



Minutes of the Stansfield Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 7th January 2026, Stansfield Village Hall at 7pm

Present: Cllrs R Barnes (Chair), A Pallett (Deputy Chair), J Ball, K Spillett, P Barnes.
Also Present: Abbie Lee (Clerk) and five members of the public.

- 1. Welcome by the Chair:** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the meeting is being recorded.
- 2. Apologies**
Cllr Slater sent his apologies. Cllrs approved his reasons for absence.
Cllr Corlett sent her apologies. Cllrs approved her reasons for absence.
District Cllr Pugh sent her apologies.
- 3. Declarations of Interests**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 4. Minutes**
The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 29th October 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.
- 5. Public Forum**
A member of the public handed out some images of proposed plans for planning applications DC/25/1871/HH and DC/25/2032/LB, accompanied by a scale model. He then gave a summary of the comments he has put on the planning portal.
A member of the public commented on the planning applications DC/25/1871/HH and DC/25/2032/LB. Concern is that it could pave the way for further development in future and it could end up becoming a house instead of a home office and gym.
A member of the public commented on planning applications DC/25/1871/HH and DC/25/2032/LB. The proposed swimming pool is less than two metres from their boundary. Concerned about noise.
- 6. County, District and Parish Councillors' Reports**
 - 6.1 No County Councillor report was received.
 - 6.2 No District Council report was received.
 - 6.3 The following reports from Parish Councillors were received:
Cllr P Barnes reported on the virtual meeting with Police & Crime Commissioner. This meeting concerned Police response to reported incidents involving loose dogs in Assington Green, and the best method for bodies like the Parish Council to report Threats to a Community.
The report is appended to these minutes.
- 7. Planning and Development**
 - 7.1 Planning application DC/25/1871/HH Laurel Bank Farmhouse, Assington Green, Stansfield, CO10 8LY. Householder planning application for a 1.5 storey outbuilding with two garages and

a log store on ground floor and home office and gym of first floor. Councillors resolved to object to the application.

Concern was raised over the scale, location and need for accommodation described within the application. Concern that the proposed outbuilding could be changed to a dwelling at a later date. Consideration should be given regarding locally valued landscape and position relative to the main house. It looks like a house-in-waiting. Should the application be granted, SPC will request a clause that it cannot be converted to a dwelling at a later date, nor can not be sold separately from the main house. Clerk to request a site visit from the planning officer to be carried out.

7.2 Planning application DC/25/2032/LB Laurel Bank Farmhouse, Assington Green, Stansfield, CO10 8LY. Application for listed building consent - a. single storey front extension and 1.5 storey side and rear extension (following demolition of existing extension) b. removal of window on front elevation c. additional three windows to side elevation d. replace window and door with new French doors on side elevation e. alterations to existing windows and doors f. internal alterations g. lime render to all elevations g. new door to outbuildings front and side elevation. External alterations including works to boundaries. Cllrs resolved to support the planning officer's decision.

7.3 Planning Application DC/25/2031/HH Laurel Bank Farmhouse, Assington Green, Stansfield, CO10 8LY. Householder planning application for a 1.5 storey extension (following demolition of existing extensions). Cllrs resolved to support the planning officer's decision.

8. Community Matters

8.1 Update on the Good Neighbour Scheme was received:

Thank you to the Good Neighbour Scheme volunteers. There have been 130 x help-outs since the scheme started two years ago. The scheme currently has approximately one request per week, which are typically for shopping, transport, or things for the village. Thank you to Cllr Ball, who helped Martin Howe to take the village sign down.

8.2 Update on Assets of Community Value was received:

Little progress has been made due to more urgent community matters taking up time. A draft list of community assets, including the pub, old water pumps, and viewpoints from footpaths, especially Footpath 16, has been compiled and needs to be discussed with WSC. A further report to be given at the next meeting.

8.3 Update on the Old Chapel Churchyard was received:

Repair and repainting of gates has almost been completed by Good Neighbour Scheme volunteers, and discussions are ongoing about methods of secure remounting. Cllr Slater was not present to give any update on the general maintenance of the site.

8.4 The emergency village plan is up to date but rest centre training has not yet been undertaken due to lack of suitable dates and a closer venue being offered by WSC.

8.5 It has been suggested that the Stansfield Village Website could be amalgamated with the Parish Council website. Clerk to contact Derek Adams to discuss.

8.6 Cllrs discussed speeding in the village and the consideration of a 20mph limit. Cllrs noted the Clerk has requested costs from Cllr Bennett.

Cllrs noted the following speed data for September:

Stansfield – Plough Hill

Total Photos: 705

30-34mph: 510

35mph+: 195

40mph+: 22

50mph+: 0

Fastest Speed: 45mph

Cllrs also thanked the Good Neighbour Scheme volunteers for putting up posters designed by young residents at the spring coffee morning in April.

8.7 Summer Fun Day and other events in 2026: to liaise with village hall. Cllr Pallett to obtain information at next village hall meeting.

8.8 General review of Website contents, including all Policy Documents, is in hand.

8.9 The following report was received on the village sign, which was taken down in December 2025 due to hazardously rotten fixings: Upon inspection, it was found the cross rail fixings for the sign were rotten, potentially posing a danger, therefore the sign was immediately taken down. Seeking to obtain three quotes to remount.

9. Clerk's Report

9.1 Cllrs noted new gov.uk email address is up and running, although there have been teething troubles.

9.2 Cllrs noted the Clerk is gradually updating the website with latest versions of policies and information, as well as news and events.

10. RFO Report

10.1 Cllrs noted the Clerk changed the mobile phone network provider from EE to Smarty, going from £27.52 per month to £6 per month.

10.2 Cllrs resolved to approve the Clerk to set up payment of the SIM as a standing order from the Unity bank account. However, if Unity Bank does not support this, Cllrs to approve a standing order being set up to the Clerk's for reimbursement.

10.3 Cllrs reviewed the Asset Register. Quotes are being sought to replace the damaged grit bin at the junction of Lower Street and the lane to the village hall.

10.4 Cllrs **resolved** to set the 2026-27 precept demand of £8,758, which is a 1.16 % increase on 2025-26, as underpinned by the budget, and authorised the Chairman and Clerk to sign the precept form.

10.5 Cllrs noted Cllr Corlett would like to be removed as a signatory on the Unity Trust bank account and nominated Cllrs Spillett and Ball to become additional signatories.

10.6 Cllrs noted the year to 30th November bank reconciliation.

11. Governance

11.1 Cllrs resolved to adopt the IT Policy in compliance with Assertion 10.

11.2 Cllrs resolved to adopt the Local Government Transparency Code in compliance with Assertion 10.

11.3 Councillors resolved to adopt the Community Engagement Policy.

11.4 Cllrs resolved to adopt the NALC model Privacy Policy in compliance with Assertion 10.

11.5 Cllrs resolved to receive adopt the ICO FOI Publication Policy in compliance with Assertion 10.

11.6 Cllrs resolved to authorise the Clerk to appoint SALC as the 2025-26 internal auditor at a cost of £189 plus VAT.

12. Agenda Items for Future Meetings

No items.

13. Proposed 2027 Meeting Dates

Cllrs noted proposed 2027 meetings all be held at 7.00 pm at Stansfield Village Hall:

13th January 2027 Parish Council Meeting

10th March 2027 Parish Council Meeting

12th May 2027 Annual Parish Council Meeting

18th May 2027 Assembly of the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors/Annual

8th September 2027 Parish Council Meeting

Cllrs to note that the Village Hall is not yet taking bookings for 2027.

Meeting closed at 8.23 pm

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 11th March 2026

Signed: Chairman Date.....

Stansfield Parish Council:

Notes from Virtual Meeting with Police and Crime Commissioner

15 December 2025, via Teams Link

Present:

Tim Passmore Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk

Sandra Graffham, Asst CEO and Head of Communications.

Councillors Rex Barnes, Pat Barnes, Martin Slater, Andrew Pallett, Keith Spillett (part).

Cllr Pat Barnes outlined the reasons for this meeting:

1.To understand what led to the Police failure to act to prevent a Threat to our Community escalating...and what actions and changes have been taken by the Police since.

2. To seek to establish a mechanism for any parish council or community body to ensure Police know and understand the community view of the seriousness and urgency level of any developing Threat. There does not seem to be a defined and promoted method for parish councils to communicate with Police regarding emerging threats to a community.

Mr Passmore said that he and his department were “absolutely” the right avenue to address these questions, and promised to do what they could to take this forward.

Concerns over Police inaction in response to individual parishoners reports of loose dogs threatening or attacking them whilst walking, in their cars and homes, prompted this meeting.

In May the Parish Council had flagged up to Police that there had been more incidents involving people than had been reported direct to Police...all long before any sheep were attacked. This communication with the then local Police Community Engagement Officer was rebuffed. *Email (Correspondence had been forwarded to the PCC and local police showing this, but can be sent again if necessary).*

Because of this, the Parish Council seeks to understand how to report the wider concerns of a community about threats being experienced. The Police and Crime Commissioner said that the local Community Engagement Officer, now called the Beat Officer, was the route and promised to give the Parish Council details of their defined role. There are 80 Beat officers in Suffolk each covering a patch.

Although no action had been taken by Police to direct reports to them about people being threatened in the months before July, the Parish Council understands that before the major incident involving 40+ sheep in July, there were two earlier incidents of sheep attacks. These had prompted some action from Police in the shape of a Community Resolution Order, but this was insufficient to ensure that the dogs were properly controlled.

We tried hard to get Police to act before this major incident happened but we feel our communication is unwelcome and the Police are not open to listening to the community wider view, said Cllr Pat Barnes. Not everyone will report incidents direct to Police but parish councils and other community bodies do pick up this information which could be passed on to Police.

Mr Passmore said they would do everything they could to put this right. He offered a public meeting in Stansfield. Cllr Barnes said they needed to have more information about the changes Police were making to methods and procedures, particularly in communications with communities, before this took place.

Cllr Barnes said an agreed, written method for community bodies to communicate with Police about Threats was needed. She had proposed one to the local police but it was rejected. *(can be sent to you again if needed)* Police appeared to be only interested in their own system of recording actual incidents direct, via 101. This did nothing to prevent situations escalating as demonstrated in Stansfield, though. It failed to capture the whole picture.

Mr Passmore said he would work with Sandra Graffham to draft a system/mechanism and Cllr Barnes offered to help too. Nick Timothy our local MP has also said he will work with us all on this.

Asked what the community was feeling now ..the resounding answer was: “ENTIRELY PREVENTABLE”

Councillors thanked Mr Passmore and Ms Graffham for holding this meeting and for their positive offers to intervene and work towards better Police communication and action.