

Stow Maries Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 19th January 2025

in The Smythe Hall, Church Lane, Stow Maries at 7.30 p.m.

The Chairman - Cllr David Hopping welcomed all those present.

COUNCILLOR ATTENDEES & OTHER ATTENDEES

Councillors:- David Hopping, Neil Gilmore, Debbie Driver, Adam Brown
& Jerry Petts

District: Not in attendance apologies sent

Essex CC Jane Fleming

In attendance: Mrs Sarah Sayer - Parish Clerk and one member of public.

Prior to commencement of the meeting Mr. Jerry Petts signed the Acceptance of Office form so he could join the meeting in his new role as Parish Council witnessed by the Parish Clerk/RFO.

25-6/109 Cllr Hopping signed the Acceptance of Office form as his new role as Chairman of the Parish Council witnessed by the Parish Clerk/RFO.

25-6/110 APOLOGIES

District Cllr Lisa Whiffen.

25-6/111 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) None made at this point in the meeting.

25-6/112 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 24th November 2025

a) The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 24th November 2025 were reviewed and approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Prop: Cllr Hopping Sec: Cllr Brown.

25-6/113 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

An update has been received from Cllr Whiffen and is as follows:- District Councillor Report –January 2026

Maldon District Council is delighted to announce the official opening of the second phase of a project to overhaul and modernise the much-loved 'Secret Garden' area in Promenade Park.

The opening took place on Monday 22 December, marking another milestone in the Council's commitment to creating inclusive and engaging spaces for residents and visitors.

An official opening ceremony was held on Monday 22 December, with the area being formally opened by Chairman of the Council - Cllr Kevin Lagan, who was joined by his granddaughter – Quinn, the Council's Chief Executive - Doug Wilkinson, Maldon East Ward Member - Cllr Andrew Lay, and Kompan Area Sales Manager – Steven Elliott.

The latest phase of the project introduces an additional inclusive play area, featuring interactive play boards, natural play elements, and a dedicated sensory garden. These additions complement the existing play facilities in

Signed by the Chairman.....
Cllr David Hopping

Dated 23rd February 2026

Stow Maries Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 19th January 2025

in The Smythe Hall, Church Lane, Stow Maries at 7.30 p.m.

this area of the park, providing a wider range of inclusive play options for children of all ages.

Phase 1 of the development works at the Blackwater Leisure Centre will be completed on schedule at the end of December.

With the new fitness suite opening to the public on Friday 2nd January 2026.

This phase includes a brand-new gym facility boasting 105 stations at approx. 35% bigger than the existing gym facility. This includes new Pulse Inclusive Fitness accredited equipment, EGYM technology and Smartflex & Speedflex equipment installed in the new space. Over 50% of the equipment from the old gym facility is being donated by Places Leisure to the Plume Academy, providing the school with a refreshed and much more comprehensive fitness suite that will be available for students to use on site.

Phase 1 of the development also includes the completion of the Climbing facility providing a completely new range of exercises, activities, and challenges for all ages. This space is fully accessible, and Places Leisure will be running tailored sessions to individuals that have specific access needs. Once the Climbing area is fully complete, training will take place with new and existing staff members. Confirmation will be provided on specific opening dates for these facilities although this is expected to be mid to late January 2026.

Press releases and leisure centre member notifications are being prepared with a full 3-month comms plan being rolled out from the beginning of Jan 26.

Phase 2 of the development will progress immediately in the new year to provide the two new group exercise studios and community space. This phase also includes a designated group cycle fitness studio and new meeting/training facilities on site. Phase 2 of the development is expected to conclude in mid-April.

25-6/114 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

a) County Councillor Jane Fleming had provided a report which was placed on the website and details from which were discussed during the meeting.

The Mayor elections have been postponed to May 2028. Discussions concerning the various mix of proposed Unitary Councils took place.

There is a link on Maldon District Council website that should be added to the Stow Maries website for reporting pot holes. Clerk to action.

A detailed discussion concerning the Love Your Bus bid took place and the members made a decision concerning the 99 service which starts at South Woodham Ferrers coming through Stow Maries and eventually ending up at Broomfield Hospital, see minutes reference 25-26/119 (a) Public Transportation. The severe pot hole close to the curb and in the middle in the vicinity of Stow Bullocks has been reported.

A vote of thanks was given to Cllr Fleming for her input at the meeting.

25-6/115 QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

a) No questions were raised.

Signed by the Chairman.....
Cllr David Hopping

Dated 23rd February 2026

Stow Maries Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 19th January 2025

in The Smythe Hall, Church Lane, Stow Maries at 7.30 p.m.

25-6/116 PLANNING MATTERS

a) Planning Applications -

Planning Applications:-

i) 25/01093/FUL PP-13624930

Erection of Ground Maintenance barn and workshop with associated yard, vehicle parking, storage of materials and landscaping
Land South of Ferguslie Honeypot Lane Stow Maries, Essex.

Members discussed and had no comments, Clerk to respond to Maldon District Council accordingly.

b) Members discussed the number of Parish Councils who had responded so far regarding contributing to the use of a planning consultant on the large development reference no. 352500926SOR and it was decided that Cllr Brown, co-ordinate the replies, contact the planning consultant regarding the update and review what happens with the following two items as they are all interconnected.

c) Members discussed and decide in favour of the Chair approaching the Dengie Hundred Group of Parishes to suggest that a SharePoint site be established so that all the Dengie Parishes can upload and access pertinent data.

d) It was agreed that the Chair also makes a presentation to the DHGPC (Dengie Hundred Group of Parish Councils) suggesting that a unified front against all the large developments in the area would be a good idea. Clerk to ascertain when the next meeting of the DHGPC is.

e) **Planning correspondence received** over the course of the month and circulated via e-mail:

i) Planning application listings were noted.

ii) Planning decisions and appeals listings were noted.

iii) No decision/appeals to review for Stow Maries

f) **STOW MARIES GREAT WAR AERODROME**

i) Cllr Neil Gilmore to attend the zoom meeting on 28th January 2026 and will update at the February 2026 meeting.

25-6/117 FINANCE

a) Members approved the payments and receipts for December 25 and January 26.

b) Members approved the bank reconciliation to the end of December 2025 to the bank statements. In order to avoid the occasional overdraft charges Clerk to transfer funds agreed at each meeting from the Business account to the Current account to ensure this does not happen.

c) Clerks review of back-pay was postponed to February 26 meeting.

d) Members noted that the required documentation had been completed and sent back to the Pensions regulator for another 3 years.

e) Members agreed to the £50.00 donation to the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance as per 25/26 budget under donations.

Signed by the Chairman.....
Cllr David Hopping

Dated 23rd February 2026

Stow Maries Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 19th January 2025

in The Smythe Hall, Church Lane, Stow Maries at 7.30 p.m.

25-6/118 HIGHWAY & PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY ISSUES

a) Mr Dore stated the following:- *We have been progressing well, but we are currently awaiting the determination of the planning application by Maldon Council. Our consultants, Jacobs, were told this would be by 28 November. The planning application (Ref 25/00891/FUL) was validated on 3 October 2025. With the way things are these days it's very difficult to get hold of a planning officer and speak to them with everything being online.*

On the current programme we are therefore looking at a start on site date in June this year, but this assumes the planning application is determined in short order.

b) Cllr Petts said he was happy to look into the matter of speeding in the village and the possibility of getting involved with neighbouring villages.

25-6/119 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

a) This item was covered during the County Cllrs Agenda item discussing "Love Your Bus" Programme. Cllr Driver is heading up the project and it was decided that Stow Maries Parish Council fully support the bid in the Love Your Bus application to enhance the 99 service which will run from South Woodham, through Stow Maries, Cold Norton, and Purleigh through to Maldon which eventually ends at Broomfield hospital. It was also mentioned that the D1/D2 services needing improving.

25-6/120 STOW MARIES PARISH VILLAGE SIGN

a) Clerk unable to obtain a quote for the refurbishment from the Sign Maker recommended, so it is back to the drawing board looking for local companies. Cllr Gilmore to send recent photo Village Sign's condition.

25-6/121 CLERKS RESIGNATION

a) It was agreed to enlist Mr. John Watson as locum Clerk/RFO with a view to a permanent position. Current Clerk/RFO to leave on 28th February 2026.

25-6/122 WEBSITE

- a) It was agreed retrospectively to pay the £40.00 to have two administrators changed on the website and the Chair added to have the same access as the Clerk/RFO.
- b) It was agreed to continue to pay on an ad hoc basis for changes on the website that can not be carried out by the administrators at £40.00 per hour.

25-6/123 INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

a) Training for Cllr Petts

25-6/124 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – Monday 16th February 2026 at 7.30 p.m.

25-6/125 ALL BUSINESS HAVING BEEN TRANSACTED THE CHAIR THANKED EVERYONE FOR ATTENDING & CLOSED THE MEETING at 21.08 p.m.

Signed by the Chairman.....
Cllr David Hopping

Dated 23rd February 2026