



HEATH & REACH PARISH COUNCIL



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025

Monday 7th April 2025

At The Barn, corner of Eastern Way & Leighton Road, Heath & Reach at 7.00pm

MINUTES

1. Present: *Cllrs. Boyden, Reading, Inns & Bevan.*

2. Apologies: *Cllrs. Fitzpatrick & Smith.*

2a. Absentees: *None.*

3. Introduction by Parish Council Chairman: *Cllr. Boyden opened meeting due to Cllr. Fitzpatrick absence.*

4. Approval of Annual Parish Meeting minutes for April 2024: *Approved and signed by Cllr. Boyden.*

5. Parish Reports (written or verbal):

i) The Allotment Trustees (United Charities): *Please see attached.*

ii) Heath Barn: *NS reported The Barn is financially sound and is currently doing very good business. New chairs have been purchased and some small card like tables are currently in the process of being brought.*

iii) St Leonards Church: *Church Warden RP reported on the new driveway and the replacement of new LED lighting in Church and Hall. Woodworm work has been carried out in Church.*

iv) Cllr. Mark Versallion: *MV reported:*

- *Despite a 5% increase in Council Tax and the budget being agreed, Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) continues to lay off staff and will face challenges throughout 2025/26 in maintaining important services. This issue is not unique to Bedfordshire, as many councils are experiencing similar difficulties. CBC is considering outsourcing traffic wardens due to high expenses.*
- *MV referred the Church land planning application to Committee to determine clarification.*
- *The planning application for 41/44 houses at LB Garden Centre will not be defended by CBC.*
- *Regarding the Luton Airport expansion plan, public opinion is evenly divided.*
- *MV has recently communicated with Jim Goldsmith, the Police Chief Inspector, concerning issues of anti-social behaviour within Stanbridge & Tilsworth.*

- *CBC is delaying traffic calming measures in the Village. They acknowledge that Woburn Road by Red Lion Court/Grange Gardens is too wide, and adding pinch points could slow traffic. MV expects updates on Jennifer Yeboah's work on Thrift Road congestion and Village traffic calming by the next FPC meeting on May 25.*

v) Parish Council Chairman's report: *Please see attached.*

vi) Police Reports: *PC's Kirsty and Luke from Leighton Buzzard attended the meeting. Since the beginning of the year, there have been 20 reported crime incidents in Heath & Reach, including 6 domestic incidents, 1 business theft, 5 other thefts, 5 public order offenses, 1 instance of criminal damage, and 2 classified as other offenses. They will be present in the Village over the next three months to monitor and address speeding issues.*

6. Q & A session to Parish Council Chairman:

This meeting is not a Parish Council (PC) meeting: it is aimed to give residents a chance to raise any village issues that they would like to share with others and for the Parish Council to consider for 2025/26.

MOP asked Police about parking on zig zag lines. Parking on zig zags is a ticketable offence, Police would normally forward details to CBC Traffic Management, but unfortunately that department is no longer active.

Concerns raised over amounts of clay being backfilled into quarries and this affecting the drainage. Cllr. CR advised he has recently liaised with the Quarry (Stone Lane Quarry). CBC review drainage system quarterly inline with planning permission granted.

Meeting closed at: 7.31pm

In accordance with The Data Protection Act 2018 all attendees of the meeting are hereby notified that the meeting will be recorded as an aide memoire for the clerk when compiling the minutes. The recordings are held securely and are deleted after the resolution that the minutes are a true and correct record.