

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL BAWDESWELL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 5TH MAY 2022 STARTING AT 7.00PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: J. Mallen (Chair), P. Lilwall, A. Toomey, K. Ewing, A Hartley-Walder, D. Coles and R. Reed

Mrs. J Boxall (Clerk)

Members of the public – 4

Cllr John Mallen opened the meeting at 7.00pm and gave the following report on behalf of the Parish Council.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2021 / 22

Chairman John Mallen reported the following matters to the Council:

As it was a surprise to be elected as Chair, following the resignation of Bill Cunliffe and therefore I have not been Chairman for the whole year, I am going to concentrate on what I see as the achievements of the Parish Council over the past year.

We have taken over the green spaces in the Bluebell Drive area after a very difficult and lengthy legal process that was frustrating for both the Parish Council and the Developer! Thanks to Jo, our Clerk and Paul at Abel Homes for their efforts in getting matters resolved. Who knows, we may even get round to getting the grass on these areas cut!

We seem to have solved the flooding issue on the car park at the Village Hall. This was a real combined effort involving not only the Parish Council but also the Bowls Club, the local farmer and Paul Buck, our appointed contractor. So far we have had no recurrence of the disastrous flooding of the previous year to the disappointment of the small folk in wellington boots and boys on bicycles! Of course it hasn't been a real test in that we have had so little rain!

The Churchyard has been fenced with financial help from the PCC and a resident of Saxon Meadows, which has made the boundary between Saxon Meadows and the Church so much more pleasant than previous.

With the help of the Saga Louts, the Jubilee Garden in front of Folland Court has been well maintained and when I went earlier this week it was so lovely in the sunlight. The trellis is being made secure and the shrubs were looking vibrant. It's a pity about the bird poop on the seat and that so few people use the garden. I spoke to a resident of Folland Court and the garden is appreciated by the residents.

Work has been carried out to the play area. Swings have been replaced and new equipment installed, especially for the tinies, means that it is really well used. It still needs work and always will but it is much more inviting for children than it was 12 months ago. As the Parish Council have established a fund for ongoing maintenance and to replace worn out equipment, the area should have a secure future.

A plan has been drawn up, mainly by Jamie Snell to deal with the drainage of the recreation area. He has secured funding for the works and a very generous donation from his employers towards the scheme. The Parish Council have supported the proposal and works will be carried out in the near future. We are all keeping our fingers crossed that it works as successfully as the car park drainage scheme. This football season has been a disaster for the football club as the pitch has been far too wet to play on so all matches had to be away matches which made the search for a solution all the more urgent.

The village sign which became cracked and in need of repair is under renovation. This work is underway and we have been assured that the village sign will be re-installed before the Queen's Jubilee in June. Thanks to Graham and Ailssa for their hard work. Tonight at the Council meeting we are discussing the renovation of the planters / shrubbery around the village sign.

Finally, I need to thank the Parish Councillors, Clerk and in particular the volunteers in the community without whom the Parish Council would have struggled. Thanks to all of the volunteers who have carried out much of the work needed on green spaces around the village. The Saga Louts, led by David Shannon for work in the jubilee Garden, Ailsa, Graham and Peter for work on the village green amongst others.

Thanks to members of the Parish Council for stepping up when the last Chair resigned in December and to David who enthusiastically has filled the vacancy after Bills departure. Thanks to Anni for all the support she has given me as Vice Chair and to our Parish Clerk Jo, who made the takeover seamless and has attempted to keep us all on the straight and narrow, our finances in order and procedure correct!

Through the leadership of Bill Cunliffe the Community has been successful in coping with the effects of Covid and thanks must be extended to the volunteers who coordinated plans to rescue people.

I would like to say that I think as a Parish Council we have done well with these achievements, but here I would like to raise a personal point which I feel needs further discussion. The Parish Council have in the past been very happy to accept offers of open space and set up play areas because it makes our village very pleasant to live in, especially for families with young children and the residents. All these open spaces need looking after and that costs money. As the finances get tighter it becomes more difficult, and as our volunteers get older, they are able to do less and less which means more pressure on the finances to secure paid workers as well as materials. The Parish Council need to consider how they will manage this.

The meeting was opened to members of the public

A resident thanked the Parish Council for their hard work over past year but expressed concern about maintenance of the Village's green open spaces. Areas needing further attention were highlighted and included Adams Pit, Jubilee Garden (where coping stones were still missing from the wall and the trellis needed to be re-fixed) and the Village Green where the Parish Council were considering replacement of the planters.

As volunteers would not be able to continue to carry out the work in the long term, the Parish Council needed to start funding the maintenance of the public spaces.

CLlr Mallen confirmed that the Council had sought advice from Norfolk Wildlife Trust who had recommended not dredging Adams Pit for a couple of years, but that hedges have been trimmed and some work has been carried out to clear overgrowth. A contractor has been asked to carry out the work to repair the walkway and the trellis / coping stones in the jubilee garden and the replacement of the planters was on the agenda for the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

The Parish Council accepted that there needed to be a review of maintenance around the village and that this would be included on the June agenda for consideration.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7.19pm