

# Barkham Village Residents Association

## Minutes of the 33rd AGM

19:39 hrs Tuesday 10th<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Present:** Alison Goudge (AG); Alan Dixon (AD); Gill Powell (GP); Shirley Warner (SW); Stewart Richardson (SR); Dave Clements (DC); Suzanne Trigg (ST); Richard Roberts (RR).

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**Apologies:** There were no apologies

Action

### Chairman's Welcome

Alan welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all the committee for the work they had carried out, under the difficulties caused by Covid-19, social distancing and lockdown.

### Previous minutes

Alan welcomed everyone to the meeting. The minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> AGM were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

Acceptance proposed by SW and seconded by SR

### Matters arising

- Finding and appointing a Membership Secretary. Ad has been in touch with a potential candidate AD
- Social matters. GP and AD have discussed developing and family summer event. No progress due to Covid-19 restrictions. Carried forward. GP AD
- There were ideas of an event for May Fayre with The Barkham Ladies. SW is in touch with this group and will discuss when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted SW
- Use of "Next Door" app. Investigation in progress AD DC

### Treasurer

The Treasurer's report and balance sheet had been circulated prior to the AGM

### Membership

AD has compiled the Membership report which has been circulated prior to the AGM meeting

### Newsletter

ST read her report and forwarded a copy to RR to include in the minutes.

### Development Watch

SR had compiled the Development Watch report, which had been circulated.

- The Coombes were the main topic of Development Watch this year.
- Good support from local populace.
- SR thanked residents of Barkham for supporting Development Watch
- AD - "...thinking back we recognise the importance of Development Watch, together with Wokingham Council, the residents of Barkham reap the benefits ..."

### **Web Master**

DC's report has been submitted and circulated prior to the meeting.

### **Social**

GP produced the Social report, which has been circulated prior to the meeting.

### **Chairman's Report.**

The Chairman's report has been produced and circulated prior to the meeting.

### **Election of officers**

- There are no resignations
- There are no nominations for officers
- All officers currently in post have agreed to serve for another year.
- There is no requirement for a vote
- Independent auditor for year 2020 – 2021. Steve Deveson, nominated by AG, seconded by AD. All voted in favour, nil votes against, nil abstentions.
- Steve Deveson is appointed Independent Auditor.

### **Any Other Business**

There was no further business

### **Dates of next meeting**

- Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021

RR

## **Appendix:**

### **Treasurer's Report**

#### **BVRA TREASURER'S REPORT**

1 November 2020

I would first like to thank Ian Overton for the smooth takeover in March following his many years as your Treasurer. I was just a little concerned at the time as my working background was in the legal profession and not in accountancy. The Covid pandemic has in some ways been to my benefit, particularly with the enforced cancellation of events, as it allowed me plenty of time to get to grips with the books, meticulously maintained by Ian. I was therefore able to concentrate on effecting internet and telephone banking for the Association. This proved to be a huge challenge - often frustrating, but ended up finally with a gift of £100.00 for the funds, by way of an apology for the difficulties encountered over the four months to achieve. This now means that apart from cash deposits there is no need for anyone to actually visit or queue at the bank. Expense and Receipt forms are obtainable on the website and can be actioned within a few days. The bank balance is healthy at just over £5000.00 and I would also like to thank Steven Deveson for his speedy audit (same day) confirming the books to be in order, so I must have got the figures right after all. I would finally

like to urge more readers to take out Direct Debits to pay for subscriptions. This saves the distributors' time and the avoidance of handling cash, while also cuts down my own visits to the bank. I look forward to the forthcoming year when hopefully events can be resumed, and I can meet residents at last on a more social basis.

Alison Goudge.

BARKHAM VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER  
2020

	2020	2019
<b>INCOME</b>		
Subscriptions	1019.39	1260.00
Bank Dep	800.00	
Transfer		
Bank Dep Interest (in balance sheet)		7.00
Grants	350.00	400.00
Newsletter	246.00	398.00
<b>EVENTS</b>		
Quiz Night	1066.23	1167.00
Carols Evening	127.66	127.00
Skittles	65.00	1017.00
Easter Egg Hunt	0.00	101.00
Barn Dance	0.00	634.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>3674.28</b>	<b>5111.00</b>
<hr/>		
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Newsletter	1584.76	1525.00
Website	127.55	71.00
Licences		84.00
Insurance	300.00	300.00
Administration	60.49	
<b>EVENTS</b>		
Quiz Night	869.62	817.00
Carols Evening	209.59	274.00

Skittles	190.60	564.00
Easter Egg Hunt	0.00	69.00
Barn Dance	200.00	658.00
Distributors Party	0.00	191.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3542.61	4553.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Profit/Loss	131.67	558.00

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

OPENING CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE	2241.15
ADD INCOME	3674.28
DEDUCT EXPENDITURE	3542.61
CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE C/FWD	2372.82
REPRESENTED BY	
CURRENT ACCOUNT	2372.82
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT (with Interest)	2743.73

5116.55
---------

I certify that at these accounts are in accordance with the books and records of the Barkham Village Association

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Steven Deveson Independent Examiner

Date 05/10/2020

Residents Associ o

Signed

Date

Steven Deveson Independent Examiner

## Membership report

### 2020 Membership Secretary AGM Summary

Unfortunately, we have now gone a complete year without a permanent Membership Secretary. We did have a volunteer who decided after a short time that the role was not right for her. Despite

attempts to get the person to stay we were unsuccessful. As a result, the BVRA Chairman (Alan Dixon) has continued to fulfil the role for the complete year. We continue to look for a permanent volunteer, but it is very frustrating that we cannot find someone from the residents for this relatively straightforward role.

On the positive side we have distributed all editions of the newsletter this year without a major problem and the attrition rate of distributors has been relatively low. Currently there are only two rounds without a permanent distributor assigned.

The management of the distribution has been simplified by the development and implementation of a BVRA data base that allows us to easily update properties, record payments and extract reports that can be used by the Whole-sellers and Distributors. All credit should go to Dave Clements for the development and maintenance of this system.

Coronavirus has had a big impact on all our activities. A special thanks to every one of the distributors. They have continued to distribute despite lockdown and other restrictions. We have been unable to hold the annual Distributors BBQ this year due to restrictions, but we will put this right when the opportunity again arises.

Since the Spring edition we have not been always been able to collect subscriptions in the normal way We have however pushed the Direct Debit payment method, and this has gained traction. This has been managed by Dave Clements so I will let him provide a more detailed description of this. In summary, we now have XXXX paid up members for 2020. This is down on previous years and is almost entirely the result of Coronavirus related restrictions. 2021 (post Covid) needs to see a big push to get the membership numbers back up to the 2019 levels.

2021 priorities are:

1. Recruit a permanent membership secretary.
2. Drive up membership numbers to at least the 2019 levels whilst emphasising the DD option for payment.
3. Continue to enhance the Membership Data Base.
- 4.

Alan Dixon - Temporary Membership Secretary

## **Newsletter Report**

Newsletter Editors Report 2020

The Newsletter has continued to publish a quarterly edition even through the difficult times which this year has presented us. The content dropped off drastically from March due to all the social and musical groups no longer able to meet due to lockdown. I have managed to collect a few new contributors keeping the focus on local features but also expanding to the slightly wider area when it provides information or services to the local community. I continue to look for new features and articles which may be of interest to all members of a Barkham residency, I wish to include varied articles which are of interest to the younger age range.

We have had a few changes in the advertisers, and I have highlighted these local advertisers with larger articles to help them through the slow period where many businesses are suffering. I would like to continue to do this and will also mention any new businesses opening in Wokingham town centre.

Stewart has done great work in providing the quiz and this has extended to a picture quiz which is now the centre feature now that Social events are not happening.

We continue to use Solopress as our publisher as they provide a good service and have said they will allow us to use a bank transfer though this has not been taken up yet.

I wish to thank all the distributors who do a great job and particularly Steve Young who manages the distribution.

Suzanne Trigg

Editor

Nov 2020

## **Development Watch Report**

BVRA Development Watch Report  
AGM November 2020

This year (since the 2019 AGM report), up to 28 October, 26 development watch alerts have been emailed out, one less than last year. The mailing list has reduced by 37 to 856, but this is still a substantial number. However, I will continue to put occasional reminder notes in the Newsletter (full distribution) for anyone who may be new to the parish or has not yet joined the list. I am pleased to say that we do get positive feedback from residents about the work of the development watch. This feedback is much appreciated. Most planning applications publicised by dev watch alerts result in numbers of comments/objections posted by residents which influence WBC's decisions.

The prime source of alerts has been the potential development activity in The Coombes. 17 alerts were solely about The Coombes. This is unlikely to reduce as only 3 of the new plot owners have so far submitted planning applications (or pre-approval requests) and 19 plots were sold.

As a reminder, the land at The Coombes, Coombes Lane, was marketed in plots at auction and on a property website in 2018-19. The advertising implied the land has the potential for development, indeed there were “artist’s impressions” of a housing estate with the sale details.

The land concerned is Protected Woodland (TPO 371/1988) and Local Wildlife Site. It can only be lawfully used for forestry uses. The TPO was been extended to cover all trees at the site.

In order to carry out works to trees on the land, owners must either apply to the Council or to the Forestry Commission. In both cases, the consent would only be for agreed works to trees – not development.

I am pleased to report that all the Coombes planning applications refused by WBC that have gone to appeal have (to date) been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate. However at least 1 is still outstanding and we should assume the plot holders will continue to test the planning system.

The threat to develop Barkham Square with 1000 houses has gone away for now but may resurface if the government goes ahead with its plans to relax the planning laws with its controversial algorithm, although there is now resistance to that in parliament.

I’d like to thank Dave for his very prompt turnaround of the Development Watch alerts when I send them to him. I’d also like to thank several Barkham residents who act as “eyes on the ground”, particularly in relation to The Coombes and often make me aware of new planning applications and activities before I notice them

Stewart Richardson

Development Watch Coordinator

28 October 2020

## **Webmaster Report**

BRVA Webmaster Report

November 2020

The key activity this year has been the enhancing of the BVRA website administration system to support the taking of direct debit payments. BVRA have teamed up with Gocardless to offer residents an easy way to automatically pay their annual subscription via direct debit.

As at the middle of November 2020, the number of residents signing up for direct debit stands at 145. This represents around 25% of members. Of the 145, 86 have had debits collected this year, the remainder, who paid cash this year, will have their first debits collected in 2021.

The direct debit scheme is fully protected, and we encourage all members to sign up. In these difficult times it provides a safe way of paying and helps to ensure the future of BVRA. To sign up please go the BVRA website <https://www.barkham.org.uk/bvra/bvra-membership>

As usual the website has supported the mailing of both development watch and social emails with a total of 34 mailings being sent since November 2019. To receive development watch and / or social emails please sign up at <https://www.barkham.org.uk/barkham/keep-in-touch-with-bvra>

From a technical perspective the website was moved to a new server during the year and our thanks go to Bob Bishop for his assistance in this and in providing general support throughout the year. Since the move we pleased to say that the site has had 99.9% availability.

Finally, we welcome suggestions for improving the website and our social media presence on Facebook. In particular we would like to provide more images of Barkham, so if you have any suitable pictures please get in touch – I can be contacted at [webmaster@barkham.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@barkham.org.uk),

Dave Clements  
BVRA Webmaster

## **Social Report**

SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2020 AGM

NOV 2019-NOV 2020

Since the last AGM only two social events have taken place.

The first was the quiz held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019. Once again, we welcomed Steve and Anita Rayner as quizmasters. This is always a popular event and the Village Hall was full.

The second event was the Carols in the Park, held on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019 in The Junipers with The Breakaway Brass Band. We had a bumper attendance at this event and even ran out of mince pies!

The Skittles evening in March was cancelled just a few days before because of the rapid increase in coronavirus infection. Many people had already cancelled in any event, because they were in the vulnerable category.

The rest of the events that we had planned for 2020 were also cancelled due to the pandemic: The Family Skittles on March 14<sup>th</sup>; the Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday; the BBQ for newsletter distributors in early August; the Barn Dance in September; and the Quiz in November. We have also decided to cancel this year's Carols in the Park in December

We have not booked any events for 2021 (apart from booking the band for the Carols in the Park for next December) but we hope that next year will be better and we can start having fun again in Barkham!

Gill Powell 2020

## **Chairman's Report**

### **2020 AGM Summary Chairman's Report**

Clearly 2020 has been a strange year for all of us and at the time of writing this for the AGM we have moved, once again into tighter lockdown as a result of Coronavirus. As a consequence, some of our activities have been stopped or the way we do things changed somewhat.

On the positive side we have continued to produce the Newsletter under the editorship of Suzanne Trigg and despite the need to change the content Suzanne has done a great job at adapting given



the lack of social events to report on. Many thanks to Suzanne and all of the contributors who have provided content so that we still have a professional and interesting Newsletter. We have also continued to distribute all 2020 editions of the Newsletter and this reflects the commitment of the Distribution Team. There may have been some small delays in getting this to the residents in specific situations but overall, we have done a great job. Collection of Membership subscriptions has proved to be a bit more challenging and we have since March stopped almost all the physical collection of money. We have however encouraged residents to use the Direct Debit option that we set up and implemented before Coronavirus was a reality. DD has and continues to gain traction and the challenges of collecting physical money has shown what a wise move DD was. That said, there is more work to do on getting more people signed up to DD and we continue to take every opportunity to do this. I would like to formally thank Dave Clements for his excellent work in setting up and maintaining the DD's. As a result of the Coronavirus restrictions the numbers of paid members (including those paying with DD) is down on previous years at 531. We will address this issue with action in 2020 when hopefully we return to a degree of normality. Our processes in terms of recording properties and payments has been fully automated by Dave Clements. We have moved away from a spreadsheet approach and we now have a very easy to use Data Base that allows us to record information about properties and payments. We can also generate reports that support the distribution process.

Our finances are now in the hands of Alison Goudge who has done a great job in moving the BVRA into the world of on-line banking. We have also tightened up on our process in terms of issuing and filing receipts for all expenses and subscriptions. As per the accounts and despite the lower returns so far from subscriptions we are still in a good financial position.

Development watch continues to function in an efficient and effective manner. Social activities have been most impacted by Coronavirus with effectively everything cancelled for this year. I normally congratulate the Social Committee on the work they have done. This year I have to say that they have managed the cancellation process in a professional and correct way. Their time will come again, and I am sure that the whole community is looking forward to re-starting these at some point in 2021.

Whilst we received a smaller grant from the Parish Council than in 2019 we have been in ongoing contact with the Parish Council and continue to align our relative activities to ensure there is minimal duplication. This communication is now working well.

On the negative side we still do not have a volunteer for the role of Membership Secretary. We are now over a year with the role being handled by the Chairman (on a temporary basis). It seems that it is a big problem to recruit new people to the committee.

In conclusion I think that the committee with support from distributors and the wider community should take pride in what has been achieved within a difficult year. The BVRA is still functioning

and “working from home”, we have continued to produce and distribute the Newsletter our finances are in order and our processes and systems have been improved. Whilst it is difficult to look ahead to next year, I believe that at some point we will be able to “dust off” the Social Committee and resume some form of social events. We can and should continue to push the Direct Debit option and look at ways that we can embrace and represent the Barkham Residents further.

Alan Dixon

Chairman BVRA