

Barkway Bulletin

A Newsletter from the Parish Council of Barkway

Issue 25

Winter 2015



Welcome to another edition of the Barkway Bulletin.

Dog Fouling

Unfortunately this continues to be a problem. There have been a number of complaints about dog fouling. It is the responsibility of the person walking the dog to ensure they clear up. This is unsocial behaviour.

Feeding the Ducks—no bread please

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 the RSPB advice about feeding the ducks.

- White bread, regularly used for years as a treat for ducks, is not ideal food.
- Ducklings enjoy it, but it is potentially dangerous to them as they need better food in order to prosper and grow. A diet of white bread can be fatal.
- Any excess food is a temptation to vermin, who are also a threat to ducklings.
- Uneaten bread is also cause of algae bloom on the pond, which badly disturbs the eco-balance.
- Lots of food attracts more ducks to the pond where their excrement may be more than the ecology of the pond can cope with.
- The best thing to do is feed grain, birdseed or modest amounts of chopped raw green vegetables and restrict/avoid feeding bread. You can see if it is too much, as they will not eat it immediately in that case.

Please avoid feeding the ducks and especially the ducklings with bread and help them to have the happy and prosperous family life that nature intended.

Barkway War Memorial - Renovation Update

In order to bring the condition of the War Memorial and surrounding area back up to a good standard of repair it is anticipated that the cost will be in the region of about £6000. This will involve some re-pointing of the Memorial itself, renovation of the lettering on the World War II stone at the base of the Memorial and the taking up of all the flag stones around the Memorial and creating a new base and resetting and re-pointing the stones and replacing missing or broken ones. We hope this work will return the Memorial to a good condition which will last for many years to come.

The Parish Council is investigating grant funding for this project. At this stage enquiries made to the War Memorial Trust seem promising and to that end a Pre-Application for a grant has now been submitted and we await to hear whether we can go ahead and submit a formal grant application. If we are successful we may be awarded up to 75% of the cost of the project. The balance of the cost has been budgeted from the Precept .

Recreation Ground Update

Following our successful application to Royston and Area Rural Grants Committee for a 50% grant towards new equipment, we have purchased and taken delivery of 2 new picnic benches, a litter bin and a dog bin for the Recreation area.

We will get the picnic benches, made from recycled plastic and plastic bags, into position as soon as possible. The bins will need to wait until the weather is a little drier. The new bin will increase capacity for litter collection at the Rec, which now with the success of the new Pavilion and Community room is seeing increased visitors and users. The new dog bin will hopefully encourage those few dog owners who don't seem to be able to clean up after their dogs to do so in the future.

The children's swing bridge unfortunately broke just before Xmas. We have the parts to repair it, but need the wood and ground to dry out a little before we can complete this. We know there are anxious toddlers out there. Bear with us, the repair fairy is just waiting for a sunny couple of days.

We would remind you that the Community Room can be booked by Barkway precept-payers, for educational, training and meetings at very reasonable rates, and is proving very popular for childrens parties.

Over Christmas the property proved its worth, when a family re-union Christmas picnic was rescued from the bad weather and we were able to move it at very short notice to the Community room.

To book please contact barkwaypavilion@barkway-village.co.uk or use the contact page on the village website. You can also follow activities on Facebook - Barkway Pavilion & community room.

Wisbridge Solar Farm - Community Contribution - Update

The Parish Council can report that the fund balance currently stands at £17,500.

Since the last report a grant of £500 to Barkway Chapel was approved and paid to contribute towards the cost of the repair of the graveyard fence along Royston Road.

Grants approved but yet to be paid out are £1627 to Barkway Picture House for the purchase of better sound equipment. £734 to fund match the NHDC Rural Grant received for new picnic tables, waste bin and dog bin for the Recreation Ground and conditional approval of £2000 to Barkway Village Hall to pay for the foundations of their proposed kitchen extension.

Once paid, these additional grants awarded will reduce the fund down to £13,139.

Fund raising

On Saturday 26th March 2016, The Barkway Pavilion & Pre-School are organising and 'Easter Egg Hunt' & 'Barkway Vs Surrounding Villages Football Match'. The fun & games will start at 10am and run for a couple of hours. There will also be a 'Beat the Keeper' competition, a raffle, cake sale, face-painting, as well as Bacon Sandwiches, Cups of Tea/Coffee and other refreshments. Anyone interested in playing football should call Chris Cooper on 01763 849721/07796 693757 or email chirs.cooper@hybridoperations.co.uk. The emphasis will be on 'Fun', so all ages and abilities are welcome.

The Precept—what you pay to help maintain the Village

We are pleased to advise you that the precept is unchanged so that means, because of a few new houses, a tiny reduction in your Council Tax bill compared with last year.

The cost of most of our activities remains unchanged, and abnormal items are covered by either Solar Farm money (see other notes) or are dependent upon receiving grants before we spend the money (such as the War Memorial's finishing touches). We are unable to assume that the Solar Farm money continues to be paid, as it is not a legally binding agreement. However, we believe it will be.

The increase we have incurred is Council tax on the Reading Room because one can only have a single free Parish premises. The Reading room also requires some repair and renovation . The Neighbourhood Plan will incur costs to complete and we cannot rely on a grant. We still believe it is money well spent. We budget to financially support the Queen's birthday celebrations and now we feel we have to provide for the legal costs of acquiring the green space on Windmill Close despite previous remarks from HCC that help would be available to mitigate this.

The play area will continue to be upgraded and receive new equipment. We also want to continue with the improvement of the boundary hedge of the Recreation Ground. The Pavilion running costs remain difficult to predict as some costs of operation, and the income from room lettings, are outside our control.

In summary we take a lot of care to spend your money wisely, and trust that the slow but steady enhancement of the village and its facilities continues to have your support.

Councillor Jenny Warren - resignation

We are very sorry to lose Jenny Warren as a Parish Councillor. She has given your Council valuable service, predominantly covering the Planning Portfolio, but also in her wise advice and sound judgements concerning other matters, most notably the budget, the accounts and, latterly, the Neighbourhood Plan. We extend our grateful thanks to her for her years of service.

If you feel you would like to contribute to the management of Barkway village by becoming a Parish Councillor, please get in touch with Catharine Toms, parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk.

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 14th March, Monday 11th April and Monday 9th May 2016.

Members of the public are welcome.

Your Parish Councillors with their responsibilities and contact details

Sonia Falaschi-Ray (Chair):	Planning	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
Vacancy:	Neighbourhood Plan	
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