

BUNWELL PARISH COUNCIL

THE PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE, THE OLD TURNPIKE, BUNWELL, NORWICH, NR16 1SN

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REPORT OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3RD MAY 2023.

Cllrs Present: Cllr R Smith (Chair), Cllr J Chapman, Cllr D Dickson, Cllr T Harvey, Cllr S Spooner and Cllr R Watson. The Parish Clerk and 7 members of the public attended.

Chairman, Cllr Bob Smith, welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting and began by saying how sad everyone was to hear of the sudden and untimely death of Barry Duffin. Barry had been a supportive and helpful County Councillor to Bunwell and was known and respected by many people in the villages around Bunwell. He will be sorely missed.

Cllr Smith also reported that the Parish Council had applied for a grant from SNC to go towards special Coronation events, and some of the grant had been used by the PC to donate a commemorative mug to all the children at the Primary School. Funds had also been donated to the organisers of the Coronation Celebration Service to be held in Bunwell Church on the 7th May.

Reports from the Chairman and Village Organisations were received and read out and are attached in full at the end of this report.

Chairman's Report – Cllr Smith gave a report in which he thanked all the councillors for the work that they continually do for the village to help maintain its amenities and emphasised the importance of having a full council to give a balanced view and help share the tasks required. He said that the repairs to the roundabout on the playground had now been completed which had necessitated the removal of the equipment and almost total rebuild and strengthening of many of the parts. The concrete base had also been lowered and resurfaced. He particularly thanked Phil Gledhill for his engineering skill and overseeing the project, and Jason Goddard for his part in the resurfacing of the surround. Thanks were also given to W Eastons for allowing the work to be carried out in their workshop and for the transport needed to check the height above ground. This historic piece of equipment is now safe and fit to be enjoyed for many years to come. Other concerns the Parish Council take very seriously are the safety of its residents and the attempts to try to reduce speeding. A new post had been installed at the Spooner Row end of the village so that our SAM2 speed awareness machine can be moved to 4 different locations to remind motorists of the speed limit. It is also hoped to arrange for a Speedwatch Group to monitor vehicle speed in the village. Housing development in Bunwell will always be a priority and the Parish Council and the Bunwell Housing Development Group keep a close eye on all plans for housing in the village to ensure that any development is in keeping with the rest of the properties in the village. Our relationship with other local Parish Councils is now at the best it has been for a long time and co-operation with the wider area is important to us. He also reminded residents that if they are interested in the village and how it develops then becoming a councillor can enable them to achieve this.

A report from the REV J L Fellowes Memorial Fund stated that no request for help had been received during the last year and the balance at the year-end was £343.53.

The Chairman of the Village Hall reported that the last year had been reasonably smooth with many organisations now using the Hall and private functions helping the finances. He said that they are in the process of getting County Broadband installed and the fencing outside the Hall will be replaced this year.

St Michael's and All Saints' Parish Church. Unfortunately, Rev John Madinda was unwell and was not able to attend but his report is attached to these minutes.

Report from the Chairman of the Bunwell Housing & Development Group. Mr Phil Gledhill explained that this group, which consists of 3 councillors and 6 residents, was formed to carry out on-site inspections on all new house builds and significant extensions or changes to existing properties before reporting their recommendations to the Parish Council and South Norfolk Council. The SNC are currently progressing their Village Clusters Plan which will affect Bunwell. The two Allocated Sites for future development are VCBUN1, opposite Greenways for 15 dwellings, and VCBUN2, opposite Lilac Farm for 20 dwellings. There may still be changes prior to the completion of SNC's final report. This report will be referred to SNC Full Council during Summer 2023 and, if approved, referred for independent examination by The Secretary of State, before adoption in Spring 2024. Mr Gledhill said that the Housing Group continues to support the interests of the village community, equally understanding the vitally important businesses within Bunwell, not least the farmers.

The Bunwell Poor Allotments (Fuel Charity) report was given by the Chairman, William Easton. He explained that the Trust was set up in the early 19th century originally to distribute fuel to the poor of the parish and a bag of coal was given to those in need at Christmas time. Over the years this has changed and money available at the end of each year is divided amongst residents of Bunwell who have lived there for 3 years, who are over 70 years of age and those that have become widowed. The Trust report in the Parish Magazine each year asking for new applicants who would benefit from such a gift and consideration is also given to making other payments to anyone suffering extreme hardship as a one-off or regular payment. The Balance Sheet for 2021 showed that 22 charity gifts had been given and there is a bank balance of £942.98.

David Neale, of the Bunwell Heritage Group, reported that 18 years ago it was suggested that Bunwell's past should be recorded. The Group was set up to undertake the task and this is now completed with the history of Bunwell recorded in three hardback volumes. He thanked all those that had contributed to and bought copies of the Group's work.

Norfolk Constabulary Report. PC Steve Phillips attended the meeting and explained that a new Beat Manager was about to be recruited to the Bunwell area who would make contact with us shortly. He said that there are 3 Beat Managers to cover 53 parishes, so it was not always possible to attend meetings as often as they would like. He reported that there had been 92 crimes reported in Bunwell in the last year which is counted as a reasonably low total. He answered residents' questions concerning vandalism and what could be done to help reduce this. He said that anyone observing any crime should ring 999 and report it immediately. Anyone with evidence of a crime after the event should ring 101 to report it. The more reports that are received, the more the Police will be able to analyse the findings and take any action necessary. He was also asked about speeding in Bunwell and reported that the Police had used a temporary speed reporting box at two sites in the village over the last few weeks. The findings showed that at a site near the Spooner Row end of the village over a period of 8 days, the total number of vehicles passing was 11,630 with an average speed of 30.3mph and 2,215 vehicles exceeded 35mph. At a site near Greenways over 10 days the total number of vehicles was 16,104 with an average speed of 27mph and 1,200 vehicles exceeded 35mph.

The Chairman asked residents to let the Parish Council have their ideas for using the Community Infrastructure Levy income from building developments to enhance the facilities in the village and for their thoughts on any improvements the Parish Council could make to village life.

He requested councillors present to consider the appointment of Andrew Love as PC representative on the Allotment Charity Group, and this was agreed unanimously.

He thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and said that the Parish Council will continue to do their best to ensure Bunwell residents' interests are looked after to the best of the Council's ability in the future.

Bunwell Parish Council AGM 2023

Chairman's Report

First of all, I would like to thank all the councillors for the work that they continually do for the village to help maintain the infrastructure of the village. It is very important that we have a full council as that will always make it better for everybody in the village.

Two years ago, we were hit by the Covid pandemic that is still lurking around and letting us know that it is still here, although maybe in a different form that might still mutate into something else.

As you are aware, the merry-go-round on the play park had to be dismantled, and almost totally rebuilt and strengthened with many new parts which had to be meticulously manufactured. Also a lot of hard ground work that had to be done, including a new lowered concrete base and a new safety surface to be laid on the perimeter. The village has to thank two of the main people involved, Phil Gledhill and Jason Goddard, for the amount of constant hard work and time they put into this project. We also have to be grateful to W Easton for the many tractor lifts he had to do just to make sure the roundabout was at the right height from the ground. I think everybody from all the local villages that have come to see what has been done, are very pleased it is back, as this roundabout is one of a kind that is slowly disappearing.

We as the Parish Council still have projects and concerns that we want to progress, ie speeding in the village. I am sure that it is the concern of everyone in the village that road safety must be maintained, so we are putting up another speed sign on the approach from Spooner Row. We need people who are interested in maintaining the safety of everybody against speeding vehicles, so if you are one of those people then let us know you wish to volunteer and create a speed watch team, The more people, the less you have to do. If you are worried about what is involved, then be assured you will receive trained first.

Housing development in Bunwell will always be a concern which we are very vigilant about. The Parish Council and the Bunwell Housing Development Group keep a close eye on all plans for housing in the village and make sure that any development is in keeping with the rest of the properties in the village.

Our relationship with other local Parish Councils is now at the best it has been for a long time and co-operation with the wider area is important to us.

If you are interested in the village and how it develops and want to have your say, then become a councillor - the stronger we are the more we can achieve.

Robert Smith, Chairman, Bunwell Parish Council

The Rev J L Fellowes Memorial Fund 2023

This fund was set up to assist school leavers with help for books, tools etc. They place an article in the village magazine each year asking for young people to apply but last year they didn't receive any requests for assistance. The total balance in hand is £343.53. An article will be placed in the Village Newsletter later in the year offering help to any school-leavers in need of funds.

Ray Kemp, Treasurer

Bunwell Village Hall 2023

Bunwell Village Hall has seen a steady return to something like 'normal' over the past year. Bookings are steady with our regular users, and we have had some new bookings for wedding receptions, christenings and birthday parties, which all help nicely.

We are in the process of getting County Broadband installed, but this is proving to be more difficult than it seemed at first! Hopefully it will be completed by the summer.

The fence at the front of the carpark will be replaced this year. We are currently investigating a funding route (not PC money) with the help of Bob Smith and the PC.

Otherwise, a fairly calm year for the Village Hall with no major issues to report!

Richard Hoolahan – Chairman

Cynthia Hewett – Secretary

ST MICHAELS AND ALL ANGELS CHURCH, BUNWELL, 2023

INTRODUCTION: I begin by saying thank you to all of you for all your support and prayers through this last year. I also thank you for your great commitment to the task of leading forward St Michaels Church Bunwell in many challenging times.

Your commitment and support has been a great encouragement to me.

“I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow” **(1 Corinthians 3:6,7)**.

MINISTRY: This last year has had its ups and downs. I unfortunately could not attend last years AGM because I was stuck abroad, and unfortunately that caused great stress to the Ministry Team. Since last year's AGM, we have seen our church gradually get back to normal following the lifting of COVID restrictions. Thankfully we were able to partially open the church by Christmas and fully open and resume our regular worship and resumed our very well attended Christingle service. We all have wonderful memories of celebrating Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee. That was a record breaking historical even we could have in our church. Following that we had the sad news of Her Majesty's departure, and again our church could be used as a place where we joined the rest of the country in grief but also comfort and expressing our appreciation for her many years of service. We were blessed on each occasion to be graced by a band, the silver band and the brass band.

CHALLENGES AHEAD: By mid-2022, we still did not know what the future held regarding our Benefice, following the diocesan plan to reorganize the Deanery. We are very grateful to Wacton PCC who took the step to call for a meeting with the Archdeacon, who came to meet the whole benefice at All Saints Church Wacton on 29th June. The meeting was followed by another meeting at the village hall in Long Stratton where the benefice met with the Bishop of Thetford, the Archdeacon and the Rural Dean as part of the continued consultation and a proposal was laid out regarding the possible future. This proposal was to be discussed by each PCC and recommendations returned to the Archdeacon's office by the 10th December.

In March we received the results and further recommendations, which includes the splitting up of the Long Stratton and Pilgrim Benefice into two separate benefices and Tharston to be part of the Benefice. Please let us continue to pray for the outcome since so far all PCC's apart from Aslacton have chosen to split and Wacton have chosen to remain in the Pilgrim end of the Team. One thing however which has been confirmed by the Archdeacon's office is that there will be a full-time replacement at Long Stratton to replace Revd Heather Wilcox.

GIVING AND PARISH SHARE: This still remains a challenge, however this year the Diocesan Board of Finance have given a grant to the benefice to help subsidize the requested contribution.

FUNDRAISING: This is also a great challenge with a small congregation. Thank you for all that has taken place and support given to events such as at the Platinum Jubilee and the continued task of raising funds towards the restoration of church bells and other activities.

The sewing group saw another success in packing the Christmas child boxes to Romania.

CHURCH BUILDING AND CHURCHYARD: St Michaels Church remains a special space in the village where many events past and present have left permanent memories. Some of the special highlights have been the celebrations of key moments such as weddings and school assemblies in Church and Thanksgiving services where people could come to receive comfort and hope at times of distress such as funerals. I do hope and pray that we can be able to maintain our church for future generations to have a privilege of worshipping God here. I am very grateful for all the support in keeping the church open. We continue to pray for the work of maintaining the building repairs, and hopefully keeping it open for many years to come.

The school has been able to come into church on special occasions.

BAPTISMS WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS; These records can be found in our register books.

ADMINISTRATOR: In my last report I reported that the benefice had employed a Team Administrator. Sadly, the administrator had to step down and now the Team operates without an administrator.

FUTURE AND VISION: May I ask us to look to the future in hope and trust in God. My prayers are that God brings more people and resources into the church. The diocesan vision this year is to be transformed by Christ Pastorally. I pray that we can be able to balance between the care for the fabric and the pastoral care.

CONCLUSION: Finally I would like to thank everyone for your invaluable support in this last year and hope that we can do the best we can in the coming year.

The Revd John Madinda [April 2023]

Bunwell Housing Development Group 2023 AGM

The group currently has 9 members comprising 3 councillors and 6 residents.

All new house builds are referred to the group for a view, as are any significant extensions or changes to existing properties. The group carry out on-site inspections and a considered report with recommendations is issued to the parish council for their consideration and recommendations to South Norfolk Council (SNC).

The SNC are currently progressing a major project affecting us all, their Village Clusters Plan. Following the public consultation last year the results were analysed and the conclusions led to some changes but none in Bunwell from the original plan. The Allocated Sites remain as VCBUN 1 opposite Greenways for 15 dwellings and VCBUN2, the site opposite Lilac Farm, for 20 dwellings. However, SNC cannot guarantee that changes will not be made prior to completion of their final report.

There are some concerns about the ability of the mains sewage system to cope with the additional demand and a survey with users has just finished. There is also concern, which was expressed in the consultations about the mix of housing for the new sites and that more smaller 3 bedroom houses should be included. The parish council also would like to see more windfall sites spread throughout the village, these being 1 or 2 houses on small sites, allowed for over the Plan period of 2018 – 2038. This would provide opportunities for self-build and more bespoke properties. We also continue to support affordable housing.

In January of this year the plan reached the Regulation 19 stage where the publication of the Cluster Villages Plan provided a 3 month consultation opportunity for the public and other stakeholders, for example parish councils, to make representations on whether the Plan is legally compliant and

“Sound” in accordance with the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The final Plan will be referred to SNC Full Council (Cabinet) during Summer 2023 and if approved, referred for independent examination by The Secretary of State, all being well Adopted Spring 2024.

The Housing Group continues to support the interests of the village community, equally understanding the vitally important businesses within, not least of all the farmers.

Phil Gledhill (BHDG)

Bunwell Poor Allotments Charity Annual Report 2023

The trust was set up in the early 19th century, originally to distribute fuel to the poor of the parish, from the proceeds of rented land. A bag of coal was given to those in need at Christmas time.

Over the years this has changed, the land having been sold and the money invested, and money available at the end of each year has been divided amongst those people who have been residents of Bunwell for 3 years, who are 70 years of age, and also those that have become widowed. Being governed by the Charity Commission, our constitution rules also allow us to make other payments to anyone suffering extreme hardship as a one off or regular payment.

If you think that you may be eligible or know someone else who might be, please let a member of the committee know. That’s Myself, Andrew Love, Nigel Crouch, Jackie Smith, Jean Stimpson, Rev. J. Madinda.

Last Christmas we distributed 22 gifts of £100 each. We also decided to drop the word ‘poor’ from the charity name as we felt that it was stopping some people from applying for the gift.

We will put a note in the Parish Magazine later in the year asking for new applicants. Existing recipients do not need to reapply.

Finally, Andrew Love is due for re-election to the committee as a Parish Council representative. I would like to ask that they duly re-elect him.

BUNWELL ALLOTMENTS BALANCE SHEET For 2021

INCOME

EXPENDITURE

Bank balance 01/01/21

£812.38

Charity Gifts 19 @ £100.00

£2000.00

COIF Dividends

£2,030.60

Bank balance 31/12/21

£942.98

Overdrawn Gift

£100.00

£ 2,942.98

£2,942.98

William Easton (Chairman)

Bunwell Heritage Group Report May 2023

18 years ago in 2005, in a village survey someone suggested that as well as planning for the future of the village, the past should be recorded.

The Bunwell Heritage Group was set up to undertake that task and as Secretary of that Group, I am pleased to report that the task has been completed. The history has been recorded in three hardback volumes.

Many of the villagers have contributed their memories and records and they have been acknowledged in the work. However, a few people need special mention:

Peter Day whose local knowledge and collection of postcards and Bunwell ephemera provided copy and illustration for the early twentieth century.

John Herne whose scholarly work on Bunwell's farms, pubs and lawbreakers provides a treasure trove for those researching their family history.

Jean Stimpson for her painstaking research into the Bunwell men that fought in the two world wars, and

Margaret Thorburn whose recollections of a childhood within a farming family provided an important light-hearted element to our work.

On behalf of the Group, I should like to thank all those who contributed to and bought copies of our work.

David Neale, Secretary

Signed

Date