BRADFIELD ST CLARE PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2024

This meeting was held on 14 May 2024 in the Village Hall, Bradfield St Clare.

Present: Cllrs John Kirk, Paul Foster, Malcolm Hignett, Sue Partridge, Parish Clerk Nicola Sturgeon, 2 members of the public and the Area Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator Andy Tucker.

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr Alex Duchesne, Borough Cllr Sara Mildmay-White and County Cllr Karen Soons .
2. To consider and approve the Annual Parish Meeting report of 9th May 2023: the draft Minutes were approved.
3. County Cllr and Borough Cllr reports:

County Cllr Karen Soons – please see the full annual report on the parish website at bradfieldstclare.onesuffolk.net

Borough Cllr Sara Mildmay-White

Council Tax 2024-25

Council Tax Band D	
West Suffolk Council	£197.82
Police and Crime Commissioner	£275.58
Suffolk County Council	£1571.04

My Committees appointments on West Suffolk Council
Development Control Committee, West Suffolk Standards Committee, substitute on Overview and Scrutiny.
Outside Appointments: James Stiff's Almshouses Charity Trustee

Garden Waste Collection 2024-25
Cost of Brown Bin £50 pa
Link for signing up on line: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/gardenwaste

Locality Budget Spend May 2022-23
Total Budget £2800
Rougham Playing Field Management Committee: conversion of old store room to meeting room. **£1,100**
Bradfield St Clare Village Hall: Disabled Access enhancements. **£1,100**
Rougham Ravers WI: Floral Enhancements in Rougham. **£300**
Remaining budget £300 carried forward to 2024-25

Highlights from West Suffolk 2023-24
In the last 12 months we have been getting used to the new Labour led alliance who now form the administration in West Suffolk together with the independents. They are all new to the posts and together with the staff are taking time to adjust to the new order. One of their first decisions was to cancel the Western Way project which was to provide a new leisure centre, swimming pool, day care nursery and house West Suffolk records office. The old leisure centre will now receive essential maintenance to ensure it remains open over the next 10 years as a cost of £725,000 per year.

Strategic priorities. The administration's strategic priorities: Sustainable growth. Environmental resilience. Thriving communities. Affordable, available decent homes.

The local council tax reduction scheme has been extended for another year. This is a means tested scheme to support residents who maybe experiencing financial hardship. It is a 100% reduction on the council tax.

The local plan for 2024 to 2040 is now ready to be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. This will take place later in the year and depending on any modifications the inspector requires it is anticipated the plan will be adopted late Spring 2025.

Grounds maintenance service. An extra investment of £200,000 to improve operational efficiencies.

Solar for Business. The new administration will continue support for this initiative which is expected to achieve ongoing income of around £760,000 per annum and reduce costs for businesses. So far 78 business premises have signed up for the scheme.

Local Issues. These have mostly been around recurrent road closures affecting Stanningfield and Bradfield Combust, flooding and potholes. All of these are dealt with by Suffolk County Council and I together with the Parish Council continue to report these.

Finally, a thank you to all the parish councillors and volunteers who work so hard to keep your villages vibrant and attractive.

Sara Mildmay-White

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4. Reports from Safer Neighbourhood Watch Area Co-Ordinator and village organisations and clubs:

2023 Church report

2023 has once been a year of change for Bradfield St Clare. Both Churchwardens resigned at the church's Annual Parochial Church Meeting in April, leaving both posts vacant. There

were also changes in PCC membership, and by the end of 2023 there were only 3 elected members and the co-opted treasurer. However, this has not deterred the very small group of worshippers who support Bradfield St Clare. Services have been well maintained and supported, and fundraising events have taken place, namely the Jazz Picnic in the garden of Fenella and Donald Fraser during the summer, and the quiz in the village hall in the autumn. Our thanks to all who helped to make these successful events.

Mrs Isobel Payne, Mrs Lorraine Morley, Mr Mike Morley and Mrs Margaret Lovick have made sure that there are refreshments at the morning services, along with intercessors and readers, and Mrs Val Nunn has played the organ for us. There is always a warm welcome awaiting worshippers to all services.

The fabric of the Church building is cared for by Mr Mike Morley, and he has been dogged in pursuing local builders to carry out repairs. The inside of the Church has been beautifully cleaned and maintained by our cleaners, Betty and Angie Tucker, and the flower arrangers have provided very nice arrangements throughout the year. Members of the Lovick family have continued to keep the grass mowed throughout the spring and summer, and there was a churchyard working party that helped with weeding and general tidying up.

The 'knit and natter' group has been meeting monthly in the Village Hall, which has been a chance for some across the benefice to meet, knit, crochet, sew – and yes, natter! And of course eat cake. All are welcome to join the group whether they are churchgoers or not.

There were no weddings, funerals or baptisms in the Church during 2023, and one funeral conducted at the Crematorium.

The Suffolk Historic Churches Bicycle ride coincided with one of the hottest days of the summer, however a magnificent sum was raised by the valiant crew, and we thank them for their hard work!

Once again the Church hosted the crib service on Christmas Eve, and an amazing number of people turned up to enjoy it. There were around 100 people in Church, and the Rector has to go home to fetch some more mulled wine for after the service! Rev Helen, our assistant curate conducted an extra special service, as this was her last Christmas in the benefice.

The Revd Canon Sharon Potter

2023 Neighbourhood Watch Report for Bradfield St Clare

Introduction: The Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association (SNWA) Bury St Edmunds Area B covers the 6 parishes of Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield, Bradfield St Clare, Bradfield St George, Rushbrooke with Rougham, Little and Great Whelnetham, and Nowton.

The statistics below have been extracted from the Suffolk Constabulary's website and the 14 defined crime categories is a National system used by 43 police forces across England & Wales. It is recognised that the National reporting format has its limitations.

2023 Statistics. During 2023 the parish reported/recorded just 6 crimes: 4 x burglary (cf. 0 in 2022) and 2 x violence/sexual (cf. 1 in 2022). This crime rate is well below the average of 25 for our 6 Area B parishes. The 2023 monthly average for the whole of Area B was 14 (same as 2022) while the monthly average for the whole of Bury St Edmunds Police Reporting Area was 450 (cf. 493 in 2022).

Points of Note:

- Violence and Sexual (incl. Domestic Abuse) accounted for 49% (cf.63% in 2022) of our Area B recorded crimes. Snapshot – for the period Jul to Sep 2023, 23% of all recorded Violence & Sexual incidnets in the Bury St Edmunds Safer Neighbourhood Area were Domestic Abuse.
  Other Area B crimes accounted for: anti-social behaviour – 16%; criminal damage and arson – 10%; other theft – 9%; burglary – 8%; public order – 4%; drugs, robbery, shop theft, vehicle, and other crime all 1% or below.

- Cybercrime: SCAM phone calls, e-mails, texts etc are not included in the stats as Action Fraud is responsible. Nationally, as of 31st October 2023, thanks to the public forwarding SCAM email to report@phishing.gov.uk more than 151,000 malicious SCAMs have been removed over 277,900 URLs thereby helping to protect others.

- For the year ending June 2023, the Office for National Statistics ranks Suffolk as having the 6th lowest crime rate (cf. 7th in 2022) out of 43 Police Forces (excl. British Transport) across England & Wales, with Suffolk being lowest (same in 2022) in the East of England 6 counties.

Area B Network: Our network continues to be extremely healthy and pro-active. Alerts and monthly stats etc are posted on 4 parish/village community facebook pages (Bradfield Combust & Stanningfield Residents, Rougham Village Community, Great Whelethamm Residents and Nowton Village) and on Nextdoor.co.uk reaching residents in all 6 parishes. As of 1st January 2024, 4600 residents (with some duplication) in our 6 parish Area B are now connected electronically (community social media and/or email) to our NHW network. The monthly stats and other useful information are also uploaded onto the dedicated Area B page on the SNWA's website (suffolknwa.co.uk/bseb.html).

Team Effort: Finally, thank you to our 9 registered NHW Scheme Coordinators, parish councils and clerks, residents, our CPO (PC Emma Macduff), CPT, SNWA, the various agencies and other key individuals for making our Area B NHW Network meaningful and hugely successful!

Andy Tucker

SNWA BSE Area B Network Coord

Village Hall Report – 2023

The year 2023 was a good year for the Bradfield St Clare Village Hall with the exception of losing its status as a Polling Station. Events such as Whist, Kit Café, occasional Tai Chi sessions (when

the weather restricts outside activity) and the Reverent Sharon's knitting group continue successfully and of course not forgetting the Quiz Nights. It is intended to hold them more regularly in favour of selected charities. The Café, as always, is well attended. The Whist Drives are still well attended with people from other villages such as Felsham, Cockfield, St George and also Bury as well as from our own village.

A village litter pick was held on Saturday 23rd March starting from and ending at the Village Hall. This was successful with less rubbish sacks being filled compared to last year. Hopefully a positive sign. All sacks, and litter pick equipment was, as always, provided by the Council who also organised their collection and disposal.

As a result of the Village Hall losing its status as a Polling Station due to it not being Wheel Chair accessible, as according to West Suffolk, the entrance door and the door leading from the entrance hall have now been replaced in order to meet the necessary requirements. The Village Hall Committee has no obtained quotes for the building work to make the toilets a unisex disabled toilet and to enlarge the kitchen area and change the store room facility. Application for a Grant towards the replacement of the doors was successful thanks to Sarah Mildmay-White, providing £1100 and £5660 from Rural England Prosperity Funding. It is hoped to pursue applications for further Grants towards this forthcoming work.

The committee thanks all Parishioners for their continued support.

John Kirk - Chairman

5. Date of the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting: to be agreed later in the year.