



## **MINUTES**

### **Annual Assembly of the Parish of Woolverstone Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025 7:30pm Berners Hall**

**1. Apologies:** Julia Pearce, Simon Harley, Daniel Potter

**2. Attendance:** Simon Pearce, Allison Glading, Anna Caston, Matthew March, Simon Kent, Kathryn Deaton, Sarah Harris, Craig Catchpole

**3. Minutes:** Minutes of the 2024 meeting were circulated to those in attendance. Proposed: Sarah Harris, Seconded: Allison Glading

#### **4. Matters Arising:**

Elsbeth Iskander – AOB – use of two buildings in the village for affordable housing. This has been considered over the year but after much investigation by Elspeth Iskander and Matthew March it was decided not to progress this. Barrelmans Point are planning to offer 53 affordable houses / joint ownership houses at the development in Shotley.

#### **5. Chairman of Woolverstone Parish Council Report**

Simon Pearce, Chair welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting of 2025.

#### **D-Day 80**

Last June, we commemorated the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day landings with a beacon ceremony on 6<sup>th</sup> June at Ipswich High School. This was especially poignant as we looked out over the River Orwell, from where so many boats carrying men and equipment left for Normandy eighty years earlier.

Two days later, over the w/e 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June, we mounted a D-Day 80 exhibition in Berners Hall which showed the role that Woolverstone played in the run up to D-Day and for months afterwards.

### **Heritage Trail**

Two years ago, we marked the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Berners family purchasing Woolverstone Manor with an exhibition in Berners Hall, providing an overview of the family and the development of the estate within which we live.

There was a second part to the project. To establish a Heritage Trail in the village. Key heritage assets are marked with blue plaques, a brief description of date etc. of the structure and a QR code taking the visitor to a new website with further information of both places and people.

The plaques are in place. My huge thanks to the owners of the 15 properties who agreed to have a plaque placed on their boundary. Without this the trail would not have been possible. A new leaflet has been prepared with a map of the trail and is available to visitors in Berners Hall, St Michael's, RHYC, MDL, MoniMar and local shops.

A new website – [www.woolverstone.org](http://www.woolverstone.org) - has been designed and content written to add details and images about people and places which will help visitors, and new residents, understand the village we live in.

We thank the Lottery Heritage Fund for their support of this project through a grant which covered the vast majority of the cost.

### **Horsepond Green**

Another project taking place over the course of the year, led by Sarah Harris and Simon Kent, has been the restoration of Horsepond Green. A plan was developed in consultation with National Landscapes to create an oasis of biodiversity within the area bought by five villagers in 1992 and passed on to the Parish Council, holding it in Trust for the village, in 1994.

A number of working parties have cleared overgrown areas, pruned trees, created insect "hotels" and planted hedging. A bench will follow, to allow residents to sit and enjoy the space as was originally intended.

### **Spring Clean and Beach Clean**

We have added a beach clean up to our regular Spring Clean. This helps keep the village clear of rubbish that is thrown from passing cars or dropped by walkers, mostly the former. We found an interesting item this year – a human tibia which was collected by the Police who

suggested an age of over 100 years. Subsequently, a fragment of pelvis and a finger bone were found in the same area.

### **Reduction in speed limit**

Speeding continues to be an issue for the village.

Following the rejection of our case by Suffolk County Council to have the speed limit from Chelmondiston to Woolverstone reduced to 40-mph. This was to help the residents of the 7 houses of Woolverstone outside the 30-mph limit and also to reduce speed on entry to the 30-mph zone in the village.

There was no appeal of the decision, which was made by two County Councillors, one of which changed roles the following day. A Freedom of Information request found that there were no notes of any conversation that took place to reach the decision. Neither was there any response to the 35-page document of evidence we provided in support of our case.

We have since purchased two more Speed Indicator Devices, yet to be erected, so there are additional speed reminders for vehicles travelling through the village.

### **Warm Thursdays**

“Warm Thursdays” continued to run throughout the year in Berners Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month providing a space for tea/coffee, cake and chat. Most importantly, this has brought together a group of neighbours from different parts of the village. Thank you to those who have provided cakes on different occasions.

### **PROW 29**

The issue with Public Footpath No 29 from Mannings Lane to the foreshore has been satisfactorily resolved.

### **SPPA – Shotley Peninsula Parishes Alliance**

Over the year, an alliance of all the Peninsula parishes has been formed and is working together to persuade Babergh to treat the Peninsula holistically rather than piecemeal with regard to planning and other matters that affect us all. A meeting has taken place with Arthur Charvonia, BDC CEO, and other Babergh Officers, held in Berners Hall, to map out the first steps.

### **Council Reorganisation**

As I understand it at the moment.

1. Norfolk and Suffolk will share a mayor, who will be elected in May 2026.
2. County Council and District Councils will be replaced by unitary councils who will do all those jobs currently undertaken between both councils.
3. There is discussion about the size of the unitary authorities. Some in SCC would like all of Suffolk to be one unitary authority. Others think that would be too remote from local people. BDC would like to see smaller, multiple authorities.

### **MoniMar**

Woolverstone has gained a new restaurant and bar at Woolverstone Marina. We wish them well and every success.

### **Former HMS Ganges**

The Section 73 variation application to increase the number of houses at the former HMS Ganges site was passed by Babergh Planning Committee on Wednesday 30th April. House numbers will increase from 285 to 303, albeit a slightly different mix with more smaller houses. Rather than the proposed Care Home there will now be 75 assisted living units. The Spine Road will go right up to King Edward VII Drive but not connect until agreement is reached with Shotley Marina. The swimming pool is to be converted to a gym. There was a suggestion that there will be some “affordable” housing, including shared ownership and social housing if Homes England can be brought on board.

Simon Pearce made representation on behalf of Woolverstone Parish that any decision should be deferred until the Transport Report figures were truly representative. Figures presented included the week when Ipswich High School were on half-term and there was an anomalous 2000 vehicle drop on one day of the survey. BDC accepted, in the end, that IHS were on half-term but did not think that would affect the traffic statistics substantially. There was no explanation for the missing 2000 vehicle on 2/11/23. BDC Planning Committee members and Officers seem unperturbed by manifestly inaccurate and unrepresentative data.

The traffic consultants, Waterman, who produced the report suggested that traffic volume was decreasing on the Peninsula due to WFH and would reduce further when construction traffic was removed from the equation. SCC accepted this opinion.

Through the BDC Officer’s Report we found that Woolverstone’s Conservation Area status was confined to the architecture and spaces between buildings and their relationship. There is

therefore no protection from noise, vibration or emissions, despite the Secretary of States ruling to that effect in 2006.

Highway safety works, proposed to mitigate the impact of additional traffic generated by the development on the B1456 may not be implemented, despite being part of the Section 106 agreement, if the developer does not make enough profit from the development.

## **Planning**

The 5 parcels of land for the G Mayhew Farms development have been sold. The developer who purchased them is currently completing another project and is expected to make a start next year on the 22 new houses in Woolverstone. This phased development. We'll let you know more when we have more information about when and where he will make a start.

The following planning applications have been granted in Woolverstone this last year:

Ridgeway                      Single storey extension, replacement of flat roof with pitched.

There have been many other applications through the village and the Marina for tree works.

MDL (Woolverstone) Marina have had their entire estate tree population surveyed for health and safety. You may notice tags on trees. As a result, some trees have been removed. There are plans in the future to plant a considerable number of native tree species as replacements.

## **Thank you**

I would like to thank all the members of the Parish Council for the work, time and energy that they have given in numerous ways.

Thank you, also, to people in the village who have helped in different ways to move forward with a variety of projects.

## **6. Babergh District Councillor**

No report due to Daniel Potters current situation.

## **7. Suffolk County Councillor**

A report was circulated in the meeting and can be viewed on the Woolverstone Parish Council website under AGM

## **8. Finance**

The full detailed report can be viewed under the finance section of the Woolverstone Parish Council website, showing income and expenditure.

Assets remain – Horsepond’s Green and Lawn Mower

There were no questions.

### **9. St Michaels Church**

There was no response from the church

### **10. Berners Hall**

This is being maintained well with regular bookings.

Anna Caston offered to help Sarah Hutton with the management of the hall due to personal circumstances in the coming weeks.

### **11. Woolverstone United Football Club**

For a small village, its football club goes from strength to strength.

Three teams represent our village. In Division One and Division Five of the Suffolk and Ipswich League. Our Veterans (Vets) in the Suffolk and Norfolk Veterans League Division Two. With over 70 players signed over the three sides, the club is working closely with Ipswich High School, sharing facilities with the school, also helping with the pitch preparation. Spring Lodge have again supported the club and next season residents will attend games. The Royal Hospital School have provided winter training facilities.

The Club Committee often sits with eleven at meetings, helping to run the Club.

After reaching the Suffolk Junior Cup final at Portman Road last season, hopes were high for a very good 24-25 season. Having signed 3 new players and preseason training well attended, the first team got off to a great start, winning 3 out of the first 4 games. Sitting top with a plus 4 goal difference, we then had an awful middle section. Our next 18 games saw just 2 wins, 2 draws and 14 loses. With just 5 games left, it looked like we would be relegated. A good run of form in those games saw us win 2, draw 2 and lose just 1. Giving us just enough points to ensure First Division football again next season at Hazelwoods.

Over all a frustrating season, losing a lot of games by the odd goal or mistake but the lads stayed together and finished the season strong, giving encouraging signs for next season 25-26.

A season that “could have been” for the reserves,

24 games played, 10 wins, 2 draws and 12 losses ending the season firmly in mid-table.

Notable back-to-back 7-0 wins at home to Brooks Hall and then away to Kesgrave at the end of October in the middle of a 4 game win streak with another 6-0 win at home against Bramford United just before Christmas.

Dropping points to both Bacton and Mendlesham in March were far from ideal but the boys ended the season strong, beating both Bramford 6th place finishers and Saxmundham 3rd place finishers summed up a balanced season for the reserves.

Vets started the season well, winning some close fought games against Ransomes and Old Newton to put the team in good position for the promotion race. Unfortunately, with injuries to some key players, the second half of season became difficult with the team lacking goals. With the Vets league consisting of 6 teams, a promotion chance soon became a relegation battle and conceding a game to Kirton through lack of players followed by a loss to them at home the following week, sealed our position in the relegation zone. Although a disappointing outcome, still plenty of positives to take with Woolverstone beginning to build a strong Vets team.

The end of season presentation held in the Halbred Inn, where the club awards were given:

Clubman - Luke Fitch

Sportsman - Jack Sisley

First team awards -

Managers player - Jordan Lay

Most Improved - Callum Brookwell-Young

Players player - Hayden Catchpole

Reserve team awards -

Managers player - Ashley Archer

Most Improved - Paul Dennington

Players player- Jake Summons

Ten year service award - Aaron Gordon

Twenty year service award - Dale Sparrow

So on to another season 25-26, the club sits in good health and 104 years young.

Craig Catchpole

Chairman- Woolverstone Football Club

## **12. Friends of Woolverstone**

The Steering Committee of Friends of Woolverstone are Phil Mayhew (Chair), Simon Pearce (Secretary) and Sarah Harris (Treasurer). With the help of others, we have put on a good range of events over the past year within the village for Woolverstone residents and beyond.

FOW are continuing to provide events for the coming year.

Events 24/25

June 2024 D-Day 80 Exhibition. 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June. 300+ visitors. 23 information boards which are now available at our Facebook page - woolverstone: notes and queries

Sept 2024 6<sup>th</sup> Woolverstone Art Show w/e 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Sept.

Nov 2024 Christmas Fair. Great atmosphere. Good range of stalls.

A questionnaire was distributed across the village about what events people would like to see and asking for more volunteers for FOW. The results of this questionnaire will be shared with the village through the newsletter.

Funds stand at £7,444.94

The next meeting will take place soon and those who have offered support through the questionnaire will be invited so we have a larger pool of people working within this group.

## **13. Ipswich High School**

No report to be included.

## **14. Suffolk Local History Recorder**

No report to be included.

## **15. AOB**

None

Signed

Date 22/05/25

Meeting closed at 20:18