

BOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the MEETING

held on Tuesday 28th October 2025 at 7.00p.m. in the Village Hall, Boxford.

PRESENT: Cllrs D Warren, H Watts, C Lawson, A Troke, J Tolputt and J King. Z Rumsey (Clerk), DCllr Hurren and CCllr J Finch. 6 members of the public attended in person.

1. Co-Option of Councillor

John King was nominated to be co-opted to the Parish Council, this was proposed and seconded and voted unanimously. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.

2. Apologies:

Cllr P Watt. It was resolved to accept the apologies.

3. Declarations of Interest by Councillors:

None received.

4. Approval of Minutes of 23rd September 2025:

It was resolved to accept the minutes as correct and these were signed by the Chair.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

It was noted that Vince Strafford has withdrawn his offer to assist with the car park, following the previous discussion regarding hiring Hugh Phillips as a consultant. It was also noted that any agreement to be made with Mr Phillips should be in writing with a contract formed to ensure proper practices are in place.

Cllr Troke confirmed that he would be attending the Remembrance Day Church Service and would therefore be able to lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council.

All other matters arising are Agenda items.

6. Public Participation- Views / Questions from the Public:

A resident raised a concern regarding the play area at Goodlands – it was confirmed that this was a matter for Babergh District Council and DCllr Hurren will look into.

An update on the speed limit restriction was requested – CCllr Finch confirmed that the matter was in motion and was going through the legal process. This unfortunately is not a quick process.

A resident raised a concern regarding the trees around the Ash Street area – DCllr Hurren confirmed that this was a matter for BDC and will be looked into.

It was reported that the public access surface to the front of the Old Gaol was uneven and potentially dangerous; this has been raised to SCC Highways but has been rejected. The resident requested that CCllr Finch discuss with Highways to overturn the decision. It was requested that this be added as an agenda item to the next PC meeting to request contribution from PC if unsuccessful with Highways.

Previous discussions have been had with Cllr Warren regarding the old Mill Surgery. Correspondence has been received from BDC that the application for the Asset of Community Value has been rejected and a private sale has subsequently taken place. The purchaser has offered the PC first refusal to lease the building and it has been asked that the matter be added to the next meeting agenda to discuss if the PC wish to continue discussions with the new owner.

7. District Council Report:

The attached report was received by DCllr Hurren and was forwarded to the Parish Councillors after the meeting. DCllr Hurren informed that PC that he has been approached by a resident to request a bench for a late resident in the Millenium Garden. It was resolved that the matter would be added to the agenda for the next meeting to be discussed.

County Council Report:

The attached report was received and distributed to Parish Councillors ahead of the meeting. CCllr Finch discussed matters from the report.

8. Finance –

a) *Bank Balances and previously agreed payments.*

24th September 2025 Opening Bank Balances: £117,406.56.

Income:
£13,780.77 (CIL Payment).

Outgoings:

Date paid	Payee	Amount	Details
29/09/25	Zoe Rumsey	£454.09	Clerks Salary
07/10/25	HMRC	£135.97	PAYE
	Boxford Village Hall	£41.00	October Hall Hire
	David Warren	£375.00	War Memorial Soldiers
	David Warren	£21.50	Remembrance Day Wreath
	Mortimer Contracts	£626.40	Public Realm contractor
	Suffolk Cloud	£120.00	Email & website hosting
21/10/25	E.ON	£31.50	Bell House Electricity

The sum of the payments made was £1,805.46.

22nd October 2025 Closing Bank balances:

Community Account £47,464.38

Deposit Account £34,596.76

Reserve Account £47,320.73

Total of £129,381.87

b) *Authorise payments*

None

c) *Purchase of Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration*

It was resolved to purchase the book alongside Polstead Parish Council, with the understanding that if for any reason the Clerk is no longer in position for either Council, an identical copy will be purchased jointly with PPC.

9. Planning – Report on Decisions from the Planning Authority.

DC/25/03455 – 38 Swan Street – Granted

Consider the following items: -

a) DC/25/04465 – 2 Rectory Park, Boxford – Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area.

DC/25/04517 – 10 The Causeway, Boxford – Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area.

DC/25/04502 – The Old Forge, Boxford – Application for Listed Building Consent. Replacement of 3rd ground floor rear windows.

DC/25/04513 – Old School House, Boxford – Householder Application - Erection of a residential annex building and pool, new gates and walls, following removal of three trees and two sheds. New hedge planting.

DC/25/04517 – 4 The Causeway, Boxford – Application for works to Trees subject to Tree Preservation Order WS232.

It was resolved to raise no objection to all of the above planning applications.

b) *Any other urgent planning matters:*

None received.

10. Resolve purchase of Christmas Tree

It was resolved to purchase the Christmas tree from the same company as last year, Sudbury Plants.

11. Approval of updated Standing Orders

The Clerk has distributed the changes made to the Standing Orders to the Councillors prior to the meeting. It was resolved to accept the changes and adopt the Standing Orders.

12. Review of Data Protection policies

The Clerk has distributed the changes made to the Data Protection policies to the Councillors prior to the meeting. It was resolved to accept the changes and adopt the Data Protection policies.

13. Approval of estimate for tree works to the cemetery

Cllr Warren has received a quote of £3,950 + VAT for the works to the trees in the cemetery. It was resolved to accept the quote and go ahead with the works as some of the trees are becoming potentially dangerous.

14. Application to DCllr Hurren for funds from locality budget to replace Churchyard Posts

DCllr Hurren confirmed that the locality budget is still available of up to £1000 and would be soon closing but an exact date would be confirmed at the next meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk would look for quotes before the next meeting to establish how much would be required from the locality budget.

15. Village bulb planting – update

Cllr Troke has been obtaining prices for bulbs but it was unsure how many would be needed. It was resolved that a plan is to be drawn up to establish where in the village bulbs would be planted, therefore it could be estimated how many bulbs would be required and who would like to assist in planting, i.e. Beavers, Rainbows etc.

16. Stone Street Car Park – update and to agree consultancy works

The consultancy works were discussed earlier in the meeting, please see item 5 for minutes. It is being questioned whether there is a requirement for the car park to be linked with building residential properties along Stone Street and whether the costs are going to be achievable for the PC. It was resolved to engage with the Boxford Volunteer Consultancy group to ask for their assistance in the project.

17. Member's Reports

None received.

18. Agree meeting for budget

It was resolved that once the Clerk has drafted a budgeted, a date would be agreed between Cllrs Warren, Watt and Tolputt for a convenient time to meet.

19. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 25th November 2025

20. Closed session – confidential matter to be discussed

The matter of the Mill Surgery was raised during item 6 as it has become public knowledge within the village and was no longer deemed a confidential matter for the PC.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 21.16.

Signed.....

Date.....

Report for Boxford PC 21st October 2025. from Cllr Bryn Hurren.

Firstly good news in that the Woodland Trust have finally received documentation from developer to enable them to take over possession of the Primrose Wood meadow and manage it for the benefit of the wildlife and eco systems that it will support and in perpetuity for the village of Boxford and its residents as a whole. They will now register the property in their name and as they have their own lawyers, this should happen quickly. A great acquisition for them and the village as a whole. Also as they have allocated monies for fencing and gates, this whole scenario can now be progressed quickly and competently.

I have noticed recently that the little playground has been left without maintenance and have put in a call to our public realm team for some urgent maintenance and upkeep. Maybe the PC can have input for ideas into a planting scheme to make it look a little better with input from the environmental committee, maybe shrubs and bushes to set it off and give a little wind break and some privacy.

I have had an enquiry from Dave Gasson who was a long term Councillor on Boxford PC, to put a memorial bench at the entrance to the Causeway, in memory of his late wife Jill who passed away a few months ago. Would it be possible to place it alongside the wall at the back of the garden that the PC manage and upkeep? I presume that the PC have ownership of that area and might welcome a seat as a place to sit and rest for passers by. Also being at the entrance of the Causeway where Jill lived would be a nice place for the family to sit and visit themselves.

I have noticed recently that the posts supporting the church gates have finally rotted at the bottom and the gates are sagging on the ground, I will did them out in the next couple of weeks but they may need replacing in the very near future, I do remember when making the gates that I predicted the posts would last another 20 yrs but think it is much longer than that now. Quite happy to quote for the work but need to look first.

Just a gentle reminder also that I do have my locality budget monies again this year and would be happy to fund a project that is of benefit to the wider village and has the PCs support, up to a value of approx. £1,000,00 Maybe an item for next months agenda, the money has to be claimed by end of this year and I have to apply for it, so some urgency here.

Regrettably, I will not be at your meeting as it once again clashes with the Babergh full council meeting and I do have to stop behind for quick meeting with officers and signing of minutes etc. Maybe David with another could meet me early next week for an exchange of outcomes from your meeting and anything else coming up on the horizon, plus public comments as well.

Many Thanks Bryn.

A Report for Boxford Parish Council Meeting on 25th November 2025 From James Finch – County Councillor for the Stour Valley

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➤ **Ofsted Focused Visit finds ‘early signs of improvement’ in Front Door Children’s Services**

The report noted ‘early signs of improvement beginning to emerge. These include

- Children identified as at risk of harm receive prompt and appropriate responses with strong oversight and swift multi-agency collaboration
- Clear investment and support from the whole council for children's services
- High staff morale, stable workforce, strong peer and managerial support maintaining consistency for families despite leadership changes

However the report also highlighted the following areas which still need for improvement:

- Monitoring systems need to more reliably flag delays and support effective management decision-making
- More consistency in professional curiosity and threshold decisions needed
- Better recognition and response needed to pattern of concern when multiple or repeated requests are made for the same families

Since the ILACS report in August 2024, which found that the authority’s children’s services ‘Require Improvement to be Good’, Suffolk County Council’s children’s services have been on a transformation journey.

We welcome the report and opportunity to receive this focused visit from Ofsted. I am pleased to say that Ofsted’s findings were very much as we expected. The focused visit has demonstrated that we know our service well; we know our strengths and where we are making good progress, but we also know where we need to continue to improve in this very complex area.

➤ **Suffolk’s recycling centres raise half a million pounds for charity**

The Benjamin Foundation, which operates re-use shops at Suffolk’s recycling centres in Bury St Edmunds and Foxhall, is benefitting from the money to provide local families with childcare, mental health, youth, family and housing support services.

The half-million-pound milestone came during the national Second-Hand September campaign this year, with people pledging not to buy anything new during the month.

The relationship between The Benjamin Foundation and the county council’s recycling centres is helping us to protect the environment, as well as supporting our residents.

A key part of this success story is the repair and resale of white goods. They are collected at Suffolk’s recycling centres, repaired by The Benjamin Foundation’s skilled technicians and sold in their charity shops, giving them a second life and helping families

➤ **Mapping project reaches major digital milestone**

Suffolk County Council has reached a major digital milestone in putting the county on the map.

It has completed the Definitive Map and Statement (DM&S) consolidation project, using modern background mapping to prepare the updated legal record of public rights of way (PROW) such as footpaths, bridleways, and byways in Suffolk. The consolidation project is the process of preparing a new digital DM&S that incorporates all legal changes since the previous issue.

Moving away from hand-drawn maps and written notes, the council has created new versions of the maps from a digital database using specialist software against Ordnance Survey Master map base mapping. It has involved checking and digitising more than 10,500 individual routes across the county, ensuring they reflect the effects of more than 2,600 legal orders, including complex public path order packages.

This ensures that Suffolk’s PROW network — which extends across thousands of miles of countryside — is properly recorded and accessible for generations to come. The updated Definitive Maps are clearer and easier to interpret and working from a digital database makes it easier to share data with a wide range of partners, including user groups, councils, developers, the National Trust, Natural England, and the Forestry Commission.

Working copies of the maps are available for the public to view and download from the [Rights of Way and Access pages](#) of the Suffolk County Council website.

➤ **Suffolk residents safer than ever due to 70% increase in Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV)**

This increase in tailored fire safety advice and support comes as Candle Fire Safety Week (20–26 October) coincides with Diwali, the Festival of Lights (20 October), celebrated by Hindu, Sikh, and Jain communities, when homes are illuminated with candles and oil lamps (diyas). The timing serves as a timely reminder as Christmas approaches of the importance of fire safety, particularly when using open flames in the home.

For Suffolk residents, individuals who qualify for a Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) are visited by a specialist practitioner or operational firefighters who will help create a tailored home fire safety plan. Those deemed most at risk also receive free smoke alarms or specialist equipment.

This includes the elderly, individuals with hearing or sight impairments, those with limited mobility, and people living with dementia, who may have a reduced ability to respond quickly to fire hazards. Factors contributing to this elevated risk include physical frailty, cognitive impairments, and the use of medications affecting alertness and mobility.

To help identify the most vulnerable in the community, the team has integrated with SafeLink, an online platform that allows residents or their carers to complete a virtual home fire safety check.

Based on the data entered, the platform alerts the Prevention Team to those considered most vulnerable and at higher risk. This approach ensures fire safety support reaches as many people as possible while prioritising additional resources for those who need it most. People deemed as low risk will still receive a bespoke Home Fire Action Plan.

Despite being one of the smallest fire prevention teams in the country, the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Prevention Team, has transformed home fire safety delivery across Suffolk.

The growth in HFSVs reflects improvements in working practices, stronger community engagement, staff training, and targeted support for vulnerable residents, ensuring help reaches those most at risk.

Our focus is always on protecting residents where the risk of harm from fire is greatest – in their homes. Every visit and educational session increases the likelihood that domestic fires can be prevented.

With nearly 850 accidental fires each year across England started by candles, this month is a perfect opportunity to remind everyone to take simple precautions. Keep candles and oil lamps away from flammable materials such as curtains, decorations and soft furnishings, place them on stable surfaces out of reach of children and pets, never leave them unattended, ensure they are properly extinguished, and make sure smoke alarms are installed and working.

➤ **Tom's race with new foster carers**

What started as a small local project in the Midlands is now a major nationwide campaign involving over 90 local authority fostering services, project managed by CAN Digital. 'The Run' is set to be the most ambitious jointly funded fostering film project yet.

The film focuses on Tom, an 11-year-old boy, contrasting his need to run - away from danger, a chaotic home life, to get to school in time for breakfast club because he's hungry - with running as a sport.

Despite the disadvantages Tom faces before being fostered – not even having PE kit for school – he's good at running and the film climaxes with Tom taking part in an athletics tournament, running in a stadium, with the support of his new foster family.

It's Tom's chance to shine. Can Tom win his race? On the track and in his life?

The message of this project is very simple, but so important – we need foster carers, and we need people to foster for Suffolk County Council.

This sentiment applies across the country, which is why this project has grown into a national campaign. 'The Run' is a brilliant, emotional film none of us could have produced on our own, which is why this partnership is so important.

Fostering is a flexible role with options for short term care from a weekend a month to longer term opportunities, all providing life-changing support for local children. If you want to find out more about what it's like to foster or adopt with us, please call a member of the team on 01473 264800

My Priorities

*Education - Supporting Vulnerable People - Jobs and Growth - Localism and the Stour Valley -
Building on Suffolk's Strength all underpinned by strong financial management and fair council tax.*