

# DRAFT MINUTES OF SAXTEAD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held at 7pm on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
In the restaurant of the Old Mill House Pub, Saxtead

## 1. Chairman's welcome

Mr Simon Hordern, as Chair of Saxtead Parish Council, welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.

### Present

Simon Hordern Tracey Colchester Evelyn Sullivan Margaret Baumbach  
Paul Johnson Nick Barlow-Shepherd County Councillor Stephen Burroughes  
Lydia Kindred (minute taker)

## 2. Apologies for absence were received from District Councillor Owen Grey and Paula Slater.

## 3. The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 18th May 2023 were noted.

## 4. There were no matters arising.

## 5. Simon Hordern provided a report on Saxtead Parish Council. Since the election last year, the Parish Council has had many achievements, which he listed. Efforts to develop interaction with residents have continued and residents' newsletters have been popular. He wanted to thank all Councillors for their input, but noted that the vast majority of these achievements have fallen on a small number of people. He suggested that the Council's focus for the next year needs to be spreading the workload and getting other residents involved. The Chair concluded by reiterating that it has been a fantastic year for the new Council since the election and he was looking forward to seeing more progress in the next year.

*The full report will be filed with the minutes and can be found on the village website.*

## 6. Paul Johnson gave a verbal report on the Townlands Trust. He started by outlining the history and charitable aims of the trust, as well as explaining how its income is divided. Before issuing any grants, the Trust must ensure that any recipients are not eligible to receive funding from other places. With few hardship grants being applied for, the Trust has re-examined what projects it is and isn't permitted to support. It is looking to use its funds to help improve residents' lives, rather than being based solely on 'need' and hardship. The Trust has pledged £5,000 towards the church toilet project. The Trustees would be amenable to receiving applications from the Parish Council for projects that would help to make Saxtead a nicer place to live.

## 7. A written report from the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme was provided by Jonathan Sullivan. Jonathan took over the scheme in February 2024 and thanked Paul Wale for the smooth hand-over. Neighbourhood Watch bin stickers have been placed around the village to help get message of the scheme out.

Jonathan regularly passes on relevant crime information to Saxtead's members. He is also questioning why crime detection rates seem to no longer be published and will be raising this with the newly re-elected Police & Crime Commissioner.

Jonathan would welcome feedback from members on the information supplied, to ensure he is sending the right amount of information. He was pleased to report that

there have been no reported crime incidents in Saxtead, although there have been waves of crimes in adjacent villages.

#### **8. Reports from other Village Groups**

Tracey Colchester reported on the newly-formed book group. This has been very popular and, with 13 members, there is now a waiting list. It is a friendly and inclusive group which brings residents together and is a great way to meet new people. She thanked Nick for hosting the group at the pub.

Tracey also reported that David and Graham are now running the walking group. There are several people on the circulation list and normally 6-8 people attend each walk, but numbers fluctuate.

Simon reported on the Green Saxtead group. They have been liaising with Suffolk Wildlife Trust and a work party on Little Green was well attended. The next phase of works will be to remove the cut brambles and for the pond to be dug out.

Evelyn reported on the Saxtead Ladies club. They meet at the pub, normally on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday. All are welcome to drink and chat.

*County Cllr. Burroughes' report was noted and will be published on the website.*

#### **9. Comments and questions**

Paul Johnson commented on the book group and walking group, which both have growing numbers. He is of the opinion that membership should be restricted to those living within the village to help keep the groups local and for the benefit of Saxtead residents.

#### **10. Any other business**

Tracey Colchester reported on the Rural Coffee Caravan. The Caravan will be visiting for 6 months during 2024, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. She will be advertising it as a 'pop-up café' and will stress that this is a 'use it or lose it' service to try and encourage residents to attend. She is trying to set up a lift-sharing scheme to help people get to this and other local events.

*Simon Hordern thanked everyone for coming and the meeting was closed at 7.40pm.*

## **Saxtead Parish Council Chair's Report 2023-2024**

It's a year now since the council elections which saw three longstanding councillors step down and new ones in the form of Tracey Colchester and Paula Slater join.

A lot has happened in this year. We regrettably said goodbye to our new chair Liz Wale due to work commitments but were pleased to hold on to Lydia as the clerk.

In terms of achievements in this time, I think it has been very positive and with continued efforts the Council's focus on developing greater interaction with the residents and improving the environment within the village it is hoped that more people within the village will be encouraged to get involved in some way or form.

In no particular order, the achievements over the last year worthy of note include:

1. Changing the meeting venue to The Mill House so that it is back in the village and much more accessible to villagers.
2. The setting up of various groups open to everyone within the village including the Green Saxtead environmental group, a regular book club, walking group and Ladies Drinks event in the Mill House and the continuation of the Coffee Caravan visit.
3. The very well received and helpful Thermal Imaging of households within the village
4. A second successful litter pick throughout the village which is now planned throughout the year along with other planned events including an upcoming vintage car rally and a car boot sale.
5. The start of the tidying up and improvement of signage within the village with the first phase being the removal of old fly posters and the dilapidated Fram Castle sign.
6. Agreeing the speed reduction works and budget contribution so these works can go ahead.
7. The circulation of our now regular village newsletter
8. Greater interaction with Pembroke College where the PC has taken a more proactive approach to developing this important relationship
9. Additional seating to be provided on the main green and a new PC Noticeboard for the main green with the one at Little Green/Chapel Road having a long overdue refurbishment.
10. Planting narcissi bulbs across the green through the East Suffolk in Blooms scheme.

All of the above paints a very positive picture, my only concern being that the vast majority of these achievements have fallen on only a few and I fear if this continues we will not only lose momentum but also possibly the people kindly volunteering their time and so one of the main priorities I think we have to focus on this coming year is expanding the number of people prepared to help out. It will make it much more manageable for all concerned and will make it a lot more fun which is as important as getting it done.