

Cratfield Parish Council

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Cratfield Village Hall

Tuesday 13th January 2026 at 7.30 pm

Councillors Present: Lotty Barbour (Chair), Richard Chiver (Vice Chair), Tim Ackerley, Dan Elford, Adrian McDonald, Chris Mobbs and Helen Torrance

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also Present: County Councillor Stephen Burroughes and four parishioners

A. Public Forum - For Members of the Public

Parishioners expressed concerns regarding the recent planning application at Holly Tree Farmhouse (see point 5.c).

B. County & District Councillor Reports

County Councillor Stephen Burroughes sent a report and gave a verbal update. Full report: [2026 » Cratfield Parish Council](#). District Councillor Julia Ewart sent apologies.

MINUTES

1. To Approve Apologies for Absence

None

2. To Record Declarations of Interests and to Consider Requests for Dispensation

None

3. To Approve the Minutes from the Meeting held on 11th November 2025

The Minutes from the Meeting held on 11th November 2025 were confirmed unanimously as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Finance

a) To Receive the Financial & Budget Reports and Approve Income & Expenditure

Councillor Resolved to Approve the following Receipts and Expenditure:

DATE	REF.	DETAILS	RECEIPTS	EXPENDITURE
11/11/2025	18	Stewart Cable Handyman - Play Area Maint.		£ 198.00
26/11/2025	19	London Hearts - Bleed Control Kit		£ 53.49
28/11/2025	S/O	Clerk's Salary - November		£ 252.89
30/11/2025	D/D	Bank Service Charge		£ 6.00
28/12/2025	S/O	Clerk's Salary - December		£ 252.89
30/12/2026	D/D	Bank Service Charge		£ 6.00
13/01/2026	20	Clerk's Expenses December & January		£ 24.00
		Total	£ -	£ 793.27
		Reserves		
		General Reserves		£ 4,075.97
		Restricted Reserves		£ 5,360.61
		Total Funds		£ 9,436.58

Signed:

Date:

Cratfield Parish Council

b) Defibrillator Bleed Control Kit – update

The Clerk confirmed that the Bleed Control Kit has now been received and installed in the defibrillator cabinet at the Village Hall. It has also been registered on the UK Bleed Control website, with a notice placed in the Parish Magazine and on the Parish Council website.

c) Budget and Precept 2026/27 – update

The Clerk confirmed that the precept had been applied for and acknowledged by East Suffolk Council.

d) Millenium Meadow Picnic Bench Grant Request - update

No update.

5. Planning Applications and Decisions

To review the listed Planning Applications and any additional Applications received after the Agenda is published.

Applications

a) Ref. No: DC/25/4554/FUL

Renovation and Alternations to Grade II Listed Farmhouse. Replacement entrance porch and lean-to extensions. Single storey modern extension to West Gable. Erection of ancillary Cart lodge and Annexe Buildings.

The Gables Silverleys Green Cratfield Suffolk IP19 0QJ

Validated: Mon 05 Jan 2026 | Status: Awaiting decision

[Councillors Resolved to submit a Neutral response with no comments.](#)

b) Ref. No: DC/25/4555/LBC

Listed Building Consent - Renovation and Alternations to Grade II Listed Farmhouse. Replacement entrance porch and lean-to extensions. Single storey modern extension to West Gable. Erection of ancillary Cart lodge and Annexe Buildings.

The Gables Silverleys Green Cratfield Suffolk IP19 0QJ

Validated: Mon 05 Jan 2026 | Status: Awaiting decision

[Councillors Resolved to submit a Neutral response with no comments.](#)

c) Ref. No: DC/25/4346/FUL

Erection of Agricultural Storage Building and all associated works
Holly Tree Farmhouse Bell Green Cratfield Halesworth Suffolk IP19 0DN

Validated: Wed 03 Dec 2025. Status: Awaiting decision

[Councillors Resolved to submit an Objection response with comments \(attached\).](#)

d) Ref. No: DC/25/4172/FUL

Construction of a single storey extension to existing courtyard garage with a pantile pitched roof over both, including provide door access to courtyard from existing converted barn and install solar panels to courtyard and cart lodge rooves.

Old Hall Farm North Green Cratfield Halesworth Suffolk IP19 0DS

Validated: Tue 18 Nov 2025. Status: Awaiting decision (*comments closed*)

Decisions

e) DC/25/3758/FUL

Proposal: Retrospective Application - Erection of Children's Playhouse

Site address: Swan Green Farmhouse, Swan Green, Cratfield, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 0QQ

Status: Permitted

f) DC/25/3608/FUL

Proposal: Single storey extension to the side of the property

Site address: The Old Cider Works, Tongs Lane, Cratfield, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 0QD

Status: Permitted

Signed:

Date:

Cratfield Parish Council

6. Village Matters

a) Tong's Lane

Cllr McDonald has been advised that Suffolk County Council Highways records the following in respect of Tong's Lane:

- i. Tongs Lane appears to be a historic highway and is regarded as being highway maintainable at public expense. Suffolk County Council is responsible for its maintenance.
- ii. It is classified as an Unclassified Road (U2706). These are local roads intended for local traffic and this route is recorded as being "Open to All Vehicles."
- iii. We are not aware of any restrictions or limitations being in place along this route.

Cllrs discussed whether Tong's Lane could be changed to a bridleway, with landowners retaining access to their fields. Cllr McDonald agreed to investigate.

Action: AM

b) Play Area

- Play Area Inspection November 2025 Report – update

The Clerk confirmed that there were no outstanding issues arising from the recent Play Area Report.

- Handyman – update

The Clerk reported that the perimeter hedges are still to be cut back by the Handyman and will be done this spring.

- Front Hedge

Councillors Agreed to leave the front hedge for the time being and to replace it when it deteriorates in due course.

c) Millenium Meadow

Cllr Ackerley informed the meeting that he was in the early stages of planning another Cratfield Midsummer Madness event on 4th July 2026.

d) Village Maintenance

Cllrs reported fly-tipping at the bottom of Church Hill, on the right-hand side near the sharp bend in the ditch.

Action: Clerk

e) Footpath Issues

None reported

f) Allotments – update

No issues.

g) SCC Footpath Leaflet/Map – update

The leaflet/map is with Suffolk County Council for printing and will be available from 2026.

h) To Consider the Village Hall Technology

Cllrs discussed the Village Hall technology and asked Cllr Torrance to speak to the Village Hall Committee and to explore the various options available.

Action: HT

i) To Consider a Neighbourhood Plan

Cllrs discussed a Cratfield Neighbourhood Plan, including the time required for its preparation and the potential costs involved. Cllr Torrance agreed to investigate further for consideration at the next meeting.

Action: HT

7. Correspondence

a) Parishioner's email - 1 The Street, Cratfield

The Clerk reported an email from a parishioner regarding the sale of 1 The Street, Cratfield, and the ownership of the grassed area in front of the property, querying whether it belongs to the Parish

Signed:

Date:

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Council or Flagship Housing. Cllr Macdonald agreed to investigate further and report back to the Council.

Action: AM

8. Any Other Business *(For discussion only – the Council cannot make decisions on these items unless on the agenda)*

a) East Suffolk Council Free Packs of Daffodil Bulbs Offer – update

Cllrs reported that the Daffodils have been planted around the village.

b) Councillor Training – update

Cllrs noted that Cllr Torrance will be attending a Councillor training event on 19 January.

c) Silverleys Green

A Cllr reported that vehicles are missing the junction from Cratfield Road onto Silverleys Green (near the noticeboard) and asked the Clerk to make enquiries regarding the possible installation of a sharp bend warning sign.

Action: Clerk

9. Items for the Next Agenda

a) Policies Review

b) To Consider Grants

10. To Confirm the Meeting Dates

- Tuesday 10th March 2026 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 7.30 pm – Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting
- Tuesday 14th July 2026 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 8th September 2026 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 10th November 2026 at 7.30 pm

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm

5.c) Planning Application DC/25/4346/FUL – OBJECTION

This application follows on from previous applications submitted in 2023 and 2024 for development at the same site. The 2024 application was refused at appeal by the Planning Inspectorate in October 2025 under Appeal Ref: APP/X3540/W/25/3366924.

In dismissing the appeal, the Inspector concluded:

“Thus, the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and to the setting and significance of the farmhouse in conflict with Policies SCLP10.4, SCLP11.1 and SCLP12.34 of the Local Plan. These policies, amongst other things, support proposals that demonstrate a clear understanding of the character of the built and historic environment and use this understanding to complement local character and distinctiveness, and seek to implement a strategy for rural areas that includes the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets.”

The current application seeks to overcome this refusal by repositioning the proposed agricultural building. However, Cratfield Parish Council considers that the revised siting does not address the fundamental concerns identified by the Inspector.

Signed:

Date:

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Despite the repositioning, the proposed building would remain harmful to the character and appearance of the area and would adversely affect the setting and significance of nearby heritage assets, specifically Mill House and Mill Cottage. Although not listed, both properties are recognised heritage assets which predate the Tithe Map of 1839.

The land rises steeply behind Mill House and Mill Cottage at Holly Tree Farm and, as a result, the base of the proposed barn, including its finished floor level, would be at least 1 metre higher than the ground floor level of the cottages. This change in land levels would significantly amplify the perceived height and visual impact of the building, rendering it visually dominant, overbearing and intimidating in scale when viewed from these historic properties and their setting. In addition, the applicant has over-estimated the distance between the proposed barn and the cottages, further understating the extent of harm to their setting.

It is also noted that the site currently supports sensitive wildlife species including owls, harriers, brown hares and deer. Cratfield Parish Council is concerned that habitat loss and the footprint of the proposed building would adversely affect these species. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal should therefore be required to assess the full ecological impact of the development.

The submitted Ecology Report dates from September 2024. A new ecology assessment should be undertaken to reflect the revised siting of the proposed barn, which has been moved from its previous location and is now positioned close to the hedge on the west boundary.

Cratfield Parish Council further questions whether the proposal genuinely relates to the needs of a working farm. The scale of the proposed structure significantly exceeds what would reasonably be required for the limited agricultural activity undertaken on the site. The landholding comprises two small fields managed by a contract farmer using their own machinery and off-site storage. The current owner does not possess farm machinery, raising further questions regarding the necessity for additional on-site storage and the use of existing farm buildings.

Given the limited size of the holding and the lack of diverse farming activity, Cratfield Parish Council considers that the proposed building far exceeds the maximum potential biological yield of the land, even allowing for two cropping cycles per year. Approval of a structure of this size would also significantly reduce the area of productive agricultural land available.

In light of these concerns, Cratfield Parish Council believes that, as a matter of due diligence, the Local Planning Authority should require a Formal Agricultural Appraisal to robustly demonstrate that a building of this volume and scale is reasonably necessary for the agricultural use of the land. Should any building be justified, it should be sited close to existing farm buildings to minimise landscape and visual impact, rather than being isolated in a prominent position.

Cratfield Parish Council is also concerned that the proposal may represent an attempt to introduce additional residential or holiday accommodation under the guise of an agricultural building, potentially followed by a future change of use application.

Signed:

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Due to its size, colour and elevated position, the proposed structure would be visible from a wide area including Bell Green, North Green and beyond, resulting in unacceptable visual intrusion into the rural landscape.

The site is not connected to mains drainage and relies on soakaways. Given the heavy clay soil in this area, there is a high risk that surface water runoff would increase, exacerbating existing flooding issues at the low-lying junction of Bell Green and North Green Road.

Throughout the planning application there are numerous inaccuracies. These should be fully checked and verified by East Suffolk Council before the application is considered or determined.

For the reasons set out above, Cratfield Parish Council **objects** to planning application DC/25/4346/FUL.

Signed:

Date: