

PEASENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Peasehall Parish Council Meeting
held at the **Assembly Hall on Wednesday 15th April 2026 at 7.00 pm**

2026/39 Attendance and apologies

Attendees:

Cllr Barry Rowing (Chairman)
Cllr Stephen Long
Cllr Roger Benstead
Cllr John Bimson
Cllr John Bawtree
Cllr Gary Greenwood
Dist. Cllr Julia Ewart

Apologies for absence:

In attendance:

Carol Hume - Parish Clerk
5 members of the public

2026/40 Declarations of Interest

None

2026/41 Requests for Dispensation

None

2026/42 Resignations from the Parish Council

An email was received from Oliver Charles resigning from the Parish Council due to work pressures. The Parish Clerk/RFO, Carol Hume, has also resigned giving one month's notice but she has agreed to stay on until the 29th May to enable a smooth transition to a new Parish Clerk. There is an advert for the position on the SALC website, on Facebook and on the noticeboard. Currently there are 3 applicants, and it is hoped that an appointment will be made before the APM/AGM on 20th May. Interviews will take place during the first week of May, with the Chairman, the clerk and another Parish Councillor.

2026/43 Public Forum

- a) The 2025/2026 Annual Report from Dist. Cllr Ewart will be posted on the website
- b) Mr Potter thanked the Parish Council for the grant given to the Assembly Hall to help with the refurbishments, which are now complete. Without grant funding the Hall would be unable to provide the improvements already done such as to heating, insulation and the new toilets. The next project would be to replace all external doors, but currently there are not enough funds to do this.

2026/44 Minutes

The minutes of the PPC meeting held on 18th March 2026 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2026/45 To receive progress reports for information

- a) Final IT Policy for approval. All new gov.uk councillor email addresses are now in use. Cllr Long has finalised the IT Policy, the Chairman asked that it would be signed by him as the person responsible for IT, at the AGM in May. The Chairman proposed that PPC accepts the final IT Policy as revised, this was agreed unanimously. It was suggested that all Councillors consider the Vice-Chairman role next month.

- b) SCC Highways Site Visit – update. The Chairman read out an email received from Charles Harrison, SCC Highways Community Liaison Engineer, saying that he was unable to meet on site in the village during the last week of April and he is unable to start any administrative processes until after the upcoming County Council elections in May when there will be a new Councillor for our area, which will now be Halesworth and funding sources will be identified.
- c) Hackney Road 'H' markings update. The clerk will contact Charles Harrison and remind him that it is over 14 weeks since PPC paid for these to be done and can he give a date when they will be put in.
- d) Encroachment letter reminders. These have been sent out by the clerk, but nothing has been done. Cllr Bimson will remind the residents of Hill Cottage if he sees them. If no action is taken by the residents, PPC can inform SCC who have earlier suggested that they could cut the hedges/trees and charge the occupiers the cost involved.
- e) Cemetery Matters. Following a review of the Risk Assessment it was discovered that a 'topple test' should be carried out regularly on headstones in the cemetery. This has been done in the past but needs to be done on a regular basis. Cllr Benstead agreed to do the tests on all the stones and report back to the Council. The Chairman has been in touch with Mr Trovell about these matters and he will copy or photograph the cemetery plan documents and have further discussions in respect of consecrated ground limits.
- f) OpenReach pipes across the Gull. This was reported to the OpenReach Damage, Health and Safety Team on 1st April. A reply from an executive said one of their engineers would be on site within 48 hours to make the area safe. It appears that nothing has been done so the clerk will send a reminder.

Dist. Cllr Ewart then spoke about some of the items included in her Annual Report. She gave a comprehensive description of the new re-organisation regarding LGR, and how it will affect Peasenhall. Cllr Ewart hopes to stay as a Dist. Cllr for one more year, when there will be further elections for an interim period. In April 2028 there will be a transitional period when it will be very important to pay close attention to what is going on e.g. highways, new housing schemes, extra parking. She encouraged PPC to be ambitious and to make a list of issues that will be important to the village and to be aware of how democracy is changing with the gradual loss of control over how decisions are made.

2026/46 Finance and Governance

- a) The bank balances as at 31.3.2026 were confirmed by the RFO:
Current account £30,327.38 Savings account £37,646.86
- b) The year-end Bank Reconciliation for Q4 was approved and signed by Cllr Greenwood.
- c) The year-end budget-v-actuals figures for Q4 were approved.
- d) The updated Risk Assessment was approved and adopted.
- e) The APM poster will be in the May edition of the Yoxmere Fisherman and on the noticeboard.
- f) The attached payment schedule was authorised.

2026/47 Planning

- a) Currently there are no new applications
- b) Call for Sites – Published map only. All Councillors have seen the map but no discussions can take place at this stage until PPC is consulted officially on any of the sites. There will be a little more information available at the PPC AGM in May.

2026/48 Mabel's Walk Allotments/Public Open Space

- a) Draft Allotments Land Transfer to PPC – any update from Simon Burnip of Atkins Dellow. No update has been received from Mr. Burnip so the clerk or the Chairman will write to him and request further information. The Chairman may also write again to Lorraine Francis, ESC Infrastructure Team.
- b) ESC Complaint, referral to the Ombudsman – update. The Chairman said he has not heard anything but was told it would take between 20 and 22 weeks for any response as there is currently a backlog. He will be attending the ESPA Conference on 18th April in Framlingham (see item under Correspondence).

2026/49 Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council

- a) APM Speaker and Annual Report reminder. PC Amy Yeldham has sent her apologies as she is away on the APM date so the Chairman will draft an invitation for the clerk to send to Sarah Mortimer, Suffolk Community Foundation, to ask if she, or someone on her team, can attend. The clerk will email to ask for annual reports for the APM from the usual village organisations.
- b) Regular inspections for memorial headstones – This has already been covered under Item 2026/45 e).
- c) Private Emergency Plan. PPC has no Emergency Plan of its own, but there is a short Emergency Advice document on the PPC website. A resident present at the meeting is keen to make his own Plan and he has volunteers to assist him. There is a Community Emergency Plan Workshop on 29th April at Melton, Woodbridge which he could attend. The Chairman will forward details to him.

2026/50 Possible co-option of a new Councillor

Esme Smith said she has lived in the village for 18 years, has two daughters, works as an occupational therapist and has a general interest in the future of Peasenhall. She was proposed by Cllr Rowing, seconded by Cllr Bimson and was unanimously voted on to PPC as a Councillor. She duly signed the Declaration of Interest.

2026/51 Correspondence

- a) Dementia Support Workshops for Suffolk Community Groups. These are being offered as free face-to-face and online workshops from May to July 2026. The nearest location to Peasenhall would be in Snape on 7th May and 29th June. The online workshops will be on 20th May, 3rd June, 7th and 16th July.
- b) East Suffolk Marmot Place – VCFSE Workshop 16th April. Dist Cllr Ewart may go to this workshop. It will address better efficiency with general health and well-being in the Saxmundham area.
- c) ESPA Annual Conference 18th April. The Chairman will be attending this and has submitted a question, but it has not been included in the agenda. The Chairman then read out his question to the meeting for information. Dist Cllr Ewart she is unable to attend but she will highlight that the Chairman's question should have been included.
- d) Suffolk Celebration of Cycling – Sunday 12th July. More information on this event will be provided at the AGM in May.
- e) The Chairman read out an email he has received from a resident who has concerns about the recently published Map of Sites near and including the old school and any Village Development Plan. He then read out sections of his reply to the resident saying that some benefit to the village and the Assembly Hall may arrive out of developing the land around the old school and the Hall, and that PPC may be looking to achieve some community benefit from all allocations during future site consultations.

2026/52 The next meeting will be the Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 20th May at 7 pm in the Assembly Hall followed by the Parish Council Annual General Meeting.

