

Residents are invited to attend the

**BARNHAM
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

*An opportunity to hear from local organisations and businesses and
to raise questions and concerns about village related matters.*

Date: Tuesday 12th May 2026

Time: 7:00pm

**Venue: Barnham Village Hall
Mill Lane, Barnham IP24 2NG**

AGENDA

1. Welcome from the Chair of Barnham Parish Council, Cllr John Bauer

2. Reports/Presentations

We are looking forward to receiving presentations from:

- Barnham Parish Council
- Euston Estate
- The St Thomas' Charity
- Barnham Village Oral History Project
- Barnham Christmas Choir Written report received
- Barnham Carpet Bowls Club Written report received
- Barnham Village Hall Written report received
- West Suffolk District Cllr Andrew Smith Written report
- Any other village organisations who wish to participate

3. To receive questions, comments, or suggestions from members of the public about any matters relating to the parish of Barnham

If you would like to present a report to the meeting, it would be helpful if you could let Pauline Smith - Barnham Parish Clerk - know in advance. Alternatively, you are welcome to submit a written report for inclusion.

Written reports received as at 7th May 2026 attached.

For more information please email: clerk@barnham-pc.gov.uk
or 'phone 07801 550153.

1st May 2026/Cllr J Bauer, Chair Barnham Parish Council

Updated with written reports 7th May 2026, Clerk Barnham Parish Council



Barnham Annual Village Meeting 2026 Reports received as at 7th May 2026

Barnham Village Hall

Barnham Village Hall has been at the heart of the community for over 70 years.

The hall relies on income to remain viable. Historically, these bookings came from groups, clubs and pastimes based within the village.

Over the past 20 years most of these village-based activities have folded. This was accelerated by the Covid pandemic. This has had a significant impact on income which means that the hall finances are finely balanced.

The majority of our booking income is now derived from hirers outside of the village, in particular two regular users.

The monthly social/bar evenings, and the Daffodil Teas make a valuable contribution to finances, but other fund-raising activities, such as Craft Fairs, Stage shows, Village Fete etc are now a distant memory.

In addition to financial pressures, the hall is urgently in need of “new blood”. The village hall committee is now down to six.

The world we live in today is so very different from 70 years ago, even 30 years ago. Being part of village organisations and giving something back to the community was everything. Now we live in a world where we don't have the time, and it's ok because someone else will do it. The village clubs and societies, the village pub, the bowling green, the village fete. Will the village hall be next.?

We are grateful for the ongoing support from the Parish Council.

Judy Jordan, Chair
Barnham Village Hall Committee
May 2026

Barnham Christmas Choir

Once again, the Barnham Carol Choir sang at the village Carol Service, which last year was held on Sunday 21st December. It was led by Sally Bauer, the church organist.

The year 2025 was celebrated as the "Year of the Steam Train" to mark the 200th anniversary of the first modern passenger railway, the Stockton and Darlington Railway (1825–2025). In recognition of this special anniversary, Sally produced a unique arrangement for the choir of the gospel song Mary Had a Baby. This included the sound of a train whistle throughout and created the sensation of a train speeding up and slowing down through changes of key.

This was just one of the items performed by the choir, who acquitted themselves admirably despite some singers being unavailable.

The choir is very grateful to Roz and Philip Wilkinson for their continued hospitality in hosting rehearsals each year.

Sally Bauer
Musical Director and Conductor
Barnham Christmas Choir

Barnham Indoor Carpet Bowls Club

The Indoor Carpet Bowls Club has eight regular members who meet each Thursday afternoon in the Village Hall. Although the club is not involved in a league, members thoroughly enjoy a friendly afternoon of bowls together in a welcoming atmosphere.

- All equipment provided.
- Low cost per session includes tea and biscuits.
- New members welcome.
- For more information contact Tony Higginbottom on 01842 766064.
- Come along and join in the fun!

Tony Higginbottom
Verbal report to Parish Clerk
May 2026

Barnham

West Suffolk District Councillors Annual Report May 2026

In 2025 we faced the prospect of a Local Government Review (LGR). In 2026 we now know that there are to be three unitary authorities in Suffolk. Additionally, the government intends that Norfolk and Suffolk will become a combined mayoral authority in 2028. All current local government authorities across Suffolk and Norfolk e.g. Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk District Council will cease to exist and will transition into unitary authorities.

Unitary councillors will be elected (to the wards of their new unitary) in May 2027 and will serve one year in what is known as the shadow authority and then three years in their new unitary authority. Elections would then take place every four years from 2031 (in alignment with town and parish elections).

Existing district councillors will stay in place, alongside the shadow authority until May 2028. This is because the shadow authority will be focused on setting up the new council, not running day to day services.

The council tax budget for 2026/27 was discussed at Council on the 24th February 2026. Recommendations among other things included a 2.96% rise in Council Tax.

During the year I was able to contribute £500.00 towards the Village Gateways from my Councillors Locality Budget.

There have been significant staff changes at senior level. As a result the opportunity has been taken for some restructuring which while necessary and in some cases beneficial is always unsettling for staff who must also now be wondering what the impact of a Unitary Authority will be for them.

The future is definitely full of change and challenge with the advent of a Unitary Authority and a Mayor. There is a lot of detail to be resolved, and timescales are tight. Whether you are for it or against it, this government is determined it will happen and therefore we need to embrace it and work towards making it the best unitary we can.

Andrew Smith
West Suffolk District Councillor
Bardwell Ward
May 2026

Reports to be added following the meeting:
Barnham Parish Council
Euston Estate
St Thomas' Charity
Barnham Oral History Project