Parish Clerk & RFO Report November 2026

AGENDA ITEMS

13. Lorry Watch scheme:

The SCC Trading Standards Service can enforce weight restriction orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Weight restriction orders make it an offence to drive a vehicle through the restricted area where the vehicle exceeds the weight limit imposed unless they are exempt, for example some Environmental Orders provide exemptions when delivering or collecting within the restriction zone.

The Lorry Watch scheme aims to help parishes who feel that local HGV weight restriction traffic orders are being abused.

Trading Standards aim to ensure that the weight restriction orders are adhered to. These orders are in place to protect old or weak structures, as well as to prohibit heavy vehicles from areas unsuitable for their size (e.g. narrow village roads). The scheme is run in partnership with Suffolk Highways.

The scheme aims to empower residents and prevent environmental damage to some of Suffolk's most sensitive settlements.

There are active Lorry Watch schemes in the following areas:

- Bungay
- Coddenham
- Hadleigh
- Holton
- Leiston
- Palgrave
- Sproughton
- Thorndon
- Wetherden

How the scheme works

1. Local trained observers note details of vehicles that may be misusing a restricted route.
2. A report is sent to Suffolk Trading Standards.
3. Suffolk Trading Standards confirm the vehicle weight and registered keepers of the vehicle.
4. Investigations are made with the registered keeper and driver of the vehicle.
5. Action is taken in accordance with the Enforcement Policy.
6. Feedback is provided on a six-monthly basis to Lorrywatch zones.

18. Play Area Inspections 2027:

The Parish Council is being asked to retrospectively agree that The Play Inspection Company undertakes the 2027 inspections.

The Parish Council has accepted the invitation received from Babergh DC for them to organise the annual play inspections for 2027. The cost will be £62.31 +VAT per play area plus £25.00 per play area to cover Babergh DC admin costs (total £261.93 net of VAT); this charge is still less than competitors. The Babergh DC letter was received 13th October 2026, with a response deadline of 30th October 2026.

19. Community Emergency Plan:

Community Emergency Planning is about people understanding local risks and knowing what resources they have available to help minimise the impact of an emergency on their community. Emergencies can take many forms, from house fires through to flooding or widespread power outages.

Experience shows that those who are prepared cope better during an emergency.

Communities with local knowledge, enthusiasm and information are a great asset and a Community Emergency Plan can help.

Across Suffolk there are many community groups, towns, parishes, and wards who have produced a plan making their community better prepared to respond and recover from incidents that may happen in their area.

County, district, and borough councils all have Emergency Planning Officers who together plan and prepare for emergencies in their areas and can support communities to prepare their own emergency plans.

HOW TO PREPARE A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN

Step 1: Liaise with your local Emergency Planning Officer from the **Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit,** who can support you with preparing your Community Emergency Plan. The Emergency Planning Officer will provide you with useful information and advice for creating your plan.

Email: emergency.planning@suffolk.gov.uk

Step 2: Set up a Community Emergency Planning Group and appoint a coordinator.

Step 3: Identify local skills and resources available.

Step 4: Work with others in your community to complete the plan.

Step 5: Once your plan is complete, please ensure that your local Emergency Planning Officer has a copy as well as anyone else in the community who needs one.

Step 6: Review your plan on an annual basis and, if necessary, update and redistribute it.

OTHER MATTERS

1) **Allotment Waters Rates**
   First reported in the August 2026 Clerk's Report, this matter has had to be shelved due to the lack of response from alternative water suppliers.

2) **Outstanding CIL**
   I can confirm the Parish Council has received a CIL payment of £20,564.88 from Babergh DC; this is the outstanding CIL money due from planning application DC/19/02687, Land south of the Paddocks, Old London Road, and which had to be recovered, by Babergh, through the Courts.

3) **The Pensions Regulator** three-year re-declaration was submitted on 12th October 2026.

4) **Suffolk Community Foundation** grant application for £5k towards new safety fencing along the Brook at the Mill Lane play area was unsuccessful.

5) **Training**
   I attended a Babergh DC webinar/briefing on Emergency Planning on 27th October 2026.

6) **Textile Recycling Bin at the VH**
   On 24th July 2026, I sent an email to BDC Waste Management requesting that the textile recycling bin be removed, following the CWPC resolution. A follow-up email was sent 26th October 2026 to ask when the bin will be removed.

7) **Babergh DC Refund**
   I have been chasing Babergh DC since 3rd August 2026 for a refund of £311.04; an overcharge for the litter bin emptying. The refund is due to be paid on 20th November 2026.

8) **Old London Road Overhanging Branches**
   A resident has contacted CWPC raising concerns about the low, overhanging branches along the section of the footpath between Elm Lane and Chapel Lane on the Old London Road. Having reported the matter via the Suffolk Highways Reporting tool, the resident's report was dismissed, with no action being taken. I have submitted a report and if this is also dismissed, I'll contact our Suffolk Highways Liaison Officer to ask for their intervention.

9) **Councillor Registers of Interest**
   Cllrs are reminded that they may need to update their Registers of Interest as and when they may take on / remove themselves from roles on community groups.

10) **Website: update on PHP security vulnerabilities (message from Pear Space (were Suffolk Cloud)**

    "You will probably have seen in the news about the high-profile critical security vulnerability affecting PHP, a technology used to power millions of websites and applications around the world.

    We can confirm that your Pear Space website *does* use PHP, however we can also confirm that your website is secure. Upon the vulnerability being announced we took immediate steps to mitigate the

threat and subsequently patch our servers with secure versions of PHP as soon as they were available.

Customers on our new website templates are running the latest secure version of PHP which is also patched against these new vulnerabilities. Additionally, we have comprehensive web application firewalls and other measures in place to protect your sites and data.

Customers on our older website templates run an older version of PHP 5.6 - because we use CloudLinux versions of PHP the security patches have been back ported, which means patches from a newer version of PHP have been applied to this older version.

Although the risk to older template websites has been mitigated this is still a great opportunity to consider upgrading to our brand new template and new version of software. Not only does this run the latest version of PHP and other technology, it's also packed full of new features that help make your site easier to use and more compliant in every way."

This leads to the question, does the Council want to upgrade to the new template and version of software?

Details from Pear Space -

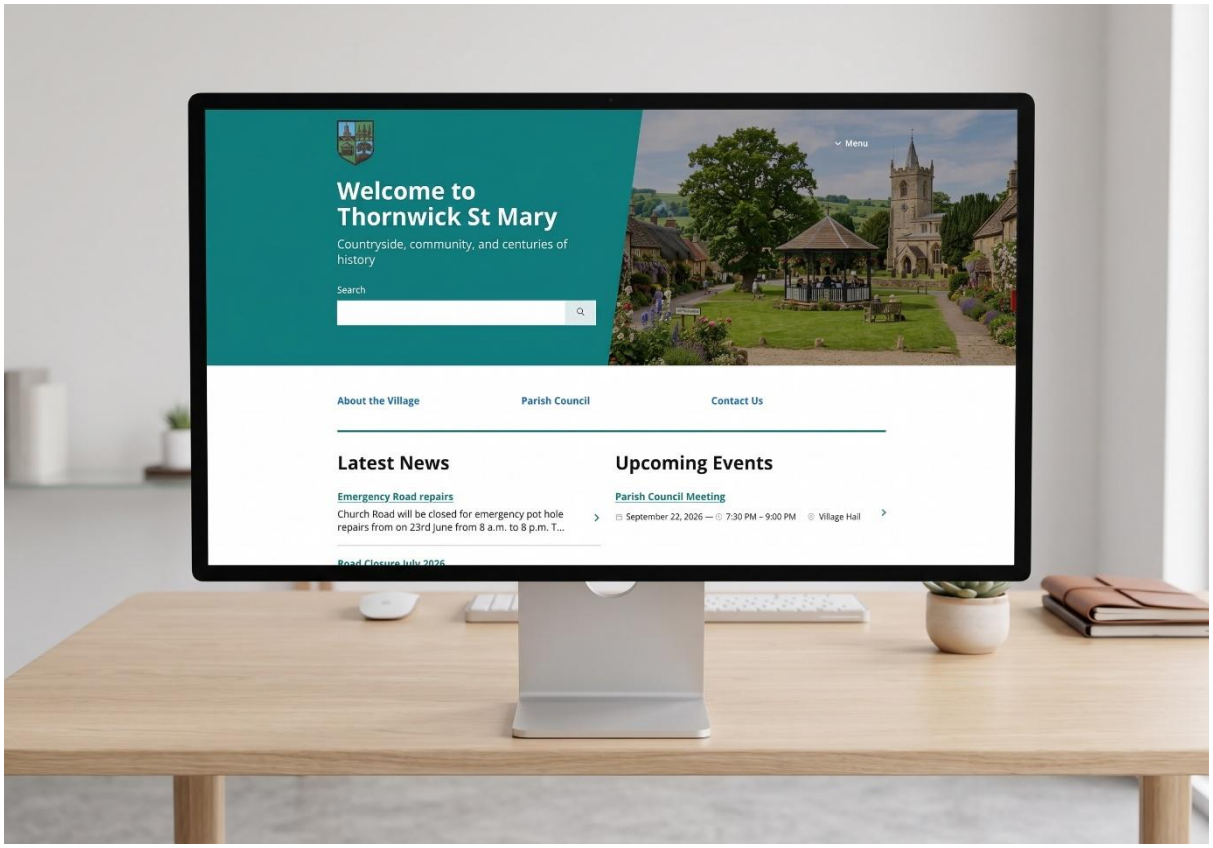
We're delighted to say everything's ready, and it's available now as an upgrade to your existing site!

Everything we've built is designed to make your website easier to manage, more accessible, and more useful and informative for your residents and website visitors.

Here's everything that's new.

Brand new design, available now.
We've rebuilt our template on the latest GOV.UK Design System, the same design residents already know and trust from government services such as www.gov.uk - It makes your site easier to use, more trusted, and properly compliant from the moment it goes live.

It's also built to be genuinely useful and engaging for residents, giving them a reason to visit your site again and again. And it looks incredible, if we do say so ourselves. It features image slideshows, beautiful photo headers, and so much more.



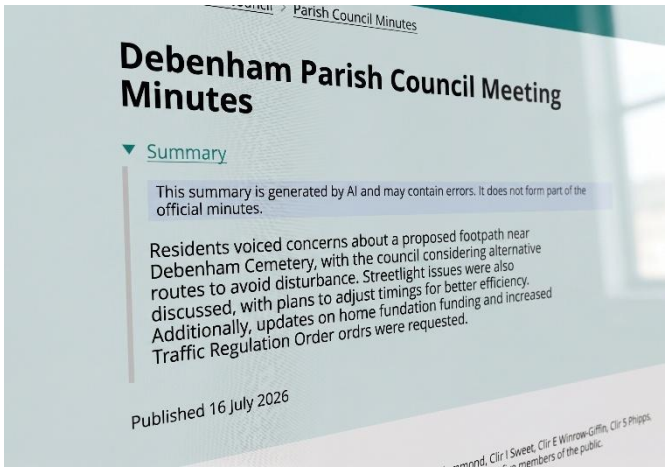
View a live demo at https://www.thornwickstmary-pc.uk – our very own make believe parish council.

Upgrade your site today for just £300 – for this fixed fee we'll build the new site and copy over all your existing content, and show you how to use the new features so you don't have to worry at all.

Publish fully accessible minutes and agendas in seconds!

Most councils publish minutes and agendas as a PDF or Word upload, which is rarely accessible or compliant. We've fixed that, and it's included as standard on every Pear Space website.

For the first time posting an agenda or minutes is now as simple as uploading the document you already produce, be it Word or PDF. The website creates a perfect accessible version every time without fail, and posts it for you.



As an added extra, we also generate a short summary alongside it, pulling out the points that matter most to residents, a planning decision, a road closure, whatever's relevant, so people actually want to read your minutes rather than skim past them. So your website is now more accessible, more useful, and more interesting.

Accessibility monitoring, built in.



We all know how critical accessibility is and ensuring your site complies with WCAG 2.2 and as many of you already know we offer comprehensive audits and advice for a one-off cost of £70 per audit, or £250 per year for quarterly audits.

With the launch of our new website templates though we can now offer real time accessibility reporting of your website for an annual cost of £750. With our new service your site is checked automatically every time a page changes to ensure that your site remains accessible, not just accessible once when you launch it. If there is a problem we let you know directly in the website admin area with helpful advice and guidance explaining exactly what is wrong.

We also now include an accessibility statement with all our audits. Even better, if you have real time monitoring or quarterly monitoring we automatically publish and update your accessibility statement on your website, with a full report you can download to share with your council whenever you need to.

With our new website template and accessibility monitoring you can have absolute peace of mind that your site is fully compliant and accessible with zero stress and worry.

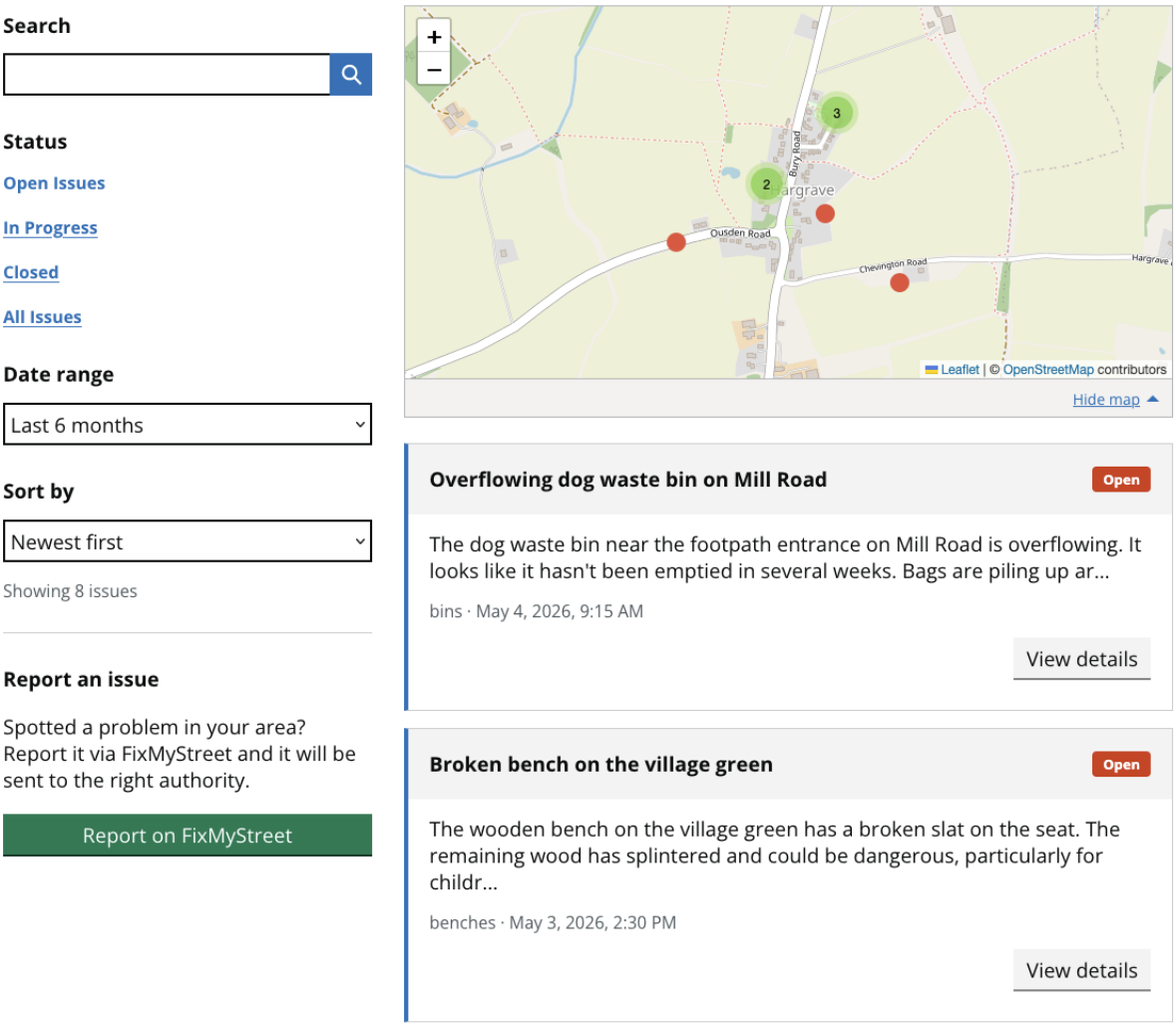
Introducing FixMyStreet

FixMyStreet is the UK's most popular street and neighbourhood reporting service, already used by thousands of people up and down the country to report potholes, broken streetlights and more.

Now your parish council can receive those reports directly too, landing straight into a dedicated issues inbox in your website admin area, complete with a map of what's been reported and where, and the ability to reply to residents without leaving your computer.

All the issues in your parish are then displayed with their latest update, photos if provided, and a map on your website so residents can be fully up to date with what's going on in their parish, whether it's managed by the parish council itself or another authority.

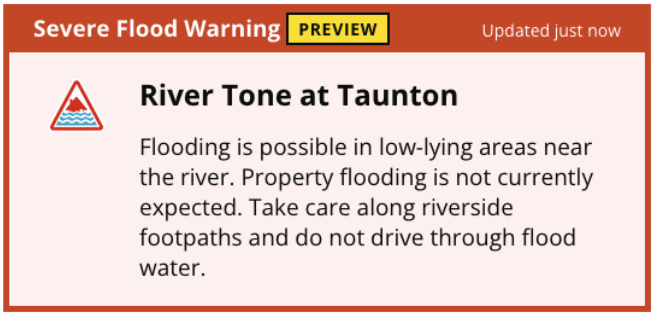
Don't worry, anything you don't manage yourselves such as roads, drainage, anything belonging to the district or county council, gets routed automatically to the right authority. Residents don't need to know who's responsible for what, they just report it and it reaches the right person.



Pear Space is the first provider to support FixMyStreet's brand new parish council tier! Our integration itself is free with our new website template, you'll just need a FixMyStreet subscription alongside it, normally £20 a month, though as a Pear Space customer you get 10% off, bringing it down to £18 a month.

Flood Warnings

With our new website template you can automatically display flood warnings in your parish prominently on your website. You just configure the flood areas in your website admin area and whenever the Environment Agency issues a warning for your area, it appears automatically. Just a little detail to make your parish website



that little bit more helpful to your residents.

Ready to upgrade?

Put together, this is a website that saves you time, makes your life easier, and perhaps most importantly keeps you compliant for Assertion 10 - and even better it gives residents something they'll actually find useful and informative.

Get in touch and we'll talk you through your options with the new template, adding FixMyStreet reporting, stepping up your accessibility monitoring, or all of it together. We can get you booked in and upgraded as soon as you're ready.

Sue Frankis, Clerk to the Parish of Copdock & Washbrook