

NAVESTOCK PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 11th March 2025 - 19.00 START

Present: Councillors Chrissy Gelderbloem (CG), Rowena Bere-Brown (RBB), Adrian Enkel (AE), Lucy Gelderbloem (LG), John Parrish known as Mike (MP), Roy Tyzack (RT), David Williams (DW)

Also Present: Clerk Victor Simmons (VS), Essex County Councillor Lesley Wagland (LW), Mark Sheridan-Brown (MSB) & Coral Woolner (CW) - Essex Police + 8 members of the public (MOP)

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

1) Chair's welcome & announcements: CG welcomed everybody present and read out a generic statement regarding the recording of meetings (NPC now audio record all meetings)

2) Reports from Parish groups and clubs:

CHURCH COUNCIL: (Hugh Savill report read by VS) - Services are held every Sunday by the Reverend Julie Hardy at 6.30pm. There is usually a congregation of between 10 and 15 plus a choir. Events this year include a plant sale (17th May), a "Hymns and Pimms" service on 6th July and an Essex choir "men2sing" on 19th July. The last 5-year review recommended a lot of remedial work including resolving damp problems. This is being undertaken by Church Warden Peter Doersam.

WI: (Suzanne O'Shea report read by VS) - We continue to meet at the cricket pavilion with 19 members. Sadly, long standing member Mary Ingram has passed away, having attended with her mother as a child when the WI started in 1950. We have enjoyed various speakers during the year, plus paid a visit to Anglesey Abbey in September. 2025 marks our 75th anniversary, with a member's lunch at Bentley Golf Club in June, followed a week later by a gathering at the church with neighbouring institutes.

PARISH LUNCHESES: (Suzanne O'Shea report read by VS) - Our numbers have risen to 40, with 4 of us in the kitchen. We value others who help in laying tables and serving drinks etc, as we usually serve 35 meals consisting of 3 courses (including vegetarian and gluten free options), wine and coffee for £4. There is approximately £300 in the kitty, with costs kept low by careful shopping and home produce. The lunches have now been served for over 30 years, providing valuable companionship for attendees.

VILLAGE HALL: (Suzanne O'Shea report read by VS) - The committee and Chairman remain unchanged, with finances in a reasonably good state. Our principal income source is Little Doves pre-school 4 days a week, with the scouts and a keep fit class also regulars. A new noticeboard has been erected at the gate, plus a salt bin and snow clearing equipment obtained. Minor problems with the toilets and kitchen water heater are in hand, plus major pothole issues in the car park. It is hoped that NPC will be taking on ground's maintenance moving forward, as grass cutting around the hall has become a problem. The Treasurer is looking to change the bank account once a suitable business account can be found.

NAVESTOCK CRICKET CLUB: (Naren Damodaran report read by VS) - NCC experienced a relatively quiet 2024 as we struggled to field two teams, with relegation the consequence of this shrinking player pool. Financially we are in a relatively strong position and continue to invest in essential ground equipment. Despite the challenge of increasing costs, we remain dedicated in keeping cricket affordable to everyone in the local community and thank the Parish Council for their support following recent security issues.

VILLAGE SOCIETY: (RT) - The village society had a quite year which ended on a sad note with the loss of one of our longest standing and very active members, Mary Ingram. Given our elderly membership, plans are afoot to revamp the society whilst developing a new range of events catering more to their needs and wishes. In April a successful 'Call my Bluff' evening was held in the village hall and in July several members helped with the smooth running of the annual Navestock Village Show. October saw 50+ people attend an enthralling and entertaining talk by Zulu wars expert Captain Rob Caskie in the cricket pavilion. The December Christmas lunch was held in Brentwood at Taratino's, with 25 attending.

LITTLE DOVES CHRISTIAN PRE-SCHOOL: (Pam Biddulph report read by RBB) - Little Doves Christian Pre-school has now been open for nearly 8 years, using Navestock Village Hall. We have 21 staff members, with 5 coming from Navestock, the majority trained to level 2 and 3 in childcare. Child numbers have increased significantly, with at least 7 families coming from within Navestock, plus a waiting list for both September 2025 and 2026. We continue to enjoy use of the play area, which we extend into the car park with portable fencing and had a marvellous sports day on The Green with use of the cricket pavilion. Last year we had a parent invited nativity plus Christmas party for the children, with an Easter service followed by an egg hunt at St. Pauls this April. Funding continues to be a challenge to meet rising costs and we continually look for fundraising opportunities / donations being a registered charity. We would like to thank the NVH committee for their continued support and Adrian for helping out where he can.

GREENS CHARITY: (CG) - This is a small community charity that caters for those in need, both financial and educational. There was one application for educational assistance this year, that the trustees agreed to support. She hoped to promote the charity more this year which may result in increased applications.

FIRST NAVESTOCK SCOUT GROUP: (VS) - No report received.

3) Any other business: None, therefore **CG** closed the Annual Parish Assembly at 19.19 whilst also thanking those that ran the various community groups which were a great asset to the Parish.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

19.20 Start

25/15) Chair's welcome & announcements: **CG** welcomed everybody present

25/16) Apologies and reasons for absence: **CG** - None

25/17) Declaration of interests with regards to items on the agenda: **RBB & MP** (22.05),
RT (22.06, 22.12 & 22.13) - All non-pecuniary

25/18) To approve the previously circulated minutes from the Parish Council Meeting - Tuesday 14th January 2025: Minutes were *agreed* as correct and to be signed by **CG**

25/19) Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda

19.21 Meeting suspended for public participation

Robert Kennedy (MOP) - Revisited the concerned residents issues from March of last year, namely CCTV and fly-tipping, Parish signage in general, Parish funds and assets and how to leverage income from these with adequate controls. **Tony Donnelly (MOP)** - Asked for current and proposed future expenditure on the sports pavilion. **CG** and the **Clerk** - £100K and £25K (2025/26 budget). He also

commented on the mess created in Sabines Road where the farmer had cleared the ditches. **MP** and **AE** gave some background on the issue and farmers responsibilities in general. After discussion it was agreed that NPC would speak to the local farmer regarding the issues raised. **LW** - Gave an overview on ECC Highways involvement in ditch and pavement issues and stated there is an enforcement team for such matters if required. There was a small priority funding window in September so it was essential all faults were reported, including any localised flooding problems on roads. In a recent ECC survey residents had placed pothole repairs above all other issues. She urged use of 'Causeway one.network' to view highway works and the utilities involved, as the platform of choice. In response to a **MOP** question, **CG** said that the proposed Spring Farm development was still with BBC Planning.

19.50 End of public participation

25/20) Action on matters arising from public participation session: None, as any relevant items were already on the agenda

25/21) Reports: To receive brief reports from Borough and County Councillors present: **CG** - None as **LW** had already covered this during public participation

25/22) Matters arising from previous meetings:

22.01) Village Hall Sports Pavilion (build) and parish field issues: **MP** - Completion of the car park is on hold due to the weather and BYFC require some changes to the lease to finalise the £30K playing surface grant application. Some unforeseen issues with the connecting corridor had arisen due to the volume of water running off the village hall roof, as there was no guttering. **CG** - Was waiting on a second heating quote for the pavilion and was looking at cleaning with a view to getting the facility open ASAP. She had also registered an interest for possible solar panel installation. **MP & CG dealing**

22.02) Health and Wellbeing: **CG** - Had received a flyer from BBC regarding potential financial assistance. **MP** offered to print some off plus it could be included in the next newsletter. Several recent church events had been well attended, but not by Navestock residents. **AE** - Grateful that the safety cut had finally been completed in some requested locations. Highways had recently left a diversion sign in the middle of a footpath, which he had to move on safety grounds. **Carried forward**

22.03) Spring Farm & Skip-A-Hoy (environmental issues): **CG** - There were still occasional fires and fly-tipping issues which it was important to keep reporting from a data perspective. **Carried forward**

22.04) Neighbourhood Watch including CCTV: **CG** - A CCTV camera had been stolen and it was hoped to arrange a Police community meeting soon. **MSB** - Fly tipping was a major issue affecting quality of life and took up a lot of Police resource. The geography of Navestock plus when it occurs made it difficult to combat. The Police regularly liaise with the BBC camera team and have access to their data, with some action days planned. Was aware of the issues at Spring Farm. **Carried forward**

20.11: MSB & CW left the meeting and were thanked by CG for their attendance

22.05) Shonks Mill Flood Storage Area (River Roding Project): **MP** - Concreting works were now under way on the dam and measures had been taken to try and stop birds nesting, as this would cause operational issues should it occur. **Carried forward**

22.06) Navestock Side - sewage discharge: CG - Had looked at the problem with the Church Commissionaires land agent, who would be speaking to the farmer regarding the collapsing ditch and possibly writing to residents. It was likely the issue would only fully resolve itself as properties were sold, resulting in upgraded systems having to be installed by law. *Carried forward*

22.07) Common Land issues within Navestock Parish: CG - NPC were now members of The Open Spaces Society who would hopefully give us specific advice on some of these issues. *CG dealing*

22.08) Security of Navestock Parish Council assets: CG - Quotes have been received to secure 'The Green' with works about to start. Phase 1 is improved ditching right down to the library and phase 2 fencing and gates. **LW** - The Community Fund grant of £2K had a deadline of March 31st. **Clerk** - Noted the deadline and was confident it would be met. **RT** - Raised the issue of constant nefarious activities at night in the field gateway, but stated there were no obvious solutions. *Carried forward*

22.09) Navestock rubbish and litter issues: CG - A problem has arisen in that BBC are currently no longer litter picking rural roads on safety grounds. **LW** - Confirmed this to be the case as other Parishes had the same issue, plus they would not remove bags of litter collected by members of the public as it was deemed to be commercial waste. **MP** - On that basis NPC should not organise litter picking events until further notice, as it would be legally unwise. **RBB & AE** - Raised the issue of large nitrous oxide canisters which are appearing everywhere. These are deemed to be hazardous waste due to the risk of explosion if crushed, so should not be placed in normal rubbish. *Carried forward*

22.10) Boundary issues - Navestock Heath: CG - Was still an ongoing matter *CG & Clerk dealing*

22.11) Parish roads signage: CG - Has had no reply from Highways regarding installation of replacement fingerposts if purchased by NPC (approx. £500 each), plus 'Welcome to Navestock' signs. **LW** - Other Parishes have had the same problem but she can help with process and possibly funding (her 2025/26 Locality Fund). Also, all signage (including replacements) requires a licence. **MP** - Consideration should be given to metal signs rather than wooden fingerposts. *Carried forward*

22.12) Outline application for a new dual site motorway service area (M25) - MOTO: CG - Still ongoing with BBC planning. **RBB** - It appeared some of the objection posters had been removed. **AE** - Observed that some on noticeboards had fallen off due to the fixings used. *Carried forward*

22.13) Proposal for a motorway service area (M25) - Welcome Break: CG - No further information had been received and as yet no planning application had been submitted to BBC. *Carried forward*

22.14) Village Hall playground seating: CG - Had found a contractor to lay the concrete base for the new picnic table. This would be purchased once an installation date was agreed. *CG & Clerk dealing*

22.15) BBPCA - AGM November 20th (report): Clerk - West Horndon PC were currently hosting meetings with Councillor Lee Petty as Chair and Kim Harding as acting Clerk, with the next meeting on March 20th. They had major planning issues involving large housing developments. *Item resolved*

22.16) Defibrillator: CG - Currently it had not been possible to discuss this with the owner of the proposed location. **RT** - Was prepared to undertake the monitoring if a suitable location could be found. **RBB** - Any site would require power as external boxes had to be heated. *Carried forward*

22.17) VE Day 80 - 8th May 2025: RT - The beacon will be lit at 9.30pm on May 8th and this has been registered on behalf of NPC. **CG** - Proposed a community event on Sunday 11th in the village hall assisted by the WI, with an option to use the field dependant on the weather. **Carried forward**

20.45: LW left the meeting after being thanked by **CG** for her attendance and help with NPC issues

25/23) Current Matters:

23.01) NPC Fixed Asset Policy & Register / Reserves Policy 2025 (for approval): CG - After checking that everybody had read the 2025 document it was **approved** unanimously. **Item resolved**

23.02) Annual playground inspection 2025: Clerk - Asked for approval to proceed with the existing company when the renewal notice arrived, this was **agreed** after discussion. **Clerk dealing**

23.03) Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) membership 2025/26: CG - After discussion it was **agreed** to join the RCCE with both NPC & the village hall included in the membership. **Clerk dealing**

23.04) NPC grounds maintenance: CG - Had spoken to two contractors regarding this and current thinking was to start initially on a trial basis before any contract discussions. **RBB** - Asked if this would include all around the village hall? **CG** - Yes, plus the sports field. **Carried forward**

25/24) Reports: To receive brief reports from NPC Working Parties: DW - Raised the condition of Albyns Lane which is dangerous and requested that **CG** and **LW** visit to see the problem first hand. Also continued motorbike activity on Curtis Mill Green. **LG** - Several fly tips in Navestock Heath area had been reported and cleared by BBC. **AE** - Flooding issues in Navestock Side towards the Dudbrook Road junction continued to cause problems. The **Clerk** advised that this was reported some years back and there were blocked connection issues. **CG** - Fly-tipping and fires in the Murthering Lane area which it was important to keep reporting. **RBB** - The safety barrier at the Dudbrook Road / Princes Road / Shonks Mill Road junction had been badly damaged in an RTC. The **Clerk** had already reported this to ECC Highways and said that several thousand pounds had been spent in the past at this junction by the Local Highways Panel. **RT** - The hedge at the Old Road / Horseman Side junction had been cut back by the resident. The sewage smell at the Goatswood Lane / Horseman Side junction had returned plus a nasty pothole had appeared. **MP** - Felt that WI-Fi / broadband at the village hall should be explored again, which with cameras added could enhance security in the general area. Currently free hedging and trees of different varieties were available, perhaps for use in the village hall sports field to aid security there?

25/25) Correspondence and Clerks Report: Clerk - The Dudbrook Road salt gritting route reinstatement request was looking very unlikely following dialogue with **LW**. The Mayor's Civic Dinner was being held on 11/4. All NPC Councillors had completed their 'Register of Interests' form which were now available to view on the BBC website. The safety cuts in Goatswood Lane, Green Lane and Royds Lane had been completed, with Horseman Side and Murthering Lane still outstanding. A 'Code of Conduct' BBC training event via Teams was available on 17/3. The Open Spaces course **CG** was due to attend had been cancelled until November. The 10th 'British Spring Clean' was running from 21/3 to 6/4 although NPC normally ran their own event. This was clearly now in doubt given the latest BBC stance on litter picking (see item 25/22.09). The **Clerk** had attended a devolution webinar on 27/2 with local elections now suspended until 2026. The **Webmaster** had reserved a gov.uk domain address plus email addresses with an IT company. A potential changeover would be in October this year when our current contract expires. The Shonks Mill Road flooding problem raised by **RBB** was now in hand with ECC Highways. NATS were

in the Ward this week although 3 of the 5 jobs requested by NPC had been rejected as they were litter picks. MP Alex Burghart had requested details of local events for inclusion on his social platforms.

25/26) Planning: Clerk - Since the January meeting 5 consultee comments regarding the following planning applications had been submitted: **Spring Farm (24/01247/FUL), Old Priors Golf Course (24/01298/FUL, 24/01299/FUL and 24/01333/FUL) plus Stan Sted Cottage (24/01281/HHA)**

25/27) Finance: CG has checked the accounts / records & everything is in order. Cheques to be signed were approved for Payroll (March), **Clerk** (Open Spaces Society membership 2025) and **R. Balcombe** (Website renewal and domain 2024/25)

25/28) Discussion Items and date of next meeting: RBB - The village hall may may well need to replace their boiler soon. **MP** - It might be worth considering a larger boiler that could supply both the village hall and the sports pavilion? **LG** - Would there be a classic car display at this year's village show? **RT** - Yes

Next meeting: Tuesday 13th May, 2025 preceded by the Navestock Annual Parish Meeting

Meeting closed at 21.20

***Victor Simmons
Clerk & RFO to Navestock Parish Council
6th May 2025***