

BARKWAY BULLETIN



A Quarterly Newsletter from the Parish Council of Barkway

Issue No 13.

October 2012

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Barkway Bulletin. Normally published in September, it has been delayed until October to enable certain items of a current and topical nature to be included. I hope that you enjoy reading news about Barkway and Newsells and would welcome comments and thoughts on any of the items covered.

So far, 2012 has been a memorable year for the country, with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June followed by the Olympics and Paralympics over the summer. (I will put aside the poor weather in the first six months). I believe that this has raised the spirits of many and the hope would be that this can be maintained at both national and also at a local levels. Here in Barkway, we remain optimistic as we strive to improve the sports and community facilities for the Parish. As you can see in the Bulletin report, we are at an important and crucial stage in our ambitious plan to construct the new sports pavilion and community room at the Rec. A further application was submitted in September to see if we can obtain another grant of £50K. If we were to be successful then we would be close to the final amount needed. If we are not, however, we will struggle to meet the deadline date of spring 2013 (required by the earlier grant from NHDC) for construction. The search for alternative funding continues.

Steve Alsop, Chairman, Barkway Parish Council

Proposed Solar Farm on land at Wisbridge Farm

Following on from the public consultation meetings held by Push Energy back in July, Barkway Parish Council is keen to know your views about this proposed Solar Farm.

As yet, Barkway Parish Council has not received details of any formal planning application made but would like to be in a position to represent the views of the village if or when this happens.

Please forward your comments by 5th October to: parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk

Litter Picking Day

It was suggested that a litter picking day should be organised in order to collect rubbish which is lying on the sides of the roads which lead into Barkway.

The date of Sunday 14th October, with a start time of 10.30hrs, has been proposed. Correct equipment, in the form of Hi Viz jackets, litter pickers, gloves and bag hoops (for keeping litter picking bags open) will be available on arrival at the Rec, depending on the final numbers of volunteers.

It is hoped that the work could be completed within 2/3 hours, rounding off with some light refreshments.

Anyone who would like to volunteer could they please email Councillor Steve Alsop on steve.alsop@barkway-village.co.uk by Sunday 7th October.

Flooding in Barkway

Yes it really could happen and it will not be because a river burst its banks. It will be rain (or melting snow) which failed to get away. Why can the water not get away? It is because the drains and gullies are blocked. So why are they blocked?

Despite the cuts, the Highways Department has been pressured into completing both a gully emptying and a drain rodding/jetting scheme, but the problem is the ease with which they will fill and block again with the dirt and straw that flows into them. Again, the Highways come regularly to sweep the roads on a Tuesday morning every 4 weeks between 8.30 and noon; not a fixed time. The dates are on the village website (www.barkway-village.co.uk) but the next dates are October 9, November 6 and December 4.

We do ask you to keep the street clear, and park on just one side. We even did a leaflet drop on cars but frankly it does not work for whatever reason, so a lot of the gutters are rarely if ever swept.

We are therefore asking ALL residents to help; in many cases not for their own sakes (those on higher parts will never flood) but for the community as a whole.

What would we like you to do? Well simply this. Take care of your own bit of pavement and gutter by sweeping it up and putting it in the bin, not the road. We know that you did not create the mud or straw but only you can fix it. It is in the interest of those 10 or 12 houses at risk, and, of course, it is voluntary.

If your neighbours would have difficulty doing it, then please help them too. We cannot stop the mud (off tyres and land run-off) or the straw (this is an agricultural area and the straw is apparently going to create green energy) but we can help ourselves. Please help.

Councillor Jim Dalton

Dates for your Diary.....

Next Parish Council meetings: Mon 8th October. 12th November and 10th December in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.

Members of the public welcome.

Parish Council/Police Surgeries: Held bi-monthly in the Reading Room. Next date: 17th November - between 10 and 11 am.

Parish Matters.....

Permanent Item to Commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee 2012

We have received a few responses from residents as to how the village should commemorate the Diamond Jubilee. The four most popular suggestions so far are as follows (and in no particular order):

- A) A flag pole by the village pond
- B) A bench overlooking the village pond
- C) A picnic table in the recreation ground
- D) Restoration of the Telephone box

Please let us have a vote for your preferred option by Friday 5th October. You may do this by contacting Catharine Toms – Parish Clerk: Tel: 01763 848716 or email: parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk

Thank you.

Your Village Website

The Barkway village website in its current shape has been in existence for almost 5 years. During that time, it has become an important means of communicating news and matters relating to the village. With over 30 hits a day - many of whom are first time visitors - it is important that a village website it kept fresh and free from stagnation. It is, with this in mind, that the Parish Council is seeking to revamp and reorganise the site using a brand new design and format. Of course, a village website belongs to the village and as such, as part of the process of rationalisation, the Parish Council is keen to listen to views from residents as to what they would like to see on their website. Please visit www.barkway-village.co.uk and have a look and let us know if you have any thoughts and ideas as to how the site should be presented in the future. You may do this by contacting the Parish Clerk parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk or you may complete and submit the form that can be found on the "contact us" page on the site.

Pavilion Project

Since the last report in the June Bulletin, the Project Committee and the Parish Council have met specifically to discuss ways of obtaining the funding shortfall needed to start the rebuilding work. So far, approximately 80K has been raised, leaving about £60k to be found. Earlier this year, Councillors Murphy and Terry attended a Sport England funding presentation and followed this up with a site meeting with John O'Callaghan, Club, Coach and Development Manager for Sport England, who was very positive about our project and encouraged us to make a grant application to Sport England. Accordingly, Councillor Murphy assembled and submitted a complex application for £50k and we hope to hear if our application has been successful in December. The Pavilion Group would welcome any constructive suggestions that may help with the fundraising effort. But, in the meantime, donations to the project can still be made through the "Buy a Brick" campaign, which can be accessed through the Barkway Village website.

Chapel Close Update

On Tuesday 25th September Chapel Close was formally opened by Kevin Thompson (CEO, North Herts Homes) and Councillor Steve Alsop (Chairman, Barkway Parish Council).

At the same time the Village Garden (Wheatsheaf Meadow Garden) was opened by local schoolchildren, Emily Swain, who won the design competition for the garden and Jake Grimes who was the runner up. They were accompanied by the head teacher, teachers and pupils from Barkway School.

Once the legal formalities of the lease are complete then the responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the garden will pass to the Parish Council. The garden will then become a peaceful place for the enjoyment of all the residents of Barkway.

We have had incidents recently when plastic bags of dog waste have been left on the side of parish footpaths. Can we ask all dog owners to either take their pet's waste back home with them or leave it in one of the many dog bins, which are located around the village. Many thanks for your co operation.

Village Pond

You will notice, we hope, that the work we agreed to undertake at the village pond has now been completed.

The view of the pond from the village green has been opened up by the removal of the vegetation and the old tree stump. Grass seed has been sown and, hopefully, we will see some growth before the winter. For this reason the area has been cordoned off to allow this to happen. We would appreciate it if people did not walk on here for the immediate future.

During the winter we will look to remove some of the dead wood which is both in the pond and around the perimeter.

For information, for safety reasons a 'throw line' is now attached to the post next to the jetty to assist in case there is an unfortunate incident of someone falling into the pond. Unfortunately the base of the village sign has become rotten and, therefore, is currently unsafe.

A repair has been organised and the sign should be back up on the village green in the next few weeks.

Your Parish Councillors with their responsibilities and contact details

Steve Alsop: (Chairman) Environment

Jim Dalton: (Vice Chairman) Highways

Tony Terry: Property & Leisure

Simon Taylor: Pavilion Project & Parish Plan update

Andrew Murphy: Corporate Governance & Grants

Jenny Warren: Planning

Community Liaison portfolio - vacant

Catharine Toms: Parish Clerk

steve.alsop@barkway-village.co.uk

jim.dalton@barkway-village.co.uk

tony.terry@barkway-village.co.uk

simon.taylor@barkway-village.co.uk

andrew.murphy@barkway-village.co.uk

jenny.warren@barkway-village.co.uk

parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk

If you have any comments on the content of this edition of Barkway Bulletin, please contact the editor at gordon.baker@barkway-village.co.uk - we are always interested in hearing your views.

Ken McCormick

Ken retired on 30th September after 10 years service as a Parish Councillor. Ken was Chairman of the Council for 3 years and Vice Chairman on two separate occasions during this time. Whilst chairman, Ken was heavily involved with the development of the Wheatsheaf Meadow site and the proposed travellers' site in the village. The Parish Council, on behalf of the village, would like to thank Ken for his long and distinguished service as a Councillor.