

Minutes of the Meeting of Buscot Parish Council
held on Wednesday 19 March 2025 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Jo Scanlan (Chairman), Dan Billington, Lizzie Hall, Cath Parris and Helen Woof.

County Councillor Bethia Thomas, Keith Assirati-Wilkie and Andy Gunn (National Trust).

Public 6.

49. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from District Councillors Katherine Foxhall and Viral Patel. The Chairman welcomed Keith Assirati-Wilkie, Estate Manager, to his first meeting of the Parish Council.

50. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Billington reminded the meeting of his previous declaration that although he was employed by the National Trust his membership of the Parish Council was in a personal capacity.

51. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 January 2025 were adopted and signed as a correct record, subject to it being noted that although funding had been agreed to repair the churchyard wall at Coleshill, the works remained to be completed.

52. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

53. Public Speaking

Neil Miles made reference to the speed of traffic travelling along the A417 through Buscot, which was a continued danger to both motorists exiting the village on to the A417 and those residents whose properties fronted the main road. It was agreed to discuss this matter further as part of the traffic management item later in the meeting.

54. District and County Councillors Reports

The District Councillors and County Councillor's reports had both been circulated in advance of the meeting.

County Council

County Councillor Thomas provided further details regarding the proposed reform of local government arrangements across Oxfordshire, advising that the Vale's preference was for a unitary authority combining the Vale, South Oxfordshire and West Berkshire District Councils. She announced that additional funding had been agreed to fund an annual programme of roadside drains and gulley clearance works across the County. Finally, she advised that the proposed Solar Farm development at Coleshill was in doubt due to a further solar farm planned 'east of Swindon'.

55. Traffic Management

Further to the public statement made by Mr Miles earlier in the meeting, the Clerk reminded the meeting that the Parish Council's application to reduce traffic speeds to 30mph on the A417 was currently with the County Council. Unfortunately, as previously reported, consideration of the application had been delayed due to an administrative error at the County. Councillor Thomas advised that she would be asking a question at the next meeting of the County Council regarding the need to progress the application for the 30mph speed limit as a matter of urgency, together with the need for more regular gulley clearance.

The Clerk confirmed that the poles for the Speed Indicator Device to be located on the A417 had been installed and that he would arrange for the SID to be displayed as soon as possible. It was suggested that Coleshill Parish Council be contacted to borrow its handheld traffic speed device, to measure traffic speeds on the A417 through the village once the SID was in place. Neil Miles agreed to undertake the survey on behalf of the Parish Council. The Chairman asked the National Trust to investigate whether it was possible to install a footpath to allow the tenants of 1,2 and 3 Buscot access to the properties without having to walk on the main road.

The Clerk confirmed that a road closure protocol had been agreed with the County Council in respect of both the A417 and Buscot Wick during flooding emergencies. Councillor Billington stressed the need for an agreed emergency plan to be able to respond to any future flooding emergencies. Councillor Thomas referred to the Community Resilience website for assistance.

56. Flooding

Mr Gunn from the National Trust gave an update on progress with the Trust's Flood Alleviation Plan for the parish and circulated an outline design. He explained that land above Buscot would be subject to a Topographical

Clerk

**Mr
Assirati-
Wilkie**

	survey to assist with the design stage of the plan. He explained that the proposed plan was designed to alleviate flooding from land water run-off and would not solve flooding caused by rising river levels. The next stage would involve stringent assessments, a full drainage survey and the submission of a planning application, with delivery of the plan expected in August/September. In response to a question, Mr Gunn confirmed that the proposed scheme was Buscot village focused but agreed to have further discussions to better understand the flooding challenges faced by Buscot Wick. The meeting discussed the need for additional sandbags to protect properties and it was agreed to discuss this matter further with the Trust, once the level of demand was established.	Cllr Billington Clerk
57.	<u>National Trust</u> A report on Trust activities had been circulated prior to the meeting. Mr Assarati-Wilkie provided the following updates:- • Flood reinstatement works to four properties, including Buscot Tea Rooms • Property maintenance – replacing garage doors • Countryside update – main car surface, removal of waste bin, installation of gangway and pontoon at Cheesewharf to avoid further bank erosion • Tree works – Almond trees in the car park and Poplar trees on Weir Field. • On further inspection extensive work now required to repair the village hall clock, including planning and Listed Building consent. The Chairman expressed disappointment with the ongoing delay to the village hall clock repairs. She also queried whether the erection of a pontoon at Cheesewharf was likely to attract additional visitors to the area. Mr Assarati-Wilkie confirmed that this was not being publicised. The tenant of the Buscot Tea Rooms stated her disappointment that repairs to the property, following extensive flooding, had not been undertaken in accordance with the agreed refurbishment schedule. Mr Assirati-Wilkie undertook to discuss this with the Estates Manager. Finally, The Chairman reported that a parishioner had recently tried to hire the village hall but had been advised that it was unavailable due to the kitchen facilities being used by Bishopsland. Mr Assirati-Wilkie undertook to investigate.	Mr Assirati- Wilkie Mr Assirati- Wilkie
58.	<u>Correspondence</u> Nothing of note to report.	
59.	<u>Village Events for 2025</u> It was noted that the car boot sale would be held on Sunday	

3 August.

60. Finance

Receipts and payments since the last meeting were noted. Funds were currently £2691 and £1366 respectively across the two accounts.

61. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 21 May (revised date).

62. Any Other Business

(a) Noticeboard – Buscot Village

The Chairman undertook to ask Chris Leniec to repair the village noticeboard.

(b) Grass Cutting – Play Area

The Trust agreed to undertake the first cut of the grass at the play area before Easter. Chris Leniec would then take responsibility for the remainder of the year.

(c) Telephone Box

The Chairman reported that the telephone box was currently under repair.

(d) St Mary's Church

It was noted that St Mary's Church would be open daily from 31 March.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

Chairman