

Collated Reports for  
Bardwell Village Meeting  
Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023

10.00am

The Tithe Barn, Bardwell Village Hall  
Up Street, Bardwell

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## BARDWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: David Ruffles

The Parish Council has been very actively involved over the last year supporting the village where possible, being very much focused on preserving the splendid village we are all fortunate to reside in, but at the same time looking to make improvements in the future where possible.

The council held 10 meetings over the last year. Although there was a noticeable drop in planning applications during this period, applications for tree works were at normal levels.

Over the past year the council has been in a relentless pursuit to obtain a replacement footbridge over the river, which formed part of a very popular footpath much enjoyed by many residents. In April our efforts were rewarded when Suffolk County Council, after continuous pressure from our county councillor Joanna Spicer, announced on a site visit that we will be getting a new bridge in 2024 This was very welcome news.

The community field is now pretty much finished and is proving to be a great village asset, enjoyed by many, and it is rewarding to see all the allotment spaces in use and prospering.

The prospect of new homes in School Lane, is still a possibility, but some way off as this proposal has first to be accepted into the local plan, then planning permission sought if this was to happen. The council has had positive meetings with the landowner Suffolk County Council Farms regarding the location and quantity of new builds, as well as installing a new footpath and parking bays on this section of the road. The scheme is some way off at present but when and if plans come forward, we will act in the best interests of the village.

Earlier this month we said goodbye to four councillors who stood down after long services, and our thanks go out to the following for their efforts, Peter Sanderson, Ali Compton, John Babraff and Geoff Clough.

For what is probably the first time ever, we had an election for a new council, with nine candidates coming forward to contest the election on May 4<sup>th</sup>, in what was a very keenly fought election. We welcome five new councillors this month, Karl Ives, Karen Witton, Mike Allum, Lenka Lelakova and Margaret Berrill, along with returning Councillors David Ruffles and Andrew Smith.

Former councillor Tony Stokes was not successful in the election, Tony must be thanked for his services to the council over the years, and in particular his assistance with some of the not so straight forward matters which come up from time to time.

I am very honoured to be elected as chairman for the 6<sup>th</sup> time, along with a new vice chair in Margaret Berrill this month and feel that an election which saw a remarkable turn out of 54.9% was a very decisive result and one we must all respect moving forward in keeping Bardwell at the forefront.

Finally, the Parish Council was pleased to support the, Kings Coronation Picnic at the Playing Field on May 7<sup>th</sup>, in what turned out to be a very well attended event and enjoyed by the young and old alike. Our thanks go out to Margaret Berrill and Kit Harding for organising this splendid event.

## SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Suffolk County Councillor: Joanna Spicer MBE

[Joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk)

Being your annual meeting may I first thank David Ruffles and former parish council members for making me welcome at meetings throughout the year and also thanks to Pauline who is an excellent clerk. I value working in partnership with Andrew Smith as we navigate the technicalities of two-tier local government. I was pleased to meet your 5 new members at the parish council meeting on Tuesday.

I was sorry this year we said goodbye to 5 long serving and hard working parish councillors and offer them all my thanks.

It has been a busy year for the County Council as we continue the post pandemic recovery, work with the ongoing implications of Brexit and in the last year respond to the challenges of the Ukrainian war and the worrying cost of living crisis.

The county council has a gross budget this year of over £1 billion. As in previous years about 75% of our expenditure is on adult care and children's services including special needs (SEND) and child protection. Only 22% of our expenditure is from government grant and the rest is local taxes in Suffolk

For Bardwell a great deal of my focus has been on highway and drainage matters. I am pleased to report that investigations have taken place at Low Street, Church Lane and Quaker Lane and I am hopefully work may start soon. The extensive drainage work done by SCC at The Green and Up Street seems to have stood the test of time.

I have been very worried all year about the closure for safety reasons of the foot bridge over the river but am pleased to report that SCC will replace it next year. We had a very wet gathering to lobby the cabinet member for highways.



School lane safety and parking associated with the school and the Windmill is worrying at times – but they are both very important community assets.

Bardwell School is thriving and I am pleased to report that at least 9 children will be joining Reception in September. SET Ixworth is again full for Year 7 intake.

I have been pleased to make grants towards Coronation decorations and signs for Quiet Lanes (an SCC scheme).

## WEST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Bardwell Ward: Andrew Smith

[andrew.smith@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.smith@westsuffolk.gov.uk)

West Suffolk's budget for 2023 -2024 was presented to full Council on the 21<sup>st</sup> February and was approved 45 for and 8 against. The budget was balanced, that being no small achievement with so many councils all over the country experiencing financial difficulties and presenting budgets with large deficits.

For 2023/2024 the council tax increase is just under 10 pence per week (£4.95/yr. for band D). We also agreed for one year only, to increase the maximum council tax reduction claimants would be entitled to under the West Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme from 91.5 per cent to 100 per cent. The proposal is highly targeted and will reach those who are already on means-tested benefits which is around 4,700 residents.

Despite all the challenges over the last year we have supported and continue to support a number of initiatives to help our residents through the energy crisis with schemes like warm homes; and warm spaces such as the very successful one held here in the Tithe Barn on Tuesdays 10-12.30am.

We are still working on the Local Plan which because of recent Government changes to the NPPF has meant we have had to push back the schedule for a few months.

Since becoming District Council I have supported many local projects in Bardwell with funding from my Locality budget totalling £6,050, including trees for planting on the Community field, allotment fencing and sheds and AWA field supply, repairs and modifications to children's play equipment on the community field, pensioners Christmas lunch and important maintenance in the churchyard during covid.

To my surprise I was delighted to have been elected unopposed as your District Councillor. My Ward consists of Bardwell, Barningham, Coney Weston, Euston, Fakenham Magna, Honington (Village) & Sapiston.

I remain committed to supporting our rural community in Bardwell Ward and across West Suffolk

## BARDWELL AMBLERS

Ali Compton

Bardwell Amblers have had a good year of varied walks in Suffolk and Norfolk. Our regular day out to the coast in September has proved so popular that we had another coastal walk in April, to Walberswick. Also this year we had two very interesting town walks in Thetford and Diss guided by members of our group with historic commentary. I'm sure we all learnt new things about these towns we thought we were familiar with. Most of these gentle walks are between three and four miles.

We meet at the Tithe Barn on the second Sunday of the month – 2.00pm in Summer and 1.pm in Winter and drive to the starting point of the walk. Car sharing is encouraged. New members welcome. For further information contact Ali Compton 01359 252044.

## **THE BARDWELL CHARITIES**

Chairman: Barry Felton

The annual Fair and COTG took place successfully and without issue and The Green survived the long summer heat wave.

The inevitable drought completely dried out the round pond as well as the long ditch at the back of The Green and possibly due to the intense heat and the lack of rain, a mature Willow, at the back of The Green died. Its removal was delayed due to its proximity to overhead power cables. This required UKPN to be in attendance while the tree surgeons were at work but the tree has now been removed.

Last year, West Suffolk reported the loss of many trees due to the intense weather conditions.

During the Summer, a large tree from the neighbouring farm fell onto The Green and was subsequently removed by Mike Allum.

There is a pit in Wyken Road that's on land that belongs to the Charity. For many years, it's been used by locals as an unlicensed dump but, with planning permission, the Charity have made arrangements to fill the pit with inert waste and then cover it with a layer of topsoil. On completion, the area will be planted with trees and shrubs. Work was postponed due to Covid but will recommence in 2023.

Our accounts were submitted to, and accepted by, the Charities Commission.

## **CARS ON BARDWELL VILLAGE GREEN**

Chairman: David Ruffles

Our show at the end of the month will be our 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary since we started in 2012, and the show is as popular as ever, with another fully booked out show ahead on May 28<sup>th</sup>.

Last year's show, moved to coincide with the Jubilee weekend, was not blessed with the best of weather, but this did not deter exhibitors and visitors that much, as with the rain stopping in time the turn out was still pretty decent.

To stage this show now has significant costs attached to it, costs we must cover from sponsorship, donations, stalls, raffle tickets and programme sales. Thankfully we manage to meet our costs every year, but whilst the show has always been about the whole village benefiting financially, a tradition we very much want to continue with this free admission event, we also need to have an income from the event each year, to meet our costs.

As always, we are grateful to so many in the village who help stage this event, the list is endless, and we can assure these community minded people we really are grateful.

## **BARDWELL SPORTS & COMMUNITY CLUB (BSCC)**

Chairman: Neil Kellett

### **Football**

The season is coming to a close and team results will be published in due course.

### **Cricket**

Cricket is played at various levels both in competitive matches and friendlies. We currently have:

A ladies team.

Junior teams at various age groups.

4 men's teams playing in both the Saturday & Sunday leagues.

All of the cricket teams are coached by Paballo (Pabs) Mogoero from South Africa who joins us again for this summer.

### **Grumpy Goat**

On 1 Feb 23 the Goat became a limited company, under a new management structure and 5 directors were appointed from the BSCC committee, that meets monthly. This means that the Goat is now separate from the BSCC but its purpose remains as a fundraiser to support the BSCC.

Some of the new events are a monthly shear & beer (good value at £9) & a quiz night that are both very popular. Staffing in hospitality is an ongoing issue so on weeknights some committee members take a turn behind the bar. The Goat operates as a café during the day serving hot & cold food and as a bar in the evenings with food also served on a Fri & Sat evening.

The BSCC needs to raise funds in its own right and we plan to support village events this summer. We hope to run a beer tent at Cars on the Green and will have provided a hog roast at the Coronation picnic on the playing field along with other offerings from the Goat.

### **Krazy Horse Weekender**

Over the weekend of 7-9 Jul the BSCC will support the KH weekender organised by a custom car and motorbike company called Krazy Horse. It is not anticipated that this will be the same size as Bardfest and our commitment to this will be the provision of bar, food, car parking & camping facilities with KH covering the costs.

### **Peter Sanderson Pavilion**

As you may have seen in the BVN a party was held to thank Peter for all his hard work for the village over many years and in recognition the pavilion will now be named after him. By the time of the meeting hopefully I can update on how the new signs are progressing.

### **Croquet**

We are considering setting up an area to play croquet which may encourage more people to make use of the facilities at the playing field.

## **BARDWELL VILLAGE HALL**

Chairman: James Fletcher

### **Works Services Completed**

Portable testing, fire alarm and emergency lights checked. One inside halogen heater repaired. Broadband has been installed and is available thanks to Tony Stokes. We had two major water burst pipes above the bar area which had to be repaired and the water heater also required repairs. The guttering was repaired too, as it was leaking over the walls causing damp patches. Various windows have been painted along with the fire door. The stains on the walls are also being addressed.

### **Cars on the Green**

Bacon butties and cakes will be served again this year. Teas, coffee and soft drinks will also be on sale. Cake makers in or around the village are asked to donate cakes for this year. Details will be in the village magazine.

### **The Booking System for Hall Hirers**

The Committee is still looking at a system to handle bookings online and one to deal with the accounts if feasible, plus an interim change to the recording of bookings and the issue of booking invoices. This is still ongoing. We are also looking to update the 200 Club system, ways to pay etc.

### **Theatre Groups**

The Spinning Wheel group and Common Ground Theatre group plus any others are hopefully still going to perform in the Tithe Barn. Please check the village magazine and local notices for future productions. The Velveteen Rabbit production was a great success.

### **Grants**

Grants are being sought by our grant getter Sarah when we get the go-ahead.

### **Treasurer**

Unfortunately, our wonderful Treasurer Eileen Russell Roberts left us last October: we have a very competent and able replacement, Julia Steed.

### **Secretary**

Our secretary has also changed from Jerry Endicott, who is still on the committee, to Karen Witton who joined the committee earlier this year.

### **Improvements to the Tithe Barn**

The planning application has been submitted and hopefully an answer will be forthcoming on the 9<sup>th</sup> June. The plans have already been approved by the Tithe Barn Committee, the PCC and the parish council. We will then hopefully finalise what the kitchen and bar areas will require and how the works will be completed, either in stages (most likely) or all at once, costings are also to be sought through a Quantity Surveyor's report or by getting quotes from various contractors.

### **Bookings**

The number of bookings have gradually improved and the Committee are now actively looking at new ideas and events that could be held in the Barn, i.e. family bingo, beetle drives, table top sales, exhibitions and several other ideas.



We had a grant of just over £500 to host a Warm Space event every week which we are still doing every Tuesday at 10am – 12.30pm. With free tea, coffee, biscuits and cake. These sessions started off with only a few people attending and now it's up to around twenty-five. It's an event that some really look forward to as they see very few, if any, people in between these sessions.

We hope to continue these sessions up to June and restart them in the winter if possible

## FRIENDS OF BARDWELL CHURCH

Chairman: David Ray

This report covers the calendar year 2022.

2022 saw us all gradually emerging from the pandemic mindset and behaviours. Early in the year we decided not to run a Safari supper, judging it was still too early for the close social mixing involved. We also decided not to run a stall at Cars on the Green (COTG) during the Jubilee weekend in June, but we did respond positively to an offer from the COTG committee to sell their cash draw tickets in exchange for a share in the profits. So we ended up organising a plan to sell tickets before the event, at the church during the Flower Festival over the COTG weekend, and at the event. Despite poor weather on the day we (and our partners in the PTA) helped significantly to boost sales and produce some useful income for the Friends.

However, our main effort in 2022 went into organising and running the jazz concert in the church in October. We are very grateful to Chris Ingham for kindly offering to do a concert for us (with singer Joanna Eden) at a very reasonable rate. We arranged the promotion of the event, the ticket sales, two bars, and all the other organisation for the event. It was a sell-out, was widely-praised, universally enjoyed, and raised a very pleasing sum for the Friends.

Of course we raise funds to support the fabric of the church and churchyard. This year our financial support went towards the repair of the churchyard wall by the main gate where the large mature yew tree's growth had pushed the wall toward the adjoining property and caused the wall to fracture. The wall was repaired by a contractor rebuilding it using a 'bridge' over the roots leaving space to allow for future growth. The PCC had obtained a grant of £1500 for this work and Friends contributed half of the rest, with the PCC covering the other half.

The other way we support the fabric of the church and churchyard is through physical help by volunteers, and in 2022 we supported two formal work parties on 23 April and 18 August, as well as a number of informal ones where a few volunteers helped out with some urgent small tasks. During the year cut long grass was raked up, a medium-sized tree was felled, and other minor tree work, general strimming and tidying work was carried out, and a large number of runs to the tip with green waste were made.

Other assistance has been provided by Friends helping to man the church both for the Flower Festival during the Jubilee weekend in June, and for the two Heritage weekends in September.

I would like to record my grateful thanks to the Friends committee, to the Friends members, to all those who organised, helped at, and supported our events and work parties over the year, and to those who subscribed to or donated generously to our funds – without all of you much less would have been achieved.

## BARDWELL COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

Ali Compton

The CSW (Community Speedwatch) team operates all the year round, from safe locations allocated by the police community speedwatch team. We usually do sessions of about an hour and only pack up early if it rains.

Our presence is not just to catch people speeding but to encourage people driving through our village to be careful. If we record drivers exceeding the speed limit this is reported to the police who will then send a letter to the offender.

In 2022 we took part in the Suffolk ANPR (Automatic number plate recognition) project\* to determine whether ANPR cameras combined with Speed Indicator Devices have any effect on peoples driving habits. Devices were placed in the village in different locations for a week at a time and data collected. Initial reading of the report seems to show that drivers do not greatly change their speeds. Residents, however, feel happier that devices such as these are in place and that CSW groups are active in the village to remind them to drive carefully.

**Bardwell CSW** Contact details in Bardwell Village News

*\* The outcome of the Suffolk ANPR Project is detailed with the online version of this report at [www.bardwell.onesuffolk.net](http://www.bardwell.onesuffolk.net)*