

DENNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 10th November 2025 at 7.30pm at Dennington Village Hall



1. Councillors present

Robert Wardley (Chair) John Calver Doris Dearing Vashti Mouncer
Kevin Shelver Sam Steward
Cllr. Lunn was absent.
County Cllr. Burroughes and District Cllr. Langdon Morris sent their apologies.

In attendance

Lydia Kindred (clerk) 2 members of public

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr. Shelver- Item 7a. Sports Club Representative. A dispensation was granted to discuss the application. Cllr. Shelver left the meeting for the vote.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2025 were approved as a true record.

4. Matters arising

None

5. Public Forum

One of the residents made several comments. He confirmed that he was not in favour of a permissive path from Owls Green and explained his reasonings for this.

He suggested that some trees planted by the Parish Council at Owls Green and Capons Green need some attention.

He passed on the parochial Council's thanks for the annual donation towards the electricity costs, which are growing.

He was pleased to see that the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is being considered again, although he suggested that it needs to include WhatsApp communications in order to make it most effective.

The community website needs some attention and fresh content.

The Christmas lights switch-on event is very good for the community. He encouraged the Parish Council to support it and thinks the Council should donate the Christmas tree rather than asking residents to do so each year.

6. Chair's Report

The Chair has replaced more posts in The Square. Confirmation that the Land Registry has processed the Sports Club's first registration is still awaited.

The Consolidated Charities has today donated £1,000 to the Council to be used towards the purchase of a future tractor mower for the village. *The clerk will write to thank them for this and will ring-fence these funds.*

As agreed at a previous meeting, the tractor mower will be serviced over winter and he will arrange this.

There are some issues with parking near the Church and pond. Some people attending church events cannot park due to people visiting the pub parking in the way. This will be added to the next agenda.

The defibrillator pads expire at the end of the month and will need replacing before then. Volunteers using the tractor mower need to send the clerk copies of their driving license and confirm that they have not had endorsements or accidents within the last 3 years.

7. Clerk's report

The clerk has attended briefing sessions on East Suffolk Council's Local Plan Review and call for sites process, and the Local Government Review and assess management. The call for sites period runs until 9th January.

SALC's membership fees will increase by 3% and NALC are proposing increasing their fees by 3.6%.

The Meeting room has been booked for 2026 and the meeting dates have been published on the website.

The web editor has had to step back. The clerk is uploading Council documents and a volunteer to run the community side of the website will be asked for in the next newsletter.

8. Responsible Financial Officer's report

a) The following payments were approved:

Amount	Payee	Details
£95.94	Defibshop	Defibrillator pads
£22.80	SALC	6 months payroll
£250.00	Dennington Village Hall	Donation
£100.00	East Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau	Donation
£450.00	Dennington Church	Donation for communal lighting
£100.00	East Anglian Air Ambulance	Donation
£700.00	Dennington Sports Club	Donation
£20.00	Dennington Village Hall	Hall hire November

b) Receipts since the last meeting were noted:

£6,125 East Suffolk Council Precept instalment

£12.90 Barclays Interest

£48.98 Barclays Interest

c) The bank balances, statements and bank reconciliation as at 31.10.2025 were reviewed and signed by the RFO.

d) The year-to-date financial statement was considered. It was noted that the insurance, asset management and business rates costs are higher than budgeted for and this will be considered when setting the next budget.

9. Highways and footpaths issues in the village

The chair reported his site meeting with the Rights of Way Officer and footpath defects which should be rectified.

Cllr Hopewell-Smith presented the findings from his Owls Green residents' survey and outlined his proposal to request a permissive footpath linking Owls Green with the village centre, with the aim of improving connectivity between the two. After discussion, Councillors agreed not to pursue the proposal. Councillors also agreed not to explore altering the village boundary for Owls Green to become part of Laxfield.

10. Residents welcome pack & Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Cllr. Mouncer will bring printed copies of the proposed welcome pack to the next meeting. She- as an individual, not a Parish Councillor- has set up an informal village communications group on Whatsapp to help spread important village notices and this will be advertised on the community website.

The chair has been liaising with a representative from the Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and will invite him to come to a future meeting to discuss the Scheme with Councillors. It was noted that if the Council rejoins the scheme, its communication methods need to be compliant with the NWS's requirements.

11. Assertion 10

11.1 The clerk provided an update on responsibilities that the Council will need to consider.

11.2 The draft Data & IT policy was considered. The Chair suggested some additional items to consider regarding the use of email. The clerk will revise the policy and recirculate it, to be considered again in January.

11.3 The Council is still awaiting the Website Accessibility Review, which is expected to identify several changes required to bring the site into compliance with WCAG 2.1 standards. It was agreed that the clerk will obtain a quotation for establishing a separate website for community news and updates and to retain the existing site exclusively for Council business. This would help reduce the strict publication requirements and formatting constraints that apply to official Council websites.

12. The condition of noticeboards in the village

Cllr. Calver has cleaned the noticeboard at Owls Green and will treat it with wood preserve in spring. The noticeboard at The Neathouse has been painted this year but the back panel needs replacing.

13. Financing a handyman

There was discussion on financing a handyman to carry out maintenance and improvement tasks in the village. It was agreed to instead investigate insurance implications of volunteers carrying out tasks for the Council. If this is not possible, this can be considered again.

14. Digital mailing list

It was agreed that the clerk will create a digital mailing list to contact residents with important updates and to help improve community engagement. She will make a poster for this and advertise it in the next newsletter, noticeboards and website.

15. Village Christmas tree and lights switch-on

The Christmas lights switch-on event will take place on 30th November. It was noted that this event has run for seven years and remains a popular village occasion. In previous years, the Christmas tree has been donated by local residents. Councillors discussed whether the Parish Council should fund the tree this year. It was agreed that the Chair will first approach a resident to see if they are willing to donate a tree. If not, Councillors agreed by majority vote that the Council will allocate up to £250 to purchase a village Christmas tree.

16. Draft budget figures

These were discussed and will be ratified at January's meeting. The clerk will circulate the draft budget to Councillors.

17. Correspondence:

Essex and Suffolk Water – local water supply projects

East Suffolk Council notice of Call for Sites re Local Plan review
Invitation to SALC Forum with a focus on devolution on 2nd December. The clerk will attend this.
Freedom of Information request re finance breakdown, councillor numbers, elected/co opted etc- the clerk has responded to this.
Pensions Regulator notification of impending re-enrolment requirements- this was completed on 25th September 2025
Complaints about the overflowing bins and condition of the bin at the sports club were noted. Cllr. Shelver will raise this with the Sports Club Committee.
Citizens Advice Bureau- seeking a donation

18. Councillor Reports on actions and updates

Cllr. Dearing advised that she would be resigning after tonight’s meeting. The Chair thanked her for her many years’ service to the Council.
Cllr. Steward reported that the Village Hall Committee is meeting next week.
Cllr. Hopewell-Smith is liaising with a resident at Owls Green about installing the other pedestrian warning sign on a spare pole on his land.

19. Matters to be raised at the next meeting

Budget and precept
Community jobs list
IT and Data Policy
Notice board treatment (May)

20. The next meeting was confirmed as being on Monday 19th January 2026. There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.30pm.

Signed
Chair
Date