Minutes of Great Bradley Annual Village Meeting

Held on Wed 19th April 2023

Present

Pat Spires – Chair, Cllr Charles Boulton, Cllr Annette Sugg, Cllr Rowan Sylvester Bradley, Suffolk County Cllr Bobby Bennett, West Suffolk Cllr Peter Stevens and members of Great Bradley village general public

Apologies for absence through illness - Hayley Livermore – Parish Clerk

1. **Chairperson Pat Spires** – welcomed all present and thanked everyone for giving up their time and attending the annual meeting
2. **Suffolk County Council Cllr Bobby Bennett** gave a summary report on the activities of the Clare Division of the Suffolk County Council. The summary included details on budget spending and many other topics including Highways issues and other important concerns. A copy of her report is contained in Appendix 1 document 1.
3. **West Suffolk Councillor Peter Stevens** gave his annual report.

Peter said that this is the end of his 4 year term with SCC and elections were coming up on the 4th of May. He said that during this period amongst other things he had been responsible for Civil Parking Enforcement but his main concern had been that of waste disposal. He made reference to the excellent job that waste disposal workers had done during the Covid pandemic and wished to thank them.

Council Tax has gone up but the rise had been one of the lowest in Suffolk.

His locality budget covered 6 villages and he had always tried to support good causes in those villages such as Village Halls, Community events and Warm Spaces etc.

With regard to vehicles speeding through the village he believed we were not getting the level of support required and would seek to see improvement. Everyone uses the highways and with almost no local bus services we are all dependent on our cars. The Government definitely needs to take a closer look at this!

Peter said he was indebted to Pat Spires for keeping the parish council together and thanked her for her nearly ten years of council service. Hopefully someone will be found to replace her.

Peter Stevens hoped to be re-elected again on the 4th of May and reminded all of us who vote to bring along photographic identity evidence.

In response, Pat Spires thanked Peter for his support of the village and the fact that he always came to meetings and attended village events. She thanked him once again for his support and wished him well in the upcoming elections.

1. **Suffolk Police Report** – An email was received by the Parish Clerk indicating that local policing priorities are based on threat, harm and risk as follows:

County lines dealing

Theft of Ford Transit vans

Catalytic converter thefts

ASB in certain areas.

The message also went on to explain that the Suffolk County Command operating model is currently being reviewed with a view to ensuring that policing resources are in the right place to deliver neighbourhood policing. A new model will be implemented in October 2023 with individual officers having a responsibility for geographical areas.

A full copy of this e mail message is available in appendix 1 as document 2

1. **Parish Council Report.** – Pat Spires delivered a report covering the Parish Council’s activities over the past 12 months.

Pat would have introduced Parish Clerk Hayley Livermore who has been covering for Penny Lewis who is on maternity leave, unfortunately Hayley was unwell so that was not possible. During the past year quite a few issues had been addressed and solved as well as the carrying out of normal village maintenance. Hayley had been a great help in solving these problems and Pat would like to thank her for that. Before going on to list the various issues which had been addressed Pat explained that over the past year the cost of many things such as labour and building materials had considerably increased and this had been quite a challenge for the parish council.

A full copy of the PC chairperson’s report is available in Appendix 1 as document 3 but topics covered included:

Play Equipment maintenance and repair

Clarendale Seat rebuild.

Grass Cutting

Audit

Queen’s Jubilee event

No ‘Litter Pick’ this year

Bonfire Night

Speed Watch and trialling of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)

Resurfacing of the Recreation Ground access road

New Village Notice Boards

Ryder family bench restored on the Recreation ground

The Bugle – Pat thanked Nikki Dow for taking on the editorship of the ‘Bugle’ and for making new arrangements for printing

Pat gave a thank you to Georgina and Geoff Mathews for looking after the Rec dog bin and bag dispenser

Simon Kiddy was thanked for ensuring our flag flies on the appropriate dates

Mike Brophy was thanked for managing the village Facebook platform.

Pat gave notice that next month with the help of the VH Committee we will be holding a ‘Big Lunch as part of the celebrations for King Charles III Coronation.

1. **Village Hall Committee,** The Chairperson Barbara Housden gave a report on the Village Hall - Barbara took over as chairperson from Alison McCloskey at the beginning of 2023. The following is a summary of her report:

The financial year sees the Village Hall in a similar financial position to that of 12 months ago. This is down to the efforts of those that organise events and those that come to them. A few new ideas have been tried this year including a quiz night which proved very popular plus an upcoming ‘Pottery and Prosecco’ event. The Bar which is often open at events is no longer run by Tony but by members of the Committee. (However any offers of help from non committee members to help run the bar and or Bar-B-Qs would be greatly accepted) Talking of Bar-B-Qs three have been booked for June, July and Sept.

To speed up purchases the VH now has a card reader which was bought using funds which were kindly donated by a local village family. Using the same source, a coffee maker was also purchased and we are looking to spend the rest of the donation on a new large tea pot for the kitchen and possibly a second card reader, also for the kitchen.

We are always looking out for new ways to use the Hall; if anybody has any new ideas please let us know. Remember the Hall is available for hire (Children’s parties etc) but NO Bouncy Castles (Safety Rules)

The Committee is looking to redecorate both the inside and the outside of the Hall and we are presently looking for quotes (If anybody can help with useful quote suggestions please let us know)

The biggest expense challenge the Hall has to face is the ever increasing cost of electricity, the cost having gone up 4 times in the last year.

Barbara finished by thanking everyone for supporting the Village Hall and hoped to see everyone again in the coming year.

1. **St Mary’s Church** – Report presented by Ken Ireland.

Fr Chris Giles holds church services on the 4th Sunday of each month. Attendances:

Communion – 25 to 30 people

Carol Service and Christmas Day Service – 50 to 80 people

There have been in the past year, 4 baptisms, 4 funerals and 2 weddings plus a book of condolence for the Queen’s passing.

Parochial fees to an amount of £4,900 have been paid in full to the Diocese. This year the quota will be increased to £6,000 of which £2,000 has been paid.

In the last year the church has provided ‘Charitable Giving’ to the homeless and produce from the Harvest Festival service was donated to a Haverhill food-bank.

Peter Smith has been welcomed as a member of the Benefice team.

Last Year’s Fete raised £3,600 and we must thank Charles Ryder for the loan of his garden. This year’s fete will be on 2/7/23 starting at 2:00 pm. (All donations welcomed)

An opening launch for the ‘Friends of the Church’ was held on 10/12/22 – the aim of the ‘Friends’ is maintain the fabric of the church with a further aim to illuminate the ceiling of the church.

Advance notice was given of a ‘Hymns and Rosé**’** event for Sat 1/7/23. Tickets will be available soon.

Finally Mrs Helen Smith announced that a garden party will be held at Great Bradley Hall on the 13th of May to which all are invited.

1. **Great Bradley Farms** – No report received
2. **Thurlow Estate** – No report received

10. **Bugle** – A report from Editor Niki Dow. Niki thanked all those who have contributed to the Bugle. This is the second year since the facelift and the recruitment of new contributors. We want to reach as many people as possible but unfortunately Facebook download clicks of the Bugle are quite low. This is a problem because we need to advertise digitally. Because of costs we have had to reduce the number of printed copies and unfortunately because of even higher costs we may have reduce the number even further. Our key goal must be to keep the ‘Bugle’ going and it certainly needs promoting. If anybody has any new ideas which would help promotion please contact Niki.

Printed copies are always available in the dispenser and Niki will always print a copy if anybody is desperate for one.

11**. Bonfire Night** - A special report on last year’s Bonfire Night, giving thanks to all concerned was provided by Pat Spires. Special Mention was given to all volunteers including all in the Sunday mornings team, David Flood and his son Alex and of course Charles and Alice Ryder for their continued support without which this annual event could not take place. The collections on the gate raised an amazing £1,271 and the refreshments provided by the VH Committee produced significant revenue which will go towards upkeep of the Village Hall. A full copy of the Bonfire Night report is available in Appendix 1 as document 4.

12**. Neighbourhood Watch** – We no longer have a Neighbourhood Watch Group but when necessary Caroline Greatbach, who has stepped down, will post ‘Police Awareness’ notices on Facebook. Thank you to Caroline for continuing that service.

13**. Community Speed-watch** - A report was read from Paul Hart who was unfortunately unavailable to attend – Winter operation of the Speed-watch team has been limited to weekends because the team are only allowed to operate in daylight hours. Currently the team are using the space outside Spring barn as well as the field entrance to the north of the village on the left just before the 40 MPH limit sign. Results from the 9th of May 2022 to date were as follows. NB Vehicles are reported if they exceed the limit by 5 MPH.

Number of speeding vehicles reported – 1439 vehicles

Of that total it includes:

One vehicle reported 4 times

15 vehicles reported 3 times

77 vehicles reported 2 times

The maximum speed reported was 59 MPH (Almost twice the limit) and this was reported outside Spring Barn. For details of the repercussions following a report please see the full report which can be viewed on Doc No 5 Appendix 1.

14. **Allotments –** Report by John Barnett:

An ‘Allotment; space has now become available due to one of our members having to give up due to ill health.

Some of the original allotmenteers are still on their plots but others have joined us as people move on. The number of small sheds and greenhouses on plots has increased and one plot even sports a run for re-homed chickens.

We now have an orchard plot where our nine fruit trees have survived the perils of winter including severe flooding. Many drainage ditches having been hastily dug. Now in their third year the trees are looking much more fruitful. We have a further £50, which was kindly provided by the Parish Council, to purchase more fruit trees but last year the very dry and hot weather was against us so that exercise has been postponed for a while. A couple of allotmenteers have beehives in an adjacent field which certainly helps with pollinating plants not only for the allotments but the village as a whole. The new owners of the land (Vestey Estates) have done some sterling work on the hedges to bring them back under control. Finally we are planning to run anotherBar-B-Q for the Allotmenteers this year. This will give us all a chance to meet up again. For a full copy of John’s report please view document 4a in Appendix 1.

1. **Village Website, Facebook group** and Archive group.

Mike Brophy (aka Bradley Magna) was not able to attend but provided a full report.

With regard to the Website the web stats are no longer tracked but evidence suggests this is an extremely comprehensive websites for such a small village. Additions this year includes:

A short cut menu for most useful pages.

The home page has colour–coded sections.

The History section has been updated to align it with articles appearing in the Bugle.

Facebook Group

The figures relating to members, posts and viewings etc are quite comprehensive and they can all be viewed on a copy of Mike’s report which is located on doc 6 in Appendix 1. Mike would also like to point out that the group is a private one and can only be used by those in the group. He encourages users to make use of the ‘Search’ function if you are looking for a tradesman and also encourages VH club groups to promote their groups on the Facebook group. To view Mike’s full report see doc 6 in Appendix 1.

NB a report on the Archive Group is covered in item 18

16. **WEA** – report form Peter Smith. Peter was sorry to report that for a combination of reasons including a lack of interest and a bureaucratic WEA organisation the GB-WEA group has sadly been closed. He expressed gratitude for the help given by the VHMC in keeping the group going and to all the loyal group members. Hopefully it may be possible in the future to give one off talks using the TV facility, a format which has been successfully tried in the past; details of such events will be published when necessary. For Peter’s full report view Doc 7 in appendix 1.

17. **The Art Group** a report from Pat Spires - When we resumed after Covid we decided to trial a meeting without a tutor with just the group members supporting each other. This not only reduced costs but also enabled us to meet for 3 hours rather than 2 every week. The result is that we now have longer terms and meet nearly every week with short breaks over Christmas and Easter and a longer one over the summer. This new approach has proved popular and we will continue in this manner for the foreseeable future.

Pat then went on to outline the Talent within the group and how new members from further afield have been introduced. Planning for the staging of another weekend art exhibition similar to the one held last April is well under way, so watch the Bugle for further information. Although currently full, the group is always willing to discuss possible new membership with interested parties so if that’s the case please contact Pat.

For a full copy of Pat’s art club report please view Document 8 in Appendix 1.

18. **The Archive Group** - A report from Peter Smith.

The Archive Group has completed its initial collation and indexing of its existing material which is now securely stored in the Village Hall. More material is being obtained and added which will be treated in a similar manner.

The VH committee has agreed to provide wall space and thus a permanent display for the medals of Private Marsh. The Archive Group thought that the V Hall would be a more secure and suitable place for this display, were it will be visible along with the new Memorial Tablet.

Mike Brophy continues to add photos etc to the electronic archive and if you need help with any historic records Mike should be your first port of call. If Mike is not available Pat Spires, John Barnett or indeed Peter himself will try and help.

For a full copy of Peter Smith’s report pleas view document 9 in Appendix 1

19**. The Book Club** – A report from Annette Sugg. We started our book club again in Feb 2022 and have met regularly each month since then. We currently have 11 members and have maintained good attendance throughout the year, which is, I think testament to how much we all enjoy these evenings.

Each month members bring along recommendations and we collectively choose a book to then review at our next meeting. It is also an opportunity to swap books with each other and so create a little saving in that we do not have to continually buy new copies. Please do not tell Amazon!

Throughout the year, we have enjoyed reading a variety of genres, usually from well known authors and occasionally from lesser known writers. We recently invited a very local author, whom I think should remain nameless, for a book signing and to explain the pros and cons of self-publishing.

The reviews usually involve a lively discussion over tea, coffee and biscuits. (Occasionally wine) but it seems only on rare occasions that we disagree. Our group is very informal and new members are always welcome. We meet on the 1st Thursday of every month 7:30 to 9:30 so if you are interested and for just £2 per month then please come and join us.

1. **Drop-In** - A report from Pat Spires.

We meet on the afternoon of every first Thursday of the month for Cake, Sandwiches, Tea and Coffee... and of course a chat. Sometimes we have a theme like Halloween or Easter etc. Numbers have been falling lately so we need to let people know it is happening and encourage them to come.

1. **Camera Club** - Richard Sugg gave a short report.

The club meets every third Thursday of each month. Members send their images to Sheldon Woodhouse who then prepares them for display on the large TV screen. At the meeting members have a friendly discussion on the individual images. We then decide on the topic for the next month. Numbers attending vary but we usually have 8 to 10, however new members are of course always welcome.

22. **Scottish Dancing** – A few words from Helen Smith. Helen reported that the club continues to go well with around 15 members who continue to attend every Monday afternoon.

23. **Village Event** – **King Charles III Coronation Big Lunch** – Report from Pat Spires.

Plans are well underway for this special celebration which will take place on Sunday the 7th of May in the Village Hall. The Village Hall was chosen as the venue so that any last minute changes due to the vagaries of the weather can be avoided.

Linda will return with the popular Henry’s Hog Roast and a selection of deserts and a free bar will available (Until we run out!)

For the children there will gold paper crowns to decorate with lots of stick on jewels. Please - if the children are decorating a crown they must be accompanied by a parent/adult for safety. We also have some Coronation wrist bands which will be used as prizes or just handed out. We do have some Children’s games but we are looking for someone to supervise them (games, races etc.)

Pat Thanked the VHMC for their support but indicated that more help with setting up on the day was needed (especially the outside space) Any volunteers please contact Pat as the more there are then the easier and quicker the job becomes.

Finally Pat encouraged everyone in the village to come along and help Great Bradley celebrate this historic event. For a copy of the full proposals for the Coronation event please see Appendix 1 document 10

24. **Closing Statement from Retiring Parish Council Chairperson Pat Spires**. In a closing statement Pat stated that she would like to thank everyone who helped her during her 10 year service with the Parish Council. A full copy of Pat’s closing statement can be viewed in Appendix 1 document 3 (part 2)