Shimpling Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Council

Monday 9th November 2026, 7:00pm at Shimpling Village Hall

Present:

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

County Councillor: John Nunn

Clerk: Natasha Byford

1. **Apologies for absence**: Cllr Dunkley, Cllr Plumb 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**: Non pecuniary interest raised by Cllr Milhench for item 16 and 21 due to activities of a local businessman.

   b) **To consider requests for dispensation for the agenda item(s) under discussion**: Discussed that Cllrs lived close to the house in question in Item 13.

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 14th September 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:

As we move into November, I am pleased to report on several initiatives aimed at improving the safety, resilience and wellbeing of our community, alongside the ongoing work of the Parish Council.

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Welcome to our New Councillor

Firstly, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Mark Austin, who joins us as a new parish councillor. We look forward to working with Mark and benefiting from the experience and perspectives he will bring to the Council.

Road Safety and the Proposed 20mph Limit

Our Speed Watch Working Group has now met and is progressing plans to consult residents about a proposed 20mph speed limit within the parish. The group is developing a survey to gather residents' views and experiences of traffic speeds and road safety. This will help ensure that any future proposals reflect local concerns and are supported by evidence. I would encourage everyone to participate when the survey is circulated.

Community Resilience and Emergency Planning

We are also reviewing how we can strengthen our local emergency response arrangements, particularly in relation to flooding, heatwaves, wildfires, severe storms and other potential incidents. Our aim is to establish clearer arrangements for communication, coordination and practical support, especially for residents who may be more vulnerable during emergencies. We will be considering how best to work with local volunteers, residents and the relevant authorities to improve our community's preparedness and resilience.

Greening Shimpling

I am delighted that Greening Shimpling is organising a community screening of The People's Emergency Briefing on climate change in January. This will provide an opportunity for residents to learn more about the challenges we face and consider what action we can take locally. My thanks go to the Greening Shimpling volunteers for their continued enthusiasm and commitment.

Village Hall Maintenance

We are currently gathering quotations for remedial works required at the Village Hall. Maintaining our community facilities and ensuring they remain safe and fit for purpose is an important responsibility, and obtaining competitive quotations will help us make informed decisions about the necessary work and associated expenditure.

Parish Council Budget and Precept

The Council has also been working on its budget for the coming financial year. I would particularly like to thank Gerry, whose expertise and guidance throughout the budget-setting process have been invaluable. Although the proposed precept has risen slightly, this reflects the increasing costs of running the Parish Council and maintaining the services and facilities for which we are responsible. We remain committed to managing public funds carefully, ensuring value for money and keeping any increases as modest as possible.

Looking Ahead

These initiatives reflect our commitment to building a safer, more connected and more resilient community, while managing our responsibilities and resources effectively. Finally, I would like to thank my fellow councillors, our Clerk and the many residents and volunteers who continue to give their time and energy to making Shimpling a better place to live.

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6. District Councillors report:

Cllrs Plumb and Holt were unable to attend but sent over the following report;

Regulator publishes findings of councils' housing services inspection

The Regulator of Social Housing has published its findings after an inspection of the housing services provided by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. Councils help lowest income families receive the support they need

Targeted support for the districts' lowest income households unlocked almost £300k in unclaimed benefits for families across Babergh and Mid Suffolk last year, new figures have revealed.

Government update on Local Government Reorganisation in Suffolk

Minister Jim McMahon made a statement to the House of Commons this week, providing an update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

As you may remember, the original decision to create three new unitary councils in Suffolk was unexpectedly withdrawn by Government last month, meaning local elections in May 2027 go ahead on existing council boundaries. Government has now completed the first phase of the review and say they are satisfied that the criteria and process for LGR are robust. We are now expecting a fresh decision to made on the future of local government in Suffolk based on the proposals previously submitted and are ready to respond to any queries, or offer assurances as required regarding the three council case, to ensure the final decision is the best one for the residents of Suffolk. We expect to hear this decision by March 2027 at the latest. Shadow elections for the new unitary councils in all areas are then expected to take place in May 2028, ahead of the new councils going live on 1 April 2029. We will keep you informed of all developments as we hear them.

No further questions on this.

7. County Councillors report:

Cllr Nunn gave the following report:

Suffolk residents urged to check flood risk and prepare ahead of winter

Suffolk County Council is supporting the Environment Agency's Flood Action Week (from 12 October 2026), which aims to raise awareness of flood risk and encourage people to prepare and have a plan in place.

Suffolk residents are also encouraged to make themselves aware of their responsibilities on their property, and the things that they can do to reduce the impacts of flooding.

As climate change brings more frequent periods of intense rainfall, flooding is becoming an increasing risk across the country, as many Suffolk communities experienced during Storm Babet in October 2023.

The Environment Agency says:

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“6.3 million properties in England sit in areas at risk of flooding. And as our climate keeps changing, that risk keeps growing. Between April 2025 and March 2026 alone, we issued over 3,400 flood alerts, around 1,000 flood warnings, and 3 severe flood warnings.”

While Suffolk County Council continues to invest in projects that help reduce flood risk, there are also practical steps that residents can take themselves, from understanding their flood risk to maintaining watercourses on their land.

Councillor Morgan Brobyn, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Food, Waste and Rural Affairs

Suffolk County Council continues to support communities through its role as Lead Local Flood Authority. Alongside Suffolk Highways' programme of maintaining more than 150,000 highway gullies, the council is securing funding and delivering projects that help reduce the impact of flooding on residents, businesses and critical infrastructure.

This includes natural flood management schemes, developed with farmers and landowners, that slow the flow of water through the landscape and reduce flood risk for downstream communities – for example a number of recent projects are underway in Debenham, which felt the impact of Storm Babet.

Suffolk County Council, in partnership with Norfolk County Council, has also pioneered the Reclaim The Rain project - testing new ways of managing and harnessing water in small rural locations, including projects with Boxford Village Hall and Little Blakenham Village Hall.

Flooding can have a devastating impact on homes, businesses and communities, which is why being prepared is so important.

“While Suffolk County Council continues to invest in projects that help reduce flood risk, there are also practical steps that residents can take themselves, from understanding their flood risk to maintaining watercourses on their land.

“Many people may not realise they are responsible for a ditch, stream or other watercourse on their property. Keeping these clear helps water flow as intended and can reduce the risk of flooding both for themselves and their neighbours.

“Increasingly intense rainfall can sometimes lead to flooding even where drainage systems and gullies are working as intended, which is why we need a combination of local action and flood resilience measures to help communities adapt. Flood Action Week is a good opportunity to check what support and information is available and make sure you're prepared ahead of the winter months

There are a number of resources available online:

- Maintenance of ditches and other watercourses - responsibility often lies with the landowner.
- Highway drainage in Suffolk - find out when gullies near you are due to be attended
- Flood Smart Living Handbook – advice, guidance and measures you can take to reduce the risk of flooding
- Flood risk checker – find out if your property is at risk of flooding using the Environment Agency national mapping
- Report a flood in Suffolk - how to report a flood problem and what will happen after you've reported the problem

For more advice and information for Suffolk, search for “flooding” on www.suffolk.gov.uk

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Follow the Environment Agency on Facebook for more about flooding during Flood Action Week
www.facebook.com/environmentagency

Suffolk's Chief Fire Officer, Jon Lacey, has announced his retirement

Jon joined Suffolk County Council as Chief Fire Officer and Executive Director in November 2021 and has led Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service through a period of significant investment, improvement and partnership working.

Having begun his career in 1993 as an on-call firefighter with West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, Jon went on to serve in a range of operational and leadership roles across Essex, West Sussex and nationally.

Throughout his career he has responded to major incidents in the UK and overseas, led Urban Search and Rescue teams, supported national resilience work and played a key role in emergency planning and public safety preparedness. Most recently, Jon led operations during the Dunwich Heath wildfire, coordinating the national multi-agency response.

During his time in Suffolk, Jon has overseen the return of Fire Control services to the county, investment in 19 new fire engines and additional emergency response vehicles, continued development of Suffolk's emergency services hubs, and strengthened the governance and improvement processes that support the service's day-to-day work.

Under his leadership, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has also played a nationally recognised role in responding to major incidents, while continuing to invest in the wellbeing and development of its workforce locally; and supporting initiatives such as The Fire Fighters Charity.

Speaking about his retirement, **Jon Lacey, Suffolk's Chief Fire Officer, said:**

"After 34 years in the fire and rescue service, I've decided that the time is right for me to retire.

"This has not been a quick decision. I've been considering it for some time, but I feel now is the right moment to focus on new challenges and spend more time with my family.

"It has been an enormous privilege to serve as Suffolk's Chief Fire Officer and the County Council's Executive Director for the wider public safety service. I am truly proud of what we have achieved, and will never forget the dedication, professionalism and kindness of our firefighters, control staff, support teams, volunteers and partner organisations.

"Whether responding to major incidents, helping residents in their time of need, or working behind the scenes to keep services running, they make a difference every single day.

"I would like to thank everyone I have had the privilege to work alongside throughout my career, and especially the incredible people here in Suffolk. It has been an honour to serve with them."

First look at Suffolk's new £3.6m fleet of fire engines

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has unveiled 11 new fire engines as part of a £3.6 million investment in the county's emergency response.

The new vehicles are the latest phase of the Service's fleet replacement programme and will replace some of its oldest appliances, helping to ensure firefighters have access to modern vehicles equipped with the latest operational and safety features.

The investment follows the successful introduction of eight new engines in 2024 and forms part of the Service's long-term fleet replacement strategy.

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Featuring a number of operational and safety enhancements, the new additions boast touchscreen pump controls, LED scene lighting, hot hand wash units, tyre pressure monitoring, and blind spot collision alerts. Additional improvements include automated ladder head gantries and bronze water pumps designed to reduce corrosion and maintenance requirements.

Built by 'Emergency One' on Volvo FL816 chassis, the 16-tonne Type B pumping appliances have been designed to respond to a wide range of incidents and are the same specification as appliances already operating within the Service.

Green light for A12 multi-million pound upgrade as scheme gets planning permission

Suffolk County Council has approved a full planning application for highway improvements on the A12 worth around £63 million.

The works will take place between the A12/A14 Seven Hills Junction and the Woods Lane junction north of Woodbridge.

The plans feature significant upgrades to the 6.8 mile stretch to improve transport connectivity, journey times, safety, and accessibility for all users, including motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and public transport passengers.

A key feature will be to turn the road from single carriageway to dual carriageway between the two junctions with the B1438 and the B1079.

The council's Development and Regulation Committee gave unanimous approval today (Tuesday October 20) to the scheme.

The council will now formally submit its business case to the Department for Transport (DfT) and, subject to DfT approval, work may start around autumn 2027.

If approved by DfT, central Government will provide up to £54.067m, with the remainder coming from developers and the county council.

Councillor Christopher Hudson, Suffolk County Council Cabinet member for Transport and Highways, said: "This scheme will provide significant infrastructure improvements and is an investment in our county.

"It will improve the resilience of the local road network as congestion is already a problem, especially at peak periods, and will also improve connectivity to the regions' ports and support the visitor economy."

Key elements of the scheme are:

- Highway upgrades to improve traffic flow and safety, including enhancements to seven road junctions.
- Replacement of the Martlesham footbridge with a new non-motorised users bridge to improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists
- New bus link junction north of Anson Road, connecting the A12 and Main Road via Portal Avenue
- Dual carriageway upgrade between the A12/B1438 Ipswich Road junction and the A12/B1079 Grundisburgh Road junction, including a new layby, shared use footway/cycleway, and agricultural accessway

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- New shared use footway/cycleways at Portal Avenue and north of A1152 Woods Lane, along with improved crossing facilities at key junctions
- Additional highway features, such as maintenance bays, traffic signs, upgraded signals, and pedestrian crossings

The proposals were drawn up following two public consultations after the scheme was first outlined in 2020.

Cllr Nunn left the meeting 7:26pm.

8. Village Hall:

a) Village Hall Committee – The Clerk had sent round prior to the meeting, the following report on behalf of the VHC:

Finance - no significant change since the last report - we continue to plan and hold events that generate a modest income which currently covers the day to day running of village hall.

Electricity bills will rise over the winter due to the lack of sun and drop in temperature

Hall Usage

Private Bookings - Table Tennis sessions seem to be established now - though they could do with more attendees to make it stable.

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 and the fire brigade officer came to talk about fire safety in the home and arrange home visits for interested residents.

Other activities

The Autumn Wreath making Workshop was held on the 24th Oct with some beautiful wreaths made to adorn Shimpling doors. The next crafts session is a Christmas Pottery workshop on the 28th Nov led by local potter Cally James.

Ware also planning to do a Christmas Film session for local children close to Christmas and in the new year a Murder Mystery Evening.

Maintenance & Improvement Projects

The PC is leading on trying to secure funding to do improvements at the VH (predominantly related to disability) which should set it up for another few years

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.

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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 have received 2 quotations for these works, £50,088 and £69,261 and are awaiting the third quote. Members discussed this and thought that while it nice to be able to do all of these things, our budget and realistic funding would not stretch to this and to look at the urgent items to do instead.

Members agreed that the disability upgrade to the toilet and the hearing loop works in the Village Hall would be good to do, provided we could get funding for it.

They also agreed that extending the mezzanine floor, adding the railings and the ladder would be a health and safety issue as well as extending and flattening the path up the driveway to the front of the Village Hall and round to the side exit should be done, again depending on the funding. It was discussed to ask local builder Ben to quote on these projects also.

Action: Clerk to continue working on this project and to bring quotes and funding options to the January 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

- **Printer Ink and Paper** **£42.84**
  (LGA, 1972, s.111)
- **SALC Payroll** **£61.20**
  (LGA, 1972, s.111)
- **CAS Website Hosting** **£70.00**
  (LGA, 1972, s.111)

9c) The following amounts were approved for payment:

- **Clerk's Net salary after Tax** **£542.51**
- **HMRC Tax payment** **£135.80**
- **Clerk's expenses (Fuel)** **£20.90**

LGA 1972 s. 111 (ancillary Powers)

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The above payment schedule was approved by members.

9d) The Clerk noted that the Council have received money from bank interest £7.55 and £7.55 in September and October. CIL Payment for £900.

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 (7th Sept 26 – 1st Nov 26), I have worked 1 hours 30 minutes over the given time frame of 5 hours per week, this included organising all the paperwork for the November meeting, agendas, actions from the September meetings, organising payments, meeting builders and potential funding at the Village Hall, as well as general administration.

11. Neighbourhood Plan:

The Neighbourhood Plan is now in the examination phase. The Babergh map of land ownership was discussed and asked to try and keep contacting Babergh about taking on ownership of the playground area. The Clerk also said that Cllr Holt was trying to arrange a meeting with the NP group.

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 Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Works to a Listed Building The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; The Planning (Listed Buildings)(Certificates of Lawfulness of Proposed Works) Regulations 2014 - Confirmation that Listed Building Consent B/06/00925 dated 10.11.2006 has been lawfully commenced in accordance with Condition 1 of the respective permission. – Awaiting decision
b) DC/26/04515 - Rectory Cottage Old Rectory Lane Shimpling Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP29 4HQ - Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/24/04287 - Biodiversity Net Gain Condition – Awaiting Decision

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13. Maltings Farm:

The PC received correspondence regarding a potential planning application on this property. But noted that they were unable to comment without a formal planning application.

Action: Clerk to go back to Christine to respond to her letter.

14. Playground:

The new signage asking people to use the gate is up. It was said that the signage seems to have worked. It was also noted that David does a good job looking after the playground.

15. EV Charger:

Clerk updated members that we have had a email regarding the chargers.

Action: Clerk to carry on with the EV charger install communication

16. Village Defib:

Members discussed options and agreed to replace the defib at the Village Hall and use the existing cabinet and to add an additional defib with cabinet at the Village Hall. The additional cabinet would be funding by Cllr Nunn. Rentadefib was £361 per machine on a 4 year agreement. £495 plus £10 delivery for a cabinet. So it would be £723 for 2 defibs per year. A kind local business will donate to the PC to cover the costs for this year and half the costs for next year.

It was also discussed about first responders in the Village and having people who could be called upon to run and get the defib if required in an emergency situation.

Action: Cllr Milhench to liaise with the Clerk to get the 2 defibs ordered and the cabinet ordered and Cllr Nunn to pay for the cabinet.

17. Traffic and Speeding

There has been enough interest to get a group together and it was discussed about a 20mph zone and speed limits of 20mph. The PC agreed that the Shimpling Speed Watch group could contact the Police, County Council and District Council to start things off with this. Cllr Nunn said that Shimpling had his support with this.

Action: Cllr O'Rielly-Turner to report back to the Shimpling Speed Watch Group and contact the relevant people to get started with this.

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18. Recycling Banks:

Members discussed and decided that we can give formal agreement that the banks can now be moved, including the clothes bank. Clerk to notify Nathalie that these will be going. It was also discussed about the matting on the verge once the recycling banks have gone and Cllr Milhench suggested he discuss this with Bernard.

Action: Clerk to give the go ahead for the removal of the recycling banks, including the clothing bank and let Nathalie know this.

Action: Cllr Milhench to discuss the matting on the verge with Bernard.

19. Councillor Vacancy:

Members invited Mark Austin to talk about why he would like to join the PC as a Councillor. Members then voted to co-opt Mark. Mr Mark Austin of Dairy Cottage, Chadacre Estate, Shimpling, IP29 4JD was voted to serve on the council by unanimous vote.

Action: Clerk to ensure acceptance of office and register of interests are completed within 28 days and send any details required for new Councillors.

Action: Clerk to ask for an email address to be set up for Mark.

20. Insurance:

Members discussed the insurance quotations for 1st Dec 26 – 30th Nov 27 and agreed to renew with Clear Councils

Action: Clerk to renew the insurance

21. Nativity Scene:

Members discussed funding of the Christmas tree for the Village Nativity scene. It was agreed to go ahead with this and it would be funded by donation to the PC from a local business.

Action: Cllr Rooke to source the tree and Clerk to organise the donation and payment

22. Greening Group:

The greening group gave an update that they would be showing a screening in January, in the Village Hall, or at Shimpling Park Farm if the hall went over capacity, on The Peoples Emergency Briefing which would be followed by a community discussion. This would be on Saturday 30th January 2027. The PC, District and County Councillors and MP would all be invited.

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23. Emergency Preparedness:

Members discussed whether a Community Emergency Plan was necessary for Shimpling and it was thought that it would be a good idea to get a working party together for this.

Action: Cllr O'Reilly-Turner to organise getting a working party together for this.

24. Dog Poo Bins:

It was discussed that there is an increasing amount of dog poo in the bin at the playground. Cllr Brunwin said the David Campan was happy to put up signs asking that the playground bin was general waste and no dog poo was to be put in it. Members agreed this was a good idea and would hopefully stop this happening. Shimpling already had 2 dog poo bins, one opposite the Bush and one in Gents Lane.

25. Bus Stop:

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. Cllr Shrimpton reported that he was still chasing this up.

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

26. Budget:

a) Members agreed to set the budget for 2027/28 at £16,630.00
b) Members agreed to set the precept for 2027/28 at £16,130.00

Action: Clerk to send precept form

27. Correspondence Received:

None

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

Members had a small discussion on fund raising ideas.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9:42pm.

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