

Barkway Bulletin

A Newsletter from the Parish Council of Barkway

Issue 23

June 2015



Welcome to another edition of the Barkway Bulletin.

Chairman's Report to the APM on 20th May 2015

Council Changes and Portfolios

There were some changes of Councillors during the year. Fiona Tomkins, Steve Foster and Steve Alsop stood down. I should personally like to thank them for their considerable contributions over the years, especially Fiona in running the website and Steve Alsop driving through the Pavilion project.

We welcomed Robert Squire, taking over Media and Communications, Bob Davidson, Property and the Pavilion and Graham Swann, Highways. Jim Dalton was Chairman until recently and has done splendid work on Highways, especially keeping pressure on the companies concerned with the road closure. Giuseppe Frapporti has covered environment, his professional area of expertise, Jenny Warren has processed a raft of planning applications and I have taken over as Chairman, as well as attempting to drive through our Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood and Local Plans

The Neighbourhood Plan consultation document, which was created using the responses that residents gave to our comprehensive questionnaire, was submitted to local landowners and interested bodies for comment. It will now be redrafted in line with some recently received guidelines from NHDC and submitted to them for scrutiny. If deemed acceptable, it will be offered up for a referendum to the residents of Barkway and Nuthampstead, hopefully before the end of this year.

The NHDC Local Plan consultation document appears to have taken note of our residents' wishes to have limited housebuilding, as they have suggested a total of 49 additional dwellings over the period 2011-2031, some 13 of which have already been built, with a further 5 having obtained planning permission.

Pavilion and Community Room

The new Pavilion with Community Room was opened by our MP Oliver Heald in January. It is an exceptional facility and we hope it will encourage Barkway's football prowess as well as hosting games for Royston Football Club. The Community Room with kitchen facilities is a delightful venue for group activities. We are very grateful to all the people who made this happen.

The Hole

The High Street was closed for many weeks while drains, collapsed culverts and pipework were sorted out. This caused considerable inconvenience and hardship to some local businesses, though some High Street residents revelled in the lack of traffic noise.

New Businesses

The Tally Ho pub has been revitalised under new management and a hairdressers has opened up at the other end of the High Street.

Jim Dalton, who was Chairman until April 2015, reviews our financial situation on the following pages.

Sonia Falaschi-Ray, Chairman, Barkway Parish Council

The Financial Report.

In the last financial year we spent, in general terms, less on almost every aspect of routine expense, but we did increase the salary of the Parish Clerk to nearer the recommended level. We really should increase it again shortly.

The savings in general, made it possible to forecast we would meet that extra salary with only a small increase in precept. We had a modest year in terms of grant assistance. So please put yourself in our place in January when we had to decide on the precept:

1. History shows that to maintain our services we rely on grants as well as the precept, and getting grants is ever harder.
2. The Solar Farm money has always been considered as separate and not for general running purposes. In any case was not forthcoming at that time.
3. A change of government was coming and, regardless of flavour, they would not relax controls. It had been hinted broadly that Parish Council precepts may be the next to be capped and frozen.
4. As is normal in any construction project, the pavilion incurred unforeseen expenses and the request to release S106 monies to cover it had been refused by NHDC. It still requires some items.
5. The Recreation Ground Committee are actively fundraising. Nevertheless, the Parish Council must reserve money to be able to cover these costs.
6. The nett ongoing costs to the Parish of the pavilion and playing field is a forecast without an historical base. Both anticipated income and costs are much larger than we have previously been exposed to.
7. The neighbourhood plan has served us well so far and has to be finished. A grant might be available.
8. We obtained a grant (paid last year) for 50% of a new seesaw and replacement swing baby-cradles. No money has been spent on our war memorials for some time and at this centenary time, apart from cleaning, they need some renovation. Again grants MAY be available but we feel the job should be done regardless.

Had we not had reasonable reserves in November we could not have covered the absence of S106 money from NHDC. Be assured, we are very careful with your money.

We had a couple of one-off spends this year (Neighbourhood Plan and War Memorials) and should rebuild our reserves. Finally we want to 'Smarten up Barkway' (washing and repairing and in some cases replacing road signs, unblocking gullies, cutting verges, path clearance etc.) using some of the soon to be announced 'Highways Together' permissions.

Currently we are not at present ALLOWED to improve these things. In future we hope to be allowed to use volunteer labour to achieve a better looking Barkway.

Parish Matters.....

Feeding the Ducks

At times there has been excess amounts of bread in and around the pond. This looks untidy and also can lead to a build up of algae in the pond itself. The Parish Council does not want to discourage the feeding of the ducks as this is part of the charm of the village pond but does request residents to be aware of overfeeding the ducks.

Barkway Parish Council Email Database

Are you receiving email messages from Barkway Parish Council? If not and you would like to be kept informed about matters relating to the Parish (and we will not bombard you with endless emails, or pass your details on to any third party), please forward your details to: parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk.

Barkway & Newsells Village Website

Included on the site are: the monthly police reports, eHealth news, events, village organisations, news etc..

Thank you to the organisations that have sent items to be included on the site. If your organisation has some news to share or an event to publicise, then please forward the details by email to: webmaster@barkway-village.co.uk

New Councillor



I moved to Barkway 12 years ago with my wife Patricia. In 2005 we moved to Hamilton, New Zealand for 10 months. In 2006 my daughter Orla was born and she is now just coming to the end of her time at Barkway school. Since moving here I have been involved within the community helping out where I can with the village panto bar, annual market, Village school and speedwatch.

I am currently involved as part of the committee and bar staff at the social club and part of a small team of villagers campaigning to get village green status for some of the land at Windmill Close.

In my spare time I enjoying reading, foreign travel and supporting my daughter in her many hobbies , including being dads taxi to rehearsals and dance competitions all over southern England. I currently work for an American nutritional supplement company based in St Neots as an inventory control manager. Prior to this I worked for 26 years at Tesco covering various roles in logistics and IT. By joining the parish council I hope to continue my efforts in helping the local community to thrive.

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 next quarter are : Monday 13th July, Monday 10th August, Monday 14th September.

Your Parish Councillors with their responsibilities and contact details

Sonia Falaschi-Ray (Chair):	Neighbourhood Plan	sonia.falaschi-ray@barkway-village.co.uk
Jim Dalton (Vice-Chair):	Special Projects	jim.dalton@barkway-village.co.uk
Bob Davidson:	Community Property	bob.davidson@barkway-village.co.uk
Giuseppe Frapporti:	Environment	giuseppe.frapporti@barkway-village.co.uk
Jenny Warren:	Planning	jenny.warren@barkway-village.co.uk
Rob Squire:	Media and Communications	rob.squire@barkway-village.co.uk
Graham Swann:	Highways	graham.swann@barkway-village.co.uk
Catharine Toms:	Parish Clerk	parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk