

Minutes from the meeting held on 5th January 2026

Rachel Hitchcock welcomed members to the meeting.

- Members present: Rachel Hitchcock, Matt Cable, Vicki Sargent, Becs Spendiff, David Slater, Chris Hunt, Justin Dowding, David Finnigan, Joan Border, Martin Wright, Trevor Smy
- Apologies: Claire Buller, Iain Wright, Jo Metson, Julie Clark, Heike Ellwood, Adam Lunn, Mike Hunter, Kathryn Niven, Robert Dosser,
- Minutes of meeting held on 22nd October 2025 were approved (proposed Becs Spendiff, seconded Matt Cable)

Matters arising including:

- **Executive Committee:** No new members
- **Fundraising Activities/Events:** It was proposed to make our AGM in March a more social event to mark the Community Council's 60th Anniversary alongside celebrating the Village Hall roof. Date to be confirmed once Iain has a date for sign off. (Date of 4th March now confirmed). We will then discuss with Lorraine doing a feature in the Community Times commemorating 60 years of the Community Council (**Claire/Rachel**)
- **Community Defibrillator:**
Defibrillators are located at the Village Hall, Fire Station and on the verge outside The Houses, Bures Road, Wiston. CO6 4LZ.. The defibrillators at the Village Hall and Bures Road, Wiston are managed by the CC; they are regularly checked and are registered with The Circuit, the British Heart Foundation System linked to the Ambulance Service. Site checks are reported to both the CHT Webnos system and the Circuit. The defibrillator at the Fire Station is also linked to the Circuit which means the Ambulance Service will refer 999 callers to the closest defibrillator.
- **Online Ticketing Facility:** NaylandEvents.org
This remains the principle outlet for selling tickets to village events. If village organisations wish to use this facility contact Justin Dowding.
- **Village Hall Gardening Morning:** Saturday 21st March 2026, from 9am
All welcome.
- **Community Involvement:** Ideas to help raise participation in village groups and events welcome.
*An item headed **Volunteer Vacancies** is included in the Community Times, listing the various volunteers needed by different groups; please let Lorraine know of you have vacancies to be included. It would be helpful if everyone, when they see promotions for Nayland events on Facebook, could make a comment (however brief) and not just click on 'like'. All village groups would benefit from this.*

In response to a query from David Finnigan, it was confirmed that there are details of all the village societies in the Community Times. He mentioned that the Community Space at Parkers Way might be another venue that could be used by societies and it was suggested that this could be advertised in the Community Times if it was a possibility.

• **Resident Volunteer List:**

This is a list of residents prepared to assist other residents who at times are unable to get out for themselves and would benefit from having a prescription collected, an errand run or some shopping dropped off. If anyone requires assistance or could give assistance if needed please contact Lorraine.

1. Recent Activities:

• **Bonfire & Fireworks: Tuesday 5th November.**

Thanks were given for everybody's help and support with this very successful event. It was noted that we

will give further consideration to how to manage gate sales (those who just turn up on the night) and parking (a couple more marshalls and cones – particularly along Court Street pinch point). Overall the event ran very smoothly with a record profit achieved.

- **Christmas Fayre: Saturday 6th December.**

Thanks were given for the support of societies and stall holders plus helpers and all those who came along. It was a successful Fayre with lots of people enjoying the festive atmosphere. Father Christmas was very popular and it was nice to have the school in attendance – the school confirmed that we can hope to have a larger representation next year which would mean we could use the stage, although the small band of ukuleles this year did a wonderful job.

- **Christmas Trail: Christmas Trail (Windows and Trees)**

Thanks was given to all those who participated in the Christmas Trail which helped create a lovely festive atmosphere around the village.

- **Village Christmas tree:**

Thanks to Claire for organising this again and to the team for putting it up and taking it down. It looked fabulous. Approval was given for expenditure on a new start for the top of the Christmas Tree which would be linked to the lights. (proposed Vicki Sargent, seconded Becs Spendiff)

- **Father Christmas' Tour of Nayland: Wednesday 24th December**

More popular than ever – a big thank you to Father Christmas, his elf for making time on a busy Christmas Eve to tour the village and to George Pratt for kindly providing the transport in the form of his vintage John Deere tractor.

2. Correspondence: None that isn't mentioned elsewhere

3. Treasurer's Report for year to 31st December 2025 - preliminary:

Breakdown of profits to date: Bonfire night £6,839, Community Times £973, Quiz £532, Calendar £489 and interest income £268, and the Christmas Fayre (£140).

Grants paid: Grants paid: Village Hall roof £10,000, WW2 commemorative book £576, maintenance of Horse Watering area £300, First Responders £96, and Lizzie's Fund £39

Current Position: The accounts show reserves of £15,435 represented by current a/c monies £14,849, and cash on hand £576. We hold £222 for the RBL Services Fund and one grant is pending for Horse Watering area £58. We have £5 of accrued income. **Therefore unencumbered assets are £15,425.**

Expenses year to date: £681 for annual insurance, £229 for website hosting, £198 for 2024 defibrillator maintenance, £128 for hall hire and £42 of sundry items.

(Matt Cable, Treasurer)

Matt confirmed that he would be shutting down the Paypal account as it is somewhat redundant except for a very few calendar sales – Justin will alter the link to Stripe.

4. Grants & Donations:

- **Permissive footpath maintenance:**

We will monitor the two stretches of permissive footpath - Stoke Road and Court Knoll to Allotment field - and call Dan Bowman back when needed (obviously being mindful of restrictions due to nesting birds). We will also monitor bodpave solution at the Conservation Meadow and see how this beds in with a view to this being a possible solution to the wet stretch of footpath between Court Knoll and the allotments, We will also keep an eye on how often this stretch is impassable before considering approaching others to contribute. Tendring Estate has said that they approve of the bodpave solution and would be prepared to contribute £1000 towards the paroject. Rachel has replied to say that this is a really positive offer but that the remaining funds will need to be sourced and the success of the bodpave on the Nayland meadow monitored – we will go back to them when ready to proceed with this].

No further maintenance required from Dad Bowman at this stage.

5. Community Times & websites:

Thanks as always to all contributors. Heading towards the next deadline; please let Lorraine know if you have promotion or large items to include so adequate space can be reserved.

6. Village Calendar:

Village calendars have sold well (114 at the time of the meeting with more sales expected) – this means a profit to date of just under £500. It was agreed that it was definitely worthwhile continuing with the calendar especially as Lorraine, Wendy and Claire were happy to continue in the current roles and the quote from Spingold was just £30 +VAT more than this year. A big thank you to the whole team for their efforts.

7. Forthcoming Activities:

- Fun Village Quiz:** *Friday 6th February*

Tickets are now on sale. Jo Metson, Vicki Sargent and Claire Buller available to help with raffle/set up etc... Alannah and Zain available to help with collecting up sheets. Will to do scoring.

8. AOB:

9. Date of Next Meeting: This will be the AGM – date tbc. Date has been confirmed as Wednesday 4th March, 7.30 pm (Exec 7pm) in the Village Hall.

Society Reports:

Nayland Community First Responder Group

Nayland Community First Responder group's report to the Community Council general meeting.

As the charity of the year for the Men's Senior Golf Team at Stoke-by-Nayland Resort, we were presented with a total donation amount of £10,578.84p. The 2025 Captain Kevin Price presented us with the cheque in December as one of his last duties.

We have also received a kind donation from St James Church, Nayland, of £113 raised from attendees of the carol service on the 21st of December.

We held a BLS session for Leavenheath Beavers in November, and two local community groups in December, Footpath Explorers: Village & Countryside Walks, and Sarah's Pawsome Dog Retreat and Training. All three groups made donations towards our charity for which we are very grateful.

Volunteer Responder Ryan Appleton, along with his twin brother Dean who responds in Essex, has been awarded the British Empire Medal in the King's New Years Honours. Ryan has now been a CFR for over 10 years and has dedicated countless hours to saving lives in the local community.

We are currently recruiting for more responders. Applications need to be made via the East of England Ambulance Service website. Essential criteria are:

- be over 18
- be able to carry our 25kg bags
- pass a DBS check
- have a full driving licence and access to a road worthy car

Posters are up around the village, and we have had an advert in the CT.

2025 figures:

We attended 66 calls. Spent 55:47 hours with patients. Most common calls were 1. Chest Pain 2. Breathing Difficulties 3. Fit 4. Fall 5. Stroke. Arrive before the ambulance 85% of the time. Volunteered 2,938:36 Hours as a group.

Trained 56 people in Basic Life Support.

Nayland with Wissington Conservation Society:

Our next speaker meeting, which is also our AGM, will take place on March the 10th. We are delighted to report that our guest speaker is Frances Christie, the fine art specialist, who regularly appears on the BBC's Antiques Roadshow programme. The topic will be the value of art.

We have also arranged for a visit to Smallbridge Hall in May. This Elizabethan property has been subject to substantial restoration over the past 10 years and is well worth a view. At the moment visitors are limited to Society members but as we can accommodate up to 40 visitors we may be able to permit non-members to attend.

In my last report I mentioned that the Society had considered the acquisition of the Swan's Nest adjacent to the bridge in Mill Street. As I suspect you will already be aware a local resident made a successful bid for it and is already undertaking some long-awaited care of the area.

Finally, as the Society has been unable to find anyone willing to lead the management of our Open Gardens event we have decided to give it a rest for this year but will be holding it next year on the 13th of June.

Village Players

The Village Players had a great time performing The Village Hall at the beginning of December, audiences enjoyed the light-hearted comedy about village life and the performance was well reviewed by the North Essex Theatre Guild. Auditions for the Spring production of Terence Rattigan's Flare Path, to be directed by Mandy Cook, will be held on 11 and 14 January at the Church Hall. Performance dates are 16-18 April. Written in 1941 and first staged in 1942, Flare Path is set in a hotel near an RAF Bomber Command airbase during the Second World War, the story involves a love triangle between a pilot, his actress wife and a famous film star. There are roles for seven men and four women of

varying ages. Please head to villageplayers.co.uk for more details and character synopsis'. As always we are on the look out for new people, both onstage and backstage. If your NY resolution is to get involved please do get in touch. Contact Emma Wallis on 07942 7785346 / naylandvillageplayers@gmail.com or if you would like more info on Flare Path please contact Mandy Cook on 01206 263210 / mandycookonline@gmail.com

Nayland Meadow

Local contractor, Ray Chisnall and his son Mark have been most helpful and worked hard to remove some 800 tons of silt from the pond which has I'm sure you have all seen is distributed around the edges of the pond, where it will be for several months while it dries out, prior to cultivating and reseeding so that it can be incorporated back into the field. It is a sobering thought to realise that 800 tons of silt have passed from the river through the pipes into the pond in the last 20 years!

About half of the reeds have been imaginatively removed creating areas of variable water depth in order, to provide as wide a variety of habitats for wild life as possible.

Subject to planning permission The boardwalk and viewing platform on the western side pond , which will be half a metre below the level of the current footpath and only constitutes less than 1% of the pond area, should be completed by the spring , allowing visitors a closer connection to nature and provide educational opportunities for children and others for many years to come.

Nayland Choir:

Nayland Choir have recently become a registered charity with the stated aim 'to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music, and in particular choral music' through our concerts and other activities.

We had a lovely and appreciative 'full house' for our winter concert in the village hall in December and the choir enjoyed singing another varied programme of music. Some of us also sang carols in the Anchor with a singing group from Stoke-by-Nayland and others sang Christmas songs in the Hare and Hounds in Leavenheath. We also sang at St. James' church carol service which was another lovely community event.

Rehearsals resume on 8th January in preparation for our next concert on Sunday 29th March in St. James' Church, featuring Pergolesi's Stabat Mater, Vivaldi's Credo and Haydn's Missa Brevis, which will be accompanied once again by a group of musicians.

Art group:

We enjoyed learning some new techniques at the end of last term. We had an acrylics session one week; this is not our usual medium and it was only the third time that we had tried it, but it was interesting - and challenging - to try something very different. During our final week before Christmas, we explored origami and used this to make stars, angels, crackers and wreaths. We are restarting on 7th January and look forward to more drawing and painting to come.

St James Church

Our Services over Christmas went well. The 9 lessons and carols was very well attended as was the Christingle Service it was lovely to see so many children As Helen was away Dereck, reader from Wiston, took the Service. The numbers for our Christmas Day Eucharist was slightly disappointing but many of our "regulars" were away. We are still in need of a Churchwarden and if any one would like to join the PCC they would be most welcome.

At the meeting Chris Hunt added that work will start on the South Aisle Roof in the first week of February and that 2026 was the 250th anniversary of Constable's birth and that there were plans to do something to mark this occasion – support would be sought within the village.

Royal British Legion

The RBL completed 2025 with a talk by Will, of course, which was both interesting and thought-provoking. Several Members had been aware of statues of Matthew Flinders in Australia and had seen the TV reports of the discovery of his remains during HS2 works at Euston station. Will's First Edition of Flinders' charts and sketches was a remarkable artifact, overlooked by The Antiques Roadshow, apparently.

The programme for 2026 starts on 16th February with David Pryor's stories from his time as a forensic scientist, then April 13th with Captain Richard Channon (RN Rtd.) a submarine captain, relating stories of his time in the Royal Navy. There will be a St George's Day lunch on 23rd April and meetings on 15th June, 17th August and 12th October, for which we have speakers and we hope to arrange a couple of external visits.

We hope to refurbish the RBL Noticeboard in the Village this year, to extend its life.