



BARLEY
Annual Village Meeting
WEDNESDAY 14TH MAY 2025 at 8PM

Minutes

1. In Attendance:

28 members of the public, 4 Parish Councillors, the RFO and the Parish Clerk.

2. Barley Parish Council – Jerry Carlisle and Yvonne Lee welcome:

Jerry Carlisle the Parish Council's Chair for 2024/25 welcomed all and gave a short update on what the Parish Council has been active on as reflected in all the Parish Council Minutes up to the end of April 2025. Cllr Carlisle then thanked Fiona Hill for her years of service as our County Councillor who stepped down from the position this year.

The new Chair Yvonne Lee then introduced herself, thanking Jerry Carlisle for all his years as Chair of the Parish Council, and introduced our new County Councillor Ruth Brown, following this years May elections.

3. Ex County Councillor Fiona Hill

Fiona Hill gave a farewell report of news and activity she has been involved with as County Councillor over the last few months before thanking Barley Parish Council and the village for their support over the years. See Appendix.

County Councillor Ruth Brown

Cllr Brown introduced herself and thanked Cllr Hill for all her hard work over the years.

Report from District Councillor Martin Prescott

Cllr Martin Prescott gave a short report on recent activity – advising that road cleansing and drainage issues are still ongoing, and that there has been a change in contractors which has caused issues and delays. Cllr Prescott also thanked Fiona Hill for her years as County Councillor and welcomed Ruth Brown into the role.

Barley Charities

The Barley Parish Charities is an organisation that dates possibly earlier than the bellringers! With the primary objective to donate monies to those in need. There is a committee of trustees who manage the income. It was set up in the days where there was no national health service and is to help people of reduced needs. They have given a donation to the Scouts. We also support the school, the community group, the scouts, and individuals looking to do any particular voluntary work who need assistance with travelling costs. Income is about £4,000 a year, on investments from approx £60K. If anyone becomes aware of anyone who needs help, please do get in touch with Geoffrey Wilkerson, all enquiries of course are confidential.

4. Reports from local Organisations

Various members of local clubs then gave a short report on their clubs recent activities. Summarised as follows

- **The Tennis Club**

Barley Tennis Club is thriving. Currently we have 153 members using the Courts. We are completely self-funded with some of the cheapest membership prices around. We always welcome new members (£50 for new family membership with a £45 renewal price). Cost to reseed 34K. looks to be done in 2030. The Tennis Club became a Charity recently in order to protect members to ensure a strong legal entity. We are part of the LTA so insurances liability and risk assessments are all done annually.

- **The Scouts 7th Royston Scouts**

The Scouts currently have 120 children who take part in all groups Beavers Cubs Scouts and Explorers with a large waiting list. Ranges of activity from cooking craft skills, climbing walking skills camping. Etc. Lots of camps coming up. All funded through the subscriptions from the children who take part. Scout leaders are all volunteers and we are looking for more people to volunteer with us as a Leader or assistant of any kind, please get in touch! There are plans for a new and improved Scout hut and we have worked with the Parish Council and thank them for their support.

- **Barley Show**

This year Barley Flower and Village Show will be on the 12th July. It is the 135th Year that the show has been running and we really encourage people to enter the flower show competition! It's not just Flowers but many different baking and making categories and anyone can enter and we look forward to seeing many of you there.

- **Barley Social Hub:**

The Barley Social Hub as a committee of 4 people. We help to facilitate other people's events and have put on our own concerts and talks in the Church, having helped to raise £30K for the Barley Church Facilities fund. Did a virtual balloon race and about 100 people took part. 60% of profits will go to the British Legion and the 40% to the Church Facilities Fund. Next we have the Community Choir 26th October. Ideas are very welcome for other ideas. And also every 3rd Thursday there is a Coffee Morning at The Fox and Hounds run by the Barley Social Hub.

- **Gardening Club;**

Barley gardening club has been going for many years. We meet on the 1st Monday of the month at 7.30pm. We have over 100 people who receive the monthly newsletter and have about 30 regular visitors to the club. We always have a speaker at the events which are £3 per visit, £10 for the year. We are affiliated with RHS and we have a card that we can share with the members.

- **Knitting Group**

Every Christmas we fundraise for a different Charity by knitting Post box toppers that are installed every year. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month unless otherwise notified, and everyone is very welcome.

- **Bell Ringers**

The bell ringers are the oldest club in the village. We practice at 7.30 on Wednesday evenings. We ring the bells on Sundays once or twice a month for the Church service. Weddings we also do when asked. We also look after the Church clock ensuring it remains on time. If anyone would like a tour to the top please do get in touch and we can make that happen.

- **The Barley Charities**

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- **The Church – Vanessa Martin**

We have a new Rector Rev Mark Brigen.

Barley Church is running at a deficit and more fundraising is being done to help support it. On behalf of Barley Church we would like to thank The Barley Social Hub for their support in raising funds for new, much needed toilet and kitchen facilities in the Church. We've had many fantastic nights in the Church as a result of their efforts and alongside the Flower Tower installation, have raised over £25,000. Architects have now been approached and plans are being created. More information to come.

- **Royal British Legion – Sue Williams**

We are the Barley, Barkway, Nuthampstead, Reed and Anstey branch. We are fairly large in area but small in the amount of people - but we manage to raise a lot of money. Mainly a fundraising branch, several events have been held including a cheese and wine supper with some entertainment last October and others are planned for the forthcoming year.

The Community Garden

The Community Garden aim is to bring people together as a social space. We have school groups who come weekly who have their own beds where they learn about food and flowers. Richmonds kindly sponsored the orchard and 14 different types of fruit trees were planted in February. Fund Raising is a priority and how we can continue to keep inviting people in.

- **The Community Choir**

The Community Choir sings in Barley on Tuesday between 6-7pm at The Town House. We have an excellent and supportive teacher who runs the choir, and we do a number of local events which you can be a part of too. We welcome anyone who would like to join.

5. **AOB**

A member of the public complained about the speed of vehicles along Smiths End Lane and asked if anything could be done about it. Discussions were held about potential options of what is possible and the Chair advised the meeting that options were still being investigated.

End

Cllr Yvonne Lee, Chairman of Barley Parish Council thanked all contributors and attendees for coming. The meeting closed at 9.52pm.

ANNUAL REPORT TO BARLEY FROM PREVIOUS COUNTY COUNCILLOR FIONA HILL

The County Council is facing financial challenges but has managed to deliver a balanced budget for 2025/26 whilst maintaining front line services. There will be an increase of 4.99% in Council Tax, of which 2% is ringfenced for Adult Social Care. The budget is around £2.7 billion with £1.5 billion for the Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

Following significant challenges, King James Academy now has a fully functioning school following the storm damage last year. Over 92% of maintained schools in Hertfordshire have been judged Good or Outstanding and I am delighted we have such good schools in Royston East and Ermine Division. The additional funding that HCC has put into Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) has funded new employees, ongoing training and additional school spaces. Improvements are now apparent. The Adult Learning Service, Step2Skills, is also going from strength to strength.

Integration of Health and Social Care and Public Health remains a key priority for the Council and the new Care Home is now open in Royston supporting residents previously in Richard Cox House. Our ambition and support for a bespoke health facility for the benefit of Royston and the surrounding area, worked on for so many years, continues and we are working with and having positive discussions with the NHS and other stakeholders, to try and make this a reality.

The work of the Armed Forces Covenant continues to be strong with GPs, District, Town and Parish Councils signed up. The Covenant is invaluable in supporting veterans of the Armed Forces in accessing local services and ensuring they are not disadvantaged.

Royston Library has undergone improvements and remains busy with increased activities, plus the traditional hubs, drop-in sessions for Barclays Bank, the Police and new clubs in addition to the regular activities.

I have continued working with the Police, OPCC and Parish Council on road safety and parking issues. We persist with the work on mitigation measures for speeding, including Police checks, Speed Indicator Devices and the Speed and Volume Survey in Picknag Road. 20mph zones are also being investigated across the County, including Barley, depending on outcomes of data and funding.

The Highways Locality Budget (HLB) has ensured that roads, footpaths and projects that would not receive timely attention have been improved and I have continued to lobby for utility companies and developers to be more accountable. Potholes have been reported and repaired, including along The Mount and Church Lane, flooding issues, including the long awaited work on drains in the High Street and London Road, have been addressed and there are future resurfacing works identified for Picknag Road, currently delayed and its junction with Cambridge Road, plus the structure of the bridge between Barley and Royston. The joint working between councillors and Highways/Waste officers at

County/District Councils has proved very successful with drainage and street cleaning. The full lists of grant funding through the HLB and community Locality Budgets are available to view on the County Council website.

The temporary banking hub in Royston has been extended and will become permanent when premises have been secured. The safer crossing over the A505 is also continuing to move forward positively with detailed designs being drafted.

I have participated in many consultations over the year including the planning applications in Barley, plus BK3 and Barkway Road, Royston (both of which will impact on Barley), the new Waste proposals and the proposed increases in Parking Tariffs.

I would like to thank the Clerk, Chairman and Councillors from Barley Parish Council for including me in their meetings and District Councillor Martin Prescott for his support, joint working and friendship.

It has been a pleasure to represent residents in Barley over the last few years. Thank you all for welcoming me to your village.