

CBP Forum Minutes 15/09/2026 at 7:30pm

Present: Geraldine Tate, Lea Dodds, Pat Cleary, Jim Perry, Simon Hunt, Paul Webb, Liz Swift, Caroline Hillary, John Hughes, Martin O'Leary, Katherine Hyett (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Hazel Barber, Ryan Noyes and Nicola Hallows.

2. Approval of the minutes of 7th July 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2026 were approved.

3. Matters arising

Matter Arising	Action Required – Updates in Bold	Responsible
Earth Café	Arrange event. Due to hall availability, it was agreed that this should move to early 2027.	Paul Webb/SSECAM
Spring Close Chalk Stream	SSECAM to share water sampling data with Anglian Water and the Environment Agency. Nicola Hallows to prepare a paper summarising findings. It was noted that the SSECAM meeting had been delayed. Nicola Hallows to confirm re. paper referenced above.	Paul Webb/ Nicola Hallows
Parish online/baseline environmental data	Contact Cllr Ian Walters (Duxford PC) The group discussed the potential use of Parish Online to record and manage baseline environmental information. Katherine Hyett had been in contact with Cllr Ian Walters of Duxford Parish Council, and has arranged for Ian and Grace O'Donovan, ecologist, to attend the next meeting to discuss Duxford's Nature Recovery Action Plan and their use of environmental data. It was hoped that somebody involved with the Nature Recovery work could also become involved. There was further discussion about how Parish Online could potentially be used locally.	Katherine Hyett
Burwell waterways	Chase up EA meeting The Clerk had been following up a proposed meeting with the Environment Agency. Jim Perry raised concerns about fencing next to and flotsam within the waterways, and Anglian Water was also discussed. Lea Dodds highlighted the responsibilities of riparian owners. An issue relating to mooring was also raised. Paul Webb advised that the matter should be reported privately through the appropriate route.	Katherine Hyett

4. Projects Update

a) Spring Close chalk stream

The Historic England report had been circulated. The Clerk reported that Highways had been contacted again and a response was being chased.

b) Renewable Energy Developments Around Burwell

An update was provided on renewable energy developments around Burwell.

It was reported that Weirs Drove 2 had gone live approximately a month previously, despite concerns that planning conditions had not yet been signed off. BEAT had been in dialogue with the planning team, including David Morren, and a resident had submitted a formal complaint. Concerns were expressed about what was perceived to be a two-tier planning system and whether the situation aligned with public policy. Charlotte Cane MP had also been contacted, with the Parish Council copied into correspondence. It was noted that East Cambridgeshire District Council had recently recruited an officer to assist with planning controls/enforcement.

The Hightown Drove appeal was expected to take place on 1 and 2 December. Simon Hunt had prepared a further paper concerning cyber security risks associated with battery energy storage developments. Mandy Manchett had resigned as Chair of BEAT but remained keen to collaborate, particularly in relation to environmental impacts.

Simon had also been approached by the Kingsway Action Group regarding the possibility of acting as an expert witness on cyber security risks and remained in regular contact with Nick Acklam who is representing Burwell Parish Council at the Hightown Drove appeal.

There was discussion about how concerns regarding fire safety, pollution and cyber security could best be raised with regulators and inspectors. The possibility of approaching Delta T or other appropriate specialists for expert advice was discussed.

Lea Dodds considered cyber security to be one of the most difficult risks to address. Caroline Hillary raised questions about insurance requirements and how insurers assessed and managed risks associated with operators.

John Hughes reported on his attendance at a planning meeting concerning Horningsea and commented on the difference in approach. He felt that it demonstrated the value of BEAT mobilising and engaging with the planning process.

It was noted that BEAT had produced a website illustrating how Burwell could look if the various proposed developments went ahead.

Liz Swift highlighted the Community Safety meeting on 4 November and suggested that the issue could be raised there. She also expressed concern about the level of specialist technical expertise available to councillors when considering complex developments.

Martin O'Leary highlighted the increasingly extreme weather conditions and the importance of moving away from fossil fuels and towards Net Zero. Simon Hunt agreed with the need for battery storage as part of the transition but stressed that developments needed to be delivered appropriately and safely.

Paul Webb suggested inviting Simon Hunt to the community safety meeting to provide further information on the issues. Jim Perry noted that, on highly technical matters, decision-making bodies would normally rely heavily on recommendations from officers and technical specialists.

It was also noted that the current pipeline of proposed renewable energy projects substantially exceeded projected requirements.

Pat Cleary commented that the public meetings held on the developments by BEAT had been very useful and well received.

c) Programme of educational activities

Steve Boreham ecology talk:

It was proposed that the talk be moved to early 2027.

National Emergency Briefing:

An update was provided following information received through an SLCC regional meeting. A possible screening date of 28 October 2026 was being considered, subject to confirmation from the Vicar. The National Emergency Briefing was described as a public information initiative bringing together experts from areas including science, health, food security, economics and national security to provide evidence-based information about the climate and nature crisis, the potential consequences of inaction and possible solutions. If progressed locally, the event would need to be publicised through the Council's website, social media, noticeboards, newsletters and community networks. The film would be screened at a suitable venue and followed by an inclusive, non-partisan facilitated discussion, giving attendees an opportunity to consider local implications and practical actions.

Beer Festival, 23 and 24 October:

The Parish Council was supporting the event through significantly reduced room hire charges. The group discussed how the Council's involvement and the event itself could best be promoted.

d) Review of CBP Biodiversity and Climate Change Plans

The review of the Council's Biodiversity and Climate Change Plans, including the Net Zero 2030 target, was currently on hold until after the meeting on 3 November.

The importance of ensuring maintenance activities complied with wildlife legislation, including appropriate management of trees and vegetation, was discussed.

Geraldine Tate asked about the Council's existing Net Zero target, and it was agreed that this would need further consideration as part of the wider review.

5. Forum Community Updates

- a) Wild Burwell** held a nature day at Spring Close with support from Wicken Fen. There had been a steady flow of visitors throughout the event, although engaging teenagers and adults continued to be more challenging.

At the chalk stream, Colin Smith and Nicky were planning vegetation management and clearance work. A data logger was now in place, with information available through YourRiver.co.uk. It was confirmed that water could not be diverted from the outfall pipe. The Clerk suggested that a clear policy decision regarding future management of the chalk stream would be helpful, if this could be discussed at a Spring Close Management meeting. The earthwork banks had been cut and the arisings raked away. It was noted that salad burnet, a locally important/threatened plant species, was growing at the site.

At Priory Meadow, watering of the trees had continued and grass-cutting arrangements were being considered.

b) BEAT

Updates relating to BEAT had been covered during the discussion on renewable energy developments.

c) Spring Close/Priory Meadow Management Group

Updates relating to Spring Close and Priory Meadow were covered under the Wild Burwell discussion.

d) Pauline's Swamp Nature Reserve

An open day had been held on 6 September. The weather had been very good, although attendance had been lower than hoped. The event had provided useful learning for future activities. Suggestions included better roadside signage, greater social media promotion, control of purchasing and potentially holding the event at a different time of year. The overall aim remained to encourage more people to visit, enjoy and appreciate the area. Paul Webb suggested that a small budget, potentially around £30, should be used for targeted social media promotion of future events

e) National Trust/Wicken Fen

It was reported that Wicken Fen would try to assist with cutting at Pauline's Swamp. Conditions at Wicken Fen remained very dry, with water levels reported to be significantly lower than normal. Work was being considered to retain and store more water on National Trust land. Funding for the proposed bridge over Burwell Lode remained an issue, although the project was progressing through the planning process. Biodiversity Net Gain opportunities were also being explored.

Katherine Hyett informed John Hughes that Burwell Parish Council are exploring the quiet lanes initiative for Weirs Drove and felt it would be useful to link up.

f) Repair/Swish café

The next Repair Café was due to take place on 4 October, with a Swish event planned for 18 October. There was also discussion about ecological grants and the possibility of broadening the scope of future grant funding.

6. Any other business

Lea Dodds reported that he had heard there may be an opportunity to obtain a small collection bin for recycling small electrical appliances.

Action: Katherine Hyett to investigate and report back.

7. Date of next meeting: 3rd November 2026

Meeting closed 20:45

Signed

Dated