

NAVESTOCK PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 10th March 2026 - 19.00 START

Present: Councillors Chrissy Gelderbloem (CG), Rowena Bere-Brown (RBB), Adrian Enkel (AE),
John Parrish known as Mike (MP)

Also Present: Clerk Victor Simmons (VS) + 3 members of the public (MOP)

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

1) Chair's welcome & announcements: CG welcomed everybody present to the Annual Parish Assembly.

2) Reports from Parish groups and clubs:

GREENS CHARITY: (CG) - The charity has been relatively quiet due to issues accessing the bank account / records, plus submitting accounts to the Charity Commission. There have been no applications for financial assistance and there were two new trustees, namely the Reverend Julie Hardy and Jan Savill.

VILLAGE SOCIETY: (Penelope Tyzack report read by VS) - The Village Society had a quiet year, as falling numbers allied to Roy's declining health made finding suitable events increasingly difficult. Despite this, Roy ensured that the village show field events went ahead producing a financial success. It is hoped that following his sad passing in October, the NVS will continue with other members taking responsibility.

NAVESTOCK CRICKET CLUB: (Naren Damodaran report read by VS) - NCC experienced a steady 2025 as improved player availability strengthened our playing resources. Sadly, we had suffered severe vandalism to The Green during the winter of 2024, which miraculously only resulted in the loss of three early season fixtures. Thanks to NPC and ECC, perimeter fencing has been installed plus other associated works which will hopefully prevent further problems. 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 and thank the Parish Council for their ongoing support.

PARISH LUNCHESES: (Suzanne O'Shea report read by VS) - Our numbers are currently at 40, with 4 of us in the kitchen. We have regular help with laying up, serving and washing up as on average 34 meals are served each month at £4 per head. Costs are kept low by careful planning, buying seasonally and using local garden produce. We also cater for those with special dietary requirements in what is a valuable community event.

VILLAGE HALL: (Suzanne O'Shea report read by VS) - The hall remains steady with regular bookings, Little Doves four days a week plus occasional weekend events. This currently means that the village hall finances are in a stable position. Sadly, committee member Roy Tyzack passed away at the end of the year and his replacement will be discussed at the July 2026 AGM. Fellow committee member Rowena Bere-Brown has stepped up to oversee bookings etc., aided by our Treasurer whilst we look for a permanent manager. A deep clean of the kitchen and toilets has been carried out and it's hoped to reseal the floors in the school holidays following the village show. Problems persist with Alec's restaurant patrons parking in the car park and the area between side of the hall and the sports pavilion has been rotovated and sown with wild flower seeds by the scouts.

WI: (Suzanne O'Shea report read by VS) - We continue to meet at the cricket pavilion with 19 members. 2025 marked our 75th anniversary, with life beginning in the old school rooms on the Heath in June 1950. In June, we had lunch at Bentley Golf Club and in July a gathering at the church with neighbouring institutes, followed by tea in the churchyard. We have enjoyed varied speakers throughout the year and visited Bedford's Park walled garden in the autumn. Although a small institute, we continue to thrive.

FIRST NAVESTOCK SCOUT GROUP: (Jan Savill report read by Hugh Savill) - The beavers, cubs and scouts meet every Thursday night at Navestock village hall, with all sections recently participating in a sleep over there. The scouts enjoyed a week-long 2025 summer camp in the New Forest, plus there was a four-day cub camp in May. The scouts served at the 'Soup and Sweet' event last year and planted wild flowers as referenced in the village hall report. All sections received many badges and awards in 2025, with the scouts in particular enhancing their cooking skills. Last month there was a visit from the Police Service involving demonstrations of vehicle technology. This year's scout summer camp is in the Peak District, with a planned joint cub and beaver camp at Skreens Park Chelmsford in May. Jan has been awarded the second highest award for adult volunteer services to scouting, namely the 'Silver Acorn'.

CHURCH COUNCIL: (Hugh Savill) - Services are held every Sunday evening by the Reverend Julie Hardy, who has recently become Rector after 5/6 years with us. There is usually a congregation of under 10, with declining numbers being a concern. Events this year include a summer plant sale, a 'Hymns and Pimms' service, our bi-annual quiz and a Christmas Fayre in December organised by Elaine Williams.

LITTLE DOVES CHRISTIAN PRE-SCHOOL: (Pam Biddulph report read by RBB) - Little Doves Christian Pre-school has now been open for nearly 9 years, using Navestock village hall. We have 22 staff members, with 6 coming from Navestock, all trained with the latest relevant courses. Little Doves has a team of trustees, mostly being St. Paul's church members who support our work. We are full until the end of July with a waiting list for September 2026. In June 2025 we had our Ofsted inspection and were awarded outstanding in all areas. We continue to enjoy use of the play area, which we extend into the car park with portable fencing and had our 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, plus 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, plus allowing extended hire hours on a Tuesday and Wednesday which allows our equipment to be left out within the hall saving valuable time.

3) Any other business: None, therefore **CG** closed the Annual Parish Assembly at 19.15.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

19.16 Start

26/15) 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). She also thanked all Councillors for their efforts / contributions plus the various community groups.

26/16) Apologies and reasons for absence: CG - Lucy Gelderbloem (**LG**) - working (**accepted**)

26/17) Declaration of interests with regards to agenda items: AE (26/26), MP & RBB (26/22.05) - All non pecuniary.

26/18) To approve the previously circulated minutes from the Parish Council Meeting - Tuesday 13th January 2026: Minutes were *agreed* as correct and to be signed by **CG**.

26/19) Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda:

19.20 Meeting suspended for public participation

Joe McNamara (MOP) - Asked about what seemed to be an escalation in fly-tipping plus the ongoing problem of potholes. There was a general discussion around these issues and what NPC was doing to try and resolve such matters. **MOP** were also made aware of the ECC Highways interactive fault reporting map and the lack of transparency when looking at specific reports.

19.30 End of public participation (meeting reopened)

26/20) Action on matters arising from public participation session: **CG** - Hoped that the Councillors answers to questions raised were sufficient and expressed how frustrating these issues can be.

26/21) Reports: To receive brief reports from Borough and County Councillors present: **CG** - The Brentwood Centre revamp had been allocated £25 million, however there was no update on the Baytree Centre. The Business Development Group was looking to upgrade street furniture in the various High Streets. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was still a regular discussion topic.

26/22) Matters arising from previous meetings:

22.01) Village Hall Sports Pavilion (build) and parish field: **CG** - The electric air conditioning / heating was now installed and essential painting works were under way. **Clerk** - The toilet hand rails and other ancillary equipment has now been installed and the kitchen cabinet build is in hand. **MP** - Had started clearing the excess foliage following the hedge thinning works he had recently undertaken. **CG & RBB** - Thanked MP for his hard work in completing this project. **MP, CG and Clerk dealing**

22.02) Health and Wellbeing: **CG** - There was a church quiz this coming Saturday. The hub was still going well and although in Kelvedon Hatch, Navestock residents attended regularly. **Carried forward**

22.03) Spring Farm & Skip-A-Hoy (environmental issues): **CG** - Although BBC enforcement had been to site, there was little activity to report. It was likely another planning application would be submitted in due course. The external areas outside of the site were awash with fly-tipping and litter. **AE** - A traffic survey in Horseman Side had recorded 2,300 vehicles (timescale of survey unknown). **Carried forward**

22.04) Neighbourhood Watch including CCTV: **CG** - Had received no specific reports from the BBC enforcement officers regarding activity in Navestock. However, it is possible to get footage checked retrospectively following fly-tips to see what evidence (if any) might be available. **Carried forward**

22.05) Shonks Mill Flood Storage Area (River Roding Project): **RBB** - Work appears to be under way again, following the winter break. This includes some tree planting near the barrier. **Carried forward**

22.06) Common Land issues within Navestock Parish: **CG** - Was still a work in progress. **CG dealing**

22.07) Navestock rubbish and litter issues: **RBB** - Raised the question of nitrous oxide cannisters which hadn't been collected by BBC whilst an adjacent fly-tip had. On discussion there appears to be no clear policy on these items. **CG** - There had been WhatsApp group threads regarding resident litter picking. **MP & Clerk** - Due to the current BBC guidelines litter picking can only be undertaken under their control, so NPC cannot currently condone or assist any resident action. **Carried forward**

22.08) Boundary issues - Navestock Heath: CG - All relevant paperwork had been forwarded to our solicitors GEPP and we are awaiting their suggested recommendations and quote. **CG dealing**

22.09) Navestock Parish roads signage: CG - There was no further update since the January meeting and the finger post issue was clearly one for ECC Highways to resolve. **MP** - Felt that a different design probably made out of metal was the only sensible long-term solution. **CG & Clerk dealing**

22.10) Motorway service areas (M25) update: CG - There was no further planning updates since the January meeting. **RBB** - The M25 action group NERA (Northeast Residents Association) have a fundraising event shortly and have now also obtained charity status. **Carried forward**

22.11) Village Hall playground seating: CG - Installation still in hand with our contractor. **CG dealing**

22.12) NPC grounds maintenance: CG - Was still talking to various contractors. **RBB** - Commented that this needs to be progressed as grass around the village hall is now growing quickly. **CG dealing**

22.13) Navestock Village Show 2025: Clerk - The monies from the 2025 show had now been received and a final spreadsheet had been distributed to Councillors. After discussion the Village Society needs to be asked for details of their constitution etc. before the monetary split. **CG & Clerk dealing**

22.14) ECC Locality Fund 2025-26: Clerk - The £500 grant towards the sports pavilion heating had been received from ECC, so this agenda item could now be closed. **Item resolved**

22.15) NPC tree management: CG - Was currently dealing with a contractor who had requested more detailed information including a map of the trees to be surveyed. **CG dealing**

22.16) NPC composition 2026 (casual vacancy): Clerk - NPC were now in a position where they were looking to co-opt a replacement Councillor. BBC Electoral Services were aware of the situation but had no involvement in the process. After November it would not be possible to fill the vacancy due to the May 2027 Parish Council elections (6-month rule). **Carried forward**

22.17) NPC Recreational Sensory Garden: CG - The BBC Locality Fund required a contractor quote to release the £1,750 grant, with work to be completed by the end of June. A general discussion followed over potential options plus confusion over who was overseeing the project. **CG dealing**

22.18) Village hall car park issues: CG - The matter was ongoing with new signage probably the only sensible solution. After discussion agreeing on concise wording proved problematic, so this would be given further thought. **RBB** - The issue was also causing difficulties for hirers of the village hall who were finding parked vehicles when they went to lock the gates after events. **Carried forward**

26/23) Current Matters:

23.01) Rural affordable housing opportunity (RCCE & ERHA presentation):

CG - Meeting suspended at 20.05

Laura Atkinson gave a presentation on behalf of the RCCE regarding the opportunity for a rural housing scheme, which would involve NPC instigating a housing needs survey. This could take the form of a rural exception site (affordable housing) with 8-10 homes. Councillors and MOP asked various questions around the concept, citing previous issues with the current housing association scheme at Tyser Green. Following this, Laura went into the different options in greater detail as any potential land would probably be owned by the Church Commissioners, not NPC. CG thanked Laura for her attendance and said we would get back to her after further consideration. **Carried forward**

CG - Meeting reopened at 20.40

23.02) Brentwood Community Assembly - 15th January (report): CG - The meeting focused on issues surrounding Brentwood Business initiatives with disappointingly little time given to Parish matters. The next assembly is on Thursday 12th March which **CG** is attending. Herongate & Ingrave Parish Council was taking over stewardship of the BBPCA for 2026 and 2027. *Item resolved*

23.03) BBC - Increased allocation of traveller's sites: CG - Gave an overview of the current traveller sites situation / quotas within Brentwood and in particular Navestock. It was felt that BBC should be pressed on their current position / intentions regarding legal, illegal and tolerated sites. *CG dealing*

23.04) NPC Fixed Asset Policy & Register / Reserves Policy 2026 (initial discussion): Clerk - The 2026 policy will be due for approval at the May meeting once the annual audit is completed. *Clerk dealing*

23.05) Annual playground(s) inspection 2026: Clerk - Our annual playground(s) inspection was imminent and after discussion it was agreed to continue using our current contractor. *Clerk dealing*

26/24) Reports: To receive brief reports from NPC Working Parties: MP - The greensward opposite The Forge had been badly damaged by builders working on the property. The Clerk to investigate and write to the builders asking for reinstatement at the end of the project. **AE** - Reported lots of recent issues with youths on e-scooters (safety matter). There had also been a problem with loose dogs (German Shepherds). **RBB** - The problem of the bowls mats in the village hall is still unresolved. The village hall Committee would like to add a sign on the external fence by the main gates which would probably mean relocating the Nicks Tyres banner (*agreed*). Pest control in the village hall and sports pavilion needed resolution and it was *agreed* to combine these under one contract with an appropriate cost split. **CG** (on behalf of **LG**) - Had recently reported several fly-tips in the Old Road area. **CG** - Murthing Lane was in a poor state due to fly-tips and litter plus, there had been complaints of earth movement involving large lorries in Sabines Road.

26/25) Correspondence and Clerks Report: Clerk - The regular BBC Clerks Forums have been cancelled, to be replaced by Parish Community Assemblies. There is an opportunity to influence the agendas for these, which we should probably take? Still no update on the dead oak tree reported in Navestock Side / Royds Lane that was awaiting inspection from ECC Highways. After consultation with the **Webmaster**, I'm now approaching suppliers regarding a new website with a .gov.uk domain. Councillors will have new dedicated email addresses to satisfy the 2025/26 AGAR (assertion 10). This would involve significant cost implications, but the new regulations have to be complied with. Following the March meeting, NPC obligations surrounding the defibrillator was investigated and the findings emailed out to Councillors. Thanks to **RBB's** diligence NPC look to be meeting all requirements, with a policy on the matter to be considered at a later date. The Open Spaces Society membership for 2026/27 has been renewed. Lesley Wagland has been made aware of serious flooding and pothole issues in Princes Road, which she duly forwarded onto to ECC Highways. The NATS team had been in attendance week commencing 23/2, sadly the quality of the requested works (if indeed completed) was poor. Charlene Slade had resigned as CEO of the EALC and was leaving the post in April. A significant proportion of correspondence coming into the NPC mailbox still revolved around LGR.

26/26) Planning: CG - There were currently no applications that NPC felt the need to comment on. It was noted that the Beacon Hill Farm appeal regarding a swimming pool had been successful with the Planning Inspectorate.

26/27) Finance: CG has checked the accounts / records & everything was in order.

There was a general discussion around banking as NPC was now incurring a modest monthly account fee, plus potential options moving forward regarding having transfer facilities.

Cheques to be signed were approved for:

Payroll (March), **Clerk** (Open Spaces Society membership 2026/27),

Navestock Village Society (split of 2025 village show profit),

N. Frost (Sports Pavilion painting and associated works),

Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE membership 2026/27)

26/28) Discussion Items and date of next meeting: CG - none other than the **Clerk** asked to be made aware of any new payments ASAP, as the accounts including cheque book would be going to the auditor in early April.

Next meeting: Tuesday 12th May, 2026 @ 19.00 including the Annual Parish Meeting

Meeting closed at 21.22

Victor Simmons
Clerk & RFO to Navestock Parish Council
4th May 2026