

MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF ELECTORS
HELD ON MONDAY 28TH APRIL 2025



Item	<p>Councillor Maggie Dunn chaired the meeting with Councillors attending Gwyn James, Peter Fisk, Andy Baker, Jenny Stone and Elaine read. Approx 30 members of the public were present along with Ned Harrison & Louisa Antonioli CNNP, Councillors Rebecca Hopfensperger and Sarah Broughton. The Clerk was also present.</p> <p>1. <u>Chairmans welcome</u> Cllr Dunn welcomed everybody to the meeting and reminded everybody present that the meeting maybe recorded.</p> <p>2. Approval of the minutes of the last annual Parish Meeting in 2024 moved the end in order to give MOP chance to read and approve.</p> <p>3. <u>Chairmans summary of the last year</u> Cllr Dunn started by thanking the Councillors old and new for their contributions to the village over the past year. Advised that we now have vacancies on the Parish Council as Matthew Parker has left the village. Advised to get in touch if you are interested. Cllr Dunn gave thanks to Amanda Jackson who has now left the role of Clerk. Jessica Langley is now settling in and embracing the role.</p> <p>Cllr Dunn advised we have had a busy year in way of planning this year with 34 various planning or TPO applications that we have considered. Advised we are still progressing with the Triangle Development, More from Phillip Reeve on that later. Cllr Dunn gave thanks to Phillip and Vivien for all they have given in relation to working on the Triangle and also to Vivien for her help updating the website, which was long overdue! Cllr Dunn discussed the new communication group who have been coming up with ideas for comms for the village and assisting with the production of the newsletter. Cllr Dunn gave thanks to them for their time.</p> <p><u>Updates for the village</u> Cllr Dunn advised that the village gates are in production, Cllr James has been the driving force behind this, Thank you Gwyn. These are to deter speeding, which is a huge concern for many residents. Diversions from the A14 and Compiègne way haven't helped matters. Upon speaking to other Parish Councils they are unfortunately all having similar problems.</p> <p>The severals developments is progressing as we have had 2 amendments. We have considered and commented on. Cllr Dunn will keep everyone informed of updates.</p> <p>Suffolk County Council are planning to utilise the area between Icepits wood and Cox Lane. This will be known as Elms Meadow. We have Ned and Louisa here from CNNP to provide an update later.</p> <p>In May the new GYM Equipment is due to be installed at the Playing Field, by the children's play area, which we hope to update later in the year. There will also be an accessible piece of equipment for wheelchair users. This is for adults and Teenagers. We hope this will be an asset to the village. Thank you, Cllr Jenny Stone, for managing this.</p> <p>The Bus Route – Changes to the route. We are disappointed with the changes that have limited the access to transport for some villagers. We have had some funding to increase services on the A143 and Fornham Rd but not through the village. We will keep you informed of this.</p> <p>Damage in the Village - School Road Noticeboard forced open and sign damage. This kind of damage costs us all as we have to spend money to replace or repair.</p> <p>Devolution – Leaflets for information on the tables. Cllr Hopfensperger will provide an update shortly. Devolution is the transfer of powers from National to Local government. We will have a link</p>	
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to the SCC website from the Parish Website should you wish to look into it further. Suffolk became a two-tier council about 50 years ago but now they are looking to streamline to a unitary council. Great Barton PC concerns are 1 Mayor cannot be in both Suffolk and Norfolk so it will need to be somewhere in the middle. I.e. Bury or Thetford. Mayor will be elected in 2026.

Clerk returned at 8.50 and the Minutes from the last meeting had been added to the website.

4. **Report from County Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger**

Devolution – Directly elected Mayor for local authorities. They want to have these in place across the country. These will happen in May 2026. The likely powers at the moment. Population, Health, Blue Light Services, Infrastructure and Planning.

The Government reorganisation have also introduced a reform for County Council and then district and borough council. Local government designed from scratch it would all come under 1 roof. Housing development etc all under 1 roof. Shaping communities rather than 1 authority doing planning and another strategic, roads and another authority looking at health.

6 areas selected and prioritised. SCC put a strategic business case together for January which they have done. One Unitary Business Case and one 2or3 proposal. Cllr Hopfensperger concerns are inequality geographically. Cllr Hopfensperger referred to figures in the back of the documents handed out. SCC will update them in September and then to the public around December time. Residents will have a chance to have their say via focus groups, and various outlet's.

Highways – Mill Road junction, signs higher and more visible. Renewed the white lining in that area. Cllr Hopfensperger has used her locality budget for this.

Compiègne way – Following the works done we haven't had any more flooding. The road hasn't been closed again. It has however had a catastrophic effect on the roads used whilst Compiègne way was closed. They have been working on a weight limit on Fornham Rd again liked it used to be. MOP raised the issue after the tonnage limit sign was knocked down it was never replaced and even after querying, she was told there wasn't ever a sign. Cllr Hopfensperger advised that is the problem no record but she is pursuing it. Following A14 diversion we had increased traffic in the village; contacted the Clerk who in turn contacted Highways who acted quickly with speeding vans (ad hoc) and increased signage.

Speeding is still an issue. MOP had been cutting back verges but feels its too dangerous now. Cllr Hopfensperger advised she is meeting Cllr Baker in the next few weeks to cut back the pathway on the A143 and to use some of her budget.

MOP discussed the Original TRO for Fornham Road following the death of a young lad (name not included). A Transport specialised solicitor would take SCC to court should it be required. After MOP dismissed by multiple Cllrs dismissed concerns. MOP advised the new contractor is reinstating pot holes / repairs at a much better quality. Cllr Hopfensperger requested copies of letters.

Cllr Hopfensperger also requested that any highways issues need to be logged on the highways app. Or contact Jessica the Clerk. She will happily report the issues for those unable to use the online portal.

MOP raised lorry's using non-Lorry routes – get the reg / route – infringement of the Drivers CPC. There is an online form to report this issue of breaches – again if you cannot then reach out to Jessica and she can report.

5. **Councillor Sarah Broughton Update**

Cllr Broughton advised that budgets had been released and it was disappointing that the car parking charges have increased in bury st Edmunds (and not the other towns!). Seems we are being penalised. Reminded village groups and organisations that we do have a locality budget for funds.

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<p>2.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p>	<p>Local plan closed last week. Weed killer has been reintroduced as what they were using was not effective. Bus Service – Bus route has been affected due to the terrible fire in Bardwell due to the diversion.</p> <p>Council to approve Minutes from Last annual meeting (Item being discussed out of sequence as per previous note). Minutes from Last annual meeting on Monday 15th April 2024 approved, Peter Fisk Proposed, Andy Baker Second, unanimous.</p> <p>Update on the Triangle Development Mr Philip Reeve chairman for the Triangle Taskforce, working on behalf of the Parish Council provided a review of the Triangle development from the early days of 2012 through to the imminent hybrid planning application, Spring 2025. The site came forward in March 2012 to ensure continuing vibrancy of the village following the approval of the 5 strategic sites for Bury St Edmunds. The site was included in St Edmundsbury Borough Council’s Rural Vision 2031 and was progressed through the village’s Neighbourhood Plan (NP) from 2016-2020. The NP promoted the Triangle with 150 homes alongside community facilities. The Plan was “made” by the new West Suffolk District Council in June 2021 as a statutory plan document. Any forthcoming planning application for the Triangle required a Development Brief (DB) and this has been progressed by Barley Homes a commercial development company of West Suffolk Council. The Draft DB did not contain any community facilities or a commitment to the whole 12.4Ha site. The main areas of concern were the site entrance along Mill Road; 27% extra housing and the overall design didn’t reflect the character of Great Barton. WSC adopted the revised DB in November 2024 with only the car park/drop off included in the 1st phase of construction. The Taskforce have continued to engage with Barley Homes and the Cabinet Member for Planning to ensure as many facilities as possible can be delivered to Gt Barton. The Taskforce with the Primary School have put forward a revised layout centred around the 1.1Ha of land allocated as expansion for the school. This involves a redesign of the land layout, a less convoluted route to the car park/drop off and a better location of the MUGA. Mr Philip Reeve concluded by encouraging all residents and related parties to respond to the expected planning application.</p> <p>Elm Meadow update Ned Harrison & Louisa Antonioli from CNNP attended to allow an open session for Councillors and MOP to discuss the upcoming Bio Diversity project which is Elms Meadow and Footpath. Handouts for the proposed footpath layout handed out along with an overview of the development context. Following the field being retired from Agriculture in 2023 it is now in the hands of the Bio Diversity project. The aim is to be a space for nature, a community asset and a maintenance plan needs to in place for this. Surveys have been completed and they have received the recommendations. Bio Diversity net gain can be used to off set impacts by 10% and that is what the council plan to use to fund this space and provide the longevity. Unfortunately, ponds would be quite costly due to the sandy ground, so hedgerows, scrubland and the footpath have been prioritised. Louisa referred MOP to the maps and descriptions. Proposal for community orchard and the best place is still to be decided. Louisa advised that the barn is considered as a separate asset to the land. And this now has a Class Q planning application put forward. This is very new information but now has an impact on the footpath location. The footpath cannot currently start due to bird nesting season. Once agreed the footpath can start in September. Once the location is agreed. All maps and a contact email for feedback will be added to the PC Website for residents to review and feedback.</p>	
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MOP queried why 3 years ago when this all began to discuss a footpath for the field has gone back to square 1. Queried when can he walk the agreed route from 1 year ago. Havebury, SCC etc everyone had agreed but nothing had happened.

Louisa advised she couldn't answer why that hadn't happened. She can only advise on what she has been involved in. There could be a permissive right to walk it. Will query with the PROW Team.

MOP queried why they have sold the building we could have used. And also why is the footpath running through the dwellings land. He would really like to see a circular walk.

Ned will take back the queries, and hope to be able to provide and answer. Other than a health and safety issues.

Louisa to come back to the PC with answers.

MOP confused as to why net zero is over food production? Ned advised this field has been taken out of farming due to the land / size of the estate but the rest of the farm is still being farmed and agricultural. MOP queried duration of project. Louisa advised its 30 years and a 1 off payment is received. MOP queried if the land could be rescinded if Mill Road and the Thurston development became a bottle neck, should a relief road be required. Ned advised that it will remain a council owned asset. If they did that, they would need to create the Bio Net Gain to another site.

MOP concerned over path location re-routed due to selling farm space. Requested why as courtesy residents don't get notified of this. Also concerned that barn is sold off when its home to barn owls, bats etc because they are making money. Is disingenuous.

Ned has advised they have just applied for Class Q. His Remit is the BNG income and ongoing costs for the land. MOP doesn't have a problem with the BNG but the dwelling. Queried if the barns were included. Ned advised it's just the land not the additional asset. MOP also mentioned his house name is incorrect! Overall Resident does support the footpath but requested we make sure we keep it like that. Ned again referred to their contact email address for feedback.

Cllr Read queried the location of the footpath after observing where poles had been installed. Advised that PROW haven't replied to her emails. The community asset is being sold to us but it doesn't feel like that. MOP advised that ironically the orchard used to be on the farm land. For Heritage sense it should be on the farm land. Louisa wasn't aware and couldn't see it on historical maps. If we could prove it then she could use funding.

Cllr Broughton queried if there was any other access than the footpath and orchard as part of this community asset. As she doesn't see that there is. Louisa advised no, but it's with the idea the space including the footpath and orchard will be for the village to enjoy. Cllr Broughton advised she saw it more as a community asset for Suffolk council. Cllr Stone queried the revenue from the meadow.

Ned advised they would be looking to cover costs and BNG marked is hard to define. Cllr Read confirmed after research £1126 per acre/annually over 30 years, totalling £122,500.46 making it quite profitable.

Cllr Read requested more footpaths to make it more accessible for residents. And need to consider dog bins. MOP pointed out the hare coarse vehicles need to not have easy access.

Cllr Dunn queried the preferred footpath location with the MOP whose house it sits directly behind. MOP preferred at the top running along the boundary and not crossing someone's land.

MOP requested an open session for the Elms Meadow Project.

Ideas for facilities such as a wildlife centre, tool storage for orchard etc. Cllr Read said that won't happen as they are selling the barn. Louisa stated she is trying to not let it be steered by the money. MOP queried adding more trees but Louisa advised that actually more trees means more maintenance.

The council thanked the CNNP Team for attending.

8. *Cllr Fisk left at 9.23pm*

Village Matters (any questions and comments)

MOP queried as to what we are doing to bring the village together as per the village website and mission statement and what are we doing for VE day.

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Cllr Dunn advised she was away. Cllr Stone advised there was a lack of interest in putting something together. MOP queried as to why no one had asked him. Cllr Stone advised the WI provide all the cakes etc and unfortunately, they were unable to do. Clerk advised we currently have 3 vacancies on the council and would love more help on the team. Cllr Dunn trying to get a play shown in Great Barton around the war and that era. Cllr Stone, pointed out we have 2000 residents in the village, vacancies on the PC, but at this annual meeting we only have 30 people. MOP advised that sadly a certain age group VE day won't mean much.
Louisa advised Elms Meadow planting will be a community event.

9. **Chairmans thanks**

Councillor Dunn thanked everybody for attending and stated if you would like to be a parish councillor come and get involved. Meeting closed 9.58pm

..... sign and date

..... Print name

Chairman
Signed as confirmation that they are a true record.