



## Wingfield Parish Council

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### Unconfirmed minutes of Wingfield Parish Council Meeting (unless signed).

Held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025 7.30 pm at Syleham and Wingfield Village Hall

<b>Present:</b>	Guy Mathias	Chair
	Lee Smith (LS)	Councillor (Deputy Chair)
	Robin Feavearyear (RF)	Councillor
	Anthony Jolly (AJ)	Councillor
	Melanie Murray (MM)	Councillor
	Henry Lloyd (HL)	Suffolk County Councillor
	Lavinia Hadingham (LaH)	BMSDC Councillor
	Lesley Hastie (LH)	Clerk

**Attendees:** Members of the public 5

Item No	Agenda title	Action
<b>25.11</b>	<b>Chairman's Welcome</b>	
	LS welcomed people to the meeting.	
<b>25.12</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>	
	DM and CC gave apologies which were accepted.	
<b>25.13</b>	<b>Declaration of interest in any item on the agenda</b>	
	None.	
	<b>ANNUAL MEETING</b>	
<b>25.14</b>	<b>Election of chair and vice chair</b>	
	Councillors voted GM as chair and LS as vice chair.	
<b>25.15</b>	<b>Chair's Annual Report</b>	
	GM said that it was with great sadness that the council had said goodbye to David Young, the parish council's clerk, who had passed away last year. GM went on to report on the council's activities over the last year which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appointment of a new clerk</li></ul>	

Item No	Agenda title	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of online banking</li> <li>• Adoption of SALC as a payroll provider ensuring that the council met its obligations regarding PAYE</li> <li>• No increase in the precept (council tax) for this year for residents</li> <li>• Parish Council website was moved to a new platform which made it easier to update</li> <li>• Updating of the council's standing orders and policies</li> <li>• Successful bid for funding for the Oral History signs</li> <li>• Throughout the year, councillors reported damaged road and street signs and potholes and met with Suffolk Highways to discuss options for replacing damaged signs and repairing potholes</li> <li>• Agreed to purchase a second defibrillator</li> <li>• Awarded grant funding of £125 towards the upkeep of the village planters</li> <li>• Responded to planning consultations</li> <li>• Introduced sheep to graze the common as part of a management plan for the maintenance of the common</li> <li>• Donated £50 to the Royal British Legion which paid for a poppy wreath for Remembrance Day.</li> </ul> <p>GM thanked councillors, the clerk, residents, district and county councillors, and Syleham and Wingfield Village Hall for their support over the past year.</p>	
<b>25.16</b>	<b>Community Group Reports</b>	
<b>25.16 a</b>	<b>Wingfield Barns</b> (See report on website)	
<b>b</b>	<b>St Andrew's Church</b> (See report on website)	
<b>c</b>	<b>Syleham and Wingfield Village Hall</b> (See Annex A)	
<b>ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING</b>		
<b>25.17</b>	<b>Approval of the minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025 meeting as a true record</b>	
a.	The minutes were approved.	
<b>25.18</b>	<b>District Councillor's Report</b>	
	LaH reported that she intended to ask planning colleagues to attend a ward meeting on how the Joint Local Plan would impact parishes. She added that parish councils would be invited to this meeting.	
<b>25.19</b>	<b>County Councillor's Report</b>	
	HL said that he had Locality Grant Funding which parishes could apply for and encouraged councillors to apply.	

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	<p>HL added that he had sent his May report which included details of the council reorganisation options. HL added that there would be mayoral elections next year however he was unsure when the council elections would be. A copy of the report can be found here:  <a href="https://www.henryjameslloyd.com/p/may-county-report/">https://www.henryjameslloyd.com/p/may-county-report/</a></p>	
<b>25.20</b>	<b>Issues for discussion</b>	
<b>25.20a</b>	<p><b>Approval of Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR) and Annual Accounts</b></p> <p>Councillors approved the AGAR and the accounts.</p>	
<b>25.20b</b>	<p><b>Repair of road signs - Update</b></p> <p>GM reported that councillors had had a very helpful meeting with Suffolk Highways' Community Liaison Engineer regarding repairing the village's damaged road signs. Councillors agreed to set up a working party which would meet in the coming weeks to progress this.</p>	
<b>25.20c</b>	<p><b>Wingfield Oral History - Update</b></p> <p>Councillors agreed that the clerk could commission designs for the Oral History logos which would then be shared with residents for their views. Councillors also agreed to set up a working party to discuss the names on the signs and the locations.</p>	
<b>25.20d</b>	<p><b>Community Development Grants – Wingfield Parish Projects – Suggestions</b></p> <p>Suggestions included sourcing funding for the maintenance of Wingfield Green which was very overgrown particularly the footpath near the castle. LS said that the council would need to wait until September to carry out this work and that he would speak to contractors regarding a quote for the work.  <b>ACTION:</b> LS to source a quote for the work.</p>	<b>LS</b>
<b>25.20e</b>	<p><b>Green spaces funding – Suggestions for Wingfield Common/Green projects including development of a pond plus identification of funding strands</b></p> <p>Suggestions included maintenance of the village's ponds. GM encouraged councillors to think about additional projects.</p>	
<b>25.20f</b>	<p><b>Village footpaths – Access and maintenance</b></p> <p>GM reported that a number of the village footpaths were hard to follow due to poor signage and overgrown brambles and that some footpaths had barbed wire blocking access. Councillors agreed to carry out an audit of footpaths.</p>	
<b>25.20g</b>	<p><b>Planting a tree in memory of David Young</b></p> <p>LS said that he would come back to the parish council with the cost of purchasing an oak tree.</p>	
<b>25.20h</b>	<p><b>Purchase of a new defibrillator – Update</b></p> <p>Councillors agreed to raise an invoice with the supplier and to pay in full when the order was fulfilled.  <b>ACTION:</b> Clerk to ask supplier to raise an invoice.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>

Item No	Agenda title	Action
25.20i	<p><b>VE Day Celebrations – Parish Council Response</b>  Councillors agreed that this had slipped off their radar due to the celebrations being held at Syleham and Wingfield Village Hall to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. Councillors agreed that they would look at marking VJ Day (15 August) and future significant remembrance events and would also look at options for a visual installation to remember those residents who had lost their lives serving in the armed forces.  <b>ACTION:</b> Clerk to look at the cost of benches, statues etc and share with councillors.</p>	Clerk
25.20j	<p><b>Village Phone Box</b>  Councillors agreed that they would look at moving the phone box and would also consider uses for the phone box.</p>	
	<p><b>Clerk's report</b></p>	
25.21	<p><b>Planning</b>  The council responded with no objections to planning application DC/25/01680: <i>Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed building for agricultural use (Bullocks Hill Farm)</i>. The district council subsequently ruled that no formal approval was required.  The council also responded to planning application DC/25/01460 for the construction of a driveway with no objections.</p>	
25.22	<p><b>Adoption of gov.uk domains for councillor emails and parish council website</b>  The clerk explained the benefits of adopting gov.uk domains including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gov.uk brand is a professional, trusted brand that people will recognise</li> <li>• increased transparency and security compared to personal email accounts</li> <li>• the ability to manage email accounts by being able to remove email accounts when councillors/staff leave</li> <li>• easy access to email accounts to fulfil Freedom of Information (FOI) obligations</li> <li>• continuous central government monitoring for potential security vulnerabilities.</li> </ul> <p>Clerk explained that there would be an initial cost of around £500 with an annual fee to maintain the site. Councillors agreed to adopt gov.uk domain and for the clerk to source quotes from the government list of approved providers.  <b>ACTION:</b> Clerk to source quotes</p>	Clerk
25.23	<p><b>Finances</b></p>	
25.23a	<p><b>Bank reconciliation</b>  The clerk presented a bank reconciliation to councillors and flagged that the council was due to pay its insurance premium of £410.69.</p>	
25.23b	<p><b>Adoption of NALC Financial Regulations 2025</b></p>	

Item No	Agenda title	Action
	Councillors agreed to adopt the 2025 regulations.	
<b>25.24</b>	<b>Public Session</b>	
<b>25.24a</b>	A member of the public advised that the grass verge on Abbey Road required maintenance work. Councillors asked the resident to send details to the parish clerk who would then report it using the Suffolk Highways Reporting Tool. <b>ACTION</b>	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>25.24b</b>	AJ reported that a manhole in front of the Parish Council noticeboard was loose. MM agreed to visit the location and identify which organisation was responsible for the manhole and to report to the Clerk who would then report it to the relevant authority. <b>ACTION</b> AJ also reported a number of damaged signs. It was agreed that these would be added to the working group's list of signs to be repaired.	<b>Clerk</b>

There being no other business, the Chair thanked those present for their contribution and closed the meeting at 21.06

**Date of next meeting:** 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025 7:30 pm Wednesday at Syleham and Wingfield Village Hall.

Chair:  ..... Date: 17/9/25

## Annex A

To Wingfield Parish Council

May 2025

Our shared village hall has remained busy! The local community supports the village hall by booking for family gatherings and celebrations, while community events bring a range of groups together.

Regular use of the village hall includes Carpet Bowls, Tai Chi, Coffee groups as well as the Sports and Social club. A new addition is an early evening family group for young people of secondary school age attending with a family adult, to play pool, darts, board games and socialise. Unfortunately, a weekly, daytime, socialising group for young families did not gain the support that the young parent who set it up, had envisaged.

Use of the village hall for meetings and events for both churches and both parish councils remains free.

We have made use of the 'Living well in Winter' initiative from Mid Suffolk District Council to continue to provide a regular daytime coffee get together twice per month, as well as provision each Tuesday evening from 8pm to 10pm.

If you were to visit on a Tuesday or Friday when the volunteer run bar is open you may find any or all of a range of uses – jive dancers, card players, pool and darts players, karaoke, open mic session, the

backgammon board may be in use... the Friday quizzes and bingo sessions raise funds for locally nominated charities and good causes. Already in 2025 funds have been raised for Fressingfield and Stradbroke surgeries, Hoxne PTA, 1<sup>st</sup> Fressingfield Scouts, Stradbroke Tennis club and the Rural Coffee Caravan!

As always, we would encourage you to come along to some of the diverse events arranged by the hard working Sports and Social club – who give hours of voluntary time to raise money for the Village Hall management committee to spend on the maintenance and upkeep of our village hall.

As with each of us, regular bills have all increased, and hours have been put into securing the best prices available for our utility usage.

The village hall is generally in a good state of repair but further maintenance is always needed – although no large outlays this year. Our building sub committee identified some cosmetic tasks as well as minor upgrades which we plan to carry out by the end of the calendar year

Annual checks on the gas appliance, fire extinguishers, fire and general alarms as well as PAT are up to date.

The RoSPA annual inspection of the play and exercise equipment on J's Meadow, was completed in March 2025. The area is well used by families and young people. We are grateful to those who give their time to regularly cut the grass on J's Meadow and to those who come along to the monthly maintenance get together. The relatively young hedge is well cared for and has had good growth in the years since it was planted, and the raised beds make a good show. We would wish to improve the path surface in the future.

We continue to work on researching, discussing and implementing further appropriate policies.

We are looking forward to continuing our beneficial work for our communities.

Thank you for your ongoing interest and support

Best wishes

Julie Thompson

On behalf of Syleham and Wingfield village hall management committee

#### **BRIEF FOR REPORT ON ST ANDREW'S CHURCH,**

#### **WINGFIELD TO PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL**

#### **MEETING, MAY 2025**

During 2024 regular services of Holy Communion were held on the first Sunday of each month and BCP Evensong on the third Sunday, on two occasions with the participation of amateur choirs. Attendances at Easter and especially at Christmas were particularly encouraging. In addition, a service of Compline was held on Zoom each Friday evening throughout the year

and in church as a hybrid service during Lent. A benefice service was held at Wingfield on the Sunday after Christmas.

Our work with children and families continued to flourish with increased participation from Wingfield families.

Messy Church continued to meet monthly and celebrated Easter with an Easter Egg hunt. Little Lambs, our parent and toddler group, met monthly, and later twice monthly, at Hone pavilion. Club Create for 7-12 year olds held a number of holiday and half term sessions. The Rural Youth Café for 12-16 year olds held its first session in January 2024 and monthly sessions thereafter. Attendance varied but a core group of participants is gradually building up.

We are most grateful to all those who support the church by helping with maintenance of the church and the churchyard. Professional support is however also required. A survey of the trees in the churchyard carried out in late 2023 identified a considerable amount of major tree surgery which is beyond the capacity of amateur helpers. We need financial help from the parish council to ensure that the churchyard remains safe and welcoming to visitors.

During 2025 we will also be pursuing grant applications to contribute to the major repairs required to the stonework of the church, the windows and the roof, estimated to cost in the order of £250,000.

### **Wingfield Barns**

Another AGM rolls around with the Chair's report starting with the words, 'It's been a difficult year...'

Obviously, the outstanding event of the year was the departure of Anna and the

arrival of Erica.

Anna, we simply can't thank you enough for everything you have done for Wingfield Barns. From the moment I interviewed you at The John Peel Centre what feels like a hundred years ago, you have contributed so much more than anyone could reasonably expect from an employee. This place has you stamped all over it and your passion will live on here for a very long time. The best of luck in your new role. In the new year we welcomed Erica to the team. Erica brings a wealth of experience in local theatre and has already brought new ideas and events to the barns. Taking on a venue like this involves a very steep learning curve and is, to say the least, a daunting prospect. Four months in I don't think it's very fair to ask how it's going! Suffice to say that we are all properly impressed.

The post-COVID/ Cost of Living financial crisis which also hit us in Autumn 2024 has concentrated minds and rather soaked up resources for the past six months or so. It has had a big impact on all of us and this has led to changes in our management structure and corporate governance. These changes are all for the good.

We have had to cancel several gigs during the year, largely due to poor sales and which reflects the nature of people now generally making last-minute decisions to attend events.. As reported last year, one of the noticeable effects of long COVID, in the events & entertainment industry, is that some audiences are reluctant to book in advance, leaving it until the last minute, or on the day, to decide whether to attend or not. This is not confined to us, our sector or our sized venue, it's industry wide, unless you're Taylor Swift! We are investigating any ways we can address the problem, bulk buy incentives, twofers, advance booking discounts...

The loss of the 2024 Christmas Fair was a blow but, under the then circumstances, it would have been very wrong of us to go ahead. It will return, bigger & better this year.

There's a great programme of events lined up for the rest of 2025 with many of the usual suspects sitting alongside new, and exciting features.

The Mini-Prints Exhibition returns this summer, let's see if we can beat the 2024 record for sales, we have a rolling programme of hanging art exhibitions in Studios 1 & 2, there are children's and family events during the summer holidays and there are gigs galore featuring both old friends and new faces.

While we were forced to renew our wedding license last autumn as we had an

impending wedding, it's difficult to see weddings ever being a large part of our

business, we only have a couple in the diary over the next 24 months and local

competition is ever stronger both in terms of venues & pricing.

We have new tenants in both Studio 4 & The Granary, feel free to join Kerrison's and

get fit & get the artwork that you bought at an exhibition framed in The Granary,

thus materially contributing to the Barns' future!

In conclusion, now is the time to hand over to the new board, I can only thank

Anna, Luke, Denis, Guy, Lauli and Ian for their tenacity, belief & support over the

past year, it is solely down to you that we're still here. I welcome Mike back on to

the board as well, that'll keep the team focussed in the right direction!

I wish the board the very best of luck in forging a new relationship with MSDC and in

guiding the barns through the next phase.

I'm going to step back from the board for the near future, I have some projects over

the summer which are soaking up my time beyond expectations, but I will be doing

some work on a couple of gigs here & will lurk in the background for a while!

That's it then, thank you all for your support & bonne chance.

Matthew Abercrombie

Outgoing Chair,

Wingfield Barns Community Interest Company