

BARKING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at Barking Village Hall at 7.00pm
on Wednesday 8th May 2024

PRESENT:

Cllr Marcus Tabberer– Chairman, Cllr Rosamund Fellowes, Cllr Steve Butler, Cllr Matt Harper, Cllr Ann Ross and Cllr Mike Bailey

IN ATTENDANCE:

County Cllr Kay Oakes Mrs L Rogers - Clerk
7 members of the public

BPC 01/24 APOLOGIES

Cllr Mike Anderson, District Cllr Dan Pratt, David Bishop, Peter Wright, Maria Dalby, Shaun Cochrane, Pastor Graham Steward and Sue Marsh

BPC 02/24 MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting held on 9th March 2023 were approved by the councillors and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

BPC 03/24 BARKING PARISH COUNCIL –Cllr Marcus Tabberer (Chairman)

I would like to start with some well-deserved thanks.

Firstly, my thanks to Lucinda, our ever-diligent parish clerk, who continues to deal with the admin and inevitable red tape her great efficiency. Without her efforts it would be very difficult for the PC to operate. Also, thanks to my fellow councillors for all the hard work and contribution during the last 12 months. Many thanks to Matt our newest parish councillor who joined this year to strengthen our numbers.

My thanks to thank Dan Pratt (District Councillor) and Kay Oakes (our County Councillor) for their continued hard work and dedication to the Barking Parish. The depth of knowledge and willingness to help on all matters, particularly funding and governance, is of great importance.

I have a great deal of support provided to myself as chair and this is very much appreciated.

Much of the PC activity this year has been to continue to manage and maintain the parish assets and in particularly the Tye. This continues to be challenge given ever increasing costs, limited budget and this year, a very wet winter. Even what may seem a simple matter of grass cutting has involved a change in contractors (twice) and waiting for the ground to be dry enough to proceed.

I'm happy to confirm that we have managed to operate within our set budget for the last 12 months and have successfully completed all relevant financial audits. The rise in the precept this year generated much discussion to strike the right balance between increasing funding in line with costs and trying to keep the rise as low as possible.

The PC continues to review and maintain and where needed replace the assets, such as benches, waste bin, play equipment etc in line with funds.

The PC has over the last year coordinated its objections to the National Grid plans for installing new pylon infrastructure as this is of particular concern to so many who

live within the parish.

The recent completion of the easement with building contractor DAB for access across the Tye and aligning all the necessary legal permissions and notifications, and not least the compensation. This has taken a significant amount of time and effort over the last 3 years to get us to this point. I am happy to confirm the Parish Council are now in receipt of the fund this easement has generated.

This, plus other funds, are earmarked for the construction of a footway continuing from where the current footpath ends (Ashfords) south towards the Tye. The next steps for the PC will be to formally evaluate how far these funds will take us along this path. More details will be published as soon as they are known.

On a personal note, I have greatly enjoyed being the chair of Barking PC over the past 3 years but due to personal reasons will be handing over this duty at some point in the next 12 months when the opportunity arises.

BPC 04/24 INVITED REPRESENTATIVES:

St Mary's Church, Barking – *Cllr Rosamund Fellowes*

Rector and Chairman of PCC The Reverend Danial Harrison

Treasurer Mr Danny Clifford

Secretary Mrs Vanessa Edwards

Members Mrs Rosamund Fellowes, Mrs Annie Proffit and Mrs Sue Marsh

Currently there is no Church Warden but duties are shared by Mesdames Fellowes and Marsh

We are one of eight churches in the benefice served by Dan the Rector. The life of the church continues with a monthly Communion Service with hymns on the fourth Sunday of each month, at which all are welcome. During 2023 we were pleased to celebrate two baptisms, one local wedding with a full church and many children, and two funerals, one of which was followed by a burial in Darmsden Churchyard which falls within our parish and responsibility although the Church is owned by a trust and no longer consecrated. As well as our regular services with a small but supportive congregation, our Carol Service on Christmas Eve was well attended and refreshments enjoyed afterwards!

We are fortunate to have still voluntary organist Mrs Dickerson and also an excellent team of Bell Ringers led by the Rower Captain Phil, who if pressed also acts as locum organist!

The continuing maintenance of the Church and Churchyard is all important and we are grateful to the Needham Market and Barking welfare Charities for their promise to help towards the resurfacing of the paths to the Church and Barking Parish Council for their grant towards the grass cutting. However the PCC is required to find an annual contribution to the Diocese of currently £4,800 to support its work and towards the Rectors salary. This is less than they would like but currently what we can afford if we are going to continue to keep the building watertight, lit and heated (to a degree!) we are grateful to those who support with Gift Aid allowing us to reclaim tax from HMRC and those who supported our fund raising events during the year. Take away Valentines teas remain popular as did the Christmas wreath making, the Harvest Supper raised more than usual and thank you to those who gave so generously, sadly a planned quiz night had to be abandoned due to lack of support. We hope that many of you will attend our Wimbledon talk and strawberry cream tea on June 15th and a visit from the Suffolk Church Choir in September, as we enjoy your company and goodwill of which we are very grateful. The Church is open every day and you

are always welcome. It is your Church and we need your ongoing support in these days of uncertainty and change

Barking Chapel –*Pastor Graham Steward read by Cllr Tabberer:* We thank God for his blessing on our little congregation through another year. Our numbers are not massive but remain fairly constant as we worship together as part of the wider family of God. We are thankful for the wide age range which we have in our church family and it is a joy to see young and old worshipping together. We seek to tailor what we do to meet that needs of various groups within the church, which does present its challenges when overall numbers are small.

Before the end of this year we shall have completed the process which by which Barking Chapel will become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in its own right.

This means that for the first time we shall stand alone rather than being under the same trust as Battsford Free Church who bought the original part of the building we use over fifty years ago. In practice nothing will change in the way we do things but it does mean we shall have to be entirely self-supporting. We shall still retain close links with the Free Church at Battsford and are currently exploring the possibility of taking on a ministry trainee to work alongside both churches.

As a church we believe in the importance of sharing the good news of Jesus in the world of today. This Spring we are planing some outreach in conjunction with a number of workers from the Faith Mission, with whom we have often worked in the past. We plan distribute copies of the Gospel of Mark to homes in the area and to include a link to a site where people can discover more about the message of Jesus if they wish.

Looking back over twenty-five years of ministry at Barking Chapel I realise that there is only one person regularly attending the church who has been here longer than my wife and I. Most of our original congregation now worship God in heaven. We are praying that God will continue to add new members to our number and enable us to grow into the future.

Village Hall Management Committee & Community Council – *Maria Dalby read by Cllr Tabberer* '23/24 has been a story of floods and insurance claims at the village hall. After a hot summer in 22 some autumn storms caused repeated flooding in the kitchen, corridor and storage areas of the hall. The committee invested in flood drainage outside near the storeroom and annex area and there was an insurance claim to repair the inside damage. The quality of work was poor and the execution very piecemeal and worse the contractor was very unpleasant despite repeated complaints to Hiscox our insurers. Finally by the end of May 23 there seemed to be some respite as the contractors completed the work and I returned a very unsatisfied satisfaction survey.

We had a few months respite during which we began to repaint the hall starting with the ladies loos. Then came storm Babet in October. The installed storm drainage held up but the water table rose and water bubbled up through the newly replaced vinyl floor tiles and so began a second insurance claim. This time Hiscox employed a completely different set of contractors. The hall was dried out over Christmas, all the outside drains were flushed and at Easter the internal repairs were completed. The whole area now has a latex damp proof membrane and a new sealed sheet vinyl floor. The whole hall was redecorated and we hope you all enjoy the result.

Moving forward we are currently seeking funding to replace the kitchen units which we had identified as requiring repair and replacement in 2018. Hopefully funding will allow us to replace all the units and bring the kitchen up to date.

We have had some changes with hirers over the year. Unfortunately because of personal issues for the organisers, we lost one of our weekend martial arts groups and the sewing club retired. New groups include Needham Market spiritual group and Needham scouts who

are temporarily meeting in the hall. The Pre-school currently provide 27 hours per week to each child but plan to increase to a full 30 hour week from next academic year.

As always we still struggle to find volunteers to fill the trustee posts on our committee. We currently have no Chair and this post has been empty since last year. Our treasurer is resigning but we have found a replacement. In the meantime our ability to run fundraising events is severely impacted as simply maintaining the building takes most of our time. If anyone is interested in helping on the committee in any way please contact us or attend our AGM on Weds May 15th at 19:30.

Needham Market and Barking Welfare Charities

A REMINDER OF OUR PURPOSE

The “Town Lands” and “Almshouse” charities are restricted by charity law to make grants that only benefit residents in Needham Market town and the parishes of Barking & Darmsden. They are registered with the Charity Commission and managed by eleven local trustees. The principal objectives of Town Lands are: to relieve residents’ need, hardship or distress, and to provide relief for old age or sickness in the area, including convalescence, and to use any balance of income for such charitable purposes for the general benefit of the inhabitants as the trustees think fit.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Trustees continue to support the local minibus, administer the historic Camping Land as a public amenity and manage the allotments on Quinto Road. Trustees also oversee four flats within Orwell Housing’s Drift Court sheltered housing scheme. Full details can be found in the latest independently examined Annual Report and financial statements, which will be available from the Charity Commission in due course.

Town Lands grants this year have focused on supporting individuals and families distressed by the cost of living issues. Trustees continue to prioritise those in need, and are ready and able to commit additional funds if requires. Key other grants this last year include £2,000 to facilitate a wheelchair friendly tarmac access to St Mary’s church and £5,000 (with other stakeholders) towards emergency boiler repairs at Needham Market Community Centre. However, the trustees have recently made major decisions to the support they provide.

a) It has become increasingly difficult over the last decade to administer the allotments, instead of simply providing the land. Trustees have decided to cease their direct involvement on day-to-day operations that they feel is not their remit

b) As mentioned last year, trustees are working on a major Almshouse project to build six new almshouses on their land in Creeting. This is expected to complete during 2024.

Unlike the four units at Drift Court that were designed for the elderly, the new buildings will be adaptable to also suit younger people in need and the disabled.

We are also conscious of funds available for other projects, so please enquire of the charity if you have any plans where we may be able to help.

Theobald’s Foundation – Cllr Kay Oakes

For those present who might not be aware of what the Theobald’s Endowed Foundation Charity is, I thought I would start by giving a very short summary of its background and aims. The scheme in its current form came into being in 1986 following a donation from Needham Market & Barking Welfare Charities and a very generous bequest from Mr Eric Lacey Theobald of over £30,000 in 1983. However, the Foundation itself can trace its history right back to 1632 with the endowment of a Free School in Needham Market. The school developed over many years to the point where in the 19th Century it had achieved considerable status and reputation, details of which can be found in the History of Needham

Market by the late Hugh Paget. Following the eventual closure of the school, the Foundation was governed by a new Trust deed established in 1911 enabling the Trustees, then referred to as Governors, to give restricted financial assistance utilising a limited endowment, to a small number of applicants for the continuation of their education. The Foundation in its current form was approved by the Charities Commission and established in November 1986 replacing the 1911 Trust Deed. Direction of the Foundation lies with up to 9 Trustees, of whom 2 are nominated by Needham Market Town Council and 2 by Barking Parish Council the remaining Trustees are co-opted. The beneficial area is the civil parishes of Needham Market and Barking. The potential beneficiaries are young people, under 25 proceeding to Higher or Further Education. It is the role of the Trustees to make small grants to qualifying individuals and manage and maintain the charitable funds future through investment. Written applications for grants are welcomed from individuals within the qualifying parishes and these are generally reviewed annually at the Foundations February meeting. Applications are considered in line with the request made by each individual against a set of qualifying criteria and scale of grant available. A written thank you from fund recipients is expected by the Trustees, although sadly not always received, this will be taken into account should the applicant approach the Foundation in subsequent years for further grants. In 2024 grants have been given to 18 applicants totalling £4,250, including students from the Parish of Barking. These funds typically assist the young students in the purchase of books, study materials and specialist equipment pertaining to the area of studies they are engaged in. As in previous years as we approach the annual grant cycle, we will be promoting awareness of the Foundation to local students moving into, or continuing in, further education and inviting them to apply.

Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes

Suffolk County Council have increased funding for Library services to the end of July 2024. The fire service has been brought back to Suffolk and is working well. All three councils have objected to the Norwich to Tilbury pylon project and agree it should be off shore. The current consultation is open and they are pushing for off shore. The new Highways contractors Milestone started in October 2023. The majority of funding goes to the vulnerable adult and children in the county. There is rising demand and there are difficult decisions to be made when trying to make savings in this service. Funding has been allocated for bus services and there is a project to resurface some roads. The idea of forming a Community Self Help group to be able to tackle clearing paths, cleaning road signs was discussed. Cllr Oakes can help with training, clothing, insurance and obtaining a licence to carry out work. To discuss at the next parish council meeting
The Parish Council thanked Kay for her support and help.

BPC05/24 Proposed Footway on the Tye

The negotiations for the easement for the nine houses has been completed so there are additional funds for the project. Additional funds will probably be needed. The costs will dictate the length of the path

BPC06/24 Public Forum

The beacon has been moved to the Tye so it can be lit for events; the next one being the celebration of the 80th anniversary of D-Day on 9th June

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45pm

Chairman..... Date.....