

# MIDDLETON - CUM - FORDLEY



## NEWSLETTER

February 2026



## Editorial

Firstly – ‘Happy New Year’ everyone from the newsletter team – even though it’s nearly February we won’t have seen all of you yet! This issue is quite retrospective with two months since the last edition but lots of events happened worthy of a mention. Christmas seems so long ago now! I have tried to get them in some sort of chronological order (apart from the snow) with apologies for shrinking things to fit!

The lovely snow photos are thanks to Jane at the new Rectory, the aerial ones are from Charlie and one from Brian’s front balcony in Mill Street.

The recent Aurora (front cover) was caught by Anna of Rectory Rd. on her evening dog walk. Thank you all.

Contributions for the next issue can be emailed to [barbara.barker.t21@btinternet.com](mailto:barbara.barker.t21@btinternet.com) or dropped in to 6 Meadowview, Rectory Rd by **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February please.**

Also to be found on the Parish website: [www.middletoncumfordley.org.uk](http://www.middletoncumfordley.org.uk)

Donations may be made to:  
HSBC Middleton Newsletter  
sort code 40-28-33  
account number 61054236





## Christmas Craft Fair (29<sup>th</sup> November)



Angela and Lynda were delighted with the support they received for the Christmas Craft Fair. The skills on display and the depth of talent that was shown through a wide range of crafts, was quite inspiring.

We raised £350 and would like to thank all who braved the dreadful weather and came along to support the Middleton Community. The funds were divided between Middleton Community Council, the Village Hall and the village newsletter.

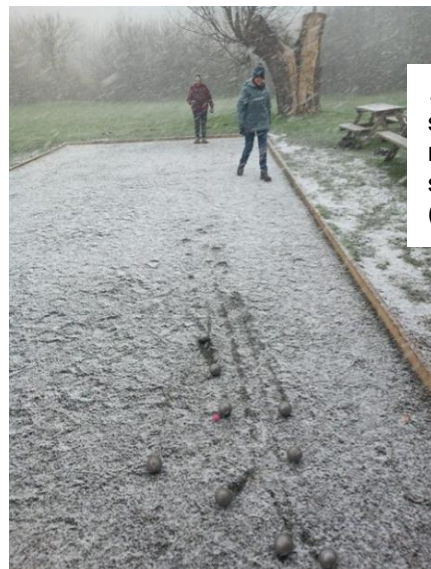
We would also like to thank the members of the WI who donated cakes and savouries and served customers and washed up.



## Santa Boules competition 6th December 2025



13 pairs took part this year on a bright but chilly Saturday morning. Paul and Barbara were the eventual winners gaining the prestigious trophy made of old coches!! Runners up were Peter and Brian. A fun morning with food and drink flowing too – thanks to those in the kitchen making that happen!



...and if you thought santa boules was mad enough – this surely beats it!! (Jan. 2026)



## Community Council Christmas Party – 13<sup>th</sup> December 2025

In December MCC welcomed 48 people to the village Hall for the annual 'feast of food and entertainment' and judging by all the lovely comments and feedback it was very much enjoyed by all. This is just one comment received but sums it all up nicely.

"Thank you so much to every single person who was involved in our Christmas Party at the village hall. It was the highlight of our Christmas so far. Delicious food and amazing entertainment definitely made it an evening to remember- we loved it and are very grateful to you all for all of the time and effort that went into making it a resounding success! What a village! "

Echoing those thoughts – it is important to note that it's not just MCC committee members that put this event together – we couldn't do it without the extra volunteers who help cook / serve / wait tables / wash up / taxi and of course not forgetting provide entertainment ! There are too many to mention without danger of forgetting someone. Thank you all.

From the proceeds of the raffle we were able to send £150 to Ipswich Hospital's ongoing Blossom Appeal. Naturally there are photos and videos which many will have already seen – but in case you haven't .... Here is a link to the Christmas party video for those who have the online version. (Hope it still works!)

[https://youtu.be/igxrc9l8Y\\_M?si=WEDgKbTbt-EJKmiA](https://youtu.be/igxrc9l8Y_M?si=WEDgKbTbt-EJKmiA)





# Middleton-cum-Fordley WI Christmas Party December 2025

Our president Rita welcomed our 43 guests to our last WI End of Year party and thanked those who helped to set up the Village Hall and those who prepared the buffet.

Our WI members were all presented with a bone china cup and saucer marked with 'Middleton Women's Institute,' as a memento.



Sizewell Gap entertained everyone with music, songs and story telling.



As much as everyone enjoyed the evening it remains such a sad fact Middleton-cum-Fordley WI, one of the oldest WIs in this area, will hold their last meeting in March.

**We invited all ex WI members to come along to our January Meeting on the 21st. Our speaker was discussing bee keeping.**  
LW

## Festive Coffee Morning Club lunch

A lunch was organised in December to thank the regulars and those who have continued to support this independent group, who meet every Thursday at 10.45 am in the Village Hall.



New members are always welcome.

We will be offering homemade soup and a roll until March, along with our usual range of hot drinks.

Contact Lynda on [01728 668977](tel:01728668977) for details or if you require a lift.

Our January meeting was the last with a speaker. Members and former members gathered to hear Michael Peter " Mr. B " speak on "Beekeeping". A hive may have 60-80,000 bees, the majority of these are females-the workers. The fewer males are the drones who mate with the queen, lose strength, then drop dead. In the hives the bees make hexagon ( the strongest of geometrical shapes) cells, always the same size. After filling these cells with honey the bees cap the cells with wax to keep out any moisture to prevent mold. Some of the workers are scouts who go out to find sources of nectar then go back to the hive to do a little dance which tells the others where the source is. No one is sure how a bee's navigation system works but they can always find the hive again. Beekeeping apparatus consists of a bottom "Brood" box where the queen lays the eggs and above that there are "Super or Supers" where the honey is stored. Inside both types of boxes there are removable hanging frames hanging 5/16 inch apart. The bees make their cells on these. May through October these frames are inspected by the keeper daily to check for disease and queen cells. Queen cells are put into another frame to prevent a new queen from killing the old one. Diseases like varroa mites can be treated. Bees also have predators like wasps, hornets and mice who must be kept out of the hive structure. When it is time to harvest the honey the bees are sent from the super down into the brood by using a sheet of chemical the bees dislike. The frames in the super are taken out and the wax caps are cut off, the honey is spun off in a centrifuge then filtered, then rested to get the bubbles out and finally bottled. From September the hives must be fed with sugar syrup and with this even in winter the bees can produce 35-40 lbs of honey. When bees swarm it is because the hive has become too crowded and about half leave to find a new home. The talk was fascinating and very informative. We also learned from Mr B that women on the whole with their calm and gentle ways are much better at beekeeping than men!

In February members will be having a farewell lunch at The Wentworth Hotel in Aldeburgh.

LV

The Community Council are meeting on Monday to discuss events for 2026 – if there's something you'd like us to consider that we perhaps haven't thought of let us know before Monday evening.

[middleton.community.council@gmail.com](mailto:middleton.community.council@gmail.com)



**Body Control Pilates Teacher, Victoria Hayden** is planning a Pilates taster session on Friday 6th February at Middleton Village Hall at 1.10pm with a view to starting a new class for new clients a few weeks later.

The new class will have a particular focus on bone density but will include all the usual Pilates joys such as increasing strength, mobility and flexibility, improved posture, reduction in aches and pains as well as improved pelvic floor function.

**BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL, PLEASE NOTE THIS IS NOT A DROP IN SESSION. 12 PLACES AVAILABLE WITH A FEE OF 11.50 PER PERSON.**

**Please email or call Victoria on 07713277176 or [victoriahaydenpilates@gmail.com](mailto:victoriahaydenpilates@gmail.com)**



## SZC

In November of last year the Parish Council had invited SZC to provide a question and answer presentation to the village. What transpired was a somewhat speedy video exhorting the wonders of SZC's ability to build roads and the 'promise' of answers to pre submitted questions from the village.

The following are the answers from SZC on those questions. You may judge for yourselves on the responses to what we considered to be very valid concerns and statements.

The two files can be accessed on our Village Website under the SizewellC.

Steve Thorpe

Deputy Chair

## LIONLINK CONSULTATION

Your Parish Council are keen to know if there is anything we can do to help residents in relation to Lionlink. Currently the developer National Grid is consulting on the project, with the proposed routes running (north to south) to the west of the B1122, then crossing the road immediately west of Suffolk Stoves and running north between the main village and Middleton Moor.

If you are affected by this route you should have received detailed information from Lionlink since New Year. Please let us know if you, or any of your neighbours, are having any issues with Lionlink that the Parish Council may be able to help with (though we are only consultees),

via [cllcharlesmacdowell@gmail.com](mailto:cllcharlesmacdowell@gmail.com)

We will be participating in a Parish Councils' online meeting with the developer on 27 Jan, so it would be best if we could hear from you before then.

The consultation exhibitions are

Saturday 24 January 2026 11am – 4pm Fromus Centre, Saxmundham, IP17 1AL

Saturday 31 January 2026 11am – 4pm Walberswick Village Hall IP18 6TZ

Friday 06 February 2026 2 – 7pm High Lodge Leisure, Nr Darsham, IP17 3QT

Saturday 21 February 2026 11am – 4pm Westleton Village Hall, IP17 3AD

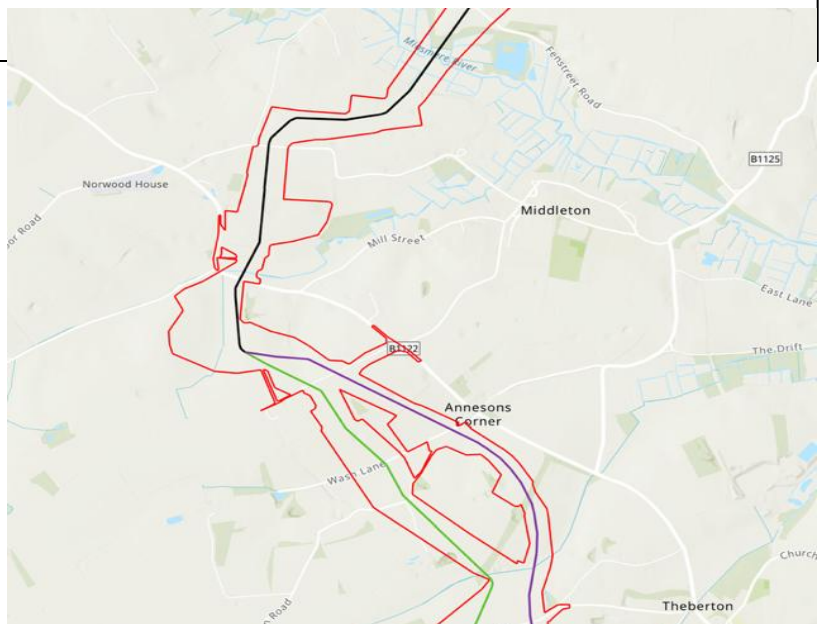
Saturday 28 February 2026 11am – 4pm Yoxford Village Hall, Old High Road, IP17 3HN

I am planning to attend the first of these around 3pm.

Kind regards

Charles Macdowell

for Middleton Parish Council





### Calling knitters, sewers and other crafters...

"Do you have unfinished ( or not-yet-started) sewing or knitting projects? Do you need the impetus to get it finished (or get started)? If you would be interested in a sociable, informal gathering on Tuesdays in Middleton Village Hall, please get in touch."

Christine  
cb4art@gmail.com



## SAVE THE DATE MIDDLETON OPEN GARDENS



6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> June 2026  
(11 am - 5pm)

The preparation for this popular event has now started and we are keen to include new gardens within the programme. Middleton Open gardens weekend offers visitors a wide variety of experiences. Showcasing both formal and informal, well established and newly planted gardens.

If you would like to open you garden for this event, please do contact me to chat about what's involved.

Christine : 07826840478 or email:  
[christineburgess29@gmail.com](mailto:christineburgess29@gmail.com)

Fund raising for Holy Trinity Church, Middleton, also this year supporting the East Anglian Ambulance

## MIDDLETON OPEN GARDENS – Help needed!

(Annual event to raise funds for the Holy Trinity Church and local charities)

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> June 2026 (11am - 5pm)

As we begin preparations for this popular event we are keen to hear from anyone who may feel able to oversee the Pavilion refreshments.

We receive generous contributions of cakes/jams/pickles/scones from people who live in our village and from nearby businesses, and every year committed volunteers come together to help prepare, serve and wash up. The volunteers say they love being part of the team and it offers a real sense of community.

However, this requires good liaison and co-ordination, and so we are hopeful that, this year, one or two people may feel this is something that they could assist us with.

We would welcome your interest and ask that, if you would like to know more about what is involved, please contact Christine on 07826840478 or email: [christineburgess29@gmail.com](mailto:christineburgess29@gmail.com)





# HOLY TRINITY – MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY

## Church Services during February

Sunday 8 February

11am PCC-led Service

Sunday 22 February

11am Holy Communion

*The Benefice Service this month will be at St Peter's, Westleton on  
Sunday 1 February at 10am*

*For anyone who would like to attend an Ashing Service on Ash Wednesday one will take place at  
St Peter's, Yoxford at 10am on Wednesday 18 February*

## POETRY IN THE PORCH – A Lenten Practice

*the heart's time*

A poem a day for Lent and Easter

By Janet Morley

'To keep Lent is to turn aside from the ordinary routines of our life in order to reflect; to notice what is going on, to detect what is really significant...' Janet Morley

Continuing to use poetry here to provide us with reason to pause, a poem from Janet Morley's book *the heart's time* will be posted on the notice board in the church porch each weekday during Lent. Sadly, they will not be accompanied by pastries(!) but we hope they might still give us food for thought...

If you would like the poem sent to your inbox each weekday morning, please drop a line to [ajt.opom@gmail.com](mailto:ajt.opom@gmail.com) or you might consider purchasing the book yourself...



### Rev Canon Roger Smith

We were deeply sad to hear that the Rev Canon Roger Smith had passed away. He and Molly had lived in the Rectory Road New Rectory for several years and were very involved with the village. Molly was a WI member and a great support to Roger. Sadly, their only daughter, Elizabeth, died after they moved away; a cherry tree is planted in our churchyard in her remembrance. Middleton was represented at Roger's funeral in Metfield. Our thoughts are with Molly and Andrew at this sad time.

As usual Holy Trinity was fully involved in Christmas events opening with 'Waiting in the Dark' held each Sunday evening in Advent for an hour. A lovely time of peace and quiet reflection by the light of the Advent Candle and followed by a very welcome cup of hot chocolate.

Our lovely Carol Service was very well attended and enabled us to send £104 to The Children's Society, thank you to all who donated and all who took part. We enjoyed hot mulled wine with (mice) mince pies and a chance to mingle and chat.

The Midnight service followed on a very cold windy night which held the numbers down but still a good amount of people attending.

The New Year has started with Poetry & Pastries, with more people joining this gathering to read or simply listen, and of course the pastries & coffee are very inviting! We now look forward to hosting concerts in April & May along with other events in 2026. Thank you to a very supportive PCC.

Rita  
CW



**4 February – Nicola and Margaret**  
**11 March – Val and Camilla**  
**3 April – Christine and David**

**18 February – Trish and Graham**  
**25 March – Rob**

New dusters always welcome, of all faiths and none

**Thought for the Month.**  
**God is the worm—**  
quietly making and remaking  
the ground beneath our feet;  
creating, often unseen, the dark loam  
from which fullness might grow. Gideon Heugh



### **ROBERT SONGER**

Peacefully in Ipswich Hospital on 10th January, 2026, Robert aged 89, of Saxmundham, formerly of Middleton. Dearly loved Dad of Alison, proud Grandad of Rebecca and Kelly, Great Grandad to Imogen, Teddy and Freddy. Funeral Service at Seven Hills Crematorium on Tuesday, 3rd February at 12 noon. No flowers

Some older Middleton residents may remember Bob as a member of The Bell darts team.

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### **CAMPAIGN RATS MAKE AN APPEARANCE ALONG THE B1125!**

For several months now, the B1125 Action Group has been campaigning directly to all relevant stakeholders to maintain the B1125 as a rural B-road along our Heritage Coastline - instead of enabling it to turn into the dangerous rat-run it has become. So many of you have reported examples of reckless driver behaviour and speeds which have made you feel unsafe on this road, and yet there is still no proper resolution in sight.



The Group's focus is that the B1125 should **not** be the Google/SATNAV route of choice for traffic rushing to & from the north (that should be using the A-roads) and believes it requires multiple new measures to both reduce the volume and curb dangerous speeds.

To date the B1125 Action Group has succeeded in persuading our MP Jenny Riddell-Carpenter and ALL the local Parish Councils (jointly) to put more pressure on Sizewell C, Suffolk County Council's Highways and Suffolk Constabulary to work together with local communities to make the B1125 safer through the urgent implementation of a variety of more appropriate traffic calming measures.

**Please contact the B1125 Action Group: [b1125actiongroup@btinternet.com](mailto:b1125actiongroup@btinternet.com) for more information about the campaign's objectives and to engage with future campaign activities**



## Middleton Dark Skies

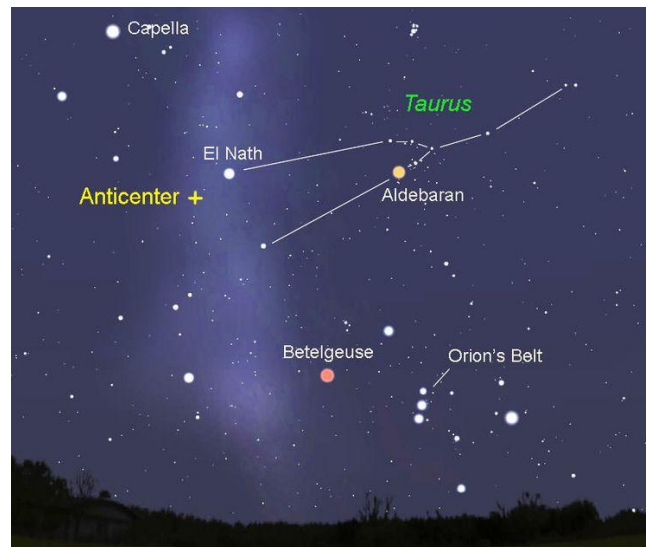
### February Highlights

**Planets on View.** **Venus** has switched from being The Morning Star to The Evening Star and dominates the western sky, setting at around 7.45 pm. **Mars** is still lost in the glare of the Sun. **Jupiter** is shining brightly all night long, still sitting in the constellation of Gemini, having made its closest approach to the Earth during early January, and sets at around 5.30 am. **Saturn** is still visible in the western sky, setting at around 8.00 pm. On the 19<sup>th</sup> the crescent Moon will be sitting just to the right of Saturn, so should help locating the planet a little easier.

**Constellations.** While all the winter favourites are still prominent in the night sky, they have now moved to the right from their positions over Christmas, which has allowed the first of the spring constellations to put in an appearance. **Leo** (The Lion) follows Gemini, Taurus and Orion across the southern sky this month. The bright planet Jupiter is sitting in Gemini, so is good place to start from in locating Leo. At 10.00 pm Jupiter is sitting directly south with Leo off to the left in the SE. The most obvious part of the constellation is the head and mane of the lion which is formed by a backward facing question mark, known as The Sickle, which is made up of six out of the nine main stars that form the constellation, the other 3 making up the body of the Lion. Leo actually contains dozens of stars, 13 of which are known to have planets orbiting them. The name Leo is Latin for Lion, which in Greek myth was a lion with special fur that prevented it from being slain by hunters' weapons, so Hercules killed it by breaking its back with his bare hands!! Hercules then skinned the lion of its fur and wore it as armour.



*Leo (The Lion)*



*The 'Winter' Milky Way looking South*

**The Milky Way.** With the darker winter skies, it would figure that The Milky Way should stand out more as it arches directly overhead from the Northern to the Southern horizons. The reason that is relatively difficult to see is that the northern hemisphere is tilted away from the brighter central core of our galaxy and we are now looking out at one of the dimmer outer arms. A pair of binoculars will however still reveal masses of faint stars.

**The Moon.** This month the full moon will occur on the 1<sup>st</sup> and goes by the name of Snow Moon. So far over 2 million craters over 1km in diameter have been identified on the Moon. Estimates of the total number of craters, 10 meters or more in diameter, are in the region of ½ billion.

**Meteors and Comets.** Unfortunately none of any note this month, but always a chance of seeing the odd rogue meteor.

**Artificial Satellites.** Plenty of these to see (12,000+), so just spend half an hour looking up at a clear night sky. Some move in small groups or in a line, so always fun to watch out for these. Starlink satellite 'trains' are best seen a day or so after a launch from Cape Canaveral, before they have spread apart from each other. There are 10-12 planned Starlink launches every month, so plenty of opportunities to observe these trains.



## NEWSLETTER FINANCES FOR 2025

| Newsletter <b>INCOME 2025</b>           |                              | Newsletter <b>EXPENDITURE 2025</b>                                 |                  |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
|                                         | 2024 figures<br>in brackets  | Leiston Press 1 issue @<br>£142 (Sept)                             | £ 142.00         |
| Individual donations during<br>the year | £ <b>420.00</b><br>(660.00)  | Leiston Press 5 issues @<br>£166 ( March, June, Aug,<br>Oct, Nov.) | £ 830.00         |
| Advertisers                             | £ <b>210.00</b><br>( 240.00) |                                                                    |                  |
| Parish Council                          | £ <b>500.00</b><br>(500.00)  | Leiston Press 5 issues @<br>£196 (Feb.,April, May,<br>July, Dec.)  | £ 980.00         |
| P.C.C.                                  | £ <b>50.00</b>               |                                                                    |                  |
| Xmas craft fair                         | £ <b>50.00</b>               | Bank charges                                                       | £ 42.70          |
| Christmas Greetings                     | £ <b>435.00</b><br>(405.00)  | Gift                                                               | £ 8.75           |
|                                         |                              | Part payment - Macafee<br>anti-virus for laptop                    | £ 69.99          |
|                                         |                              | Adobe                                                              | £ 21.14          |
|                                         |                              | Microsoft                                                          | £ 42.50          |
| <b>Total income 2025</b>                | <b>£ 1665.00</b>             | <b>Total expenditure</b>                                           | <b>£ 2137.08</b> |
| <b>Carry forward from 2024</b>          | £ 2172.93                    |                                                                    |                  |
|                                         |                              | Income (inc C/F)                                                   | £ 3837.93        |
| <b>Total with carry forward</b>         | £ 3837.93                    | Expenditure                                                        | £ 2137.08        |
|                                         |                              | <b>Balance</b>                                                     | <b>£ 1700.85</b> |

In the past I have reported that we would probably have to cut costs by printing the newsletter in black and white. Fortunately - thanks to all the wonderfully generous donations from our readers and village organisations -we have avoided this scenario once again. THANK YOU ALL and in particular those who donated for their Christmas Greetings – slightly down on last year but still a goodly amount.

You may notice from the above that there are no donations in 2025 from the WI or MCC as there usually is. As you are probably aware the WI is closing shortly and as such made a very generous donation from their funds in January. The MCC donation is an oversight on the part of their treasurer (me!!) so hopefully will be rectified after their next meeting.

The carry forward balance of £1700.85 will pay for 8 issues at the most expensive rate (20 pages) or 10 issues at the smaller 16 page copies, but I have every faith that donations will continue.

Thank you Trish for being our independent examiner of the finances once again (and spotting my typos! )

Thank you too, to our regular team of deliverers and all contributors – whether regular or one-offs. It wouldn't work without you all.

New residents wishing to have more information can email me at [barbara.barker.t21@btinternet.com](mailto:barbara.barker.t21@btinternet.com) or if you wish to switch from paper to email or vice-versa.

Remember donations can be made by BACS or cash through my letter box at 6 Meadowview, Rectory Road. Cheques are still possible but they incur us small bank charges.

HSBC  
Middleton Newsletter  
sort code 40-28-33  
account number  
61054236

**PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU'RE NOT ON THE MAILING LIST FOR THE UPDATES / REMINDERS THAT COME OUT SOMETIMES IN BETWEEN EDITIONS AND YOU'D LIKE TO BE.**



## **MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 10 DEC. 2025 AT 7pm AT THE VILLAGE HALL

"Please note that the Parish Council will be pleased to consider adding additional items suggested by residents please do so via the Parish Clerk on [parishclerkmiddleton@gmail.com](mailto:parishclerkmiddleton@gmail.com)".

### **1 Attendance and Apologies**

#### **Attendees:**

Cllr Julian Cusack  
Cllr Steve Thorpe  
Cllr Charles Macdowell  
Cllr Chris Reynolds  
Cllr Giles Piercy  
Cllr Kathryn Rowe  
Cllr Michele Kendall

#### **Apologies accepted for absence:**

Dist. Cllr Katie Graham

#### **In attendance:**

County Cllr Richard Smith  
Parish Clerk  
Members of the public x 5

### **2 Councillors' Declarations of Interest.** None.

### **3 Public Forum.** None.

### **4 Minutes**

a) The Council approved the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 November 2025.

b) Matters arising and Action Points

- \* Cllr Ian Widgington was welcomed to the parish council. Apologies were made for the incorrect surname used in November's minutes.
- \* A donation has been made to the Royal British Legion.
- \* Correspondence continues with Nice Touch Landscapes to improve the village path to the church.
- \* Safeguarding and EDI policies have been sent to SZC Community Fund and uploaded onto the village website.

### **5 Causeway Farm.** Nothing to report.

**6 Sizewell C and other Energy Projects.** A discussion took place regarding problems relating to Fordley Road. One of the main concerns of the residents of Fordley Road is the decision for it to join with the SLR, thereby stopping access to Middleton village via Fordley Road. It is understood that an underpass will be created at the railway line for farm machinery, but completion is not anticipated until February 2028. Fordley Road will be closed in September 2026 and will not reopen until October/November 2027. Residents are concerned that when the road does reopen as a direct access to the link road it will be used as a rat run. The meeting was advised that MPC have made multiple representations to SZC regarding this matter, who have in return, advised that their vehicles must follow designated routes and that SCC are unwilling to consider additional speed limits as they do not meet their guidelines. It appears that SCC are also reluctant to move resources into the area to manage problems with traffic congestion.

A resident of Fordley Road reported that where the road narrows several cars were forced into his driveway to allow oncoming cars to pass. Furthermore, there is no weight restriction on the road, lorries are frequent users and the verges are destroyed. The residents of Fordley Road would like 1) a 30mph speed limit, 2) specific designated passing places and 3) a weight restriction (7.5 tonnes).

It was confirmed that Fordley Road landowners would be willing to contribute their land for the purpose of passing places. MPC will push for a meeting with SCC to discuss Fordley Road and the B1125 issues early in the new year.

It was confirmed that access to the village from Fordley Road, via cycle/walking routes would be available following the completion of the SLR. As plans stand currently pedestrians would need to cross the SLR

There was an expectation that SZC would resurface the B1122, outside the cottages on the Moor, add white lines and cats' eyes, before Christmas. Nothing has been done to date.

Concerns were raised again about the use of Middleton laybys as lavatories. It is understood that SZC are looking into providing temporary toilets for their drivers, as they are aware of the problem. A date has not been provided.

'No SZC traffic' signs have been requested for these laybys, but the response was 'no' (due to cost). Our local MP has since made a request, with no reply received to date.

The B1125 is suffering from rat running and high speeds. MPC would like to see 1) a 30mph extension of the B1125 Westleton to the B1122 junction, 2) an extension of the B1125 30mph limit to the B1122 junction, 3) conventional speed cameras near Middleton Garage, facing both ways, 4) pinch points (or chicanes), narrowing the road to a single lane, as part of the new pedestrian crossing which is being implemented by SZC early next



year and 5) additional chevrons at Yewtree Corner.

The B1125 Action Group has been created to address the problems that are being experienced.

The mitigation required is speed limit restrictions and potentially other restrictions to make it less attractive to use the B1125.

The water main between Westleton and Middleton is going to be replaced early next year. The road between Middleton and Westleton will be closed for two months.

## 7 Emergency Planning Group – c/f

## 8 Councillors Reports

- a) Village Hall Management Committee. Nothing to report.
- b) Middleton Primary School. Nothing to report.
- c) Highways, footpaths and trees. It was noted that one of the doors has come off the noticeboard by The Bell Inn. **Action: Cllr Thorpe to source a quote for making good.**
- d) Middleton Moor Management Group. The meeting was updated on pond clearance. The contractors who carried out pond clearance last year have declined to do any further work. It is now too late for the works to be carried out, and it was agreed to get a plan of action arranged for next winter.

## 9 Finance

- a) The latest financial position was received and accepted by all.
- b) The bank reconciliation for Q2 2025/26 was received and accepted by all.
- c) The following payments were authorised.

| Details                               | Payee                       | Amount | Power         |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|---------------|
| Basic DBS Check, GOV.UK (ratify)      | Parish Clerk, pd 16/10      | £21.50 | LGA 1972s.111 |
| Toner Cartridge, Toner Giant (ratify) | Parish Clerk, pd 20/10      | £37.20 | LGA 1972s.111 |
| Waste Toner, Toner Giant (ratify)     | Parish Clerk, pd 6/10       | £20.83 | LGA 1972s.111 |
| Village Newsletter donation (ratify)  | Village Newsletter, pd 4/12 | £500   | LGA 1972s.137 |

- d) The cost of EDI training for the Safeguarding Lead at a cost of £30.00 + VAT was agreed.

**10 Report from Finance Working Group – Budget for 2026/27.** MPC will possibly need to make a transfer to the Trust to continue operating the recreation ground and pavilion, in the sum of £2500. This does put a strain on the parish council's budget, and that together with other increases in costs will require an increase of the precept to £12,005. This represents a 15% increase in the parish precept, and thus a £6 increase to Band D properties for the year. This budget also includes the annual review of the clerk's salary and other provisions. (If we are successful with our application to the SZC Community Fund for money to invest in the recreation ground, then we will have less need to subsidise that operation from the parish precept.)

Approval was given for the new precept and budget figures. **Action: Clerk to notify ESC of the precept request.**

**11 New Councillor.** See above.

**12 Village Path approach to Church update.** Contact has been made with the contractor to return to site and apply a resin bond to the shingle, to make it pushchair/wheelchair friendly. **Action: Clerk to continue with request.**

**13 Document Re-adoption.** Anti-harassment & Bullying Policy, Information Protection Policy and Document Retention Policy were reviewed and readopted at the meeting. **Action: Clerk to upload onto village website.**

**14 2026 Meeting Dates.** Meeting dates were agreed. **Action: Clerk to add to village website.**

**15 Correspondence.** MPC are in receipt of a Planning Appeal for Moles Meadow, Yoxford Road. The original planning application, (to remove the condition only allowing the property to be used as a holiday home) came to MPC in April of this year for consultation. No objection was submitted to ESC. The planning office have turned the application down citing that the property is part of East Suffolk tourist accommodation and policy is to maintain this at its current level. It was agreed by MPC to write to the Planning Inspectorate supporting the landowner for removal of the condition. It was noted that the village has a high proportion of second homes and holiday accommodation already and that permission was given for the lodges in Title Road. **Action: Clerk to advise the Planning Inspectorate accordingly.**

Following the £500 donation towards the running of the village newsletter, it was agreed that contact with MPC may be made during the coming year, if more funds are required. Figures for newsletter funding will be published in February's edition.

A request has been received from a village resident requesting a pump track (for BMX bikes) at the recreation ground. It was felt that there would not be enough interest in the village to support what would be an expensive endeavour. **Action: Cllr Piercy to advise accordingly.**

A request was made for salt to be available for icy roads in the village. The meeting was advised that all grit bins in the village are full and ready for use. The salt may be used for public roads and pavements but not for private driveways or businesses.

**16 Items for Next Agenda.** None

**17 Next Meeting.** Agreed for Wednesday 14 January 2026 at 7pm, at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

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**MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AS SOLE TRUSTEE OF  
THE MIDDLETON RECREATION GROUND TRUST  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2025  
AT 8.10pm AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

**Attendance and Apologies**

**Attendees:**

Cllr Julian Cusack  
Cllr Steve Thorpe  
Cllr Charles Macdowell  
Cllr Chris Reynolds  
Cllr Kathryn Rowe  
Cllr Giles Piercy  
Cllr Michele Kendall  
Cllr Ian Widgington

**Apologies accepted for absence:**

None

**In attendance:**

Parish Clerk

**To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations.** None.

**Minutes**

Minutes approved of Trustee Meeting held on 12 November 2025. Matters arising. None.

**To review Safety Inspection Report** The latest report has been received and noted.

**SZC Community Fund**

MPC are waiting to hear the outcome.

**Finance**

The following payment was approved.

| Details                         | Payee                 | Amount | Power           |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Pavilion Sundries (Nisbets Ltd) | Parish Clerk (ratify) | £49.75 | LGA 1972 s. 137 |

**Running of pavilion review**

The meeting was advised that there has not been as many bookings this year, in part due to the flood. The above sundries were purchased to replace the wet paper towels etc. The pavilion is infrequently used by village residents and it was agreed that local groups need to be encouraged to use the pavilion, which is advertised on Facebook, where most bookings originate.

The cost for village residents is £15 and £25 for non-village residents. DofE are charged £70 (includes overnight). The pavilion loses money when used for the open gardens and fete. It was noted that from January 2026 the pavilion will run under a new energy plan, cheaper than previous years.

Should MPC be successful in obtaining a grant from the SZC Community Fund and all improvement plans are implemented, along with a strong advertising campaign, it is hoped bookings will naturally increase. Either way, it



was agreed that more effort should be made to promote the facilities. Offering a marquee was also suggested. Advertising in The Fisherman and other local parish magazines is also an option. The Pavilion Manager was thanked for all her hard work and efforts to date and will return to the role in April next year.

**Correspondence.** None.

**Matters for discussion.** None

**Consider Items for the next Agenda.** None

**Next Meeting**

Agreed for Wednesday 14 January 2026 to follow on after the Parish Council Meeting. Meeting closed at 8.40pm.

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**MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14**  
**JANUARY 2026 AT 7pm AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

"Please note that the Parish Council will be pleased to consider adding additional items suggested by residents please do so via the Parish Clerk on [parishclerkmiddleton@gmail.com](mailto:parishclerkmiddleton@gmail.com)".

**1. Attendance and Apologies**

**Attendees:**

Cllr Julian Cusack (8pm)  
Cllr Steve Thorpe (Chair)  
Cllr Charles Macdowell  
Cllr Chris Reynolds  
Cllr Giles Piercy  
Cllr Kathryn Rowe  
Cllr Michele Kendall

**Apologies accepted for absence:**

Cllr Ian Widginton

**In attendance:**

County Cllr Richard Smith  
District Cllr Katie Graham  
Parish Clerk  
Members of the public x 3

**2. Councillors' Declarations of Interest.** None.

**3. Public Forum.** It was confirmed, upon request, that the parish council are now in receipt of the answers to the questions raised by residents to SZC at the end of last year. **Action: Clerk to arrange for submission of the document in the next parish newsletter.** **SEE FOOTNOTE BELOW**

A member of the public has, again, raised the issue of i) resurfacing on the B1122 out the cottages on the Moor, ii) white lines repainted, and iii) placement of cats' eyes; all promised before Christmas and still yet to be delivered. It was noted that a pattern is emerging whereby apportion of responsibility is directed on SZC by SCC and on SCC by SZC. The meeting was advised that SZC, generally, contracts the work, occasionally to SCC. **Action: Cllr Thorpe to seek further information from Richard Knight, SZC.**

Dist Cllr Graham reported on a recent ministerial visit to the district by Lord Vallance, Minister for Nuclear at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. East Suffolk Council has urged the Government to improve coordination and strategic oversight of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). East Suffolk Council will continue to advocate for improved coordination and collaboration between projects and developers and will keep pressing for communities affected by nationally important infrastructure to receive appropriate benefits for hosting them.

County Cllr Smith reported that SCC Highways received a 'red' rating from The Department for Transport. However, it is understood that the statistics provided were incorrect and SCC have lodged a complaint and asked for a formal retraction. A press release has been issued today by SCC giving the correct statistics.

Local government reform continues. It should be known by the end of March whether the government will approve the one unitary council option or the three. SCC have been invited by the government to give their thoughts on May elections this year regarding 'capacity matters' and whether an election would affect such. It is a government decision as to whether elections go ahead; SCC believe that if the elections go ahead there will be a period of three months where SCC will work at a sub-normal level; six weeks before and six weeks after the election. It is anticipated that SCC will hear from the government by the end of the first week in February. If elections do take place in May, County Councillor Richard Smith, will not be seeking re-election. It was also noted that should the elections take place, electoral boundaries will change; boundaries from Saxmundham, Kelsale and Carlton will no longer go north, as they currently do, up to Blythburgh, they will go south down to Orford and will therefore not be in the same electoral area as they are presently. The boundary changes will not apply if there are no elections.

#### 4 Minutes

a) The Council approved the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 December 2025.

b) Matters arising and Action Points

- \* Repairs to noticeboard by The Bell Inn – ongoing.
- \* Precept request submitted to ESC.
- \* The contractor has been instructed to carry out further works to the village path approach to the church. Note, this work is weather dependent.
- \* Re-adopted documents. Anti-harrassment & Bullying Policy, Information Protection Policy and Document Retention Policy have been uploaded onto village website.
- \* Moles Meadow planning appeal – The Planning Inspectorate has been advised accordingly.

**5 Causeway Farm.** County Cllr Smith provided the meeting with an update. On Monday of this week SCC secured vacant possession of the farm. A planning application for dwellings on Hastoe Field was also submitted on Monday. SCC chose not to consult MPC regarding this application, in advance, as it may have led to inappropriate discussions regarding the farm tenant. MPC are now aware of the application and SCC are happy to engage in conversation. Furthermore, it was confirmed that SCC are prepared to donate half of Hastoe Field to MPC. The meeting was provided with a contact at SCC regarding this matter and it was agreed that MPC will meet to discuss further, followed by a face-to-face meeting with SCC.

An opportunity was taken to voice MPC's disappointment at not being included in the proposal for the abovementioned planning application for 13 dwellings on Hastoe Field. To be excluded is disempowering and leaves the PC questioning its purpose. MPC's plea moving forward would be that nothing happens further, without talking to the parish council first. County Cllr Smith confirmed that officers would meet with the parish council to discuss further, and if unhappy with the outcome/response then Cllr Smith will 'step in'. In the meantime, Cllr Smith has agreed to share our thoughts with the planning officers.

**6 Sizewell C and other Energy Projects.** Following the last Northern Transport Forum, Cllr Macdowell had a meeting with SCC Highways and SZC. Three possibilities were proposed: 1) extending Westleton 30mph average speed camera to the B1122 junction and/or extending the 30mph limit to the B1122 junction. 2) Flashing speed cameras near Middleton garage, facing both ways, with pinch points in a similar location, perhaps part of the new pedestrian crossings that are going to be put in by SZC early next year? or chicanes. 3) Vehicle activated speed warning signs and additional chevrons at Yewtree Corner. Whilst chasing a response to the above, SCC were also asked about issues facing Fordley Road; 1) passing spaces, 2) 30mph speed limit, and 3) 7.5 tonne weight limit. Following a third communication with no reply, these requests were hand delivered to SCC and SZC this evening at the Main Site Forum in Leiston, being attended by Cllr Cusack on behalf of MPC. Upon Cllr's Cusack's arrival at the parish meeting, it was confirmed that the correspondence was handed over.

A joint parish council meeting took place, before Christmas, between Blythburgh, Westleton, Darsham, Walberswick, Theberton and Middleton to discuss the B1125 and problems being experienced now and those anticipated in the future. As a result of the meeting, the joint parishes are writing a letter to SCC, ESC, SZC and the police with the abovementioned recommendations. The B1125 Action Group also attended this meeting. It was reported that Darsham PC would be happy to donate towards the cost of banners that may be erected by the B1125 Action Group to reduce the speed and volume of traffic on the B1125. MPC offered similar financial assistance, following sight of the banner.

It was confirmed that the rats now being positioned along the B1125 are there to draw attention, particularly from the press to the problems being experienced and on the back of written correspondence to SZC and SCC by residents, being ignored. It was noted that a new policy, agreed by SCC, addresses 20mph speed limits in built-up areas and that this could be advantageous to the area, following further discussions with SCC.

Cllr Cusack reported back from the MDS Forum in Leiston, held this evening. Urination in laybys - SZC will be introducing facilities at the northern park and ride and at the construction area (main site). They will also be providing appropriate signage for the laybys on the B1122, as seen on the A12. It was acknowledged that there is a problem with speeding along the B1125, and that SZC would be able and willing to invest in a speed indication device and will work with MPC to achieve this. The police acknowledged that this is an area where enforcement is needed. It was also reported that more traffic monitoring will take place in April. SCC confirmed that a response is being drafted to our three requests for Fordley Road (see above). Finally, the outstanding plans for landscaping of the SLR will also be made available.

Lionlink public information exhibitions are now scheduled; dates as follows: -

Saturday 24 January, 11am-4pm, Fromus Centre, Saxmundham IP17 1AL

Saturday 31 January, 11am-4pm, Walberswick Village Hall, IP18 6TZ

Friday 6 February, 2-7pm, High Lodge Leisure, Darsham IP17 3QT

Saturday 21 February, 11am-4pm, Westleton Village Hall IP17 3AD

Saturday 28 February, 11am-4pm, Yoxford Village Hall IP17 3HN

A member of the public thanked the parish council for their efforts to date regarding the energy projects and resulting problems.



**7 Approval of SZC Community Fund contract.** MPC have been successful in securing a £120,000 grant for the recreation ground. The contract has been received and shared amongst the councillors. A 30% increase in the use of the recreation ground has been predicted. It is the aim of the parish council that the pavilion will be running at a surplus by the end of the grant period and that the changes/additions made will benefit the wellbeing of the residents. Surveys will take place before, during and after the grant period to demonstrate we have met our intentions. The PC are obliged to create a ring-fenced fund commencing year one, to pay for the replacement of equipment in the future. The newly reformed Recreation Ground Group met to discuss this further. In 25 years' time we would want to have the equivalent of

£80,000 sitting in a ring-fenced fund, given the lifetime of the equipment. That would mean 1) putting aside surplus from running of the pavilion, 2) increasing the precept and 3) further grants. The PC anticipate saving £3,000 - £4,000 per year, this figure will be given to SZC. The parish council gave their approval, and it was confirmed that the contract will be signed on Thursday 15 January 2026.

It was noted that amongst the listed purchases for the recreation ground is adult fitness equipment. Since choosing this, a preferable option has become known to the Recreation Ground Group who will seek approval from SZC to purchase the better option, over that submitted on the application.

## **8 Emergency Planning Group – c/f**

## **9 Councillors Reports**

a) Village Hall Management Committee. Following works at the pavilion last year, it was understood that an arrangement had been made for unwanted soil to be transported to the village hall, at a cost of £50. The soil did not arrive. **Action: Clerk to look through accounts to establish whether payment was made.**

b) Middleton Primary School. Nothing to report.

c) Highways, footpaths and trees. Nothing to report.

d) Middleton Moor Management Group. The meeting was advised that the Moor Management Group would like to participate in the meeting between MPC and Natural England regarding the pond.

## **10 Finance**

c) The latest financial position was received and accepted by all.

d) The following payment was authorised.

| Details                 | Payee | Amount  | Power         |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|---------------|
| NI Contributions P30 Q3 | HMRC  | £107.15 | LGA 1972s.112 |

**11 Planning Application.** DC/25/4744/CLE. Use of land as a domestic curtilage. Brookside Lodge, Yoxford Road. MPC have no objection to this planning application. **Action: Clerk to advise ESC Planning.**

**12 Village Path approach to Church update.** See above.

**13 Document Re-adoption.** The Donation Policy has been reviewed and was re-adopted at the meeting. **Action: Clerk to upload onto village website.**

**14 Correspondence.** Many emails have been received from residents supporting a 20mph speed limit on the B1125, following SCC's new policy (mentioned above).

**15 Items for Next Agenda.** IT Policy, Assertion 10 and MPC debit card.

**16 Next Meeting.** Agreed for Wednesday 11 February 2026 at 7pm, at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

## **FOOTNOTE FROM POINT 3**

The SZC question and answers mentioned are not published in the newsletter as they are many pages long. Instead they can be found on the Parish Council website as detailed on page 7 of this issue.

**MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AS SOLE TRUSTEE OF  
THE MIDDLETON RECREATION GROUND TRUST  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY 2026  
AT 8.20pm AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

**Attendance and Apologies**

**Attendees:**

Cllr Julian Cusack  
Cllr Steve Thorpe (Chair)  
Cllr Charles Macdowell  
Cllr Chris Reynolds  
Cllr Kathryn Rowe  
Cllr Giles Piercy  
Cllr Michele Kendall

**Apologies accepted for absence:**

Cllr Ian Widginton

**In attendance:**

Parish Clerk  
Member of the public x 1

**To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations.** None.

**Minutes**

Minutes approved of Trustee Meeting held on 10 December 2025.  
Matters arising. None.

**To review Safety Inspection Report and 2026 Inspection Fees**

The latest report has been received and noted. The 2026 inspection fees from East Suffolk Services were agreed. It was noted that these fees (and insurance) will increase along with the increase in equipment.

**SZC Community Fund**

See Middleton-cum-Fordley Parish Council Meeting Minutes 14 January 2026, minute 7.

**Correspondence.** None.

**Matters for discussion.** It was noted that an individual was seen with a metal detector on the recreation ground and had dug a hole.

**Consider Items for the next Agenda.** None.

**Next Meeting**

Agreed for Wednesday 11 February 2026 to follow on after the Parish Council Meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.





## DIARY DATES 2026

### February

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> Benefice Service, St Peter's Westleton **10am**  
 Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> PCC-led Service Holy Trinity **11am**  
 Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**  
 Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> Ashing Service on Ash Wednesday St Peter's, Yoxford **10am**  
 Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> Holy Communion, Holy Trinity **11am**  
 Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> WI – Farewell Lunch – Wentworth, Aldeburgh **Members only**

### March

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> Vinyl Night at the Bell from **6pm**  
 Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**

### April

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**  
 Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> "The Middletones" performing live at The Bell **8pm**

### May

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**

### June

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Sat/Sun 6<sup>th</sup> /7<sup>th</sup> Open Gardens  
 Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> Vinyl Night at the Bell from **6pm**  
 Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**

### July

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**

### August

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Village Fete - Playing Field **2pm**

### September

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**  
 Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> Vinyl Night at the Bell from **6pm**

### October

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**

### November

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**

### December

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**  
 Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> Vinyl Night at the Bell from **6pm**  
 Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**  
 Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> MCC Christmas Party

### DGT Maintenance Services

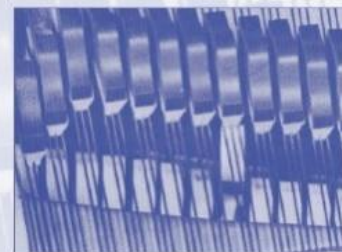
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### Thursday Morning VH Group



Don't forget the Thursday Coffee morning is extended to include soup and roll lunch for the winter months.

No need to book - just drop in to the Village Hall from 11 am for a warm welcome with a cuppa, followed by a hearty bowl of soup made by one of our volunteers. All welcome.

