

Snape Annual Parish Meeting 2026

Report from the Chair of the Parish Council 2025-2026

We are very fortunate to live in a village with a unique setting and a very vibrant community. As is evident from the annual reports from organisations across Snape which are published alongside this one we are a community which cares about its neighbours and about the environment we live in. The task of the Parish Council is to represent those interests, support local organisations and seek solutions to the wider problems that we face.

This year has been a busy one for the Council and working with others has been a key objective. This will continue into the new year. I would highlight just one example. This year we were not able to organise the spring litter pick but, with much credit to John Swann for organising it, it went ahead anyway!

We still have four vacancies for Parish Councillors and I would encourage anyone in the village who would like to make a contribution to the future at a 'strategic' level to consider joining us. We are a friendly team and we try to make a difference.

David Norman and Maria Norman stood down from the Council during the year. Both were instrumental in maintaining links with many other organisations. Maria has reinvigorated the management of the village allotments and secured funding to improve the space and David has ensured that we are able to continue to participate in the Suffolk Highways 'Self-Help' Scheme which enabled us to support Snape Church and the Friends of Snape Church in resolving the flooding problems on Church Green. I am very grateful to both of them for all their hard work.

I would like to welcome Edward King and David McKenna who have joined the Council in recent months. Each brings particular interests and connections which will be invaluable to us next year.

We have had good support from our County Councillor Andrew Reid and from our East Suffolk Councillors, particularly Cllr Katie Graham who regularly attends our meetings. Many thanks to them.

Key Priorities

Energy Projects

The Parish Council has committed itself to active engagement with the challenges presented by the major energy projects underway in our part of East Suffolk. Andrew McDonald represented us very ably in public and in writing at the Planning Inspectorate Examination of the SEALINK project. Russ Rainger attends the community forums raising issues around the delivery of the Sizewell C construction project. That vigilance will continue in the next twelve months as we face the proposals from LionLink. We are also active participants in local partnerships bringing Town and Parish Councils together to strengthen our voice on the quality of life in this area. These include Aldeburgh & Leiston Community Partnership, The Joint Parishes Traffic Initiative and the East Suffolk Communities Energy Partnership.

Road safety, traffic and highways

are of constant concern to the Parish Council. The speed and volume of traffic, particularly heavy vehicles, through the village is again a growing problem. It has been particularly challenging during the construction works at Friday Street and elsewhere on the A12. It restricts easy pedestrian movement around the village, it is a hazard for car drivers turning on to Church Road and for local users of the Quiet Lanes. The measures introduced by the County Council to manage parking around the school are no longer adequate to ensure road safety for children on their way to and from school.

We have raised these issues again with the County Council, particularly the inconsistent application of speed limits through the village and although there is an increased presence of police speed checks in Snape we have not had a positive response from the County Council.

We will renew our campaign on this in 2026-7.

The Parish Council will continue to maintain the Speed indicators on the A1094 and B1069 and support the Community Speedwatch volunteers. The Parish Council is committed to renewing the Gateway markers and signage around the village this year. This includes the speed limit reminders.

The lack of public transport

through Snape for local people and visitors has been a priority topic for the Parish Council over the last few years. We have argued from the beginning that the Katch Bus service does not meet needs and although it has been slightly rerouted, the lack of a regular service to Saxmundham or any of our neighbouring market towns is not acceptable. There is a growing local campaign on this and the ***Parish Council will support the search for a workable solution.***

Planning

We continue to scrutinise all planning applications which are referred to the Parish Council by East Suffolk and we express objections or matters of concern to the planners where we think there might be a negative impact on quality of life or the environment in Snape particularly if there are implications for traffic.

Communications

Currently the main mechanism for communicating with local people about the work of the Parish Council is the publication of notices of our meeting which are open to the public and the posting of comprehensive minutes of meetings on the Snape Village website. We have complemented this from time to time with doorstep newsletters and notices but as our time resource has diminished over the last couple of years we have not done this very often. It is now time to think about how we can communicate better and a working group will recommend some ***new initiatives over the next few months.***

Health and wellbeing

The Parish Council has secured funding from various sources to provide a bike rack and repair facilities at the Village Hall and another bike rack at the Church. These will be installed over the summer. There are now two defibrillators in the Village both acquired and maintained by the Parish Council. The first is at the Village Hall (with many thanks to Maria Norman who makes sure that it is ready for use) and the newer one is at the Church near the gate on to Church Green (with many thanks to RW Curle who installed it for us). The Parish Council will continue to support the Snape Good Neighbour Scheme.

Raising funds for investment in Snape

Several organisations in the village have secured funds from the Sizewell C Community Fund recently. Money will be available for community facilities in Snape over the next few years and several organisations including the Village Hall, the Playing Field and the Church have projects which would enable them to offer more. It has been suggested that the Parish Council could assist by convening a meeting of all interested parties to compare notes and to make sure that the village as a whole is putting complementary rather than duplicating bids in to the Community Fund (and other funding bodies) to maximise the chances of success. We will look to organise this meeting as soon as possible.

Local Government Reorganisation

Over the next two years local government in Suffolk will be reorganised to create Unitary Authorities (replacing the present two tier structure with a single tier). Although this does not directly affect Parish Councils one of the principles behind it is greater community empowerment. Larger Town and Parish Councils might be able to take on services to deliver locally. We in Snape, a relatively small Parish, will need to make sure that we are not drowned out by our larger neighbours. We have already shown that we can collaborate with others and we should look out for opportunities to make sure that our voice is heard and listened to by the new authority!

That is a quick review of some of the Parish Council's activity over the last year and priorities for next year. We will always do our best to represent the Village and to support the community.

I want to conclude by thanking all the members of the Parish Council for their support, hard work and good humour and in particular our Clerk, Marie Backhouse whose professionalism and dedication keeps the Parish Council running effectively.

Thank you

Paul Richards
Chair - Snape Parish Council

May 2026

