

Deputy Clerk's Report for Full Council Meeting

16 September 2026

Markets

Harvest Market 12th September

32 stalls enjoyed brisk trade. Some smallholders reported high sales – perhaps visitors were shopping early for Christmas? Fentons Removals once again handled the set-up and breakdown for the event. Singer-songwriter Craig Lucas was well received and added another dimension to the event. Some local businesses, especially the café and food outlets, saw higher footfall than usual.

Christmas Market 28 November 2026

42 pitches have been booked, and we are considering adding further space options to meet demand (we presently have a waiting list). Entertainment has been arranged. Please note that the deputy clerk won't be available from 10 am on the day due to a longstanding family commitment. The Clerk will require support throughout the day from WMPC Councillors, including first aid cover and photography (should the new marketing and events person not be in post).

A suspension of carparks and a closure of the road will be applied for during September by the appropriate councils.

Saturday Market

Nothing to report other than Newbourne Farm is here every week.

Wednesday Market

DPC Fish usually visits The Hill on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays.

2027 Seasonal Markets

The 2027 dates have been finalised, and we have started promoting them. Some bookings have come in already. The dates are

20th March – 5 bookings so far, Barley Brigg Morris Dancers have been booked.

19th June – 4 bookings

11th September – 4 bookings

27th November – 4 bookings

Invoicing for Markets

Invoices are issued monthly, and traders pay promptly. We issue invoices for all seasonal market pitches, and we follow up on any outstanding invoices regularly.

Christmas Trees

We ordered 23 4-foot trees and one 15-foot tree from Stephenson. We want to ensure they are in situ before this year's Christmas Market which we didn't manage in 2025.

Business Training Event

This training event on Friday 25th September is being held in the boardroom at Rolands, Wickham Market. The workshop is led by Nic Pandolfi and will cover Google for Business, Instagram, Threads and AI for Business. Subsidised by East Suffolk Council, tickets are £15, including refreshments. Bookings are being taken via Eventbrite, and at the moment 20 out of a possible 30 have been booked. The Deputy Clerk has visited all businesses in the village, and if she hasn't been able to speak with the business owner, she has emailed them. Promotion has been carried out via The Suffolk Coast, The Parish Magazine, posters, the village Round Robin, Fram Tech, Social Media Posts, LinkedIn, and our market traders, with various local parish councils and business associations receiving emails regarding the event. Bookings are still being taken (there is room for 30 people).

Allotments

The annual renewal letters and invoices are due to be actioned towards the end of September.

Cemetery

There have been two enquiries about people requesting to pre-book ashes plots, and the Clerk is considering what reservation fees to charge. There has also been an enquiry about reserving a burial plot.

The deputy clerk continues to keep the registers up to date and liaises with funeral directors, family members, and the stonemasons and grave diggers. The paperwork has been streamlined, and additional information is maintained, e.g., details of the grave diggers and their PLIs.

The Clerk has met with East Suffolk as several graves need infilling.

From 14 July to 16 September there has been:

1 Burial Interment

0 Ashes Interment

The Deputy Clerk attended a day-long workshop run by Suffolk Wildlife Trust at Coddensham Church. Notes she took on the day, along with possibilities for Wickham Market Cemetery, are included with this report. Suffolk Wildlife Trust offer a free service in which they will come and survey the cemetery and give their thoughts and ideas on how it can be improved for wildlife.

Planning Applications

From 14 July to 16 September 2026, 11 planning applications were received, and 3 meetings were held.

Parish Magazine

The September/October 2026 edition of the Wickham Market parish magazine has begun delivery.

The deadline for copy for the November/December edition is 9th October, and the deputy clerk will then proceed with organising the design, printing and delivery of this magazine by the middle of November.

Social Media

The VWM Instagram now has 187 followers (up from 140), and the VWM Facebook has 208 (up from 143). Posts are also published on the WMPC Instagram and Facebook accounts, and on NextDoor.

Visit Wickham Market Website

New events continue to be added to the Visit Wickham Market website's events listing page. More businesses have been contacted to inform them that their details can be listed on the website's business pages. News stories have also been included, and links to various pages (e.g., Walks and News) have been incorporated into some social media posts.

Emails and Enquiries

Email and face-to-face requests and enquiries are received by the deputy clerk and are dealt with promptly.