

BARKWAY BULLETIN

A Regular Newsletter from the Parish Council of Barkway



Spring 2017

Issue number 27

Welcome to another edition of the Barkway Bulletin.

We have delayed this issue hoping that we could give you firmer information regarding house-building planning issues; unfortunately, these are still unclear. We are now in the process of completing our Neighbourhood Plan with the assistance of a Consultant.

Next financial year's Precept

The Precept is the amount of Parish Council Tax charged to each household through our Council Tax bill. It is made available for your Council to run the Parish for the common good. We have decided to leave it unchanged from last year's total level of £36,000. Current projects include repairing the recreation ground play and seating equipment, maintaining the village pond, and the wagon wash, restoration of the War Memorial and completion of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Solar Farm income

Recent grants from the money have been: £400 to Barkway Social Club for a new carpet for their back room where the Youth Club meets, £640 spent on necessary equipment to finish off the new Community Room at the Pavilion, £2,000 spent on replacing the jetty on the village pond with a more accessible version and £700 to Barkway Church to help towards the cost of their new alarm system. We are due a further £22,000 over the next two years to spend on village projects. However, the farm is currently up for sale and we hope that new owners will honour the offer made to the Parish Council originally of £11,000 pa for five years

North Herts. District Council Local Plan

The NHDC proposed Local Plan will be considered at a full Council Meeting on 11th April. If, as is likely, it is voted through, it will be passed to the Government Inspectorate to review the numbers of new houses recommended for North Hertfordshire and the selected sites including Barkway. The Inspector will have a summary of your Parish Council's submission of the unsuitability of the proposed site labelled BK3, which straddles the north of the village between the Royston Road and the B1368. We expect to have an opportunity to make a verbal submission in due course.

Planning applications

There is an active planning application for 100 houses to be built on the western 2/3 of the site BK3 to which your Parish Council has strongly objected on the grounds of *unsustainability*, due to a lack of local amenities. This would lead to every adult requiring personal motor transport to access shops, secondary schooling, medical facilities and most employment opportunities. The local roads are narrow and potentially dangerous. *No decision has been made on the planning application at the time of going to press.*

War Memorial Renovation Update

Unfortunately, the renovation project at the Barkway War Memorial has turned into a rather long, drawn-out affair. Following a site visit by an officer from the War Memorials Trust, it transpired that the job was more complex than we had originally anticipated, with some structural remedial work also required. We had to obtain new quotations. Both the War Memorials Trust and the Conservation Officer at NHDC are very supportive of the project and we plan to submit new quotations to the Trust in time for their next round of grant decision making. The War Memorial Trust hopes to be able to award the Council 75% of the cost of the project.

The works will include the cleaning of the stone, structural work to the base plinth of the Memorial and repointing, as well as the lifting and relaying of the York stone paved area around the Memorial, including the steps and replacing damaged or missing York stone. Also, the full renovation of the World War II plaque at the base of the Memorial which has become illegible. It is hoped to carry out this work towards the end of Summer 2017 or in Spring 2018.

Recreation Ground Update

The zip wire is back! With the better weather, we were finally able to make the essential repairs to the zip wire frame and reopen it. We are pleased to announce that the Parish Council has secured Section 106 funding to enable us to create a "car park on the Rec" to alleviate the problems we face some weekends when there is a clash of events on the Rec and at the Village Hall.

We plan to move the swings and roundabout into spaces in and around the other play apparatus and fence them off, bringing the area up to higher safety standards. We will move the picnic benches closer to the play area and plan to replace some elderly ones.

The newly created open area will be fenced-off and turned into a grass car park, using plastic reinforcement. This will create a safe, drivable surface, whilst allowing us to retain the grass, creating parking spaces for around 20 cars. Access to the car park during the week will be controlled.

If funds allow, we also plan to create a covered veranda over the community room decking as well as installing a wheelchair ramp on the end of the deck to ease access onto the Rec.

We hope to have this done by Summer, as we have a busy month in July with both Music on the Rec and B in the Park scheduled to be held on consecutive weekends.

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 10th April, 8th May (including the Annual Meeting) and 12th June. Members of the public are welcome to attend. Please note for your diary that the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Wednesday 17th May in the Community Room at the Pavilion at 7.30pm. Parishioners are warmly invited and refreshments will be provided.

MORE PARISH MATTERS.....

Anstey Quarry

Anstey Quarry has been accepting and recycling aggregates for the last 17 years. As the quarry's extraction of aggregates and the requirement of chalk for farming has reduced, over the last few years, they have been backfilling the quarry with clean waste soil and aggregate, they also recycle aggregates. They expect the quarry backfilling to be completed over the next 18 months, although their current licence expires in 2020.

The quarry operates eight 32 tonne gravel lorries between the hours of 0700 to 1800 Monday to Friday and 0700 to 1300 hrs on Saturday. No disposal operations take place on Sundays or Public Holidays excepting essential maintenance work and only between 0700 and 1700 hours. The site also operates under the following lorry movement restrictions: no more than 60 HGV lorry movements (30 in, 30 out, over 7.5 tonne) at the site on any one working day (Monday to Friday), and 40 HGV lorry movements (20 in, 20 out) on Saturdays. These restrictions include their 8 lorries leaving and returning to the site. The site then distributes the remaining trips to other contractors to deliver or remove aggregates.

The Site Manager tries to ensure that lorries are scheduled to cause minimum disruption and, when possible, use the Buckland road, thereby reducing heavy traffic on Barkway High Street. However, he can only control their own lorries and routes, and has limited influence over other hauliers.

Hertfordshire County Council has recently been in touch with the quarry regarding some lorries leaving the site slightly earlier than the agreed times and the Site Manager is addressing this.

The Manager is very keen to ensure that any complaints received are dealt with quickly and will investigate any complaints and report to the companies using the quarry.

Please remember that Winters/Anstey quarry are not the only operator in the area, so some lorry movements that are being attributed to them may in fact be on route elsewhere.

Environment

The Silver Jubilee bench by the pond is being renovated and the map stand should be renovated and returned to position soon.

Councillor News

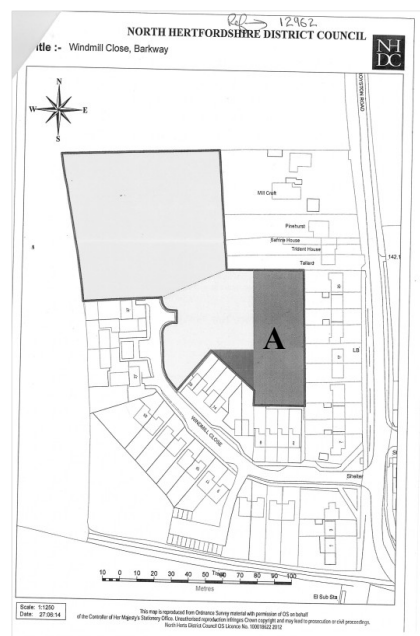
Although we still have a vacancy for a Councillor to take on the Media and Communication portfolio, we have two new Councillors to tell you about. Bernie Morss was co-opted on 13th June 2016 and is responsible for Sport and Leisure. Richard O'Sullivan is a more recent addition and will have the portfolio of The Neighbourhood Plan and Special Projects.

Your Councillors:

Sonia Falaschi-Ray: (Chair) Planning
Giusseppe Frapporti: (Vice Chair) Environment
Bob Davidson: - Community Property
Graham Swann: Highways
Bernie Morss: Sport & Leisure
Richard O'Sullivan— Neighbourhood Plan & Special Projects
Vacant: - Media & Communication
Catharine Toms: Parish Clerk

Windmill Close

We are finally at in the final stages of completing the contract for a 99 year lease and eventual purchase of some land at the rear of Windmill Close with the District Council. This will protect an open space for the Barkway Residents to enjoy at Windmill Close. Eventually this parcel of land will be turned into an official open space. The area marked A below shows the open space.



HGV Speeding

We have also received some queries reference speed limits through the lanes and villages. New upper-speed limits were introduced in 2015 for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) over 7.5 tonnes. Speed limits rose from 40mph to 50mph on single carriageways. Obviously, lower speed restrictions must be observed where they apply.

If you feel that any vehicle travelling through the village is speeding, or you wish to raise any other issues we would be happy to contact the site manager. If you are reporting a lorry issue, please supply where possible the registration and haulier. All movements in and out of the quarry are recorded so it can be quickly investigated if there is a link with the quarry, their own lorries also are fitted with trackers so their location at any time can be quickly ascertained.