

St James South Elmham
Minutes of the Parish Meeting to set the Precept
held on 18th November 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Committee Members Present: Mr C. Bradley (Chairman)
Mrs S. Smith (Clerk)
Mr A. Hadingham, Mr R. Hadingham
Mr B. Crockford, Mrs A. Dinsdale & Mr M.
Graham

and 7 residents of the village.

1. The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting and briefly explained the nature of a Parish Meeting, that there are two public meetings a year, the Precept in the autumn, and the AGM in the spring. Tonights meeting therefore was to primarily set the Precept for the coming financial year 2026/27.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs L. Bradley, Mrs C. Rodbourne & Mrs J Bastow

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the previous Meeting of 13th May 2025 were summarised for the meeting by Mrs A. Dinsdale, had been published on the Public Notices Board and were available at the meeting.

Proposed by Mr A. Hadingham Seconded by Mr D. Ritchie- Vote unanimous.

Signed as a true record by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None

5. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that the ongoing waste activities in the village had a court date set for 10 December 2025.

There were no further planning applications.

Infrastructure program: The Chair gave an update on the various projects that had been completed or were still ongoing:

1. Telephone Kiosk: The Kiosk is now illuminated Dusk till Dawn, there is still some internal work to be completed.

2. Village Hall landscaping: The plans to re-landscape the hedge and area surrounding the kiosk and village pump had awaited work on the trench for electricity supply to the Kiosk, they can now proceed.
3. External Utilities: (water and electric) The cost of extending these to the meadow proved prohibitive and were modified to provide an external supply at the Kitchen end of the hall and power to the Telephone Kiosk. Project completed.
4. Orchard and Village green: There are now three new benches and new entrance fencing at the Orchard. This work is complete. Two of the old Orchard benches are being restored and will be situated on the Village Green, the concrete pads are already in place. The Z team have cleared a significant amount of dead wood and bramble from the boundary hedge on the green. Thanks go to them and the Orchard Crew for their work on the green and the Orchard. ESC have awarded the village another sack of daffodil bulbs.
5. Village website: The Orchard website is now closed down and the Village Website is under construction, the chair advised everyone they can view progress on it by searching stjamessouthelmham.uk. The Chair invited ideas on what the community would like on the home page and mentioned the Bindicator. (advice on bin days) was a useful tool.
6. Physical Village signs: SCC have agreed to replace two damaged finger signs at the junction with Mill Lane and the Orchard.

Dog Waste: Discussions with ESC suggest it may be possible to have dog bins and emptying free of charge depending on the siting of bins. The Chair circulated a map with the suggested sites for 4 bins and asked for any views. After discussion, the meeting noted the lack of any such facilities in the village and agreed that the issue should be pursued, with bins to be sited as on the proposed map.

Local government reorganisation : The Chair mentioned the current proposals of a one Council or three Council model for Suffolk. This decision is still ongoing.

6. Village Reports

The Chairman then invited reports from the Church, the Village Hall and Village Orchard.

For the Church, Mr B. Crockford said that the congregation remains at a steady number. There is a need to re-roof the nave of the church which is a large piece of work and expensive. There is some suggestion the chancellor may introduce a change in the VAT reclamation for churches and they are waiting to see what happens in the budget before making any decisions. There are two items that have an annual expense for the church i) Grass cutting in the autumn ii) Insurance at a cost of £1374.94 p.a. Mr Crockford thanked the team of four who continue to cut the grass

throughout the year.

For the Village Hall, Mr C. Bradley read a report from the Village Hall.

The Hall continues to be well used for sports activities and private bookings with lots of new events arranged. The music evenings have proved popular and will continue in 2026, including another Ceilidh band. The crafts are all booked up with Ruth Jewson returning to the village for these. The recent raffle at the quiz night raised funds for Macmillan. The summer lunch remains a success with a donation going to the Church after this event.

The Christmas lunch will follow the usual format and we expect it to be fully booked again this year.

We will soon be publishing a complete calendar of hall events for 2026. and are committed to using the hall as much as possible as a local hub for our village.

The travelling Coffee Caravan, coming once a month, continues to attract a good number of residents, providing a social, welcoming space.

Some exterior maintenance has been carried out and thanks go to the Z team, who have been instrumental.

Within the next few weeks, before the Christmas Lunch, the hall interior will be refreshed with new paint, as will the ladies facilities.

The defibrillator will be made more visible and when completed there will be a session to demonstrate First Aid, CPR and use of the machine when necessary.

For the Village Orchard, Mr C. Bradley advised that it had been a mixed year for the trees with some flourishing and others not performing as well.

7. Precept

The Chairman outlined the Precept process and how the money is used; for example, the support of village facilities, projects, events and activities, membership of useful organisations, and support of village organisations. For clarity, the Chairman invited Mr M Graham to go through the expenditure this year to 14 November 25.

At a recent committee meeting the precept had been discussed at length; our policy was to maintain a prudent balance, that if needed, could cover the costs of unexpected or unforeseen events, and raising the Precept by inflation was a good way to do this.

The current precept is £2,462.46, inflation is currently circa 4% and the committee recommended increasing the Precept for 2026/27 by this amount. This would make the proposed Precept amount £2,560.96. An increase of £98.49. This equates to £29.10 per household per annum or 0.56p per week.

Mr M. Graham proposed the increase of 4%.

Mr R. Hadingham seconded - the vote in favour was unanimous.

8. Any Other Business

Mr B. Crockford thanked everyone for their work on the Telephone Box with particular mention to Joe Thurston.

Mrs S. Smith advised that the Streetlights and Way leave signs that were broken had all been reported to the council recently.

Mr C. Bradley asked for views on the old Minute book from the village being compassionately repaired and suggested approaching 'The repair shop'. Mr B. Crockford stated he was against having the book repaired voicing that it should be left as is. Several other residents from the village suggested they liked the idea. This remains ongoing.

The road signs and street signs becoming damaged or worn was raised and Mrs S Smith asked that if residents wanted to raise individual cases to her she would report them to the council and see if we could get them repaired or replaced.

Mr C. Bradley thanked all the volunteers within the village for their continued support.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.27pm

Greshaw Green Enclosure.

As committee members of the Parish Meeting, the members are also Trustees of the Greshaw Green Enclosure Trust.

No significant donations have been made during the past 6 months. There was a balance of £2350.65 in the account.

The Greshaw Green Trust is there to help any resident of the village who may benefit from help or support from the Trust on behalf of the community.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm

