

Baughurst Society AGM

Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday 10th March 2026

Time: 7:30 PM

Location: Heath End Village Hall, Baughurst, Hants

Attendees

In attendance were 21 residents and friends of Baughurst.

Joe Au	Maria Higson
Anne Ayres	Brian Jones
Anthony (Tony) Chuter	Barbara Jones
Colin Cooper	Eileen Lee
Christine Cooper	Clare Normand
Adrian Drew	Ruth Porter
Chris Evans	George Porter
Nikki Evans	Martin Slatford
Ngozi Fakeye	Karen Tidy
Sara Hanson	Nigel Williamson
Janette Hewitt	

Meeting Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the last minutes (14/01/2025)
3. Chair's report (M Slatford)
4. Treasurers report – including memberships (C Cooper)
5. Proposal for setting up a Marketing/Communications group (N Evans)
6. Baughurst Society's website update (C Cooper)
7. Agree on interim calendar for this year (Easter Egg Hunt, Bio Blitz, Bat Watch etc) (C Evans)
8. Community Orchard update (C Evans)
9. Walks update (Sara Hanson)
10. Baughurst Repair Cafe update (C Cooper)
11. Fork & Cork evening (C Cooper/C Evans/M Slatford)
12. Open Forum
13. Election of Officers
14. Agree on next meeting

Meeting Minutes

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Russell Clark and Rosie Woo and were accepted by the meeting

Approval of the last minutes

The minutes of the AGM held on 14th January 2025 were approved as correct.

Chair's Report

The Chair reflected on the activities and progress of the society over the past year. The focus has been on building strong foundations and expanding the society's work in new ways. The society was originally formed to oppose the erection of pylons across rural England (group known as SPARE), but its work has since broadened significantly.

Much of the society's activity has taken place quietly behind the scenes; however, there is now a desire to communicate these achievements more widely and celebrate the society's contributions:

Several key areas were highlighted:

- Energy: Support initiatives that promote greater energy efficiency within homes and encourage more sustainable energy use.
- Environment: Anne's work at the Copse continues to be an important pillar of the society's environmental efforts.
- Exercise: Weekly walks have been established and continue to be well attended.
- Extended Life: The Repair Café has been particularly successful and is setting a strong example for other communities across the area.
- Entertainment: Community events have included Wassailing and Halloween Celebrations organised by Chris & Nikki at the Orchard, as well as the upcoming Easter Egg Extravaganza.
- Upcoming Events: A cheese and wine evening is planned for the near future, with further events listed on the society's website.
- Communication: The parish magazine is now also published on the website, helping to improve accessibility and communication with the wider community.

Overall, the society continues to develop a wide range of activities and initiatives, with further projects and events planned.

Presentation - Basingstoke Neighbour Care

Peter Robson gave a presentation on the work of Basingstoke Neighbour Care, which provides volunteer transport for residents in the Baughurst and Tadley areas to attend hospital and GP appointments.

The organisation has been operating since 1997 and is a registered charity. It currently has around 60 volunteers, many of whom are village-based. The charity's patron is Lady Portsmouth.

Volunteer drivers are reimbursed at a rate of 45p per mile. Volunteers are required to undergo DBS checks and provide references before undertaking the role. The position is flexible and typically requires only a few hours of time, allowing volunteers to fit the role around their other commitments.

Drivers are only expected to assist with journeys they are able to accommodate. Clients must be able to walk unaided to and from the vehicle and be sufficiently mobile to travel independently.

Volunteers benefit from free parking at the hospital, and their vehicles are recognised through an official badge for car park access. Drivers normally wait for the patient at the hospital and return them home afterwards, which was highlighted as a key aspect of the service.

Approximately 40 journeys were undertaken in this local area during the past month. The organisation is currently seeking additional volunteer drivers from the local community to help meet demand.

An office is based in Basingstoke, and information leaflets were made available at the meeting. Further details will also be posted on the society's website.

Volunteers are advised to check with their own insurance provider; however, as the role is voluntary and not undertaken as full-time work, it is generally covered by standard insurance policies.

Treasurers Report

Copies of the Treasurer's Report are available upon request.

Proposal for setting up a Marketing/Communications group

The meeting discussed the need to promote the society's work more actively in order to reach a wider audience. It was noted that many of the society's activities take place behind the scenes and that greater effort should be made to publicise what is being achieved so that more residents are aware of the initiatives and events taking place.

Members agreed that improving communication and outreach would help attract new participants and volunteers. In particular, it was suggested that the society should make greater use of social media and other communication channels.

Work has already begun on redesigning the society's social media presence, with changes initiated in March. The online group has now been made public to increase visibility and accessibility.

The possibility of reviewing the society's name was also raised. Some members felt that the name "Baughurst Society" may give the impression of a debating or discussion group rather than an active community organisation. It was suggested that a review of the name could be considered in order to better reflect the society's activities and potentially appeal to a younger audience.

It was noted that awareness of the society currently relies largely on word of mouth. Members expressed interest in forming a small communications group and inviting volunteers to help develop and promote the society's outreach and messaging.

Baughurst Society – Core Marketing Plan



Website Update

Colin provided a demonstration of the updated Baughurst Society website and outlined recent developments and future plans. The website aims to reinforce the society's strapline by preserving the history of the area while encouraging greater community involvement.

Recent updates include the monthly publication of the Parish News, now available on the website in colour. The meeting discussed how best to incorporate the magazine archive into the site, including the potential use of a search function to make past issues easier to access. Some discussion took place regarding whether the Parish News should be hosted on the Baughurst Society website, given that it includes content relating to neighbouring parishes.

The Upcoming Events section has been expanded to provide regular updates on community activities. Pages for the Repair Café have been refreshed, and four accessible walking routes have been added to the site, with further walks still to be completed.

The Orchard section has also been updated with information about the trees and events taking place there. A new page for the Art Club is expected to be introduced shortly.

Colin also reported on several technical improvements, including enhanced website security, the introduction of comment sections for community feedback, and the use of analytics to measure visitor engagement. The website currently receives an average of around 100 visitors per week, indicating growing awareness and usage.

Additional work planned includes further development of the walks section, improvements to the event update process, and refining the handling of user feedback and comments. Links to the society's social media channels are also being incorporated.

All software used for the website is free to use. Volunteers are being sought to assist with maintaining and developing the website further.

Overall, the aim is to develop the website as a single point of contact for community information and activities.

Interim Calendar of the Year

An interim calendar of events was presented, highlighting activities taking place at the Orchard. These events have proven very popular with the community and have received positive feedback.

Previous events held at the Orchard have included the Easter Egg Hunt, Moth Trapping Evening, Halloween Celebrations and the Wassailing event.

Planned events for the coming year include the Easter Egg Hunt, a BioBlitz, a summer community event and Halloween celebrations.

The organisers emphasised that these events rely on community support, and additional volunteers are always welcome to assist with planning and running future events.

Community Orchard Update

It was noted that the Baughurst Society manages and runs the Orchard with the permission of the Parish Council. The society is responsible for organising activities and events at the site, as well as supporting its ongoing maintenance and community use.

Information shared at the meeting is illustrated below:



Walks Update

Sara provided an update on the local walking group in Baughurst, which she has led for the past ten years. The walks typically last around 90 minutes and cover approximately 3–4 miles.

The programme is supported by three Ramblers groups and continues to attract new participants, many of whom learn about the walks through online searches or by word of mouth. The initiative forms part of the Walks for Wellbeing programme, with appropriate insurance in place and high-visibility equipment used where required.

The Baughurst walks currently have around 38 regular participants, with an average of approximately 22 walkers attending each session. Two back markers assist in ensuring the group stays together and that all participants are supported during the walks. The walks take place on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month.

Participants are predominantly retired, and the walks provide both social interaction and health benefits.

Sara also noted two recent developments. A new walking group has been established at Pamber Heath, meeting on the first and third Thursdays of each month. This group currently averages around 18 walkers, with approximately 36 regular participants. In addition, an evening walk has been trialled, although attendance has so far been limited.

It was also noted that Blue Angel Care has started a separate walk in Tadley, meeting at 11:30am at the New Inn.

Attendance on the walks can vary depending on weather conditions, the time of year, and participant availability. In total, 15 walking routes have now been mapped.

Sara also expressed thanks to Anne for her work in maintaining the condition of the local footpaths around the Copse, which supports the continued success of the walking programme.

Baughurst Repair Café Update

An update was provided on the Baughurst Repair Café, which has now held ten events. The initiative has successfully covered its operating costs and has recently been able to plan awarding its first grant.

The Repair Café is supported by a team of 72 volunteers, with approximately 35–40 volunteers attending each event. Sessions are held at the Heath End Village Hall from 10:00am to 1:00pm on the third Sunday of each month.

The project has made a significant environmental impact, with an estimated £60,000 worth of items repaired that might otherwise have been discarded, thereby reducing waste and encouraging repair and reuse within the community.

Fork & Cork Evening

Details were shared about the upcoming Fork & Cork Evening, which will take place on 12th June from 7.30pm – 9.30pm.

The event will feature a tasting of six cheeses paired with six wines, with participants encouraged to share their opinions and feedback during the evening.

Tickets will be priced at £25 for Baughurst Society Members and £30 for non-members.

Open Forum

Anne reported that the planters at the Orchard are being maintained and should be regularly filled to ensure they remain available for community use.

Claire provided an update on litter picking activities. She noted that the local Scouts have expressed interest in becoming involved in future litter-picking efforts.

Anne also gave an update on the Copse. As part of her interest in wildlife and conservation, she has been leading a long-term restoration project for the ancient woodland. The woodland had been suffering from a closed canopy and declining biodiversity. A ten-year restoration plan has therefore been implemented.

As part of this work, approximately eight acres of conifers were felled. While this was initially a significant change and resulted in one complaint, the area has since been replanted with around 2,400 new trees. The project has involved strong community participation, with volunteers of all ages contributing — the youngest volunteer being three-year-old Hazel.

The area will now largely be left to establish and grow over the coming year. Anne's work has also included significant improvements to the local footpaths, and thanks were expressed for her efforts in maintaining and enhancing these routes.

Election of Officers

The following people were nominated for the prospective Committee and were voted unanimously by those in attendance.

Martin Slatford as Chair

Chris Evans as Secretary

Colin Cooper as Treasurer

Colin Grenville, Anne Ayres, Rosemary Woo, Clare Normand, Janette Hewitt and Russell Clark as Committee Members.

Agree of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place between January and March 2027, with a preference for early March, subject to confirmation.