd at a cost of £118.00 including VAT.

The Highways Act 1980 section 274A confers on Parish Councils the power to contribute towards the cost of traffic calming measures and the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 section 72 confers on Parish Councils the power to provide traffic signs and other notices.

WHAT IS IN THE BOX?

- SID / SLR / SAM Speed Sign
- Radar
- Sheet pole mounting bracket (Fig 1.)
- Solar Charge Controller (Optional; pre-fitted if applicable) (Fig 2.)
- 80w Solar Panel (Optional)
- Solar Panel Mounting Bracket (Only solar powered models)
- 4 x U-bolts for solar panel mounting bracket for 76mm posts (Only solar powered models) (Fig 3.)
- 2 x 76mm clips to fit the sheet pole mounting bracket to your post. Requires a 13mm spanner (other clip sizes available) (Fig 4.)
- USB Data Cable (Data radars only) (Fig 5.)
- 1 x Battery (excluding mains powered models) (Fig 6.)
- 2 x Batteries (Solar powered models only) (Fig 6.)
- 1 x Battery charging Cable (Battery powered model only) (Fig 7.)
- 1 x Battery Charger (Battery powered model only) (Fig 7.)



Fig 1.



Fig 2.



Fig 3



Fig 4.



Fig 5.



Fig 6.



Fig 7.



Fig 8.

BATTERIES

- Batteries are not pre-installed, so will need to be fitted into the unit once the signs are installed.
- The batteries are pre-wired for correct polarity, do not alter this.*Each battery weighs 7 kg each.
- Each unit can hold up to 2 batteries, held in place by the battery clamps pictured below.

Battery Powered



1 battery as standard

Mains Powered



Optional batteries for intermittent power supply.

Solar Powered



2 batteries and Solar Charge Controller

*Altering or attempting to alter the batteries will result in your warranty being voided

POSITIONING YOUR SPEED SIGN



Avoid placing our sign underneath overhanging trees/hedges, especially if using solar panels. This will have a detrimental effect on the charging of the batteries plus tree sap will cause the sign to become dirty and could cause the sign to be obscured.



Please ensure the unit does not obstruct any pre-existing road signs.

The sign should not overhang an existing highway boundary without the adjoining owners' consent.



The Sign must be clearly visible to approaching traffic. Preferably on a clear straight road to allow sufficient time to be seen by drivers.

The edge of the sign nearest the roadside should be less than 1m away from the kerb.



A minimum height of 2.15m must be allowed between the base of the sign and the ground.

Ensure the sign is mounted to a suitable post, or permission is granted to use an existing pole or lamp post.

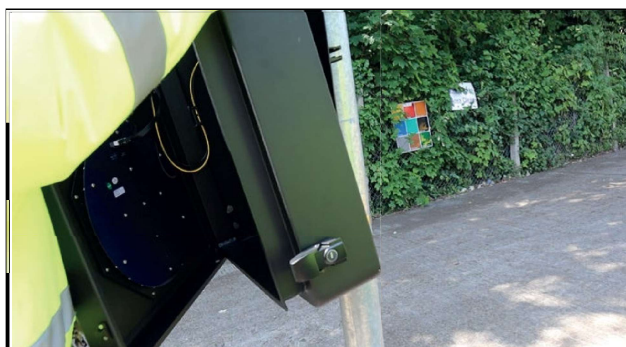
ATTACHING YOUR SPEED SIGN TO A POST

Please Note: Due to the height requirement of the sign, personnel installing the sign must take care when working at heights.



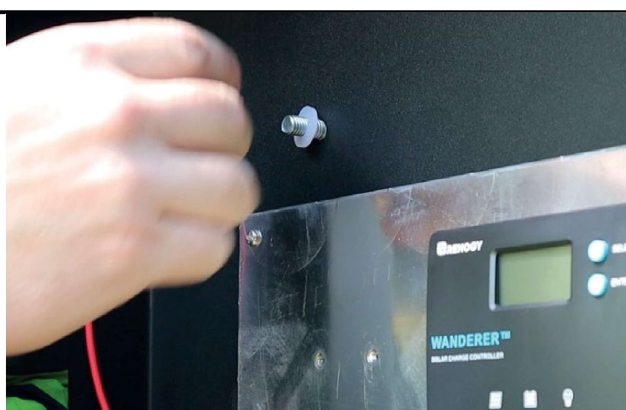
1.

Firstly, connect the pole mounting plate to the post using the clips provided using a 13mm spanner (tools not included)



2.

The speed sign must be secured to the mounting plate via the slot on the bottom of the sign.



3.

To finish securing your new speed sign to the post, open up the speed sign and use the provided washers and screw knobs on the inside of the sign.

SOLAR PANEL INSTALLATION

In your packaging, you will be supplied with an installation guide, but some important information is outlined below.

Also supplied are 4 U-Shaped clamps, suitable for 76mm- 89mm Diameter posts. (Other sizes are available upon request.)



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **Connect the battery to the solar charge controller before the solar panel** - this ensures the correct power mode
- Always observe the correct polarity when making electrical connections. Reverse polarity connection to a battery is a fire hazard and may damage your solar regulator/charge controller.
- Do not walk or drop objects on the panel front or rear.
- Do not use mirrors or any other objects to concentrate sunlight on the solar panels.
- Always handle with care.

MOUNTING

- Choose a location that is free from shade and as close as possible to South facing
- Always fix to a solid and supportive surface capable of withstanding all expected loads including the weight of the panel as well as those imposed by wind and snow.
- For optimum performance, tilt the panel at an angle of 70° facing south.

MAINTENANCE

- Occasionally wipe the solar panel with a damp cloth (use only water and mild detergent) to remove the build-up of dirt, salt, etc.
- Batteries should be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. (Printed on the side of the battery)
- All wiring and connections should be regularly checked for integrity and corrosion.

SOLAR PANEL TROUBLESHOOTING

If your solar panel does not seem to be performing properly start by addressing the following points:

- Inspect all electrical connections for any sign of corrosion or loose wiring.
- Test the panel's open circuit voltage (Voc). To reduce risk of sparking, cover the panel before disconnecting. Using a multi-meter set to DC Volts, measure the voltage across the +ve and -ve terminals of the panel. In bright, sunny conditions a reading of approx. 18 to 22V should be seen.
- Verify the condition of the battery. Over time a battery will lose its ability to recharge, especially after repeated heavy cycles of charge and deep discharge. Contact the battery's manufacturer for more detailed guidelines on battery testing.
- Make sure your system is properly sized for your power requirements.
- During periods of prolonged overcast weather, the batteries may require a mains charge as the solar panels may not create enough voltage to charge the batteries.

For further assistance contact your supplier.

Error Number	Error Description
E0	No error detected
E01	Battery over-discharged
E02	Battery over-voltage
E04	Load short circuit
E05	Load overloaded
E06	Controller over-temperature
E08	PV input over-current
E10	PV over-voltage
E13	PV reverse polarity
E14	Battery reverse polarity

POWER SOURCE SET UP

Battery Powered



1 battery as standard

Mains Powered



Optional batteries for intermittent power supply.

Solar Powered



2 batteries and Solar Charger Controller

*Altering or attempting to alter the batteries will result in your warranty being voided

SOLAR

Our solar powered VAS signs are fitted with breakers to offer additional safety to users. To switch a breaker on, flick the breaker up - and to switch them off, flick the breaker back down.

When setting up or changing batteries in a speed sign with solar panels installed, ensure that the solar panel is disconnected first before connecting the battery to the solar charge controller. Once the battery is connected, then plug in the solar cable.



Plugging the solar panel in before the batteries will make the sign run off solar ONLY

Left Breaker - Solar: This breaker must be switched OFF (down position) before removing or replacing batteries in the VAS sign. Only turn this back on when the batteries are reinstalled.

Right breaker - Battery: This breaker can be left ON (up position) perpetually, unless you are turning the sign off.

BATTERY

Ensure that the battery is connected to the correct polarity before attempting to plug in. Once checked, push the yellow connectors together. The XT60 connectors will only connect one way do not force.

MAINS

For safety purposes, mains units must be set up by a qualified electrician. **DO NOT ATTEMPT INSTALLATION OTHERWISE**

Tree Maintenance

Background:

In October 2025 Council obtained a quote of £19,130 for the work required to trees from its retained contractor. This included £2,850 for works required to trees in the Recreation Ground which is the responsibility of the Community Council. The proposed cost to Council was therefore £16,280.

Council determined at its 6th November 2025 Meeting to 'carry out the urgent safety related work to First Meadow and the Cemetery at a cost of £4,000'. This work has been completed.

Council determined at its 8th January 2026 meeting to commission a tree survey. That survey has now been completed and passed to the retained contractor who has considered the survey and issued revised quotations.

In light of the original quote of £16,280 and the commissioning of £4,000 of work in 2025/26 Council has included £10,000 in its 2026/27 Revenue budget for Tree Work.

Summary of Original Quote and Revised Quote:

Original Quote (PC Portion i.e. excluding Rec Ground which is Community Council responsibility) £16,280
Less Work Done (£4,000)
Remaining Original Quote £12,280
New Quote £4,250

Apparent Saving £8,030 compared to original quote but note that the cost of the work required in the Recreation Ground (Community Council work) has increased by £1,775 to £4,625.

The major causes of the saving of £8,030 and the increase in cost of £1,775 (see detail on next page) are:

£3,700 Churchyard large cedar. The Contractor has written 'I am quite surprised that no work has been recommended for this tree – the fact is that there is free pedestrian access and graves beneath'

£1,400 removal of encroaching hedgerow vegetation on rear boundary of churchyard.

£800 raising lime trees away from pavement in front of the churchyard.

£800 for clearing misc. brambles etc on right hand side of church boundary

£2,200 for work on two field maples in the Recreation Ground not included in original quote..

	Original Quote	Notes	Remaining Items	Post Survey Quote	Change	Notes
First Meadow	£5,600.00	This works includes: Urgent safety work to trees near the Play Area cost £2,200. Urgent safety work to trees overhanging footpath forcing users to 'duck' cost £800. Urgent safety work felling dead tree next to Footpath cost £600.	£2,800.00	£3,235.00	£435.00	New quote is basically v significantly reducing size of weeping willow £1,500 & crack willow £1,425 The pruning of trees cost £800 which make a footpath in the corner dark and causes users to duck was not recommended by the tree survey The maintenance on the crack willow £1,425 has been added consequent of the tree survey
Cemetery	£3,130.00	This work includes felling a dead tree £1,200.	£1,930.00	£845.00	£1,085.00	This is minor items except £450 of work on one common beech. Original quote included £700 of removing ' ivy, bramble, self-set trees and general woody weed growth around some of the graves and in some of the trees particularly the Irish Yews. 3-4 years ago when we were looking after the trees here we would annually remove this. It needs re-doing to prevent it getting out of hand again.
The Churchyard	£7,550.00	This work includes Urgent safety work to large cedar £3,700, Safety work to trees overhanging footpath £800. Note this quote was a range of £6,350 to £7,550.	£7,550.00	£170.00	£7,380.00	£3,700 large cedar 'I am quite surprised that no work has been recommended for this tree – the fact that there is free pedestrian access and graves beneath' The tree survey has not addressed the general lack of management of the rear hedgerow. 'Basically the whole back boundary is unmanaged and poorly maintained and has encroached by up to 5-6m in places into the Churchyard. This should be addressed and the encroachment cut back, felled and stumps poisoned where appropriate to prevent regrowth. Sadly we have seen a lot of Churchyards decline if this sort of thing is left unchecked. But this is not too bad compared to some we have seen and can be reasonably easily sorted out if done soon £1,200 to £1,400. Contractor also recommends £800 to raise lime trees away from front pavement and £800 for clearing misc brambles ivy etc on right hand boundary
PC Cost	£16,280.00		£12,280.00	£4,250.00	£8,030.00	
Recreation Ground	£2,850.00	This work is the responsibility of the Community Council and includes £900 of work to the Silver Maple Trees growing above the main footpath into the Recreation Ground. This quote will, as has been standard practice, be passed on to the Community Council with a request that it be actioned.	£2,850.00	£4,625.00	£1,775.00	The new quote is £2,200 of work on two field maples, £1,000 of work on two silver maples and £600 of work felling a Hawthorn. The work on the field maples was not previously quoted for.
	£19,130.00		£15,130.00	£8,875.00	£6,255.00	
	£4,000.00					
	£15,130.00					

Proximity of Council owned land to Water Courses

Background:

Council must consider whether watercourses within or adjacent to Council land present dangers to the users of Council land.

The main proximity to water courses is at First Meadow where three or so narrow muddy paths lead to the river and a Parish Council owned bridge crosses the river.

No accidents have been recorded.

The risks relating to the three or so narrow muddy paths are mitigated by them being:

- a) a significant distance away from the play equipment
- b) being surrounded by nestles and other vegetation which has been deliberately left to grow to act as a natural barrier.
- c) not serving as access to an attraction such as a shop, school, playground or home

The bridge is fenced, further fencing to completely eliminate the risk would have to be high and lengthy.

The Suds manual advises that:

[https://www.susdrain.org/files/resources/SuDS_manual_output/paper_rp992_17_health_and_safety_principles.pdf#:~:text=The%20latest%20statistics%20for,water%20based%20activity%20\(Figure%202\).](https://www.susdrain.org/files/resources/SuDS_manual_output/paper_rp992_17_health_and_safety_principles.pdf#:~:text=The%20latest%20statistics%20for,water%20based%20activity%20(Figure%202).)

Fencing

It is not reasonable, practical or desirable to attempt to prevent drowning by denying access to every piece of water across the UK. Fencing is an effective but comparatively expensive option which does not remove all the risks arising from water.

The early response to water features in the landscape was to deny access through metal fencing, hedging and planting barriers. However, although physical barriers might be suitable where the risks are high, the provision of pedestrian fencing is frequently challenged by designers, health and safety experts and often by the local community itself.

Where the water is accessible, the edge gradient above and below the water line, and the depth profile of the water are of critical importance.

If the risk is high, either due to the required nature of the edge, the hinterland activity, the presence of hard features such as culverts, steps etc or a combination of these then fencing may be deemed necessary. The height and nature of the fence along with location in relation to the water feature are important considerations. At lower risk sites the function of a barrier may be merely to deflect

the public from the water's edge. At particularly sensitive locations, e.g. pinch points or where water is deeper, more substantial fencing may be required.

Where it is considered likely that unsupervised young children could gain access to the water, then a toddler proof fence 600-750mm high should be provided to prevent toddlers getting to the water but allow adult entry to step across when necessary. The fence must be a vertical pale type rather than horizontal rail construction which could be used as a climbing frame.

Where fences are provided, full responsibility for maintenance must be established to ensure that liability risks are minimised.

If fencing is not appropriate, different types of planting at the margin can provide an element of physical protection and create a clearly identifiable visual border. If it is not possible to provide a planted margin then clear identification of the edge of the water can be beneficial.

Life Saving Equipment

Life rings and other pieces of Public Rescue Equipment (PRE) have often been provided unnecessarily in the past. Thought should be given to the need for the type of PRE needed e.g. life ring, throw bags or other rescue devices, if the water conditions and location suggest that one is needed (should anyone enter the water). For PRE to be effective the person in the water needs to be noticed when in trouble, which is affected by the siting of a pond.

PRE is frequently abused and its presence can provide a false sense of security for those thinking of entering the water. Where they are provided they should be regularly inspected, maintained and immediately replaced if used or found missing.

Signs

In a public area signs may be the only way of educating users about health and safety risks or how to use the rainwater runoff play system or feature. This can support local water safety or safety awareness activities, e.g. school based or community water safety training.

Signs should be used to convey public education requirements. If deep water or other significant hazards exist (which are not recommended for SuDS design), the logical place for the display of safety signs is at principal access points to sites where the maximum number of visitors will view the information. Therefore signs should be put in places such as main entrances and visitors' car parks.

The following information should be included on the board (if appropriate):

- Site name
- Emergency instruction: "Dial 999 in an emergency"
- Main hazard and prohibition symbols and supplementary text
- Details of site supervision services and contact details
- Location and Postcode (needs to be understood by local emergency services)

10

CIRIA RP992 The SuDS Manual Update: Paper RP992/17

Health and safety principles for SuDS: framework and checklists



- Site map showing, rescue equipment, first aid and supervisory help, telephones
- Organisational logos.

Signs and information are commonly provided with any PRE that is provided to form a 'safety point' or 'safety station'.

In addition to the information provided at principal access points, provision should be made to repeat the message along routes adjacent to the water's edge where specific higher risk situations exist. These are known as 'nag signs.'

These are repeat messages, small reinforcement messages of key hazard or prohibition messages given previously on the primary or secondary signs. They should relate directly to the hazard they are in close proximity to and be predominantly symbol-based messages with reinforcing text. They are normally located next to the hazard at places where visitors are most likely to access to water. These could be (for example):

- Pinch points on walkways/paths
- Jetties / platforms
- Locations where entry might be expected
- Viewing platforms
- Other key hazards determined on site

There will be many locations on site where nag signs can be placed. It is crucial, however, that only the key locations are signed; too many nag signs will have a detrimental effect on the overall message.

Motion:

That the presence of watercourses adjacent to First Meadow is added to the Risk Register and that signage is purchased up to a cost of £500 to warn users of the watercourses.

Power to acquire land for public recreation Power to acquire and maintain land for open spaces Public Health Act 1875 s.164
Open Spaces Act 1906 ss.9 and 10