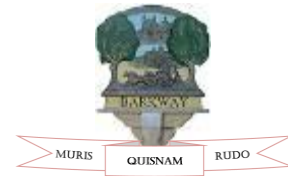


# BARKWAY PARISH COUNCIL



## Annual Report for the Financial Year 2009-10

This is the Annual Report of Barkway Parish Council. It summarises the Parish Council's activities since the Annual Meeting held in May 2009 and gives data for the financial year April 2009 to March 2010.

### Chairman's Report to Parishioners

I must begin with the changes in the Parish Council in the last year:

**Spring 2009** - Richard Atkins left the Council and, after a delay due to various reasons, Gordon Baker was co-opted to the Council in October.

**Summer 2009** - our Clerk of 22 years, Mrs Susan Neilson, retired. It is very difficult to express just how sad we were at this, but we are deeply grateful to Sue for her service to the village. Replacing Sue was a momentous task but we were extremely fortunate that Mrs. Catharine Toms felt up to the challenge to step into her shoes and has continued to keep us in incredibly good shape.

**October 2009** - Ken McCormick decided, after 3 years as Chairman, to step down. We express our heartfelt thanks for his selfless dedication and service. So in October, I became your new Chairman with Gordon Baker as Vice-Chairman.

**March 2010** - Graham Penning announced his decision to retire from the Parish Council after 7 years. We thank Graham for his dedication and look forward to even better vegetables from his allotment this year! Steve Alsop, another well-known member of our community, was co-opted in May and has taken up Graham's portfolio of looking after the environment.

The last year therefore has been a busy year for Barkway Parish Council.

The normal tranquillity of Barkway was interrupted several times over the past year. Anstey Quarry succeeded in its application to have its traffic flow restrictions changed, despite the protestations of the Councils and communities. Barkway Park Golf Club's proposal to create a 3-hole golf academy was not successful, thanks to our united objections.

**June 2009** - we sadly saw the last residents leave Wheatsheaf Meadow House. I know this was a wrench to many in our community but we must look to the future. I am very pleased to report that the project to create affordable housing on the site is progressing, albeit delayed due to the discovery of bats in the empty building, and we are working with North Herts Homes who aim to deliver 10 new properties to the village in 2011. These new properties begin to help us to meet our current and future housing needs and to give new opportunities for those in our community who seek accommodation at an affordable cost.

**Summer 2009** - with the hard work of Mrs. Sue Neilson, Mrs. Rosemary Ellis and Mrs Elaine Taylor, we opened a book exchange service in the Reading Rooms. However, as the colder weather came, we discovered problems with the building and we reluctantly had to suspend this service. We are therefore currently focused on improving the condition of the property, bringing it to a sustainable condition and re-opening the book exchange service as well as looking at other ways in which the community can put this delightful building to good use.

**Summer 2009** - we started formally the Parish Plan Process. The Barkway-Newsells Parish Plan Group, formed completely of volunteers from the community, put together and delivered a questionnaire to every household in the Parish to get the community's views on life in the Parish and how it could be improved. 29% of the community responded and groups of volunteers worked on the suggestions and ideas included in the results. The draft Parish Plan will be published in full in June 2010 and submitted to Herts. County and North Herts District Councils. A copy of the Plan will be delivered to every household and made available on the website. It is a plan for the community, by the community and for any plan to be developed and brought to fruition it needs the support of the community. So I would encourage anyone who has not been involved up to now, and who wants to get involved, to let us know.

A Parish Plan is a door opener for avenues of revenue within the Councils, to work towards gaining funds for the improvements that we seek. It is a living document. It will require frequent review and regularly updating by the Parish Plan Group, the Parish Council and the volunteer Working Groups. They will work to achieve the solutions and improvements aimed for in the plan, or as fresh challenges arise. The Parish Plan however, is additionally a major step forward in your Parish Council's determination to reach Quality Parish Status. This is a Government recognised status, which should unlock further doors for the future and place your Parish Council in a very strong position when it comes to negotiating for further longer term improvements.

As part of this commitment to achieving Quality Parish Status, we published the first quarterly Barkway Bulletin, in March 2010, and also in that month we began bi-monthly Parish Council surgeries - further methods enabling the Parish Council to hold dialogue with the community over and above the village website, notice boards and, of course, the Diary.

Although the Parish Plan has only just been launched, we have already started one of the initiatives suggested in the Plan. In the interests of communication, it was suggested to hold regular meetings between the organisations in the Village so that they might share experiences and ideas for the benefit of the Village. The inaugural meeting of the Barkway Forum was held on 6 May, with 15 representatives from village organisations. This turned out to be very successful and it was agreed by all to be continued. A second meeting will be held on 23 June 2010.

Our village website has gone from strength to strength and I am proud to say it is the envy of many of our neighbouring Parishes. Whilst we continue to rely upon the Diary as one of the main forms of communication in the Parish, the website has grown in popularity as a daily updated source of information on what is happening - with over 750 new visitors in the first quarter of 2010. The website is the Parish Council's main form of external communication – a very necessary method these days – so I do encourage you to visit [www.barkway-village.co.uk](http://www.barkway-village.co.uk) regularly and to advise the webmaster of any activities that you are planning or wish to publicise.

Parish Councillor record of attendance at Parish Council meetings for the year to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010						
R. Davidson 8/11	G. Baker 5/5	K McCormick 7/11	A. Terry 11/11	G. Penning 10/11	J. Cockerton 6/11	V. Styles 8/11

### Financial Report for the year 2009-2010

	<u>31/03/2008</u>	<u>31/03/2009</u>	<u>31/03/2010</u>
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Balance b/fwd Previous Year	8,556.01	2,400.60	2,183.81
HMCE	662.43		2,972.21
Interest	132.70	36.38	2.20
Map Grant		512.00	
PPP	1,000.00	1,000.00	600.00
Precept	11,400.00	11,640.00	11,630.00
Recreation Ground - Firework Collection	258.46	161.68	320.86
Recreation Ground - Football Fees	1,273.55	956.50	930.00
Recreation Ground - Village Hall	1,100.00		1,810.87
Parish Plan Grant			250.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>24,383.15</b>	<b>16,707.16</b>	<b>20,699.95</b>
Dog Bins	397.92	401.96	337.28
Equipment – Office		781.32	
Equipment – Play	6,410.81		
Equipment – Reading Room and Youth Cub		505.00	
Fireworks	650.42	400.00	394.65
General - Grass Cutting etc.	622.38	917.85	1,085.00
Annual Subscriptions	404.89	413.88	777.39
Insurance	1,770.89	1,777.52	1,801.61
S137	376.48	16.50	16.50
Parish Map Work	500.00		
Parish Paths	301.43	1,533.12	1,618.75
Parks & Open Spaces	1,621.02	2,100.19	593.16
Pavillion		794.42	217.92
Pavillion - Electricity	1,295.00	(393.41)	363.41
Reading Room		200.00	2,654.87
Staff Costs	3,841.00	4,526.00	3,948.00
Administration Costs			927.42
Sundries - Coach Hire	235.00		
Sundries - Donations	459.00		479.00
VAT	1,699.81	379.76	577.87
Village Hall In/Out	1,100.00		1,810.87
Website	296.50	169.24	87.32
Parish Plan			250.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>21,982.55</b>	<b>14,523.35</b>	<b>17,941.02</b>
<b>Balance c/fwd Following Year</b>	<b>2,400.60</b>	<b>2,183.81</b>	<b>2,758.93</b>



Dr Bob Davidson  
Chairman