

# Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

January 2026



*Dear Fellow Villager*

You may have already read in the minutes of our Parish Council meetings or in The Bugle magazine, that we are in discussions with the Fornham All Saints Parish Council to combine the two organisations.

We agreed at our last meeting that I should write to all village residents and businesses to explain the background to this potential move. I stress that at this stage it is only a proposal (and subject to approval by West Suffolk Council), although our council and that of Fornham All Saints are in favour of such a move.

If agreed, the 'grouping' would only take place from the start of the 2027/28 financial year, so there is still time to make sure we achieve the benefits of combining.

Firstly, I must be clear we are not planning to change any village settlement boundaries. Each of the three villages will remain as they are today, each with the same facilities that they already enjoy.

We are hoping that by joining operations, we will gain some economies of scale in administration and when negotiating contracts for example footpath & recreation space maintenance. We also now share the same Clerk and envisage only having one Clerk (our only employee) going forward. We would also envisage combining the two village magazines to further reduce the costs associated with print and production.

Most importantly, we think that by combining, we will have a louder voice when it comes to planning issues. This is especially important as local government is looking likely to move to having a single unitary authority based in Ipswich. Today, St Martin has an electoral roll of 900 and St Genevieve 70, combining with All Saints will give a combined roll of 1500 adding greater weight to any representations we make.

Our mission for The Fornhams is,

- To make the villages as safe as possible, including our roads and pavements
- To make the villages as attractive as possible and litter free
- To support the clubs and activities that make for an inclusive community

In the past, many of these actions would have been done by the district or county council, but it is clear that they are now not being done and both authorities claim lack of funds. We will now take some of these functions, like pathway maintenance, in-house and will hope to do so without increasing the precept (which the Parish Council adds to the rates bill) more than the minimum amount commensurate with the extra responsibilities we are taking over from the councils.

Please let us know your thoughts or feelings, either via our website, in writing or email to the Clerk (details below), or by attending one of our monthly meetings.

We have submitted our intentions to West Suffolk Council as part of their Community Governance Review. All suggestions are put forward to full council for discussion and they may then decide to conduct their own public consultation before making a final decision later in the year.

*Clive Last*

Clive Last, Chair

**Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council** | [www.fsmsg-pc.gov.uk](http://www.fsmsg-pc.gov.uk)

Clerk: Justin Hook | 2 Clay Hall Cottages, Fornham St Genevieve, IP28 6JF | [clerk@fsmsg-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@fsmsg-pc.gov.uk)