

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 1st April 2026 at 7:30pm in Barningham Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs J Chalmers - Chair, C Hammond, R Baxter, S Knight, Y Martin, West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Cllr Bull & Suffolk County Council (SCC) Cllr J Spicer.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received, and the reason given accepted and approved by the Councillors from: Cllrs L Hebert & N Martineau.

2. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

2.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None.

2.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.

2.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 4th March 2026, were agreed, approved and signed as a correct record.

5. Meeting Open to the Public 2 members of the public present.

It is requested that this item does not exceed 16 minutes and that any member of the public does not speak for any longer than 4 minutes

The members of public present were pleased to hear about the positive outcome of the planning committee's decision regarding the planning application for the land off Hopton Road. See under item 13.1 for further details.

The Parish Council have been copied in on correspondence, sent to the SCC flooding Team, from a resident, regarding recent ditch works in Bardwell Road.

A suggestion for some solar lights, along the raised path opposite the shop, was made. This area can be very dark in the winter month. The Clerk will explore this suggestion. **Action Clerk**

6. Report from Suffolk County Councillor (SCC): J Spicer

Cllr Spicer was very sad that this would be her last meeting as County Councillor for Barningham. She has been representing the Barningham ward for 37 years but has decided not to stand for re-election in the upcoming May elections. Cllr Spicers input and support over the years will be greatly missed. Cllr Spicer will meet with the Chair and Clerk to pass over any files and information pertaining to current SCC matters, these will include works to the railings opposite the shop and damage to the kerb outside the shop. Cllr Spicer has chased up the pot hole repair for Drought's Lane, and this has been inspected. The verge and grass will regenerate and should not require any intervention. The Elections in May will see the new Councillor in post for only two years as we will be moving to a new unitary council, in our region, in April 2028.

7. Report from West Suffolk District Councillor (WSDC): C Bull

As included on the agenda, under item 13.3, WSDC are currently carrying out a call for sites. This is a regular occurrence. The 2026 Call for Sites runs from 23 March 2026 to 20 May 2026 and is aimed at identifying land for the next Local Plan. Cllr Bull reported more instances of fly tipping locally and asked that we keep an eye out for further occurrences. A caravan site, at The Duke of Malbrough, has been granted planning permission following appeal. On March 25, 2026, the UK government announced that Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Suffolk will split the county into three new unitary authorities by April 2028. This decision replaces the existing county council and five district/borough councils with new structures covering West Suffolk, East Suffolk, and a combined South Suffolk & Ipswich area. Our area is one of the areas least changed.

8. Chairman's Reports

8.1 To receive any update from the Support our Buses project.

At present, there are no further updates. The chair is still waiting for further information before being able to write the bid for the Saturday service.

8.2 To note successful application for funding from WSDC for Village Hall roof repairs.

The Chair was successful in her bid for funding for the Village Hall, for a grant of £2,187 towards the cost of the roof repair for the extension.

9. Clerk's Report

9.1 To note continued vandalism at the church.

Sadly it has been reported that there has been further vandalism at the church.

9.2 To note receipt of Suffolk Care Directory 2026.

The Clerk has received the 2026 Suffolk Care Directory. Copies will be left in the Village Hall for those who would like one.

10 Finance/Compliance

10.1 To following accounts were approved for payment/noted.

Description	Type	customer	Total
Interest	Receipt	Barclays	£75.72
Clothes bank	Receipt	Alford Storage	£16.00
Burial	Receipt	Rosedale	£110.00
Salary/admin	Payment	Various	-£2,202.83
Signs/ cones	Payment	Start Safely	-£147.72
Tools	Payment	Ryobi	-£291.97
paint/sanding	Payment	Screwfix	-£21.98

10.2 Bank reconciliation and schedule of payments.

The Clerk provided the Councillors with a bank reconciliation and schedule of payments for information. Cllr Baxter carried out the additional accounts check at the meeting and the Chair signed the agreed schedule of payments.

10.3 To review insurance cover.

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

10.4 To note date for SALC for Audit 2025/6

The Clerk confirmed that she has booked SALC to carry out the audit W/C 18 May. This means that we will sign off on the end of year accounts at the June meeting.

11. Village Matters

11.1 To receive any Highways update.

11.2 To receive Traffic Data update.

The latest traffic data has been uploaded to the Parish Council website and will go on Facebook shortly.

11.3 To discuss any progress on metal barrier repairs, Church Road.

The Chair and Clerk will discuss this matter with Cllr Spicer when they meet up.

11.4 To receive feedback on reported damage to verge B1111/Church Road.
We will continue to pursue this matter, with highways, if the work is not undertaken shortly.

11.5 To receive any update on Hepworth Road traffic calming measures.
We are still exploring options to fund any works and will again revisit the possibility of erecting a Vehicle Activated Sign if a suitable location can be identified (VAS).

11.6 To receive update on anti-social behaviour at Aggies Piece.
The police are carrying out regular patrols both in and around Aggies Piece. It has been noted that there are some possible items of drug paraphernalia in a specific location within Aggies Piece and as a result they have shared the information with their rural colleagues who have also commenced foot and vehicle patrols in the area.

12. Neighbourhood Plan

12.1 To note that WSDC have completed their consultation on the Barningham Neighbourhood Plan.

The consultation, carried out by WSDC, finished yesterday. We will now await further advice from our consultant re next steps.

13. Planning (to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted)

13.1 To receive notification of Development Control Committee inclusion of DC/25/0963/OUT for their 1st April meeting.

The Chair and Clerk attended the Development Control Committee and the Chair read the following statement:

Barningham accepts the need for development as illustrated in our Neighbourhood Plan. The West Suffolk Development Plan published by you identifies this site for around 37 homes. The site remains the same so it is difficult to understand how an increase to 60 is acceptable. The proposed density for this development is 37 houses per hectare whilst Lingwood Close our most recent development adjoining is only 27 per hectare, this proposal is suggesting putting 3 times the number of houses on a site only twice the size. We strongly disagree with the view that this uplift to 60 dwellings can be supported without detriment to the character of Barningham. A development of this density on the edge of the village is completely out of character giving a much more urban feel to the entrance to the village. We are particularly concerned that the development framework shows the use of land outside of the allocated site boundary being used as SANG. This is NOT allowed. It is meant to be within the allocated site as identified on the policies map. The officers report says a higher quantum can be satisfactorily accommodated whilst maintaining strong compliance with policy AP42 but this is not the case. The developer is including additional land outside that allocated in order to be compliant. This clearly shows that the allocated site is not suitable for this size of development.

All of the reasons for the uplift to 60 dwellings are about meeting National Policy requirements. There is no rationale for it and there is certainly no reference to meeting the needs of the village and it's residents. The local ICB states local GP practices do not have capacity for the additional growth resulting from this development. Exemplified by a local resident who phoned at 8am was number 27 in the queue when it was her turn there were no appointments left. The travel plan is considered acceptable citing opportunities for frequent travel by bus weekdays and weekends. In reality there are 2 buses out in the morning and 3 back Monday to Friday with nothing at the weekend.

Barningham is not against development just this development. It needs to be in keeping with the village. It feels that this is being done to us and the sizeable increase is for the benefit of the local authority meeting its targets rather than for the benefit of Barningham. Is the idea of working collaboratively through local plans no longer valued? Do the allocations in the Local Plan have no meaning?

There is so much more to maintaining strong, well functioning communities than maximising land potential. This is not the right development for Barningham. I urge the committee to respect the views of the residents and refuse this application.

Following this, and further input from West Suffolk Councillors, the application was unanimously refused. The reasons given for this was overdevelopment of the site, which would be detrimental to the character of the village, as well as concerns raised about the green space.

13.2 To receive response of concern raised to WSDC Planning Department.

Cllr Chalmers received an apology from Tamara Benford-Brown, Senior Planning Officer -WSDC- regarding the lack of response we had received following a planning concern we had raised over works being carried out at Old Hall. We have been assured that the enforcement team is now in discussion with the applicant on next steps. This includes the submission of a planning application to regularise some works. We will await the application.

13.3 WSDC Call for sites.

Call for sites with potential for development - March to May 2026

As discussed under Cllr Bulls report, WSDC are collating a list of sites that are available for development for housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, employment uses, mixed uses and for infrastructure including for community facilities, education, health, and transport, and for green infrastructure such as parks, allotments, area of biodiversity net gain, play areas and other open space. This includes sites that have already been allocated for development in a Local Plan document, have been given planning permission, or are partially constructed. The call for sites will run from Monday 23 March (9am) will close at 5pm Wednesday 20 May 2026.

14. Housing Needs Survey (HNS)

14.1 To note submission of contract with Community Action Suffolk (CAS) to carry out HNS. The Contract has been submitted to CAS, we will await further instruction.

15. Aggies Piece, Biodiversity and Environment. To receive any updates, to include:

It appears that there is currently no funding for the wetland project at Aggies Piece. We would like to find someone who could help with funding options, Cllr Baxter will continue to pursue this.

Action Baxter

15.1 To receive update on request for Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

Cllr Baxter has raised concerns about some of the trees and hedge rows on the proposed Hopton Road site. In the planning application it is indicated that these would be protected. Cllr Baxter has arranged for the Tree Officer from WSDC, Nathan Mageachie to come to the village on Wednesday 15th April to look at the area. Cllr Baxter will also ask him to look at the village in general and see where it might be appropriate to attached TPOs.

15.2 To discuss option to plant wildflowers on green spaces in the village.

The Conservation Group would like to see some wildflower areas in the village. An area on Millfield and Bishops Croft were discussed. It was suggested that a contained area around the drainage area, on Millfield, might work. Cllr Bull felt that WSDC would, in principle, be happy with the idea but that they would need more details, she will provide Cllr Baxter with contact details for an officer at WSDC who should be able to help. Cllr Baxter will look at seed costings and see if there is any funding available.

Action Cllr Bull/Baxter

15.3 To discuss application to DEFRA for funding to support work at Aggies.

Cllr Baxter will submit a grant application when the next funding round opens. **Action Cllr Baxter**

16. Caretaker's Report.

16.1 To receive any update from the Caretaker.

The Caretaker continues to do a good job and is pleased with the new equipment we have received which was funded by the SCC Self Help Scheme.

17 Play Area/Cricket Meadow: To receive any updates, to include:

17.1 To note success of grant application for Play Area works.

We have been successful with our application for the Capital Communities Funding Grant and have received a grant of £2187 towards works for the wet pour and remedial repairs to the play equipment in the children's Play area.

18. Churchyard/Cemetery.

18.1 To note request for additional inscription/erection of memorial.

The Councillors were happy with the request, which included some yellow daffodils, for the memorial of the late G & B Butcher.

18.2 To note new fees for the Cemeteries from 1st April, as previously agreed.

The new Cemetery fees came into force today. This information has been updated on the website.

19. Correspondence for Discussion/Information

There was no additional correspondence received.

20. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda

Cllr Baxter asked that Councillors roles be included on the next agenda.

Action Clerk

21. Date of Next Meeting. Annual Parish Council Meeting - Wednesday 6th May 2026, 7.00pm
Barningham Village Hall

22.Exclusion of the Public and Press To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for the consideration of the following items:

22.1 Personnel Issues. None. 22.2 Legal Issues. None.