Shimpling Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Council

Monday 14th September 2026, 7:00pm at Shimpling Village Hall

Present:

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

District Councillors: Stephen Plumb

County Councillor: John Nunn

Clerk: Natasha Byford

1. **Apologies for absence**: Cllr Brunwin and Cllr Holt sent their apologies, these were noted.

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

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

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

3. **Public Participation session**

   Four member of the public (MOP) attended. Members of the public noted that they were attending due to the speeding issues raised. That the fundraising for the PC was important and it would be good to discuss events and ideas. Another member of the public had previously been on another local council and was happy to lend his advice to Shimpling PC re speeding and defibs.

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

   a) The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 13th July 2026 were approved. These were signed by Chair O'Reilly-Turner

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

   The Clerk noted that these are discussed in the agenda at different points or resolved so didn't require a separate discussion.

5. **Chair's report**:

   Chair O'Reilly-Turner gave the following report:

Since our July meeting, the Parish Council has been dealing with a number of smaller but important village matters.

The proposed local government reorganisation in Suffolk has now been axed. At present, we have very little information about what this means for Suffolk or for parish councils, so we are awaiting further clarification and will keep residents informed.

We have raised concerns about the bus service at Thorn Court Corner, following reports of buses not stopping to collect passengers and passengers not being allowed to disembark there. We are liaising with Suffolk County Council's bus services team and hope to have confirmation shortly that Thorn Court Corner is to be treated as a recognised stop.

Unfortunately, the postbox on Avely Lane has been stolen. We have no further update at present but will share any information we receive.

We have also received concerns about litter, obstruction of highways and antisocial or inconsiderate behaviour. We would ask everyone to treat their neighbours with kindness and respect and to help look after the environment and character of our village. Where there are particular concerns about litter, fly-tipping, noise, highways, environmental matters or other issues, residents can contact the relevant public services directly – contact details are listed in the newsletter. Reporting problems through the appropriate channels also ensures that they are properly recorded and passed to those responsible for dealing with them.

At the playground, new signs have been installed asking people to use the gates rather than climb over the fence. This follows concerns about repeated climbing damaging the fence and creating unnecessary repair costs for the village.

The defibrillator at The Bush will become a Parish Council asset at the end of October. Our thanks go to Marian for taking responsibility for this vital piece of equipment for so long. We are also investigating options for additional defibrillators elsewhere in the village to improve coverage.

We are obtaining quotes and advice about making the Village Hall more accessible and disabled-friendly, as part of the wider improvements previously discussed by the Council.

A correction from my July report: the Parish Council no longer receives income from the recycling banks by The Bush, so there is no particular benefit to the village from using these rather than other recycling facilities. We are exploring whether the banks can now be removed.

Making the Council more open

One of our priorities is to make the work of the Parish Council more transparent and accessible. We want to use the website more effectively to share what we are working on, the issues being discussed and the decisions we take. We also want to share more of the information we receive about consultations, projects, funding and opportunities that may be useful to residents.

We currently have a vacancy for a seventh Parish Councillor. If you are interested in helping shape what happens in Shimpling, please get in touch. You do not need previous council experience – just an interest in our village and a willingness to get involved.

Traffic and speeding

We would also like to establish a working group to look at traffic and speeding in the village, with a view to exploring whether lower speed limits, including 20mph limits in appropriate areas, could be introduced.
Suffolk County Council's policy requires evidence of local support and speed surveys agreed with its officers. The results are important: mean speeds below 28mph may make a signed 20mph limit feasible, while higher existing speeds can require traffic-calming measures and additional local funding.
This therefore needs to be a community effort. If you feel strongly about speeding or traffic through Shimpling, please come forward and help. We need residents willing to organise, identify problem areas, gather evidence and help with the surveys and consultation needed to make a credible application.
The Parish Council can help facilitate change, but we also need residents who want that change to be prepared to get involved in making it happen.
Finally, thank you to our Clerk, fellow councillors and everyone who continues to contribute to village life. Please keep raising issues with us, sharing ideas and, where you can, getting involved.

6. District Councillors report:

Cllr Plumb gave an update to say that now the unitary councils have been withdrawn, the District and Parish Council elections should go ahead in May 2027 as originally planned.

He then gave the following report:

Partners unite to deliver powerful case for investment in Sudbury

Local partners have joined together behind a shared commitment to support the future regeneration, renewal and prosperity of Sudbury through the development of a comprehensive masterplan designed to attract public and private investment to ensure the town fulfils its potential.

Questions remain unanswered – councils repeat objection to pylons project

In a closing statement to National Grid's Norwich to Tilbury examination, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have restated their objection and again called for the plan to be halted – with questions remaining unanswered over the devastating impact of the scheme for local communities, businesses, environment, heritage and landscape.

Suffolk residents can get a free proposal to replace ageing heating systems with heat pumps

All of Suffolk's public sector organisations have come together to help residents in Suffolk replace ageing gas, oil or LPG boilers with a heat pump combining a £7,500 or £9,000 government grant, depending on current heating fuel, with group-buying savings on installation.

Councils' armed forces commitment recognised with silver award

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have received a silver award for their ongoing commitment to the armed forces community.

Councils' 'excellent' commitment to gender equality recognised

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have been officially recognised a Menopause Friendly employers – raising awareness and supporting those experiencing the symptoms of menopause.

Sudbury youngster is set to make waves in the swimming world

Seven-year-old Jacob Parker from Sudbury has completed all seven stages of the Swim Academy programme at Babergh's Kingfisher Leisure Centre, an achievement Swim England has described as "unusually early" for his age.

No further questions, Cllr Plumb left the meeting at 7:37pm

7. County Councillors report:

Cllr Nunn gave the following report:

Suffolk residents can get a free proposal to replace ageing heating systems with heat pumps, and access a government grant for installation

All of Suffolk's public sector organisations (including all of Suffolk's local councils) have come together to help residents in Suffolk replace ageing gas, oil or LPG boilers with a heat pump, combining a £7,500 or £9,000 government grant, depending on current heating fuel, with group-buying savings on installation.

Over the past few years, energy bills have been unpredictable, serving as a reminder of just how exposed household budgets can be to forces entirely outside our control. But now, Suffolk's public sector organisations are partnering with Switch Together, a community group-buying scheme, to help residents in Suffolk move away from ageing and inefficient heating systems.

Through the government's Boiler Upgrade Scheme, eligible homeowners in England can receive a grant of £7,500 toward an air source heat pump, or £9,000 for households currently heating with oil or LPG. The grant is applied for upfront by the installer, so residents do not need to claim it back or repay it.

The Boiler Upgrade Scheme is open to homeowners and small business owners in England who are replacing a fossil fuel heating system and hold a valid Energy Performance Certificate with no outstanding major insulation recommendations. It is not means-tested, so

there is no income threshold to qualify. The scheme is currently scheduled to run until 31 December 2027.

Switch Together works by bringing residents together so that installers compete to win their business, securing better installation prices than most homeowners could negotiate alone. Once registered, residents receive a free, no-obligation personal offer, and their installer handles the grant application on their behalf. Switch Together's group-buying savings apply on top of the government grant.

Every installation is carried out by a Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) accredited installer. Switch Together works only with MCS-accredited professionals, so residents are covered from the first quote to the finished installation.

Councillor Gerald Kelly, Chair of the Suffolk Councils' Environment Portfolio Holders' Group, said:
"This is a fantastic opportunity for Suffolk residents to explore a cleaner, more efficient and cheaper way of heating their homes. Through our partnership with Switch Together, homeowners can access trusted installers, exclusive group-buying savings and government grants worth up to £9,000, making heat pumps more affordable than ever.

"Registration is free and comes with no obligation, so I'd encourage anyone thinking about replacing an ageing heating system to sign up and see what's possible. Together, we're helping residents save money, reduce emissions and create a more sustainable Suffolk."

The grant amount: £7,500 for households currently heating with gas or electricity, or £9,000 for households currently heating with oil or LPG. Switch Together's scheme covers air-to-water air source heat pumps, which provide both central heating and hot water.

Why an air source heat pump: they typically use three to four times less energy than a traditional boiler to heat a home, which can help lower bills over time. They spread heat evenly through the property, keeping every room at a steady, comfortable temperature even when it's cold outside. And because they don't burn fuel on site, they produce fewer emissions than a gas, oil or LPG boiler, for a cleaner, more sustainable home.

How Switch Together works: residents register free, with no obligation; Switch Together matches them with a trusted, MCS-accredited installer and a personal offer; and, if the resident chooses to go ahead, carry out the installation.
Residents of Suffolk can check their eligibility and register their interest on the Switch Together website.

This scheme is brought to you by Suffolk's public sector organisations as part of their work to create a more sustainable Suffolk.
Find out more about Sustainable Suffolk and their projects at www.sustainablesuffolk.org.uk

Energy Efficiency Loans

Homeowners across Suffolk can now apply for a loan to help fund energy efficiency improvements to their homes, thanks to a partnership between Suffolk County Council and Lendology. The Warm Homes Suffolk Loan scheme offers eligible homeowners access to loans from £2k to £15k at a fixed interest rate of 2.2% Annual Percentage Rate (APR), with repayment terms of up to seven years. Borrowers may also repay their loan early without penalty, subject to eligibility and loan terms. The funding is designed to support residents who want to improve the energy performance of their homes while spreading the cost of installation over a manageable period.

The loan can be used for a range of energy efficiency measures, including:

- Solar photovoltaic (PV) systems
- Solar battery storage
- Solar thermal systems
- Ground source heat pumps
- Air source heat pumps
- Double and triple glazed windows and doors
- Loft, wall and floor insulation
- Ventilation systems when installed alongside insulation measures

The scheme aims to help residents reduce their energy bills and make their homes better insulated. For more information about the Warm Homes Suffolk Loan Scheme, please visit the Lendology website: https://www.lendology.org.uk/partner/suffolk-council/

High Streets Matter: Support for Market Towns

Suffolk County Council is offering extra support to small independent and hospitality businesses across the county via its new High Street Matter programme. This will offer 75 businesses a package of one-to-one advice, funding opportunities and peer networking, with a view to help them become more resilient so high streets can thrive. Interested businesses can find out more and register here: https://www.newangliagrowthhub.co.uk/suffolks-high-streets-matter/

River Gipping path improvements complete as full 17-mile route reopens

Walkers and local communities can once again enjoy the full length of the Gipping Valley River Path after major improvements and repairs were completed at two key locations.

Suffolk County Council has completed improvement works by the River Gipping at Creeting St Peter and Sproughton, making the route safer, more accessible and more resilient to flooding while reopening the full 17-mile Gipping Valley River Path.
Works at Creeting St Peter included upgrading wooden footbridges and boardwalks with new recycled plastic versions, while works at Sproughton included riverbank repairs, path widening, accessible ramps and a new footbridge.
The 17-mile route connects Stowmarket and Ipswich railway stations and passes Needham Market station, while linking to a wider network of walking routes across Suffolk.

The magnificent response to the Dunwich fire.

Councillor Tristan Gale, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for planning, devolution and the fire service.

The devastation to the heathlands and adjoining Minsmere is heartbreaking.
So much has been lost and it will take many years to grow back to its previously abundant wildness.

A real concern is the displacement of wildlife that inhabited the area, there are far and wide implications that only time will heal, and we hope that it will grow back stronger.
However, what is beyond question is the magnificent response of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service and all those organisations who have rallied to support them.

I have purposely not commented during the firefighting effort because I wanted the focus of the public to be on the fire, and not on the Reform UK administration’s messages.
Now that it is no longer being classed as a major incident, I am more than happy to lend my voice to those praising the response.

I want to thank every single person who has played a part, from those fighting the fire on the heath and staff working around the clock behind the scenes, to the organisations providing food, welfare, equipment, specialist advice and practical support.
I also want to thank residents and businesses in Dunwich, Westleton and the surrounding communities who have had to live with road closures, smoke, disruption, and uncertainty for almost two weeks and have shown tremendous patience and support for our emergency services.

Praise is due too to the local supermarkets that donated numerous welfare packages, and Suffolk Building Society which donated £5,000 at the start of the incident in support of the local community.

I will take this opportunity to state that the rescinding of the climate emergency declaration would not have stopped a fire of this nature taking hold. Education is key to how we manage our countryside in the ever-changing climate, and we must fight to provide the resources that we need for our emergency services.

If we genuinely want to reduce the impacts of incidents like this, our conversation going forward should be about investment in Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service.
Better-resourced fire crews with updated equipment, improved wildfire capability and the funding to meet the growing demands placed on our invaluable service and crews.

Cllr Nunn left the meeting 7:42pm.

8. Village Hall:

a) Village Hall Committee – The Clerk read the 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.

Hall Usage
Private Bookings - we have one booking for local resident's children's birthday party in September and Table Tennis sessions most though they could do with more attendees to make it viable.
There have also been 4 sessions of play booked by residents in the summer holidays - no charge (and no income)
Regular Events – The regular classes of Pilates and Zumba have restarted after the summer break, and the WI continue to use the hall on alternate months for their meetings.
Film nights attendance continues to cover the current cost of the licence fee - we will wait to see what the licence increase in cost in the Autumn will be.
The Rural Coffee Caravan continues to attract a good attendance, with the charity bringing their van, advice and expertise to the village. A representative from Babergh Customer services has been in attendance helping residents with council related issues.

Other activities
The Barn Dance this year was a fund raiser for the Churches so we had no income from the event.
We have two arts and crafts sessions booked for the Autumn - Autumn Wreath making Workshop (Oct) and Christmas Pottery Session (Nov)

Maintenance & Improvement Projects

The annual maintenance checks and service have been completed of the fire alarm system and firefighting equipment - no issues identified. The cost of this and PAT testing was £398.88

A review of the quality of the audio in the hall has been done by AED sound and a report submitted to the PC clerk - it is hoped that this and other improvements to the hall to make it more disability appropriate will be part of the grant application the PC are leading on.

We still await confirmation of the installation of the EV car Charger point which will hopefully generate income for the hall.

b) The PC now has a specification for works at the Village Hall, this includes replacing the front entrance with a fully automatic door, replacing the two other fire doors with aluminium doors. Extending the mezzanine floor and putting a barrier across with access. Updating the electric to a switch for the AV power, getting an additional power source outside and separating the emergency lights from the fire alarm circuit. Updating the toilet with a Doc M pack to ensure its fully accessible. Making the walkway all the way round the Village Hall flat and re rendering the back and side of the VH. We are awaiting 3 quotations for this work and then we can look at funding options.

Action: Clerk to continue working on this project and hope to be able to bring the quote and funding options for the November 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 Chair signed the bank reconciliations.

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

Leaving balances as follows:

Treasurers Account	£5,499.07
Business Account	£18,364.04
Including CIL of	£4,947.62
Earmarked Reserves of	£7,000.00
General Reserves of	£8,929.18

9b) To acknowledge payments made outside the meeting

- **999 Network – Laptop Support** **£144.00**
  (LGA, 1972, s.111)
- **Dog waste bin emptying** **£216.00**
  (LGA, 1972, s.111)
- **SID Maintenance Contract** **£390.88**
  (LGA, 1972, s.111)
- **Signs for playground** **£54.76**
  (Public Health Act 1875, s164)

- **Lark Valley Grass Cutting** **£180.00**
  (Public Health Act 1875, s164)

9c) The following amounts were approved for payment:

- **Clerk's Net salary after Tax** **£571.06**
- **HMRC Tax payment** **£142.80**
- **Employer NI** **£76.51**
- **Clerk's expenses (Fuel)** **£41.80**

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 £7.54 and £8.05 in July and August. We have also received the second part of the precept £7,602.50.

10. **a) 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:

Summary of Progress: During the period (6th July 26 – 6th Sept 26), I have worked 3 hours 30 minutes under the given time frame of 5 hours per week, this included organising all the paperwork for the September meeting, agendas, actions from the July meetings, organising payments, as well as general administration.

b) Clerks pay it was agreed to increase SCP 15 which the Clerk is currently on went from £15.56 to £16.08 – this gets backdated to April so Clerk has a backpay of £31.33 due to the NALC pay scale update.

Following a good review, it was asked that the Clerk has a rise from SCP 15 at £16.08ph to SCP 16 at £16.34ph. This is included in the budget, as we always budget for an increase. Members agreed and were happy with this.

11. **Neighbourhood Plan:**

The Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted to Babergh the consultation ran from Monday 13th July to Friday 4th September. It is now in the examination phase.

12. **Planning:**

The Clerk gave an update on planning:

Planning Decisions:

None

Planning Applications:

a) DC/26/02718 - The Hermitage Bury Road Shimpling Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 0JL - Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a Proposed Use or Development - Confirmation that planning permission B/06/00924 dated 10/11/2006 and Listed Building Consent B/06/00924 dated 10.11.2006 have been lawfully commenced in accordance with Condition 1 of the respective permissions. – No comment

b) DC/26/02657 - Cracketts The Street Shimpling Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP29 4HU - Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/25/00787 - 3 (Fenestration), 4 (Eaves, Verges and Abutments), 5 (Roof Materials), 6 (Wall Cladding Materials) and 7 (Rainwater Goods) – No comment

c) DC/26/02654 - 1 Mill Hill Shimpling IP29 4HH - Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a Proposed Use or Development. Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Erection of single storey extension (following demolition of conservatory) Please see the accompanying plan showing existing / proposed. The works are small scale and follow permitted development guidelines – No comment

d) DC/26/02175 - Laburinthos Cottage, Bury Road, Shimpling (part In The Parish Of Alpheton), Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 0JJ - Householder Application - Erection of a detached annexe for family members (following demolition of outbuildings) (re-submission to renew approved application DC/23/02958).- No comment

13. Playground:

The new signage asking people to use the gate is up. Members thanks David Campan for putting these up. It was said that we hadn't heard much about whether this was helping with the fence issues as yet.

14. EV Charger:

Clerk updated members that we had a proposed installation drawing back but it was in the incorrect place. Clerk has gone back to them to explain the position, again. They also said that land registry suggests that the PC own the whole car park so Clerk would check if this is incorrect.

Action: Clerk to carry on with the EV charger install communication and to see if we can check the land registry.

15. Village Defib:

The defib at the Bush will become a PC asset at the end of October. Cllr Milhench updated us on quotes for a defib, it was thought that the one at the Bush should be replaced and that there should be an additional defib with cabinet at the Village Hall. The options were renting the defibrillators, there were different options of £40 per month per device or a 5 year rental at £1 per day. It would cost around £880 per year to get 2x defibrillators up and running. These are all held in a central database. Cllr Nunn kindly offered to fund the cabinet at the Village Hall. Cllr Milhench said that he hasn't gone back to the companies to get best and final prices yet and it was possible that a local business may put some money towards it too. Cllr Milhench said he would come back to the November meeting with final figures.

Cllr Milhench left the meeting at 7:19pm.

Action: Cllr Milhench to come back to the November meeting with final figures for 2x defibs and for costs for a cabinet so Clerk can liaise with Cllr Nunn regarding funding for this.

16. Traffic and Speeding

a) Speeding through the village and suggestion to lower the Village speed limit was discussed but noted that we need evidence to even begin to look at this and whether residents would want that. It was noted that the Village does have 2x SIDs and the white gates at Alpheton and the fake man in high vis were also suggested as ideas to slow down drivers. The option of an ANPR on top of the SID has also been used in other villages, so could potentially be something to look into.

b) The possibility of a speed watch group was discussed and agreed that a working party would be set up to discuss what they could do as there seems to be the 6 people that are required as a minimum to get this set up. Chair O'Rielly-Turner said she was happy to head this up and see if they could get a group together.

Action: Chair O'Rielly-Turner to head this up and see if they could get a group together.

c) Members discussed the difficulties for traffic turning from Hallifax Place onto The Street in either direction. Cllr Rooke said he would look at the possibility of making the single mirror there into a double mirror or whether we would need a new post and mirror.

Action: Cllr Rooke to look at the mirror and report back to the November meeting.

17. Recycling Banks:

Members discussed whether is was now the time to see if Babergh would dispose of the recycling banks as the PC are not getting any funds from it any more and residents are able to recycle a lot more at home with the new bin structure. It was thought that the PC should check with the Bush that the removal of the glass bin would be okay with them.

Action: Clerk to discuss with the Bush about the removal of the glass bin and speak to Babergh about the process of the removal of the bins.

18. Bus Stop:

Members discussed the overhanging hedge restricting the view of the bus stop opposite Hallifax place. It was thought that we could ask Chris to add it to the list of cuts but to check with the landowner first.

Action: Cllr Rooke to check with the landowner and if this is okay then Clerk to ask Chris to cut it.

Members discussed the bus stop timetables and it was thought that there is a space for the timetables inside the bus stops. Cllr Shrimpton said he would look into this and see how they are accessed.

Action: Cllr Shrimpton to look into the bus stop timetable noticeboards inside the bus shelters and see how they are accessed.

19. Correspondence Received:

Correspondence received regarding a property in the Village which has rubbish in the gardens, Councillors discussed this and as it is private property, the PC do not have powers to tell residents to tidy up, however the PC have created a document with useful links, including reporting litter and will send this round to the Village and add it to the newsletter. It was noted that it may be worth a discussion with Cllr Nunn to see if he knows of any avenues of help for the PC or residents.

Action: Clerk to send round the document with useful links and get in touch with Cllr Nunn

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

Mark Austin attended and suggested he would like to be put forward for the vacancy position.

Action: Clerk to add this to the November meeting.

Cllr O'Reilly-Turner suggested a computer help service where if people had tech issues or needed some printing they could come and ask for help. Mark suggested just popping a message on the Whatsapp group as people are always very helpful in the Village.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9:03pm.