PINEWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Monday 12 May 2025 at the Pinewood Community Hall at 7:00pm.

Present:	Cllr. B. Blackwood (Chair), Cllr. L. Barclay, Cllr. T. Collard, Cllr. J. Harding, Cllr. M. Manning, Cllr. R. Manning and Cllr. S. Peartree.
In attendance:	Mrs S. Duthie (Clerk to Pinewood Parish Council & RFO)
Others attending:	Cllr. B. Riley (District Councillors), Minister P. Newton (SDBC) and 1 Parishioner

Chairman advised the meeting would be recorded to ensure the accuracy of the minutes.

25/APM/1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**
Minister S. Robinson, Mr. James Baker, Cllr. C. Hudson and Cllr. H. Davies

25/APM/2 **MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS – 7 MAY 2024 TO BE AGREED AND SIGNED.**
Copies of the minutes had previously been circulated to all. Proposed by Cllr. R. Manning and seconded by Cllr. M. Manning that the minutes are signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

25/APM/3 **PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND REPORT.**
Cllr. Blackwood gave his report. See appendix A

25/APM/4 **REPORT FROM CLLR. B. BLACKWOOD, CHAIRMAN, CAR PARK COMMITTEE.**
Cllr. Blackwood gave his report. See appendix A

25/APM/5 **REPORT FROM CLLR. L. BARCLAY, CHAIRMAN, COMMUNITY HALL COMMITTEE.**
Cllr. Blackwood gave his report. See appendix A.
Cllr. Barclay gave her report as follows: -
'The original idea behind having a Hall & Events Co-ordinator was so that the hall be so successful that it would be able to subsidise the Parish Council, with the plans to eventually enable us to reduce the precept. Our Co-ordinator came from a similar position with her previous employer and is therefore extremely experienced and is very keen to bring in more regular classes which covers the whole community. With the challenge to be able to put on an event that Cllr. Barclay would want to attend other than visiting the Community Hall for voting or meetings.'

25/APM/6 **REPORT FROM MINISTER PETER NEWTON, SHEPHERD DRIVE BAPTIST CHURCH.**
Minister P. Newton gave his report. See appendix B.

25/APM/7 **REPORT FROM MR JAMES BAKER, GREENWAYS.**
Mr. Baker was not present and had not sent a report. However, Cllr. Barclay gave a brief update in his absence as follows:
'The Friends of Belstead Brook Park' worked by the Copdock Interchange at the weekend cutting back overgrown vegetation. A volunteer used the tractor to help clear away saving a lot of volunteer time. Areas no longer looked after are as you cross the Brook either by the concrete or wooden bridge as this is private property. Every second Saturday of the month 'The Friends of Belstead Brook Park' are out doing a lot of conservation work within the area of Pinewood.'

25/APM/8 **REPORT FROM CLLR. CHRISTOPHER HUDSON, SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCILLOR**
Cllr. Hudson was not present but had sent a report. See appendix C.

Signed.....

25/APM/9 REPORT FROM BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: -

(i) Cllr. H. Davies

Cllr. Davies was not present but had sent a report. See appendix D.

(ii) Cllr. B. Riley

Cllr. Riley gave his report as follows:

'As you are aware I attend meetings regularly and look after constituents and endeavour to look after tax payers. The biggest event for the year is the unexpected Unitary Proposal. After regularly attending council meetings, at no point have I heard of any expression or care for our residents. Following the decision 12 years ago not to merge Babergh with Mid Suffolk. Some discussions are being had as to whether this current proposal is worthwhile monetary and better governance. The executives are concerned that we will be going down from 7 authorities to 3, meaning surplus chief executives, deputy executives etc. It will therefore be interesting to see what will happen.

Babergh for the last 6 months has been recruiting of a deputy chief executive and now we have chief executive assistants. I do where the justification is for these positions. I have very little confidence that this will turn out well in the end and will be very costly. It has been suggested we will have Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk.'

25/APM/10 QUESTIONS FROM PINEWOOD RESIDENTS.

Parishioner asked if there was anything happening at Belstead House. The Chair said he was not aware of anything being done. Some overgrown vegetation had been cut back recently, but officially there had not been any movement on previous plans. The Chair asked Cllr. Riley if he was aware of any planning applications. Cllr. Riley was not and it was suggested that previous planning applications may have now expired.

25/APM/11 ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT AS THE CHAIRMAN MAY ALLOW.

Cllr. Riley asked whether our surplus funds had been reinvested yet. The Chair confirmed that a competitive savings account had been sourced and we are now at the stage of submitting the application.

Cllr. Riley highlighted that there may be grants available if the Parish Council are interested for Solar Panels. The Chair said he was very keen for this and Cllr. Riley offered to find out more information and report back at the next meeting.

As there was no other business the Chair thanked everyone for attending and formally closed the meeting at 7:30pm.

Chairman.....

Dated.....12.5.26.....

APPENDIX A

Chairman's Annual Report

It is my pleasure to present the annual Chairman's Report, summarising the key developments, decisions, and achievements of the Parish Council over the past year.

Council Changes

This year brought several changes to the composition of the Council. We said farewell to Councillors Shaw, Wragg, Bryant, and Abery, all of whom stepped down during the year. We thank them sincerely for their dedication and contributions to the Parish.

We've also welcomed three new members: Councillors Peartree, Collard, and Harding, who were co-opted onto the Council. Their fresh perspectives and enthusiasm are definitely a welcome addition.

The Council also started the process of digitisation - aimed at modernising our administrative systems and operational procedures. This effort will allow for more efficient record-keeping, easier access to information, and reduce (paper) waste.

Staffing Changes

To better achieve some key objectives, we made a number of key staffing changes this year.

A Hall and Events Coordinator was appointed to enhance management of the Community Hall and to support a broader calendar of events and activities. This role has already begun to positively impact our engagement with local groups and service users.

We also recruited a new Bar Supervisor on a temporary basis, along with supporting bar staff, to oversee operations in the newly opened members bar. Their work has contributed greatly to the welcoming and professional environment we aim to provide. We're still actively recruiting for someone to fill the Bar Supervisor role on a permanent basis.

Furthermore, the HR Committee has formalised the pay structure for non-salaried employees. This policy brings consistency, fairness, and clarity to remuneration, ensuring our workforce is appropriately recognised and supported.

Community Hall

Our Community Hall has seen a strong year, both in terms of investment and usage.

A significant milestone was the opening of the members bar, which has quickly become a regular part of the lives of some of our community. Alongside this, we recorded an increase in weekly hires and overall usage, reflecting the demand for well-maintained, affordable, accessible spaces.

To support this, we undertook several maintenance and improvement works, including the resurfacing of the floor in main hall and a range of general repairs thoughout the building.

The car park also received attention, with repairs made to the barrier and upgrades to the lighting to improve both safety and usability for visitors.

The Community

We've seen a rise in complaints about students of Suffolk One college parking in residential parking areas and causing disruption. We continue to work with Councillor Davies and the college to find a solution.

Work has started on putting together a scheme for Grit Bin application and allocation, with a view to being able to offer this to residents later this year. This would allow for residents to apply for a bin to place placed in their area and have that application be supported and validated by the Council.

In Closing

I would like to extend my thanks to all councillors and staff who have given their time and energy to help the Parish thrive. This year has seen positive change and we are looking forward to building on this momentum in the coming year.

MINISTER PETER NEWTON **APPENDIX B**

Shepherd Drive Baptist Church Annual Report 2024/25

After several years where these reports have focused on issues surrounding our building project, it is a pleasant change not to have to report outstanding issues needing to be resolved or matters of that nature, and to be able to focus on people instead! It has been great to see new relationships built with people in the community and to be able to walk with some of them in their discovery of Christian faith.

As the church congregation grows, we have to work harder at maintaining a sense of family when most people simply do not know everyone who's there on a Sunday morning. So it has been good to see a growth in our smaller Bible study groups and other events where there is more opportunity to build solid friendships. Space continues to be a challenge, and we are considering possible solutions - on Easter Sunday we found ourselves with an unexpectedly large number of visitors which left some of us listening in to the service from the foyer!

I notice that I reported on a new group, Coffee Connections for Men, last year, so I'll focus in on this activity briefly. The group has really flourished into an opportunity for men to get together and chat, with smaller groups continuing the friendships built with trips to Felixstowe for lunch, snooker, and various other things. Seeing these kinds of connections develop in a demographic that is too often more isolated has been very encouraging. All men are very welcome. The group normally meets between 10am and 12noon on the 3rd Monday of the month. As with all our events, details can be found on our website, Facebook, and now also Instagram.

I would just close, as has become my custom by underlining that although we have found some people feel unsure if they can attend, or if there are certain eligibility criteria, a warm welcome is extended to all regardless of background or faith at all our events.

CLLR. CHRISTOPHER HUDSON **APPENDIX C**

Parish Council Annual Report 2024/25

Restoring Local Power, Rebuilding National Pride

A Reform Vision for Local Government

Chair's Foreword

This year, our Parish Council stands at a crossroads – not just locally, but nationally. Communities like ours are the backbone of Britain, yet for too long we've been overlooked by Westminster and stifled by bloated bureaucracy. That ends now. Backed by the Reform UK vision, we are reclaiming control over our local destiny — cutting waste, empowering residents, and delivering practical solutions where others have failed.

Delivering for Our Community – The Reform Way

In 2024/25, we committed ourselves to **common sense local governance** — and the results speak for themselves:

- **Streamlined Spending**: We cut administrative costs by 12%, ensuring more of your tax money goes to visible improvements — not paper-pushing.
- **Local Safety First**: We worked with community wardens and local police to push for zero-tolerance on anti-social behaviour and improved rural policing presence.
- **Fighting for Local Voice**: We opposed top-down housing targets and challenged inappropriate developments that ignore local infrastructure and character.
- **Championing Local Business**: We supported high street traders and small enterprises through simplified licensing, fairer local rates, and active promotion of "buy local" schemes.
- **Greener, Not Woker**: We focused on practical environmental improvements — cleaner streets, tree planting, flood prevention — not performative greenwashing.

A Vision for the Future: Real Power, Real Change

Our vision aligns with Reform UK's belief that **power should sit closest to the people**. We call for:

1. **A New Local Government Settlement**: End the Whitehall stranglehold. Councils must have the power to set local priorities, spend local money, and be held to account by local people.
2. **Scrap Wasteful Quangos**: Replace unelected regional bodies with accountable local decision-making. No more money wasted on middlemen.
3. **Rebuild Community Spirit**: Reinstate pride in place by giving residents a say in what matters – from planning to policing to parks.
4. **Fairer Funding for Parish Councils**: We do more with less – now it's time central government respected our role and funded us accordingly.
5. **Cut Council Tax, Not Services**: End duplication, digitise services, and slash executive pay. Let taxpayers see value for every pound spent.

Conclusion

This Parish Council doesn't just believe in doing things differently — we *are* doing things differently. With Reform principles as our compass, we've proven that bold, efficient, local leadership delivers real results.

We stand ready to lead a revolution in local government. Not more layers. Not more excuses. Just results — delivered by people who care.

APPENDIX D

Babergh District Council - Annual Report 2024/25

My annual report is a refresher on what happened month-by-month in Babergh and the Sproughton & Pinewood Ward. A lot has happened and the pace shows no sign of letting up with portfolio and devolution work ongoing.

May 2024

- General Election – Babergh dealing with and providing support during the General Election and 'returning' services.
- Norwich – Tilbury Grid Extension – BDC engaging with National Grid, along with other bodies, in pushing for alternatives to over-ground pylons.
- Brockley Wood Mineral Extraction Site – BDC, Ward Councillors and parish councils supporting the prospect of 'Judicial Review' of the legality of the site application.
- Babergh Cabinet – Discuss and agree process for the implementation of 'simpler recycling' following legislation to bring this into force by April 2026.
- £1.2m in CiL funding handed out across BMSDC
- Carparking charges approved for Hadleigh, Sudbury & Lavenham – decision called in for review by Overview & Scrutiny
- Attended Norwich 2 Tilbury Pylons meeting hosted by James Cartlidge
- Received 'Emergency Planning Training'

June 2024

- BDC Holiday activities and food programme returns for support to communities.
- Community Grants window 'open' for applications up to £10,000
- 'Call for Sites' process commenced to support Joint Local Planning (Part 1)
- 3 'Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) out for consultation (Biodiversity & Trees, Housing & Intensive Livestock & Poultry)
- Confirmed Locality Budget spending for previous financial year - dog-bins, recycling bins & bench for Sproughton and new bench for Pinewood
- BMSDC received a grant of £300,000 to install EV chargers in council carparks
- SCC completed works to (hopefully) fix the flooding on Hadleigh Road nr Church Lane)
- Met with leadership team at Suffolk One College to discuss issues with student car parking outside the college
- Was given the Climate Change, Nature Recovery & Biodiversity Portfolio

July 2024

- Deborah Saw (Green Party) Elected as Council leader for next 12 months. Cabinet reviews its strategy with some changes to portfolio holders. Our very own, Dave Busby, remains on cabinet.
- 'Fun Days' for the schools' summer break announced for July & August.
- Spent the night at Endeavour House on election night watching the counting. James Cartlidge re-elected with 50%fewer votes than last time.
- 'First Time Fix' Project announced – designed to improve how repairs, maintenance & servicing are handled. Repair numbers gradually increasing

- Additional funding for vulnerable residents approved to allow people to stay in their own homes for longer
- Further updates on new recycling rules. In 2026 it will be possible to include glass bottles & tetrapaks in the recycling bins and from 2027 plastic film & bags. A new food waste bin (collected weekly) will be supplied.
- Suffolk residents able to access electric vehicles on a short-term basis from Summer 2026
- Looking to obtain additional bus funding for students to improve take up of the 100 carparking spaces reserved for them at Tesco Park n Ride

August 2024

- Household Support Fund announced to help tenants with cost-of-living support. £100,000 made available to council tenants, a reduction in council tax for low-income households and £150,000 to households struggling with rent.
- Tom Barker, current Director of Planning becomes new BMSDC Chief Operating Officer.
- Rural Prosperity Funding Grant announced to support rural business.
- New Local Listed Building Consent Order, allowing Grade II listed property owners to upgrade or replace windows without having to make individual applications, subject to conditions agreed. Also a Local Development Order, allowing solar PV and other renewable technologies to be installed on unlisted buildings within the curtilage of a Grade II listed property.
- Labour government increases its housing targets – BMS set to discuss how these can be achieved.
- Overview & Scrutiny Committee completed their review of carparking charges – now revised slightly.

September 2024

- Annual Canvass of Residents to record and support our data on the 'State of the District' made.
- 'Pension Credit Action Week' supported by the council raising awareness of qualifying conditions for claims.
- 'Call 4 Land' summit held with the objective of helping local landowners or those with large gardens to consider how they can improve the biodiversity of their land by working with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust or Forestry Commission to plant trees, hedges, orchards etc.
- Drain under Belmont Road finally jetted – hopefully flooding will now cease
- A14 Traffic diversion starts through Sproughton to allow overnight resurfacing works to take place. Much effort expended by our Traffic Chair to get 4-way traffic lights in the village.
- Traffic Exhibition held in Tithe Barn – design your own solution to Sproughton's traffic problems!
- Solar Together launched in Suffolk - offering residents affordable renewable energy sources Suffolk residents will boost local renewable energy generation, cut carbon emissions, and save on energy bills with a community-led solar panel initiative

- Social Housing: Both Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils called for urgent government action to address the financial crisis in council housing. Both councils have written to Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner and local MPs, highlighting the need for changes to the current financial model governing council housing in England.
- Devolution: Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils have added their voices to a joint statement following the news that a proposed Suffolk devolution deal has been scrapped by the Government
- Sustainable Travel Group set-up with myself as Chair

October 2024

- 'Simpler Recycling' – Council responds to UK Gov legislation on the implementation of a simpler recycling scheme expectations for April 2026. The Council initiates consideration of what a Suffolk wide scheme might look like, planning and implementation.
- Storm Babet. Suffolk resilience forum reviews, one year on, the impact and 'lessons learnt' from the storm on residents and infrastructure by flooding in the district.
- The Living Well in Winter grant aimed at tackling social isolation in winter has returned for a second year, thanks to funding from Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. Aims to support things like 'Meet-Up Mondays'
- Babergh cabinet met last week to discuss proposals for the increase of next year's fees and charges. Babergh has a predicted £1 million deficit for Feb'25, added to an already identified £6.7 million gap. The aim is to recover the true cost of the services provided. Currently these are not fully recovered as Babergh has been subsidising them for several years at least.
- Consultation started on Copdock2Capel cycle path
- Sustainable Travel Group now identifying sites for the installation of Eezybike electric bike hire pods
- Results are in from the 'Call 4 Land' summit – over 20% of attendees contacted the grant providers to see what projects can be funded.
- LCWIP – part of the path between Bramford & Claydon is being upgraded – have requested we look to improving the path between Sproughton & Ipswich
- 'Bus Service Improvement Plan ' bid has gone in to support Suffolk One efforts to reduce student parking on local streets.
- Church Lane flooding – work continued on trying to resolve this by working with landowners and SCC
- Sproughton PC & I met with Taylor Wimpey to discuss their new Design Codes document that is supposed to comply with the Sproughton Neighbourhood Plan Design Codes – Taylor Wimpey includes 3 storey buildings in direct conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan

November 2024

- Annual Governance Statement – Published by Council. All local authorities, by law, need be accountable to their residents for the provision of value for money.

- There was a call for land to support nature, to increase tree coverage and to improve biodiversity.
- Rural Housing Event – Held in Lavenham looking at the issues of affordable homes, health and wellbeing.
- Brockley Wood: Bentley PC have had an application for a quarry and crushing plant approved by SCC, rejected at Judicial Review now coming back to SCC in the New Year. Bentley are continuing to fight this one.
- Work on the budget continues – detailed analysis of what can/can't be cut, job vacancies frozen
- Greenhouse Gas Report for Babergh prepared ready for cabinet in December (our emissions are decreasing)
- Sudbury Town Council agreed to the installation of an Eezybike pod at Kingfisher Leisure Centre
- A14 Traffic Diversion thru Sproughton continues. Unfortunately, a lorry clipped a house on the High Street. No one in the village was surprised!!
- Flooding in Church Lane, Sproughton: Flooding source, landowner agreed to meet with residents

December 2024

- Councils Celebrate 130 Years of Women District Councillors – Women now make up over one third of all elected ward councillors.
- BMSDC New Grants Process Launched – Meetings to help communities gain access to grant funding. This was done in conjunction with the launch of a new webpage – 'Click' Access to Community Funding.
- BMSDC 'Reset' on Building Services – Councils bringing back support for our housing and property assets 'in house' for the vast majority of building and repair works required.
- Babergh cabinet approved the 2025-26 budget and the Greenhouse gas report.
- The 'Green Skills 4 Schools' summit held at Ipswich High School for Girls was so successful we have already agreed to hold another one in 2026. Funding already agreed.
- Became a member of the Suffolk Environment Portfolio Holders Group which is run by SCC
- The Bus Service Improvement Plan funding bid was approved.
- Devolution: The Labour government issued the English Devolution White Paper. SCC began to think about cancelling the county elections in May'25 due to the amount of work devolution is likely to entail.

January 2025

- Budget Fixing for Councils – No change in last 12 months from UK Gov on funding along with withdrawal of Rural Funding Support Grant (worth £365,000 to BDC)
- Devolution Becomes the 'Big Topic' along with Local Government Reform and the move away from two tier authorities to single tier Unitary Council model. It was confirmed Norfolk & Suffolk would be on the fast track for devolution towards a combined mayoral authority.

- UK Gov Announces changes to NPPF and requirement for BDC to ramp up house building from 416 to 775 homes.
- Parking Charges Introduced – Parking charges come into effect from January in Sudbury, Lavenham & Hadleigh.
- The new project manager for the Joint Local Plan project has now arrived at Babergh
- Norfolk/Suffolk Local Nature Reserve Strategy was presented at a cabinet briefing prior to approval at Feb's cabinet meeting.
- Initial discussion on a rollout plan for the extended Park 'n' Ride to Suffolk One bus service. Meeting with local residents to be arranged

February 2025

- A balanced budget was delivered albeit by use of £765,00 of reserves.
- Devolution & Local Government Reform – Workshops delivered by BDC to inform District, Town and Parish Councillors of timelines, potential formulation and structural responsibilities. Leaders now spending a lot of time on this.
- BMSDC Building Control Team – Victorious at LABC Awards held at Grosvenor House Hotel ceremony. BMSDC picked up 'Best Team' of year award.
- Burnett Close Play Area has been surveyed with a view to upgrading this area.
- Sproughton Nature Reserve presented at a cabinet briefing.
- Traffic Solutions 4 Sproughton – results paper being collated

March 2025

- 'Planning for the Future' – BMSDC launch a briefing pack to Town & Parish Councils setting out what the governments significant changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) mean to the joint district councils and the potential impacts this will have upon Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- BDC Brief Town & Parish Councils on the 'Interim Housing Requirement Advice' document which gave initial advice on the housing requirement numbers across our communities for parishes to factor into their Neighbourhood Plans if possible.
- The Brockley Wood quarry application was heard however deferred due to late submission of a material document
- The new Bramford battery storage application has been approved despite a number of concerns around safety.
- The new Norfolk & Suffolk Nature Reserve Strategy went before the February Cabinet Meeting and was unanimously approved. It will be going out for public consultation shortly
- Sproughton Nature Reserve application approved at cabinet

April 2025

- Devolution: Babergh council approved the response to the Combined Norfolk & Suffolk Mayoral Authority consultation which has now been submitted. We are

waiting on a response from the government on our interim plan which was submitted in March.

- The Brockley Wood quarry application was supposed to be heard (again) having been deferred previously due to insufficient time to review a significant document that had landed 24hrs before. However, the meeting has been deferred by SCC for a second time as the new Bentley Conservation Area was approved the day before the meeting.
- Another Nature Reserve??: Capel St Mary are now looking at designating an area as a nature reserve – the legal agreement is being worked on.
- Planning: We have had two planning committee meetings this month – numbers of applications are picking up in comparison to last year. One for Assington Autos, predictably enough in Assington, wanting to extend the time for complying with previous planning conditions and the other for 300-ish homes on the HMS Ganges site in Shotley. This was an old Navy training establishment but has been abandoned for decades – the kind of site that the government wants us to develop. The developer is providing affordable homes,