Broughton Parish Council (BPC) – Chairman's Report May 2026

Background

At the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2025, BPC Councillors re-elected Michael O'Donovan as Chairman, and Mark Ray as Deputy Chairman.

Council Overview

The council is responsible to Huntingdon District Council (HDC) and all the villagers of Broughton Civil Parish. The council consists of seven members including a Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Councillors, and a Parish Clerk. Most councillors accept additional roles such as maintaining the village speed monitors, the waste bin on Causeway Rd, footpaths, representing the BPC at the VHMC, the ten extra green bins for the use of villagers, the flood group, and other responsibilities to maintain the good order of the parish for the benefit of all parish residents.

Achievements

Defibrillator

The defibrillator is located inside the porch of the Parish Church. A warden was appointed (Gemma Heard) to perform a weekly check. A Paediatric Pad has been added and security measures fitted to help track the defib if it is removed from the porch. Ideally more training will be offered to villagers shortly.

Village Roads

Huntingdon District Council organised some road sweeping during the year and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) made repairs to the road outside The Crown recently.

Administration

Cemetery

The cemetery was successfully mowed in 2025 by a team of village volunteers; many thanks to the mowing team. The wild-flower area was again secured by Cllr Moulton during the spring/summer months. The area produced some rare plants for everybody to enjoy. Maintenance of the trees, ivy and shrubs was again completed with volunteers.

Other Agencies

An inspection of the playpark was completed by RoSPA and there were few comments. The playpark equipment was cleaned by a team of volunteers in March this year and the mower was serviced by M O'D. Many thanks to Mike Fisher for cutting the grass in the playpark in 2025.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) has been completed and is ready for signature.

Local Government

Reorganisation

Comments were returned to HDC expressing Broughton Parish Council recommendations covering a possible future Unitary Authority and other options. A most comprehensive return was sent to HDC with further comments on the proposed Local Plan.

Comments were also returned to CCC/HDC concerning the A141 and the St Ives Improvement Scheme.

Financial Report

The budget for 2026-2027 was approved by the council.

BPC continues to face financial challenges. The increased precept award and cost savings wherever possible should strengthen the balance sheet for future years.

The BPC internal audit was completed successfully with minor comments only from the auditor, including the financial report. This is a credit to the Parish Clerk and Cllr Ray for their hard work in preparing the AGAR and the Financial Report.

Community

The RoSPA annual report produced little comment.

The Flood Group shed stores flood pumps and other equipment. The brook itself was cleared of much overgrowth by contractors from the Environment Agency in 2024. Water sensors have been placed at Bull Bridge and at the bridge near the Crown

A discolouration of the Bury Brook was reported to the Environment Agency (EA) in March which was acknowledged and recorded. The source of the contamination was traced by Cllr Cobby to a discharge from Glebe Farm in Kings Ripton. The water cleared in a few days and has run normally since.

Johnson's Farm in Woodhurst extracted water from the brook several times in Apr 26 when the water level was already low. This was reported to the EA, and water extraction has not occurred since.

Arrangements for mowing the grass at the churchyard have been secured for summer and autumn 2026.

Speeding. Concern has been expressed about vehicles speeding in Bridge Rd and Causeway Rd, and especially School Rd. A survey for all villagers to complete has been drafted for circulation to canvass opinion on options to reduce speeding throughout the village. The survey will be circulated soon.

Bull Green Flowers. Under the supervision of Cllr Ray, the village has enjoyed the flowers on the green for another year. Boards which describe the plants have been returned for the summer. The village looks forward to another year of great enjoyment from the planting on this green.

Pound Green repairs to depleted grass. The very wet winter has caused part of the grass to be damaged by contractors' vehicles parked on the green whilst the refurbishment of Brooklands continues. The owner of Brooklands has agreed that the contractor involved will rope-off the damaged area, repair the hardened soil, and sow new grass seed to make good the depleted area, all at no cost to BPC.

Challenges Faced

BPC may wish to complete a tree survey of all the trees for which BPC has ownership or responsibility.

Recognition and Appreciation

Firstly, everybody in the village itself who does his/her best to maintain the village, and every villager who lives in Broughton civil parish. A special thank you must go to the councillors who take on all the extra tasks such as bins, road speed indicators, liaison with the Village Hall Management Committee, etc.

Risk Register. BPC must maintain a register of any risks known or received, and its plans to reduce the risks identified. Maintaining this register is probably the most mundane challenge expected of BPC. Well done to Cllr Moulton with assistance from Cllr Cobby for tackling this challenge.

Outstanding Matters

Finger Post Bull Lane. This signpost was removed some years ago with the intention of repositioning the same post on the corner of Bridge Rd and School Rd, where the post-box is currently sited. The signpost is currently in a villager's garden awaiting a final decision from BPC whether to proceed or return the signpost to its original location in Bull Lane. This matter will be discussed later this year.

"Broughton" sign on Pound Green. This sign has been "patched" several times and should be replaced. A villager has estimated the cost of replacement at £200, and further discussion on the type of replacement has not been finalised. This has been an ongoing matter and remains open which hopefully will be finalised later in 2026.

Missing "Broughton" sign at the top of School Rd. The sign at the south side at the top of School Rd was reported as missing to CCC Highways some time ago, and no explanation for its removal has been found. BPC must continue to chase Highways for its promised replacement, or take further action itself.

Conclusion

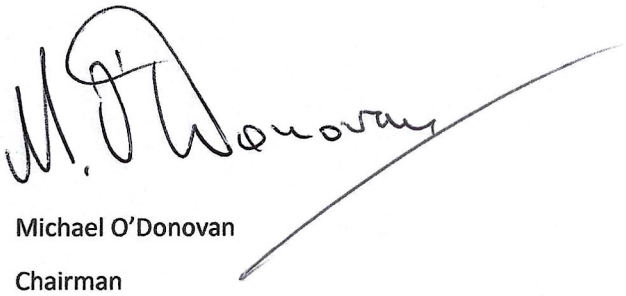
BPC has faced several challenges in the year 2025/2026. These challenges have been met by the parish council with open debate, frankness in disagreement, but a willingness to promote Broughton village and ensure the continued success of Broughton in 2026/2027.

Overall

A very busy year for BPC with some critical moments for Councillors. There were no resignations from Cllrs and the constitution of BPC remains at seven Cllrs and one Parish Clerk.

Thank you

Thank you to everybody involved with keeping our village a green and pleasant land, and thank you to all BPC councillors for their support, especially to our parish clerk.



Michael O'Donovan

Chairman

11 May 2026