

DENNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 14th September 2026 at 7.30pm at Dennington Village Hall



1. Councillors present

Robert Wardley (Chair) Nick Hopewell-Smith Matt Lunn (Vice Chair)
Kevin Shelver Sam Steward

Cllr. Faye Steward sent her apologies and these were accepted.

Cllrs. Vashti Mouncer and John Calver were absent.

Also in attendance: Lydia Kindred (clerk) & 2 members of public
District Cllr. Langdon-Morris sent his apologies.

2. Declarations of interest

Re item 12, Cllr. Steward declared an interest in application DC/26/2693/FUL.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th July were approved as a true record.

4. Matters arising

None

5. Public Forum

The resident present spoke in favour of planning application DC/26/2693/FUL, detailing reasons for his support. He also extended an invitation to the a Harvest BBQ on Friday 18th September to everyone in the village.

6. Chair's report

The Chair reported that he and a resident had cut the lower hedge at the Sports Club, and he thanked Robert Rous for disposing of the trimmings. He also expressed thanks to Cllr. Steward for cutting the hedges around the village green, the allotments, and the Sports Club.

Confirmation of the first registration for the Sports Club is still awaited from the Land Registry. This had been expected in September. *The clerk will ask the solicitors for an update.*

The Chair is working on a project to record the memories of long-standing village residents to help preserve local history. He noted that this is being undertaken by him in a personal capacity, rather than as a Parish Council initiative.

7. Clerk's report

The clerk will be attending the next East Suffolk Council Town and Parish Council Planning Forum on 16th September and will provide updates following the meeting. The forum is expected to outline changes to the planning decision process coming into effect in October, which are intended to reduce the number of applications considered by ESC's Planning Committee.

The clerk attended an East Suffolk Council Winter Preparedness session earlier today, where several important issues were raised, including the importance of a Community Emergency Plan. *It was noted that the Chair and Vice Chair are working on one for the village.*

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) process is moving towards full digitisation, with the aim that submissions for the year ending 31st March 2027 will be completed online. The Internal Auditor's report will likely not be digitised at this stage. In preparation for this transition, the Clerk has registered Dennington Parish Council on the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments (SAAA) online portal.

The clerk is working on the Council's content for the next edition of the newsletter.

8. Responsible Financial Officer's report

- a) The following payments were considered and approved:

Amount	Payee	Details
£Awaited	HMRC	PAYE to 05.10.2026
£Awaited	L. Kindred	Pay to 30.09.2026
£20.00	Dennington Village Hall	Hall hire September
£556.38.	Zurich	Insurance premium

- b) Payments and receipts since the last meeting
None
- c) The bank balances, statements and bank reconciliation as at 26.08.2026 had been circulated and were reviewed and signed by the Examining Councillor.
- d) The year-to-date financial statement was reviewed, and this was in line with the budget.
- e) It was noted that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached an agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027. As per contract terms, it was agreed to backdate clerk's pay to the revised rate from 1st April.

9. Local Government Review update

It was reported that on 7th September the Government announced it is withdrawing its decision to implement Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Suffolk.

This means it is now unlikely that Suffolk will move to a unitary council model, and existing district and county councils will likely remain in place.

The May 2027 local elections will proceed using the existing district and county council boundaries.

The implications for the proposed devolution arrangements for Suffolk and Norfolk are not yet clear- Mayoral elections are currently scheduled for May 2028, but further guidance is awaited. The clerk will share more information when it becomes available.

10. Better Recycling update – East Suffolk Council

The Chair has been in contact with District Councillor Owen Grey regarding missed food waste bins and there has been an improvement in collection rates.

Cllr Sally Noble has reported that August had been a particularly challenging month for the Better Recycling service. A combination of several heatwaves, staff holidays, sickness absence and the death of an East Suffolk Services operative had placed significant pressure on operations. She advised that the service is expected to improve during September, with teams confident that recent difficulties are now being addressed. However, it is recognised that some residents have experienced repeated disruption and a poor level of service during this period. Cllr. Noble acknowledged that this is not acceptable and offered apologies to those affected.

11. Current and ongoing highways and footpaths issues in the village

Long grass near the entrance to Swainston's Way has now been cut to improve the visibility splay.

Having shared previous correspondence with the County Councillor, the Chair has not heard back from him regarding whether an additional layby near Blyth villas could be possible. *The clerk will ask him for an update.*

Cllr. Lunn will report drains which are blocked or need desilting via SCC's online reporting tool.

12. The following applications were considered:

DC/26/2693/FUL- *Consultation expires 15/09/11*

Construction of new self build residential dwelling with double garage

White House Farm Saxtead Road Dennington IP13 8AW

Cllr. Steward left the meeting for the duration of discussion on this item.

The application was discussed at length. The site lies just outside the parish envelope. A resident's objection was considered. Councillors noted that there is no right to a view and that this is not a valid material consideration. Councillors raised concerns regarding SCC Highways' comment that the Parish Council would be responsible for relocating the village gateway and 30mph roundels situated at the entrance to the proposed driveway. It was agreed to respond that the Parish Council did not install this gateway, does not own it and has no responsibility for its relocation.

If the development is permitted, Councillors agreed to ask whether the public right of way could be diverted across the new driveway to allow footpath users to reach the pavement directly, rather than walking further along Saxtead Road to the footbridge. This would provide a benefit to the village. If a formal diversion is not possible, the Council would welcome the applicant considering a permissive path.

It was agreed not to object to the application.

DC/26/2986/TCA

1no. Fir/Pine (marked 1 on plan) - Fell 2no. Cypress - Prune back to boundary 1no.

Willow) - Prune back to boundary 1no. Mixed hedge

Howards Lodge The Street Dennington IP13 8JF- No objections

DC/26/3073/FUL

Erection of greenhouse in front garden of dwelling

Owl House Owls Green Dennington IP13 8BX – No objections

13. Correspondence received since date of last meeting:

East Suffolk Council offer of free trees which must be planted within public sight. This was noted and will be passed on to the Playschool.

Suffolk Water Recycling Storage and Transfer Project– Request for scoping document input. Councillors noted that this would pass through Laxfield, near Owl's Green. Councillors have received no comments from residents on this and had nothing that they wished to be included in the scoping document. The clerk will respond as such.

14. Dog waste bins

It was agreed to replace two dog bins in the village, at a cost of £145 each plus £15 delivery.

15. Insurance

The insurance renewal was considered. Councillors were pleased to note that the premium had decreased by £42. It was agreed that the policy is still fit for the Council's needs.

16. New residents Welcome Pack

Cllr. Mouncer had intended to email this to Councillors. The clerk will ask her to do this, and it is hoped that this can then be signed off at the next Council meeting.

17. Websites

A resident has said she may be willing to maintain the community website (www.dennington.org.uk) and will liaise with the clerk about this. The Council may need to pay for training as she has not used the Silverstripe web editing system before. It was agreed to fund training up to £150 if necessary.

It was also agreed to update the Parish Council's website to make it more accessibility compatible at a one-off cost of £150. Minutes and agendas will then be imbedded in the web pages without the need for PDFs and a summary of all minutes will be provided.

18. Councillor Reports on actions and updates

Cllr. Shelver gave a brief report from the Sports Club.

19. Second Public Session

A resident asked if Dennington could have its own flag, noting that Suffolk and Framlingham have a flag.

Concerns were raised that including this second public session could lead residents to question Council decisions already made. Councillors will review the need and value of having an additional public session.

20. Matters to be raised at the next meeting

Consider Dennington having its own village flag.

The next meeting was confirmed as being on Monday 9th November 2026 (note date change from 16th November).

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.55pm.