

## MINUTES of the ASPENDEN ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> MAY 2026 at 7.00pm in THE FOX ASPENDEN

Present                      Cllr Richard Blackburn (Chair)      Cllr Stuart Chambers  
                                    Cllr Tom Poulton                              Cllr Joe Murphy  
                                    County Councillor Sue Nicholls  
                                    0 members of the public

Officer attending              Denise Anderson (Clerk)

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Tracy Devonshire due to work commitments.  
Apologies were received from Neil Cutis (ASPCC) and Steve Parlor (Aspenden Village Fund & The Fox Petanque Team)

### 2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2023

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025 having been circulated previously, were before the meeting and signed as a correct record.

### 3. ASPENDEN PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR'S REPORT

#### Play Area & Village Green Flooding

Terrain Aeration were commissioned to undertake works to alleviate the flooding – the works comprised hammering a hollow probe in to the soil at a depth of 1 metre in to which compressed air was blasted through the probe whilst simultaneously injecting dried milled seaweed. Over a period of time the seaweed expands and contracts with the moisture content in the soil, helping to keep the fractures and fissures open.

The initial results were encouraging and the flooding reduced and the ground began to dry and firm up. We are continuing to monitor and liaise with the contractor to determine if further remedial works are required as we noted the recurrence of the flooding earlier this year, although the extent was far less significant and is seen to drain away over a shorter period of time.

The costs were funded by East Herts S106 monies.

#### Village Green

A memorial bench has recently been installed in memory of Chris Newman, a long standing local resident who sadly passed away, in recognition of the support and help he gave to the village over the years. His wife, Chris, continues to maintain the Village Planters on behalf of the Parish Council.

#### Dandara Phase 2/Aspenden Road

These works have now been completed with the exception of activating the traffic signals which we understand will take place shortly.

#### Highways

The redressing of the Un-named road between Aspenden and Westmill have also been completed and no further works are programmed.

We have noticed an increase in fly-tipping in the area and these incidents, together with potholes, broken surfaces etc. can reported through the following link on the East Herts website:  
<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/highways-parking/report-street-light-or-pothole>

#### Aspenden Village Fete & Dog Show – Sunday 2nd August 2026

The Aspenden Village Fund is pleased to announce that after the successful reintroduction of the Fete in 2024, it will be holding and organising another Village Fete & Dog Show on Sunday 2nd August from 1pm – to 6pm on the Village Green.

Any volunteers interested in helping on the day, please get in touch with Steve Parlor on 07792 204571 or [aspendenvillagefund@gmail.com](mailto:aspendenvillagefund@gmail.com)

### 4. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TERRY SMITH

Councillor Smith was not present at the meeting and no report was received.

## 5. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR SUE NICHOLLS

### Planning Issues

(i) Planning Application 3/24/0966/OUT – Land north of A507 and west of A10

Subsequent to the refusal of this planning application by East Herts Council in October 2025, an appeal has now been lodged by the applicant and will be decided by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State at a Public Inquiry. The inquiry will be held in the East Herts District Council Chamber, Wallfields, Hertford.

The dates for the inquiry have not been announced yet.

Any comments on the original application for planning permission (unless they were marked confidential) will be sent by the Council to the Planning Inspectorate and they will be taken into account by the Inspector who decides the appeal unless they are subsequently withdrawn. If you wish to amend your comments or make any new ones, please contact the Planning Inspectorate quoting reference 6008238 by 4th June 2026. You can make a comment to The Planning Inspectorate at <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

(ii) Planning Application ref: 3/24/1255/OUT - Land South Of A507, West Of A10 Buntingford - Outline planning application for development of employment land (flexible use B2, B8, E(c) and E(g)), informal open space, associated works and infrastructure including a new access from A507, with all matters reserved except for access.

This application was refused by East Herts Planning on 6 May 2026.

Main reasons:

Siting and location - The proposals by reason of scale, form, visual impact and siting on the west side of the A10 outside of the Buntingford Settlement Boundary, would intrude upon and have a significantly harmful urbanising impact upon the 'Cherry Green Arable Plateau'

Poor quality and unsafe active travel connections and unsafe environment for pedestrians, cyclists and other highway users.

The proposed development results in a conflict with Policies BUNT3, INT1, DPS2, GBR2, DES2, ED1, TRA1 and TRA2 of the District Plan (2018) and Policies ES1 and BE2 of the Buntingford Community Neighbourhood Plan (2017). Thus, the proposals fail to comply with the Development Plan as a whole.

### New Five Dinners Scheme is launched

The new Five Dinners scheme is now available through East Herts Council. It offers a simple, easy-to-use meal planning service designed to take the stress out of weekday cooking and provides a weekly plan of five healthy, family-friendly meals, along with a ready-made shopping list, helping you to save time, reduce food waste, and make the most of seasonal ingredients.

The scheme helps you to:

- Try new recipes using fresh, in-season produce
- Cut down on food waste and unnecessary shopping
- Spend less time planning and more time enjoying meals together

The scheme is available free to residents, more information and sign-up details can be found on the provider's webpage <https://fivedinners.com/my-community-food-hub/mycommunity/>

### Ward Freman Swimming Pool

The latest news from the Pool Group is that the freehold of the pool has now been transferred to them. They can now start moving on with Phase 1 of the works to get the pool open again. This includes work in the plant room on the filtration and chemical dosing system and setting up an independent water supply, repairing broken tiles and expansion joints in the pool, a deep clean and heating system assessment. The aim is to reopen by the end of the year. The pool group will be sharing updates in the next few weeks on repair work, dates for open days and volunteer days to tackle cleaning and maintenance. So far over £239,000 has been raised to save the pool.

You can find more information, make a donation and sign up for their newsletter by visiting their website <https://wardfremanpool.org/>

### Buntingford Repair Café

The next Buntingford Repair Café will be at Seth Ward Community Centre, 6 June from 2pm to 5pm. All repairs are carried out for free by our volunteers who will be available to fix variety of items including:  
 Small electrical & battery items (eg hairdryers, coffee makers)  
 Household repairs (eg small furniture, toys)  
 Sewing, mending and textile repairs

Jewellery items

Knife and tools sharpening.

Bike maintenance and small repairs

Booking is required using this link <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/buntingfordrepaircafe> or by emailing us at [repaircafebuntingford@gmail.com](mailto:repaircafebuntingford@gmail.com)

It's worth coming along even if you have nothing to repair as we will have a pop up café selling a range of drinks and homemade cakes. All café sales go towards our running costs such as hall hire and purchasing equipment.

#### **NEB Screening – 24 June, 7.30pm at Seth Ward Community Centre (Bunters Suite)**

The National Emergency Briefing was an event that took place in London last year, hosted by Chris Packham, and featured climate scientists and experts from other fields sharing an honest account of the changes that are happening with climate and nature, including the latest evidence on extreme weather, food security, health and the cost of living and what the implications are for everyday life in the UK.

I am hosting a screening of the film (as local councillor and chair of the Buntingford Community Project) based on the event. Following the 50 minute screening, there will be an open discussion about the issues raised and what the changes might mean for the future of our local community. Also, an opportunity to discuss what we can all do, both individually and collectively, to help make a difference. Chris Hinchliff MP will be attending the event and I am hoping that Ben Crystall, leader of East Herts Council will also be able to attend.

Tickets are free and available at the following link

<https://www.tickettailor.com/.../buntingfordcommu.../2153077>

You can also find a map which includes details of all planned screenings across the UK here <https://www.nebriefing.org/screening-map>

#### **Buntingford Active Travel Fund Part 2 Proposed Scheme**

Herts County Council held a briefing for local councillors and Exec Members from East Herts Council on feedback from the public consultation on the ATF2 plans for Buntingford. There was very positive support for the scheme and in particular the two proposals for 20mph limits within it. There was good support for both options – a small and a town-wide limit, which received support from 60.8% of those engaged with the consultation. I am really pleased that the decision has been made to go ahead with the whole town option. The boundaries of the whole town scheme have not been decided yet and I have requested that it should be expanded to include Aspenden. Further details to follow.

#### **Road Safety Strategy Public Consultation.**

The Herts County Council Road Safety Strategy is out for public consultation until 22 June. You can read it and add your comments at this link. People's views will help us understand which road safety issues and priorities matter most to people who live, work and travel in Hertfordshire.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/transport-and-highways/road-safety-strategy.aspx>

#### **6. REPORT FROM HERTFORDSHIRE POLICE**

The police were not present but PCSO Glen Stanway had submitted the police monthly crime report to the Parish Council.

#### **7. REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS**

The Village Organisations submitted reports which are published as an Appendix to the Minutes.

#### **8. OPEN SESSION**

There being no questions or further business the Annual Parish Meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_