

Minutes of Barningham Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6th May 2026 at 7:30pm in Barningham Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs J Chalmers - Chair, N Martineau, R Baxter, Y Martin, L Hebert & C Hammond

1. Election of Chair

Cllr Baxter nominated Cllr Chalmers for the position of Chair, this was seconded by Cllr Martineau. Cllr Chalmers accepted the position.

2. Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Chalmers completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3. Election of Vice Chair

Cllr Baxter nominated Cllr Martineau for the position of Vice Chair, this was seconded by Cllr Hebert. Cllr Martineau accepted the position.

4. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, and the reason given accepted and approved by the Councillors from: from Cllr. S Knight, West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Cllr Bull & Suffolk County Council (SCC) Cllr J Spicer.

5. To elect Council Officers and Representatives to outside bodies

Cllr Chalmers was re-elected at the Parish Council representative for the Village Hall Committee.

6. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

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

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

6.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. N/A.

7. To discuss and agree Councillors roles

There have been some changes since Councillors roles were last allocated. With this in mind the Clerk will share the list of responsibilities for the Councillors consideration. We will revisit this at the next meeting.

8. Minutes - The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 1st April 2026, were agreed, approved and signed as a correct record.

9. Meeting open to the public 3 Members of the public present.

A resident asked if Barningham has a village pantry. It was confirmed that there was this provision in the village, and that it was administered by the Church Warden. It was suggested that this might benefit from being advertised more widely. The Barningham Charities is another organisation who can offer help. Information regarding this can be found on noticeboards in the village.

It was asked if there was scope for another dog litter bin on Hopton Road. The Chair will look to see if there is a suitable location for an additional bin.

Action Chair

It was noted that next month is Pride Month. It was suggested that the resident who brought this to the attention of the Councillors might like to write an article, for inclusion in the Parish News. We will provide contact information to facilitate this.

Action Clerk

10. Report from Suffolk County Councillor: J Spicer

As the outgoing County Councillor, no report was received for this meeting.

11. Report from West Suffolk District Councillor: C Bull

Cllr Bull was unable to attend the meeting.

12. Progress reports. For information, from:

12.1 Chairman:

12.1.1 To receive any update from the 'Support Our Buses' project.

There was no update to receive at the time of the meeting. It was unclear what funding would still be available following the local elections.

12.1.2 To note completion of repairs to Village Hall roof.

The roof for the store room has been replaced and the store area cleaned out. This is a big improvement for the hall. Some of the work was funded through a grant from West Suffolk District Council.

12.2 Clerk:

12.2.1 To receive feedback from Clerks unplugged session.

At the session, there were discussions about data protection and, it is being strongly recommended, that the Clerk has a device (Laptop/PC) for each of her parishes. It was agreed that we should factor this in when looking at the budget moving forward.

13 Finance/Compliance 13.1 The following accounts were approved/noted.

Receipt	Bierton and woods	Burials	£82.50
Receipt	Alford Storage	Clothes bank	£10.00
Receipt	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	£49,825.00
Receipt	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	£2,187.00
Payment	Various	Salary-office	-£3,407.68
Payment	SALC	Membership subscription	-£421.99
Payment	Countryside, conservation & TS	Aggies paths and trimming	-£450.00
Payment	Barningham Village Hall	PC Hall Hire	-£400.00
Payment	Countryside, conservation & TS	Grass cutting	-£761.54
Payment	Barningham Village Hall	Coffee caravan hall hire	-£63.00
Payment	MiJan Ltd	Accounts software	-£108.00

13.2 Bank reconciliation, [budget report](#) and schedule of payments.

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

13.3 The Following documents were reviewed, updated where necessary and agreed to be in order:

- (i) [Councillor Code of Conduct](#)
- (ii) [Financial Regulations](#).
- (iii) [Standing Orders](#).
- (iv) [Document review schedule](#).

13.3 To review insurance cover.

Cllr Hebert has done some work on reviewing the insurance documents. The Clerk has requested and received the renewal, she will share this with Cllr Hebert. It was agreed that we should review the Asset Register alongside the new document. Cllr Hebert asked about the cost of separate cover for data breaches and cyber-attacks, which has been withdrawn. The Clerk reported that the minimum premium for these policies will be £420.25 dependant on annual turnover. Setting this against our annual premium of £844.42, this was considered to be a considerable amount. The Clerk will take some advice on the need to have this cover or whether taking reasonable steps, to minimise risk, is sufficient. Cllr Hebert noted that the policy guidelines potentially require that playground equipment be inspected every 7 days. Following the reduction of inspections from WSDC, it was confirmed that the Caretaker will be undertaking weekly inspections.

Action Cllr Hebert/Clerk

14. Village Matters

14.1 To receive any Highways update.

Some work has been carried out in Drought's Lane. It would appear however that there is another large pothole that has not been repaired. Cllr Martineau will report this on the SCC reporting tool. The pothole at the entrance to Bishops Croft has been repaired.

14.2 To receive Traffic Data update.

The latest traffic data has been uploaded to the website and the Facebook page.

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

The metal barriers/railings opposite the shop have been repaired. We are grateful that this repair has now been made.

14.4 To receive feedback on reported damage to verge B1111/Church Road.

The case into this has been reopened, by SCC, as a repair has still not been carried out. We will continue to monitor the situation.

14.5 To note concerns regarding removal of Grit Bin, Hopton Road.

We received notification, from Havebury Housing, that the grit bin on Hopton Road, was to be removed. We contacted Havebury regarding the notice that had been placed on the grit bin, as we were somewhat surprised by the request for its removal. The bin has been in this location for many years and provides an important service to Havebury residents during periods of icy weather. Havebury responded to say 'As part of our neighbourhood check in yesterday it was noted that the grit bin has been placed on Havebury land. We have recently removed any grit bins belonging to Havebury from other areas, the Rangers may not have been aware this was maintained by yourself. Thank you for making us aware. Havebury have asked their Grounds Maintenance if they are happy for the grit bin to remain on the grass area of Hopton Road, Barningham or would they prefer it to be moved to an additional location'. The Parish Council had heard no more regarding this, but it is understood that the removal notice has been removed.

14.6 To discuss option for lighting on the raised path, opposite the shop.

The Clerk has looked at some options for lighting along this path. It is still to be determined if it is feasible to have lighting here. A number of the Councillors felt it was not required. The Clerk will continue to explore options and report back at a future meeting.

Action Clerk

14.7 To receive any update on Emergency Plan.

A new plan template has been received. It was agreed that Cllr Hebert/Chalmers and the Clerk would work together to update the existing plan.

Action Cllr Hebert/Chalmers/Clerk

14.8 To note report of overgrown hedges, Hepworth Road.

A request to have the hedges cut back, at the speed derestriction, in Hepworth Road has been received. The Clerk will report this on the SCC reporting tool.

Action Clerk

15. Neighbourhood Plan

15.1 To note Barningham Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement Addendum consultation which was due to run from— 23rd April 2026 (9am) to 8th May 2026 (5pm) has been extended, due to an error with email addresses, until to 15th May 5pm

15.2 To agree Barningham Neighbourhood Plan Parish Council response to Examiner's Clarification Note April 2026.

The Councillors agreed the response to the Examiner's Clarification Note April 2026. **Action Clerk**

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

16.1 DC/26/0616/HH Old Hall Coney Weston Road Barningham Householder planning application - a. perimeter fencing b. gated paddock areas c. summer house outbuilding d. dog house outbuilding e. pergola walkway d. cage/swing e. phone box f. decking/jetty area around the pond g. sewage treatment plant h. heat pump i. fencing for security. Applicant Rebecca Middleton-Jones.

The Parish Council objects to this application for the following reasons.

1. The Parish Council was first made aware of work being carried out at Old Hall in May 2024 when concern was raised about the number of mature trees and hedging being removed from the property. These concerns were brought forward to the planning authorities and in February 2025 a site visit was conducted by an officer from West Suffolk District Council. It was established during that visit that the erection of a new fence and works to form a replacement building had been carried out. This application states that work was not started until 1 October 2025 which we believe is incorrect.
2. Both the planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement say that the applicant was unaware that planning permission was needed. There was a pre-application enquiry made about this property in May 2024 (this coincides with the date concerns were first raised). In the response to this enquiry it clearly states that decking or hard landscaping around the pond would require planning permission. The pre-application response also advises that advice is sought from the Conservation Officers given the host dwelling is Grade II listed. This seems to contradict the claim that the applicant was unaware permission was needed. The pre-application response also advises that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) is conducted. This does not appear to have been done. This application form says that no trees or hedges are to be removed or pruned. The reason concerns were raised originally was because of the number of mature trees and hedging that were being removed. For Grade II listed properties, trees within the curtilage are protected as part of the listing and cutting down or lopping trees may require consultation with the local council. As this is a retrospective application we are surprised that this has not been acknowledged.
3. The Planning Statement states that the character of the site as experienced publicly remains largely unchanged by the new boundary fencing but this is not the opinion of the Parish Council. This area is described in Barningham's Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment as a distinct but separate area of the village with many fine trees. The removal of a significant amount of these mature trees and hedging and the subsequent installation of this close boarded fence has had a negative impact on the character of that area of the village. This type of fencing is not replicated anywhere else in this area making it look very much out of place and giving a more urban feel to a very rural historic landscape. The Character Assessment in the Neighbourhood Plan also identifies the view towards Old Hall as a 'key' view. (Map 4 view 17). The Neighbourhood Plan is available on the Barningham website and we would expect this to be referenced when submitting a planning application. Finally, we note that the applicant intends to submit a further application for more work at this property and understands the need to ensure any further proposals do not negatively impact the listed building. We are pleased to read this but are very disappointed that this did not happen before the unauthorised work was completed and the character of the building and it's curtilage changed. The Parish Council trusts that the proper procedures will be followed for any future applications.

4.

17. Housing Needs Survey (HNS) To receive any update.

There was no update at this time.

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

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

Cllr Baxter and a member of the Environmental Group met with the tree officer from WSDC. It was agreed that he will put TPOs on the 17 Oaks at the side of the proposed development site on Hopton Road. He will also look at what protection is available for the hedgerows. This is great news and the Parish Council are delighted with this outcome. The officer made it clear that TPOs are available in situations like this where there is a potential threat but was not able to support them elsewhere currently.

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

Cllr Baxter is still exploring the possibility of planting some wildflowers in the village, potentially in an oval at Millfield. She is in communication with WSDC and a member of the Environmental Group is meeting with a representative from Suffolk Wildlife Trust to receive some advice on the project.

18.3 To discuss RSPB guidance on bird feeding.

Cllr Baxter provided the Councillors with RSPB guidance on bird feeding.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/news/how-to-help-garden-birds#how-to-help-your-garden-birds> This sets out the importance of pausing feeding other than a small amount of fat balls/ meal worms 1/5 to 31/10. Cllr Knight has reported issues with rodents at Aggies gathering at the feeders. It was agreed that feeding would be paused and the that we would revisit the matter in the Autumn.

19. Caretaker's Report.

19.1 To receive any update from the Caretaker, including update on new tools received..

Caretakers report April 2026 .

The new hedge trimmer has arrived and has been used to cut foliage on pathway opposite the Spar and Sandy Lane pathway. All the new equipment is proving useful. The Clerk will apply to the SCC Self-help scheme for reimbursement. The Caretaker continues to do good work around the village. The recent litter pick saw a real reduction in litter overall, apart from Drought's lane where a large amount of litter was collected by Cllr Martineau. We will ask the Caretaker to include this area in his rounds in future. The litter pick was a success and thanks were extended to all those who attend and to the Clerk for the cake.

Action Clerk

20 Play Area/Cricket Meadow: To receive any update.

The grant for the play area works has been received. There were no further updates or matters for action at this at this time.

21. Churchyard/Cemetery.

21.1 To receive request for memorial stone.

A request for a memorial stone, for the later Oscar Vatcher was received and agreed.

Action Clerk

22. Correspondence for Discussion/Information

There was no additional correspondence received.

23. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda

The Councillors thanked Cllr Carol Hammond for all her hard work as both Chair and Vice Chair over the years.

Cllr Martineau reported that plans for a Fete, to be hosted by the Martineau family, at Barningham House, are progressing well. There is a fantastic committee working together and it is hoped that there will boat rides on the pond on the day. The event will be held on 11th July.

24. Date of Next Meeting. Parish Council Meeting - Wednesday 3rd June 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.

No further business, meeting closed 8.26 pm.