

# FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

## REPRESENTING FINCHINGFIELD AND CORNISH HALL END



### Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup>. April 2025 at 7pm

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 6 members of the public present.

**080/2025**      **Apologies for absence** were received from ECC Cllr G. Butland and BDC Cllr M. Ault

**081/2025**      **To receive member's declarations of interest and dispensations in items on the agenda**  
Cllr R. Duffin declared an interest in item 085/2025

**082/2025**      **To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup>. March 2025**  
**All Agreed**

**083/2025**      **Public participation session** A maximum of 15 minutes shall be allowed for public question time, and it is requested each member of the public speak for a maximum of 3 minutes  
No questions were asked

**084/2025**      **VE Day** – update from Cllr D. Bide

1) Councillors to discuss the Event Cancellation insurance of £189.00p including taxes  
Cllr J. Strange proposed accepting this cancellation policy. Cllr D. Bide seconded. **All Agreed**  
Cllr D. Bide gave a comprehensive update on activities that have agreed to participate. All signs will be erected to direct residents and visitors to the area. A fly pass will take place and model boats on the pond. A full risk assessment for the day has been undertaken by Cllr R. Gill. Any updating on the day will be monitored and recorded. Volunteers for the stalls are still required.  
If an incident happens then it will be addressed via the P.A. system. An Air Ambulance will be landing, if required, on the sportsground. Fire extinguishers will be sited around the area. The police and Fire Brigade have been informed of the event.

**085/2025**      **Diversion footpath proposal** – update from Cllr R. Duffin

The footpath has been walked by Councillors where the proposed footpath goes straight through the owners land. The footpath is being requested to go via the river. The additional length of the footpath is about 200m  
Cllr A. Stanger proposed accepting this footpath diversion proposal. Cllr D. Bide seconded. **All Agreed**  
Cllr R. Duffin abstained.

**086/2025**      **Task Force update** – Cllr J. Berry

a) Planters for Finchingfield Green and Prettying up Finchingfield  
The last Prettying up Finchingfield session was on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup>. April. There were 17 volunteers.  
The footbridge over the pond was completed. Another bench has been revarnished. The edging around the War Memorial was undertaken. Litter picking took place. Footpath down from Bardfield Road to the Pightle was cleared and the overgrown area opposite the Post Office was cut back. The next session is on 17<sup>th</sup>. May.  
9 planters are being delivered that week and volunteers will locate the planters and plant them up for the summer. Alos, remaining bramble bush opposite the post office will be cut back – nearby house owner has been approached to make sure that they are happy with this.  
The benches are an ongoing maintenance job as will be the traditional wooden bins. These are next on the list plus the repainting of the bus shelter.  
The sign (entering Stephen Marshall Avenue) will need renovation. Any objections to paint white with black lettering?

**087/2025**      **Wethersfield Airbase** – any update from last meeting Cllr R. Duffin

**Catch up on Home Office Meeting. 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

This was not attended by Ciaran Gold, who appears to have left Braintree DC, but his position was temporarily filled by Gwen Balch, Marketing and Communications Officer. We haven't had confirmation of this and who

Signed

*JStrange*

John Strange - Chair

27<sup>th</sup>. May 2025

Ciaran's replacement will be but hopefully will do soon.

Residency now up to 615 it was 628 last week but there have been discharges. Still heading for 800 but slow getting there.

Asylum assessment interviews have all been done successfully at Wethersfield, about 20 last week. 50:50 ratio of approved and not approved.

Update on the project financial funding. There is funding approved for Highways improvements around the base. This is to cover Sculpins Lane, the entrance to gate 7 and elsewhere locally.

Apparently, the Wethersfield Airbase Museum funding is being processed. Though when I spoke with Ross 4-6 weeks ago it was moving very slowly.

The Home Office have made a contribution regarding the airbase being added to the sites for development. It's not an application to add the airbase to BDC's sites for development. No substance is given as to what is applied for on it other than mentioning what we've been discussing in the future plans meeting and a map of the airbase included. The Neighbourhood Plan team will raise the question of whether this should be included on this list. What will the subcommittee discuss on 19<sup>th</sup> June? Our District Councillor confirmed that it will be discussed on 19<sup>th</sup> June and in September as it is a big site.

### **WASC**

WASC held an EGM on 10<sup>th</sup> April and agreed to spend £2,000 on a further technical report with Buro Happold investigating the AECOM report

**088/2025 Setting up a working group for the pond** any update from last meeting Cllr D. Bide

This item to be deferred to another meeting

**089/2025 Report on street lighting** – any update from last meeting Cllr R. Stanger

Cllr R. Stanger has written to Npower and the Ombudsman rejecting the offer. No further communication has been received. Cllr D. Bide to look into changing Street lights to more energy performance.

**090/2025 Traffic monitoring CCTV** – update from Cllr D. Bide

1) Weight limit signs for Bridge

Quotes attached for ANPR camera to cover Finchingfield bridge. Surveyed, quotes attached along with approval of GW Hardy for sighting the camera on the outside of their building, as attached.

Placing recording equipment also to be discussed with GW Hardy or Wethersfield Museum. Would PC be happy to cover electricity cost annually for camera and storage equipment of 150W system = 0.15 kWh x 24 hours/day @ £0.38 x 365 days a year = £499.32 per annum of electricity. Plus, annual maintenance charge as below. 3 quotations have been received. Electricity cost about £500 pa. The quotation from Eden was preferred.

EMI £1440 install and £220pa maintenance.

Eden £1300 install and £160pa maintenance.

Bell £1600 install and £300ps maintenance

Cllr D. Bide proposed accepting the Eden quotation. Cllr J. Strange seconded. **All Agreed**

2) Variable Speed signage into the village. No further update

**091/2025 CHE issues** – any update from last meeting Cllr J. Strange

- Pavilion repairs have been completed. Orchard is good. Beacon will be lit
- Football nets to be purchased. ROSPA inspection has taken place
- Horse and Groom requesting use Sportsfield. **All Agreed**

**092/2025 Neighbourhood Plan** – any update from last meeting Cllr R. Duffin

John Pearce will be responding to BDC call for sites on behalf of the Neighbourhood Plan, but Finchingfield and Wethersfield Parish councils should also back this response up.

We still await the Phase 1 Place Services report on a Conservation Area. David Sorapure is on holiday after the site visit and there is a lot was hanging on it and may will involve senior people at ECC. We hope that TFA may be willing to fund a phase 2 if it gets that far but will cross that bridge when we get there.

1. Valued Landscape Designation going ahead. Still awaiting onsite visit by consultant as she's been off with coronavirus. Richard has created Dropbox with a mountain of research for her to use, so hopefully she can hit the ground running
2. Just paid £276 to get ecology data from Essex Field Club. Don't worry won't be asking PC for reimbursement.
3. Case study of pond restoration at Spains Hall provided by the Farming and Wildlife Advisory group
4. Awaiting (free) ecology data from Ground Control Grays Farm
5. Working with North Essex Farm Cluster Emma Gray on data mapping

Signed

*JStrange*

John Strange - Chair

27<sup>th</sup>. May 2025

6. Interviews with NPA residents (esp. CHE) ongoing to get some 'local perspectives'. Bob Stanger helped here.
7. Research on writers ongoing (working with Guildhall & others).
8. Research on artists ongoing (ditto). JP just gave me another artist to add - that makes 14
9. Liaising with two photographers (organised by RD). Rick and Richard are due to meet to collect data.
10. Currently working on historical settlement patterns / sites of listed buildings
11. Drone video of NPA produced
12. More work on photos and recreational activities required
13. Chasing ECC on LNRS review for Airbase

The 7.85 acre field adjacent to the Christmas Tree site is now to be likely sold to another speculator @ £130k = £16.5k per acre and the Solar Farm in CHE on the BDC call for sites. In Richards interviews with landowners, they are stating they get regular calls from developers. Recent developments underline that the NP is very important to the district.

**093/2025      s106 monies** – update Cllr R. Gill

How much have we got?

FPC have got £22k worth of **Public Open Space Contribution** money

- £1,171.29 to be spent by Jan 2028
- £20,889.75 to be spent by June 2029

FPC have a further £60,808.67 of **Outdoor Sport Contribution**. I am told this has been earmarked for the BMX track. There is no time limit to use this contribution.

**What can POSC money be spent on?**

Public Open Space Contribution money is for the provision, improvement and enhancement areas of public open space and facilities thereon. FPC is not expecting any further S106 money and open spaces contribution is triggered by Developments of 10 or more dwellings.

FPC is asked to update its Potential Open Space Improvements plan (POSI) annually in November for submission by January in each year. The document receives Cabinet approval at Braintree Council, so projects cannot be added mid-year. If we wanted to wait and add further things onto the plan, we could do so in November for approval in January 2026. We would still have plenty of time to spend the money.

We don't have anything on the POSI at the moment relating to the village green. Is there anything we would want to consider including for future years?

**What does our current POSI include?**

Playing Fields, Finchingfield

Upgrade of children's play area, BMX/skate equipment + more activities.

Soft surfacing, fencing around playground, access gates and signage.

Improvements to Pony Field to enable ball games to be played.

Cycle parking.

Off Stephen Marshall Avenue

Signage, information boards, seating, litter bins and surfacing.

Building and play area renovation.

Cycle and disability parking

**Proposal**

The ramp into the playground isn't fit for purpose. It slopes off (see pictures) which makes it unsafe for wheelchair users and difficult for pushchairs. It is crumbling away in places. There would also be benefit in adding some addition fencing to the sides to limit the risk of small children falling as they can easily fit under the handrail. If the PC are happy for me to, I will look to gain some quotes so we can move this work forward. From speaking to families in the village, some additions to the playground would also be desirable, especially for those with additional needs. Some examples linked below.

- Sensory equipment e.g. musical and sensory playboards
  - [Bells | Playground Equipment | Creative Play](#)
  - <https://creativeplayuk.com/playground-equipment/sensory-play/chimes/>
  - [Cogs | Playground Equipment | Creative Play](#)
  - [Rainwheel | Playground Equipment | Creative Play](#)
  - <https://creativeplayuk.com/playground-equipment/imaginative-play/abacus/>

Signed

*JStrange*  
John Strange - Chair

27<sup>th</sup>. May 2025

- Imaginative play
  - [Motor Play Panel | Playground Equipment | Creative Play](#)
  - [Cafe Playtown Panel | Playground Equipment | Creative Play](#)
- inclusive swings <https://creativeplayuk.com/playground-equipment/swings-springs-spinners/basket-swing/>
- wheelchair roundabout <https://creativeplayuk.com/playground-equipment/swings-springs-spinners/wheelchair-inclusive-roundabout/>

Other upgrades that park doesn't currently have could also be considered e.g. trampoline, trim trails, climbing A frames, seesaw.

- <https://creativeplayuk.com/playground-equipment/trim-trails/adventure-trail-8/>
- <https://creativeplayuk.com/playground-equipment/trim-trails/adventure-trail-6/>
- <https://creativeplayuk.com/playground-equipment/swings-springs-spinners/small-square-trampoline/>
- <https://creativeplayuk.com/playground-equipment/swings-springs-spinners/seesaw-round/>
- <https://creativeplayuk.com/playground-equipment/trim-trails/a-frame-log-net/>

Other Proposals so far that would require inclusion on submission in November 2025:

Path / cycle way around the playing fields and pony field through the woods, a surface that can be put down quickly and be fun for kids and parents teaching them how to ride a bike.

#### **094/2025 Planning – including any Current Planning Applications requiring a response**

**25/00790/HH** - Wellgates Bardfield Road Finchingfield

Proposal: Replacement single-storey side extension

**RESOLVED:** Finchingfield Parish Council has no objections to this planning application

**25/00866/TPOCON** - The Old Parsonage Barn, The Pightle, Finchingfield

Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area:

T2 Common Horse Chestnut- Reduce lower lateral projecting towards cypress hedge by circa 2m to alleviate end loading. T3 Purple Leaf Plumb- Full canopy to reduction up to 2m to encourage growth (canopy is beginning to fail) T4 Common Ash- Fell to ground level

**RESOLVED:** Finchingfield Parish Council has no objection to this planning application subject to the Tree and Conservation Officers' approval

#### **For Information only**

**25/00560/PLD** - 15 The Causeway Finchingfield Essex CM7 4JU

Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development - Installation of Solar panels to rear elevation

The purpose of this correspondence is simply to ensure that you are aware that an application has been received for the above development. It is not seeking a consultation response from yourself and any objection/support received in respect of the application is likely to be immaterial to the consideration.

#### **For Information only**

**25/00409/HH** - Elms Farm Stambourne Road Finchingfield Essex CM7 4PG

Single-storey side extension

BDC has informed FPC that after due consideration the decision is "Application Withdrawn"

#### **095/2025 Planning Decisions made by BDC**

**25/00318/HH** - 1 Coronation Cottages Heards Lane Cornish Hall End Finchingfield Essex CM7 4HF

Proposed two storey rear extension & front porch. **Application GRANTED**

#### **095/2025 Finance**

- 1) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. March 2025  
Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. March 2025
- 2) To receive the comparison of Actual against Budget 2025/26  
Councillors noted the comparison of Actual against Budget 2025/26

Signed

*John Strange*  
John Strange - Chair

27<sup>th</sup>. May 2025

3) To approve the payment of Accounts for April 2025 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council financial requirements. **All Agreed** – see link for payments <https://finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/finance/>

**096/2025 Items for next agenda**

Christmas, Christmas Tree and lighting: Data on Tourist (Cllr M. Staines): Electric Feeder pillar Cllr D. Bide:

**097/2025 Date of next Full Council meeting – 27<sup>th</sup>. May 2025 at Finchingfield Village Hall at 7.30pm**

**098/2025 Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Councillors to Resolve that by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**099/2025 Councillors to discuss Trust matters**

**100/2025 Closure of the meeting**

To close the meeting having considered and determined all items of business.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.30pm and thanked everyone for attending