

BROMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE **BROMHAM MILL BOARD**
HELD ON TUESDAY 16 July 2026 AT 7PM, BROMHAM VILLAGE HALL

Attendees:	William Armitage (Chair) Sian Woodfine Trevor Roff Liz Luder	Anne Baker Kevin Rutter Norman Hughes Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer: Julie Betts
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		Action
	Public Question Time	
23/26	Appointment of Chair	
	The meeting received a nomination for William Armitage for the position of Chairman from Cllr. Roff and this was seconded by Cllr. Rutter. All Councillors voted in favour of the appointment. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That Cllr. William Armitage be elected as Chairman for the next annual period.	PC
24/26	Appointment of Vice Chair	
	The meeting received a nomination for Sian Woodfine for the position of Vice Chairman from Cllr. Luder and this was seconded by Cllr. Rutter. All Councillors voted in favour of the appointment. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That Cllr. Sian Woodfine be elected as Vice Chairman for the next annual period.	PC
25/26	Apologies for Absence	
	There were no apologies.	Note
26/26	Declarations of Interest	
	As previously declared and as recorded in the minutes. Cllr. Roff declared a non-pecuniary interest as an employee of Bedford Borough Council as they were the landlord of Bromham Mill.	Note

27/26	Minutes of Previous Meeting Held on 14 April 2026		
	The meeting considered the draft minutes of the last meeting. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record. <i>(Proposed by: Cllr. Roff, Seconded by: Cllr. Rutter, All in favour)</i>		Note PC
28/26	Reports		
	(a)	Bromham Conservation Group	
		There was no update from Bromham Conservation Group.	Note
	(b)	Bromham Nature Club	
		The Nature Club had a visit from Animals in Need; Children were given a chance to feed baby birds.	Note
		A watering can had been made available for members of Nature Club to water the trees they had planted.	Note
	(c)	Friends of Bromham Mill/Bromham Mill Volunteers:	
		No update was available from The Friends of Bromham Mill.	Note
29/26	Update on Current Issues		
	(a)	Site Management Issues	
		(i) <u>Reeds in Mill stream:</u> The reeds opposite the Mill (Kempston side) had been cut back by Felicity Irons, Rush Matters. Felicity had advised that the rushes in the mill stream were a different type and could be pulled out by volunteers; she would not be able to harvest them. (ii) <u>Damaged Stone Wall, Car Park:</u> The stone wall continues to be hit by cars causing considerable loose stone. The volunteers had been requested to remove the offending loose stone from the car park. (iii) <u>Drainage Tank & Pump:</u> There had been further problems with the tank, but these had now been sorted. The Contractor had suggested changing the pump, but given the future development proposals and as the pump had been repaired, the installation of a new pump should not be considered at this time. Councillors requested clarification of the responsibility for the repair invoice that had been received.	Note Note PC

	(b)	Bromham Mill Ecology Statement	
		A joint statement had been agreed with the Badger Trust. The statement had been published on the website, noticeboard and social media. Advice from the Badger Trust was that a small fence should be erected alongside hedging to help screen wildlife. Cllr. Woodfine had met with the Marston Vale Trust to acquire hedging for the area near the Badgers. Marston Vale had agreed to look at suitable hedging to be planted, alongside a small fence. Marston Vale would provide a report with their recommendations. The meeting considered that draft wording for a Bromham Mill Nature sign should be prepared at the earliest opportunity.	Note Note PC
	(c)	Business Plan Mission Statement	
		The current Misson Statement for the Bromham Mill, in the approved Business Plan, reads as follows: "By 2030, Bromham Mill will be a reinvigorated, thriving hub that serves as a local and regional destination for history, culture, nature and recreation". The meeting considered that, at this stage, the Mission Statement remained appropriate, but it was acknowledged that the Business Plan, prepared and adopted in 2022, did need to be refreshed. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That, following receipt of the Quantity Surveyors revised cost plan, the Business Plan, including the Mission Statement, would be reviewed. Cllr. Woodfine undertook to review the Business Plan.	Note SW
	(d)	Anti-Social Behaviour	
		There had been reports of anti-social behaviour at the Mill and there had been requests to close the gate. The meeting considered that the situation should be further monitored.	Note
30/26		Bromham Mill Regeneration	
	(a)	Discharge of Planning Conditions	
		Two applications for discharge of condition had been submitted. The cost of each application to discharge planning conditions was £400.00. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That the application fees to discharge planning conditions be met from the Bromham Mill Reserve.	Note PC

31/26	Finance & General Administration		
	(a)	2026/2027 Budget Monitoring Report: Period Ending 30 June 2026	
		This item was deferred to next meeting. Cllr. Hughes asked that an item “Funding” be added to the Bromham Mill Board agenda under “Finance & General Administration”. There were currently two live applications – Lottery and Anglian Water – that had been supported by the Parish Council. There would be a site meeting in August 2026 with the National Lottery. Cllr. Hughes outlined that there was a South Midlands grant available between £5,000 and £25,000, with a deadline for expressions of interest of 23 July 2026. Councillors agreed that Cllr Hughes should express an interest.	PC Note NH
	(b)	Council Tax Liability	
		A Tribunal Hearing took place on 15 May 2026, between the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) and the Parish Council, to discuss the Mill House Council Tax liability following the appeal lodged. Sadly, the appeal was dismissed and the Mill House would, therefore, remain in the Valuation List with effect from 18 August 2022. The Finance & General Purposes Committee, at its meeting on 18 June 2026, had agreed that Bedford Borough Council should now been challenged on their application of the 300% Long-Term Empty Premium. Cllr. Armitage explained that the Bedford Borough Council Executive report dated March 2019, when implementing the policy on premiums, clearly stated that Council Tax Premiums are discretionary. In view of recent confirmation from the Borough Council Officer, Mr. Yerrill, that Bedford Borough Council supported removing the Mill House from the Council Tax Register, Cllr Armitage suggested that the Parish Council should request that the 300% premium be removed (in line with the resolution of the Parish Council of 4 March 2025, minute 29/25(c)). Cllr. Roff suggested that consideration should be given to settling the outstanding liability (noting that 50% of the total liability had been paid in 2025/2026). The meeting considered that the settlement figure needed to be ascertained, both in respect of the basic Council Tax element and the premium charge, and that it be further considered at the next meeting. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That the imposition of the Council Tax long-term empty property premium, that had been applied on the Mill House, be challenged with a view that the discretionary charge be waived.	Note Note PC PC
	(d)	Policies & Practices	
		There were no policies or practices submitted for consideration.	Note

32/26	Tenant Matters	
	<u>Lease Update</u> See Private & Confidential. <u>Potential Tenants: Summary of Recorded Interest</u> The Parish Clerk reported that enquiries continue to be received about the availability of business space at Bromham Mill and the summary of recorded interest had been updated accordingly. <u>RESOLVED:</u> That the update in respect of businesses expressing an interest in renting space at Bromham Mill for a range of potential uses be acknowledged.	Note Note Note
33/26	Staffing Matters	
	There were no staffing matters to consider.	Note
34/26	Correspondence	
	There were no matters of communication to consider.	Note
35/26	Date of Next Meeting	
	Meeting closed at 8.15pm.	Note
	The next meeting will take place on 15 October 2026 at 7.00pm.	Note