



Saxlingham Nethergate Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Monday 8 September 2025, Saxlingham Nethergate Village Hall, 7.30pm

Present: Elsje Stocker (Chair) Julie King (Clerk)
Paul Bowen
Chris Clements
Mark Fisher MVO
Mike Haslam
Jackie Lee-Smith – from item 5av
Harry Leeder – from item 5av
Zoe Yarham

Members of the public: five including John Cook, District Councillor

These minutes are draft until approved at the next meeting.

- 1 Apologies
Apologies from Liz Utting were noted.
- 2 Declaration of Interest for Items on the Agenda and Dispensations for Councillors with a Pecuniary Interest
Zoe Yarham declared an interest in 5avi, effected by Nutrient Neutrality.
- 3 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 14 July 2025
These were agreed as a true record of proceedings.
- 4 Public Open Forum
John Cook spoke about:
 - a meeting regarding the ford at Shotesham, a decision was yet to be made regarding long-term closure of the road.
 - East Pye Solar – John had asked Daniel Elmer, Leader of South Norfolk Council, to support those opposing the proposals. He had expressed that he was supportive of solar but not on the most valuable land. John had also written to Ben Goldsborough MP asking to support his constituents. Lord John Fuller had spoken in the House of Lords about the importance of food security and that valuable food production land should not be used for solar farms.
 - Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation was on agenda for the forthcoming Cabinet Meeting.

- loud music in Foxhole – following the most recent disturbance, he had received a raft of emails. He had advised those concerned to make contact with the Environmental Protection Team at South Norfolk Council. It was also noted that the Police had attended for a second time this year. He urged the Parish Council to write to owners of the property to ask them to give assurances that it will not happen again.

Several members of the public had attended to raise concerns regarding noise from the recent event in Foxhole. They were concerned that these events were being held on land belonging to a Parish Councillor and that they had been given no advanced notice.

5 Responding to and Working with Other Bodies

a Planning

- i It was noted that, for the following applications received during the summer, the Clerk had consulted with the members of the Planning Advisory Committee and had responded under delegated powers:

2025/0006 – Calico Cottage, Foxhole, Extension to existing dwelling to create annexe following demolition of agricultural structure.

The Parish Council had objected to the amended application stating that it was still contrary to policy DM3.7 (Residential annexes).

2025/1970 – Land East of Windy Lane, Proposed agricultural barn with solar panels and polytunnel. Erect shed and partly completed farm track to support agricultural activities – Retrospective.

The Parish Council had made the following comments:

The Parish Council wish to draw your attention to the numbered paragraph "1" that is just above the signature on the decision notice for application 2024/0481: -

"1. The Local Planning Authority confirm it has taken a positive and proactive approach to reach this decision in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. In this case the proposal is not supported in principle, and no amount of negotiation would change this outcome."

With this background in mind, the Parish Council objects to the application for the following reasons:

A building of 276sqm and some 8 metres in height, with the capacity to install an additional floor, cannot be reasonably required for the agricultural needs of a small agricultural holding of less than 5ha. In addition, the size and height of the building will be obtrusive in this rural landscape.

2025/2193 – Hawthorn Cottage, Pitts Hill, Conversion of a garage to a home gym and utility room with removal of existing garage door with a replacement window and brickwork. New patio and decorative curved brick wall.

The Parish Council had supported the application.

- ii Planning Decisions taken by South Norfolk Council

2025/1847 3 Kensington Close

Approved with conditions

2025/0006 Calico Cottage, Foxhole

Approved with conditions

iii Planning Enforcement Complaint

Following the meeting between Elsie Stocker, Mike Haslam, the Clerk and Phil Courtier, Direct of Place, South Norfolk Council, regarding the Parish Council's stage 2 complaint, Phil had provided a written response. Whilst there was still concern regarding past failings, **it was agreed that the Parish Council would not pursue the complaint further but would follow up on any future issues holding the department to account.**

iv Planning Enforcement and Planning Appeals

It was agreed to write to the Environment Protection Team at South Norfolk Council to convey the Council's concern and its support for the affected neighbours of the ongoing anti-social behaviour and noisy events in Foxhole.

v East Pye Solar

Harry Leeder joined the meeting.

Concerns were expressed regarding:

- the responsibility of the eventual restoration of the sites and whether this will fall to the landowner.

Jackie Lee-Smith joined the meeting.

- the lack of support being offered by the local MP to those receiving threatening letters from the agents of the applicant
- the ethical history of the investment company behind the proposals

A submission to the Planning Inspectorate was expected late December, the Planning Inspectorate would then have 28 days to decide whether to accept the submission, once accepted interested parties would be able to apply to be involved and would have eight weeks to raise objections. Consideration was being given as to how parishes can make sure that they are ready to respond and **it was agreed that the Parish Council need to be ready to produce necessary responses and communicate with residents regarding how they can be involved.**

vi Nutrient Neutrality

Concern was raised regarding the company set up to handle credits and questions had been asked about where the money had been spent.

A response from Tom Sawyer at Norfolk Environmental Credits regarding the disparity of amounts being quoted was awaited and John Cook offered to chase.

It appeared that developments in Saxlingham Nethergate were being charged additional amounts due to inadequate investment by Anglian Water in the sewage works.

Harry Leeder declared an interest, he had recently been seconded to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government with a responsibility to look at failing water companies with a view to unlocking housing and development.

It was agreed to write to Wendy Brookes, the Environment Lead at Norfolk County Council copying in Phil Courtier, Director of Place at South Norfolk Council, County Councillor – Alison Thomas and District Councillor John Cook to express the Parish Council's concern that the lack of capacity in waste water infrastructure was endangering the affordable housing development in the Parish.

vii Neighbourhood Plan

Consideration was given as to whether Saxlingham Nethergate should look at producing a Neighbourhood Plan. It was recognised that there was merit in having a Neighbourhood Plan but as there were currently no proposals for development in Saxlingham Nethergate and due to the significant workload implications, **it was agreed to look at this again after the East-Pye proposals had concluded.**

b Highway Issues

i Footpaths

Consideration was given to whether a second cutting of the footpaths was needed. Paul Bowen and Elsje Stocker were due to meet regarding the footpaths the following Monday and would look at whether this was required.

ii Speeding and SAM 2

The data continued to be downloaded and circulated.

It was noted that the hedge at The Lodge on Cargate Lane had been cut.

c Flooding

i Silt Removal from the Ditch Along The Street

It was agreed to pause this until the multi-agency meeting had taken place (see below).

ii Ditch Along The Street – Letter to Agencies

Michael King, Senior Advisor – Strategic Flood Risk at the Environment Agency had provided an update including that Norfolk County Council were hoping to implement their plans to slow the flow and hold water back upstream of Wash Lane before Christmas. He had suggested, and offered to organise, a meeting with the Parish Council and other partners to provide updates on the current activities and to discuss how they can work together to take forward actions. **It was agreed to take Michael up on this offer and to suggest that Norfolk Wildlife Trust be invited as it was understood that they were looking at reinstating ponds in the area.**

d Lack of Mobile Signal

There was nothing to report. John Cook offered to look into what had happened with the data that was being collected from the bin lorries.

6 Asset Management

a War Memorial

i Bollards

The estimate from Highways was awaited.

b Allotments

The allotment gate posts had been inspected and found to be stable; it was thought that the clay soil drying out over the summer may have caused them to become loose. Quotes would be obtained for replacement gates, and Elsje Stocker would be arranging the repair of the broken fence posts.

c Play Area

Thanks to assistance from a resident, the repair to the top of the slide had been completed, once again they had made no charge for this work. This was the last remaining issue from the annual inspection.

It was noted that the planks under the suspended rope bridge were starting to rot, this would be monitored.

d Annual Asset Inspection

Outstanding issues following the annual asset inspection, the following were agreed:

- bottom right-hand corner of the village sign was damaged – the options for repair were considered but **it was agreed that aesthetically it would look better if it was left.**
- The noticeboard at Hootnanny had been repaired by a local resident at no cost.
- Two allotment posts were broken, **Elsje Stocker would repair**
- The Neighbourhood Watch sign at the bottom of Pitts Hill was in need of attention, the post had obviously been hit and was at an angle but secure and safe, **it was agreed not to take any action.**

7 Projects

i Finger Post, Junction of Norwich Road and Shotesham Lane

The work to restore this post was progressing.

8 Management of the Parish Council

a Communication Strategy

Mark Fisher offered to put together a strategy to link in with the wider aims and objectives of the council, including such things as an annual newsletter and resident consultation. It was also suggested that a Parish Council WhatsApp group be considered.

b Appointment of Internal Auditor

It was agreed to appoint Sue Lake as the council's internal auditor for 2025/26 at a cost of £100.

c Delegation to the Clerk

It was agreed to delegate authority to the clerk to respond to consultations when the closing date is beyond the next meeting, having consulted with Councillors.

9 Finance

a Allotment Fees and Charges

Consideration was given to the rent charged for allotments, taking into consideration the fees set by other authorities and the work that was being undertaken by the allotment holders. **It was agreed not to increase the costs for the forthcoming year.**

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

Mark Fisher	Laminated posters	£65.10
Wave	Allotment water	£138.58
Unity Trust Bank	Bank charges	£12.00

c The following were approved for payment and the nationally agreed salary review for the Clerk for 2025/26 was noted.

Julie King	July & August salary and backpay	£989.07
HMRC	NI	£23.17
Norfolk Pension Fund	Pension contribution	£293.07
Norfolk PTS	Training	£186.00
South Norfolk Council	Dog bin emptying	£451.20
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit	£252.00
Parish Online	Extra mailbox capacity	£28.80

d The following receipts since the last meeting were noted:

Julie King	Sale of A Good Place to Call Home	£5.00
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e External Audit Report

This was noted; there were no matters that required attention.

10 Village Organisations

a Village Hall

Jackie Lee-Smith gave an overview of the items discussed at the last meeting, the minutes had previously been circulated.

b Playing Field

Nothing to report.

11 Items for Next Month's Agenda

Bulb planting in October.

12 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 13 October 2025.

The meeting closed at 9.59pm

Chair's Signature.....

Date.....