



**Dear Councillors Bracegirdle, Bright, Buxton, Callingham, Elson, Forde, Moore, Scott, and Sellars,**

You are summoned to attend the next meeting of the **Amenities Committee** to be held on **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025, commencing at 7pm**. This meeting will be held in the large hall of Balderton Village Centre, Coronation Street, Balderton, NG24 3BD

*Members of the public and press are entitled to be at the following meeting Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960 Section 1 extended by the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100 unless precluded by the Parish Council by resolution during whole or part of the proceedings. Such entitlement does not however include the right to speak on any matter except at the beginning of the meeting (public open forum). As issues raised during the public session may not relate to items on the agenda no resolution for action can be taken.*

**Marion Fox Goddard, Balderton Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025**

### **AGENDA**

12. To receive declarations of any intentions to record the meeting.
13. To receive apologies for absence.
14. To receive declarations of interest.
15. Public Open Forum (20 minutes) - **Balderton Parish Council is committed to community engagement and therefore warmly invites members of public to contribute during this part of the meeting.**
16. To approve the minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
17. To note the clerk's report.
18. To note the minutes of the Allotment sub-committee (due to be held on 7.4.25) and consider any recommendations made.
19. To consider requests for dog bins.
20. To receive an update on Balderton Bowls Club request for handrails.
21. To receive an update on St. Giles closed churchyard maintenance.
22. To receive an update Balderton Lake maintenance and activity.
23. To consider if/when to hold a Macmillan coffee morning this year.
24. Correspondence
  - a. To consider introducing Happy to Chat benches.
  - b. To note Grove Angling Club minutes from their Annual General Meeting on 2.3.25.
  - c. To consider whether to apply for a VE Day Grant.



# Balderton Parish Council Amenities Committee

## Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7pm

### Attendees:

**Balderton Parish Councillors:** Vanessa Bracegirdle, Ronalie Bright, Jane Buxton, Mandie Elson (Chair), Debbie Moore, Dean Scott, and Joy Sellars

**Staff:** James Brown (Head Groundsman), Marion Fox Goddard (Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer)

**Public:** 4 residents joined the meeting

Meeting agenda pack with reports can be found on our website:

<https://www.baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk>

### 57. Declarations to record the meeting

The clerk recorded the meeting.

### 58. Apologies for absence - Karen Callingham, Simon Forde

### 59. Declarations of interest

None.

### 60. Public Open Forum

The Chair of Grove Angling Club introduced himself, having come to the meeting regarding item 8 on the agenda. The reason the club has asked for the matches to start earlier in the year is due to the expected curly weed later on in the year. A football manager from one of the teams that uses the playing field told councillors that his club would like to keep the current attendant arrangement; concern was raised regarding the responsibility and practicality of the proposal of the keys being given to the football club. Cllr Elson explained that the council will contact the club regarding this.

### 61. Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The minutes were unanimously approved as an accurate record and Councillor Elson duly signed them.

### 62. Clerk's update<sup>1</sup>

The following report was noted.

|   | Item             | Update   |
|---|------------------|--|
| 1 | Millennium Clock | Whether to proceed with a replacement will be consulted on with residents in the March newsletter to gauge feedback on whether there is support to proceed with this project.  |
| 2 | Lake             | Covenant – Clerk will bring a report to full council – date to be confirmed.<br><br>A meeting was held with members of Grove Angling Club in January. (All members were invited). Balderton Parish Councillors let attendees know that |

<sup>1</sup> Note: *Italics indicate where report has been updated (verbal during meeting) since agenda pack issued.*

|   | Item   | Update   |
|---|--|--|
|   |  | BPC <sup>2</sup> wants to work with GAC <sup>3</sup> , to see the club prosper and continue fishing on the lake. It was also confirmed that blue/green badge holders are still able to access the lakeside with their cars. (There have been rumours to the contrary on local social media).<br>See items 7, 8 and 9   |
| 3 | Allotments                                   | New signage and noticeboard in place. All allotments let.  |
| 4 | Safer Streets                                | The lamps and CCTV are in place at Heron Way car park. There has been 1 complaint regarding the lamps but otherwise their installation has been well received.<br><br>The first community organising/neighbourhood watch training session took place last month with two more due to be completed in February/March.<br><br>Newark and Sherwood District Council are organising the graffiti project with local young people and an artist. Initial designs are due to be worked on this month with the final artwork due to be completed on the side of the work shed in March.   |
| 5 | Church Wall                                  | We have met with St Giles representatives to move this forward. The plan is to have a day cleaning up the site this month. An officer from Nottinghamshire County Council is helping us with this project and we plan to do some of the work with volunteers (under his supervision) and some will require specialist stone masons. The reports that we initially received from the architect are being updated to include the bulge on the wall on Main Street. Updated quotes will then be sought. We will apply to the National Lottery for funding.  |
| 6 | Memorial safety testing/Cemetery management. | Hand tests have been done on all memorials in Mount Road Cemetery and St Giles Churchyard. 55 were found to be unstable at the cemetery, the majority have been staked with a notice but 6 had to be laid down due to their condition. Where we have contact details we have sent letters to owners but in some cases we do not have up to date details on record. Some owners have come forward and repairs are underway, but this will be an ongoing process dependent on if we can find the owners.<br><br>In St Giles, many of the memorials are a lot bigger and older so unstable ones needed to be laid down rather than staked. Thirty-seven memorials in total needed to be laid down for the safety of churchyard visitors. We have sent details to St Giles as they hold records. When training on this, we were advised it is unlikely we will find owners for the old memorials, however, notices have been put on them in case any family still tend the graves. |
| 7 | Village Centre                               | Bookings are healthy with numbers of children's parties continuing to increase. Full Council has approved expenditure for a specialist to undertake Disability Access Surveys for the Village Centre and Coronation Street site.   |
| 8 | Tree Survey                                  | The grounds team have been doing a significant amount of work around the lake in line with the tree survey findings and EMEC <sup>4</sup> report – See item 7. We are due to obtain quotes for the next survey which is due in the summer.   |
| 9 | Litter pick                                  | The next community litter pick is planned for 2/3/25. Members of the community will be invited to join councillors to help tidy up Balderton via a Facebook post and posters.  |

<sup>2</sup> BPC – Balderton Parish Council

<sup>3</sup> GAC - Grove Angling Club

<sup>4</sup> EMEC - East Midlands Environmental Consultants Ltd (trading as EMEC Ecology)

|    | Item                 | Update  |
|----|----------------------|---|
| 10 | Defibrillators       | A new defibrillator is up and running at Heron Way car park. We are still awaiting the electrical work to be completed to get the Chuter Ede one up and running again.  |
| 11 | Dog bins             | We have increased the collections to twice weekly (from once) on the dog bins at the corner of Mead Way and Lowfield Lane (no.0014) and the one opposite Sibcy Lane Manners Road junction (no. 1276) following reports of them overflowing. |
| 12 | <i>Village Trail</i> | <i>The benches have arrived, and their installation is imminent.</i>  |

**63. Update on ongoing work around the lake and actions recommended by the Ecological Appraisal and Management Plan**

The committee noted the update. The Head Groundsman detailed that the grounds team are on track to get the work required round the lake by the end of February/first week in March. Cllr Elson thanked Jim and the grounds team for their work. The clerk explained that the channels between the edge of the lake and island will be dredged this month. Removed material will be left nearby to allow invertebrates to be able to make their way back to the lake.

**64. Consideration of Grove Angling Club's request to bring their match start date forward to April 1<sup>st</sup> from May 1<sup>st</sup> each year**

The committee unanimously agreed to this change.

**65. Consideration of the designing out crime officer's advice**

The committee noted the report and requested more specific feedback on signage.

**66. Biodiversity – Discussion regarding areas that could be better used for biodiversity in our parish.**

Cllr Bright suggested that Balderton Parish Council should look at sites beyond our ones for increasing biodiversity as the UK is one of the most nature depleted countries, citing examples such as 52% of moth species being lost and the most recent butterfly count being down 50% on the survey done 2 years ago. It was suggested by starting small and building up, identifying small grass areas in the parish that could be better used for rewilding/creating wildlife corridors. It was agreed that if councillors email possible areas to the Clerical Assistant, we will collate this and establish which authority looks after them with a view to arranging a meeting with local councillors to discuss whether this is possible. *All Councillors requested to send suggestions to the office.*

**67. Grave Ownership and Deed Transferral Guidance for transfer of exclusive right of burial and Privacy Notice recommendations to Full Council**

Following recent training from the ICCM<sup>5</sup>, we have discovered that the process we have used for grave ownership transfers needs to be changed. The Amenities Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to Full Council that the Cemetery Privacy Notice should be adopted and that a charge should be introduced for the transfer of ownership of graves due to the administration required for this process.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

<sup>5</sup> Institute Cemetery and Crematorium Management

| April report |  |   |
|--------------|--|---|
|              | Item   | Update  |
| 1            | Millennium Clock                             | The consultation on whether to proceed with a replacement clock is under consultation. The consultation went out in the March newsletter and reminders have been added to Facebook. So far we have had 59 responses. Results will be brought to a Full Council meeting so the council can decide whether to proceed, considering residents' feedback.   |
| 2            | Lake   | Covenant – Clerk will bring a report to full council – date to be confirmed. See item 22.   |
| 3            | Allotments                                   | Since the last meeting 2 allotment holders requested to reduce the size of their allotments (1 by a half and 1 by a quarter). The plots have been relet, so we have 2 new allotment holders.  |
| 4            | Safer Streets                                | The community organising/neighbourhood watch training sessions have been completed and went well. The graffiti project with local young people and artists went very well and the artwork cannot be missed on the grounds shed in the car park.   |
| 5            | Church Wall                                  | In February we spent a day cleaning up the site. The reports that we initially received from the architect have been updated to include the bulge on the wall on Main Street and updated quotes from 2 supplier have been received. We are due to apply to the National Lottery for funding.  |
| 6            | Memorial safety testing/Cemetery management. | Following the hand tests were done on memorials in Mount Road Cemetery 13 of the 55 unstable ones have been repaired. We will be rechecking them to ensure the staked are still secure and that the repaired ones can be marked secure on our records.  |
| 7            | Village Centre                               | The Disability Access Survey for the Village Centre and Coronation Street has been completed. This will be considered by full council for prioritisation along with the community feedback on priorities so an action plan can be done.<br><br>Repairs to the electronic main gate at Coronation Street Park have been ordered.<br><br>External CCTV signage has been put up to let users know it is there. |
| 8            | Litter pick                                  | The next community litter pick is planned for Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> July. Members of the community will be invited to join councillors to help tidy up Balderton via a Facebook post and posters. Cllr Moore will lead on organising this.   |
| 9            | Defibrillators                               | A new defibrillator is up and running at Chuter Ede School.   |
| 10           | Village Trail                                | The benches have been installed although one on Queen Street is being moved slightly following feedback received. The lectern installation is almost complete with positive feedback from residents. Newark Civic Trust have also expressed interest in the trail so the PR that we have done is helping spread local knowledge of trail.   |
| 11           | Cemetery                                     | Two more memorial benches were installed last month. The new system is working well. Thank you to everyone involved.  |

**Item 18 – the allotment subcommittee is due to be held on 7.4.25. Draft minutes will be published on our website [here](#) before the Amenities Committee is held on 9.4.25.**

### Requests for extra dog bins

1. At the junction of Lacey Green, Southfield Road, and Queen Street. Where there is a grass area used by dogs and requiring this amenity.
2. Mallard Green

## Balderton Lake Grounds Maintenance and Activity

The following update was posted to social media on 11/3/25 and shared with councillors prior to it's release. *I have added additional information in italics on work that has been done/is underway since the March update.*

Regular visitors to the lake will no doubt have noticed there has been lots of tree/grounds work over the last few months. The tree work/brambles clearance was completed last week. We are aware some concerns have been raised on local social media, and below we give an update.

1. Tree felling – early in 2024, we had a tree survey done on all of Balderton Parish Council (BPC) sites. This was done by a qualified company which advises owners of trees on their safety. We must have such surveys done to ensure our sites are safe. A number of trees at the lake were identified as needing to be felled as they were in poor condition/had a potential risk to visitors to the lake.
2. Thinning and Coppicing – We have done this as it is a recognised method for woodland management. The Woodland Trust advises: “Thinning is the removal of some trees or parts of trees within woodland. As the trees reach 10-15 years old, they begin to compete for space, light and nutrients and growth starts to slow. Thinning makes sure that the best trees grow at the fastest rate, allowing a more diverse woodland structure and helping to futureproof the landscape.”
3. Brambles removal – We have cleared Blackberry plants at some parts of the lake. In particular we have cleared them next to the reed beds. This was recommended by ecologists to stop the brambles choking out the reed beds which line parts of the lake. We are encouraged to see the reeds spreading and plan to transplant some of them to other parts of the lake in future.
4. Chippings/Logs – We have chipped/shredded much of the waste and left it to decompose where it was cut down. This is an efficient way of dealing with the ‘waste’ and leaves it for the benefit of wildlife. On some of the larger lengths of wood this has been used to create a barrier in some of the smaller access points to the lake site from the Sustrans/cycle path. This is to minimise points where vehicles are entering the site, sometimes at speed, creating a potential risk to other lake users. Some waste is taken off site and shredded for use once decomposed. Small logs are taken off site and left at Balderton Village Centre for residents to collect.
5. Dredging - to improve the water flow in the shallow channels leading into the pump pond area. The material removed was left nearby so invertebrates could make their way back to the water (as advised by the ecologist). This is the sand left close to where this work was done. It has been spread thinly so the brambles/plants can grow back through it.
6. Consideration of wildlife – our staff and contractors always consider wildlife. Last Wednesday we did the final work to complete the tree/scrub work for this winter. We were aware that the weather was better and understand the concerns some residents have raised. Our staff always look for signs of nesting before work is conducted and would not proceed if there were any evidence of nesting.
7. Bird/bug boxes – *as the bird nesting season is underway we will put the bird boxes up in the autumn/when nesting has finished. The bug boxes have been put up.*
8. Raft removal – Several rafts in the lake that have previously been used to support the planting and growth of aquatic vegetation. Many have been unsuccessful with the rafts now empty and in a state of disrepair so these will be removed from the lake to prevent harm to any wildlife. *Our staff plan to do this work during April.*
9. New trees – this year we receive hundreds of free saplings from the Woodland Trust. Our staff plant these in a ‘quiet’ area for a year or so to bring them on and give them the best chance of survival once they are transplanted to their permanent home. *Eighty saplings have been planted on our boundary with the Sustrans and we plan to plant more saplings along borders in the Autumn.*
10. Grounds work in the coming months - *The grass has started growing again* and our grounds team *are being kept busy across our sites.* Following ecologist's advice, we will be doing this differently this year using a cyclical basis in some areas, leaving the grass to grow more to leave a better habitat for the

creatures that live there. There are also some Bird's-Foot-Trefoil plants that we want to preserve as this species supports a number of butterfly species. We will continue to work through recommendations of the ecologists to enhance the lake for fauna, flora, and users of the lakeside. We plan to do tree and seed planting and aim to ensure the lake site is safe haven for wildlife and humans including members of Grove Angling Club.

11. Litter/dog waste – Our grounds team regularly empty the litter bins and we have a contract with Newark and Sherwood District Council ( N&SDC ) to empty our dog bins. We also have committed councillors and volunteers who spend hours picking litter at the lake and other sites across the village. We are thankful to everyone who uses the bins correctly\* or takes their litter home and litter pickers. \* Occasionally, we find that the bins are overflowing due to household waste being dumped in them. We respectfully request users of the site to not use the bins for household waste.

12. Fishing pegs (platforms) – *Our staff are working their way around all the pegs, with the most deteriorated ones having already been repaired and refurbished. All peg refurbishment/repairs should be completed by the end of this month. This will be followed by the steps which will be prioritised according to the amount of work needed – this will be completed as soon as possible during the summer months.*

13. Grove Angling Club – *a new procedure is in place, so match secretaries and blue badge holders have news keys to access the lakeside with their cars. The club's matches will commence this month and the following changes to the rules were agreed by Full Council last month:*

- *Number of rods per angler to be increased to 2*
- *Use of the 'spomb' method to release bait*

*Should any problems arise from the changes, Balderton Parish Council may review these decisions. The council did not agree to the request to widen the catchment area to 20 miles.*

14. *The lock on the lifesaving equipment at the point has been vandalised. We are liaising with the supplier to obtain a replacement lock.*

## Concerns

We are aware that concerns have been raised regarding the amount of work that has been done this year. Our staff have been mindful of the need to fell trees identified in the tree reports and the ecologists' recommendations whilst leaving enough cover for wildlife. With the growing season being upon us, we will see the lakeside bloom over the coming months including all the baby birds which we can't wait to see.

## How we keep you informed

We are committed to improving communications and adopted our Communications and Engagement Policy in November 2023. Work from the current council has seen:

- the replacement of our previous website with a new site having clear structure and significantly improved content ([www.baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk))
- the introduction of a Balderton Parish Council Facebook page where we post regularly on our work
- residents being welcomed to our parish council meetings, with there being a public forum (20 minutes) for residents to raise concerns
- the introduction of a newsletter which is delivered across the parish every 6 months.
- the introduction of meet and greet sessions so residents can talk to our councillors (Next one 20/9/25 10am – noon, Balderton Village Centre, Coronation Street)
- widely publicising the Annual Parish Meeting where residents can share their concerns/ideas ( Next one 19/3/25 – 6pm, Balderton Village Centre, Coronation Street)

- our small team working to improve communications whilst balancing delivery of the operations of a small council.

#### Antisocial Behaviour /Horses at the lake

We are aware there have been horse riders around the lakeside which is against the byelaws for the area. Often, we are not on site when this happens, but we encourage you to report this by calling 101 so a record of this is built up and officers know when to patrol. We also will work with relevant partners to try to tackle this.

We have worked with Nottinghamshire Police and Newark and Sherwood District Council to deliver the Safer Streets 5 project, which has brought external funding for the new signage, bins, safety equipment and CCTV at the lake. We will continue to work closely with them to try to tackle any issues if they arise. Your input is essential on this. Please help us by:

- Reporting antisocial behaviour to Newark and Sherwood District Council – call 01636 650000 or email [customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)
- Reporting crime – call 999 or 101 – or visit their website <https://www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/>

If you have any queries, please email [office@baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:office@baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**From:** Clerk - Balderton Parish Council  
**Sent:** 12 March 2025 12:02  
**To:** REDACTED  
**Subject:** RE: Happy to Chat Bench

Hello REDACTED

Thank you for getting in touch and sharing the Happy to Chat initiative. We don't have one in Balderton at the moment; I have looked on the website and ordered a pack so the council can consider this when the Amenities meeting next meet: April 9<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. You are welcome to come to the meeting to discuss this with the committee members in the public forum at the beginning of the meeting.

<https://happytochat.uk/about/>

Best wishes,

Marion Fox Goddard  
Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer  
Telephone: 01636 703626  
[www.baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Office opening times: 10am – noon, Monday to Friday**

**Balderton Parish Council is proud to have signed the [Civility and Respect Pledge](#) and will endeavour to follow the pledge commitments.**



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

**From:** REDACTED  
**Sent:** 11 March 2025 19:34  
**To:** Balderton Parish Council <[office@baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:office@baldertonparishcouncil.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Happy To Chat Bench

Hello,  
Could you please tell me if Balderton Parish Council are aware of an initiative to help to reduce loneliness known as The Happy to Chat Bench? These benches which are marked "happy to chat" are being installed all over the UK to encourage people to sit and chat with a stranger and make friends.  
I wondered if Balderton Parish Council have plans to install one? If one has already been installed could you please tell me the location?

Kind  
regards  
REDACTED

**From:** Administrative Services <[@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 27 March 2025 15:34  
**To:** Administrative Services <[@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** 80th Anniversary of VE Day - Parish/Town Council Grant Scheme

Dear Town/Parish Council Clerk,

We are pleased to inform you that the District Council has agreed to offer a small contribution towards the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day celebrations delivered by Town/Parish Councils. It is an opportunity for the nation to come together to honour and pay tribute to the Second World War generation.

The contribution is based upon Town/Parish Council precepts. Please see below:

| <b><u>Precept</u></b> | <b><u>Grant Available</u></b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Over £250K            | £750                          |
| Over £100K            | £500                          |
| Over £50K             | £400                          |
| Over £15K             | £300                          |
| Over £5K              | £200                          |
| Under £5K             | £150                          |

If you would like to apply on behalf of your Parish/Town Council, please complete the application form attached and return to [@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](mailto:@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)

by **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2025**.

Please note, all payments will be made in advance, once applications have been reviewed and approved after the submission deadline.

Thank you

Newark and Sherwood District Council

[www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk](http://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk)