

CHESHAM BOIS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at The Parish Centre, Glebe Way, Chesham Bois at 8.00pm on Monday 19th May 2025

Councillor Paul Eckersall, Chair of Chesham Bois Parish Council, presided. There were approximately 45 persons present which included a number of Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerk.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the attendees. Thanks were expressed Cllr Winrow, Chair of the Council for the last three years, for all her hard work particularly with regard to the improvements made to the Burial Ground and ongoing work on the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Chesham Bois. Thanks were also expressed to Cllr Harris and Graham Harris for their participation in the hedge laying work in the Burial Ground. Further work to be carried out in the autumn of 2025.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 22nd April 2024

Minutes were approved

3. Report from the Chair on the Activities of the Parish Council

The Annual Report was circulated. The Parish Council had an income of £164k (prior year £132k) generated by the precept and the Burial Ground, licences and wayleaves. The largest items of expenditure (51%) related to part time staff and office related items, the common and woodlands (18%) and maintenance of the Burial Ground (17%). Reserves to cover long term liabilities and unexpected events are strong and meet recommended guidelines.

Work carried out during the year in the Burial Ground include adopting a long-term hedgerow management plan and hedge laying, grounds, buildings and path maintenance and a service of the eco-compost loo. In September 2024 an English Heritage Open Day event was hosted to mark the 100th Anniversary of the establishment of the Burial Ground.

The war memorial was restored in 2024. Regular tree safety surveys are scheduled. A consultant has been engaged to help update the 10-year Woodland Management Plan.

A Biodiversity Policy was adopted in 2024 and the WG developed an action plan. The annual clearance of bramble from the Thomas Harding Meadow was carried out by the Chiltern Society. During the winter months, councillors and volunteers cleared debris from Bricky Pond.

Buckinghamshire Council chose not to oppose St Leonard's Parochial Church's appeal to redevelop the Parish Centre site to include a new Parish Centre, car park, and Rectory. Despite most survey respondents from CBPC objecting, the Parish Council sought legal advice but found no valid grounds for a further challenge. CBPC will keep residents updated of any further developments.

A draft plan and required consultations are currently being carried out in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. Following independent examination, the next step will be a community referendum.

Upcoming community events in 2025 were noted.

4. Questions/comments from Local Electors

A question was raised whether CBPC have to allow access across land owned by the Parish Council for the Parish Centre redevelopment. The Chair confirmed that CBPC are yet to receive an application for S38 access. CBPC are not minded to give permission for this access although this will have to be formally agreed. CBPC will keep residents informed of developments. Residents can submit their own opinions. It is understood that the development cannot go ahead without this permission.

The development must commence within 3 years of the granting of permission on 7th March 2025, subject to all 26 conditions being met.

Concern was raised regarding trees on the Common in the area of the development being protected. CBPC confirmed that the latest biodiversity requirements are included in one of the conditions to be complied with before the development can go ahead.

It was requested that information was better publicised in future. CBPC confirmed that information was currently published on noticeboards, website, social media (Facebook, X and Twitter), distribution of flyers and a monthly article in Your Amersham magazine.

It was suggested that local group of volunteers could assist with leaflet drops in the future. CBPC to organise a method of communication for volunteer group.

5. Presentation by Harriet Bennett, Chilterns National Landscape

6. Presentation by Arnold Desandere, Chalfonts Beekeepers' Society

Interesting and informative talks were given by both the speakers.

The meeting formally closed at 9.50pm