

BARNEY, CROXTON & FULMODESTON

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - 2026

Tuesday 14th April 2026, 7pm at The Old School Hall, Fulmodeston

Minutes of the Meeting: Chaired by Rob Harris – locum Clerk to the Parish Council

Present – 9 Residents

Welcome and Apologies

Rob welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies were received from 1 resident.

Report from the Parish Council

Cllr Harris gave the PC report, standing in for the PC Chair, Cllr Lickly.

The PC has been dealing with a number of internal issues following the departure of the Clerk in September 2025. It has spent much time bringing the PC's governance and procedures into line with statutory requirements and rebuilding the budget to fit with basic requirements. The PC has had to make a number of decisions regarding the budget, but it is now operating on a sustainable basis.

The PC has recently been joined by Cllr Alison Fearn, and a new clerk is being appointed to begin work in a few months' time.

The Council web site has been upgraded, made more user friendly and added to with various PC documents that need to be in the public domain.

The Council would wish to thank the Fulmodeston and Barney residents for their continued monitoring of the system.

The PC was pleased to make further grants from its capital account to finance the re-installation of the stained-glass window at the OSH and to pay for furniture and a storage shed at the new Community Hub in Barney (to be paid when the PFA are ready).

The PC continues to monitor District and County matters to represent residents where appropriate. Currently the PC is involved alongside Thursford PC in discussions regarding the Norfolk Tyre Recycling facility at the north end of The Street.

Report from other Organisations represented

Barney, Fulmodeston & Thursford Food Production Club – Kerry Harris

The Club, now in its 85th year retains a strong membership with excellent attendance at talks and events. The one area it struggles is with volunteer help, and if this is not addressed may cease to exist in the near future.

Recent events have included talks on Recycling – how, what & why and The Empire Beneath our Feet – the real life of soil, and last November our first. "At Home" event when members demonstrated how to cook favourite dishes: shortbread, sour dough bread, Bakewell tart & Battenburg cake – all with tasters for the audience.

Upcoming talks include Ian Bedford – this Thursday on Companion planting for a balanced garden, Rosie May on Container Planting in May and Simon Harrap from Natural Surroundings in October

The Plant Sale takes place on the 25th April. This is our major fundraiser which allows us to keep the cost of membership and entrance to events to a minimum. We would like to thank all those who donate to the Sale and also those who attend and purchase the plants and refreshments available.

The Annual Show takes place on 25th July. This being our 85th year we are delighted that Charlie Cushing from the Thursford Exhibition & Christmas Show will be our Prizegiver. He has provided us with an extra prize of a Golden Ticket for the Christmas Show and full details of how to take part in this special class in the Show will be available at the Plant Sale. All entrants to the Show will also be entered into a draw to win a ticket for free entry into either the museum or the enchanted journey of light.

We are also delighted to announce that, thanks to the bequest received by the Club from Mrs Gillian Harvey, we have commissioned our own website which will be up and running before the Annual Show.

I would particularly like to thank all our volunteers who come to the planning meetings, arrange speakers and events and bake our refreshments, also to the Old School Hall Committee for providing the Bar and Projector.

Membership for the household remains at £10 for the year and the majority of events remain free to members.

Coffee and Chat – Christine and Mike Marshall

We have completed 3 years of operation and meet on Mondays, once each month, in the Old School Hall from 10.30 – 12.30. Up to 22 or 23 individuals attend each month, some are regular and some attend occasionally – most are retired, but not all. Most, but not all, are residents or ex-residents of the Parish. Everyone is welcome.

We have received some generous sponsorship from anonymous sponsors, also from the Methodist Chapel and the Parish Council. We are now financially independent. Those who attend are welcome to make a donation, but this is not required.

We offer refreshments and snacks – tea/coffee/biscuits, a choice of home-made soups and homemade cake.

Activities: games are always available and seated exercise, visiting ‘experts’, for example a practical session on African drumming (from The Gambia) which was very popular and will feature again this year, challenging mental and practical exercises. These are ‘voluntary’ although most people join in.

We try to provide useful information and help on a wide range of things that may affect everyday living.

Thanks to our helpers who make the food, do the tea/coffee, help in the kitchen, provide transport – and to all involved.

Cricket Club – Richard Riseborough

The cricket club is doing very well – Richard is now in his 16th year of involvement: the greatest problem is getting volunteers. Last year was expensive due to the amount of work

and lack of home games. Barney and Fulmodeston Cricket Club have performed very well over the last few years rising through the leagues and are now in the Village Club League, which is a national body.

This year, due to a reducing number of Clubs, the Cricket Club only has 5 league games but, to help with income, the PFA have let out the Playing Field to Fakenham Cricket Club to for every Saturday during the season.

Mike was concerned about the cost to the village of the Parish Council providing the funds to pay for the grass cutting for non-village associations.

Rob was concerned about the visibility of the Club – the games are not advertised to the village. Alison D suggested putting information on the games on the boards at the OSH; Mike suggested putting information through the doors of the holiday homes and up at the campsite.

Playing Field Association – Richard Riseborough

Like everyone – the PFA need more volunteers. Thanks to the Parish Council for the grants helping the PFA to get where they are. The PFA are not ready to purchase the furniture that the PC have recently agreed to provide a grant for and these will be purchased once the self-levelling of the floor has been completed.

It was agreed on the importance of the OSH and the Community Hub sharing a calendar so they don't both hold major events that clash. There is a common interest in getting more people involved. Alison F suggested that village organisations should do something collectively.

Book Club – Alison Dalby

Gill Lee is the lead for this. There are about 12 members and it ticks along fine

Events at the Old School Hall – Alison Dalby

There are about 6 people on the committee. The regular monthly events – Whist and Bingo – tick over. But this last year the OSH has missed the Big Event (such as the Duck Race, or a Food Event) so income is down.

There is no extra charge for the bar, which is available for all events: small events are generally fine and only 1 volunteers needed , but with only 6 people trained, and most of those not retired, larger events (eg Birthdays, Christenings) are more problematic, particularly (such as a funeral) an event taking place during the day.

There is pressure on James as he is the only one who understands the AV system. He is planning a training event soon. Kerry is meeting him tomorrow: all welcome. More people could then use the AV system. Richard asked if it could be used for the Quiz – Yes.

Old School Hall – James Woodfield / Alison Fearn

2025 is what I would describe as a 'normal' village hall income/expenditure year, with challenges from unexpected costs and reduced income. Hiring fees are down for the year compared to 2024, and Bingo remains flat. Discussions have already taken place about increasing Bingo entry prices and we have a table of increased hall hire charges which will need to be implemented from 1st May or after existing hall hirers have been informed.

On a positive note, Film night continues to grow and extra events (singalong etc) contributed to this as well. Whist and other event income have all increased slightly.

We would like to thank John Reilly for his continuing work running the 200 Club and the funds that are raised by the local community in supporting the Old School Hall.

We missed a 'big' summer event and it would be good if we can find a replacement for the Band and BBQ event as this helps both the bar and the Old School Hall.

Our main expenditure in 2025 over normal running costs was the purchase of new tables for the main hall.

Energy costs remain a large part of our day to day running costs.

We would like to thank the Parish Council for their grant towards the Millennium Window.

However – there is more work to be done: we need disabled toilets and some work done on the roof.

Neceda is the main grant person and the OSH is grateful for all that James and Neceda do for the Old School Hall.

OSH Bar – continues to generate income, but there has been a steep drop from 2024 levels as we have missed the large summer event and other extra events. Prices for the Bar will also be increasing in May.

Finally – we are in need of more support for events at the Old School Hall. Just as the FPC and more recently the PFA have asked for support or help at events, we are now at the same point to keep a village hall running and useable for all.

Resident's Forum

Alison F - We need to amend our offer to the residents we have now (so a Halloween Event aimed at children is not likely to work).

David – We need to ensure that the Community Hub and OSH are working together, not in competition.

Alison D – We need at least one large annual parish event to bring money in to keep places going.

Residents discussed the need to work together and organise a large Parish event each year – discussions ranged between 1 and 4 large events and the consensus was that we should aim for 2 large events each year to bring in adequate money to keep the facilities going. This is also more likely to bring in fresh support.

Suggestions included:

Duck Race

Fete/Fayre with BBQ

Charity Cricket Match

Open Gardens

Rob agreed to arrange a meeting to get at least 1 representative from all interested organisations together to come up with a plan.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm