

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



Andrew Smith
Clerk to the Council
Parish Office
Church St
Lavenham

Date: 26th June 2026

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 4th June 2026, commencing at 7.pm in the Village Hall.

All supporting documents can be found on the Parish Council website under Meetings, June 2026.

Present:

Cllrs: Jack Norman, Alison Bourne, Frank Domoney, Iain Lamont, Janice Muckian, Chris Robinson and Michael Sherman. Six members of the public.

Opening Statement by the Chair:

The Chair (Cllr Norman) began by welcoming everyone and introduced herself explaining to all present that this meeting is being recorded. The Chair reminded all that this is not a public meeting, but a meeting of the Council held in public. Members of the Public were respectfully asked to maintain silence during the Council's deliberations and not to approach the Councillors. Councillors were requested not to engage with Members of the Public when Council is in session. All were asked to ensure that their mobile phone was on silent and were reminded to treat all present with respect.

1. Apologies and approval of Absences

The Clerk reported that Cllrs Falconer, Mawford, Mitchell and Ranzetta had sent their apologies. No absences required approval.

2. Declarations of Interest and item 3 Requests for Dispensations

The Clerk said that he had received no updates from Cllrs concerning their Register of Interests and reminded Cllrs that they have 28 days to lodge any changes.

He explained that he had written to all Cllrs some weeks previously asking if they wished to renew their dispensations. He had received the following requests to apply until the 2027 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and had agreed them.

Cllrs Lamont and Falconer to speak and vote concerning Water St as long as they did not relate to their disclosable pecuniary interests. Cllr Sherman to speak and vote on matters concerning Spring St as long as they do not relate to his disclosable pecuniary interest. Cllr Muckian to speak and vote on matters concerning Bears Lane as long as they do not relate to her disclosable pecuniary interest.

He told Cllrs that he was anticipating that Cllrs will need to leave the room for item 16 and asked Cllrs whether they wished to declare any interests concerning tonight's agenda of which he was not aware and secondly, in general, whether Cllrs had any updates to their previously declared interests. None said that they did.

4. Approval of Minutes

To approve as accurate minutes of the 14th May 2026 meeting of the Council.

The Clerk explained that he made two changes to the circulated draft minutes. The first related to Cllr Ranzetta both seconding and abstaining on a vote. She had not abstained. The second related to the fact that Cllr Muckian had not volunteered to Chair an item. Cllr Mitchell had suggested Cllr Muckian Chair the item and then a vote was held. Cllr Muckian accepted the nomination but to say that she had volunteered, as the draft minutes stated, was incorrect.

Approval Motion Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Lamont **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

5. Chair's Announcements

The Chair (Cllr Norman) told Cllrs that she had attended the site of the recent fire in Spring St to offer support to those affected. She had been able to contact District Cllr Maybury and between them they had made sure the residents affected were accommodated that evening and had worked with Babergh District Council and Suffolk County Council to ensure the site was made secure once the fire was put out.

She thanked the fire crews from Long Melford, Sudbury and Bury St Edmunds who had been excellent in their handling of the situation and also Suffolk Police, the Ambulance service, Cadent, UK Power Networks and the local community for their support during and after the incident to the residents.

She had been advised that a local resident Paul Cumbers had intervened to try and make sure that the resident was okay and thanked him for his selfless efforts.

She understood that there was some concern about fire hydrants, County Cllr Lindsay has raised this with the Chief Fire Officer and that response will be reported in due course.

A collection box has been set up at the top Co-Op if anyone would like to donate to help the residents once they have been re-accommodated.

Commenting that it was a very hot but also sad afternoon as two ladies lost their homes and one of the ladies also lost her cat and another resident who had to move out because of smoke in his building she said that she could not help but feel proud of our community who all pulled together to help in their hour of need.

6. Public Participation Session

The Chair reminded Members of the Public of the protocol for this session.

A Member of the Public expressed his concerns concerning the proposed dog exercise area saying that Park Road was unable to cope with the unanticipated increase in traffic. He said that the road was much used by local walkers and pastoral in nature. The proposal would have a deleterious effect on this village asset. He had asked Suffolk Highways to revisit their comments on this Planning Application saying that the Highways Officer had concentrated on the immediate site access.

7. Local Authority Councillors' Reports

County Cllr Lindsay reported that at the first meeting of the new County Council Michael Hadwen, a Reform Councillor from Felixstowe, had been elected as leader of the Council and had announced his appointments to his cabinet. The Greens have formed the official opposition group. County Cllr Lindsay is the opposition spokesman for Highways and Transport.

His group had tabled a motion saying the Council supported the translation services the Council provided. This had been voted down by the Reform UK councillors. Reform UK's campaign literature had criticised the spend on translation services saying it was for those "refusing to integrate". He said that most of the spend was for the Homes for Ukraine scheme, launched when Russia invaded Ukraine, supporting unaccompanied children seeking asylum and sign language for the deaf. The Reform administration has taken down the Ukrainian flag at County Hall raising the St George cross instead. Cllr Hadwen, the new council leader, was himself criticised at the meeting for saying some years ago after the Salisbury poisoning that "Russia is not our enemy".

A new inspection report says the County's Special Educational Needs services has improved, with the backlog of EHCP plans having been cleared but, it says, there are still many issues that it needs to tackle, particularly in communication with families, and between the NHS, schools and social care.

He told Cllrs that the SEND department is having to restructure itself to better handle EHCPs and there appears to have been a recent rash of staff sickness. That had put the department into "business continuity" on May 21st which means it is just prioritising key work for, they estimate, a fortnight.

Reform has said they will review all actions consequent of the climate emergency declared by the Council in 2019. In his opinion the actions taken by the Council under net zero do not need reviewing, since that happens every year anyway and they have been found to have saved £4.8m a year.

He described both the legal challenge opposing the proposed creation of three unitary councils and the net zero review as being mirrored by Reform controlled Norfolk and Essex and appearing to be headline-grabbing stunts organised at the instruction of Reform Head Office.

He confirmed that he was investigating the Hydrant issue and that should the hydrants need testing he would follow this up.

District Cllr Clover spoke about the fire saying that he understood that affected residents are safely accommodated with family and friends. Residents welfare is being monitored and where necessary ongoing support will be provided. Longer term Housing options are being explored including: temporary accommodation, return to property subject to works and permanent rehousing options. One property was unstable following the fire. Indicative repair times are 3-4 months for the most severely affected property. 2.5 months for the adjoining property. 2-3 weeks for the smoke affected property.

Better recycling commences this week with black bin collection and separate food waste caddy which will be a weekly collection. The following week it will be paper and card in the green lidded bin and on the third week all plastics, tetra pak, glass, metal cans, aerosols and tin foil items.

Low income households who use heating oil are being contacted to advise them of the support available to residents including the Crisis and Resilience Fund.

Following questioning he confirmed that, currently, devices with sealed lithium batteries should only be disposed of at the Sudbury and Hadleigh recycling centres.

8. Clerks Report

The Clerk told Cllrs that the Accounts for April contain no substantial variances to Budget except the cost of answering the Freedom of Information request concerning the Neighbourhood Plan. That FOI has been answered and no correspondence has been received since the response was sent.

He said that the Accounts for May will show a substantial surplus compared to Budget as the £10,000 included in the May budget has not been spent. He is chasing the Tree Surgeon for his proposals consequent of the Tree Survey.

Motions: to approve Accounts and Receipts and Payments for the month ending 30th April 2026

Proposed: Cllr Robinson **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne **Decisions:** Approved unanimously.

The Clerk told Cllrs that he had inspected both sets of toilets with the Director of the Contractor and expressed his concerns that these needed a deep clean. Both toilets have now been properly cleaned and are looking very much better. Unfortunately, a lock had failed in the Prentice St toilets and someone had been locked in for a short time. The toilet was closed and then reopened several days later when the replacement lock was fitted.

The replacement EV chargers have been installed in Water St. Two engineers from Connected kerb attended the site very recently and had spent the full day working on the units; however, they had been unable to connect them to their back-office system. Their Customer Service team have said that they 'have now contacted the Operations department to confirm the next steps'. The Prentice St Chargers await Babergh Legal and Connected Kerb legal finalising and signing the legal documentation.

The Council's retained handy man and the Clerk had managed to unbolt the bins by the bus stop and the Green Co-Op from the Ground to look at the fixings. The fixings are different to each other and the fixings on bins currently available. He has a quote for the new bins and will order these shortly. The cost is some £350 per bin. This means that we have drill to new holes in the pavement to instal these but the Councils retained handyman says that he can do this.

Babergh had to bring all the Electrical Safety Checks up to date before the leases for the Office and the Toilets could be signed and as part of this they brought the electrical equipment up to date. This took some time. The Chair and Clerk had signed the leases this week.

Cllr Bourne reported her conversations with local residents concerning the replacement Church St light.

9a. Planning Register

The Clerk said that he had two updates to the published Planning Register.

Babergh has in the last few days approved the applications concerning De Vere House and the property at the junction of Bridge St Rd and Church Rd. The PC had recommended approval of both of these applications.

9b. Planning Applications

No Cllr wished to discuss any of the three applications for Discharge of Conditions concerning the Gas Terminal Upgrade on Sudbury Rd.

Application. No: DC/26/01986: Perseverance House, 47 High Street.

Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce crown of a Yew by 2.5m, Reduce crown of an Ash, fell Eucalyptus and cut back over hanging branches of Plum tree. Routine maintenance of trees plus the felling of one non-native tree.

Motion: Recommend Approval

Proposed: Cllr Muckian **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Application. No: DC/26/01962: The Old Manse, Barn Street.

Pollard Sycamore tree to approximately 8 metres above ground level. This tree work is quite aggressive for a tree covered by a TPO but it should recover from this work.

Motion: Recommend Approval

Proposed: Cllr Muckian **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Application. No: DC/26/01921: Church Of Saint Peter And Saint Paul, Church Street

Planning Application - Installation of 46 Solar PV panels and Battery Storage.

This panels are mounted flat on the roof and are black in colour to reduce visual impact. Due to the raised parapets, they will not be visible from the street or from a distance but will be visible from above. This installation will have minimal impact on the historic structure and will be fully reversible.

Bury St Edmunds Cathedral (Grade 1 listed) was granted Planning Permission in Feb to fit 100 Solar panels on the roof. West Suffolk Planning portal DC/25/1955/FUL. One of the requirements was that the panels could not be seen from the Ground. This is part of the Church of England Net Zero project.

Motion: Recommend Approval

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne **Decision:** Approved. Cllrs Robinson and Domoney abstained.

Application. No: DC/26/01886: The Hall, Hall Rd.

Application for Listed Building Consent. Installation of new gates as approved under Non-material Amendment DC/26/01662.

Following the appeal of DC/25/04033 refusal and subsequent granting after appeal, this application seeks for an amendment to reposition the proposed gates and add a pedestrian gate by moving them further back from Potland Lane. New brickwork would be matching the other brickwork in the yard. There will be minimal change to the appearance viewed from Potland Lane.

Motion: Recommend Approval

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Muckian **Decision:** Approved unanimously

Application. No: DC/26/01871 Land West Of Park Road Park

Full Planning Application - Change of Use of Part Arable Field to Enclosed Secure Dog Freedom and Exercise Area, including access, parking and a 1.50m high Wire Fence and Field Gate.

Park Rd cannot sustain the consequent increase in traffic. The road is too narrow and lacks passing places. Council is supportive of this type of application but not in this location.

Motion: Recommend refusal

Proposed: Cllr Muckian **Seconded:** Cllr Domoney **Decision:** Approved. Cllr Sherman opposed. Cllr Robinson abstained.

10. Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan Group: Minutes, Report and Motion concerning Newsletter.

The Chair of the LNP Group urged all Cllrs to carefully consider the comments submitted by Members of the Public concerning the PC.

Motion: That the Parish Council approves the text of the draft Newsletter and authorises the Neighbourhood Plan Group to have the Newsletter printed and subsequently distributed to all residents.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson **Seconded:** Cllr Domoney **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Cllr Domoney left the room at 8.25pm and did not return.

11. Motion to request applications for Grants

This motion had been deferred from the previous meeting of Council. The Clerk was asked to update the application deadline of 15th June to reflect the deferment.

Motion: The Clerk is instructed to invite application from Community Groups for consideration by Council at its July meeting. Community Groups to submit their applications by Monday 15th June (date to be updated).

Proposed: Cllr Robinson **Seconded:** Cllr Sherman **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Motion: to defer items 12 and 13 to the next Agenda

Proposed: Cllr Bourne **Seconded:** Cllr Muckian **Decision:** Approved unanimously

The Chair used her discretion to discuss Item 15 next.

15. Report concerning First Meadow Gate

The Chair explained that with the Clerk she had met with a representative of Suffolk Highways who had subsequently written that he would not recommend relocating the park entrance further down Brent Eleigh Road. Firstly, the dropped crossing point across the carriageway could be obscured by on-street parking, so pedestrians would not have adequate visibility to safely cross the carriageway. Secondly, the new location will be against the pedestrian desire line, and many able-bodied pedestrians will instead choose to exit the park via Lower Road or go over the fence.

He had considered whether a dropped crossing point could be constructed on the corner with Water Street, but this is hampered by the available width of the highway and the proximity of passing vehicles.

The Chair and the Clerk had then considered whether speeds could be reduced in the area by putting up a Speed Indicator Device and the risk of incidents reduced by the installation of additional signage warning motorists of the adjacent play area. A Speed Indicator Device could be installed on the park side of Brent Eleigh Rd where it would be less obscured by parked cars, be further from neighbouring properties, would have good forward visibility, could be safely accessed where there are no problems relating to the highway boundary, and the location would be beneath a B.T overhead line as opposed to a power line.

The Clerk agreed to approach Highways for a quotation and permission for a SID post on the park side of Brent Eleigh Rd and for additional warning signage.

The Clerk commented that these measures would cost considerably less than moving the gate.

14. Motion concerning purchase of a Speed Indicator Device

The Clerk displayed photographs of the Bury Rd post saying that it had sufficient visibility to motorists approaching the North was a very difficult site to work on. He added that moving SIDs required a certificate for working on the road and that he was aware that Cllrs Robinson and Sherman had the relevant certificate.

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. The Motion was not proposed.

The Chair used her discretion to discuss Item 17 next.

17. Motion to establish a Footpath and Bridleway Working Group and appoint a Councillor to lead it.

The Clerk explained the proposed motion and that the LNP says that Project P10: Footpaths – “The Parish Council will ensure that the extensive network of statutory footpaths... is adequately signposted, regularly inspected and maintained... and will use its best endeavours to ensure continuity of safe access for the public.”

Cllrs pointed out that the maintenance of these footpaths is the landowner's responsibility and that only Suffolk County Council has the powers to ensure that landowners meet these obligations. The Parish Council can report issues but has no powers or obligations. Cllrs agreed that all residents can contact Suffolk with respect to all such issues.

Cllr Lamont proposed an amendment so that it reads : that the Parish Council advertises a process for the reporting of issues and the suggestions for improvements to footpaths to Suffolk County Council Public Rights of Way

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Muckian **Decision:** Approved. Cllrs Bourne, Sherman and Robinson abstained.

The revised Motion Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Muckian **Decision:** Approved. Cllrs Bourne, Sherman and Robinson abstained.

16. Motion concerning Lavenham Community Allotments at the Paddocks Legal Work

The Clerk outlined the proposed scope of work and the quotation.

Cllrs expressed concern at the revised cost in comparison to the number of allotments to be provided. Cllrs recognised that the site had been provided for free and that these were not therefore in addition to the cost of purchasing the land. Cllrs said that in light of these increased costs they may in due course need to reconsider the, in principle, the £2,500 grant made available to the Allotments Association.

Motion: The Clerk is instructed to engage the Councils retained solicitors to a maximum cost of £5,000 to progress matters.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Muckian **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Meeting ended 9.25pm.

Date of next meeting – Parish Meeting Thursday 2nd July 2026 7pm.

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 Cartlidge 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.

His 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.

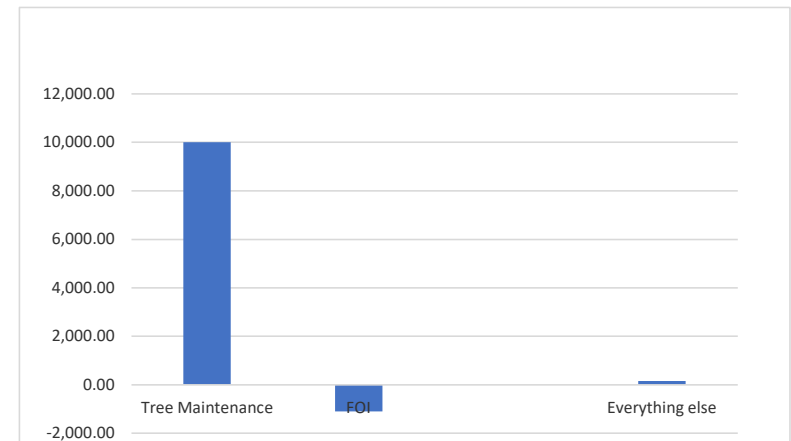
They also looking for new trustees to join our group.

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.

		Type	£
Precept	-0.03		
Babergh Cleansing Grant	0.01	Tree Maintenance	10,000.00
Burial Fees	-570.00	FOI	-1,093.00
Car Park and Toilet Donations	3.68		
Other Donations	50.00	Everything else	154.98
EV Charging Income	-100.00		
Interest Received	159.53		9,061.98
Management Costs	-675.96		
Office costs	-208.66		
Costs of Democracy	0.00		
Street Cleaning and Green Maint	9,546.84		
Public Realm	-121.99		
Toilet Costs	501.30		
Water St	49.15		
Community Events including Grants	0.00		
EV Costs	94.80		
Contingency	333.33		
	<u>9,061.98</u>		
Per Accounts	9,061.98		
Check	0.00		



	April Actual Mth	May Actual Mth	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Favourable /(Adverse)	Notes
Precept	11,213.75	11,213.75	22,427.50	22,427.53	-0.03	No variance
Babergh Cleansing Grant	555.56	555.56	1,111.12	1,111.11	0.01	No variance
Fixed Income	11,769.31	11,769.31	23,538.62	23,538.64	-0.02	
Burial Fees	285.00	345.00	630.00	1,200.00	-570.00	Timing
Car Park and Toilet Donations	239.35	269.35	508.70	505.02	3.68	Insignificant
Other Donations	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Christmas Donations in local shop
EV Charging Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	-100.00	Still being commissioned
Interest Received	200.00	359.53	559.53	400.00	159.53	Interest Rates not fallen as anticipated
Variable Income	774.35	973.88	1,748.23	2,205.02	-456.79	Timing Burial Income
Total Income	12,543.66	12,743.19	25,286.85	25,743.66	-456.81	Timing Burial Income
Management Costs	5,517.65	3,642.32	9,159.97	8,484.01	-675.96	FOI
Office costs	1,139.61	697.81	1,837.43	1,628.76	-208.66	Clerk Cilca Fees
Costs of Democracy	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	No variance
Street Cleaning and Green Maint	4,331.12	3,202.46	7,533.58	17,080.42	9,546.84	Trees
Public Realm	578.92	900.91	1,479.84	1,357.85	-121.99	Replacement parts defibs
Toilet Costs	1,050.71	1,791.15	2,841.85	3,343.15	501.30	Misc items, repairs, energy costs etc
Water St	242.37	242.37	484.73	533.88	49.15	Insignificant
Community Events including Grants	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	No variance
EV Costs	12.40	-67.20	-54.80	40.00	94.80	Insignificant
Sinking Fund	1,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	No variance
Contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00	333.33	333.33	Contingency
Total Costs	13,872.78	11,409.82	25,282.60	34,801.39	9,518.79	
Surplus/(Deficit)	-1,329.12	1,333.37	4.25	-9,057.73	9,061.98	
LNP	790.00	750.00	1,540.00	2,500.00	960.00	Places 4 People Accrual

	April Actual Mth	May Actual Mth	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Favourable /(Adverse)
Staff salaries and Other Consultancy Costs	5,417.65	3,502.32	8,919.97	8,169.01	-750.96
Audit and Payroll bureau costs	100.00	140.00	240.00	315.00	75.00
Management Costs	5,517.65	3,642.32	9,159.97	8,484.01	-675.96
Telephone & broadband	86.91	85.95	172.86	170.00	-2.86
Website Dev and .gov	64.80	102.30	167.10	190.00	22.90
Accounting software & computer	190.00	0.00	190.00	0.00	-190.00
Office Materials	11.24	47.90	59.14	40.00	-19.14
Data Protection	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Subscriptions & Insurance	284.40	284.40	568.81	600.00	31.19
All Training/Cllr expenses	325.00	0.00	325.00	120.00	-205.00
Room hire PC meetings	0.00	0.00	0.00	140.00	140.00
Office Maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Digital mapping	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Parish Office Business Rates	93.93	93.93	187.85	202.10	14.25
Parish Office rent	83.33	83.33	166.67	166.67	0.00
Office Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Office costs	1,139.61	697.81	1,837.43	1,628.76	-208.66
Cost of Democracy	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Green Maintenance	1,517.08	1,197.08	2,714.17	2,388.18	-325.99
Tree Maintenance and Care	400.00	0.00	400.00	10,800.00	10,400.00
Street cleansing	1,556.67	1,556.67	3,113.34	3,105.56	-7.78
Refuse collection bins & dog bins	426.08	288.00	714.08	500.00	-214.08
Chapel Business Rates	136.28	136.28	272.57	270.29	-2.28
All cemetery management	0.00	24.42	24.42	16.38	-8.04
Play equipment	295.00	0.00	295.00	0.00	-295.00
Street Cleaning and Green Maint	4,331.12	3,202.46	7,533.58	17,080.42	9,546.84
Street furniture	0.00	321.99	321.99	200.00	-121.99
Street Lighting energy	500.00	500.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
PWLB interest	78.92	78.92	157.85	157.85	0.00
Public Realm	578.92	900.91	1,479.84	1,357.85	-121.99
Church Street energy	154.33	-57.87	96.46	225.20	128.74
Church Street water	0.00	540.16	540.16	399.03	-141.13
Church St Toilets Business Rates	62.62	62.62	125.23	134.73	9.50
Prentice St Water	0.00	172.35	172.35	180.35	8.00
Prentice St non EV energy	30.70	28.91	59.61	77.72	18.11
Donation Points	35.90	35.90	71.80	229.95	158.15
Washroom Cleaning & Consumables	767.16	879.08	1,646.24	1,696.17	49.93
Washroom Minor Maintenance	0.00	130.00	130.00	400.00	270.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Toilet Costs	1,050.71	1,791.15	2,841.85	3,343.15	501.30
Water Street green maintenance	50.83	50.83	101.67	101.41	-0.25
Water Street Business Rates	191.53	191.53	383.07	432.47	49.40
Water St	242.37	242.37	484.73	533.88	49.15
Small Grants (combined)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Christmas trees/lighting	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Xmas Eve Community Carols	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1st Meadow summer facilities	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Misc	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bellward Award	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Community Events including Grants	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
EV Costs	12.40	-67.20	-54.80	40.00	94.80
Sinking Fund	1,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
Contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00	333.33	333.33
Total Expenses	13,872.78	11,409.82	25,282.60	34,801.39	9,518.79
Surplus/(deficit)	-1,329.12	1,333.37	4.25	-9,057.73	9,061.98
Check	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
LNP Costs	790.00	750.00	1,540.00	2,500.00	960.00

	Mar 26	May 26	Increase/(decrease)	Notes
Fixed Assets	145,797.03	145,797.03	0.00	No change
Debtors	0.00	0.00	0.00	No change
Accrued Income	234.25	1,964.35	1,730.10	No cleansing Grant yet received
Prepayments	6,931.20	6,121.17	-810.03	No significant change
VAT Refunds	4,785.94	1,519.29	-3,266.64	Birketts and Annual Street Lighting VAT claimed March 2026
	<u>11,951.38</u>	<u>9,604.81</u>	<u>-2,346.57</u>	
Cash at Bank	231,455.49	283,897.15		
Bus Prem				
Current Acc	<u>7,367.83</u>	<u>3,009.47</u>		
	<u>238,823.32</u>	<u>286,906.62</u>	48,083.30	Precept for half year received
Trade Creditors	-5,938.03	-5,294.76	-643.27	No significant change
Accruals	-15,493.41	-16,554.16	1,060.75	No significant change
Deferred Income	0.00	-44,855.00	44,855.00	Precept for half year received
	<u>-21,431.44</u>	<u>-66,703.92</u>	<u>45,272.48</u>	
Loans	-59,564.60	-59,564.60	0.00	No change
Net Assets	<u>315,575.69</u>	<u>316,039.94</u>	<u>464.25</u>	
General Funds	193,631.40	193,635.66	4.25	The deficit YTD
Ballot Fund	3,527.70	3,527.70	0.00	No change
Lavenham Funds in Trust	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	No change
Street Fair Fund	5,565.37	5,565.37	0.00	No change
Sinking Fund	58,995.64	60,995.64	2,000.00	Being increased by £1,000 per month
NCIL	52,355.58	50,815.58	-1,540.00	LNP
Total Reserves	<u>315,575.69</u>	<u>316,039.94</u>	<u>464.25</u>	
Imbalance	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	

	B/F	Per I and E	Misc	Misc	Misc	LNP NCIL	Other	C/F	
General Funds	193,631.40	4.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	193,635.66	0.00
Ballot Fund	3,527.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,527.70	0.00
NCIL	52,355.58	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-1,540.00	0.00	50,815.58	0.00
Lavenham Funds in Trust	1,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,500.00	0.00
Sinking Fund	58,995.64	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	60,995.64	0.00
Street Fair Fund	5,565.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,565.37	0.00
Total Reserves	315,575.69	2,004.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	-1,540.00	0.00	316,039.94	0.00

Wendy Bowman	280.00
Wendy Bowman	280.00
Wendy Bowman	230.00
Places4People Accrual	750.00
	<u>1,540.00</u>

0.00

Current

30/04/2026	Balance Brought Forward	6,297.27
01/05/2026	Pension Contrinutions: NEST	-186.55
05/05/2026	Toilet Donations Card	13.30
06/05/2026	Supplier Payment: Defib World	-385.19
07/05/2026	Toilet Donations: Cash	60.00
11/05/2026	Toilet Donations Card	15.20
12/05/2026	Supplier Payment: British Gas	-13.02
12/05/2026	Transfer from Deposit Account	5,000.00
12/05/2026	Supplier Payment: Amazon	-43.99
12/05/2026	Supplier Payment: Babergh District Council	-35.00
13/05/2026	Net Wages: Andrew Smith	-2,487.84
13/05/2026	Supplier Payment; Infinity Cleaning	-920.59
13/05/2026	Supplier Payment: JPB Landscapes	-3,365.51
13/05/2026	Supplier Payment: Onsite IT	-122.76
13/05/2026	Supplier Payment: Bartletts	-480.00
13/05/2026	Suplrier Payment HJ Heelis	-440.00
14/05/2026	Supplier Payment: British Gas	-32.23
18/05/2026	Supplier Payment: British Gas	-162.04
18/05/2026	Toilet Donations Card	15.20
19/05/2026	Supplier Payment: EE	-16.20
20/05/2026	Supplier Payment: BT	-86.94
21/05/2026	Burial Income: Halstead Memorial	345.00
26/05/2026	Toilet Donations Card	12.35
27/05/2026	Supplier Payment: Anglia Water	-24.42
28/05/2026	Supplier Payment: HP Inks	-13.49
28/05/2026	Toilet Donations: Cash	110.00
29/05/2026	Supplier Payment: Liberty Pay (formerly called Paya Go Cardless)	-43.08

31/05/2026	Balance Carried Forward	3,009.47
31/05/2026	Per Bank Statement	3,009.47
		0.00

Premium

30/04/2026	Balance Brought Forward	287,887.25
12/05/2026	Transfer to Current Account	-5,000.00
14/05/2026	HMRC: VAT Refund	1,009.90

31/05/2026	Balance Carried Forward	283,897.15
31/05/2026	Per Bank Statement	283,897.15
		0.00

Today: 01 Jun 2026



LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Transactions

COMMUNITY 20-83-50 00567094

Available balance	£2,306.46
Last night's balance	£3,009.47
Overdraft limit	£0.00

Showing 8 transactions between 26/05/2026 and 01/06/2026 from 25/05/2026 to 01/06/2026

Date	Description	Money in	Money out	Balance
01/06/2026	Direct Debit ANGLIAN WATER BUSI 1070883 DDR		-£172.35	£2,306.46
01/06/2026	Direct Debit ANGLIAN WATER BUSI 1070882 DDR		-£540.16	£2,478.81
01/06/2026	Counter Credit CHARITIES TRUST CP14679 BGC	£9.50		£3,018.97
29/05/2026	Direct Debit LIBERTYPAY 3SHPOHT DDR		-£43.08	£3,009.47
28/05/2026	Cash Deposit POST OFFICE 32466 28MAY 13.19 ATM	£110.00		£3,052.55

3,009.47

Today: 01 Jun 2026



LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Transactions

Business Premium ME 20-83-50 20567116

Available balance	£283,897.15
Last night's balance	£283,897.15
Overdraft limit	n/a

Showing 2 transactions between 12/05/2026 and 14/05/2026 from 02/05/2026 to 01/06/2026

Date	Description	Money in	Money out	Balance
14/05/2026	Counter Credit HMRC VTR XSV126000100262 BGC	£1,009.90		£283,897.15
12/05/2026	Funds Transfer 208350 00567094 FT 208350 00567094 FT		-£5,000.00	£282,887.25

283,897.15

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

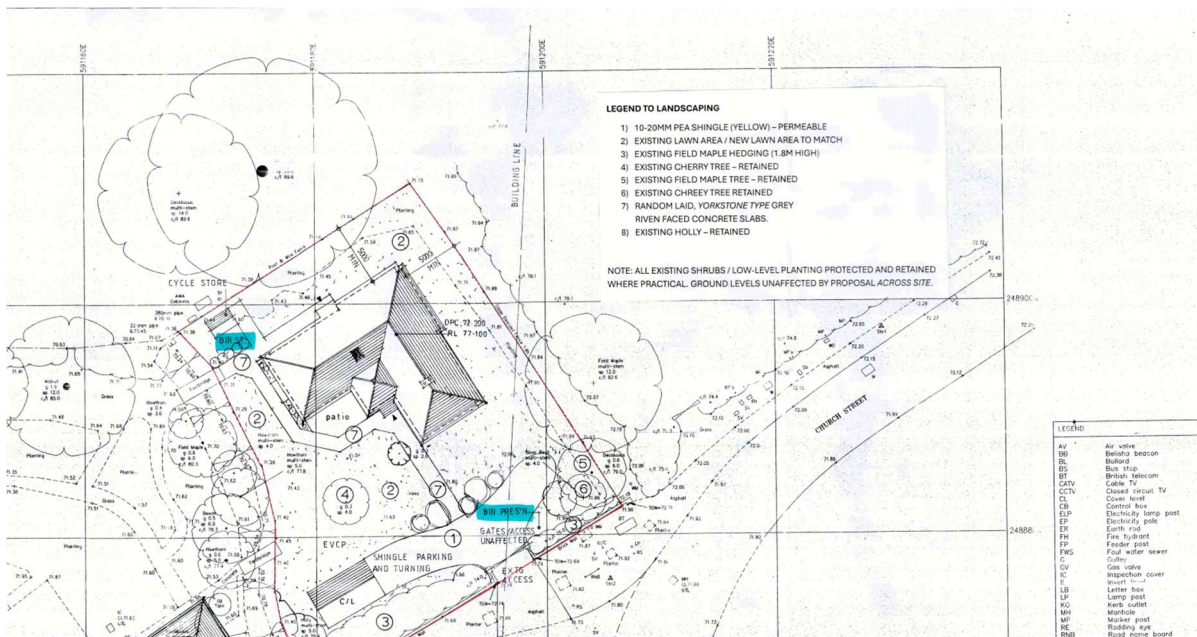
The Agent has written to the LPA as below:

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)

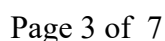
Show more description

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

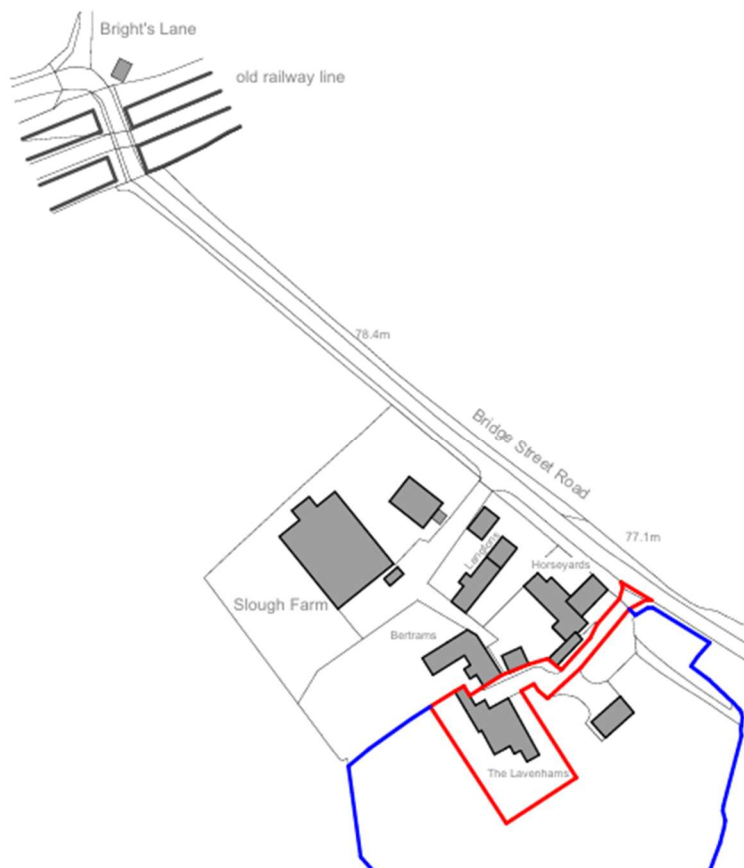
The property is Grade II listed – details of the Heritage Assets are given in the document attached to the application.

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.

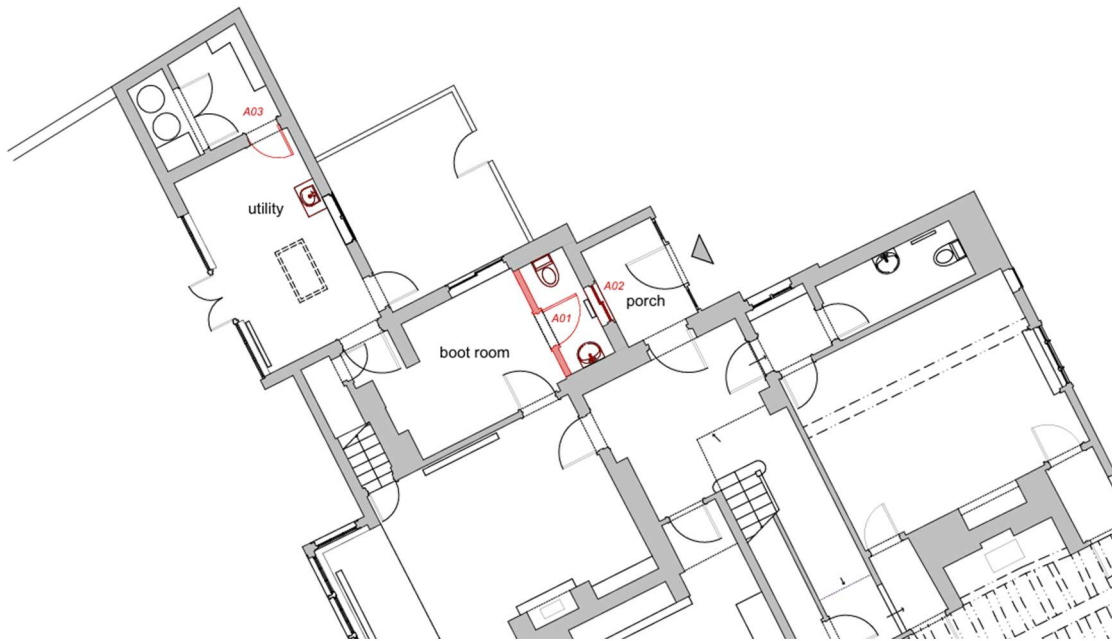
First floor changes are to the Principal Bedroom Suite that was created as part of the extension added in 2015.

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

Recommendation to be made at the Parish Council Meeting



Ground floor changes

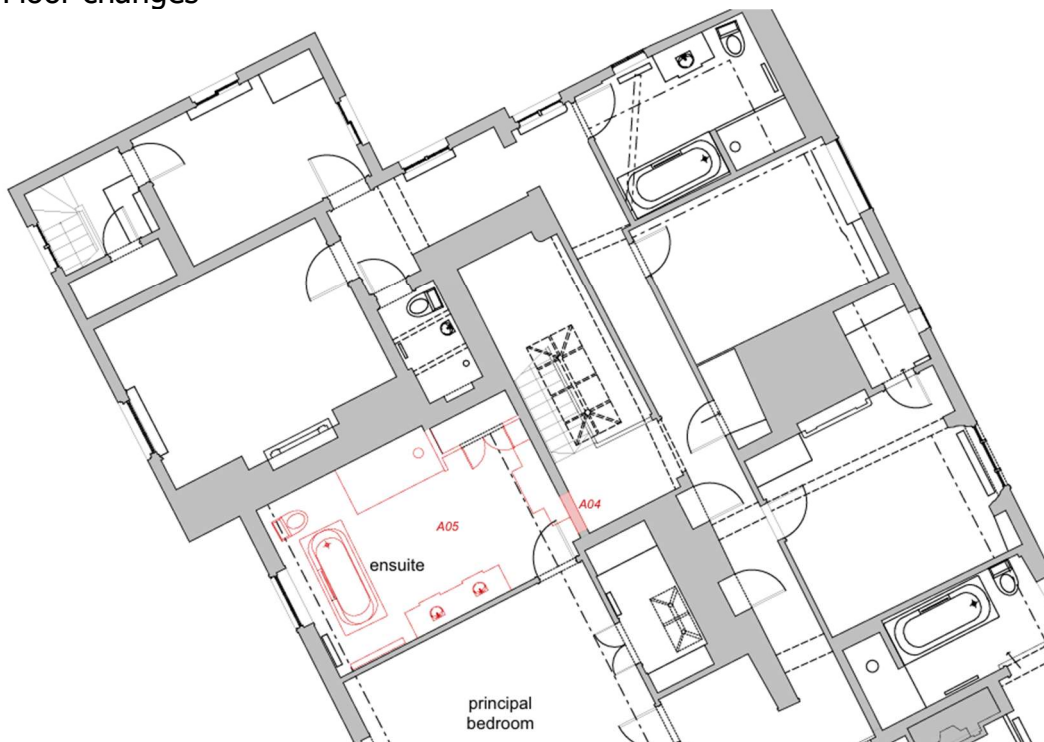


A01: Strip out existing cloakroom fittings.
Remove internal partition, door and lining between boot room
and cloakroom

A02: Remove existing window between cloakroom and
porch.

A03: Remove existing internal door

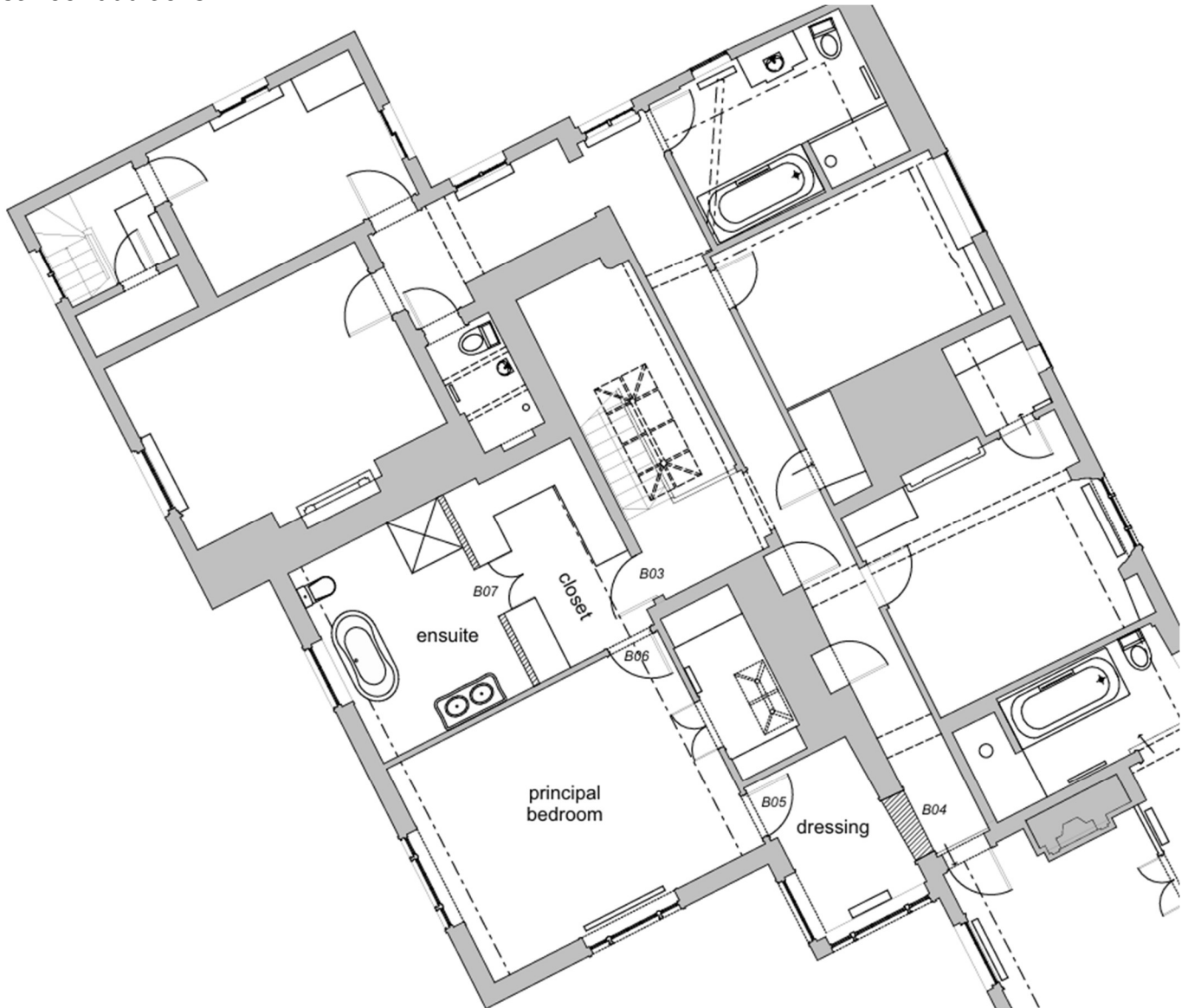
First Floor changes



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.

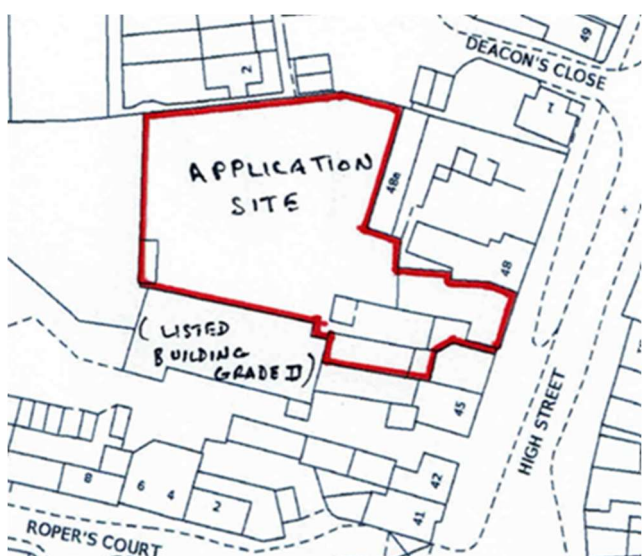
Show more description 

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

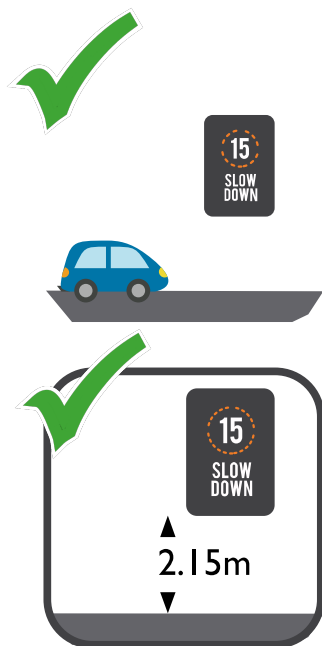


Avoid placing our sign underneath overhanging trees/hedges, especially if using solar panels. This will have a detrimental effect on the charging of the batteries plus tree sap will cause the sign to become dirty and could cause the sign to be obscured.



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.

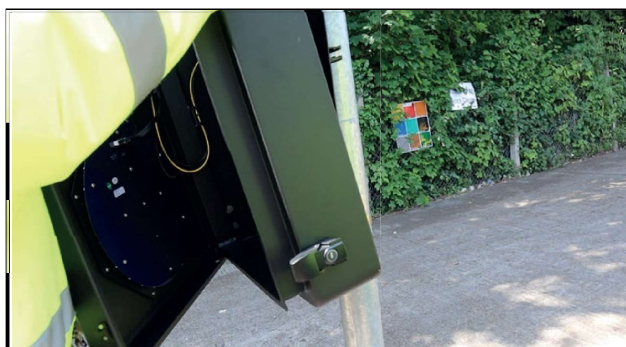
ATTACHING YOUR SPEED SIGN TO A POST

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



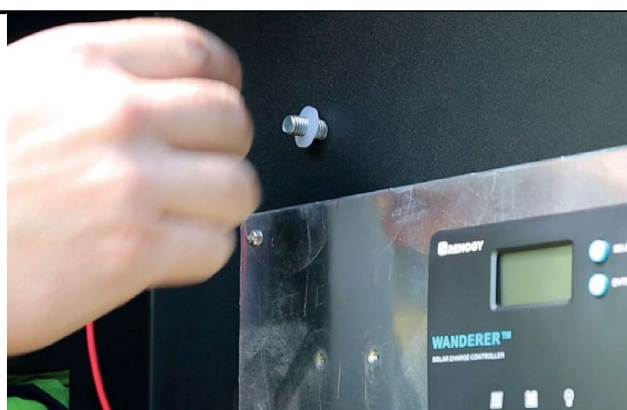
1.

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)

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- 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