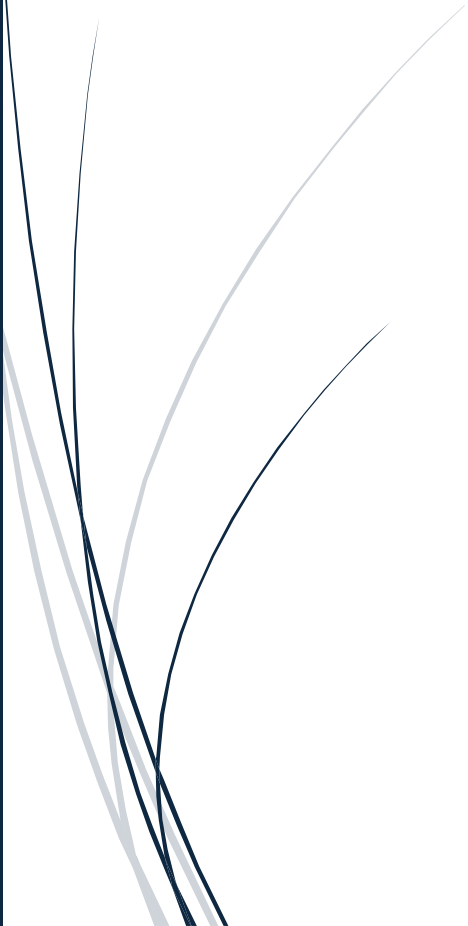




14th May 2024

Barnham Annual Parish Meeting

Reports



Pauline Smith, Clerk/RFO
BARNHAM PARISH COUNCIL
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Residents are invited to attend
The Annual Barnham Parish Meeting
on
Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 8.30pm
Venue: Barnham Village Hall, Mill Lane, Barnham IP24 2NG

AGENDA

1. Welcome from the Chair
2. Annual report of the Parish Council
3. To receive reports from the Suffolk County Councillor, West Suffolk District Councillor, and village organisations.
4. To invite members of the public to raise any matters of interest or concern

Please note:

Although the Chair of the Parish Council will preside at The Annual Parish Meeting, this is not a parish council meeting.

The Annual Parish Meeting provides an opportunity for residents to raise any matters of interest or concern relevant to the local community.

For further information please contact the Parish Clerk on 01359 221934
Email barnhampc@btinternet.com or visit www.barnham.onesuffolk.net

Please note this meeting will follow the Annual Meeting of Barnham Parish Council which commences at 7.00pm.

Agenda issued 03/5/24
Cllr John Bauer, Chair
Barnham Parish Council

Reports

BARNHAM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING TUESDAY, MAY 14TH, 2024

OVERVIEW

Having now concluded my inaugural year as Chair, I extend my gratitude to Cllr Ed Wyer for his unwavering support as Vice Chairman and to Pauline Smith, our exceptional Parish Clerk for giving us the invaluable benefit of her extensive experience in the role, ensuring our business is conducted in accordance with relevant legislation. As previously noted, Barnham Parish Council experienced its first election last year, and I'm delighted to report that all members of the new council have collaborated exceptionally well throughout the year.

I would also like to extend thanks to Cllrs Joanna Spicer and Andrew Smith for their continuous efforts in facilitating communication between SCC and WSC, particularly concerning planning matters.

KEY POINTS FROM THE YEAR'S BUSINESS

- **Meetings:** the parish council has held 7 meetings
- **Training and Development:** Councillors (3) and Clerk/RFO have attended a number of relevant training courses, meetings and conferences.
- **Emergency Preparedness:** Thanks to Cllr Ed Wyer, Barnham 's Community Emergency Plan is now complete and has been accepted by West Suffolk Council.
- **Biodiversity Policy:** In compliance with the 2021 Environment Act, Barnham Parish Council has published its biodiversity policy, guiding our decisions on planning, contracts, and purchases.
- **Planning Applications:** the parish council has been consulted on 14 planning applications by West Suffolk Council, 9 of which relate to trees in a conservation area.

ONGOING PLANNING MATTERS

Following on from last year's meeting, Station Road Industrial Estate and The Quarry, continue to feature in this report:

Station Road Industrial Estate. As anticipated, representatives for NRG have filed an appeal with the Planning Inspector. Both Barnham Parish Council and WSC have requested the dismissal of the appeal, and we now await the outcome of the hearing. Additionally, we remain engaged in other pertinent planning matters that fall outside the scope of the appeal, which have been reported to WSC ie. flood lighting and fence.

North Farm Quarry. At the time of last year’s report, it was known that the application for The Quarry had been declined. Despite no appeal from the applicant, the conditions for land recovery have yet to be met and we are currently awaiting a response from SCC Enforcement regarding the next steps. Barnham Parish Council remains committed to wanting to see that “the bund erected around the excavation site will be levelled and the site returned to its original state in accordance with the conditions to ensure full recovery of the land.”

Community Engagement. During the year, the Parish Council been actively involved in a number of activities/initiatives:

- **Farmers’ Market December 2023:** Thanks to Cllr Helen Beck and the involvement of all parish councillors, we had a very successful presence at this event, with a visual display.
- **Defibrillator Training 12th January 2024:** Cllr Helen Beck organized a well-attended defibrillator awareness training event with a trainer from the Ambulance service.
- **Thermal Imaging Camera Loan Project:** Over a period of 3 weeks during January, Cllr Ed Wyer, The Clerk, and District Cllr Andrew Smith visited 19 households with two thermal imaging cameras to identify areas of heat loss from properties yielding varying degrees of success.
- **Village Litter pick 6th April 2024:** 13 volunteers participated in our successful village litter pick, collecting a significant amount of rubbish from the verges.
- **Barnham Heath Notice Board:** This noticeboard provides space for parish council notices as well as for residents and organisations to post their own notices. It has been funded by the parish council together with generous contributions from Cllrs Joanna Spicer and Andrew Smith. We are also grateful to Paul Woolard for installing it.
- **To Celebrate the King’s Coronation Lamppost Plaques – May 2023:** Cllr Spicer funded 25 coronation lamppost plaques, which were securely fastened around the village by volunteers.
- **Portrait of King Charles III:** The parish council has obtained a framed official portrait of King Charles III via a government funded scheme, which now hangs in the village hall.
- **Speedwatch:** Regrettably, we were unable to recruit the additional volunteer required to fulfil the essential roll of speed watch team coordinator. As a result, the speed gun and associated equipment has now been returned to the police and the dedicated team is now inactive. This is particularly disappointing given the concerns regularly raised by so many residents about motorists driving at inappropriate speeds through the village.
- **Vehicle Activated Sign:** We are grateful to Jez Blackburn who continues to download the useful speed data from the VAS.
- **Suffolk Roadsafe ANPR Project:** Barnham is included within the scheduled visits for this project.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND MAINTENANCE

- **Village Hall:** It is pleasing to see that Goddard's have completed the wall height reduction and handrail installation at the village hall: This work has been funded by the parish council.
- **Play Park:** A new gate has been installed, and other repairs and maintenance have been carried out by Vertas. The parish council continues to receive reports following regular monthly safety inspections carried out by an Inspector from West Suffolk Council, with an annual inspection by an independent company.
- **Grounds Maintenance** Gratitude is extended to Mr. Ian Austin for his dedicated grounds maintenance work to the end of the 2023 season. Our new contractor, Vertas, has now taken over and we look forward to receiving a similar level of service.

OTHER INITIATIVES

- **Fit Villages Scheme** (February 2024): Due to the low response (3) this project didn't progress. However, the scheme remains open to future participation if interest increases.
- **Clock Dial Refurbishment Project:** This is a major project for which the cost is in the region of £15,000. The faculty for this work has been granted by the Diocese, and we are now actively applying seeking funding/applying for grants. We are extremely grateful to Simon Ford who continues to care for the clock and ensures it is regularly wound.
- **Police Liaison:** Following Cllr Belsham's meeting with PC Rachel Reeve and PCSO Amanda Dodd there are plans for a pop up 'police surgery' in Barnham Village Hall: date to be confirmed.
- **D-Day 80 Celebrations:** Plans are in hand for the village to celebrate the 80th anniversary of D-Day. Cllr Beck has been instrumental in making arrangements with the village school who will be supporting the event and Cllr Hawthorne has undertaken the arrangements for the lighting of the beacon.
- **Phone Box/Book Exchange:** Whilst we hear little about it at parish council meetings, we are grateful to the volunteers who continue to 'look after' the book exchange within the BT phone box.

In conclusion, the past year has been one of significant activity and engagement for Barnham Parish Council. Despite the challenges presented by ongoing planning matters and the disappointment regarding the Speedwatch scheme, the council has demonstrated its commitment to serving the community through various initiatives and projects.

From community engagement events like the Farmers' Market and defibrillator training to infrastructure improvements such as the installation of a notice board and

refurbishment of the village hall wall, the council has remained proactive in addressing the needs of the residents. Efforts in emergency preparedness, biodiversity policy compliance, and ongoing liaison with the police further underscore the council's dedication to ensuring the well-being and safety of the community.

Looking ahead, the council is poised to tackle new challenges, such as securing funding for the Clock Dial Refurbishment Project and continuing to explore avenues for community involvement, like the Fit Villages Scheme. Funding for the Clock refurbishment has already exceeded £7000.

Overall, the past year has been marked by progress, collaboration, and a steadfast commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all residents of Barnham.

John Bauer, Chair,
Barnham Parish Council
14/05/24

**SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
CLLR JOANNA SPICER, MBE
ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

Firstly I would like to thank the chairman, members and clerk of Barnham Parish Council for inviting me to attend their meetings over the last year and for always making me welcome. Andrew Smith and I do our best to work in partnership with parish councils as we navigate the complexities of local government responsibilities.

The county council has had a challenging year as we meet our statutory responsibilities caring for vulnerable older people, those with disabilities, children, special education and young people. About 79% of our total annual expenditure is on these services which are provided 365 days a year.

This year we have had to make difficult decisions over the level of council tax and we are making some significant savings involving service cuts and reducing staff numbers. Meanwhile we continue to ensure we have adequate budgets for the fire and rescue service, highways, trading standards, the environment and climate change, school support and libraries. The total budget for 2024-25 is an increase of 8.6% to £752.8million.

Since October 2023 the council has had a new contract for highway services with Milestone and we are cautiously pleased with how repairs and resurfacing is progressing.

We are currently consulting on the proposal from Government for a “Devolution Deal” for Suffolk which will bring investment in Suffolk of £480million over the next 30 years. In return for this new money and devolved decision making we will be required to have a directly elected leader of the county council from May 2025.

My engagement with the parish council over the last year has, like the last 10 years, involved the ongoing issue of a series of applications made by Elveden Estates (and Mick George) for sand and gravel extraction south of the C633. It has therefore come as a relief for the present time that SCC members refused the most recent application and there has been no appeal. There were also concerns about an application to SCC for paper recycling adjoining the glass recycling which has now been withdrawn. We have had ongoing discussion about various highway issues including the traffic lights on the A134 and the state of the C633.

I am pleased to report that all is going very well with the school which is again over subscribed for September. I have made a grant to Barham Bunnies of £300 to help get started and also granted £500 towards the new notice board at Barnham Heath and £95.00 for the King Charles III Coronation lamppost plaques.

Joanna Spicer,
County Councillor,
Joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk

**WEST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL
CLLR ANDREW SMITH
2024 ANNUAL PARISH REPORT**

At the West Suffolk Council Meeting 20th February 2024, the main agenda item was the budget for 2024/25. It was a balanced budget and unlike many councils we do not have high levels of debt.

Some of the budget proposals included: an increase of £3.00 to the brown bin charge; a 3% council tax increase which for Band D properties converts to an annual increase of £5.76 and the introduction of a second home premium. Investment proposals include: £1.2m to develop our commercial unit asset in Anglian Lane; £2.75m to top up our Net Zero fund; £6.2m to renovate the Bury leisure centre and £1.7m towards the transitional costs associated with the introduction of food waste kerbside collections.

Our new Council Leader is keen to improve how the Council engage with communities and has introduced Cabinet Tours of the towns in West Suffolk and these visits will be extended to rural areas in the future. The Chair of the Council has also attended many local parish council meetings, and indeed he attended one at Barnham during the year. These visits in general have been extremely well received.

During the year I was able to provide some modest funding towards the purchase of a new noticeboard.

Andrew Smith
West Suffolk Councillor
Bardwell Ward

13/05/2024

BARNHAM VILLAGE HALL
JUDY JORDAN, CHAIR
REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 14th May 2024

Like many other venues, hirings have not returned to pre-Covid levels. The Village Hall is almost 70 years old and requires an increasing amount of maintenance and repairs. Hirings and fund-raising are our only sources of income. Our regular hirers - the Bowls, the Over 60's, Tea Dances, and Yoga continue to support the hall but many of the pre-Covid regulars have not resumed. Friends of Barnham School hold several functions at the hall.

We have increased hiring charges this year and are comparable with local venues, however the cost of heating the hall in the winter months is proving to be a real challenge following the big increases in energy prices. Fundraising has therefore become even more important in order to try and keep the books balanced. The Craft Fairs, Daffodil Teas, and the monthly Social evening have all provided valuable income and help maintain a community spirit.

We are very grateful to the Parish Council for their on-going financial support towards some of the repairs. Thanks also go to Mathew Hawthorne who attends our meetings.

Judy Jordan, Chair
Barnham Village Hall Committee
14/05/24
