

BREDFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Friday 25th April 2025 in Village Hall

MINUTES

1	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies had been received from Cllr Richardson</p>
2	<p>Chairman's welcome, introduction and Parish Council report David Hepper</p> <p>Welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting. I should explain the purpose of the meeting – this is not a PC meeting – the Local Government Act states that a separate meeting of the electors of a parish must be held annually “for the purpose of discussing parish affairs” – further that it must be held between 1 March and 1 June and must be convened after 6pm.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>For the PC, the main event of the last twelve months was the local elections which were held in May last year. Councillor David Leyland decided not to stand again but all other Councillors were re-elected. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Leyland for all his hard work over the last few years, which ranged from being a major contributor to the Neighbourhood Plan to maintaining oversight of the budget and displaying his artistic skills in repainting the village sign. In his place we welcomed Nik Bestow, who has taken on the responsibility of budget oversight.</p> <p>We continue to hold our bi-monthly meetings, which have been supplemented by extra meetings, usually to discuss a planning application – since the last Annual Parish Meeting, we have been consulted and commented on nine applications.</p> <p>Other notable events included passing PC records relating to the period prior to 2016 being passed to Suffolk Archives; these included minutes and accounts plus correspondence files on rights of way and footpaths and the village sign plus copies of village appraisals and the parish plan plus the hedgerow survey. A new defibrillator was purchased, to replace the previous model and has been installed in the cabinet outside the village hall. This was achieved with the assistance of a generous grant from the London Hearts charity. New railings have been installed outside the Woods Meadow development, thanks to the persistence of Cllr Taylor.</p> <p>The poor weather and storm Babet and the subsequent flooding in the area was a significant event, and I must thank all the Councillors for their assistance, in particular Cllr Harker and Cllr Buckman, who both spent much of their own time in muddy flooded fields inspecting ditches and drains. As a</p>

	<p>result of this, we ordered works to be carried out at the entrance to the Meadow and Orchard, to remove an old, damaged drainage pipe and install new, and at the same time clear adjacent ditches. We also liaised with the developer of Woods Meadow to organise drain clearance work for the Shingles.</p> <p>We must agree a budget for the forthcoming year, the money coming from the Precept, a sum of money allocated by East Suffolk Council, taken from the money you pay in Council Tax. Last year we requested and received £5,573. These funds are largely allocated to paying for things like the Clerk's pay, insurance, website and asset maintenance, waste collection, audit fees and the like – the things we are required to have as a Parish Council.</p> <p>Perhaps the most important financial aspect that has affected us over the last few months is the money received from Community Infrastructure Levy payments. This is the money paid by developers to local authorities to improve local facilities where there are developments. The PC has received £39,000 over the past four years and is forecast to receive £77,000 from planned developments in the future; this will be paid in instalments over the next few years. We have produced an Infrastructure Investment Plan, to help us allocate the money, and over the last twelve months have been able to help the village hall to fund the refurbishment of the flat roof area; assist the shop with the purchase of new equipment and finally allocate money to fund the drainage and flood relief work at the Meadow and Orchard.</p> <p>As always, I must also give particular thanks to Linda Buckman, our Clerk, who works hard not just producing agenda and minutes, but fielding numerous emails and letters, dealing with a range of outside authorities on behalf of the council, supervising our finances and preparing us for the all-important annual audit.</p> <p>I will conclude by saying that our meetings are open to the public; that we have a website on which all our policies and procedures may be found, along with minutes and perhaps most importantly, our finances – you can see exactly how much money we have and how we are spending it.</p>
3	<p>The Village Hall Anne Henderson</p> <p>We had a wonderful celebration for the Coronation of King Charles III on Saturday 6th May. We all watched the event together on the big screen, then we toasted the king and enjoyed a sharing lunch together. Commemoration mugs were given out to children and a great memory was created for all who attended.</p> <p>We have had a number of successful pop-up bars – especially the recent very successful Chinese New Year. We are all looking forward to a Pizza Night at the end of May and hopefully some lovely summer evenings, when we can sit out in the sunshine. Lynn Taylor has organized a Village Book Club, which is extremely popular and makes great use of the bar. We had a successful Quiz Night and a Christmas Fair – thanks to the Entertainment Committee.</p> <p>The big project this year was the new flat roof, which was carried out very efficiently and hopefully will keep the rain out for many years to come. We</p>

also had the car park resurfaced and improvements were made to both the inside and outside lighting. Our big new project for 24/25 is the refurbishment of the tennis courts and the installation of a multi sports area in one of the courts.

Bredfield Village Hall has an excellent reputation as one of the best halls in the area and it is all thanks to the hard work of the committee.

4 **Bredfield Jubilee Meadow Report**
Stewart Belfield

The year from April 2023 to May 2024 began in a fairly quiet and routine manner. As we shall see, it didn't end that way! This report outlines events at the BJMO over the last year. More detail can be found in minutes of meetings and financial records. A financial statement for the past year is appended separately.

In the Spring of 2023, the meadow bloomed and several residents enjoyed our annual Wildflower Walk. Unfortunately, Laurie Forsyth (from the Suffolk Flora Preservation Society) was unable to lead and guide the walk, because of a serious problem with his voice. Nominally, Stewart led the walk this year, but it ended up with attendees sharing their knowledge; it was a synergetic and enjoyable learning experience for all.

Wildflower Walk – June 2023: an outing for sunhats!



For reasons not yet fully clear - but probably weather-related - the local apple harvest in 2023 was very poor. The crop from the BJMO orchard was meagre and several residents reported a lack of apples on their trees. As a result, our annual Apple Pressing Day had to be cancelled.

In the late autumn, a working party of local volunteers convened to trim sections of the hedgerow surrounding the meadow and also strim encroaching scrub. This was a successful venture and certainly made a marked impact by widening the entrance path. Thank you to all who took part. Also of note is the repair and re-erection of the BJMO entrance sign. Thank you to Paul Wiggins for his work on this. With regard to future work on hedge management, the committee has arranged for a visit from a representative of Suffolk Wildlife Trust, to seek advice on the best methods for our hedge maintenance.

During the early months of 2024, much of Britain experienced heavy rainfall and consequential flooding. Locally, this highlighted the poor quality of much of the drainage system in the area around the meadow and orchard. The

situation is complex and it has been detailed in a short report following an on-site inspection. The most pressing issue was the dire condition of the culvert pipe under the entrance to the meadow. This was broken and blocked, and was causing a back-up of water in the ditch.

A contractor was employed by the Parish Council to repair the culvert. After a month-and-a-half of part-time work, a new culvert and surrounding support was built. The long process of work meant that access to the meadow was blocked for an extended period and, amongst other things, work on new guards for the orchard trees had to be postponed. The contractor also cleared a section of the ditch surrounding the BJMO car park. Though not in the original plans, spoil from the culvert work and ditch clearance was spread over the carpark. As a result, the car park will now be out-of-action for the coming months, or longer.

Work being carried out at the entrance to the Meadow and Orchard.



The BJMO Committee is now planning for further ditch clearance bordering the entrance path. This will probably take place in October. Particular thanks to Vince for his helpful suggestions on the best way forward.

New tree guards erected around the orchard trees. Their main purpose is to protect the tree from an increasing level of damage caused by browsing deer.



In April, it was possible for Botanica to enter the meadow to fit the new tree guards. This was preceded by work - done by members of the Committee and volunteers - to remove matting and growth around the base of the trees. Max, especially, put in a number of commendable shifts! At the time of

	<p>writing, Botanica have almost completed their work. Many residents have praised how the orchard now looks. Large thanks to Angela for arranging all of this.</p> <p>Early in May 2024, an Open Meeting was advertised and convened. It took place at the shelter in the meadow. A range of issues was discussed, and members of public raised questions and made welcome suggestions regarding future management of the meadow. Extended notes on the meeting were written and submitted to the PC. A salient feature of future plans is the design, construction and erection of an interpretative noticeboard near the entrance to the meadow. The meeting was most worthwhile and further encouraged community engagement.</p> <p>The BJMO Committee has been working closely with the Parish Council to clarify rules and procedures for the management of the meadow and orchard, most particularly with regard to financial matters. In line with this, the BJMO Committee has agreed and submitted a 5-year financial plan.</p> <p>Lastly, this year marks the 10-year anniversary of Bredfield Jubilee Meadow and Orchard. The first orchard tree was planted in March 2014. We plan to mark this anniversary with an event at the meadow; most likely to be a community picnic.</p> <p>Max Brown has now joined the BJMO Committee. The other members of the committee are: Stewart Belfield (chair), Angela Derham (financial matters), Vince Buckman (representative from Bredfield Parish Council), and Paul Wigans.</p>
5	<p>Bredfield Community Shop David Hepper</p> <p>The Community Shop continues to serve the village and provide a hub for the community. The past twelve months have seen continued support and a supply of volunteer workers.</p> <p>Highlight of the year was undoubtedly the replacement of the old, worn out display freezer. This was enabled by a generous grant by the Parish Council from the Community Infrastructure Levy, and two new single-door freezers now have pride of place. The actual effort of moving the old freezer out of the shop resulted in much sweat and straining of muscles and only a small amount of bad language by the team – I must here single out Mark Kearton, Keith Derham and Peter Taylor for this. I should also mention the back-up team of volunteers who not only assisted with this, but also prepared the area, then cleaned and even painted. A CIL grant also allowed the Shop to replace the old and very worn awning. On behalf of all the volunteers, I would like to express my thanks to the PC for the grants. As the floor has also been scrubbed and polished, the shop has a cleaner, smarter appearance.</p> <p>We were worried through the year with the rising cost of electricity – our bills went up by 110%. We tackled this as best we could by switching off some appliances and the new freezers are much more energy efficient. We managed to meet the expenditure, and I must acknowledge the work of</p>

	<p>Stephen Cook and the village hall committee for their work in keeping on top of the costs.</p> <p>I can report that the Shop made a profit last year – with sales of £45,000, we generated a gross profit of £8,200, which after costs, showed a net profit of £1,500. This means that the shop remains in a healthy state.</p> <p>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.</p>
6	<p>St Andrews PCC Paul Cannard</p> <p>A new group had been set up to discuss new ideas/initiatives for the Community, one of them being a Choir for the Christmas Service which attracted a good response. There was also a New Year's Eve walk which was well attended.</p> <p>The Rolph's had very kindly donated daffodils from their land to enable posies to be made for Mothers Day.</p> <p>Rev Charles Trefusis has joined the Shop rota once a month and looking forward it has been suggested that a possible service in the Village Hall will take place.</p> <p>St Andrews has received a donation of land at the back of the Churchyard to enable the graveyard to be extended and planning permission has just been obtained.</p> <p>A Bug Hotel has been sited in the Churchyard.</p> <p>Last Autumn's Churchyard cleanup was very wet and it is hoped it will be drier this year.</p>
7	<p>Townlands Report David Hepper</p> <p>A small charity, originally established as a church charity in the early nineteenth century, exists in the parish, Bredfield Town Lands and the Parish Council has the responsibility for overseeing this. There are five trustees, drawn from people in the village.</p> <p>The original purpose was to support the poor and needy of the village and was administered by the Vicar and Churchwardens. Today the charity has a remit to allow grants to projects which will be for the benefit of the people of the village but retains the original purpose of giving aid to the needy.</p> <p>During the last twelve months one grant was approved, for assisting the Village Hall in their project to improve leisure facilities, with a multi-use games area.</p> <p>The charity successfully transferred accounts to a new bank during last year, an arrangement which we hope will prove to be more helpful than our previous account holder.</p> <p>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</p>

	amount of dividends received govern the amount of annual grants made. The charity currently holds approximately £10,000.
8	<p>The Bell Ringers Vince Buckman</p> <p>The Friday practise is going well with an average of 6-7 ringers each week and the bells are regularly rung on a Sunday morning. Ringers make a small donation each week towards the new bell ropes which should be happening in the near future and St Andrews will also help with these costs New ringers are always welcome so do come along and give it a try.</p>
9	<p>Discussions from members of the public:</p> <p>A member of the public asked about spending of the CIL monies – could it be spent on flood relief/protection? Cllr Hepper confirmed that the PC has an Infrastructure Plan and that SCC are carrying out a review on flooding in East Suffolk</p> <p>The Forge Planning Application is still outstanding and Cllr Richards confirmed that he is keeping an eye on the situation and is in contact with our District Cllr Hedgley.</p> <p>A member of the public asked about no HGV's on Ufford Road. Cllr Hepper confirmed he is having a meeting with Highways in the near future and would discuss this.</p> <p>Funding for the Quiet Lanes initiative had closed but the PC had been advised there maybe another tranche if monies became available.</p> <p>A member of the public thanked all volunteers in the village and Cllr Henderson encouraged other villagers to come forward – there are never enough volunteers!</p>
10	Date of Next Meeting – To be confirmed