Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) held on Tuesday 21st April 2026 at Wortham Pavilion at 7pm

Cllr Wright (Chair to the Council), Cllr Bradley, Cllr Williams, Cllr Beckett-Doyle, Cllr Piper, 1 member of the general public and J Wright (Clerk to the Council)

1.Welcome by the Chair of the Parish Council - The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence - Cllr Warboys due to a previous engagement.

3. To discuss any matters arising from the minutes of the 2025 meeting - There were no recorded Minutes from the 2025 meeting.

4. To receive the Annual Report from the County Councillor, Jessica Fleming - Councillor Fleming was unfortunately detained and unable to attend the meeting.

5. To receive the Annual Report from the District Councillor, Rowland Warboys - Councillor Warboys was unable to attend due to a previous engagement. Annual Report Appendix 1

6. To receive the Annual Report from the Chair of the Parish Council - Annual Report Appendix 2

7. To receive reports from Committees, Local Clubs and Organisations -

The Twinning Association (Badbergen) thanked the Parish Council for their support and for donating a commemorative road sign. A group of approx 25 will be visiting the village in August with various activities arranged. The village hall has been booked for some events and the Pavilion will also be used during the visit. A joint committee meeting of Badbergen and Wortham will also take place. There are currently approx 40 members of the Twinning and hope for an increase in the near future.

Wortham Bowls Club has a strong membership, with many long serving members, playing in various leagues. Praise was given to the green keeper for keeping the bowling green in such lovely condition. Members come from varying backgrounds, occupations, ages and the club welcomes new members.

Wortham Village Hall is being consulted about the proposed redevelopment of the Pavilion. Plans have been circulated and a meeting is to be arranged in the near future. Enquiries for grants etc are still to be explored. The Chair will be contacting the Village Hall Committee, Wortham Bowls Club and Wortham Lawn Tennis Club with redevelopment updates as they become available.

8. Parishioners Forum - Nothing to report

2026/APM/12……APPROVED……

Chair, Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

APPENDIX 2

Wortham and Burgate Parish Council Chairman's Annual
Report for 2025/26

2025/26 has been an eventful year for WBPC with both highs and lows of achievement.

Our previous Parish Clerk abandoned her duties in 2025 leaving a trail of unfulfilled tasks. Her formal resignation was accepted in January 2026 and she left her post at the end of February this year.

A new Parish Clerk, Jane Wright, was appointed in March 2026. There has not been a full handover of the Parish Council documents or property from the previous Clerk. The recovery of Parish Council property continues to be pursued.

Jane Wright has spent the last two months:-
● bringing the Parish Financial records up to date;
● organising missed internal audits;
● completing AGAR returns to the District Council;
● reclaiming VAT that had not been done at all during the previous Clerk's term of office. This
This amounted to a receipt of £8,000.
● dealing with in excess of 500 unopened emails addressed to WBPC Clerk.

The list of incomplete tasks goes on and will take time to unravel and resolve, but we are getting there.
Some good progress on outstanding projects has been made over the last year despite the inactive clerk due to direct action by proactive councillors:-
● The resurfacing of the parking bays on the track to the PO in March, 24 months later than planned
● Pavilion upgrade including creation of a parish office, relocation of the kitchen, replacing all the sanitary ware, internal painting of the non changing room area and overhaul of electrical system including replacement of all internal lights with LED lights
with LED units.
● The PC has engaged an architect to evaluate and design an extension to the Pavilion with a view to creating a village hub, meeting and function space. The second draft proposal arrived this afternoon.
● Palgrave football club team members spread and compacted the planings over the entrance from Church Road to the Pavilion car park,

There is inevitably a list of outstanding actions on the Parish Councils things to do list which we hope to address in 2026/27.
These include in no particular order:-
● Outstanding repairs to the play equipment
● Drainage work on the commons
● Erection of no grazing signs on the commons and the removal of illegal grazers on them.
● Completion of the work by Waterfields on the parking bays on the approach track to the PO
● Making up the track around the common land in front of the school.
● Working through the plans, costs, funding and feasibility of extending the Pavilion

In summary it has been a challenging year but despite that thanks to some hard work the future looks much brighter and hopefully more productive.

Susan Wright
Chair of Wortham and Burgate Parish Council
21st April 2026

APPENDIX 1

Mid Suffolk District Councillor's Annual Report 2025/6
Gislingham Ward
Mellis, Gislingham, Thornham Parva, Thornham Magna, Wortham & Burgate, Wickham Skeith
April 2026

Local Government Reorganisation	This year the County Council and the District and Borough Council submitted business cases for their different proposal for unitary authorities. The government has decided that the District and Borough Councils' proposal is the best fit for Suffolk and there will be 3 unitary authorities in Suffolk. (Complimented by three in Norfolk) While detailed boundaries are still being finalised, the three unitary councils, West Suffolk, Central & East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich are planned to be in place from April 2028. Elections for the new shadow authorities are due in May 2027. Following this there will be a transition period until vesting day on April 1st 2028 when the new unitary authorities will take over. The transition period is to enable detailed work for reorganisation to take place, and services will be delivered as usual throughout the process. Mayoral elections for the combined authority of Norfolk and Suffolk will be held in May 2028.
Planning and Housing	This year MSDC introduced funding of up to £20,000 to support Parish Councils in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans/Reviews which seek to allocate sites for housing development that make an agreed contribution to meeting the district-wide housing needs. The neighbourhood plan has statutory weight and status in the planning process – and are used to help guide and decide planning applications in conjunction with the Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan. The council held a briefing session for parishes following the government requirement to increase the number of dwellings in Mid Suffolk. The increase is from the previous 535 dwellings per year up to 734. As a result Mid Suffolk has embarked on a new Joint Local plan to keep policies up to date, this has involved a "call for sites" to help identify any land that may be required for future development as our plans progress. *https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/call-for-sites* No planning status is granted by including a site on this list. Rather, sites will now be assessed against planning policy, constraints, evidence and deliverability criteria. Further assessment will be published through the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in Spring 2026. It is important to note that we are carrying out this work to ensure any future development is plan lead and not developer lead.
Budget	The District Council's share of Council Tax is to be raised by 2.99%. For context, for a Band D property annual charge attributable to Mid Suffolk is £180.26, an increase of £5.23 per year or 10p per week. The previous years rise was 0% (Of the overall Council Tax, about 8% goes to Mid Suffolk District Council.) This rise is unavoidable as the government has now linked future grant monies to the assumption that the share of council tax has risen, so if we had not taken a small increase this year we would be facing a "cliff edge" of funding in the near future. In addition to the day-to-day provision of council services and activities, the 2026/27 budget

	includes funding for a wide range of programmes, including: ● Implementation of the new food waste collection scheme ● Enhancements to our current waste depot in readiness for this, plus further support for recycling education ● Cost of living support ● Council Tax Support scheme ● Grants programmes for towns and rural communities outside of Stowmarket ● Investment in leisure centre maintenance ● Stowmarket sports facilities delivered through the SHELF Project, plus support for wider Stowmarket regeneration ● Support for the Cosy Homes insulation scheme which has been expanded to help residents obtain solar panels ● Grant funding for nature recovery and community biodiversity groups ● Support for new footpaths and cycle ways ● Completing the build of the Stowmarket Innovation Gateway ● Expansion of the area's temporary accommodation (which avoids homeless residents being put into bed and breakfast accommodation and saves on costs going to private providers.)
A14 and litter	Work has started on a clear up of the A14. Two trucks of rubbish were cleared from the side of the A14 between junctions 49 and 50 for Tot Hill and Stowmarket during planned overnight road closures. We are grateful to volunteers who have been picking litter and all the community and parish litter picks organised but we continue to urge people to only do this where it is safe and not on fast roads.
Recycling and waste	This year has seen the district council working on the Better Recycling scheme which is starting in June. This will see the collection of food waste and additional items for recycling, with more frequent collections overall. Every home across Mid Suffolk will be receiving a new blue-lidded bin and a smaller food-waste bin and food waste caddy. Information packs are being sent out with more detail. The blue-lidded bin will be for glass bottles, jars, tetra pak, plastic bags, cans and plastic bottles. Paper and card will go in the existing green-lidded bin. www.suffolkrecyles.org.uk
Nature Recovery	This new grant launched in January offers small grants up to 2K and larger grants up to £50k for projects that protect and expand wildlife corridors and habitats within the district – including tree planting, wildflower meadow creation, or other environmental initiatives to safeguard natural spaces for future generations. Organisations such as environmental groups, schools and town and parish councils can apply. One application can be made per project, per year. MSDC has also announced a new £525,000 fund to support ambitious nature recovery, flood mitigation and water management projects across Mid Suffolk. The fund opens for applications next week. The Catchment and Landscape Nature Recovery Grant promotes larger-scale, collaborative initiatives which could span multiple sites and landowners. With a focus on river catchments, it will support projects that benefit communities as they address biodiversity loss, with a particular emphasis on priority habitats and species. It will also support natural flood management, as well as projects to improve water quality and security Funding opportunities and support - Mid Suffolk District Council - babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk Mid Suffolk District Council has purchased almost eight acres of land in the heart of Stowmarket to preserve it as a future riverside haven for nature and wildlife for future generations. The land, between Takers Lane and the River Rat, adjoins the council's existing open space at

	Pikes Meadow – unlocking potential for a new riverside walk, connecting Combs Ford and Gipping Way. Mid Suffolk District Council has also secured a 62-acre site at Thorndon and will now work with the local community to protect and enhance the area. The pastureland is just north of the village and contains meadows rich in flora and fauna. It also is an important flood plain for the River DoveIt was previously owned by the Kerrison Trust, a charity supporting young people, but recently put up for sale.Mid Suffolk has just completed the site's purchase - recognising the potential to enhance the land, increase its biodiversity value and improve flood resilience in the area.This plan could include habitat improvements – such as enhancing wet grassland and grazing marshes, pond habitats, lowland meadows and pastures, and deciduous woodland.There will be no change to public access arrangements while this plan is developed, with existing permissive paths being preserved. The council's investments are a further step to enhance biodiversity and nature – protecting and strengthening the district's wildlife and habitat diversity – and providing public green space, as well as safeguarding the land from future development.

Mid Suffolk District Council information is available via www.midsuffolk.gov.uk or by phone **0300 123 400**

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