

**Minutes of Combs Parish Council Meeting**  
**Monday 14 June 2021 at 7.30pm, Battsford Village Hall, Straight Road, Battsford**

(DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED)

**Present:** S Scarff (Chairman); I Walker (Vice Chairman); S Ottewell (councillor); T Betchley (councillor); T Kitson (councillor); K Oakes (County Councillor); J Matthissen (District Councillor)(joined at 8:35 ); T Bamber (Clerk).

**1. Apologies for absence**

V Whitehead (Councillor) (by prior agreement); T Chaplin (Councillor) (by prior agreement);

**2. Declarations of interest/ lobbying**

Cllr Scarff in respect of item 9 (a) (iii) and 10 (b) (vi) – pecuniary;  
Cllr Walker in respect of item 15 – non-pecuniary;  
Cllr Betchley in respect of item 19 – non-pecuniary

**3. Public Forum**

The only members of public present were there to discuss item 15 – St Mary's Bells Project.

**4. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 6 May 2021**

Minutes for 6 May 2021 were reviewed and it was agreed that they were to be signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting by the Chairman.

**Action:** Clerk to arrange signature

**5. Matters arising from the minutes**

No matters not raised elsewhere.

**6. County Councillor's Report**

The County Councillor's annual report had been circulated and is attached as appendix 1.

Cllr Oakes is still trying to arrange a visit from the engineer to Webbs Close – it has not been forgotten.

**7. District Councillor's Report**

District Cllr. Matthissen had not yet arrived as he had other parish councils' meetings to attend first. The councillor's report (attached here as appendix 2) had been circulated and noted by councillors. Upon his later arrival he confirmed he would send details of locality grants to Cllr Ottewell for mention in the next newsletter.

**8. Parish Council Chairman's Report**

No matters not raised elsewhere

**9. Planning**

a. Applications received for consideration:



- i. **DC/21/01983 – DC/21/02669 – land adjacent to Jockeys Hall,** – Erection of three houses etc

Following a discussion Combs Parish Council did not object to this application in principle but wished to record the following concerns:

- The access road is not designed for such an increase in traffic and consideration should be given to the creation of two passing points on Jockeys Lane;
- Past experience shows that during any increase in traffic, such as would arise during construction, vehicles trying to pass each other on Jockeys Lane and its access road, Jacks Lane (also one vehicle wide), usually cause serious damage to the verges and drainage ditches, collapsing one into the other. There have been several incidents of flooding in Jacks Lane for this reason;
- The proposed design of the houses is disappointingly bland and not in keeping with the other houses in the area. It is appreciated however that the designs proposed are likely to change once profit has been extracted by selling the land with planning permission.

- ii. **DC/21/02688 – Windy Ridge, Park Road** – work on trees etc

Combs Parish Council agreed to support this application.

- iii. **DC/21/03107 - land adjacent to 2 Oak Thatch, Park Road** - Erection of two houses

*Due to a pecuniary interest in the matter, the Chairman left the meeting and Vice-Chair Walker took over.*

Councillors noted objections lodged by residents but agreed they did not object to this application in principle. However they wished to record the following concerns:

- It is not completely clear that the trees on the site will be fully protected and this should be confirmed: the trees form an important screen /barrier between the houses and the road and also between the houses and the neighbouring listed properties;
- In an area of traditional, in some cases listed, buildings, the impact of two newbuilds may not seem appropriate
- Should the application be approved, could it please be made a condition that contractors' vehicles be prevented from parking on the road in the vicinity?

*Cllr Scarff then returned to chair the meeting.*

**Action: Clerk to post Councillors' views on planning website**

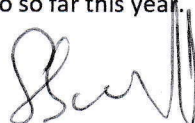
- b. Decisions received from MSDC

- i. DC/21/01250 – 10 Model Farm – Replacement windows – *Granted*. Noted
- ii. DC/21/01789 & 1790 – America Cottage – porch erection- *Listed building and planning permission refused*. Noted.
- iii. DC/21/02225 – Oaks Meadow – eco toilet changes – *granted* Noted.

## 10. Finance

- a. **Accounts review to date** – Current Account balance as of 2 June 2021 was £44,651.31 and the savings account balance was £1,922.71.

The Budget analysis and financial summary were reviewed and accepted. The clerk confirmed that the Section 137 expenditure had been zero so far this year.



**b. Payments received**

- i. (none) – Those noted in the agenda were in fact erroneously repeated from last month. See item 11.

**c. Payments to hand**

- i. EON Electricity for streetlights (direct debit) -£ 73.93). Approved by all councillors (*Parish Councils Act 1957, S.3; Highways Act 1980 S.301*).
- ii. D Bellamy (Perspex for cemetery notice board) £50.00. Approved by all councillors .Cheque number 22260 was written and signed (*Local Government Act 1972 s 142*).
- iii. D Bellamy (two new notice boards) £966.00. Approved by all councillors. Cheque number 22261 was written and signed (*Local Government Act 1972 s 142*).
- iv. D Bellamy (materials for bus shelter repair) £418.61. Approved by all councillors. Cheque number 22262 was written and signed (*Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953 s 4*).
- v. S Scarff (Speed signs) £183.49. Approved by all councillors. Cheque number 22263 was written and signed (*Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s 72(1)*).
- vi. Mid Suffolk District Council (dog/litter bin emptying) £558.80. Approved by all councillors. Cheque number 22264 was written and signed (*Litter Act 1986 ss5,6*).

**Action: Clerk to send cheques**

**d. Insurance Cover Review**

The Clerk confirmed that with one slight exception, the insurance cover in place should meet the council's requirements. Due to the increase in income last year, the limit of cover for fidelity insurance is no longer sufficient. The cost to increase the level of cover to £50,000, which should be sufficient, would be £6.23. It was AGREED to increase cover as proposed.

**Action: Clerk to arrange increase in fidelity cover.**

**11. Training**

It was agreed that the new councillors attend the new councillor training sessions organised by SALC. The clerk will co-ordinate this.

The clerk reported that the clerk training scheme, Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA), mentioned last month, would cost around £350 (£99 for introduction course, plus £50 for each of five modules). The portfolio required must be completed within 12 months and it would be feasible to commence it in September. Councillors agreed that such cost would be approved but the clerk is to ascertain if his circumstances would be conducive to a reasonable chance of success.

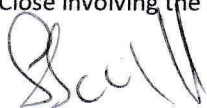
**Action: Clerk to organise training as appropriate.**

**12. Newsletter**

Cllr Ottewell informed councillors that the target printing date for the next newsletter was the end of June, and invited contributions. She will be meeting with Cllr Chaplin (currently on leave of absence) shortly to understand the process and will then circulate a draft to councillors, with a copy to the clerk for use in contributing to the BARCLIF area newsletter.

**13. Webbs Close parking issues**

Cllr Oakes is trying to arrange a meeting in Webbs Close involving the highways engineer.





#### **14. Bus Shelter/Notice Boards**

The Chairman reported that Daniel Bellamy is sourcing materials for the work on the bus shelter but that there are delays in obtaining materials at the moment.

Mr Bellamy has also installed two new notice boards (Queens Close and Model Farm) and all agreed they are of very good quality. It was agreed that Cllr Kitson canvass local residents regarding the possibility of installing another notice board at the start of Webbs Close.

**Action: Cllr Kitson to canvass views**

#### **15. PIIP (Infrastructure Plan)**

The Chairman introduced Mrs Scarff, representing the St Mary's Bells project, who updated the council on the current situation.

There are two main phases to the project and the first one, to hang the original bells at the top of the bell tower in such a way that they can be 'chimed' electronically (rather than swung), is the subject of a quotation that expires this summer. The total cost would be £22,442 and the committee has raised £17,531 so a further £4911 is being sought.

All councillors agreed that the project be invited to submit a CIL application form.

Cllr Walker then reported that he would be encouraging further suggestions for use of CIL funds, in the next newsletter, before the committee begins collating and assessing possible projects.

**Action Clerk to send CIL form to bells committee**

#### **16. Parish Walks**

Cllr Ottewell provided an update. The committee is focusing on the shorter walks as the ten mile walk appears to be less used. Some signposts have fallen and the committee will liaise with Cllr Oakes on this. Cllr Kitson reported that he had registered the council with the Ordnance Survey, and as a consequence the council will now be able to copy their maps, provided due credit is given to the source.

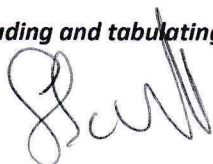
#### **17. Cycle Paths**

The Chairman reported he had no update yet.

#### **18. SIDs**

Cllr Kitson had reviewed all the data in the two devices. Until recently there had been no recording of the locations of the machines so while the reports can give an overview of vehicle speeds in the village they do not yet provide information on any specific 'hot spots'. The councillor will start to produce a detailed analysis including locations. Having achieved the remarkable feat of understanding the rather esoteric guide book that came with the device he will also produce a guide on how the data is extracted and assessed, in an easy to understand form, for which the clerk would be profoundly grateful.

**Action: Cllr Kitson to produce a guide to downloading and tabulating SID data.**



## 19. Oaks Meadow

Cllr Betchley reported that the next meeting of the steering group, of which he is now a member, will be on 23 June, and that there will be an open day (afternoon) on 4 July. The next stage in the project is to create an entrance and then install gates.

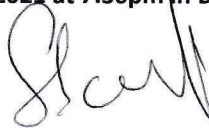
All councillors confirmed they are supportive of the project and it is expected that a CIL application form will be received soon.

## 20. Correspondence/Any Other Business

- The clerk is to co-ordinate contributions to the next BARCLIF, using items passed to him by councillors.
- Cllr Walker asked councillors for any feedback on the way the meeting had been organised, in compliance with the COVID risk assessment. All responses were positive.
- The chairman thanked Cllr Walker for a very efficient COVID risk assessment

## 21. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 12 July 2021 at 7.30pm in Battsford Village Hall

The Meeting closed at 9.30 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Clerk', is written over the text 'The Meeting closed at 9.30 pm'.



 @SuffolkTories

 Suffolk Tories

# JUNE 2021 Town and Parish Newsletter

**For more information on all stories visit:**

[Suffolk County Council | Conservative Group \(suffolkconservatives.org.uk\)](https://www.suffolkconservatives.org.uk)

Build Back **Better**  
Build Back **Stronger**  
Build Back **Greener**



## Suffolk County Council leader vows to “build back better, stronger, and greener after COVID”

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, Suffolk County Council held their 2021 AGM. Leader of the Council Matthew Hicks laid out his vision for the future.

Protecting vulnerable residents, strengthening Suffolk’s economy and a strong focus on the environment are at the heart of council's new priorities.

Protecting and supporting vulnerable residents, strengthening Suffolk’s economy, a strong focus on the environment and delivering value for money for the taxpayer is at the heart of priorities outlined by Suffolk County Council’s leader today.

Councillor Matthew Hicks said that in the next 4 years, Suffolk County Council will:

- Drive up educational standards through a project led by the National Literacy Trust.
- Maintain the Outstanding rating for Children’s Services from OFSTED
- Launch a £20m programme to spend £10m tackling highways flooding and a further £10m improving and upgrading 500 miles of pavements and footpaths.
- £14.5m in upgrading or building new waste recycling centres.
- Continue investing £45m building over 800 new school places for children with Special Educational Needs

### **On education and children’s services he said:**

“We are already investing £45m building over 800 new school places for children with Special Educational Needs. Working with our partners, we will drive up educational standards through a project led by the National Literacy Trust and we will create a network of Family Hubs.”

### **On adult social care and supporting vulnerable people he said:**

“The reality is by 2031, a fifth of Suffolk’s residents will be aged over 70, and we must be prepared for that. We will harness new technology, like we did when we supported the Digital Care Phone project last year. We will also continue our unwavering support for our fantastic care workers, who do so much to make sure people get the care and support they need.

“Since 2017 we have spent over £1bn on caring for vulnerable residents. This huge level of support will continue.”

“On the post pandemic economic landscape in Suffolk, He outlined his vision for an economic recovery looking to build an economy fit for the next 30 years, describing an economy that “embraces new greener technology, that invites investment in the right training and skills and benefits everyone equally.”

On the environment, Councillor Hicks stressed that the people of Suffolk had made it clear during the election that environmental issues matter to them, along with other concerns around housing, infrastructure and their quality of life. He stressed that the environment would continue to be at the forefront of his administration’s agenda.

### **Councillor Hicks said:**

“In 2019 this council [declared a climate emergency](#) – and since then we have been working hard to meet our responsibilities to become a carbon neutral authority by 2030.

“£3m to improve heating systems in council offices, fire stations and schools. And we are investing £14.5m in upgraded or new waste recycling centres and we are promoting greater biodiversity.”

### **In a speech dominated by COVID, Councillor Hicks said:**

“We have seen COVID 19 disrupt every part of our lives.”

He paid tribute to the those who have died of COVID in Suffolk, noting that county council’s plans for healing woods, approved in July 2020, were now under development.

### **Councillor Hicks added:**

“I promise that their memories will not be forgotten. Our plans for healing woods will, I hope, help the healing process for all those that suffer the pain of grief.”

“He went on to thank all those organisations and individuals involved in delivering the vaccination rollout across the county, noting that “the vaccine continues to represent hope for us all.”

Closing his speech, Councillor Hicks looked ahead to the proposed ending of COVID restrictions next month, noting that the new post pandemic world will come with its own challenges and opportunities, he said.

“we will not stumble back and carry on as if nothing happened – we will learn from some of the new ways of working that have emerged. With this strengthened Conservative administration - we can build back better, we must build back greener, we will build back stronger.”

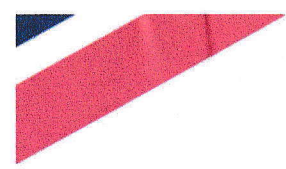
## **Walk in the footsteps of Anglo-Saxon Kings on new Suffolk countryside trail**

On May 11, it was announced that a new seven-mile walking trail near the site of Sutton Hoo had been created in Suffolk’s Deben Valley revealing the hidden archeological secrets of the area.

Walkers will be transported back 1,500 years and experience the landscape once home to a long-lost Anglo-Saxon settlement at Rendlesham where the East Anglian Kings once lived. Hidden gems from other periods of history will also be unveiled, such as a medieval priory, a stately home, a decoy pond and ancient woodland.

The trail has been created by Suffolk County Council’s Archaeological Service (SCCAS) and is one of the activities made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. SCCAS received a grant of £517,300 to fund “Rendlesham Revealed: Anglo-Saxon Life in South-East Suffolk”, a community archaeological project to uncover hidden history in the area.





To guide them, walkers can download an online guide, which will point out the history along the way, as they take in meadows, open fields, woodland and riverside paths. The guide is available on the Suffolk Heritage Explorer website: [heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/rendlesham](https://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/rendlesham)

We know that our physical and mental wellbeing benefit greatly from being outdoors and being in touch with nature. As the weather starts to improve, and we are able to travel in accordance with Government guidelines, getting outside for a walk is a really positive thing to do.

This new 'In the footsteps of Kings' trail in the peaceful Deben Valley countryside offers these benefits perfectly, as well as a unique and immersive experience exploring the local history. It is a great addition to the Discover Suffolk series, and available in time for the virtual Suffolk Walking Festival which begins on 22 May.

## **New guide drafted to support major developments in Suffolk**

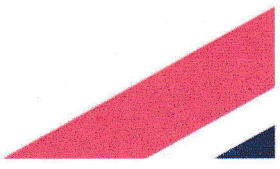
It was announced on May 17<sup>th</sup> that Suffolk County Council had launched a consultation on an updated version of its "Developers Guide".

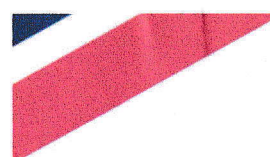
The guide is a document to support all those involved in major planning applications in the county.

Whenever major developments are considered, for example new housing or industrial sites, they will likely have an impact on the local community. This could result in increased demands on the local infrastructure, for example more local traffic, more people living in a community, more school places needed, and many other local services.

To make sure that new developments result in improvements to local communities, developers must make financial contributions to local authorities, known as Section 106 agreements, or through the Community Infrastructure Levy. This money can then be put towards services to support the increase in demand made by the new development.

This updated guide has not been written as a set of rules, but to support developers and make them aware of what they should consider with their plans. It explains how we calculate the levels of financial contributions, so that we can manage the impact of a development and make sure it has a positive impact on our communities.





During 2019/20, the county council secured over £46m towards infrastructure from Section 106 agreements. We must continue to secure sufficient contributions from developments, to help fund services like schools, libraries and household waste recycling centres. This will help us to protect communities, their residents, and the demands on local services.

## Discover something new with Suffolk Walking Festival 2021

Suffolk's Walking Festival returns in 2021 for its 14th instalment, but this year as the very first Virtual Suffolk Walking Festival.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the guided Suffolk Walking Festival cannot take place, instead the new virtual festival will include self-guided walks with fun facts about Suffolk, family activity sheets, podcasts and videos from around the county.

The festival will also include a 'My Suffolk, Your Suffolk' feature of favourite walks, and a competition where you can win 4 tickets to next year's festival and a year's subscription to the Suffolk Magazine.


The 10-day Virtual Walking Festival will take place between Saturday 22 May and Monday 31 May and all information can be accessed at [suffolkwalkingfestival.co.uk](http://suffolkwalkingfestival.co.uk) and by [facebook.com/suffolkwalkingfestival](https://facebook.com/suffolkwalkingfestival).

You don't have to be an avid walker to join the fun as the activities range from short strolls and gentle rambles to some more challenging hikes. Following the increase in popularity of walking over the last 12 months, the festival this year aims to nurture members of the public's newfound interest in Suffolk's countryside and the positive impact walking has had on our physical health, mental wellbeing and the environment.

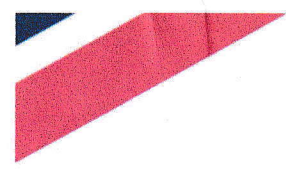
In a year when many events and group gatherings are cancelled or considerably reduced it is fantastic that the Suffolk Walking Festival 2021 is able to happen in some form.

The pandemic has encouraged many more of us to go out walking and discover our county's beautiful countryside. Walking has so many known benefits for our health and wellbeing.

Suffolk's Walking Festival is supported by Suffolk councils, many partners and charities including BBC Radio Suffolk, Suffolk Magazine, National Trust and RSPB, and community groups such as Shotley Open Spaces and Clare Country Park.







Members of the public are being encouraged to share their photos and experiences of the festival this year online by using the hashtag **#SWF21**.

## **State-of-the-art vehicles join Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service's fleet**

On May 20<sup>th</sup>, it was announced that Suffolk Fire and Rescue had unveiled three new vehicles, packed with the latest technology, to support firefighters at emergency incidents.

The Command Support Vehicles will typically be used as a hub at large, complex incidents, from which officers can manage operations and work with other emergency services.

Some of the new features on the vehicles include:


- Dedicated WiFi, enabling officers at the scene to quickly stream and share data, images, footage and plans with colleagues who are based remotely, for example at the Combined Fire Control Room
- LCD display built into the side of the vehicle, allowing officers to share content with other agencies attending an incident, such as live drone footage and plans
- Latest communications and computer technology with access to live information, weather reports, data on substances and chemicals, and direct contact with other agencies and services

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has invested £360,000 in the new units, which replace the three existing Command Support Vehicles.

With these new, more advanced vehicles in the fleet, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has even better tools at its disposal to take command of incidents.

It's important that the service continues to invest in such equipment, so that staff and crews can carry out their jobs to the best of their abilities, and are safe whilst doing so. In turn, this helps us to protect Suffolk's residents.

In the last couple of years, our firefighters have been kitted out in new uniforms and we've introduced three new appliances to the fleet. We are currently refurbishing Princes Street station in Ipswich and planning the construction of a brand new blue light station in Stowmarket. Our next projects include bringing in four new appliances which have enhanced tools to support at road traffic collisions, as well as updating breathing apparatus sets, handheld radios and IT.





## District Councillor Report: Onehouse Ward - June 2021

MSDC Annual Council Meeting	<p>The Annual Meeting took place on 24 May at Wherstead Park. Paul Ekpenyong was elected Chairman for 2021/22 on the casting vote of the outgoing Chairman as the political situation is still deadlocked. There are 17 Councillors on both sides therefore the chairman's casting vote becomes crucial for decision-making.</p> <p>Our group offered to work with the Conservative Leader for the benefit of the residents we serve, but the offer to share the workload was turned down and all but one of the committee chairs and vice chairs was appointed from that group. The one exception is that Keith Welham continues as Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Mr Ekpenyong's chosen charity will be East Anglia's Children's Hospices.</p> <p>A recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny that MSDC appoint an observer to Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice was also rejected on the casting vote of the Chairman, even though he and fellow Conservatives had spoken and voted in favour at the Scrutiny meeting.</p> <p>Rachel Eburne has stood down as Leader of the Green Group after 4 years and Andy Mellen has been elected as her successor.</p>
Future format of Council Meetings	<p>The legislation allowing virtual council and committee meetings has expired. Our first face to face meeting was on 24 May. Meetings will continue to be broadcast via YouTube but any member of the public who wishes to speak will need to be physically present in the meeting. Informal meetings, briefings and training will continue to be held virtually.</p>
Covid 19 and the Indian Variant	<p>Due to a small outbreak of the Indian variant Tactical Management Teams sprang into action, to support the arrival of mobile testing units in Needham Market's ex council offices in Hurstlea Road, with 2,000 tests completed in 3 days.</p>
The Regal Theatre	<p>The £3.6 million refurbishment of The Regal Theatre has been completed with the venue offering, three screens, new café and bar area as well as improved parking and toilet facilities.</p>
Active Travel Public Consultation	<p>As part of our commitment to supporting sustainable travel, a key piece of work being undertaken is the development of a Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan. This will include a network plan, which identifies preferred routes, and areas for infrastructure improvements for future investment. A public consultation, open until July 10, allows communities to comment on where and how improvements could be made to walking and cycling routes in their area. The platform for engaging with this consultation is available online: <a href="https://babberghmidsuffolkactivetravel.commonplace.is/">https://babberghmidsuffolkactivetravel.commonplace.is/</a></p>
Free Fitness classes	<p>'Our Parks' is running free fitness classes at venues across Suffolk, all venues are Covid secure see website for more information. <a href="https://ourparks.org.uk/borough/babergh-mid-suffolk-district-council">https://ourparks.org.uk/borough/babergh-mid-suffolk-district-council</a></p>
Review of MSDC Corporate Plan	<p>MSDC have commenced a review of the Corporate Plan and all-party discussions on the Delivery Plans which should ensure that we meet the targets set in the Corporate Plan. This work will need to take into account the following trends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relative deprivation is rising in Mid Suffolk;</li> <li>Housing costs are high; and homelessness is rising;</li> <li>Very high levels of fuel poverty and food poverty;</li> <li>Due to lack of transport, isolation is an issue.</li> </ul>
Locality Awards	<p>We have just received details of 2021/22 locality award funding from MSDC and further details will be available soon.</p>