

Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting
Held at the Pavilion, Barkway on Tuesday 11th August 2026 at 7.30pm.

- 1. Attendance:** Cllrs:
Mr W Dennis (Chair)
Mr G Swann
Ms J Cox
Mr N Stuart

Also present: Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO) and District Cllr. Martin Prescott.

Members of the Public: One member of the public was present.

- 2. To receive and accept apologies for absence:** Cllrs. D Marchant and P Baker and County Cllr. Ruth Brown. Apologies were accepted.

- 3. To receive Councillors' Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and to remind Councillors of their requirement to update register of interests under change of circumstances** – Cllrs. W Dennis and G Swann re: item 11.3

4. Minutes

4.1 To approve the minutes of the last meetings – Proposed, seconded and all in favour to approve. Resolved. **Action: Clerk**

4.2 To consider any matters arising from the last meetings – None.

Standing Orders were suspended.

- 5. To receive report from District Councillor** – There was very little to report as August was always a quiet month with many people at North Herts Council (NHC) off on annual leave. Cllr. Prescott reminded the Council that he was always willing to follow up on any issues raised and would try and obtain answers.

- 6. To receive report from County Councillor** – No report.

- 7. To receive report from the Police** – No report. However, it was noted that Police charge relating to the case of multiple lamp thefts had been heard at Stevenage Magistrates' Court on 5th August but due to the seriousness of the case the judge had referred it to the Crown Court in St Albans where the case would be heard on 2nd September.

- 8. Public Session – to receive representations from members of the public** – None.

Standing Orders were resumed.

9. Council Administration

9.1 To review progress on recruitment of a new Parish Councillor – A member of the public was present to observe the meeting, having expressed an interest in possibly becoming a Parish Councillor.

9.2 To note end of period for The Exercise of Public Rights – The Clerk reported that the period had ended on 7th August and no requests had been received to inspect the records.

10. To receive updates from Portfolio Holders

10.1 Corporate Governance – nothing to report.

10.2 Planning

10.2.1 To receive monthly report regarding Redrow BK3 development and agree any action needed – There had been no monthly report. Emails had been sent back and forth regarding various issues of non-compliance. It was recommended by Cllr. Prescott that such emails should also be copied to himself and Christella Menson (Enforcement Officer at

NHC). Redrow had been responding promptly to emails and it seemed that they were going through some initial teething problems with the commencement on site, but hopefully things would soon settle down.

The Phasing Plan received was unclear and seemed to incorporate past dates, this had not been updated to take into account the extended delay in start of the build. Cllr. Swann to request a current version of the Phasing Plan and also a list of edges and illustration of finishes that would be used on the boundaries. **Action: GS.**

A fence had appeared on the Bridleway, which didn't make sense unless it was a temporary measure. Bridleway 17 would be closed for 6 months but Bridleway 18 remained open.

Residents in Birch Meadow were unhappy about their water hydrant being used (when water supply had been agreed with the Village Hall) and construction vehicles using the private road for turning.

It was queried whether Redrow was exceeding the allowed volume of vehicles to and from site each day.

The agreed route to site was from the A10 along The Joint, which was becoming into a very bad state of repair. Former County Cllr. Fiona Hill had stated that there had been money allocated in the Highways budget for repair of the road under the former Conservative regime, but since the new Liberal Democrat regime had taken control, this money in the budget no longer existed. Cllr. Prescott agreed to find out where the money had gone.

MP Chris Hinchliff was still pressing for answers from Thames Water to justify their statement that the Sewage Treatment Plant in Barkway would have sufficient capacity to deal with the extra volume of waste from BK3.

Cllr Swann pointed out that there were two things to keep a watch on when the new Unitary Authority came into operation. Firstly, to make sure that the Herts County Council (HCC) Reserved School Site didn't suddenly get sold off and secondly how the adopted NHC Local Plan would be affected.

District Cllr. Prescott departed from the meeting at 8.07pm.

He was thanked for attending.

10.2.2 To consider and make comment on planning application:

Full Planning Permission : Creation of vehicular access off London Road (Development already carried out).

Land Known As Plot 2A, London Road, Barkway, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8EY.

Case Ref No:

– After consideration of the application it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to submit a neutral response as the development had already been carried out. However, it would be asked if NHC could ensure that there could be no change of use granted for this land and that it would remain as an agricultural paddock with no permission granted for storage of caravans, etc. The Clerk to respond to NHC. **Action: Clerk**

10.2.3 To receive update regarding imminent closure of the Tally Ho Pub in Barkway – A letter had been sent to the owners asking about their intentions for the business.

10.3 Highways

10.3.1 To receive update on progress with village survey for proposed 20mph speed limit in Barkway – Cllr. Marchant had pulled together a draft survey based on one carried out already in Reed and had created a QR code. Cllr. Marchant to liaise with Cllr. Cox regarding printing for distribution. **Action: DM**

10.3.2 To agree to commence arrangements for Road Closure for Remembrance Sunday on 8th November – Cllr. Marchant had already submitted an application (TRO) for the road closure. The Clerk to forward details to Cllr. Marchant of the Traffic Management Company in order for their services to be booked. **Action: Clerk/DM**

10.4 Sports and Recreation – It was noted that, what appeared to be, some deliberate damage had taken place to the baby swings and multi-play equipment. The baby swing had been fixed but Playground Facilities would be asked to check out the multi-play on their forthcoming inspection visit.

A replacement slat had been ordered for the circular bench at a cost of £50.

Cllr. Dennis requested that hedge trimming around the Recreation Ground could be an agenda item for September. **Action: Clerk**

10.5 Community Property – The Clerk reported that Land Registry documents relating to the Parish Council ownership of the Open Space behind Windmill Close had now all been finalised and received. Cllr. Swann had obtained some free trees to plant in the area.

It was noted that there had been some illegal fly-tipping behind the Pavilion of an old freezer and some old kitchen cupboard components. The Clerk to ask NHC to collect this. **Action: Clerk**

10.6 Environment

10.6.1 To receive progress update on Carriage Wash restoration project and to agree to registration of ownership of the Wagon Wash and Village Pond with the Land Registry – It was reported that a productive site meeting had taken place with the appointed Structural Engineer Ed Morton, the Clerk and the owner of Barkway House and Manor Farm to discuss incorporating into the job specification some land drainage from the adjoining meadow into the Carriage Wash. It was hoped that the additional work could be done without the need to apply for Listed Building Consent. It was understood from Mr Morton that the drainage could be incorporated into the southern wall very unobtrusively, which would hopefully meet the approval of the Conservation Officer.

The adjoining landowner had thought that a staff welfare unit would not be a problem to be situated just inside the gate to the meadow. This was received as very helpful.

In preparation for an application for significant grant funding towards the project, Cllr Cox had investigated the title on the area of the Carriage Wash, and in addition the Village Pond. Whilst in 1973 the Parish Council had applied for ownership of these two separate pieces of land under rights of ‘adverse possession’, the areas showed up online as yet unclaimed. It had only been a requirement since 1990 to register land. It was therefore proposed, seconded and agreed by all to apply to the Land Registry for First Registration of these two areas of land. It would be necessary to use a Solicitor for this process as whilst the Village Pond would be a straightforward transaction, the Carriage Wash land would have to include easements on the title as others would need rights of access across the area. It was proposed, seconded and agreed to use HRJ Foreman Solicitors who had acted on behalf of the Parish Council in relation to land behind Windmill Close as two Cllrs. and the Clerk had already passed verification checks with the company. The Clerk to obtain a quotation in preparation for the September meeting. Cllr. Cox to forward a brief for the Clerk to send to the Solicitor. **Action: JC/Clerk**

The next stage would be to obtain an updated job specification from the Structural Engineer, with input from the appointed Ecologist. This would be shared with the adjoining landowner with the aim for it to go out to tender by late September.

A Working Group meeting could hopefully be arranged in September.

It was understood that some parishioners were of the opinion that the recirculating ponds in Barkway House were preventing water from passing through into the Carriage Wash. However, the Parish Council was of the opinion that the source of water from Reed had virtually dried up due to the exceptionally hot weather and that the ponds were just recirculating their existing water.

10.6.2 To receive update on progress with obtaining advice on maintenance of the village pond – The Clerk reported that despite chasing several times she had received no response from the Herts and Essex Wildlife Trust. It was suggested to try the organisation Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) to which the Council subscribed to annually. **Action: Clerk**

10.7 Media and Communications – It was reported that the new BK3 tab on the website was up and running, so any updates could be published to keep parishioners informed. It was agreed that it would be useful to put on the up-to-date Phasing Plan when this was received from Redrow. **Action: GS/NS**

11. Finance – To receive finance reports from the Clerk

11.1 To provide update on current financial position

Parish Council Account:

The Parish Council bank balance at 11.08.2026: £22,101.68

The Carriage Wash Fund A/C balance: £9,706.06

Petty Cash £9.28

Receipts since the last meeting:

Parish Council A/C:

CR £240.00 – Williams – Hire of Community Room (Incl. Deposit)

CR £200.00 – Baskett – Hire of Community Room (Incl. Deposit)

11.2 To authorise payments to be made**Approval of payments since last meeting:**

DC £16.79 – Zoom – Software Subscription

DD £16.80 – Sage – Payroll Software

DD £62.34 – BT – Broadband Pavilion

DD £25.43 – Castle Water – Water Pavilion

DD £57.51 – EDF Energy – Electricity Pavilion

DD £177.06 – NHC – Quarterly Waste Collection

DD £1,621.25 – NHC – Annual Dog Bin Emptying 26/27 & Annual Play Area

DC £50.00 – Cyan – Replacement slat for bench seat

Approval of payments to be made at meeting:

By bank transfer:

BP £1,281.06 - Catharine Toms – Clerk's Monthly Salary

BP £55.25 - Annie McPherson – Litter Picking July

BP £17.00 – Sophie & Charlotte Anderton – Litter Picking July

BP £135.00 – R Bonfield – Maintenance Pavilion & Rec. July

BP £270.00 – Deluxe Perfect Cleaning Ltd – Pavilion Cleaning July

BP £274.39 – HMRC – PAYE & NI Jun

BP £150.00 – Ricky Williams – Refund of Deposit for Pavilion Hire

Reading Room Accounts:

Bank Balance at 11.08.2026 was £1,334.93

Receipts since last meeting:

£25.00 - BLHG Donation

£19.02 – Just Giving (to be transferred to Carriage Wash A/C)

Approval of payments since last meeting:

DD £15.31 – British Gas – Electricity

DD £45.00 – NHC – Rates

11.3 To consider grant application from Barkway Social Club –

Cllr. Stuart took over to Chair the meeting for this item.

After consideration of the application and available budget, it was proposed, seconded and agreed to award a grant of £500 to Barkway Social Club for their proposed improvements to their building and equipment. The Clerk to arrange payment. Resolved. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Dennis resumed as Chair of the meeting.

12. Correspondence:

1) Letter from a resident of Great Chishill expressing concern that the trees along the Cambridge Road were choked by invasive ivy jeopardising the health of the trees. Cllr. Dennis had reported it to County Cllr. Ruth Brown and the Rights of Way Officer Robert Lloyd. He would also report it online via the HCC website. **Action: WD**

2) A complaint from a horse rider regarding closure of Bridleway 17 for 6 months during construction of BK3 – this would be passed onto Robert Lloyd at HCC. **Action: WD**

3) A complaint about some fly-tipping of building waste adjacent to the block of garages off Windmill Close. This had been reported to NHC for clearance.

4) A response from Abbotsbury Properties in Barley to a letter from Barkway Parish Council asking if they could top their field adjacent to the Pavilion, as this exceptional dry spell was creating a fire risk to the Pavilion building. The request was turned down as they considered

that topping the field with machinery could cause sparks if it hit any debris, which in their opinion was a greater fire risk.

5) A complaint from an adjoining landowner that there had been illegal fly-tipping of large quantities of dog waste bagged up in larger bags and left on the ground around the dog bin off Church Lane. This was reported to NHC as fly-tipping and a health hazard and a notice put on the bin to ask whoever had been doing this to stop!

13. Items to be deferred to the next meeting – Recruitment of a new Parish Councillor, Carriage Wash Restoration Project and quotation for Informative Sign, Survey of Seats and Benches, Social Media Policy for 2026, Village Pond maintenance, Security measures for the Pavilion and Recreation Ground, Traffic speeding and 20mph zone survey, Repair to multi-play equipment.

14. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 8th September 2026.
Cllr. Swann gave his apologies for the September meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.57pm