

Shimpling Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Council

Monday 10th November 2025, 7:00pm at Shimpling Village Hall

Present:

Councillors: David Dunkley (Chair), Gerry Shrimpton, Mark Milhench, Laurence Rooke, Jen O'Reilly-Turner

District Councillors: Stephen Plumb

Clerk: Natasha Byford

1.1 **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Kemp, Cllr Holt and Cllr Brunwin, this were noted and accepted.

2 **Declarations of Members Interest(s):**

To receive disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest(s) including gifts of hospitality in excess of £25: None received.

To consider requests for dispensation for the agenda item(s) under discussion: None received.

3 **Public Participation session**

No members of the public (MOP) attended.

4 **Approval of minutes of the previous meeting:**

a) The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 8th September 2025 were approved.

Action: Clerk to publish these on the website and Social Media.

b) The Chair noted that these are discussed in the agenda at different points so didn't require a separate discussion.

5. **Chair's report:**

Cllr Dunkley's read the below report from his last couple of months as Chair:

For the last meeting I said that we had completed all of the paperwork for the introduction of EV Car Chargers at the Village Hall and that we were awaiting a date for the installation.

Unfortunately, the company charged with doing this has run out of energy and, consequently, we are awaiting communication with the new company. Whether this means we start again with the process is unclear but hopefully we will hear something before the end of the year.

We are progressing the installation of InPost storage lockers at the village hall. These should provide a very useful facility to residents, with much shorter trips to pick up and send parcels.

The second draft of the Neighbourhood Plan was produced and has been issued to the Parish Council for comment and acceptance. The next stage is to share this with residents, currently planned for 17th January and then to Babergh for processing shortly thereafter.

The bench located under the trees on the village green has now been moved to a better location at the eastern end of the green, not under a tree. Hopefully this will mean that much more use can be made of it as it will not be constantly wet and/or covered in bird droppings. Many thanks go to Councillor Rooke ably assisted by Ted Pine.

Information of the potential local government reorganisation is being disseminated but, as yet, the decision on which model will be used has been made. However, despite comments made earlier in the process, that Parish Councils will not be affected, it is clear that some level of additional responsibility is being promoted, albeit at the moment on a voluntary basis.

6. District Councillors report:

Cllr Plumb read their report and there were no further questions. The report is in Appendix A below. Cllr Holt sent a note that the locality budget applications have to be in early this year, so the deadline is 12th Dec.

Cllr Plumb left the meeting at 7:11pm.

7. County Councillors report:

No report received.

8. Village Hall:

a) Cllrs received the following report on behalf of the VHC;

Finance - we continue to plan and hold events that generate a modest income for the running of village hall. However, the Barn Dance usually held in the summer, next year - 2026, Alice Pawsey has stated that the dance should be to generate income for the Churches not the village halls so there won't be a significant new income in 2026.

In 2025 due to such fund-raising events and regular sessions, we just have had sufficient funds to cover regular running cost commitments including those taken on from the Parish Council in 2024, an annual cost of over £3500.

Village Hall Regular Expenses 2025-6

WIFI - 999 networks (direct debit monthly)

Electric - EDF (direct debit monthly)

Water - WAVE (direct debit monthly)

Cleaning - weekly

Fire Alarm Service (6 monthly - to comply with Regulations Aug & Feb)

Fire Extinguisher Service - Annual - Aug

PAT testing (yearly - July)

MPLC Umbrella Licence (annual - Oct)

Bank Charges

Electrical Safety Testing (EICR) (every 5 years) last done 2022

Fire Risk Assessment (yearly - currently done as self-assessment)

With the installation of the solar panels, we have already seen a reduction in the energy bills compared with last years. The export tariff has now started to make an impact; we had no energy expenditure in Sept and Oct and are in credit circa £200.

The hall continues to be used by the Parish Council and the PCC free of charge.

(PC - 12 hours, Neighbourhood Plan - 6 hours and PCC - 18 hours in 2024-5)

Regular Events – The regular classes of Pilates and Zumba restart in Nov after the half term break and the WI continue to use the hall on alternate months for their meeting.

Film nights attendance continues to cover the costs of the film licence and film rental; it is valued by the regulars. The film Lee will be shown on the 18th of November, and mulled wine and mince pies will be served at the Christmas film session on the 16th of December.

The Rural Coffee Caravan continues to attract a good attendance, with the charity bringing their van, advice and expertise to the village in 2025. A representative from Babergh Customer services has been in attendance helping residents with council related issues.

For the session in November, Liz Brunwin has invited a representative from the Lavenham and Long Melford GP practices to attend and listen to residents' comments and concerns.

Other potential activities

We are still waiting for Henry Lane, Project Officer (Health and Wellbeing) from Active Suffolk to arrange another regular exercise class and provide short mat bowls equipment for the village hall.

A full-sized table tennis table with bats and balls is available to hire at short notice if the hall is free. In addition, a pool table and other games have recently been donated by residents. During half term this was free to encourage families to use the hall, and we had 2 groups book sessions.

Other Future Events

"Vernon's Quiz" is planned for the 15th of November complete with fish and chip supper and is now full.

A Christmas Pottery event is planned for Saturday 22nd November with a focus on Christmas decorations and is suitable for both adults and children. Place sales are going well.

We also plan to live stream the New Wolsey Theatre Pantomime on the 27th of December 2pm and tickets have gone on sale.

Maintenance & Improvement Projects

As previously highlighted, the external maintenance and redecoration will need to be done ideally next summer. Our regular cleaner John Sinclair has provided a quote for Parish Council approval to undertake further internal works and we await approval.

- b) Members received the quotation for the repainting of the VH under the dado rail. Members decided to hold off on this for now as they didn't think it looked in poor enough condition.

Action: Clerk to respond to the quote.

- c) Members received and discussed quotation for the mould work around the windows (similar to what was done in the ladies toilets) it was looked at and members couldn't see that it needed doing so decided to hold off on this for now.

Action: Clerk to respond to the quote.

- d) Members discussed the request from the PCC to use the VH free of charge and agreed this would be okay.

Action: Clerk to inform the PCC.

- e) Members discussed the options of cladding or rendering the Village Hall. The only quotation they received back for cladding was for almost £19,000. This would need complete external funding. It was discussed about just doing something with the end wall which is the most deteriorated. Cllr Rooke suggested the PC get quotes for chiselling off the existing render and concrete render applied for the end wall.

Action: Clerk to get quotes for chiselling off the existing render and concrete render applied for the end wall.

- f) Members discussed the idea of having an InPost locker at the VH. InPost would pay the PC £1000 per year to site it, it was cost around £2-300 a year in electric. The nearest current InPost lockers are Bury or Lavenham. Members thought it sounded like a good idea and would like to go ahead, they would like to run it past the VH neighbours first.

Action: Cllr Dunkley to send some wording over to the Clerk for this.

7:47pm Cllr O'Reilly-Turner left the meeting

9. Responsible Finance Officer's Finance Report:

9a) The Clerk gave a finance report, details of which were circulated to members prior to the meeting.

The Clerk stated which invoices (please see below) needed to be paid.

Leaving balances as follows:

Treasurers Account	£7,414.76
Business Account	£18,282.36
Including CIL of	£3,061.56
Earmarked Reserves of	£6,718.60
General Reserves of	£8,929.18

9b) To acknowledge payments made outside the meeting

- **Playground Inspection (ROSPA)** £129.60
(Public Health Act 1875, s.164)
- **John Sinclair – VH Damp/Redec** £270.00
(LGA 1972, s.133)
- **SALC Payroll** £27.00
(LGA 1972, s.111)
- **VH Floor repair Laurence** £300.00
(LGA 1972, s.133)
- **Printer Ink, Paper and Notebook** £58.57
(LGA 1972, s.111)
- **Website Hosting (CAS OneSuffolk)** £66.00
(LGA 1972, s.111)
- **VH Lease** £1500.00
(LGA 1972, s.133)
- **VH Lease Disbursements** £281.40
(LGA 1972, s.133)
- **Bench relocation** £320.00
(LGA 1972, s.111)

9c) The following amounts were approved for payment:

- **Clerk's Net salary before Tax** £585.68
- **HMRC Tax payment** £83.40
- **Clerk's expenses (Fuel, stamps)** £24.06
LGA 1972 s. 111 (ancillary Powers)

The above payment schedule was approved by members.

9d) The Clerk noted that the Council have received money from bank interest £9.01 (Sept) and £10.11 (Oct). We have received £189.18 recycling credit.

10. Clerks Report: A full copy of the Clerk's report was circulated to members prior to the meeting. The following matters were considered for resolution:

a) Summary of Progress: During the period (1st Sept 25 – 2nd Nov 25), I have worked 2 hours 0 minutes under the given time frame of 5 hours per week, this included organising all the paperwork for the November meeting, agendas, actions from the September meeting, organising payments, as well as general administration.

11. Neighbourhood Plan:

a) The Chair updated members that the Neighbourhood Plan Draft had been prepared and sent round to them prior to the meeting. Members discussed the document and the exclusion of the Community Land Trust policy. The PC also wanted to send their thanks to the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group who have done a great job getting the plan together. Members voted and unanimously agreed to move to the next step with the draft NP plan. The content of the draft Neighbourhood Plan was approved for the purposes of the statutory pre-submission public consultation, which would commence in the new year

Action: Clerk to let the NP working group to progress to the next stage.

b) Members discussed the funding for the remainder of the NP and for the final £2,040 to get this completed, it was agreed to fund it from the CIL fund.

12. Planning:

Planning Decisions:

- a. DC/24/04287 - Rectory Cottage, Old Rectory Lane, Shimpling, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP29 4HQ - Full Planning Application - Erection of 1No replacement dwelling including enhancement of 5 acre horse paddock (existing dwelling to become Bat Habitat) – Awaiting decision
- b. AP/25/00045 - Lyndhurst, Little Chadacre, Shimpling, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP29 4HL - Full Planning Application - Subdivision of dwelling to form 2no. dwellings including alterations and extensions – Appeal allowed

Planning Applications:

None

13. Playground

a) Members discussed the playground inspection report and it was agreed to try and get a quotation to complete the medium risk items. It was noted that the new basketball/football goal should have a warranty so to contact the company that installed it.

Action: Clerk to get together quotations for remedials and to look into the warrantee on the new football/basketball wooden structure.

- b) Members discussed the playground fence. The playground report deemed it in better condition that it was thought so members agreed to keep fixing it as needed.

14. Village Christmas Tree

Members discussed funding the Village Christmas Tree this year. A local company agreed to fund it for the Village. Cllr Rooke discussed checking with a local Christmas tree grower to see if he could get a good discount on a large tree.

Action: Cllr Rooke to see if he can find a large tree at the local company for a good price and to liaise with the local company funding it to pay.

15. Bench:

Members discussed the bench relocation and has previously agreed to relocate the bench, the lower quote was substantially smaller and with the bad weather had to be completed prior to the meeting. The PC thanked Laurence and Ted for their work on this.

16. EV Charger

The Chair let members know that currently this was on hold due to connect kerb not having anyone able to install these EV chargers.

Action: Clerk to keep Cllrs informed of any progress on this.

17. Village Defibrillator

The Chair informed members of a request received that the PC take on the Village Defib, so it could be added to our insurance policy. Members discussed this and it was noted that the defibrillators have a 10 year lifespan so the current one would become obsolete in 2028. The current one's insurance was paid for by a local company so they are covered until November 2026. Members thought it best if we rent two new defibrillators for the Village, placing one at the Bush and one at the Village Hall. We would place these on the outside of the buildings and they would each be housed in an external cabinet. The external cabinets cost around £600 each. It was agreed to add £800 to the 26/27 budget to pay for the monthly rental of these two new defibrillators. Renting them would also mean that the company maintain them, insure then and replace them with new ones as required. Cllr Milhench to look into costings for these.

Action: Cllr Milhench to look into firm costings for the renting of two defibrillators for the Village.

18. Insurance

The Clerk discussed the only 2 quote options that came back to us for our insurance policy 1st Dec 25 – 30th Nov 26 and Members discussed the quotes. It was decided to go ahead and renew with Clear Councils insurance policy as the cheapest.

Action: Clerk to renew the insurance and pay the policy invoice.

19. Budget

a) Members agreed to set the budget for 2026/27 at £15,725.00

b) Members agreed to set the precept for 2026/27 at £15,205.00

Action: Clerk to send precept form

20. Parking Mesh

Members discussed the possibility of installing mesh on the grass between The Bush and the bottle banks to ensure that when cars park on the grass, the verges don't become all churned up. It was agreed this was a good idea and members wanted to approve up to £750 spend on this so they could get it installed in November/December before the weather gets worse.

Action: Cllr Milhench to look into costings for this.

21. Remembrance

Chair informed members that he had received correspondence asking about the possibility of putting something together for remembrance in the Village, such as artificial poppies round the Village sign. Members agreed this was a nice idea, they discussed the metal soldier silhouettes too. Cllr Milhench volunteered to look into costings.

Action: Cllr Milhench to look into costing for some of the ideas ready for the January meeting.

22. Correspondence Received:

None

23. Urgent Matters to be brought to the attention of the council:

Cllr O'Reilly-Turner asked that the heat sensor survey was happening WC 26th Nov and WC 21st Jan so anyone that would like their houses scanned to get in touch. She will also put together some wording for the newsletter for this.

Cllr O'Reilly-Turner asked for one of the Police liaison officers from Sudbury to come out and do a talk on fraud and scams and would let everyone know when there was a date for this.

Cllr Shrimpton noted that the white lines on the road between Aveley Lane and Mill Hill were totally erased. He would report this on the mapping app.

Cllr Milhench asked if we could put a piece in the newsletter regarding people turning their security lights off overnight. Cllr Dunkley said he had a list of a few things to go into the newsletter so would add this to it.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9:35pm

Appendix A: District Councillors report:

Students debate climate issues at councils' second COP-style event

Ahead of global leaders gathering in Brazil for COP30 next month, students from schools across Suffolk have taken part in their own event to tackle real-world climate change issues.

'A groundbreaking step forward' – Councils make listed building energy upgrades easier

A groundbreaking council initiative – one of the first of its kind in the country – will help owners of Grade II listed buildings make their homes more energy efficient.

Councils ask communities to identify potential development sites

Residents, developers, landowners, businesses and other organisations are being invited to submit locations which could be considered for planned future development.

Dog owner prosecuted for noise nuisance

A Shotley resident has been fined over £1,000 after repeatedly allowing his dog to cause a serious noise disturbance, despite multiple warnings and formal enforcement action.

Developer cash to support communities in Babergh and Mid Suffolk

Towns and parishes across Babergh and Mid Suffolk are set to receive more than £1m in developer contributions to help community infrastructure keep pace with housing growth.

Upcoming funding summit

The Babergh and Mid Suffolk grants and funding team is hosting a free funding summit on Wednesday 19 November at Chamberlin Hall, Bildeston, from 9am to 2.30pm. The event will help community organisations access the funding they need and is being delivered in partnership with Suffolk Community Foundation, Community Action Suffolk, Suffolk County Council and the National Lottery Community Fund. Book online: Conference Booking Form : AideCRM

Anglian Water flood guidance

Anglian Water has created a leaflet to help people protect their homes from winter flooding. The information is particularly relevant due to the long, hot summer we have had this year. You can find the leaflet as an attachment on this email. Further flooding information and guidance can be found on our website.

Sustainable Communities Food Fund

Our Sustainable Communities Food Fund provides grants to small scale food initiatives such as community pantries, fridges and food pop-ups. Between £250 and £5,000 is available and can be used for anything from the purchase of equipment and revenue costs to delivering training and workshops. Funding is awarded on a first come, first served basis, so please encourage groups to submit an application as soon as they can.

Sustainable Communities Action Day

On Saturday 8 November, Sustainable Suffolk is hosting an action day designed to bring together the county's community groups, town and parish councils, and all those involved in local environmental action in order to share knowledge and new ideas. On the day, there will be a range of speakers and workshops, hosted by prominent organisations from the local area. It runs from 9:30am until 3:30pm and lunch is included. Do sign up online and encourage any groups you think it may be relevant to, to attend.