BRADFIELD ST CLARE PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2023

This meeting was held on 9 May 2023 in the Village Hall, Bradfield St Clare.

Present: Cllrs John Kirk, Sue Partridge, Malcolm Hignett and Clerk Nicola Sturgeon together with Borough Cllr Sara Mildmay-White, County Cllr Karen Soons and two members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence: Cllrs Alex Duchesne and Paul Foster both sent their apologies.
2. To consider and approve the Annual Parish Meeting report of 24th May 2022: 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
   Position on West Suffolk Council
   This year as part of succession planning I stood down as Deputy Leader of West Suffolk Council. I continued with my Cabinet post as Portfolio Holder for Housing and as a substitute on Development Control and Licensing. Chairman Barley Homes

   Council tax 2023-24

Council Tax Band D	£192.06
Police and Crime Commissioner	£262.62
Suffolk County Council	£1,496.43

   Garden Waste Collection 2023-24

Cost of Brown Bin	£47.00

   Link for signing up on line: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/gardenwaste

   Locality Budget Spend May 2022-April 2023
   Jubilee Celebrations at Rougham, Bradfield St George, Bradfield St Clare and Bradfield Combust with Stanningfield total of £1,850.00
   Rougham Primary School swimming pool refurbishment £1,100.00
   Bradfield St Clare Community KIT Café £300
   Total: £3,250.00

   Highlights from West Suffolk 2022-23
   West Suffolk Annual Report will be available at the end of May and will be circulated to Parish Councils.
   Community Support. The vital work of Community Groups has always been recognized and supported by West Suffolk Council and never more so than during the pandemic. This

Winter £160,000 of new funding was awarded to 60 community groups and organisations helping West Suffolk residents during the winter.
£70,343.00 was also used from our Shared Prosperity Fund to support residents with the cost of living challenges during the winter.
Discretionary Housing Payment has also been available to help residents who are struggling with their rent, as well as the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme for people who are in financial hardship. www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/cost-of-living/finance-and-debt.cfm
West Suffolk Community Chest funding was increased this year to over £500,000 with the emphasis on helping residents with the cost of living challenges to their health and wellbeing.
Five more play areas in West Suffolk are being refurbished in a programme worth £220,000.
West Suffolk was one of 4 councils and the first to go live with payments through the Energy Support Scheme Alternative Funding. This was getting funding out to residents who don't directly pay their energy supplier and so haven't received the payment directly from their energy supplier.
£300,000 allocated to ensure swimming pools could stay open in West Suffolk despite soaring energy costs.
Together with partners West Suffolk Council are collectively investing £500,000 to help reduce council tax by 100% for a year for means tested low-income families. Around 11% of households under this initiative and others will pay no or reduced council tax.
Suffolk's District and Borough Councils have secured £2.2 million of Government funding to improve standard of private rented homes in the county, tackling poor housing conditions and improving tenants' wellbeing.
Continuing the investment of £9 million in initiatives to tackle the climate crisis and reach net zero by 2023.
Planned balanced budget helping to deliver a £40 million replacement for Bury St Edmunds leisure centre as part of the first phase of the Western Way development.
Nearly £28 million investment of capital expenditure identified to spend over the next 2 years on economic growth and prosperity including the Incubation Units on Suffolk Business Park.
£440,000 for car park improvements including the provision of electric charging points across West Suffolk.
Work completed on the £8.4 million scheme to redevelop the Post Office building in Bury St Edmunds, retaining the historic Victorian façade and widening the link between marketplace and the Arc. This work provided 2 retail units together with 12 apartments which have now been sold.
Development of the new car park on the north side of Bury St Edmunds railway station and new entrance to the station on he northside, 75 additional cycle parking places.
Continued investment in solar energy, working with businesses to put solar power on their properties as well as the council's own, which will see an additional £1.75 million in solar income for the council as well as generating electricity to supply the council's buildings.
Barley Homes the Council's wholly owned housing company has delivered developments in Haverhill whilst providing an income to the Council.
Homelessness work and support for refugees and asylum seekers has been at the forefront of work this year. Rough Sleeper numbers have been reduced from a high of 36 in 2018 to 9 in 2022. These numbers fluctuate and a number of these clients have been housed on several occasions but for a variety of reasons are unable to sustain a tenancy despite support and we do continue to work with them.

We continue to meet the governments housing targets with 1003 dwellings completed across West Suffolk in 2022/23. This has outperformed our government target of 806 and includes meeting our council target of 30% affordable homes.
A major planning application by West Suffolk Hospital for a new health campus/hospital was approved by development control committee and I look forward to that development moving forward.
Finally, many hours have been spent working on the new West Suffolk Local Plan. This is a government requirement and all councils should have one in place by 2024. The local plan provides a vision for the growth and development of an area together with policies which set out the way that the council aims to meet the housing, employment, social and community needs of their area, at the same time as protecting and enhancing the natural, and historic environment. Further consultation on the local plan will come forward in 2023.
Thank you all for your continued support, it is a great pleasure and honour to represent our lovely villages.
Finally, a thank you to all parish councillors and volunteers who work so hard to keep your village vibrant and attractive.

Sara Mildmay-White

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

2022 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.

2022 Statistics. During 2022 the parish reported/recorded just 2 crimes: 1 x violence/sexual and 1 x criminal damage/arson. This crime rate is well below the average of 28 for our 6 Area B parishes. The 2022 monthly average for the whole of Area B was 14 (cf. 10 in 2021) while the monthly average for the whole of Bury St Edmunds Police Reporting Area was 493 (cf. 467 in 2021).

Points of Note:

- Violence and Sexual (incl. Domestic Abuse): Our Area B saw an **89% increase** on 2021 & the category accounted for **63%** of our Area B recorded crimes in 2022.
- Anti-Social Behaviour: Our Area B saw 15 in 2022 (cf. 16 in 2021) & accounted for **9%** of Area B crimes.
- Criminal Damage & Arson: With 13 reported incidents, Area B saw a **31% decrease** compared to 2021.

- Burglary: 4 incidents in 2022 (same as 2021) and accounted for **2%** of our Area B recorded crimes.
- Vehicle: 5 in 2022 (cf. 4 in 2021) accounting for **3%** of crimes.
- Cybercrime: Thanks to residents forwarding scam emails to report@phishing.gov.uk as of December 31st 2022 the number of reports received stand at more than **16,500,000** with the removal of more than **110,000** scams across **200,000** URLs!
- For the year ending June 2022, the Office for National Statistics ranks Suffolk as having the 7th (cf. 10th in 2021) lowest crime rate out of 43 Police Forces (excl. British Transport) across England & Wales, with Suffolk being lowest 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 2023, **3484** 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 CEO (Sgt. Lee Andrews-Pearce), SNT, 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 – 2022

The year 2022 was a good year for the Bradfield St Clare Village Hall with everything now apparently back to normal with events such as Whist, Kit Café, occasional Tai Chi sessions (when the weather restricts outside activity) and the Reverend Sharon's knitting group. The Café is always well attended and a special coronation Café was held a week early on Saturday 29th April as no other event was planned for the village on the coronation weekend. Again, this was 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 1st April starting from and ending at the Village Hall. This was successful with coffee and bacon sarnies being provided at the end of the pick with around twelve rubbish sacks being filled. All sacks and litter pick equipment was, as always, provided by the Council who also organised their collection and disposal.

The path leading to the Village Hall has now been levelled, the boundary fence repaired and pathway lighting installed.

The Village Hall has this year lost its status as a Polling Station it not being Wheel Chair accessible according to West Suffolk Council. As such, the Village Hall Committee is in the process of obtaining quotes to apply for a grant to make alterations to the hall to make it disabled friendly.

This will include not only improving access to the Hall but changing the toilet facilities to a unisex disabled toilet. The committee also has plans to enlarge the kitchen area and change the store room facility.

The committee thanks all Parishioners for their continued support.

John Kirk - Chairman

KIT Café

The Kit Café continues to be popular and successful and definitely living up to its name of 'keep in touch'. It is lovely to see the very young and older people mingling and enjoying one another's company. We are also lucky to have some excellent bakers who contribute to the tasty treats on offer.

On special occasions we have themed openings. At Easter we decorated with eggs and Easter Bunnies and Margaret Fayers produced a 'just for fun' quiz with an Easter theme. Our last opening was delayed by a couple of weeks so that we could celebrate the upcoming Coronation of Charles III. Pat Hipwell got into the spirit of things by wearing her beautiful home-made crown and baking the Coronation Quiche which was delicious!

We are extremely grateful to Sara Mildmay-White for securing us a grant of £300 this year. Sara has always been very supportive of us and it is wonderful that she manages to pop in at most of our openings. So a big thank you to her.

We were hoping for a visit from our local police officer at one of our openings but, despite emailing him as promised at the Parish Council meetings a year ago, and giving him all the dates, he has never turned up. He has not replied to my email either. This is disappointing as he spoke very well at the Parish Council meeting and agreed it would be helpful and reassuring for villagers to be able to chat with him in an informal way and express any concerns they may have.

All in all I can report that the future is looking very bright for the KIT Café. We are open to any new ideas, especially on how we might encourage some of our newer residents to come along. Now that the KIT Café has become part of the Village Hall Committee we have more support and ideas coming from Committee members. This has helped us to grow in popularity and strength.

5. Date of the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting: to be agreed later in the year.