

BARKWAY BULLETIN

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL OF BARKWAY



ISSUE 18

DECEMBER 2013

2013 has been another busy year for the Parish Council. We are hopeful that we can start building the new pavilion and community room during 2014, following our recent grant application. After so many years we await, in eager anticipation, for some good news towards the end of February. In November we presented to the village the proposal for a Neighbourhood Plan. Its development will involve all the residents and we need a willing and enthusiastic group of volunteers to work with us over the next 12/18 months to make it a reality. Moreover, to have a proactive Parish Council we need parishioners willing to play their part. Currently we have five councillors only against a requirement for seven. This places exceptional pressures on the current group of councillors and we ask you to consider urgently whether you could put forward your name to join the Council. May I take this opportunity on behalf of the Parish Council to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and health and happiness in 2014.

STEVE ALSOP, CHAIR, BARKWAY PARISH COUNCIL

PAVILION PROJECT

The Recreation and Pavilion Project Committee is pleased to announce that a grant application for £50,000 has been submitted to the Football Foundation. The application process has been lengthy, starting in April with a meeting with officials of the Football Association, followed by more meetings, negotiations and sleepless nights.

If the application is successful, work on the new pavilion should start in March next year. The building will comprise two football changing rooms, showers, toilets, a kitchen area and importantly a community room for use by Barkway organisations.

This project will be a great benefit to the community – football will continue to be played on the recreation ground, village events can be staged and organisations can meet and run activities in brand new modern surroundings.

The Pavilion Project Committee will cease to exist on completion of the work and a new operations committee will be set up, reporting to the Parish Council. The role of this committee will be very important and volunteers will be required, to ensure that the stringent requirements of the respective grant funders and donors are met.

Thanks go to Councillor Steve Alsop, Gordon Baker and Tony Terry for getting the project to this exciting stage. If the additional money needed to start and complete the project is obtained from the Football Foundation, the people of Barkway will have a new facility to be proud of.

WAGON WASH

The Environment Agency investigated the death of the fish in the Wagon Wash and found no evidence of pollutants in the water. There are some survivors and we are monitoring the health of them and the water before deciding whether to introduce new fish. We plan to meet with the Environment Agency to obtain advice on the future management of the Wagon Wash.

DOG PROBLEMS

In November, there was an incident involving a dog outside the school. Below is PCSO Brabrook's report.

"Some of you may have noticed that I was talking to dog walkers in the High Street on Thursday 28th November at the morning school drop off time. I had been made aware that the previous week there had been an incident of a dog on a lead biting a grandparent at school drop off time. This understandably had made a number of the parents nervous and there was a worry that the dog could bite a child. On the Thursday I spoke with the dog walkers, all owners had their dogs on tight leads and understood their role of keeping their dog under control. A dog out of control in a public place is an offence under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, this could lead to a fine of up to £5000 and in very severe cases you could end up with your dog being destroyed and a prison sentence. My intention is to reassure every one that we have taken seriously the concerns and to make dog owners aware of the potential consequences. Should you have any information, or become aware of similar incidents please contact your local police on 101."

The problem of dog poo on the pavements is **again** an issue. It is that time of year again when people are walking dogs in the dark up and down the high street and not picking up!! Not being seen is no excuse for leaving dog poo on the pavement. Again, we would like to re-iterate that there are fines which will be levied on anyone reported for not clearing up after their dog.

TREES

The dead and diseased trees along Cambridge Road have now been removed, and we have a variety of saplings from the Woodland Trust to plant. As there are still well over 100 trees left on the stretch of road between the village hall and Cokenach, we believe that the canopy will soon recover. As there is actually little space to plant in that area, most of the saplings will be planted around the recreation ground, with the remainder used to fill gaps in hedgerows.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Parish Council meetings are held in the Reading Room on the second Monday of every month, starting at 7.30pm. Scheduled meetings for the first quarter of 2013 are 13th January, 10th February and 10th March 2014.

PARISH MATTERS.....

PARISH COUNCIL VACANCIES

Do you think that you have what it takes to become a Barkway Parish Councillor? If you like getting involved with the local community, are capable of helping make decisions which affect your community, and have time available, then we need you!!!! In order to function within the legal framework, a Parish Council must have a minimum of three Councillors, fewer than that and decisions simply cannot be made. Barkway Parish Council currently has two vacancies, so we are down to five Councillors. In January, one of the five is taking an extended holiday, which makes the need to find new councillors even more critical, So if you think you have what it takes, please have a chat with the Parish Clerk, Catharine Toms, on 848716 or email her if you prefer at parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk .

FOOTPATH UPDATE

FP3 (between the Church and Royston Road)

Herts CC have agreed to pay for the creation of a step at the new kissing gate. This hopefully will improve the situation for walkers and should be completed during December.

FP15 (through the Recreation Ground towards Earls Wood)

The Parish Council has received a grant to improve the bridge which crosses the small soakaway which feeds into the River Quin. This bridge becomes very slippery during the winter and it is anticipated that the changes, including new planks and a handrail, will make it safer.

Restricted Byway 10 (Gas Lane to Rushing Wells)

Abbotsbury Properties LLC are proposing to apply for a diversion to this restricted byway, which runs across their field. The Parish Council has formally objected to this proposed diversion. In response, we have suggested that if the Restricted Byway was downgraded to a footpath, then the existing unofficial route, from Gas Lane diagonally across to the corner of the field, could be maintained, allowing the field to be used by the landowner whilst satisfying the needs and concerns of the interested parties whose properties border the field. The Parish Council has yet to receive a response from the landowner or his agent.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

We ran a very successful Open Meeting on the evening of Thursday 28th November in the Village Hall, with a presentation by The Reverend Sonia Falaschi-Ray. Sonia outlined what putting together a Neighbourhood Plan entails to an audience of 60 people, from Barkway and Nuthampstead. Basically, it will allow us to voice our views on how we envisage our villages developing in terms of housing, local business and amenities, and be ratified by NHDC. The consensus is that yes, we should go ahead with producing a joint plan for the two villages, as it will put us in charge of our own destiny, particularly when the time comes for NHDC to decide where Hertfordshire's new houses will be built and how many. Without a plan they will simply impose decisions on individual communities, our villages being no exception. The Parish Council cannot do this alone, so volunteers were called for and some did indeed 'step up to the plate' on the night. The more the merrier though, so if you are interested, or would like an emailed copy of the presentation please contact Sonia directly.

WINTER PREPARATIONS

A new salt bin has been installed near the school which has been filled with salt and a couple of shovels. The intention is that the school and any willing volunteers can use the salt to keep the pavements clear. We are finalizing the winter Emergency Plan, which is intended to spring into action in the event of heavy snow cutting off roads surrounding our village, leaving motorists stranded. We have compiled a list of people who would be willing to venture out in either 4 by 4 vehicles, tractors and other suitable vehicles, or on foot. These will be teams of a minimum of two, fully equipped with radio walkie-talkies, high viz jackets, snow poles and torches. To add your name to the list, please call Councillor Fiona Tomkins on 848347. The winter Emergency Plan will be posted on the village website.

BONFIRE NIGHT

Bonfire night was a great success as usual, and the bucket collection raised £346.75 towards the cost of the fireworks, so many thanks to everybody for their generosity. Pre-school ran a very successful stand selling hot dogs and soup, very well received on a chilly night!

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS WITH THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Steve Alsop: (Chair) Environment & Pavilion Project	steve.alsop@barkway-village.co.uk
Jim Dalton: (Vice Chair) Highways	jim.dalton@barkway-village.co.uk
Vacant: Property & Leisure	
Fiona Tomkins: Community Liaison and Communication	fiona.tomkins@barkway-village.co.uk
Vacant: Legal, Governance & Grants	
Jenny Warren: Planning	jenny.warren@barkway-village.co.uk
Sonia Falaschi-Ray: Neighbourhood Plan	sonia.falaschi-ray@barkway-village.co.uk
Catharine Toms: Parish Clerk	parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk

The Reading Room has been open from 10am to 12 noon on Thursday mornings in December, (last session is 19th December). There is a good selection of books to borrow and we are happy to receive your unwanted books or DVDs for our shelves. Why not pop in for a browse and a coffee? If all goes well, we hope to continue in January. The Parish Council are most grateful to Celia van der Heijden for offering to manage this. If you would like any further information, Celia can be contacted on 01763 848108.

If you have any comments on the content of this edition of Barkway Bulletin, please contact the editor, Fiona Tomkins at fiona.tomkins@barkway-village.co.uk - we are always interested in hearing your views.

Published by Barkway Parish Council, The Reading Room, 12 High Street, Barkway, SG8 8EE parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk 01763 848716. December 2013

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