

BARKWAY BULLETIN

A Newsletter from the Parish Council of Barkway



Issue number 30

Spring 2019

Welcome to another edition of the Barkway Bulletin.

There are many items included in this edition. You should find them very informative and interesting. As always, comments and thoughts on the wide range of material covered will be welcome through the usual channels

Chairman's Statement



Looking back

It has been nearly a year since we issued our previous Bulletin. We aim to issue at least two bulletins a year, but as you can see below there is so much going on, time slipped through our fingers last year. We continued to spend most of our time on the planning consultations for bigger developments, such as BK3, the North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan, and many smaller developments and projects.

The new bus shelter on Royston Road was installed on a sturdier foundation to withstand another 'Beast from the East' event. The zip wire was replaced and proven very popular and many projects have been taken on and delivered as you can read below. The telephone box restored to its full glory with a very important purpose hosting the defibrillator.

Councillors Graham Swann and Bernie Moss left the Parish Council. I would like to thank Graham for chairing the Parish Council at a very busy time, particularly when planning application of bigger developments came in for consultation. I would like to thank Bernie for his work improving the Pavilion and recreation ground so it is enjoyed by so many in the village as well as the football teams.

We were lucky that Cllr Kristian Melson and Cllr Dr Michael Price stepped forward to be co-opted, so we have a full complement of councillors. Kristian has taken on the Pavilion/recreation ground portfolio and Michael is looking after our website, IT, and communications.

Looking ahead

On top of doing the many little things to keep our village beautiful and enjoyable, we will still be very busy on planning related issues. Cllr Dr Bob Davidson who has been leading on this in the last year will be supported by Michael and Cllr Bill Dennis In the coming year. I would like to thank Bob for this huge commitment and effort to keep Barkway's Parish Council voice heard on planning matters.

We resumed the work on our Neighbourhood Plan to finalise by the end of the year. We secured a professional consultant at no cost to BPC to complete this plan. All the previous information gathered over previous years via Rev Sonia Falaschi-Ray will be used. I hope many in the village have or will volunteer helping complete this important plan. We have learnt that a Neighbourhood Plan is the most important instrument we have to shape and direct development and protect Barkway and Nuthampstead village.

Cllr. Giuseppe Frapporti

To report fly tipping

<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/transport-and-streets/street-cleaning/fly-tipping>

To report a pothole

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx>



Coffee Mornings

On the second Thursday of every month, coffee mornings will be held in Barkway Village Hall at 10.30am. Everyone from Barkway and the surrounding area is welcome. For just £2 per person, you can drink as much tea or coffee as you like and eat as many biscuits as you can manage. It is a great opportunity to meet people and discuss whatever you want.

MORE PARISH MATTERS.....

Cllr. Bill Dennis: Highways

The effect of the bad weather in the past months has had a devastating effect on some of the roads within and surrounding the village. If you spot a pot hole please use the NHDC website to report any potholes, so that a quick repair can be made.

Parking on Pavements

Please consider pedestrians when parking on the foot path. Whilst it is not an offence to park partly on the path, it is an offence to block it partially or fully. Especially if you are forcing any user of the footpath to step in to the road to go around your vehicle.

Speeding

We would be pleased to hear from residents as to their views and experiences on this topic.



Other related news:

- 1) New speed indicator sign to be placed closer to Barkway Service Station showing the actual speed of vehicles entering the village, in the hope they slow down. - Road & Public safety issue.
- 2) We are working to have the white road surface signs at the junction of "The Joint" and "Royston Road" re-instated ASAP, as this is an important safety matter.
- 3) We are in talks with HCC to have a new curb side parking area on the Pavilion side of Cambridge Road to create more car parking space on match days.
- 4) We are in talks again with HCC to have the two entrances from Cambridge Road into our car parks re-surfaced. With the works we have done on the smaller car park, plus the pathway, it will finish off the area.
- 5) We are in talks with HCC, about a weight restriction for HGV, but following their conversations with the Police who have said that "They are against a weight restriction as they do not have the necessary resources to insure complete compliance", these matters are regularly reviewed.

Ideas wanted... Push Energy - Community Contribution Fund

Following the recent receipt of the 5th and final payment from Push Energy of £11,000.00, the available fund balance currently stands at £39,273.99.

This is a ring-fenced fund included within the Parish Council reserves and is available to be spent on appropriate projects that would benefit the community.

The Parish Council would welcome ideas from Parishioners on how this money could be spent.

Some projects that this fund has contributed some money to so far include:

Barkway Church - Lighting Project and Alarm System

Barkway Chapel - Graveyard Fence

Barkway Picture House - Sound System

Barkway Social Club - Carpet

Barkway Village Hall - Kitchen Extension

Barkway Parish Council - Picnic Tables and Bin for the Recreation Ground

Barkway Parish Council - New Jetty for the Village Pond

Barkway Parish Council - Legal fees to acquire Open Space on land behind Windmill Close

Barkway Parish Council - Listing Application to Historic England for the Mast Site

Barkway Parish Council - Equipment for the Community Room at the Pavilion

Cllr. Dr. Bob Davidson: Planning Update

In order to facilitate the Council's ability to respond to Planning applications in the future, it was agreed late last year to form a Planning Group, comprised of Cllrs Dr Bob Davidson, Dr Michael Price and Bill Dennis. Any new planning applications are reviewed by the group before submitting a recommended response for the Parish Council to adopt.

We should take this time to remind the electorate that the Parish Council is a Statutory Consultee on planning applications, i.e. we must be consulted, and whilst we may express a view on planning applications, our view is taken into consideration but we do not have the final say on an application – this is done by the Planning Case officer, or in some cases by the Planning Committee at NHDC. We would take the opportunity to remind the public that whilst they may object to the Parish Council about a planning application, we may take their views on board if they are valid, but we would always encourage the public to then make their view known to NHDC planners.

THE LOCAL PLAN

The Local Plan is now at the Modifications consultation stage (until April 11 2019) thereafter the Inspector will examine the NHDC Modified Local Plan and make a final decision on whether the plan is sound or not. The timescale at that stage is very much in the hands of the Inspector.

Barkway PC, along with 4 other Village Parish Council's, led by Knebworth Parish, have combined to object to the soundness in that the effect of the Main Modifications, particularly policies SP2 (MM010) and SP8 (MM035), have fundamentally changed the overall strategy of the Local Plan. The concept of the five "growth villages", taking 11% of the district's housing requirement, was not included in the pre-submission version of the Local Plan, and has not therefore been subject to full public consultation.

Additionally, working with our consultant, The Parish Council will be placing further objections on the selection criteria used to select BK3 in the first place and to have it removed from the plan, whilst also objecting to the redrawing of the boundary to incorporate the designated school area owned by HCC.

The fact that the Local Plan is at an advanced stage means it is now difficult for developers to develop any land outside the village boundary that is not included in the Local Plan. This is demonstrated by the refusal of an application for 25 houses North of Millcroft and 6 houses on Land Adjacent to Barkway Service Station – however conversely, it lends weight to any planning application submitted on land included in the Local Plan . e.g. BK3

Millcroft Redevelopment.

Following consultation with NHDC the new road off Royston Road, which will contain 5 new homes as a result of the redevelopment site, will be called Millcroft Close. The 6th house facing onto Royston Road will have a new Royston Road house number.

Rands Outline Planning Application on BK3.

The outline planning application for up to 140 homes on the site we now all know as BK3, is still progressing. The Parish Council has been in talks with NHDC planning, our Rural Communities Development officer and the Developer, regarding S106 monies. S106 is the money a developer can be required to pay to off-set the negative impact of their development in the community. In the case of BK3, this could be the substantial amount of £507,000 IF the application is granted permission. Whilst still continuing to OBJECT to the application, we have submitted a proposal for a phased project to improve facilities in Barkway for its possible future and current residents by providing a co-educational leisure facility, with indoor and outdoor play space, that could be used by the local schools in daytime, and adults in the evening and weekend. This is a draft plan at this time only which, IF the planning application goes ahead and the S106 is granted, we will fully consult the village on. The PC had to make a decision rapidly to submit a project, after consultation with the Village Hall, Social Club and School or quite simply the S106 money could have been allocated to projects outside Barkway.

Rand Brothers have assured us that if planning permission is granted, they are adamant that the S106 money goes to make improvements in Barkway, and nowhere else.

In terms of timescale, it is dependent on the application being granted, then a full planning application, then the actual build starting, and the first 100 homes being occupied before any S106 money would be paid. This therefore could feasibly take up to 3 years, we would then have 10 years to deliver the project.
