

Barsham Parish Council

Present: Andrew Ross, (Chairman), Frank Chapman, Grace Howlett, Margaret Hulme
and: Tom FitzPatrick (District Councillor)

Meeting of Barsham Parish Council on

Date: Monday 10 November 2025

Time: 7.30pm

Place: Granary, West Barsham, NR21 9NP



Minutes

1. Welcome from the Chairman. Apologies from James Goodley were accepted.
2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda and consider requests for dispensations. None.
3. The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September were approved and signed
4. To report progress on items not on the agenda from the last meeting
 - 4.1. It was noted that the defibrillator needed to be checked regularly and to ensure that it was fully charged ready for use. James Goodley had confirmed that he would continue to do this. He is registered as the contact.
5. NNDC Councillor, Tom FitzPatrick reported that new planning and finance officers have been appointed. The District and County Councils have been working on proposals for Local Government Reform when one, two or three Unitary Authority/ies will replace the current system of district and county councils. The final decision will be made by the Government (next February / March). The devolution of powers (and money) to an elected Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk has been approved. The mayorial elections will take place on 7 May 2026.
6. Open forum for Public Participation. None present.
7. Open spaces
 - 7.1. Update on village gateways / SAM2 if available. It was noted that the SAM2 was no longer an option as the regulations in Norfolk restrict use to 30 mph zones. However, the Village Gateways were a suitable and the County Councillor had committed to cover the cost (amount to be clarified). It would also be possible to put in an application to the Parish Partnership Scheme (deadline 1 Dec) for 50% of the cost from the County Council. Scale drawings of possible gateways for East Barsham and for Houghton St Giles had been circulated. It was decided that the sign for Barsham should read 'Welcome to EAST BARSHAM Please drive carefully' and if possible to replace the 50 sign with 'SLOW'. The reverse of the gateway should have 'Thank you for driving carefully'. (Similar wording of the Houghton signs). It was agreed that the gateways should be in pairs: at the top of Barsham hill on the approach from Fakenham and if possible, on the hill approach in to Barsham from Houghton; and on the entrance to Houghton from Barsham. It was agreed to make arrangements for the Chairman to meet with the Highway Engineer again to clarify the locations.
 - 7.2. Update on play area. Unfortunately, the ambitious application to the Lottery Fund had not been successful. A climbing wall was considered but it was agreed that the site was not suitable. It was agreed to continue with a scaled-down project for new swings (children and toddler) and seating for adults. The Village Hall might be able to provide some funds.
 - 7.3. Allotments rents had been received. It was noted that some of them appear to be under-cultivated. The Clerk was asked to write to all tenants reminding them to keep allotments tidy and asking them if they would like to handover to someone on the waiting list.

Barsham Parish Council

8. Planning Matters

8.1. Results of applications: none.

8.2. Consider new applications: none

8.3. Other planning matters

- 8.3.1. Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of Self-Build replacement 1.5-Storey Dwelling and New Garage – Gates to Access at **2 Walsingham Road, East Barsham.**
WITHDRAWN.

9. Financial Matters

9.1. It was noted that the instructions to remove the previous clerk, change the address, and to add the new Clerk as a signatory had been sent to the bank, but confirmation of the change had not been received. It was not possible to provide an updated bank statement.

9.2. It was noted that the Parish Council was now required to have a gov.uk website and contact email for the clerk. It was decided to set up a new website via Norfolk Association of Local Councils as this would provide the necessary requirements at a cost of approximately £100 per annum (the Wix website currently cost approximately £130 per annum and would incur more costs to convert to gov.uk).

9.3. To set the budget and the precept for 2026-27. The figures in a draft budget were reviewed. The expected payments for 2026-27 were £4125; and the receipts were £172. It was agreed to set the Precept at £4000 (an increase of £466 – just under 13%) to cover the outgoings. The form for the District Council was completed.

10. Correspondence circulated via email

10.1. Information from the housing officer that the District Council was noted: in Barsham with Houghton St Giles there are 138 homes in the parish; 28 are holiday or second homes, 3 are empty (unoccupied for six months or over). There are 48 households currently on the Housing List with a local connection to the parish and directly adjoining parishes. There was 1 affordable home let in the last twelve months.

11. Receive items for next agenda and note the date of the next meeting. None.

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12. A resolution (under the Public Admission to Meetings Act 1960) was passed to exclude members of the public and press for the following confidential items:

12.1. The contract for new clerk was confirmed and signed. It was agreed that the Clerk would take on the reporting to HMRC which had previously been done by an accountant.

12.2. It was agreed to set up a pension scheme with the Norfolk Pension Fund. It was decided that under Regulation 3 (1) of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, that Joanna Otte can join the LGPS from the start of her employment with this Council on 1 October 2025. It was agreed to delegate the authority to the Clerk to complete the forms.

12.3. It was agreed to pay the Clerk and the contributions to Norfolk Pension Fund by standing order and the instructions to the bank were signed.

13. Date of next meeting: **Monday 12 January 2026 at 7:30 pm** in the Granary.

Meeting closed at 8:50 pm

Barsham Parish Council