

Helions Bumpstead Parish Council

Parish Clerk/RFO: Kevin B. Money

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly meeting held on Monday 13th. April 2026 at 8.15pm in the village Hall

Present: Cllrs. N. Turner, R. Etheridge, R. Kirkland, N. Nicholson, A. Parker, ECC P. Schweir, BDC Cllr D. Garrod and Kevin B. Money Clerk/RFO to the Council. There was 10 members of the public present.

Cllr N. Turner was elected to chair this meeting only

1. Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr S. McGrath

2. Minutes from the 14th. April 2025 meeting All Agreed

3. Chairman's Report – Cllr Steve McGrath

The proposal for 5,000 houses occupying the North of our parish is again under consideration and there is pressure within Braintree Council to develop in the North of the district because there is already so much development planned in the South. Areas on the edge of the district are particularly attractive as they blot less of one's own district and some of one neighbours'. The closing date of the Consultation is in early March.

An email of a couple of lines to planningpolicy@braintree.gov.uk with any of the objections below would have a real effect in influencing Braintree Councillors that the isolation of our area would make a large development irresponsible. Quote the designation: STUR2293_ Land South and West of Haverhill.

The Parish Council has already pointed out that there is no local employment for the occupants of 5,000 houses, that there is No Railway, that Cambridge is 18 miles away on a road (the A1307) which has 7 large signs warning of high casualties and a Danger of Death and that the rush hour bus takes one and a half hours to get from Haverhill to Cambridge. The suggested site is on the highest part of Essex and will be visible for miles, separated from Haverhill by the ring road and an industrial estate containing chemical factories and will increase flooding in the surrounding villages.

However, it is the residents that the Consultation is aimed at, so please write and explain briefly why development in the north of our Parish is a bad idea. Further information at:

www.braintree.gov.uk/localplanengagement

The Sports Pavilion Management Committee has unfortunately closed, leaving the pavilion on the Recreation Ground without management and underused. We urgently need to find uses for the building to justify its upkeep and any ideas will be gratefully received. The Parish Council may include a village meeting in the Annual Parish Assembly in April to discuss this.

Don't forget the village litter pick on Saturday 21st March, 10 am at the village hall.

The Village Email system now has quite a few names on it, but we think it might become viable if there were a co-ordinator in the village to operate it, as this would make it seem less unapproachable. Please could any volunteers let a Parish Councillor know that they would be willing to do it.

4. County Councillor's Report – ECC Cllr Peter Schweir

ECC Cllr P. Schweir annual report can be found at

<https://helionsbumpsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk/parish-council-minutes/>

5. District Councillor's Report – BDC Cllr Diana Garrod

BDC Cllr D. Garrod annual report can be found at

<https://helionsbumpsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk/parish-council-minutes/>

6. Sports Pavilion update and way forward

At the cricket club AGM, the committee have offered to take over the management & upkeep of the pavilion, but, on the proviso that there is PC support of £1500 PA (to be reviewed annually to support the main overhead costs namely:

Insurance: Council Tax: Fire Inspection: Electricity (mainly standing charge)

I have already highlighted the benefits & cost saving to the PC both in my email & private conversation with certain councillors

The costs have been once again reviewed & have been cut to the bone - there was discussion about amending insurance cover to exclude subsidence which would dramatically reduce premiums, but, a risky strategy

Alternative use hiring for kids parties / youth groups / firms sports days was also discussed in an effort to increase income to widen villagers' awareness that this was a possibility via village magazine, notice boards, public house, but not wanting to take any village hall bookings away

Fundraising is tricky, no one wants to do it I am afraid - a lot of hard work for minimal reward, however, a quiz at the pub was suggested where both Rhanny & Doug (question setter / quiz master will be willing to consider) In our research of other neighbouring villages, it appears that upkeep of recreation ground / sport pavilion is funded through parish precept - I am sure that this has been discussed, but a potential solution if villagers wish this asset to remain & maintained in good order

The final point I need to raise is that of the showers

I have had quotes from 2 village tradespeople to carry out the work, aided by volunteers plus discounted materials - there needs to be a decision on this

It is a shame that this could not be discussed first in committee where, Matt Vickery (Treasurer HBSPV/ cricket club member), Jon Plant (cricket club treasurer / HBSPC committee member) & myself were and still are happy to attend to discuss

Mr. West gave a report on the up-to-date on the pavilion. A grant support of over £1500 per year is required to keep the pavilion viable. The water tank may have legionnaires in situ. The cricket club now only plays on Saturdays.

More members are required which could result in the mid-week league being started up again.

Cllr N. Turner to meet with the Cricket Club representative

7. Reports from Village Organisations

The Bowls club have enjoyed a successful season with membership running at 20, winning the NE Essex league for the first time in 20 years taking us as a result through to the Essex Finals later in April in Colchester Individual club members also enjoyed success winning the Langham 4's & pairs at Five Lakes in Maldon, & the Steeple Bumpstead bowls Club 90th anniversary competition.

The season re starts on 1st September with our AGM & fish n Chip supper

The Church – The present vicar retired yesterday and are starting to replace him. The Church is now linked with 5 other churches in the area. A new vicar may not be in place for up to a year. Services will continue 3 times per month. The church is in a structural sound position. The Parish Council expressed their thanks to the Church Wardens for all their efforts. There has been a reduction in the congregation numbers over the years.

8. Public Participation Session No questions were asked

9. Chair to close the meeting

The vice-Chair then closed the meeting at 9pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

N Turner
Vice-Chair

11th. May 2026