

# **BREDFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING REPORTS**

**25<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

## **REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF BREDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

Welcome everyone. I'm sure that you are all here, eagerly anticipating my annual report, and not simply waiting for the bar to open.

Welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting. This meeting is not a Council meeting, but the law requires that a meeting of the electors of the parish should be held "for the purpose of discussing parish affairs". Further, the law states that the meeting should be chaired by the Parish Council Chairman with the Clerk taking the minutes but Councillors have no more standing than any other elector.

This gives various village organisations a chance to update people on their activities and plans for the future, as well as giving an opportunity for electors to raise anything that they think is relevant for discussion.

I am pleased to be able to give this Annual Parish Meeting my Parish Council Chairman's report. I intend this year to keep it brief, I would remind you that we meet regularly, there have been ten meetings over the last twelve months, and reports now appear regularly in The Lantern, to update everyone on the work of the Parish Council. I must thank all Councillors for their hard work and commitment to doing the best for the residents of Bredfield. I would also like to thank our County and District Councillors, who despite having a large area to cover, always try to make time for us.

During the year councillors regularly attended – virtually in most cases – road safety and community partnership forums – a working party had compiled a comprehensive report on the floods that affected the area and submitted this to the County Council Flood and Water Management Investigation Team - A litter pick was organised by Cllr Bestow using the litter pickers and bag holders provided by East Suffolk Community Partnership. Cllr Bestow had prepared a possible new bus route linking villages to Woodbridge, and this had been submitted for funding consideration, but it had not been successful. The PC will continue to seek funding opportunities to establish public transport facilities. The PC took part in the Thermal Imaging Project, funded by the Climate Change Partnership, and Cllr Harker had received training on use of Thermal Imaging equipment and assisted by Cllr Bestow had carried out surveys of 19 houses in the village, to assist with potential improvements to insulation and save money on energy bills.

A traffic survey was carried out by SCC Highways at our request, funded by our County Councillor, which was necessary to introduce some traffic calming measures – these should materialise in the coming months, in the shape of speed roundels in the road and new village signs with a gate on the approach from Dallinghoo.

We have again raised the difficulties of accessing the A12 from the village with SCC – this has become something of an annual ritual. The response has been the familiar one; that the difficulties are recognised, but with limited finances, little can be done. We shall persevere with this. We are pleased to report that the white lines at the Woodbridge Road junction have been refreshed.

The Meadow and Orchard has been supported, and a meeting with a solicitor to clarify the boundary situation. The Clerk has completed forms for the Land Registry to remove the legal charge on the Meadow by Valencia Communities [formerly known as Viridor], who had provided the initial grant for the purchase of the Meadow, as this is no longer relevant

One major project is now underway, which is the review of the Neighbourhood Plan. Our Plan was 'made' in 2021 and it is vital that we keep it under review and up to date. A new NDP Working Group has been formed and I am happy to report that work is well underway. This will mean that at some point in the next months a questionnaire will be distributed, to discover your opinion on a number of issues. More details will be made available as we move forward.

The PC is a statutory consultee for planning applications and over the past year have commented on six planning applications. The PC is very aware of the concerns of residents with one significant project, the redevelopment of the Forge area. During the lengthy period of consultation, we made submissions to the Local Planning Authority, and then welcomed the decision to refuse the submitted application. This decision has been appealed by the applicant, and the PC has made further submissions and will attend the public hearing that will take place shortly.

For finances, then I must thank Cllr Bestow for his work – he produces a regular budget forecast and maintains an expert eye on spending and income. I would remind everyone that our main source of income is the Precept. This is the money we receive back from the Council Tax that you all pay. It is calculated dividing the planned expenditure by the weighted average number of band D properties in the village. For 2024/25 the Band D weighted average has risen to £158.61. Our budgeted precept requirement has therefore also risen to £6,027. This means the charge for a Band D property will rise to £38.00 – a 3% increase.

We have also been in receipt of money generated by the Community Infrastructure Levy – this is a tax imposed on new developments by the local authority – in our case East Suffolk Council. The money must be used to improve the 'infrastructure' of the area, and we receive 25% of any such money received for new development in the village. In April 2024 we received £11,905.05 and this year we are scheduled to receive £5,636.71. We have used CIL money over the last year to fund new display freezers for the village shop; to assist the village hall with the provision of a multi-use games area and the bowls club will have a new footpath part funded by CIL.

I will now wind up – with just a special thanks to our hard working Parish Clerk, Linda Buckman, who not only maintains excellent financial records, and produces the agenda and minutes, but has to deal with a range of outside agencies and people, but manages to do so whilst also producing duty rotas for the village shop and busy with the duties of a grandparent.

Thank you  
David Hepper  
Chair: BPC

## BJMO REPORT TO ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - APRIL 2025

### Developments over the previous year

1. Tree guards have now been placed around all the orchard trees. Though these have already done fine work preventing browsing by deer, they proved less effect at deterring nibbling Rabbits entering at a lower level. Additional work has been done to prevent this Rabbit damage. All trees are to receive new, and more robust name tags.
2. Signs have been erected notifying dog walkers (who are otherwise welcome) to keep dogs on leads and clear-up after their dogs
3. This year marked the 10 year anniversary of the planting of the first orchard tree in the meadow. To mark the occasion, a picnic was held on the Apple Pressing Day. The anniversary cake was much enjoyed by children!
4. The annual Wildflower Walk took place in June. This year proved to be an amazing year for Southern Marsh Orchids, with hundreds blooming in the meadow.
5. The BJMO was awarded the Green Flag Communities Award for another year.
6. A notable milestone was the official designated of the BJMO as a County Wildlife Site. This followed an inspection of the meadow by representatives of Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service and Natural England.

### Forthcoming developments and plans

1. An interpretative noticeboard will be erected in the meadow in the autumn of 2025. We are grateful to East Suffolk Council for an Enabling Communities Grant to cover the cost.
2. Plans are to be drawn-up for hedgerow management work in the autumn and winter months. Volunteers for a working party most welcome.
3. Plans will also be drawn-up, and work begin, on the layout for a 'nature area' and bicycle parking where the 'old car parking area' was. (Note: there will still be vehicular access to the meadow through the gate, when required; there will be room for parking 2-3 cars on the access hard-standing when required.)
4. There will now be three open BJMO Committee meetings per annum. These will take place in the Church Room. They will be advertised and residents welcome to attend.

*Stewart Belfield*



## VHMC Chair Report 2025

During 2025, we have had a number of successful pop-up bars, including a Pizza Night & Chinese New Year. The Village Book Club has been extremely successful, especially the cinema outing and Christmas Party. We had yet another splendid quiz night and Christmas Fair – thanks to the Entertainment Committee – Tim Dean, Hilary Harker, Chris Woods and Lynn Taylor. We also had a wonderful Pig Race Night – a joint venture between Woodbridge Lions and Macmillan, organized by Chris Woods.

Our big project this year was the refurbishment of the tennis court and the installation of the MUGA in the other court – both courts look splendid and are proving very popular. The website and the online banking are working well, hall bookings, maintenance and development work are all handled brilliantly by Stephen Cook, Tony Bence and Dave Harker - thank you.

Thank you also to all the trustees for their commitment to maintaining the high standards of the hall and the playing fields.

Sadly, this year Eve Stokes, the cleaner, decided that she had to stop due to family commitments but happily Eve has been replaced by Nikki Hind who is doing an excellent job.

I became a member of the Village Hall Management Committee in 2014 and this next year will be my 10<sup>th</sup> year as Chair. I have enjoyed every minute of it and have seen many changes, developments and improvements in those 10 years. We have a new kitchen, the Field Room and bar with the very successful Pop-Ups, solar panels and new radiators, table tennis and football tables and the new MUGA and improved tennis court. We've celebrated the Queen's Jubilee and the Coronation as well as quiz nights, Christmas Fairs and raised lots of money for Macmillan with Coffee Morning and Mammoth Quizzes. But... all good things must come to an end and I feel it is time to step down and allow someone else to take the reins next year. This will be my last year as Chair, so basically I'm working out 12 months' notice. I hope that someone will step forward to continue the good work that we have all achieved in the last 10 years and keep the Village Hall at the heart of this community.

## **REPORT FOR 2025 APM FROM BREDFIELD COMMUNITY SHOP**

The Community Shop serves the local community through the volunteers that give their time to provide a valuable local service.

Over the last year we have continued to try and replace and update elderly equipment, and thanks to a grant from the Community Infrastructure Levy we replaced a venerable display freezer with two new units. I really must thank the small team of people who spent an afternoon heaving, pushing and straining to manoeuvre the old freezer out of the Shop, and then install and set up the new ones – not forgetting those who de-stocked the old and re-stocked the new freezers, but also scrubbed and cleaned and even managed to paint the wall in the gap left between removal and installation – and for Dave Harker who ensured they were upright and stable on installation.

Last year I reported that the rising cost of electricity was a concern, and a series of economy measures had been undertaken. I am pleased to report that these costs have been reduced over the last year – I think that the new freezers will have been a help, being more energy efficient, but I must thank Stephen Cook and the village hall committee for their sterling efforts in finding good electricity suppliers in keeping these costs down.

I can report that Sales figures for the last twelve months were down on the previous year, but despite that we made a decent profit – a gross figure of £6,700 and a net figure of £2,200. These are the best figures for some time and shows the shop to be in a healthy state.

None of that would have been possible without the volunteers, and as always, I would thank all of the people who give their time to work in the shop, especially those who take responsibility for checking stock, and making the orders, and those who give up more of their time collecting goods from the cash and carry and who look after the money and finances.

# St. Andrew's Bredfield

## Report for Parish Council AGM (25<sup>th</sup> April 2025)

This past year has been a positive one for St. Andrew's. We are committed to "Discovering God and sharing the love of Jesus". Our Sunday worship services are at the heart of this and the life of the church in general. We are encouraged by the fact that our congregation is increasing in number. We now have 20-25 regular attenders as compared with 10 or less following the pandemic. We are also attracting worshippers from outside the Parish as well as from within our village. Our church is there for everybody, whether or not they are a regular worshipper. It is open every day when folks can linger for quiet prayer or reflection or absorb the atmosphere and history of the building. Likewise, the churchyard is always beautifully kept with an eye on both functionality along with respect for the environment and nature. It is a perfect place where people can sit and relax, be with loved ones or just reflect and pray.

During 2024 we held a number of special services in order to mark major festivals - Mothering Sunday, Easter, Rogation, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas. All of these have been very well attended. More recently, this year we have held our Easter Experience – a series of installations both in and outside the church depicting the story of Easter along with suggestions for prayer and reflection.

A group from the congregation meets weekly in members' houses in Bredfield. With great practical support from the Suffolk diocesan organisation focussing on rural ministry called Lightwave (<http://Lightwave.community>), there is Bible study, prayer and reflection and an opportunity to plan church activities which are also attractive to the wider village community. This group has been at the forefront of encouraging our whole congregation in their faith. Amongst other things, during 2024 and the first part of 2025 the group has or helped to organise New Year's Day Walks, an Epiphany Party, daffodil posy making outside the Village Hall on the Saturday before Mothering Sunday, a Rogation Walk, Harvest festival complete with local farmer's tractors (with grateful thanks to Grahame, Nigel and Robin) and a bacon butty breakfast, Remembrance Sunday and a choir for the Carol Service. More recently we had a pancake breakfast on "Pancake Sunday" before Shrove Tuesday.

We run "Coffee and Cake" mornings twice a month in the church room. These are always special and well-attended – it is an opportunity to spend time during the day in a warm and hospitable environment with friends old and new. We provide transport for those who do not find it easy to get out and about. Our Christmas party was particularly lovely.

Our Foodbank is also highly successful – sometimes so much so that we need the Salvation Army van to take the goods down to Woodbridge for distribution. In addition to this the church congregation have collected and donated to the Royal British Legion, Tearfund, Christians Against Poverty and Open Doors (a charity which helps persecuted Christians throughout the world).

The church is a 14<sup>th</sup> century building and as such requires considerable upkeep. At the moment we are awaiting a structural survey as some potential problems were highlighted in last year's Quinquennial survey. This survey will cost in the region of £5000 and luckily we have received a Diocesan grant which will cover half of this. Hopefully we will be given the all clear, but potentially considerable works may be necessary.

Next winter we anticipate that the church will be a more comfortable and warmer place during services. We are installing a new heating system with individual heaters in each pew which can be switched on or off as required. We are also installing new LED lighting. The church room is

receiving similar treatment and moving from bottled gas to electricity thus saving a huge amount of CO2 emissions as well as removing the cost of the yearly boiler maintenance and safety inspection. Applications for grants to substantially support these changes are in the pipeline.

One of our goals in the next year is to become a designated “eco church”. Care for creation is at the forefront of this so everything we do from worship to the way we look after our buildings and churchyard and the refreshments we provide will be under scrutiny. The above heating and lighting changes will make our energy use more efficient (and cheaper) and is a start. We also have a churchyard plan which designates when and where to mow or trim and at what time of year depending on wildflowers etc. and is in line with Bredfield’s designation as a “Wildlife Friendly Village”. We would like to encourage village residents to become involved with the management and care of the churchyard.

For further information on how to get involved with any of the above please contact Steve Stammers (07704 856005) or the Church office (01394 383162)

## **BREDFIELD TOWNLANDS CHARITIES REPORT FOR APM 2025**

There is a small charity which exists for the benefit of the village – the Town Lands trust. This was originally set up in 1812 by the church, and used money raised by renting church owned lands for charitable purposes, and was administered by the church wardens. In the 1960s it was registered as a charity, for ‘general charitable purposes’, to benefit the village. Church wardens were replaced by Parish Councillors as trustees in the 1980s and in 2008 it was re-organised with five trustees drawn from people in the village, and was merged with a smaller local charity, Marjoram’s. This latter had a remit to aid those suffering hardship through ill health or poverty.

Today the purpose of the charity is to give grants to projects which are for the public benefit of the residents of the parish of Bredfield, as well as to individuals in need by reason of ill-health, disability or financial hardship. .

During the last twelve months one grant was paid to the village hall, to assist with the cost of installing a multi-use games area.

The charity is a small one – there are investments worth approximately £40,000 with CCLA Investment Management – that stands for Churches, Charities and Local Authorities – specifically in their Ethical Investment Fund, which generates dividends, and this money is then paid into our bank account to be made available for grants – we have a rule of thumb that the amount of dividends received govern the amount of annual grants made. The charity currently holds approximately £10,000.

## **BREDFIELD BOWLS CLUB 2024 ANNUAL REPORT TO BREDFIELD PC**

I took over the chair of Bredfield Bowls Club at the 2024 AGM and propose to run as chair for a maximum of 3 years.

For the 2024 season we entered four leagues.

Mondays, Samford League where we were unfortunately relegated to Division B but this was probably as well as we were trying to play out of our comfort zone.

Tuesdays, Woodbridge League where again we were relegated to Division 2 with similar comments made for the Samford League.

Wednesdays, Ipswich and District League where we finished mid table in Division A.

Thursdays, Fynn League was our first year with this league in which we were able to introduce some newer bowlers to competitive playing which proved popular and successful as we finished mid table.

We have a hard core of about 25 members who play regularly supported by a number of social members who will assist in the club at open games and tournaments.

Unfortunately we have had several members succumb to various illnesses lately which has somewhat depleted our playing numbers.

The 2025 season has just started and we hope to be a little more competitive this year.

The club would like to thank the PC for the cash grant from the CIL to assist toward a path from the VH car park to the club entrance which will make the access safer and more comfortable, particularly during inclement weather.

Of course more interested parties are always welcome to visit the club to find out what bowling is all about and I am sure you will find a positive vibe to the club which is renowned for the banter.

At the 27<sup>th</sup> June VH PopUp bar evening club members will attend and encourage anyone interested to come across to the green and have a taster session. All that is required are a pair of flat soled shoes.

Thank you

Tony Bishop  
Chair - Bredfield Bowls Club

## **BREDFIELD BOOK CLUB**

Bredfield Book Club was formed on 6th October 2023 and we held our first meeting on Friday 3rd November with 22 people attending. We discussed amongst ourselves how we would like the Club to run.

We meet at 7.30 in The Field Room on the first Friday of every month. We decided to have the bar open so members have the opportunity to buy a drink before the meeting, and also during a halfway break. There is a rota system amongst members who take it in turn to run the bar in pairs.

The Book Club has proved to be a great success and we now have 33 regular members who are a huge support. We take it in turns to choose Book of the Month and the member who has chosen the book tends to lead the discussion. We never take ourselves too seriously, but we've had some great meetings. As well as discussing the book, the meetings provide an opportunity for a social get together helped along with a drink or two.

We had an outing to The Riverside, Woodbridge in November, attended by 22 members, to see a film based on a book we had read and we enjoyed a meal in the restaurant beforehand. We also celebrated our 1st birthday with cake and fizz at our November meeting, and in December we had a special meeting in the main hall which was already decorated for Christmas. Members each brought along a plate of canapes and we enjoyed a glass of mulled cider after the discussion.

Next week 14 of us are going to The Riverside for a pre-theatre meal and then watch one of our members who's performing live on stage in a play.

The Book Club is going from strength to strength and is something I think we should all be proud of. It's the members who make it the success it is and new ones are always welcome.

Lynn Taylor