# Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

APPROVED Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 10th September 2026 at 6.30pm in the Village Hall

**Councillors present:** John Rushman (JR) Chair, Brandon Mahon (BM) Vice Chair, Paul Butler (PB).

**In attendance:** Clerk Justin Hook (JH), County Cllr Rebecca Hopfensperger (RH), David Yates (DY) from the church, Stuart Turner (ST) representative from All Saints Resort (ASR), and 4 members of the public.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Chair's welcome & apologies for absence.
   The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting.
   Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Linda Leong-Son and District Cllr Sarah Broughton.

2. To receive any Declarations of Members' Interests.
   None received.

3. Approve and adopt the minutes from council meeting 30th July 2026.
   **Council resolved to approve the minutes and the Chair signed them.**

4. To receive County & District Councillors reports.
   **COUNTY**
   Government has made a U-turn on Local Government Reorganisation, after Judicial Reviews issued by Suffolk/Norfolk/Esses/Hampshire (all forming part of the Priority Program. New Secretary of State was advised they might lose the JR on the basis that their own criteria regarding size/population was not met. All counties in the Priority Program, population numbers were outside of the advised, making all areas 'exceptional circumstances,' with some areas as low as 360,000 vs a guideline of 500,000 – 1,000,000. First decision also went against advice of the Civil Servants.
   Lots of wasted time and money getting ready for 2027 election, now paused. Period of limbo for residents and staff alike. 2027 District elections will continue as planned on current boundaries. Expecting more news on way forward by end October.
   **DISTRICT**
   Call for sites complete for next West Suffolk Local Plan – some 368 sites identified – mostly speculative. Officers now to go through all sites by October and put forward recommendations for next plan. Spring will see consultation for any sites.
   Higham site proposed by Pigeon, for new town of 2,000 new homes (twice size of Marham Park), in small village of only 100 residents – but speculative at this stage.
   **Resident Question:** Does the village designation come into consideration? RH confirmed again, only speculative at this stage, but yes, all sites will be carefully vetted.
   **Question:** Any update on RAF Barnham? RH confirmed Home Office has put proposal forward, no decision as yet. WSC have responded with a firm NO.
   **Question:** Cllr has a property business and reports 85% residents experiencing issues with the new waste collection service. RH confirms shortage of staff has led to some confusion. RH and SB have asked for the process to be called in for scrutiny, as WSC were ahead of the game at one point, but things have gone quite wrong. Residents' patience is running out. Staff numbers are now up and things settling a little. BM reported Lark Valley Drive collections working well.

5. **PUBLIC FORUM** 15 minutes.
   Council to receive questions and issues on matters arising from the agenda and from the village.
   DY interested to hear discussions regarding cemetery provision / welcome guide and Tollgate interchange.
   DY raised ongoing issue of dog fouling on the grass in front of the church.
   ACTION: RH confirmed Clerk to speak to Andrew Hervey and copy her in, requesting signs.
   Resident raised concerns regarding planning application for amphitheatre at ASR. Application says not visible from highway or public right of way, and opening hours not relevant – both of which appear incorrect. Application focusses more on the physical aspect, nothing to do with what that facilitates or means. Comparison made Thorrington site, which has strict rules for times, days, months of use, but also in a woodland setting away from residential.
   No detail given to be able to understand fully the sites use. Lark Valley acts as a natural amphitheatre, as experienced when Krazy Horse night music can be heard at the hotel. What does this application lead to? What about golf ball safety? Not suggesting a NO, but asking council to object in its current form which is incomplete. Added to which, the nature of yet another application, which ought to be considered as a more holistic site wide master plan.
   ST would feed back to ASR the need for more details on the application.
   BM confirmed the application gives no answers to previously raised concerns and therefore a decision cannot be made without any information.
   PB agreed, not enough information for a decision.
   Resident suggested it would be better if applicant had provided all of the information with the application, instead of residents spending time and energy researching, filing objections etc.

6. Planning applications.
   Council to consider the following planning applications
   i. DC/26/1241/FUL
      All Saints Hotel The Street Fornham St Genevieve Suffolk IP28 6JQ
      Planning application - open air amphitheatre
      **Council resolved to place a holding objection, on the grounds that the application did not provide any detail in order to make an informed decision – no data regarding times / hours / frequency / numbers / whether amplified / lighting / parking etc.**
   ii. DC/26/1189/TPO
      The Laurels Parklands Green Fornham St Genevieve Suffolk IP28 6UH
      TPO 030(1960) tree preservation order - nine Sycamore, two Sweet Chestnut and one Ash (marked on plan) overall reduction of canopy by up to three
      **Council resolved to a vote of NO COMMENT, in favour of the Tree Officer's decision.**
   iii. DC/26/1189/TPO
      The Walled Garden Fornham Park Fornham St Genevieve Suffolk IP28 6TT
      TPO 157 (1991) tree preservation order - one Spruce (T1 on plan, within area A1 on order) remove limb on north east aspect and reduce limb on north east aspect by up to two metres
      **Council resolved to a vote of NO COMMENT, in favour of the Tree Officer's decision.**
   iv. DC/26/1110/HPA
      17 Ord Road Fornham St Martin Suffolk IP31 1TB
      Householder prior approval - single storey rear extension which extends beyond the rear wall of the original house by four metres with a maximum height of 3.54 metres and a height of 2.10 metres to the eaves
      **Council resolved to a vote of NO COMMENT, but the application has in fact been withdrawn.**

7. Finance.
   Council to consider and approve the following;
   i. **Council resolved to approve authorisation for outstanding invoices & payments, totalling £7,340.58.**

**ii.** Council noted payments received for July/August – **Total: £2,201.39** (£378.00 insurance, £151.80 advertising, £1,624.14 VAT reclaim, £47.45 interest),

iii. Council noted bank balances to end of August – **Total: £50,964.63** (£206.30 current / £50,758.33 savings).

**iv. Council resolved to approve bank reconciliation for July/August.**

8. End of year finance & audit.
   **i. Council resolved to approve the External Auditors report & findings.**

9. Clerks update.
   i. Street sign School Lane
   Complete **– ITEM CLOSED.**
   ii. Volunteering group update
   Three more successful sessions, **next date Friday 18th September.**
   PB and DY praised the work of the volunteers.
   iii. Increased HGV traffic on B1106
   Response from SCC clearly laid out that there are no restrictions, just suggestions. Low numbers reported. Previous issues related to empty skip lorry noise at Culford Waste. No response from Culford PC **– ITEM CLOSED.**
   iv. Children's play area improvements
   Date for work to commence – 21st September.
   JR discussed idea of removing goal posts. Cllrs felt that they are still used for smaller kick arounds, and best to leave as is.
   v. New VAS unit
   Installed by Cllr Mahon and the Clerk **– ITEM CLOSED.**
   vi. White lines, B1106 bend
   RH suggested works scheduled to be completed by the end of October.
   vii. Bus stop improvements – Oak Close
   Ongoing.
   viii. Basal growth on trees
   Clerk made contact with Hartwood who have done the works previously. Trees privately owned, so would be right to get permission. Question raised why – purely cosmetic? Clerk advised easier for mowing and looks tidier.
   ACTION: Clerk to start by getting a quote.
   ix. Pavement opposite BMW
   Hedges have been trimmed **– ITEM CLOSED.**
   x. Fencing Russel Baron Road
   WSC have agreed to replace.
   xi. Bollard bottom Barton Hill
   Damaged bollard replaced **– ITEM CLOSED.**
   xii. Manhole opposite Fornham House
   Damaged manhole reported, SCC have placed cones over as temporary fix.
   xiii. Quiet lane Mill Road and across
   Ongoing.
   xiv. Cemetery requirements
   Clerk has identified that no provision needs to be made for further burials. But council can be mindful if any sites or opportunities arise.
   DY advised potential 4 years left until closed to burials, and has identified two potential sites, and provided detail.
   ACTION: Clerk to speak to Rector / Diocese to see who is to follow this up.

xv. Bank mandate update
Changes made to remove former Cllrs and realign accesses.

xvi. Bugle distributor team member required – St Genevieve (circa 70 units)
ACTION: Clerk to speak to distributor to understand what is required and advertise in next Bugle.

10. Councillor's reports.

i. Weekly & monthly play park inspection reports - Cllr Rushman/Cllr Butler
Council to receive updates from monthly report and Cllrs bi-weekly visual inspections.
DR no longer completing the spraying work on the field, after recent discussions.
ACTION: JR to send reports to Clerk. Nothing major to report.
ACTION: Clerk to report overflowing poo bin to WSC.

ii. Speeding in the village - Cllr Mahon/Clerk
Data from the new VAS unit from mid Aug to date:
IN: avg: 25mph, max: 55mph, compliance to 30mph limit: 95% (50+mph 0.01%)
OUT: avg: 26mph, max: 82mph, compliance to 30mph limit: 93% (50+mph 0.03%)
Clerk noted average speeds and compliance was good, just the minority causing the issue. Interesting that outgoing (toward BSE) figures are actually worse.
Cllrs noted having seen drivers change behaviour when the sign activates.

11. Reserves Policy.
**Council resolved to approve the new Reserves Policy.**

12. Bend sign update.
Westcotec visited site to install but weren't happy with safety and requested traffic management, which creates a good opportunity for the hedges and trees to be trimmed also.
**Council to resolved to accept quote for traffic management for sign installation, from Connect Highways, for £629.26 inc. Vat.**
**Council resolved to accept quote for hedges and tree trimming around existing and new sign, from Leon Brown, for £336.00.**

13. Asset Register.
**Council resolved to adopt the updated Asset Register and Cllr Mahon signed it.**

14. Insurance.
**Council resolved approve the insurance renewal, with Gallagher, for £1668.69 for a fixed 3 year period, having ensured cover is suitable for Council's needs.**
The Clerk spoke to the insurers about liability arising from the rabbit scrapes on the playing field. So long as council are not advertising for football use, or hiring the field, then we are covered. Suggestion was to record dates when the team fill in the scrapes, in order to prove council is actively trying to resolve the issue. Clerk has spoken with litter picker regarding this.

15. Memorial Garden
Initial design proposal put forward by Clerk for new bench area, with tree space and planting, in place of removed trim trail, deemed excessive.
David Randall (DR) suggested Cherry Blossom tree, with natural bulb planting around a maybe a bench and a plaque. DR happy to help with project.
ACTION: Clerk to look at other options and cost up.

16. Playing field planting
Clerk and JR met with DR to discuss planting bulbs around the field for more colour in the spring. DR happy to help.
JR said that Martin & Co would sponsor £100 worth of bulbs.
**Council resolved to match this £100 donation.**
PB advised village planters looking great, many thanks to DR.

17. Welcome one-page leaflet.
    Council to review one-page welcome leaflet to replace welcome pack. To be delivered to new villagers with copy of The Bugle and the Lark Valley Magazine.
    ACTION: Cllrs and DY to feed back to Clerk any amends / improvements.

18. S137 updates
    **Council resolved to make payment of Stitchers group grant direct to village hall to cover hire costs for September.**
    Computer club currently stabilised.
    PB reiterated what an asset the Computer Club is for the villages.

19. NJC Salary Pay Award 2026/27.
    **Council resolved to approve revised NJC pay scale for Clerk. Scale 27 increasing from £19.81 to £20.47 per hour, effective from 1st April 2026, backdated to that date.**

20. Correspondence.
    i. Overgrown bushes opp. BMW, scooter puncture & thanks for clearing
    Landowner actually cleared this, Clerk saw no debris after complaints.
    ii. Pavement debris, Old Rectory to village sign
    Raised with WSC and since been swept.
    iii. Dead deer on pavement
    Raised with WSC and since been cleared.
    iv. Russell Baron road fencing
    Covered under item 9x.
    v. Kytson Road pavement
    Resident signposted to SCC reporting tool.
    vi. Tollgate interchange
    Resident signposted to Bury Town Council and SCC – this is not in the village.
    vii. Village Hall details in notice board
    Clerk created new sheet for notice boards to include church and village hall contacts.
    viii. Village shop
    Speculative email regarding requirements for village shop. Cllrs agree no harm in tentatively responding, referencing pub shop which was open for about a year, plus new Marham Park Coop, expected by year end.

21. Items to be raised on a future agenda.
    i. Merging with Fornham All Saints Parish Council – update and next steps.
    ii. Potentially merging The Bugle and The Village Voice in Feb 27 when both start their next advertising cycle, to include a review of advertising fees.
    iii. Village works, as identified in Cllr Mahon's review of assets, a quote has been received from Susan Pocklington for various works
    iv. Purchase of a poppy wreath for Remembrance Day and who should lay it

22. Date of next meeting.
    Next meeting to be the held on October 8th 2026, at 6.30pm in the Village Hall.

**Meeting closed 8.21pm.**

To be signed by the Chairman at the next meeting of the Parish Council, Thursday 8th October.

Signed: John Rushman Date: 8th October, 2026