Toddington Parish Council's Mission Statement
Is to represent and serve the local Community by preserving the village's character, supporting sustainable development, and enhancing Toddington Community Life for our residents

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Toddington Parish Council held at Toddington Village Hall on Tuesday 13th October 2026 at 7.30pm

Present:

Chair:	Cllr Lissaman
Councillors:	Cllrs: S Bacon, L Butler, D Julians, S Killinger, J Levinson, C Peddar, D Stacey
Clerk:	-
Assistant Clerk:	A Wilson
Unitary Councillor:	None
Members of the Public	1

91 **To receive apologies for absence.**
– Local Government Act 1972 s85 (1) Cllr T Collins, N Evans

Resignation of Cllr H Finch received (September 2026). Wishing her all the best in her new job. So, following this resignation, it was proposed and seconded that Cllr Stacey to take on Highways Advisory.

92 **To receive declarations of interest concerning items on the agenda** - Localism Act 2011 C7 s31 and localism act 2011 C7 s33 –
None received.

93 **To Approve accuracy of the Draft Minutes** of the last Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday 8th September 2026 – Local government Act 1972 Sch12, part V1 41 (1)

The draft minutes of the meeting were an accurate record and signed accordingly.

94 **Matters arising** from the Ordinary Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 8th September 2026 *(for information only)*

- Pond Sign ordered from Auckland Manufacturing. They turned up Monday 12th October to fit the sign – met Groundsman to show where the sign is to be placed. Not practical to put sign in while work on pond being done, will return to fit on another day.
- Gateway signs now installed.
- Pond – Duck house to be ordered as part of the Pond Project.

95 **Unitary Councillors Report (***10 Minutes)* – Received and circulated to Councillors. (see attachment)

The meeting will be adjourned for 10 min for members of the public to ask questions or comments on items of business on the agenda.

96 **To discuss items raised in public question time and refer to relevant organisations/committees.**

Resident spoke to say they are interested and supportive and likes visiting the meetings.

97 **The following planning matters have been received from Central Bedfordshire Council to agree comments to be submitted back to Central Bedfordshire** *(10 minutes)* – Town and country Planning Act 1990 sch1 p8

Please see attachment below for Parish Council comments which will be sent to Central Bedfordshire Council.

98 **Clerks Report** *(10 minutes)*

- Gateway signs delivered and are in. (*see photos*)

- Office furniture has been installed and has made a big difference to the office aesthetics and the working areas for the office staff. Blinds and lighting still to be looked into.
- Pond reed removal took place on Monday 12th October 2026 *(originally 30th September)* with a crane delivering the equipment for the reeds removal. Skips were ordered (Groundsman informed this morning that the weight of the skips were very heavy, so likely to be more, but draining water off first). 35 ducks and 13 moorhens have been counted since reeds been removed.
- Pond Clearing Day on Sunday 1st November 2026 ~ Poster now received (being advertised and Assistant Clerk to send to Andy re Village Events).
- Zip Wire – Luton Road – To be installed on 2nd November.
- Zip Wire ~ opening day (with Parkfield's) on Friday 6th November (Cllr Bacon liaising with Mr Purdom).
- Allotment Tenancy Agreements all payments received except for 1 outstanding.
- Clerk contacted BRCC for correct protocol for looking at sponsorship by Companies to sponsor the decorating of the Real Christmas tree as suggestions have been made to Council. A poster to be advertised (for 7-14 days) to give businesses the opportunity to apply to sponsor the real Christmas Tree lighting/ decorating. **Agreed** to contact local businesses giving them the opportunity to sponsor the lights and decorations for the real Christmas Tree on the Green (poster on Village Events page to advertise). Potentially 10 businesses interested already.

- To update on works with Parkfield's (Cllr Bacon). Covering litter picking, the zip wire, planting and watering of the flower planters.
- It was **agreed** for the Parish Council would like to have a Christmas Tree decorated at the Tree Festival (Parish Council). Theme to decorate a Christmas tree (photographs of around the village). Chairperson to co-ordinate.
- Toddington Park Update *(meeting 30th September 2026)* 62 people signed in, to look at the plans.
- Remembrance Day Service, Road Closure requested to CBC, in receipt of Wreath. TPC logo required (Assistant Clerk to organise). Attendance from the Parish Council on Sunday 8th November – to all walk up together as last year to lay wreath.
- Cllr Julians to attend New Councillor Course
- Cllr Peddar to attend Finance Training Course.

99 Finance *(10 minutes) (information circulated prior to meeting)*

- Payments for authorisation

The following payments were agreed to be authorised:

October 2026

Invoice	Payable to:	Payment Details	Admin	Subs	TOTAL	VAT	Grand Total
	Staff	Salary Oct	£ 6,564.24		£ 6,564.24		£ 6,564.24
		Pension	£ 2,051.56		£ 2,051.56		£ 2,051.56
		Tax	£ 2,476.18		£ 2,476.18		£ 2,476.18
DD	Village Hall	Rent	£ 225.00		£ 225.00		£ 225.00
DD	Talk Talk	Internet and phone	£ 56.89		£ 56.89	£ 11.38	£ 68.27

DD	ICO	Annual subscription		£ 47.00	£ 47.00		£ 47.00
	Apex	Office Furniture	£ 2,785.10		£ 2,785.10	£ 557.02	£ 3,342.12
	AW Shaw	Monthly Charge	£ 147.20		£ 147.20		£ 147.20
221712	Aw Shaw	Data clearing pc and remote support	£ 100.00		£ 100.00		£ 100.00
89856	Play Inspection	Risk assessments of 3 park areas	£ 289.50		£ 289.50	£ 57.90	£ 347.40
	Three	Mobile phones	£ 24.04		£ 24.04	£ 4.81	£ 28.85
	M W Agri Limited	Monthly Maintenance & annual hedge cutting	£ 566.67		£ 566.67	£ 113.33	£ 680.00
	BATPC	Dan Training New Councillors	£ 35.00		£ 35.00		£ 35.00
	BATPC	Cath Finance Training	£ 35.00		£ 35.00		£ 35.00
34227301	Cawleys	Collection ~ Cemetery	£ 115.88		£ 115.88	£ 23.18	£ 139.06
24811	Auckland Manu	Welcome to Toddington signs (x5)	£ 3,769.50		£ 3,769.50	£ 753.90	£ 4,523.40
IN76	J. Darlow	Annual Contract (Sept 2026-Feb 2027)	£ 300.00		£ 300.00	£ 60.00	£ 360.00
INV-72587	Lamps & Tubes	Christmas Lighting Display 2026 - Product Rental - Year 2 of 3 Year Agreement & Column Decorations - Lanterns	£ 1,680.00		£ 1,680.00	£ 336.00	£ 2,016.00

- Budget Review. Need a budget monitoring system. **Agreed** to look into this moving forward.

- Discussed first draft of Precept.
  Note – more storage space at Cemetery required for machinery (as space for storage lost due to Pavilion knocked down), drawings to be completed for storage (needs to be in-keeping with Cemetery), fix toilet up there. Cllr Butler to meet Cemetery Groundsman to look at plans/options. New vehicle/lease of a vehicle for Groundsman will need to be looked at.

- Update of Finance meeting held Monday 28th September (Cllr Bacon). In January we agree the precept, need another finance meeting end of November/early December.

- To Receive AGAR from External Auditor and to receive recommendations and confirm review has been concluded and that there is a Statement of Accounts on website as of 29th September 2026.

Audit 2025-2026 Conclusion
The external audit conclusion has been received (attachments already sent to Councillors) and available to the public.

The Parish Council **Resolved** to:

Publish (which must include publication on the authority's website) a statement on or before 30 September to confirm:
- that the audit has been concluded and that the statement of accounts has been published.
- the rights of inspection conferred on local government electors by section 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; and
- the address at which, and the hours during which, those rights may be exercised.
- Keep copies of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for purchase by any person on payment of a reasonable sum.
- Ensure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return remain available for public access for a period of not less than five years beginning with the date on which the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was first published.

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 do not specify the period the Completion Notice needs to be on the council's website, but this period must be reasonable.

The Parish Council further **resolved** to note the minor scope for improvements which has been recommended as detailed below for next year's audit.

Minor scope for improvements in 2026/2027

The Council has correctly displayed that their figures were restated, but have not provided an explanation as to why they were restated. In future, the Council will ensure that they provide an explanation for figures that are restated.

The Council provided minutes demonstrating that the 2024/2025 audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and associated audit report were noted, but the minutes did not cover discussion of a qualification of the audit report and the appropriate remedial action. In future, the Council will ensure that the minutes fully record the basis of any qualification of the accounts and the remedial action agreed to prevent repeat qualifications.

100 Two new Defibrillators at Cemetery Entrance and Village Hall

- **Agreed** to accept the 41 gifting of the Defibrillators to Toddington Parish Council – one placed at the Cemetery and one on the front of the Village Hall.
- Discussed the future maintenance and whose responsibility to replace and maintain. **Agreed** that Toddington Parish Council will be responsible for logging information on The Circuit and Webnos and registering both of these defibrillators. (Note: Batteries and pads, etc. for defibs to be put on precept).
- **Agreed** that Toddington Parish Council will not take on any further defibrillators, this will have to be the sole responsibility of the defibrillator group to raise funds and fully maintain. They will require full terms of reference to progress.
- Launch date of official opening and session of how to use the Defibrillators (training session) to be arranged.

101 Leisure Plan Update

TRFC – Toddington Rovers have the draft lease (for checking, etc.). Waiting to hear back.

Zip wire – already covered earlier.

102 Christmas Update

- Chair met with Councillor to discuss Christmas update. 10 businesses interested in sponsoring the real Christmas Tree and split the cost out. **Agreed** to proceed with this.
- Business Christmas Trees (trees supplied by Soper&Co.) – numbers to be submitted to Soper&Co by 1st November.
- **Agreed** to get someone to provide/sponsor the lights and get the trees to be put up/get down for those local Businesses that order the Christmas Trees.
- Stall holders for inside and outside being collated.

103 Neighbourhood Plan (*5-minute progress verbal update*)

Meeting on 28th October to discuss and comment on so far. Ready for approval by TPC in November. Framework changes by the government need to be implemented.

104 Personnel Matters – "*That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw" (5 minutes)*
None received.

105 Portfolio Holder Reports *(for information only, 5 minutes each verbal update reports)*

- Cllr Julian – gave an update re Highways – meeting with Highways later this month.

106 Correspondence received ***(5 minutes) (emailed to Councillors prior to meeting)***

- Crime Statistics - Noted
- Central Bedfordshire Community and Partnership emails circulated prior to meeting - Noted
- Central Bedfordshire news updates
- Central Bedfordshire Planning Changes – Ward Councillor no longer able to call in applications
- Post office – Notification that 27 Church square will have a lighter format Post Office Branch

Meeting Closed at 9.03pm.

Attachment

Planning Applications - October 2026

Application Number	Address / Location	Comments/Status / Proposal
CB/26/02514/FULL	Rolling Ley Luton Road Toddington LU5 6HT	**Side extensions to annexe** The existing annexe planning application CB/21/05696/FULL was originally refused. However on appeal (APP/P0240/W/23/3321719) and subject to conditions, consent was given. The key condition (5) was to ensure that the change of use of the barn was only to be used as an ancillary annexe to the dwelling and should not be subsequently occupied as a separate or self-contained dwelling unit. The scale of the proposed extensions are substantial increasing the floor area from 66m² to 106m². The layout also indicates that the living arrangements will be separate from the main building. On this basis and development in the green belt. **OBJECT**
CB/26/02110/FULL	41 Manor Road Toddington LU5 6AH	**Demolition of conservatory and side extension. Erection of two storey side and part single rear extension with rooflights, new front porch and garage extension** Previously reviewed in September 2026. A modification has been made to the plans so that the building line to the side of the house and property line run parallel. Comments regarding parking remain valid and are included for reference below. "There are other similar size extensions on Manor Road. The only concern is with regards to off-street parking. Is parking for 2 cars adequate? **NO OBJECTION with a reservation around parking provision. Must be adequate"**
CB/TRE/26/00229	53 Dunstable Road Toddington LU5 6DS	**Works to a tree protected by Tree Preservation Order – Noted** Tidying up of secondary branches on the tree. Good maintenance practise.

Report to Toddington Parish Council Meeting – 13th October 2026

It is evident that CBC is/were moving towards becoming a Unitary Authority overseen by a Mayor, as proposed by Government, and that cannot be good news for Towns and Villages in Central Bedfordshire. I believe there has been a pause, but it has not been stopped. MK has long wanted to expand over our border – this unitary authority was intended to Include MK, Luton, Bedford and possibly North Herts. A lot of focus will be on delivering the plans for the Ox Cam Arc – East West Rail and a new Town in Tempsford are just two of these. The next Ward Cllr election is to be held in May 2027 – as far as we know.

The development of Land North of Luton has yet to commence or show signs of coming forward – the plans for the M1-A6 Link Road have also not been taken forward yet and there is no sign of a Rail Freight Interchange – probably because of the much larger and more 'useable' one underway in Radlett – St Albans. The Council appears to be inviting development of road-based warehousing in our area. The granting of approval of inclusion of the Link Road in the Local Plan, by the Local Plan Inspector, was based on the fact it would take freight off of the roads. Time will tell if this is going to be taken forward in the new Local Plan – which can be used to remove as well as add sites.

You may be aware that the October Development Management Committee will be the last to be run as we know it now. Government requires that most planning decisions are to be made by Planning Officers and not go to the Development Management Committee -as from the 31st October. There will be a DMC meeting before that date and a larger number of applications than usual, are to be considered. It isn't clear where the line may be drawn, but it will not be possible for Ward Cllrs to call in applications at their request, of those of Town or Parish Councils. The PC should familiarise themselves with the new NPPF, as changes will need to be taken account of within any responses to applications, and more emphasis placed on 'planning' reasons for objecting.

At the last Full Council Meeting, Councillors opposed these mandatory changes required by Government — as were not in favour of the move to shift most planning decisions to unelected planning officers and remove member and parish/town council "call-in" powers. CBC Cllrs considered this to be undemocratic and voted against changing the Constitution to reflect that view. I wasn't at that meeting, but would have voted against too, as I feel it can only have a very negative effect on our Ward and the wider countryside – where much of our GB is under threat. However, voting against it again would not be a wise choice, as could mean that Government takes control of the process and we have even less say in the process.

This was relevant info from AI

- Legal Requirement to Comply: Local authorities are legally required by the UK Government to implement the National Scheme of Delegation (taking effect on October 31, 2026). Refusing to update the council constitution does not stop the national rules from applying.
- Risk of Unlawful Decisions and Challenges: Operating under an outdated or non-compliant constitution while ignoring the statutory scheme leaves planning decisions exposed to legal challenge, judicial review, or being declared ultra vires (outside the council's legal powers).

- Loss of Local Control / Overruled Authority: If a council refuses or delays alignment, the statutory framework still governs how applications are determined, meaning decisions made outside the proper legal delegation or procedure risk being invalid or superseded by government intervention.

It is not very clear exactly how this will work going forward, but it is a big blow to democratic decision making and particularly undermines the role of Town and Parish Councils and our residents too. Our Council Leader happens to be the Executive Member for Planning. This also feels like a conflict of interest if he is required to ignore the will of Cllrs and concerns of residents and T&PCs.

The Local Plan continues to progress and a statutory consultation on proposed sites will be held in November. There is a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2026) now in place and that must be applied – this also adds policies that promote controversial development proposals, as requires us to identify Grey Belt land within our Local Plan – 50% of which must be for affordable housing.

With granting permission 'encouraged' by Government to be the default position to boost housing delivery - there is little that stands between developers and permission being granted where it would have been unlikely to have succeeded before. Government has said it will seek to override refusal of applications for housing within walking distance of a railway station. This arbitrary plan, makes no reference to the other reasons why development may be unsuitable – such as good agricultural land, other land protections and risk of flooding etc. It is apparent that GB near railway stations will become Grey Belt. The required increase of affordable housing when a site is near a railway station, shows ignorance of the fact that their residents are likely to find it cheaper to travel by car – which will be needed for many other trips, and that not all new residents will work within an area served by the train.

We have a number of Data Centres being applied for and granted– particularly of note is the huge one granted permission in Chalton village. Chalton PC are attempting to challenge this grant of permission because of the impacts on residents and countryside and the considerable impact on the environment. They employ few people relative to the size of the buildings involved and are also being placed on both agricultural and Green Belt land. Warehousing is another favoured application in Central Bedfordshire, alongside of solar farms -many of which have been given permission and not built out.

Should the application for expansion of services at Junction 12 go ahead it will include a solar farm and more warehousing. Having seen some of the plans for sites to come forward for the new Local Plan, I can confirm a lot of CBC owned farmland in and around Flitwick is likely to be included for both housing and employment – which is likely to be further warehousing and could also be data centres. That and the development of any of the other GB sites that have come forward for consideration for the new Local Plan, plus the likely expansion at Junction 12, will create a huge and detrimental impact on our local roads and villages – and the loss of countryside/farmland is also significant.

I expect that the PC will be responding to the Local Plan consultations and to the likely impacts of further development affecting the A and B5120. The impact of that development re the access to the M1 at J 12 will be felt by all villages in that corridor. I continue to work closely with CPRE Bedfordshire, and they are always willing to help support both PCs and residents in relation to

responding to Planning applications and the Local Plan consultations. A considerable number of Local Action Groups are in place in Bedfordshire, and supported and advised by CPRE. They are responding to both the Local Plan consultations and development applications and will extend that support to any other groups or PCs.

The move to develop Unitary Authorities – which could link Central Bedfordshire with Milton Keynes, Luton and Bedford Borough, as a Mayoral Authority - has gone quiet recently, as Government has paused it following challenges to the concept. It is likely to be central to delivering the plans for the Ox Cam Arc – but that was not shown in the priority list initially published – possibly as it is already a given that it will proceed.

The CBC Leader – Cllr Adam Zerny – has appealed to Government to grant funds to the Council to help address the dreadful state of many or our roads. I doubt that would be successful as the Budget granted by Government this financial year was very much reduced, and cuts had to be made to many services to take account of that.

One of the actions taken to address the shortfall of Government funding this year, was to lessen the discounts to Council Tax for those residents on limited income. I and many others had voted against this move as experience showed that the cost of taking residents to court for money they didn't have, was an expensive business that outweighed the scheme of discounts re income – or lack of it. The reason that a system that had allocated a level of discounts had been introduced, was that it was better for the Council to have a level of charges set according to ability to pay. This change, as was predicted, resulted in a lot of failures to pay -which in turn will have generated costs to the Council for recovery via the courts.

Cllr Mary Walsh