

FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING FINCHINGFIELD AND CORNISH HALL END



Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly meeting held at Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday 22nd. April 2025 at 6.30pm

Present: Cllr J. Strange, Cllr J. Berry, Cllr D. Bide, Cllr J. Braithwaite, Cllr R. Duffin, Cllr G. Gilbert, Cllr R. Gill, Cllr R. Stanger, Cllr A. Stanger, BDC Cllr M. Staines and Kevin B Money (Parish Clerk & RFO).
There were also 3 members of the public present.

1. Chairman's welcome

2. **Apologies for absence** were received from ECC Cllr G. Butland and BDC Cllr M. Ault.

3. Annual Parish Council Statement 2024/2025 – Cllr J. Strange

I would like to welcome you all to the annual Parish assembly. This is an important event for the parish as it is when the residents find out about the many projects that have been completed and those that are in their early stages.

None of this can be achieved without a dedicated team of councillors who give their time free.

We have had a busy year with many projects, from the completion of the fence around the pond, thank you again to the Tobbell's for their kind assistance, to the pond gates again thanks go to the Friends of Finchingfield. We also last summer completed the dredging of the pond which will probably need an annual dredge to keep the silt from building up. The pond group are to re gather soon to discuss the Finchingfield Brook, pond upstream and down stream and try to understand the flood risk with some data.

We are in contact with the Essex & Suffolk Rivers Trust and North Essex Farm Cluster to seek their guidance on this project and obtain more data.

We set the annual budget for the Parish with a small increase to 2.90% which was in line with the district council increase. This is quite an achievement after obtaining an increase in our street lighting electricity bills of almost 400% but some good work and challenging work is being done to improve our usage and cut the costs, thanks to the dedicated team of parish councillors working on the project.

There has been an amazing job of making the village pretty by a dedicated team of residents that included painting the metal areas of the footbridge and the bridge. Thank you again to those who have spent their free time on doing a fantastic job. Thanks also to all the businesses who have donated the flower planters for the village, these will be dotted around the village. We should enter next year for the prettiest village in Essex competition or even the country.

Planting more trees must be encouraged and we are able to obtain grants from BDC for this, so anyone willing to lend a hand and suggest where it would be good to plant trees please do get in touch.

The decision not to replace the bridge but to repair and issue an Environmental weight restriction of 7.50 Tons was turned down by the Highways Panel but we are trying to find out the reasons and will keep all advised of the outcome.

We continue to work towards Vehicle-activated speed restriction device for both CHE & Finchingfield, this will monitor the speed of vehicles passing through both villages.

We signed up 20's Plenty campaign over three years ago. There is encouraging news that Cambridgeshire is trialling speed restrictions, and many villages in Wales already have adopted a 20mph speed restriction in their villages, so there is hope!

The Village Hall has a new lovely Kitchen and we encourage residents to use the Village Hall for events. However, on the same subject of Village Halls, it is early stages but with the assistance of a donor who will gift the Parish a substantial amount of money towards a New Village hall and community centre is a possibility which needs your support. The plan does not need any sale of Sportsfield Trust Land and allows us to design and build a community centre for the community and to last as long as the old village Hall. We do need to give a show of hands in order to approve the initial idea as you the residents are the beneficiaries of the Trust. The other projects we are looking towards the next year will be to use the grant money from S106 to improve the area around the playing field and pony field, improve drainage of the playing field in CHE as well as renovate the Pavillion in CHE.

Signed

John Strange - Chair

27th. May 2025

The joint Neighbourhood Plan with Weathersfield is at its final draft stage to be sent to the Braintree District Council.

The main event for the year will be the VE80 Celebration and Memory and the organisation for the event by Councillor David Bide has been fantastic, we hope as many of the residents from CHE and Finchingfield attend the event.

There will be many more challenges and projects in the year ahead and we will try our best to keep the residents informed as much as we can on the usual Finchingfield website.

Thanks again to the amazing assistance from my colleagues on the parish council and to our clerk, Kevin Money for keeping us on the straight and narrow.

4. Report from ECC Councillor Graham Butland

ECC Cllr Graham Butland's report can be found at <https://finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>

5. Report from BDC Councillors Cllr Michael Staines & Cllr Ault

BDC Annual report can be found at <https://finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>

6. Reports from village groups and organisations

A resident thanked all the volunteers in keeping the village green looking so good. More volunteers are needed for local groups There is no Church Warden, volunteers to assist the Guildhall and British Legion.

a) **Neighbourhood Plan** - This item deferred to the Full Council meeting

b) **VE Day event – Cllr D. Bide** - This item deferred to the Full Council meeting

7. Public Participation session

No questions from the residents

The Chair closed the meeting at 6.55pm and thanked everyone for attending