

Agenda Notes

1. To consider and agree the next steps regarding the separation of the Parish Council.

This item is for us to agree the content of the newsletter.

It is worth noting that a Parish Meeting is similar to a Sub-committee meeting. There is no automatic Planning consultation but the Meeting can of-course sign up for planning notifications and comment as a Parish Meeting as well as individuals.

2. To consider leadership of the Councils from May 2024 – April 2025

As per Rick's email, Councillors need to consider who would be happy to step up as Chairman and whether this is a role that is shared among Councillors on an annual basis.

3. To discuss a connecting people with nature project.

Ben Thompson has sent the following to Paul Bartlett:

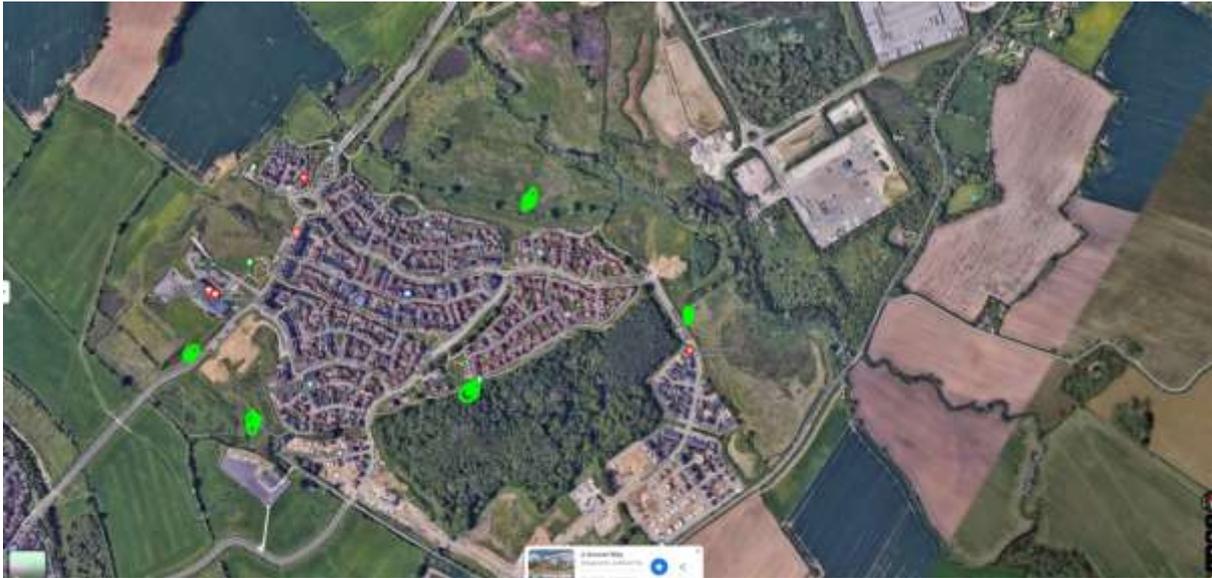
"An idea occurred to me today to better connect the community to the wild around the area.

There are maybe 4 or 5 spots where it would be great to have a mini version of the Finberry community notice board (a weatherproof, lockable notice board that can be written on) where we could write wildlife sightings at that location to look out for. The wildlife changes over the seasons and so it would be great for say myself, Ian Rickards from KWT and Robert Carr local birder to be able to write on these and say look out for x,y and z. I would suggest whichever company makes the community noticed boards could be commissioned to make some smaller ones.

Just a thought for funding if the parish council wants ideas!

Something akin to the notice board at Hothfield Heathlands, but doesn't need to be as big.

It would be good to deliver information at the spots below as they are key for wildlife:



4. To discuss the footpath connectivity to Mersham.

Ben send the following to Paul Bartlett:

“FYI I am looking to see if I can gain momentum to improve the walking connection from Finberry to Mersham.

I was out in the muddy fields doing the legal paths, but it would be so much easier if the green hard standing section in the map below was legally allowed to be walked without fear of trespass.

I have put a post out to the Mersham group to see if anyone is willing to help support an application, but perhaps it is something the parish council would consider getting behind?

Looking at both sides of potential support/objection - I can only think it would benefit every resident of Finberry/Mersham who walks and it would mean a hard standing route to the Farriers Arms which could be promoted legally, driving business and giving Finberrians a lovely countryside walk to the pub. I've given up on Mark Thompson the farmer every establishing his paths through the crops as per the current system. Objections could be the church commision who own the land, but seriously how would be a problem for them, or the 2 houses that are along that path claiming disturbance, but really lots of people use the path anyway and its just would be nice if they were of the mind to allow people to use it.

Here's my post on Mersham Facebook. It may not amount to any support, but I would hope it could get at least three people willing to support an application. I'd be happy to talk about it more to the parish council if there was appetite:

Hi all, I live in Finberry and I am keen to improve walking connections between Finberry and Mersham. I am a walker, but I know from a previous post I made in the Finberry group about how to walk to our 'local' pub, the Farriers Arms, there is a lot of appetite to have a decent route. Of course it would do nothing but serve the businesses of Mersham if we could

connect it easily through a decent walking route that can be used by all to an estate of 1200 people.

I need residents of Mershams help to do this however.

I have made a map below of the current legal walking routes to Mersham. The lines in yellow are soft ground through muddy fields and the farmers often don't establish the paths in the warmer months making using them impossible (I have tried to get this sorted out without results).

However, if we were able to legally use the green line to then continue along the blue lines, we would have a lovely hard standing walk between the two communities that could be used all year around and benefit those in wheelchairs/prams etc.

I'm sure many people use the green line anyway and so I need help to represent an application for a Public Right of Way along that green line. If you are a resident of Mersham and have used that path for 20 years or more, would you be able to contact me? I need witnesses to say they have used it for 20 years as part of an application.

It would be great to have support for this.

The wording around evidence to apply for a public right of way I have found that would need to be demonstrated is below:

'If you wish successfully to claim a right of way, you need to be able to show: use by the public at large (not just employees, tenants or licencees of the landowner etc); use ('enjoyment') for the full 20 years, but you will not need everyone to show they each used the way for 20 years so long as there is good evidence of use throughout the 20-year period; use was done openly, and not by breaking down fences, or walking across a field in the middle of the night or when it was known the landowner was away on holiday; no permission was given by the landowner.'

5. To agree meeting regularity and dates for 2024 into 2025.

The Parish Council needs to consider which meeting format it wishes to have for the future:

- a) Stay as is with 10 PC meetings plus Sub-committee meetings and Annual Parish Meeting
- b) Change to a meeting every other month in Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sept and Nov plus Sub-committee meetings and Annual Parish Meeting.
- c) Change to 4 meetings a year in Mar, May, Sept and Dec plus Sub-committee meetings and Annual Parish Meeting.

All of the above options also allow for additional Extraordinary meetings to be called with 5 working days notice.

Attendance for the meetings has been as follows:

Month	2022	2023	Average
Jan	7	4	5.5
Feb	5	5	5.0

Mar	4	5	4.5
Apr	5	6	5.5
May	5	6	5.5
Jun	5	-	5.0
Jul	4	5	4.5
Sep	4	4	4.0
Oct	4	5	4.5
Nov	3	5	4.0

Please could you consider this and then, we can vote on the 3 options tabled.