

Minutes of Bures St Mary Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 26th March 2026

At Bures Primary School Hall Nayland Road at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs J Aries, G Jackson, S Jones, L Norton, O Giles, S Manning (BHPC),
I Reece (BDC), J Finch (SCC)

Chair: J Aries

One member of the public attended.

- 1. Apologies for Absence** – Apologies received from:
Cllr J McCrory -Bures Dramatic Society performance
Cllr T Fairbairn – unwell
Apologies accepted by those members present.

2. Declarations of Interests & Dispensation Requests – No ‘Pecuniary’ or ‘Non- Pecuniary’ Interests and Dispensation requests received.

3. Minutes - Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 22nd January 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record (previously circulated).

4. Co-option of new members – no recent interest expressed. Advert displayed in the Parish Council Noticeboard. A repeat notice has been submitted to the village magazine.

5. Public Forum 15 minutes maximum public participation 3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by the Chair

The parent of a pupil who attends Bures Primary School described an incident where her son was at an after-school book club event. He managed to leave the school grounds without an adult and ran across the road. A member of the public kept him safe until the grandparents reclaimed him. The child was unharmed but the episode highlighted for the parent the busy nature of the road outside the school and the volume/speed of traffic. The parent asked that the provision of a crossing be revisited. Over 300 signatures had been gathered in support of this proposal and the parent had received about 40 statements from other parents recording incidences of unsafe driving and ‘near misses’. The County and District councillors suggested that the manning of the school gate needed reviewing. It was acknowledged that a crossing had been considered from July 2015- January 2019 without any resolution. There is already a school safety zone – 20’s plenty – in place. There are roadside barriers and an unmarked road crossing/ paved walkway across the road. Cllr Finch agreed to explore other traffic calming measures including illuminations to the school safety zone sign, and more 20 roundels. It was pointed out that due to the local elections on 7th May, officers would be shortly going into purdah. Chair to approach the Community Police Officer to request a police presence at drop off/pick up times.

County and District Councillors had presented their respective reports previously and these are now available on the Parish Council website.

Bures Hamlet Parish Council representative – Cllr Manning- gave a resume of matters discussed at the recent Bures Hamlet Parish Council meeting. A second dog attack in the Jubilee Grove involving another dog which sustained injuries requiring veterinary attention had been reported to the police. Awaiting the outcome. A notice to be erected requiring owners to keep their dogs under control when visiting the site.

Two house burglaries have taken place recently in Normandie Way and Tenterfield where access via the adjacent railway track is thought to be likely. Improvements to water drainage in Water Lane seem to have addressed earlier flooding issues. Parking issues associated with the monthly market have improved. A proposal for a 20mph limit in the village is being explored. Concerns have been raised about pedestrian safety when walking/crossing under the railway bridge. The Braintree Local Highways Panel is not accepting any more project proposals due to a backlog and insufficient funding. Refurbishment works planned for early May over a two week-period to the Railway Station.

CLlr Reece left at 8.25 pm

6. Police

a) To report on matters raised with Suffolk and Essex Community Policing Teams

- Policing Engagement Event 22nd March 2026 10.00am. PC McKellan confirmed the latest situation regarding the fire at Bevills Barn.

- Fire at Bevills Barn Wind Whistle Ridge – Friday 13th February

- A male was arrested on suspicion of a burglary in Great Cornard. Whilst in custody under caution, he was asked about the barn fire. He denied any involvement. Investigations are ongoing.

- Recent house break-ins Bures Hamlet

- Normandie Way and Tenterfield, Bures Hamlet. Access possibly made from the railway line. Police have said that the Normandie Way break-in was the work of a professional, carried out in a specific time frame when the house was unoccupied for just a few hours.

- Neighbourhood Watch Week 1st-7th June 2026. Volunteer Co-ordinator required for BSM. Mark Smith (Little Cornard NHW Coordinator) will be attending the APM to promote the importance of NHW.

- A report had been received concerning a drone being flown over properties near the Scout building, the Croft on 3rd March. The operative claimed to be a police officer which later proved to be false.

7. Highway Matters

a) Joint Parishes Highways Working Party (Wormingford, Fordham etc) update No further meetings have been called.

b) Parental School Crossing request, Nayland Road.

History of minutes recalling how the subject of a school crossing has been explored in the past circulated to all members. The matter has been raised with James Cartlidge MP South Suffolk. He has asked for more details but did mention that, as most of the children crossing the road to and from school are invariably escorted by an adult, the actual need may be harder to establish. The SpeedWatch Team had approval to operate outside the Community Centre on Nayland Road but the Police stressed NOT at school drop-off or pick-up times because motorists needed no additional distractions.

c) Alleyway from Eves Orchard/Pikes Marsh to Nayland Road request for dropped kerb- More members of the community who are users of mobility scooters have commented on the navigation issues around the village due to the lack of appropriately sited dropped kerbs. SCC Highways will not authorise a dropped kerb on the corner of Church Square with Nayland Road.

- d) Grit bins for Arger Fen request Ref: 551114/ 552341. Awaiting approval.
Highways has issued one notice refusing one of the grit bins requested on Arger Fen Road.
Thank you for your email. Please be advised that Suffolk Highways do not approve this application as it does not meet the following criteria: it's at a junction with known history of accidents or on a sharp/severe bend or has a road gradient greater than 1 in 15. There is also no suitable location for a grit bin or for anyone to stand safely to spread this. Gazeley Gate Ref: 40566 25/01/2026
Cllr Reece has kindly allocated £500 of her Locality Fund to pay for the bins as the Parish Council has to purchase the bins and install them at its own cost. The other two proposed sites are at the junction with Smallbridge Entry and at the car park by the Nature Reserve. (Ref: 551114 23.01.2026)
Awaiting a decision from Customer Services. Cllr Finch assured the members that the request for two grit bins would be processed in due course.
- e) St Edmunds Lane – potholes reported on Suffolk reporting tool **04/11/2025** Ref: 37007
There are multiple potholes along the length of St Edmunds Lane. Checked on 19th March. No evidence of any yellow markers so it is doubtful if they have been assessed. Residents feel the problem has been ignored. Cllr Finch said that the works had been escalated but there was a significant backlog.
- f) Standing Water outside school in Nayland Road- 19.11.2025 Ref: 00541722 –
According to the reporting tool, works were ordered on 20.02.2026 to be carried out within 20 working days. It remains to be seen if the situation improves when there is next a heavy rainfall.
- g) HGVs on the B1598 through village - Update on Highways response- Highways advised that inappropriate use of the B1508 through the village by over-sized HGVs was a police matter. The B1508 is an approved Lorry Route and Highways cannot do anything further about the issue. Signage in Sudbury has been improved to encourage the use of the A134. The Parish Council asked for clarification on the definition of a green lorry route.
- h) Bridge Repairs- Central support reported 27.02 2026 Ref: 52703. Cllr Finch confirmed that there are no plans to close the B1508 road bridge this summer for repairs. The works have been deferred until 2027.
- i) Suffolk Highways Town and Parish Council Survey (draft response circulated) to be submitted on behalf of the Parish Council - closing date 30th April
Cllr Finch left at this point.

8. Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement

- a) No further updates.

9. Matters arising which do not appear elsewhere on the agenda

- a) Bus shelter – update

Littlethorpe have confirmed that the new shelter is due for installation in early April – the actual date is still to be confirmed. Nigel Norton has been asked to move the two planters to free up the site. Once installed it is imperative to get the structure treated. This is part of the SuffolkonBoard's funding agreement as the standard colour provided by Littlethorpe was deemed by some councillors to be unsuitable. A suitable product to be tested prior to application.

- b) Parish Contractors works list - Circulated (BPAP 2iv)

c) EV Suffolk Plug-in application

Waiting on an update from Claire Ling, Environmental Strategy Project Manager for SCC.

d) Central Stores window advertising raised by residents

Full height advertising posters have been fitted to all the windows at Central Stores. Residents have raised concerns that these are not in keeping with a Conservation Area. Babergh Enforcement has been contacted for advice.

d) Joint Parish Council Magazine and bi-monthly snippets- April 10th deadline for May issue.

e) Local Government Reorganisation- HM Government has confirmed that there will be three unitary authorities covering Suffolk.

f) Post Office Closure 31st March 2026- update

There was some initial interest from a local retailer to provide a service in the future. Suffolk County Council has agreed that it should support rural communities which are in danger of losing their Post Office. Post Office Customer Services have been contacted and have said that there will not be an interim service whilst they are actively seeking a replacement service. The Sportsground Committee are investigating the installation of parcel drop-off units on the car park once the recycling banks are removed.

g) Stour Power Launch 29th January 2026

This is a community-led initiative to explore the creation of sources of energy locally at a cheaper cost to residents. There is to be a talk on this topic at the Transition Bures AGM on 16th April in the Dennis Ambrose Barn on the Common at 7.30pm

h) Defibrillator replacement

A new unit has been installed in Church Square with the generous funding from the Bures Music Festival.

i) Community First Aid Training – possible dates still to be arranged

j) Meadow Management Babergh District Council-suggestions for suitable areas are being sought by Babergh's Biodiversity Officer.

Map was previously circulated showing small areas owned by Babergh D.C. in the village which are currently being treated as grassed meadow. Friends Field bank, Claypits /Eves Orchard rectangle, Pumping station verge. Mowed in spring then left until autumn. No additional areas identified.

l) Litter Pick 21st March – a good response with some 20 residents taking part. New litter pickers were jointly purchased by the two Parish Councils and the BCLT kindly purchased some junior litter pickers.

m) Annual Parish Meeting 30th March 7pm- final arrangements are now in place. Tables will be set up for displays from 6pm. James Finch will be speaking on Fostering and Charlotte Ward will be talking about Bikes for Africa.

n) MP Constituency Surgery 13th March

Bures St Mary PC was invited to send a representative to James Cartilidge's constituency surgery for a 15-minute appointment. Cllr Aries went, having invited Chris Crace of the Cricket Club to also

attend. He shared preliminary plans for the new pavilion showing the capacity for it to be hired out for other events. The demolition of the remains has still to be arranged. Weavers has been approached. Waiting for a pre-planning meeting with Babergh before formalising the plans for planning permission. James Cartlidge discussed funding options, recommending the National Lottery. The proposal for a school crossing was raised. Further details required and evidence of public support. As children are invariably escorted by an adult this will impact on the case for the need for a crossing.

o) Better Recycling for Suffolk

Leaflets have been distributed to all households. A provisional timetable has been prepared. It is expected that during April to May 2026 food waste caddies are to be delivered – including information on how the bins should be used

Also, April to May 2026 new recycling bins are to be delivered – including information on how the bins should be used

10. Planning

a) To report on applications received and any decisions made since the previous planning committee meeting – See Planning Appendix

b) To note the response submitted to any applications received since the previous meeting: See Planning Appendix

c) To report and follow up as required:

- Chambers Bus Depot/Knowle House

Discharge Condition for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) refused because off-site BNG was short of mixed scrub by 0.01 units. To be resubmitted. Roses will be erecting some scaffolding in mid/late April by Knowle House. An ecologist needs to check that there are no bats living in the roof. After the check, the roof tiles will be removed so builders can be sure the bats won't be disturbed when construction work starts properly later in the year.

The developers have suggested the site should be called 'Chambers Place'. Members felt that this did not fully reflect the true history of the site and an alternative suggestion might be 'Chambers Yard'. To seek some local opinions via Beautiful Bures Facebook.

- Greenacres, Packards Lane, Wormingford Colchester Borough (Ref:251634)

It is maintained by the developers that the development will have minimal impact on HGV traffic in the area, including Bures St Mary.

National Farmers' Union NFU support the plan.

Extended period for Determination granted to 24.04.26

- Call for Sites – Babergh DC January 2026 –

Only the garage area in Claypits Avenue to the rear of the school was put forward to potentially accommodate 5 dwellings.

11. Finance Matters

a) Finance & Budget monitoring report – circulated and noted. It was noted that SALC has advised that Parish Councils must allocate sufficient funds for the May elections in 2027. It was agreed that the unspent CIL monies could be allocated towards traffic calming measures if a school crossing was approved by Highways.

b) Bank reconciliation report and verifying bank statements – circulated/ agreed and signed.

- c) Finance Reports from the Joint Sportsground Committee and Joint Cemetery Authority-circulated
- d) Two S137 donation requests were considered. Application letters previously circulated.
SARS- Suffolk Accident Rescue Service – HQ Bury St Edmunds
Kernos Centre- Sudbury based. Supporting mental health
It was agreed that, as S137 funds had been used to pay for the postmaster’s retirement evening, no other donations would be possible this financial year.
- e) To discuss the recruitment of the Parish Clerk/RFO -
The position has been advertised locally on Facebook, in the village magazine and with flyers around the village. One expression of interest has been received to date but no interview has been arranged as yet.
Terms of the combined role:
32 hours per month BSM PC
24 hours a month JSG
Rate of pay SCP 14 £15.31 p.h. -SCP 17 £16.08 p.h. (depending on experience)

12. Audit

- a) BB Business Associates Ltd Letter of Engagement for Internal Services 2925/26 was accepted.

13. Bures Neighbourhood Plan & Bures Parish Action Plan

- a) Joint NHP progress-
The next stage will be the public referendum. The document is still with Babergh District Council.
The next stage may be delayed until after the May 7th local elections.
- b) Joint Parish Plan 2025-2026 –
The proposal for a school crossing in Nayland Road needs to be added

14. Correspondence

All the following correspondence has been circulated for information or follow up:
Local Government Reorganisation updates
Bures Primary School Newsletters
NSIP and large-scale energy developments update
All the latest from your National Landscape
NALC/SALC News Bulletins (Members can log in individually)
National Lottery Community Fair 25th March 2026 19.00
Department for Transport New Road Safety Strategy and Consultation
Suffolk Highways 20mph Policy February 2026
Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley PRoW Improvements Funding

15. Reports: Cllrs to acknowledge receipt and present questions by exception

- a) Asset report – Cllr Jones - all in order but the Asset Checklist needs updating.
28th May: Cllr Giles
- b) Sportsground (BPAP 3 i) Meeting held 9th March
- c) Community Centre-Treasurer and new caretaker required. Advert sent out.
- d) Cemetery – Meeting held 9th March
- e) Jubilee Grove/Transition Group Report (BPAP2ii)
- f) Station Adopters – reports to be submitted alternate meetings
- g) Rights of Way (BPAP 2 iv)
- h) Tree Warden (BPAP 2 i) nil to report

i) Bures Common Land Trust- markets recommenced 14th March

16. Brief information & exchange for next agenda items

- BSMPC representatives for BH meeting on 18th May: Cllr McCrory
- BH Representative for BSMPC meeting on 28th May: Cllr Welch

17. Date of next meeting: 28th May to be held at the Community Centre Nayland Road at 7.30pm

Future meeting dates 2026: 23rd July, 24th, September, 26th November

It was noted that the 23rd July falls in the summer school holidays- It was agreed to change the date to 16th July subject to the Garrad Room being available.

Prior to booking the Garrad Room for January to May 2027 it was agreed to revert to 3rd Thursday of the month to avoid school holiday clashes subject to Garrad Room availability

APM 30th March 2026- 7pm for a 7.30pm start / 6pm setup

Mrs Jan Aries

Acting Clerk Bures St Mary Parish Council