

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th July 2026 at 7:00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs J Chalmers - Chair, L Hebert, S Knight, Thomas Bayliss, Suffolk County Council Councillor (SCC) H Richardson & West Suffolk District Council (WSDC) Councillor C Bull.

Cllr H Richardson was formally welcomed, we look forward to working with him.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received, and the reason given accepted and approved by the Councillors from: from: Cllrs N Martineau, C Hammond & Y Martin.

2. To note resignation of Councillor Baxter

The Parish Council were saddened to receive Cllr Roberta Baxter's resignation. She has been a valued member of the Parish Council since she joined in July 2014. She will continue to support the Parish Council with environmental matters, for which we are extremely grateful.

3. Co-option of new Parish Councillor

The vacancy, arising from the resignation of Roberta Baxter, has been advertised for the required statutory period. West Suffolk Council has confirmed that it has not received a request from ten local government electors for an election to be held to fill the vacancy on Barningham Parish Council. We can therefore co-opt a new Parish Councillor. Local resident, Thomas Bayliss was co-opted on to the Council. The councillors welcomed Thomas Baylis. Cllr Bayliss completed the relevant paperwork and the Clerk will ensure this is submitted to WSDC.

4. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

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

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

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

5. Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on Wednesday 3rd June 2026, were agreed, approved and signed as a correct record.

6. Meeting Open to the Public

There were no members of the public present.

7. Report from Suffolk County Councillor (SCC): H Richardson

Cllr Richardson provided the following written report:

RAF Barnham. You will no doubt be aware that it was announced on Friday 26th June that the Ministry of Defence facility at RAF Barnham, near the Norfolk border with Thetford, is intended to be used to accommodate up to 1,250 asylum seekers toward the end of the year. From an operational perspective, the local response is being led by West Suffolk Council and I would particularly like to thank my District Councillor colleague Andrew Smith for his swift, visible, and proactive leadership in representing residents on this contentious matter. From Suffolk County Council's perspective, contact has been made with Barnham primary school to offer them whatever support is needed given their close proximity to the new site. **A143.** Following the damage to the A143 during the May heatwave, Highways officers conducted twice-daily site visits during the recent hot weather in June to assess the state of the road surface. For the time being it remains structurally sound but has deteriorated in places, though it continues to remain open. Following the emergence repairs conducted in May, redressing of the road will take place between 1st – 3rd August. This will be at the expense of the contractor given the initial installation of the 'membrane' beneath the road surface last year was found to be defective. However it should also be noted that there will be further roadworks along the A143 from 13th July to 23rd November as part of the highway's .

improvements associated with the Bloor Homes development in Stanton (specifically widening of the road, introduction of a new bus stop, new footpath, extension of the 30mph zone and a signalised junction). The A143 will therefore have two-way traffic lights with one lane open during this period. **CQC inspection.** Adult social care services at the County Council received a rating of 'Good' when assessed recently by the Care Quality Commission ('CQC'); this is unchanged from the previous inspection. Committed and compassionate care staff were noted as strongpoints, but the CQC's report emphasised the need to improve waiting times to access services. **Local government reorganisation.** The new administration at Suffolk County Council confirmed at a Cabinet meeting on Monday 29th June that they formally intend to launch a Judicial Review to the High Court over the decision to proceed with three new unitary authorities in Suffolk. This will be at a cost of £500,000 which will be met from (as yet undetermined) earmarked reserves. The timescales for this are unknown but will likely depend on whether the High Court believes there is a 'case to answer'. **Bus routes.** Although we are waiting for final confirmation, the County Council has indicated there is sufficient funding for the 70 and 73 bus services to continue in their current form until April 2028. However there are still some areas without coverage, such as Hepworth, and this will be a focus of mine in the coming weeks. Whether there is sufficient funding for the 332 to be extended to Thetford will become clearer later in the year. **Armed Forces Day.** Armed Forces Day commemorations took place at King's Meadow Recreation Ground in Stowmarket on Saturday 27th June, bringing together service personnel, veterans, families and the wider community to recognise the county's armed forces community. The programme included a cadet and Standard bearers' parade, a royal salute to HM Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk, the national anthem, and performances by The Vibettes, the RAF Honington Voluntary Band and the Honington Military Wives Choir. Attendees also visited local stalls and displays from Suffolk's Regular, Reserve and Cadet Forces, alongside family activities. Speeches from Cllr Darren Dordoy (Mayor of Stowmarket), Cllr Lorraine Baker (Chair of Mid Suffolk District Council), and Mark Pendlington, HM Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, highlighted the importance of the armed forces community and expressed thanks for their service. The event concluded with an AH-64E Apache helicopter flyover.

In addition to the report above, the condition of the A143 from Stanton to Ixworth was discussed at length. The road is currently closed and the diverted traffic is causing significant issues for neighbouring villages. Cllr Richardson has been informed by SCC that the current issues being experienced, with the road surface breaking up, is unconnected to the previous repair works and that they have resulted from the recent high temperatures. It was stated that the previous problems arose from a faulty membrane. The short term solution, of 'dusting' the road has been carried out. A temporary repair will be carried out in July with a permanent repair being undertaken in August. The permanent repair will not be at the tax payer's expense. Cllr Richardson will continue to monitor the situation and will keep us informed of progress. It was noted in his report that reference to the buses should have read 73 & 73A and not the 70 route which is a self-funding route. The Clerk will send some dates to Cllr Richardson so we can set up a date to meet with him and Andrew Moore, to discuss issues in the village, including traffic calming options for Hepworth Road. It was noted that it is the Village Fete this weekend. Cllr Richardson will do his best to attend.

Action Clerk

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

To include any update on landline switch-off.

It was understood that residents would be contacted individually regarding the switch over, once a date is known. Cllr Bull has been informed that a non-recyclable bag can be used in the food recycling bins. This is because machinery is used that will separate the bags from the food at the recycling factory. There will be door-step engagement for the lowest performing areas to help people better understand the new recycling regime. Information about holiday activities has been circulated. Cllr Bull is trying to find out if there is any money available to help with the proposed wildflower area in the Village. Cllr Bull is chasing up the planning application for Old Hall, as decision has not yet been made.

9. Chairman's Reports

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

The long awaited report from Cenex has been received. It would appear that a 'hub and spoke' network is being proposed. It was unclear if the Saturday service is going ahead at the moment, however the funding for the 73 and 73A is guaranteed until 2028.

9.2 To receive update on potential new bin on Hopton Road.

The advice from SCC, re dog waste bins, is that they do not normally allow them to be attached to street light columns, as this as it is hazardous waste and the contractor will not work on street lights with these bins attached. We will continue to look for a suitable location in that area, this will be added to the list of items to be looked at with Cllr Richardson and Andrew Moore.

9.3 To discuss Councillors' roles and responsibility.

Following the resignation of Cllr Baxter, it was agreed that Cllr Bayliss will lead on Environmental issue, supported by Roberta Baxter.

Cllr Hebert will lead on legal and insurance matters.

Cllrs Hebert/Chalmers and the Clerk will lead on the Emergency Plan.

Cllr Knight will pick up the Accessibility Audit with Cllr Martin. The Clerk will send a copy of the latest version of the plan to Cllr Knight.

Action Clerk

10. Clerk's Report

10.1 To note advice given re tree on the Highway.

A resident contacted the Clerk about a tree, adjacent to their property, that they had concerns about. The Clerk informed them that SCC are responsible for the trees on the highway and passed on contact details for both the Highways Department and the County Councillor.

10.2 To note information supplied re The Royal George and burial in the cemetery.

A visitor to the village was seeking information about a, historic burial in the Lychgate Cemetery and about how to purchase a copy of the book about the history of the village. The Clerk put them in touch with the relevant people. They also raised concerns about the overgrown area of the Lychgate Cemetery. The Clerk explained that this was something that was done to encourage wildlife and that a path was cut through the area, two or three time as year, to allow access to the older graves situated there.

10.3 To note concerns raised to Countrywide re 'for Sale' board.

A resident copied the Clerk in on correspondence to a local estate agent regarding a 'For Sale' that has been in situ for a number of years. This has now been removed.

11 Finance/Compliance

11.1 The following payments were approved and receipts noted.:

Type	Supplier / customer	Description	Total
Receipt	Alford Storage	Clothes Bank	£23.00
Receipt	SCC	Tools, self-help scheme	£237.48
Payment	Various	Office/salary/admin	-£2,234.86
Payment	CAS	Data Protection/compliance	-£82.00
Payment	CCT services	Grass Cutting	-£1,523.09
Payment	SALC	Audit	-£410.40

The Chair signed the agreed schedule of payments.

11.2 Bank reconciliation, budget report and schedule of payments.

The Clerk provided the Councillors with a bank reconciliation, schedule of payments and a budget report for information. The budget report shows a comparison between budgeted and actual income and expenditure.

11.2 (i) Cllr Knight carried out the additional accounts check at the meeting. These included checking documents confirming the amounts set up for payment at Barclays and verifying the bank reconciliations (for all accounts)

11.2 (ii) Cllr Chalmers will approve the payments at the bank, following confirmation from Cllr Knight who has made the additional accounts check as recorded above.

11.3 to note submission of AGAR to PKF Littlejohn and compliance with Transparency Code/Publication requirement .

The Clerk has submitted the required documentation to PKF for the Audit and ensured that we are compliant with our obligations under the Transparency code and Publication Scheme.

12. Village Matters

12.1 To receive any Highways update.

Road closure, A143, this was discussed under item 7, SCC Cllr Richardsons report.

12.2 To receive Traffic Data update.

The traffic data has been shared. It was noted that the device, at the shop, was not holding its charge. We will monitor the situation.

12.3 To receive update on damaged railings.

The railing opposite the shop have been damaged again. This has been reported to SCC Highways. SCC have investigated our report and after careful assessment, this matter is not currently considered to meet their safety intervention criteria for immediate action.

12.3 To receive update on concerns raised about road surface, Mill Road.

The road surface, in Mill Road, was reported as melting in the hot weather. SCC have investigated the report and after careful assessment, this matter is not currently considered to meet their safety intervention criteria for immediate action.

12.4 Sandy Lane Footpath

Concerns were raised about the Sandy Lane footpath. It was noted that this is regularly cut back, with a hard cut back every six months.

12.4 Emergency Plan update.

A date to meet will be arranged to update the plan, after a date to meet Cllr Richardson was agreed.

Action Clerk

13. Barningham Neighbourhood Plan

13.1 To note date of Neighbourhood Plan Referendum - 10 September 2026.

The date for the Barningham Neighbourhood Plan Referendum is set for 10th September 2026.

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

14.1 West Suffolk Local Plan 2045 - Scoping Consultation (16 June to 28 July 2026)

This is the first chance for people to have their say about the development of a new local plan for West Suffolk which will cover the period to 2045. This local plan will take around 30 months to prepare, with adoption of the plan currently scheduled for May 2029. The timetable for the preparation of the local plan can be viewed [here](#).

This first scoping consultation takes the form of a survey. It includes a mix of free-text and multiple-choice questions about how you would like to be engaged and consulted during the plan preparation process, as well as what the plan should include.

15. Housing Needs Survey (HNS)15.1 To receive any update. It was agreed that we will continue work on this once the Neighbourhood Plan is concluded. Cllr Bayliss would like to be involved when we are ready to start.

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

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

Bobby Baxter was unable to attend the meeting but sent the following report. With regard to DEFRA funding to assist with aggies maintenance, I have reviewed the new SFI (sustainable farming initiative) and CSHT (countryside stewardship higher tier) funding options but cannot identify anything in the new (and reduced) options that would assist us, but I have emailed the RPA (Rural Payments Agency) to ask for advice.

With regard to Aggies grass cut after the end of July would you like me to try to organise this again. It was agreed that we would like Bobby Baxter to organise this if she could. **Action Clerk**

With respect to the Conservation Group I have the following report:

We met 8/6 and discussed possible actions:

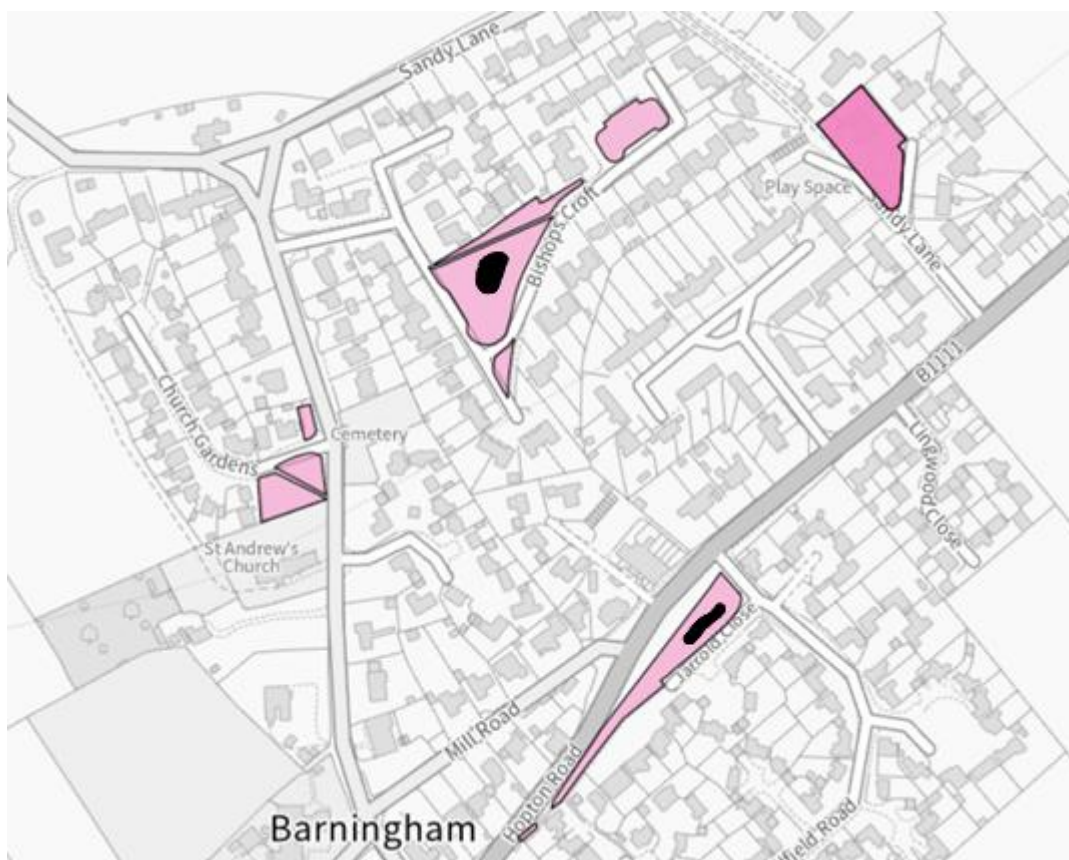
a) Wildflower areas-

- Taken advice from WSC , and SWT
- Invited comments from residents on FB and in Parish News
- Options to either clear grass and seed wildflowers or allow grass to grow in designated areas and see what comes up, in the first instance we will do the latter
- Advice has been to cut and remove grass in usual way from early August, but to let grass grow in designated areas next spring
- We would like to do this on the areas marked in black on the WSC map, and on a small area of the cricket meadow (if agreed) perhaps we can discuss that at a PC meeting after our next conservation group meeting

b) Also conservation day including at Aggie's Piece (removing ivy, and any over tight tree protectors) was confirmed 26/9/2026

c) Next meeting 17/8 6.30 pm pub , Agenda to include:

- Wildflower areas- progress
- Planned conservation day
- Any further options for wetland project at Aggie's



Cllr Bayliss has put up some signage and will put something on Facebook about the wildflower proposals.

17. Caretaker's Report.

17.1 To receive any update from the Caretaker.

Small playpark. Attended meeting to discuss WSC report about the wooden swing frames . Idea forwarded to the Clerk, will try and attend a meeting with Play Area Office WSDC . Rubber bung replaced on small gate .- rubbish cleared , emptied bins , play equipment checked for wear / damage / graffiti. Foliage cut away, including the full length of pathway in Sandy Lane. Lychgate cemetery .- Headstones checked and bin put out fortnightly. The line marking equipment was moved and used on the Cricket Meadow, the Caretaker found it and returned it to the school.

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

18.1 To discuss works to play area.

As mentioned above a meeting is currently being arranged to discuss the issues in the Children's Play area.

Action Clerk

19. Churchyard/Cemetery.

19.1 To discuss memorial request.

The request for a memorial in the Cemetery was approved.

Action Clerk

20. Correspondence for Discussion/Information

20.1 West Suffolk Council (WSDC) - annual canvass. Information Circulated.

20.2 WSDC Removal of requirement to publish members' home addresses in their public registers of interest. Noted

20.3 West Suffolk Parish and Town Forum – King Edwards Memorial Hall, Newmarket on Tuesday 28 July 2026. Cllrs Chalmer, Bull and the Clerk will attend.

20.4 West Suffolk Council - Food Waste update. Circulated.

21. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda

The hot weather has caused some irregularities with the Church Clock, also it appears to have been oiled. It was wondered if the churchwarden enabled access by the horologist. We will check to see if this is the case and make it clear that access should only be via the Parish Council.

Action Clerk

It was reported that there has been an increase in antisocial driving in the village. We can move the Speed Indicator Advice and try to get some data to support this. There is also evidence of antisocial behaviour down at aggies piece. The Clerk will contact the police to ask them to investigate this and also to enquire as to why they didn't attend the drop in session as advertised.

Action Clerk

22. Date of Next Meeting. Parish Council Meeting – It was agreed that we would not hold a meeting in August, unless we receive some urgent business. Therefore the next meeting is scheduled Wednesday 2nd September 2026, 7.00pm Barningham Village Hall

23.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:

23.1 Personnel Issues. None.

23.2 Legal Issues. None.