St James South Elmham
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held on 19th May 2026 at 7.30pm
in the Village Hall

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

13 Residents of the village

1.Chairman's Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting, especially new attendees.The nature of Parish meetings was explained and the fact this was the AGM where the Finances were agreed.

2.Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mrs L. Bradley & Mrs C. Rodbourne.

3.Minutes of the Previous (Precept) Meeting 18 November 2025

The minutes had been published on the parish noticeboard, and copies were available to read this evening. Mrs A Dinsdale then read a precis of the minutes.
Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Mr M Graham, seconded by Mr A. Hadingham, vote unanimous. Signed by the Chairman.

4.Matters arising from the minutes

The matter of Dog waste bins was raised and deferred for an update later in the meeting.

5.Chairman's report & Village reports
Chairman's report

a) Waste Processing /transfer activities update
The Chair gave an update regarding the history of this issue and the recent court case which took place on 8th April 26 at Great Yarmouth Court.
The charges related to the sites in St James and Withersdale. The defendant was found guilty on all 5 charges and given 8 weeks to provide financial information prior to sentencing on July 6th 2026. There is still a requirement for the land to be cleared.

A short discussion took place regarding North Suffolk Water and a storage reservoir proposal regarding sites.

There have been no new planning matters.

b) Other village reports

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

For the Church: Mr B Crockford said that the church was in the same position as all churches , attendance was down but volunteer support continued to be good.
The gates have recently been painted. Mr A. Chatsworth is unable to continue cutting part of the church yard, the church would be grateful for any new volunteers. Mention was made of a large dead tree that will need to be removed at some point and may need to have fund raising for this to be achieved.
The church are still monitoring the need for the Nave to be re roofed. It was last done in 1840. The slates are crumbling, a new roof is estimated to cost approximately 50K.

For the Village Hall: The Clerk read out a report that had been prepared by the hall committee.
The hall has undergone refurbishment in recent weeks. The floor has been professionally cleaned and polished for the first time since 2018.
Signage has been brought up to date for the hall and the Defibrillator has had new lighting and signage installed to assist in locating the device.
First Aid training dates are still being sought.
The Z Team have been instrumental in keeping the hall grounds in good condition and the area around the water pump is still having work done.Thanks goes to the team for their work.
The Village WhatsApp group has been used widely in the village for all sorts from emergencies to support needed and general info.Thanks goes to Ruth and Dave Jewson for setting this up.
All sorts of activities have been booked in the hall for this year covering a wide range of events.Costs continue to rise annually. Charges for use of the venue are kept as low as possible. We are fortunate to have substantial raffle prizes donated for some events which help to cover costs.

For the Orchard: The Chairman advised that the Orchard was cut back slightly this autumn. Jeremy Henry was thanked for all his work on the Orchard , it was noted that this continues despite Jeremy no longer living in St James. John Santillo was also thanked for his help.

The Chair then reported on the **Infrastructure Improvement Programme** of work within the village.

Telephone Kiosk Refurbishment :This is now complete. Thanks to all involved, lots of remarks about how splendid it looks.

External Utilities: External power supply now installed with plug sockets and power supply to Kiosk.

Orchard Benches: Restoration of two original benches is almost complete, these will be installed on Village Green on pre- laid pads.
One final bench to be installed soon.
Thanks given to the Z team for the work undertaken in clearing the encroaching hedge on the Green.

Village Website: Progress has been slow since last meeting . Aim is to launch our first public version by early July.

Physical Signs: Previous Councillor Judy Cloke funded two Finger posts at the Orchard Junction and the end of Mill Lane. This is all complete.

Local Government reorganisation was mentioned, the Chair gave an update that Suffolks 50 year old Two tier council structure is likely to become three Unitary Councils and the election of a Mayor has been delayed until May 2028. The statutory Parish Meeting will become the sole official mechanism to legally engage with the proposed new body.

6.Financial reports

a.Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2026

The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2026 were presented, and explained by Mr M Graham. Thanks were extended to Mrs B. Crockford for preparing them.Mr R. Hadingham was also thanked for his support regarding the village Insurance.

Adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Mr M Graham - Seconded by Mr R Hadingham - The Vote was Unanimous. The Chairman signed the Accounts.

b.Annual Governance & Accountability Return

The Chairman then read out the governance statement which said that like all bodies concerned with local government we are required to demonstrate and confirm we have followed proper governance practices and properly managed our finances. There are particular requirements for Parish Meetings without a Parish Council and an exemption from external audit review in certain circumstances.
The chair then introduced, received and noted the Annual Internal Audit report.This will be signed by Mr R Hadingham the Committee's internal Auditor.
The Chair then read through the Governance Return and advised the attendees they were welcome to see the document.

Acceptance of the Governance Return by the meeting was required this was Proposed by Mr A Hadingham -Seconded by Mr M Graham and agreed by the meeting and committee members.This was signed by the Chairman.

c.The Accounting Statement

This was held up and explained as a summary of the accounts that the Committee had just been through.This was Proposed by Mr R Hadingham -Seconded by Mr M Graham.The Vote was Unanimous.This was signed by the Chairman.

d. Certificate of Exemption

The Chairman then announced that as a small Parish Meeting, with receipts and payments below £25,000 we may claim exemption from an Assurance Review by the external auditors.
This was Proposed by Mr A Hadingham - Seconded by Mr R Hadingham. The vote was Unanimous.This was signed by the Chairman.

e.The Chairman then announced the dates for exercise of Public Rights of inspection of the records.
The dates for display are from 3 June until 14 July 2026.

7.Spending and donations for year ending 31st March 2027

Spending and donation amounts are taken from the money raised annually via the Precept.

The Chairman explained that there were certain expenditures that had to happen each year, for example Parish Meeting expenses, Suffolk Association of Local Councils membership, Data Protection fee and insurance. Some expenditure will normally be present each year: Parish Meeting expenses incl. Chairman's & Clerk's; SALC membership; insurance; DP Fee.
Donations : The Chairman explained that we could go through each organisation individually or consider whether we wanted to keep the donations the same as the previous year. It was Proposed by Mr R Hadingham that we keep all the donations the same as the previous year. This was Seconded by Mr B Crockford. The vote was unanimous.

8.Elections

The Chairman Mr C .Bradley announced his intention to stand down as Chair at this meeting and the need to elect a new Chair.

Mr A.Hadingham stood and thanked Mr Bradley for all his hard work commenting on how much the role had changed over the years and how much dedication Mr Bradley had given to the role.

Mr B Crockford also stood and reminded the committee about the significant changes in the village that Mr Bradley had overseen. This included the introduction of Broadband into the village at a very early stage. Ownership of the village Green, Management of the Orchard, Obtaining CIL money to fund projects including a Defibrillator, overseeing the very long Waste Management dispute within the village and the refurbishment of the beautiful Telephone Kiosk. A Warm Thank you was given by all with a round of applause.

Mr C Bradley then stood down and the Clerk Mrs S Smith then raised the issue of electing a new Chair. Mr M Graham announced he was willing to stand as Chair and the attendees were asked if anyone else would like to also be considered for the role.Mr C Bradley Proposed Mr R.Hadingham seconded the election of Mr M Graham as the new Chair. The vote was unanimous.

Mr M .Graham then took over as Chair.

9.Other Business

Thanks was given to Mr Bradley and all those who continue to support the village in all capacities. Mr Jewson raised concerns and questioned what penalties were likely to apply if people failed to comply with the new recycling process being introduced in June by East Suffolk Council.The consensus was we we need to wait and see how this progresses.

The dog waste bins were discussed with agreement the council should be chased.

Mr B Crockford advised he now had a Licence to burn on his land following a visit by the Council.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.14pm.