

Swardeston Parish Council
Minutes of the November 2025 Parish Council Meeting
At Swardeston village hall, on Thursday 13th November 2025 at 7.30PM
Meeting 11/2025

Present:
Members - Derek Barber, Nigel Legg, Graham Jermy, Dominic Everett, Justin Barber and Wendy Middleton
Clerk - Carole Jowett
Cllr Webber
2 members of the public attended

1.	To consider apologies for absence There were no apologies for absence	
2.	To co-opt member to fill vacancy following election There were no nominations to fill the vacancy.	
3.	To receive declaration of interests in items on agenda There were no declarations of interest made.	
4.	Resolution to adjourn the meeting for public participation and district/county councillor reports Public Participation No issues were raised. Councillor reports Cllr Webber presented a report which is copied at appendix a. A question was asked about the suspension of elections for the local government review and Cllr Webber said that it was expected that the county council elections would go ahead next May.	
5.	To confirm minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 2025 and review matters arising The minutes of the October meeting were reviewed. Mr J Barber proposed the minutes be agreed as an accurate record, Dr Legg seconded the proposal which was agreed; they were signed by the chairman. Matters arising Mr J Barber said he was still to cut the hedge and he would get this done. The clerk would check with South Norfolk about the group contract playground inspection. The 10-year guarantee documentation for the Matta surfacing was still needed.	JB CJ
6.	To review the requirements of assertion 10 and agree any action There were no matters to discuss.	
7.	To discuss and agree any action on remaining funding for the village hall Loft insulation was being paid for by village hall and mainly covered by a grant. The paving and revised disabled access had been completed. Electric and lighting work had been upgraded. The windows and doors were still to be done, a deposit of £918.00 was due to be paid before they could be ordered. There should be sufficient insulation left over to lag the hot water cylinder.	
8.	To review the risk assessment policy and agree any changes Mr D Barber had circulated an amended copy of the risk assessment with a small amendment recognising the backup of data used only one hard drive Mr J Barber proposed the updated policy be accepted, Mr Jermy seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. An assessment of risks within the current year was completed and no issues were raised.	

9.	To review the business continuity plan and agree any changes The business continuity plan was reviewed and no changes were required. Mr J Barber proposed the plan be accepted unchanged, Dr Legg seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed.																
10.	To review the asset register and check all assets Mr Jermy had physically checked all assets on the register and noted the noticeboard had been replaced which needed to be photographed and the register updated. He would do this and circulate ahead of the next meeting. The new war memorial would need to be added once installed.	GJ															
11.	To consider the annual play area inspection There was nothing to review																
12.	To review and agree comments on planning application No applications had been received.																
13.	To consider any action on the national energy infrastructure projects Aggregate was being delivered to the Hornsea 3 cable route in Intwood Lane and, as Short Lane had been closed, a diversion had been implemented by Norfolk County Council. Damage to properties had resulted and NCC had been inspecting it.																
14.	To consider the invitation to bid for the parish partnership 2026/27 Estimates had been given for the improvement of Dog Walk. A boundary issue had been encountered and was unlikely to be resolved this year. There were serious concerns about the effect on adjacent structures if a full excavation was undertaken and was likely to cost in excess of £20k. The lesser improvement with an overlay was likely to be approximately £14k but it was recognised that it would not last as long. This option would make it more useable and accessible to wheelchair users and pushchairs. Mr J Barber proposed that a bid be submitted for the overlay scheme, Mr Jermy seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed.	DB															
15.	To receive an update on the defibrillator The defibrillator had been checked on 13 th November 2025 and the circuit updated.																
16.	Finance 16.1 To consider and agree the accounting statements 11th September 2025 Mr J Barber proposed the accounts be accepted as a true record; Mr Jermy seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. 16.2 To discuss budget requirements for 2026/27 The budget was discussed and would be agreed at a future meeting. 16.3 To agree invoices for payment in accordance with budget <table border="0"> <tr> <td>BACS £249.70</td> <td>Norse Eastern Ltd</td> <td>Grounds maintenance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS £1778.14</td> <td>Darren Ireland</td> <td>Paving work</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS £124.83</td> <td>C Jowett</td> <td>Clerks salary</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BACS £82.80</td> <td>HMRC</td> <td>PAYE</td> </tr> </table> Mr J Barber proposed the payments were made, Mr Jermy seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. There was an invoice for the deposit for the windows and doors but had not been received. Mr J Barber proposed the payment be made on receipt of the invoice, Mr Everett seconded the proposal and this was unanimously agreed. <table border="0"> <tr> <td>BACS £918.00</td> <td>Shawn Gilbey</td> <td>Deposit for windows and doors</td> </tr> </table>	BACS £249.70	Norse Eastern Ltd	Grounds maintenance	BACS £1778.14	Darren Ireland	Paving work	BACS £124.83	C Jowett	Clerks salary	BACS £82.80	HMRC	PAYE	BACS £918.00	Shawn Gilbey	Deposit for windows and doors	
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17.	To consider correspondence received There were no issues to discuss																
18.	To adjourn the meeting for public participation No items were raised.																

	Mr D Barber asked Cllr Webber a question about the contradictory approach of councils on the Norwich to Tilbury pylons; Suffolk Council was objecting to the pylons but were opposing sea cabling to Kent. Cllr Webber understood the difficulty and confusion around the best ways to achieve green energy.	
19.	To agree agenda items for the next meeting on 11th December 2025 at 7:30 To review and agree changes to the asset register To confirm the check on the defibrillator To review and agree comments on any planning applications received To discuss and agree any action on remaining funding for the village hall The meeting closed at 20:55 pm	
Signed: Mr D Barber Chairman to Swardeston Parish Council https://swardestonparish.gov.uk		

District Councillors' Report for Swardeston Parish Council – 13 November 2025

Member Ward Grants

Member Ward Grants for 2025/26 are now available. Requests for support with small projects (typically up to £1,000 per project) to benefit the local community can be made to your District Councillors.

Devolution & Local Government Reform

Proposals from all local authorities have now been submitted to Westminster. The Government's consultation on possible options for LGR in Norfolk is expected to open in late November/early December.

A "Structural Change Order" is due to be submitted in the Spring of 2026 as part of the process of shifting powers and funding to the new local government structure. It will need to be submitted before the Summer recess to meet the 2027 timetable for setting up the new shadow Unitary Authorities.

The timetable for elections to the new positions is expected to be as follows:

May 2026: Mayoral elections for Mayor of Norfolk & Suffolk and County Council elections (postponed from May 2025).

May 2027: Shadow unitary authority elections.

May 2027: Proposed District Council elections to be postponed, pending dissolution in 2028.

Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils are starting to work together to form the new County Combined Authority (CCA) which is expected to come into existence once the necessary legislation is passed in 2026.

South Norfolk and Broadland Business Award

Nominations can be made under 12 different categories until 12th December.

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/business/broadland-and-south-norfolk-business-awards>

South Norfolk Biodiversity Strategy

South Norfolk Council's Biodiversity Strategy, a five-year plan for 2025-2030, was approved at the last council meeting. One priority is improving biodiversity on Council managed land, which includes the commons at Dunston, Flordon, Mulbarton and Swardeston. Improvement plans are planned for 10 SNC sites, each to increase biodiversity by 10% over the next 5 years. The strategy can be found here:

<https://southnorfolkandbroadland.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s12998/South%20Norfolk%20Biodiversity%20Strategy.pdf>

Christmas Toy Donation Appeal

SNC are appealing for donations of new toys to be distributed to needy families across the district. The nearest donation centre is Wymondham Leisure Centre. Full details – and ideas – can be found here:

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/community-safety/help-hub/support-community-groups/christmas-toy-donation-appeal>

South Norfolk Planning Consultations

Two new supplementary planning documents (SPDs) are open for consultation. The GNLP Green Infrastructure SPD and the South Norfolk and Broadland Design Code SPD can be found here:

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/planning/future-development/supplementary-planning-documents/joint-supplementary-planning-documents-for-broadland-and-south-norfolk-councils>

A draft of the Design Code was open for public consultation earlier this year.

Greater Norwich Local Plan

Work is starting on the next iteration of the GNLP. The new plan will need to find sites for 60,000 extra new homes over 30 years to meet the Government's revised housing targets. The call for sites is expected to launch in early 2026.

The Government is seeking to accelerate the timetable for the production of local plans, but this is dependent on legislation currently going through parliament. It is therefore too early to indicate how many years it will be before the plan is complete.

Tasway Solar Farm

The Tasway Phase One Consultation is open until December 5. This will be a large 700 MW solar farm with BESS on land running from Ashwellthorpe to Wacton. The information includes the fields under consideration and possible cable route corridors. The Tasway team are not sure if the farm would connect to the grid at Norwich Main or at the East Pye substation near Great Moulton. The preliminary timetable suggests construction could start in 2030. There are 2 more public meetings in Bunwell and Tacolneston on 14th and 15th November. Further information can be found on:

<https://taswayenergypark.co.uk/>

East Pye Solar Farm

A targeted consultation has been launched with a number of changes from the proposals in the statutory consultation. The changes include a firming up on the site of the Great Moulton substation and an increase in its size from 132kV to 400 kV – the height will increase from 7m to 13m. There are changes and additional information regarding the proposed routeing of HGVs and Abnormal Indivisible Loads.

‘Norwich to Tilbury’ Update

The National Grid’s Development Consent Order has been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate. All supporting documentation can now be inspected on the Planning Inspectorate website. Individuals and organisations interested in participating in this process can register with the Planning Inspectorate by November 27, 2025, to have their say.

<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020027>

PylonsEastAnglia are continuing to campaign against the pylon proposals and are fundraising. For further information visit: <https://pylonseastanglia.co.uk/actions>.

Bob McClenning, Ian Spratt & Jim Webber

	<u>Councillor Contact Details</u>	
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