Minutes of Great Barton Parish Council
on Monday 19th October 2026 at 7.00pm

Councillor Maggie Dunn chaired the meeting along with Councillors, Peter Fisk, Andy Baker, Gwyn James, and Chris Power. Cllr Hopfensperger and Broughton and 2 members of the public were present.

1.	**Chairmans Welcome** Cllr Maggie Dunn welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded everyone present that the public session is the opportunity for members of the public to raise any concerns. No fire alarms are scheduled, and the emergency exits were pointed out. Apologies received from Cllr Lillistone. i. There were no declarations of interest ii. No written requests for dispensation
8.	*Due to member of the public present Chair agreed to pull item forward* **Council to consider the following planning applications** **DC/26/1426/HH - Firs Farm Brand Road** - a. two storey side extension to south elevation with roof lights (following demolition of existing single storey extension and outbuilding) b. increase aperture to first floor rear elevation and replace window c. removal of rear roof flue d. horizontal timber cladding to all existing elevations **Cllrs resolved there was no objection in relation to this application. Proposed Chair Dunn, Seconded Cllr Baker, all in favour.**
2.	**Open Public Session** No comments
3.	**Update on Developments – Open Session** The Clerk reported that contact had been made with Barley Homes to arrange a meeting. Whilst a meeting was initially agreed, Barley Homes subsequently cancelled it after the Clerk advised that Parish Councillors would also need to attend. Councillors Hopfensperger and Broughton expressed their disappointment and noted that a previous meeting for them had also been cancelled. Clerk read out an update received from Barley Homes - *West Suffolk Council is in the process, working with our development company Barley Homes, to take forward a proposal for the site, in conjunction with Lovells. The site is spilt into two, with West Suffolk Council owning part of the land, and Suffolk County Council the other. The proposal is for West Suffolk to take forward the whole site as one development, subject to planning permission. We are working with the County Council to finalise this process and will then take the proposal to Councillors at West Suffolk Council, this is likely to be in December. At this stage we can't give a timescale of works as this depends on several factors but should know more by December and will be able to update the Parish then.* It was noted that Councillor Broughton would request a briefing from Barley Homes for Councillors and the Parish Council prior to the anticipated submission of an application in December. MOP expressed concern regarding the level of communication and consultation between West Suffolk Council, Barley Homes, Vistry and the Parish Council, commenting that local democratic processes did not appear to be operating effectively in this regard. MOP advised that the NPPF had been updated in August and that he was awaiting further information from Places4People regarding implications for the Local Plan. MOP advised that he would prepare a brief update for the parish newsletter, including reference to previous proposals for the triangle site from 2025, to help ensure residents were informed ahead of any future planning application being submitted. Cllr Broughton noted that there would be an opportunity for residents and the Parish Council to comment on any future planning application but expressed concern that previous representations had not appeared to influence decision-making. Cllr Broughton queried whether the Parish Council had received training on the revised planning process and delegation arrangements. The Chair confirmed that training had been undertaken. Cllr

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	Hopfensperger advised that only larger applications would be determined by the Delegation Panel, with smaller applications continuing to be determined by planning officers. Clerk provided an update from Cllr Lillistone – • TTRO for temporary access came into force on the 12th, reduction in speed is now a legal requirement and can be enforced. • Clerk has contacted community police team for speed enforcement (ANPR don't operate in a 40mph) • Pushing for additional 40 mph signs in accordance with recommendations contained in National Highways signage. Reported on SCC Highways system and email to Beccy copied into SCC. • 278 Licence for both North and South roundabouts imminent. Fencing to North roundabout in place so commencement of construction should be soon. Rob to review copy of licenses when received. Cllr Hopfensperger advised that the matter had been referred to Sam Harvey, who is responsible for network assurance in relation to the signage arrangements, and that a site visit had been requested. She noted that the difficulty was that the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) was not set out under the Section 278 Agreement. Cllr James queried the associated costs. It was noted that approximately £15,000 had been paid by Vistry in relation to the TTRO and associated fees. Cllr James commented that such costs would be prohibitive for most villages seeking similar changes. He also queried whether statutory notices should have been displayed as part of the consultation process and, if so, whether any residents had seen them. MOP queried the level of enforcement applied to developers, noting that residents would ordinarily face enforcement action for non-compliance. MOP asked what sanctions could be imposed where developers failed to follow the proper process. Cllr Hopfensperger advised that fines could be issued. MOP expressed the view that such sanctions should be applied. Cllr Power reported that he had located a temporary notice covering the period 27 October to 15 November and noted that it was assumed a further notice would need to be submitted thereafter. Cllr Power noted that, upon arriving at the site entrance, the foreman was not present at the gate, having been called away to attend to another matter. He observed that this could result in site traffic building up quickly if gate supervision is temporarily unavailable.
4.	**<u>County Councillor Report from Cllr Hopfensperger</u>** • SCC made a formal objection against the Forest City Application and that it should not bypass the system. SCC objected and they want to protect our rural areas where reasonable to do so, this includes Redmere Windfarm to ensure we are consulted
5.	**<u>District Councillor Report from Cllr Broughton</u>** Cllr James confirmed the Gate had been removed on the A143 but looking to move to the avenue as there is a property who was hoping to reduce the speed limit, that won't happen but to put the gate the other side of Molymusk. Cllr Broughton needs exact confirmation before being placed. Clerk suggested using the What3words for the location. Clerk requested an update on the proposed Bunbury Junction roundabout improvements. Cllrs Broughton and Hopfensperger advised that they had no further updates at this time. Cllr Baker advised that he had been involved in discussions regarding the potential use of his land to facilitate the roundabout improvements, with the possibility of receiving Suffolk County Farms land in exchange for development purposes, subject to the necessary planning permissions being obtained. Cllr Broughton commented that this appeared to be a sensible option. MOP suggested that further developments in Stanton, Ixworth and Thurston should be paused until improvements to the junction had been completed. Cllr James commented on the significant commitment being undertaken by a resident for the wider benefit of the village. Cllr Baker noted that recurring issues, including flooding, supported the case for this option and advised that the Bunbury side of the road contains an existing fibre-optic cable, the relocation of which would be particularly costly.

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Cllr Power queried why Suffolk Highways and the relevant authorities had not progressed a solution to the matter. Cllr Broughton requested that the issue be pursued further, and Cllr Hopfensperger confirmed that she would follow this up.
The Clerk advised that the drainage issues had been reported again, as the drains require thorough cleansing and were not functioning effectively. Cllr Baker confirmed that water ingress was affecting his property through the solid walls. Cllrs advised Cllr Baker to take more photos and upload the evidence. Cars/Lorries cannot avoid the large flood that regularly appears outside the property. MOP urged Cllr Baker to draw up and action plan.
Cllr Power offered assistance with drafting regarding the matter, and Cllr Hopfensperger requested that the letter be forwarded to her for follow-up action.

Cllr Hopfensperger and Broughton left the meeting at 19:55

6. **To Sign the minutes of the Council meeting on Monday 28th September 2026**
Cllr James proposed acceptance of the minutes to stand as an accurate record of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr Power, agreed unanimously by those present. Cllr Fisk did not participate in the vote, having left the meeting prior to its conclusion.

7. **Council considered completed planning applications**

Application Number	Address	Details	Great Barton Parish Council Comments	West Suffolk Council Decision
DC/26/1284/TPO	31 Diomed Drive	Tree preservation order - one Beech (T1 on plan, T1 on order) raise crown to 5 metres; one Silver Birch (T2 on plan, within group G1 on order) fell	Great Barton Parish Council has no objections to the West Suffolk Tree Officer recommendations, all in favour	APPROVE

8. **Council to consider the following planning applications**

Delegated Powers Response – DC/26/1367/TPO – The Moat House
Following further information becoming available after the meeting, a revised response was submitted under delegated powers. The revised response is attached as Document 1**.** The submission of the revised response was agreed by the Council. **Proposed by Cllr Power, seconded by Cllr Baker, and approved unanimously.**

DC/26/1454/HH – The Laurels, Thurston Rd - a. one front and one rear dormer windows b. 1 and 1/2 storey side extension c. detached garage with ancillary accommodation above d. front porch e. three rooflights**. Cllrs resolved there was no objection**, **proposed by Cllr Baker, seconded by Cllr Power, and approved unanimously**

DC/26/1488/HH – Wychwood House, Mill Rd - first floor rear extension
Cllrs resolved there was no objection, **proposed by Chair Dunn, seconded by Cllr Power, and approved unanimously**

9. **Finance**
a) Payments of Accounts and outstanding invoices. The Council resolved to pay the following Accounts. Proposed Cllr James Seconded Cllr Power unanimous decision. Internet banking transactions entered by the Clerk, verified by Cllr James, verified and released by Chair Dunn.

Inv Ref	Payee	Details	Power to pay	Pymt type	Total Invoice	VAT reclaim

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65	Jessica Langley	Monthly Salary up until 12th and NJC Payrise back pay	3	B/P	£ 1,237.43	
66	HMRC	Ni & tax due previous month (after 6th before 22nd)	1	B/P	£ 130.96	
67	Nest Pensions	Pension Contributions (paid 9th of the month)	1	DD	£ 39.44	
68	Great Barton Thanks Giving Fund	Hall Hire Full Council Meeting	3	B/P	£ 12.50	
69	O2	Clerks mobile phone contract	1	DD	£ 16.60	£ 2.77
70	Unity Bank Trust	Unity Bank Service Charge Taken 30/09/26	1	SO	£ 7.00	
71	Pear Space	Domain Renewal, Hosting & Support, Mailbox Storage for 1 year	3	B/P	£ 250.00	
72	Vertas	Grass Cutting - 01/10/26-31/12/26- Village Hall 808.84 Holy Innocents 843.08	5	B/P	£ 1,982.30	£ 330.38
73	SALC	Invoice for 12m Payroll Services for 1 employee with Pension 01/04/26-31/03/27	3	B/P	£ 129.60	£ 21.60
74	SCC	1/2 Yearly Rent - Icepits wood 01/04/26-30/09/26	5	DD	£ 50.00	
75	SCC	1/2 Yearly Rent - Allotments 01/04/26-30/09/26	5	DD	£ 60.00	
76	AMS	1. Grass Cut Conyers Green (May 10.g) 2. Remove Gate (Sept 9.g) 3. Grass Cutting, Church Rd and Travellers Rest (Sept 9.f)	5	B/P	£ 177.00	
77	CAS Ltd Insurance	Insurance Renewal for 2026-2027	3	B/P	£ 1,182.70	
78	GB Allotments	Grant to allotments for water storage improvements Sept 9.h)	3	B/P	£ 668.00	
79	Gadd Brothers	Tree works following survey Aug 11.g)	3	B/P	£ 7,950.00	£ 1,325.00

b) Responsible Financial Officer's Report including details of reserve budgets

Bank balances

Unity trusts Current Account	£15,386.12
Unity Trust Savings Account	£80,024.72
Total balances	**£95,410.84**
Instant Access Interest	£464.50
Moved from current account to savings account	-
Moved funds from Savings account to Current account	£10,000.00
Credits received	£
Payments made under S137*	-

Reserves Balances

GREAT BARTON PARISH COUNCIL RESERVES AS OF 19th October 2026						
RESERVE	**AS of 12/06/2026**	**SPENT TO DATE**	**EARMARKED PROJECTS**		**CURRENT BALANCE**	**AVAILABLE TO SPEND**
SMALL PROJECTS	£2,922.24	£735.00	None	£ -	£2,187.24	£2,187.24

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	LEGAL/CONSULTATION*	£13,095.41	£1,710.00	None	£ -	£11,385.41	£11,385.41
	YOUTH PROJECT	£296.59		None	£ -	£296.59	£296.59
	GENERAL	£12,657.47	£1,194.00	None	£ -	£11,463.47	£11,463.47
	ALLOTMENTS	£60.00	£120.00		£ -	-£60.00	-£60.00
	ASSET MAINTENANCE	£10,526.47	£376.96	None	£ -	£10,149.51	£10,149.51
	ASSET ACQUISITION	£10,847.61		(Precept Budget of £456)	£ -	£10,847.61	£10,847.61
	ICEPITS WOOD*	£16,119.55	£8,147.92	(Precept Budget of £2000)	£ -	£7,971.63	£7,971.63
	S106 FUNDS	£10,024.00			£ -	£10,024.00	£10,024.00
	TOTAL RESERVES	**£76,549.34**	**£12,283.88**		**£ -**	**£64,265.46**	**£64,265.46**

c) Cllr James reviewed the Quarter 2 Bank Reconciliations and Signed off.
d) Council reviewed the Quarter 2 Spend over £100 and no issues
e) Council reviewed the Quarter 2 Spend to Budget. Clerk raised Internal Audit fees were higher than expected due to spending last financial year. Employers NI had been more due to increases. Bin Emptying had been a little higher. All points to note for the budget review in Nov.
f) Council reviewed the cost for the A143 Skirting back. All deemed a worthwhile project but require the Rationale to be completed prior to vote. Clerk to produce this for Nov meeting.
g) Cllr James explained speeding initiatives for the village, including moving a SID Location, extension posts, and new SID. Rough costs would be £3500. Cllrs agreed worthwhile spend in principle. Cllr James to get quotes for next meeting.
h) It was resolved to appoint Cllr Power and Cllr Lillistone (the latter in his absence but with his prior agreement) to the Finance Committee. The motion was carried unanimously.

10 **Non- Financial Items**

Budget meeting date set for W/C 9th November. Clerk to confirm date.
Clerk to advise Vistry on availability for Meeting to review progress and concerns to date. Councillors to raise points for agenda.

No update on neighbourhood plan review from Places4People. MOP has reviewed revised NPPF. Polices need to be as robust as possible. Clerk to add to agenda for November.

Council considered possible theme for the Christmas Tree festival. It was agreed to go for While Shepherds Watch their Flocks. It was noted we need new Christmas lights. Clerk to organise.

Cllr Fisk left at 20:53

11 **Chairman' and Councillor Reports**

Chair Dunn reported that he had attended a Highways and Flooding training session, where it was noted that there are approximately 1,000 drainage-related jobs awaiting attention.

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	Cllr Baker advised that he had received several phishing emails during the week and encouraged councillors to check sender email addresses and remain vigilant. The Clerk advised that any councillor who is unsure whether an email is legitimate should forward it to her for verification. A reminder on email security and phishing awareness will be circulated. Chair Dunn advised there has been some communication between the police and parish council in relation to anti-social behaviour on Cox Lane. Clerk noted wooden fence near playground is snapped. Chair to raise at VH Committee. Clerk advised Elm Meadow Barn is not locked although requested SCF to do so. It appears someone may be sleeping in there. And beer cans littering in the wood, with a camping chair in situ. Cans / rubbish removed.
12	**Correspondence not covered elsewhere** MOP contacted clerk about jumps in wood, and rubbish, tarpaulins etc. Clerk to contact bike group to tidy up the area and secure the bin. Cllr Power queried if tarpaulins would be affecting the trees. MOP advised they wouldn't impact the trees. Cllr Baker would recommend a tidy up in there. Clerk advised she had met Simon from BOSS (Barn Owl Suffolk Support) who advised that they now install 2 boxes together as the male owl is not allowed in the main box when they have young. A location for the new box was agreed and is to be paid for by SCF. It was noted the vegetation had been cleared below the current box; Council was unaware as why this had happened. BOSS did advise our current box is in need of repair and will send a cost for this. BOSS will then monitor both boxes and clean out annually. No update on new footpaths.
13	**Open Public Session – 10 Minutes** MOP requested the skirting back costs be put in the newsletter. As we would get the feedback, we have the money to do the works. MOP requested update on City Fibre. As they don't appear to have gone up the bridleway. Clerk advised we have not been notified of any installation dates etc. Only have contact from when we had complaints. Clerk advised she would make contact with City Fibre she has a contact. MOP confirmed that PC wanted a paragraph for the newsletter in relation to the triangle. PC unanimously agreed.
14	There being no further business the meeting finished at 21.45pm …… sign and date …… Print name Chairman Signed as confirmation that they are a true record.

Document 1

Meeting Points for TPO Officer Site Visit

DC/26/1367/TPO
The Moat House / Woodside, Livermere Road, Great Barton

Executive Summary

Movement has been recorded at Woodside and oak roots have been found in the vicinity of the conservatory. The central issue is whether the evidence is sufficiently specific and robust to justify the irreversible removal of two mature protected oak trees, T1 and T2. The Council is asked to distinguish evidence of movement and the presence of oak roots from proof that these particular trees are the material cause of the damage and that complete felling is necessary.
A number of factors require careful consideration before consent is given. These include the marked difference

in foundation depth between the conservatory and the original house; whether the conservatory was designed appropriately for shrinkable clay and mature pre-existing trees; whether the identified oak roots can be attributed to T1 or T2; whether DNA or other root-provenance testing would assist; whether the monitoring period was influenced by unusually severe wet/dry weather conditions; whether less damaging arboricultural management could adequately reduce risk; and whether engineering alternatives have been properly examined.
The position is cooperative and evidence-led. Felling should only be authorised if the Council is satisfied, after considering the complete technical picture and reasonable alternatives, that removal of both protected trees is necessary and proportionate.

1. Different foundation depths are a material issue. The geotechnical investigation records the underside of the conservatory foundation at approximately 0.50 metres below ground level, compared with approximately 1.00 metre for the original house. Two linked structures founded at materially different depths can respond differently to soil moisture change and ground movement. The TPO officer is asked to consider whether this differential foundation arrangement is relevant to the observed cracking and whether it has been adequately addressed in the applicant's causal analysis.

2. Was the conservatory foundation appropriate for the site? The issue is not simply whether the conservatory foundation should have matched the depth of the main house. The more important question is whether the conservatory foundation was appropriately designed for the actual ground conditions, including shrinkable clay, the proximity of mature trees and the possibility of differential movement between the extension and the original building. Evidence should be sought as to the conservatory's date of construction, the foundation design specified at the time, any Building Control requirements, and whether a movement joint or other allowance for differential movement was provided.

3. The trees pre-date the building. The arboricultural report categorises T1 and T2 as significantly older than the property. If the mature oaks were already established when the conservatory was built, the Council is asked to consider whether their presence and foreseeable influence on shrinkable clay should have been allowed for in the foundation design.

4. Oak-root identification and DNA/root-provenance testing. The root identification report records Quercus spp. roots, confirming that oak roots were present in the sampled area, but does not attribute them to T1, T2 or another individual oak. Where the proposal is to remove two specific protected trees, the Council is asked to consider whether DNA profiling or another accepted root-provenance technique could materially strengthen the evidence by linking sampled roots to a particular tree. The applicant's arboricultural report states that DNA profiling would not be of assistance, but gives no clear explanation for why individual attribution is unnecessary. Before irreversible felling, the TPO officer is asked whether further provenance testing could resolve uncertainty as to which tree or trees produced the roots found adjacent to the conservatory.

5. Absence of deeper roots should be weighed in the overall assessment. The geotechnical report records no roots between approximately 1.0 metres and 3.7 metres in TP/BH1 and none between approximately 0.7 metres and 3.0 metres in TP/BH2 after inspection of the recovered soils. This does not, by itself, rule out

tree-related subsidence, but the Council is asked to consider what weight should be given to the concentration of observed roots in the shallower profile.

6. Monitoring proves movement, but not necessarily its source. Level monitoring between November 2025 and August 2026 records progressive movement at Woodside. This is relevant evidence. However, monitoring establishes that the structure moved; causation remains a separate question. The Council is asked to consider whether the pattern, timing and location of the movement specifically demonstrate the influence of T1 and T2 rather than merely confirming that the conservatory is susceptible to movement.

7. The monitoring period coincided with unusually variable weather conditions. The monitoring period followed a very hot and dry summer and then extended through a period described locally as very wet or flooded over winter and into further drought conditions the following summer. Such changes can materially affect shrinkable clay. The TPO officer is asked whether the monitoring data have been interpreted against local rainfall, soil-moisture and drought records, so that exceptional regional weather effects can be distinguished from the normal long-term influence of individual trees. If this weather chronology is relied upon formally, local Met Office or Environment Agency records should be added to the case file.

8. The original arboricultural conclusion was expressed as preliminary. The arboricultural report records that Subsidence Management Services had concluded on a preliminary basis that the damage was due to differential foundation movement exacerbated by moisture abstraction from vegetation. Later investigations have added evidence, but the Council is asked to identify precisely what evidence is said to convert that preliminary view into a sufficiently specific conclusion that both T1 and T2 must be felled.

9. The trees are not being proposed for removal because they are dangerous or defective. The arboricultural report expressly states that it does not assess decay or hazard. The application is therefore not based on the trees being diseased, unstable or imminently dangerous. The justification for removal rests on the subsidence case, so the causal evidence and proportionality of felling should be examined particularly carefully.

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10. Less damaging arboricultural management should be properly considered. The arboricultural report acknowledges that pruning in accordance with BRE IP7/06, repeated on a suitable cycle, can be an alternative to removal, although it rejects that option here because of residual risk. The Council is asked to consider whether an appropriate crown-management regime could sufficiently reduce moisture demand while retaining the trees, and whether the reasons for rejecting that option are supported by evidence specific to T1 and T2.
11. Other significant trees are proposed to be retained. The same arboricultural report recommends retaining and managing other substantial trees, including another oak, horse chestnut and ash, principally by pruning rather than removal. The TPO officer is asked to identify the objective distinction between those trees and T1/T2 and why management is considered acceptable for one group but complete felling necessary for the other.
12. Engineering alternatives should be considered alongside tree removal. Before two mature protected trees are permanently lost, the Council is asked to satisfy itself that reasonable structural options have been properly examined. These may include localised foundation strengthening, underpinning or another engineering repair to the conservatory. The shallow approximately 500 mm conservatory foundation makes this particularly relevant. The existence of an engineering alternative would not automatically rule out tree works, but it should form part of the proportionality assessment.
13. Replacement planting is not an immediate substitute for mature oaks. Replacement planting may be appropriate if removal is eventually authorised, but young replacement trees cannot provide the immediate visual, ecological and landscape value of mature oak trees. The time required for replacements to develop comparable stature and habitat value should therefore form part of the balance.
14. The insurer's preferred risk solution is not automatically the Council's planning conclusion. It is understandable that an insurer may favour the option that most decisively reduces future subsidence risk. The Council has a different role: it must determine whether the evidence justifies works to protected trees after considering causation, necessity and reasonable alternatives. The insurance

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