



Saxlingham Nethergate Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Monday 19 May 2025, Saxlingham Nethergate Village Hall, 7.30pm

Present: Elsje Stocker (Chair) Julie King (Clerk)
 Chris Clements
 Mark Fisher MVO
 Mike Haslam
 Harry Leeder
 Jackie Lee-Smith
 Zoe Yarham

Members of the public: seven

- 1 Election of Chair
Elsje Stocker was elected unopposed. Elsje signed her declaration of acceptance of office.
- 2 Election of Vice Chair
Mark Fisher was elected unopposed.
- 3 Apologies
All Parish Councillors were present. John Cook, District Councillor had sent his apologies.
- 4 Declaration of Interest for Items on the Agenda and Dispensations for Councillors with a Pecuniary Interest
Jackie Lee-Smith declared an interest in item 11aiii as an employee of Hill House and 11e as landowner.
- 5 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 7 April 2025
These were agreed as a true record of proceedings.
- 6 Public Open Forum
A member of the public asked about the insurance renewal and whether any of the quotes would include cover to enable the Community Payback Team to undertake work on the ditches.

The Treasurer of the Village Hall Committee spoke in support of the grant application. The cost of insurance was double that of two years ago and coupled with the loss of income from Springboard Nursery meant that the Charity didn't have the resources to pay the insurance and ongoing costs. Fundraising events were being organised but it was estimated that there was

likely to be a £3,000 shortfall during the current financial year. The grant was asking the Parish Council for half the cost of the insurance, £1,600, without which it would not be possible to keep the hall open.

A member of the public said that they were part of the Shotesham Solar Panel Group and were happy to feedback information. They said that there was a petition demanding that the location of solar panels should be as a result of proper planning. They also spoke about walks that were being organised along public rights of way that would be affected by the East Pye solar development, with those that use the footpaths regularly being asked to record how much they use them. Finally, they spoke of thoughts that the sites may have been selected adjacent to current developments, as once planning permission was obtained, it would be possible for the developer to purchase the land through compulsory purchase at agricultural rates and for the investors to later benefit from the gains associated with land that could be developed for housing.

It was noted that the six solar schemes being proposed in South Norfolk would rely on the Norwich to Tilbury upgrade and that Central Government were looking at regionalising grids to reduce pylons.

Concern was expressed regarding increased flood risk caused by the solar panels' concrete foundations that would be required.

Concern was raised regarding the overgrown hedge belonging to The Lodge on Cargate Lane, this would be reported to Highways.

Concern was expressed regarding soil on the road at the Elmers Lane/Long Lane corner, this would be reported to Highways.

Concern was expressed regarding a motorist regularly speeding on Elmers Lane, it was suggested that this was reported to Police.

7 Election of Representatives

a Village Hall Management Committee

It was agreed to appoint Jackie Lee-Smith, Ray Small and Paul Newman as the Parish Council appointed trustees.

b Saxlingham United Charities

Chris Clements had agreed to serve for a further four-year term and was appointed.

Corinne Douglas had decided not to continue as trustee, formal thanks would be sent to Corinne in recognition for the many years' service. It was agreed to advertise the position.

c Footpath Officer

It was agreed that Elsie Stocker would continue.

d Planning Advisory Group

It was agreed that Mike Haslam, Chris Clements and Mark Fisher would continue as the Planning Advisory Group, considering planning applications and making recommendations to the full Council (or to the Clerk if there was insufficient time).

e Councillor Responsible for the Quarterly Inspection of the Accounts

It was agreed that Mark Fisher would undertake the role for the forthcoming year.

8 Delegation Arrangements to the Clerk

It was agreed that the two arrangements already in place would continue:

- **Where it had not been possible to obtain any necessary extension from the District Council to allow a planning application to be considered at the next Council Meeting, the Clerk would, having consulted with the members of the Planning Advisory Committee, make the necessary response or convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council.**
- **To incur expenditure, subject to a limit of £500, which is of 'extreme urgency', as detailed in the Financial Regulations.**

9 Publishing of Councillors' Contact Details in Contact

It was agreed that Councillors' names, telephone numbers, residential street and email addresses would be published in Contact.

10 Councillor Vacancies

It was noted that the Council were free to co-opt into the vacancy created by the resignation of Jo Kershaw. The necessary notice had been displayed for the vacancy created by the resignation of Roger Stocks. Assuming that an election wasn't called, the Parish Council would be free to co-opt into this vacancy from 27 May.

It was agreed that Jackie Lee-Smith would become a bank signatory to join Elsie Stocker and Zoe Yarham and that Harry Leeder would be added to the rota for the Play Area checks. Zoe Yarham and Harry Leeder offered to print and post notices, including the agendas, on the village noticeboards.

11 Responding to and Working with Other Bodies

a Planning

i Planning Applications

2025/1132 Hill Pond, West End – Removal of condition 6 - (The granting of the recent certificate of lawfulness (2024/3413) makes the condition unenforceable and no longer necessary) of consented permission 2009/1515 which gave consent for (Proposed amended design of commenced chalet bungalow (application number FH12136))

It was agreed to recommend approval.

2025/1145 14 Steward Close – First floor extension above existing converted garage with two dormer windows

It was agreed to recommend approval.

- ii Planning Decisions taken by South Norfolk Council
None.

- iii Planning Enforcement Complaint
Jackie Lee-Smith abstained from this item.

It was felt that an unsatisfactory response had been received to previous correspondence regarding the Council's planning enforcement complaint and that it was important that future enforcement issues in the village would be dealt with effectively. A 'stage 2' draft letter had been circulated; **it was agreed to send the letter.**

- iv Planning Enforcement and Planning Appeals
Concern was expressed regarding the development on land south of Windy Lane. It was noted that a planning application had been refused but that development continued to take place. **It was agreed that Mikke Haslam would draft a letter asking Planning Enforcement what action was being taken.**

- v East Pye Solar
It was noted that the Parish Council had requested to join CPRE's alliance against the mega solar farms in Norfolk and that individuals could also join. There would be a meeting of the alliance the following Thursday evening at 7pm.

It was recognised that the Parish Council needed to increase its communication with the Parish with regard to the proposal. **It was agreed that Elsje Stocker would look at arranging a community walk along effected footpaths and Mark Fisher, Harry Leeder and Mike Haslam would look at communication with the public.**

b Highway Issues

- i Footpaths
Growth on the village footpaths had been slow due to the lack of rain; a railing had been added to the steps at mudhole (it was not thought that this was Highways) and that Redwings had arranged for some maintenance of the footpaths.

Consideration was given to purchasing spare parts for footpath signage, **it was agreed that Elsje Stocker would contact Highways again regarding discs and any repairs required to posts would be reported using the Norfolk County Council's online system.**

- ii Roadworks on the A140 in Swainsthorpe
Concern was expressed regarding the volume and speed of traffic using the roads in the village.

The police had carried out enforcement checks.

It was noted that the current work was to connect a solar farm between Swainsthorpe and Mulbarton into the substation at Dunston. Concern was expressed that planning

permission was being given to such schemes without regard to the inconvenience caused during construction.

c Flooding

It was noted that the Environment Agency had sent through their annual maintenance schedule.

i Silt Removal from the Ditch Along The Street

Harry Leeder was looking at organising this to be done as soon as possible, ways to reduce the cost were being looked at.

ii Ditch Along The Street – Letter to Agencies

It was agreed to write to Michael Kinge at the Environment Agency to request a meeting to discuss the implementation of a maintenance regime.

d South Norfolk Council's Public Spaces Protection Order (Dog Fouling & Dog Control) Renewal Consultation

This was noted and agreed.

e Planting of wood

Jackie Lee-Smith abstained from this item.

It was proposed to plant 10 acres of new woodland on land in Foxhole. It was noted that fencing would be erected adjacent to the existing footpath to deter walkers from accessing the site but that plenty of room would be allowed for the footpath. **It was agreed to support the proposal.**

12 Projects

a VE Anniversary Celebration

This had been a huge success with over 100 in attendance, many had dressed in 1940s style dress and the dance floor had been full all evening. The event had been supported by many volunteers including a cask of beer from the Saxon Club. The accounts were shared in draft form, profit made from the evening would be donated to the Village Hall.

13 Asset Management

a War Memorial

i Bollards

A response from the Highway Engineer was awaited.

ii Plaque

Consideration was given to creating a copy of the Royal British Legion Norfolk, Coltishall Award for the Best Kept War Memorial 2024 to mount on the War Memorial. A quote of £59 had been obtained. **It was agreed to go ahead with this.**

b Dog Bin Browns Lane

The lid of the bin had become rusty and sharp, the edges had been taped, **it was agreed to monitor.**

c Allotments

An inspection had been carried out the previous week, letters had been sent to those allotment holders who were not adequately cultivating their allotments. All allotments were once again let.

d Play Area

The annual inspection would be carried out in June at a cost of £92 plus VAT. Jackie Lee-Smith was pressure washing the equipment.

14 Management of the Parish Council

a Asset Register

The asset register was reviewed and approved.

b Insurance

A renewal quote had been received from the current insurer but alternative quotes were awaited, the insurance renewed on 6 June. It was noted that coverage for the Community Payback Team to be able to clear the ditches would be preferable. **The level of coverage was agreed and it was agreed to delegate to the clerk the decision of which insurer to use once the quotes had been received.**

15 Finance

a The following payments made since the last meeting were noted:

Unity Trust Bank	Bank charges	£6.00
------------------	--------------	-------

b The following were approved for payment:

Julie King	April salary & expenses	£530.64
Julie King	Brushcutter	£259.99
Norfolk Pension Fund	Pension contribution	£135.56
Norfolk Parish Training & Support	Planning training	£130.00
Geoff Blyth	Defibrillator battery	£253.80
Charlotte Vandjour Wright	VE Day Event - singer	£200.00
Village Hall	VE Day Event – hall hire	£352.00
Westcotec	SAM 2 post and batteries	£435.60
Elsje Stocker	VE Day Event – expenses	£416.90
Saxon Club	Beer	£55.20

c The following receipts since the last meeting were noted:

Sale of 'A Good Place to Call Home'		£5.00
South Norfolk Council	Precept	£8,248.00
HMRC	VAT reclaim	£236.17
Allotment tenant	Rent & deposit	£37.00

16 Village Organisations

a Village Hall

The Village Hall Committee had submitted a grant request for £1,600 towards their insurance cost of £3,200. Fundraising events were being organised to assist with the

finances of the hall but a shortfall was still anticipated. It was noted that this was something that the Parish Council hadn't budgeted for so would need to come out of reserves. **It was agreed to offer an interest free loan repayable within 18 months with a review in six months.**

- b Playing Field
Those present were sad to hear about the weedkiller being inadvertently used on part of The Meadow, it was noted that the Playing Field Committee were looking at mitigation measures with the contractor responsible.

17 Date of Next Meeting
Monday 9 June 2025.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Chair's Signature..... Date.....