**Great Bradley Annual Village Meeting held at the Village Hall on 9th April 2014**

The Chairman Simon Kiddy welcomed 22 people attending the meeting.

**Minutes:**

The minutes of last year’s meeting 10th April 2013 were approved

**Suffolk Police:**Apologies were received from PCSO Sophie Mitchell who had sent the following report:

PC Sinclair is on duty this evening and maybe able to attend in person depending on commitments, if she is unable to make it then please do not hesitate to forward any correspondence for our attention onto us.

In the last year there has been just the one crime of note in the area:

* This was a theft of a quantity of red diesel from a JCB located on farm land on Hall Road. This occurred overnight on Thursday 3rd October 2013.

In comparison with the previous year from April 2012 – April 2013. There were 4 crimes of note in the area. These were:

* Burglary other building – A Tack room was broken into and various equestrian items stolen. This occurred overnight on Tuesday 19th June 2012.
* Attempted theft of a caravan from a property on Evergreen Lane. This occurred in the evening of Thursday 1st November 2012.
* Theft of a horse box trailer from a property on East Green. This occurred sometime overnight on Friday 2nd November 2012.
* Burglary other building – 3 John Deere tractors were stolen when an outbuilding was broken into on a farm on East Green. This occurred between 28th March and 7th April 2013.

So as you can see from the comparison we had just the one crime of note this year compared to the 4 in the previous year. This is obviously positive news and we are pleased to report this decrease in reported crime in the area.

Bradley was a priority village for speeding for the SNT between the months of December 2013 – March 2014 along with the Wratting’s and Thurlow’s as part of the B1061 corridor of traffic. The figures for Bradley were as follows:

* 8 Speed checks were carried out
* 4 Fixed Penalty tickets were issued
* 5 Verbal warnings given

The next SNT Priority setting meeting is scheduled for Tuesday  10th June 2014, 7pm at Bury Police Station.

The PCC, Tim Passmore, will be hosting a public meeting for the St Edmundsbury district on Wednesday 7th May 2014 at 6:30 pm at The Samuel Ward Academy, Chalkstone Way, Haverhill, CB9 0LD.  Chief Constable, Douglas Paxton will also be in attendance at the meeting.

General information worth noting:

* There has been a recent growing trend of purse/wallet thefts from handbag/bags in town centres. The victims are predominantly elderly with the majority of offences taking place on market days. Various methods are being used such as: Taking purses/wallets visibly laying in the tops of bags, targeting shoppers in charity shops, and at supermarkets watching pin numbers being entered for payment and then following the victim into the car park and using distraction techniques to steal the bank card used. The suspects range in descriptions and possibly work in small groups or teams consisting of both males and females. In the past they have also used children as a distraction cover. We are asking people to be increasingly aware when out and about shopping for this type of behaviour and to report any suspicious activity to us on 101.
* We have had increasing reports in Suffolk of a fraud scam currently ongoing nationwide where by the offender phones an elderly victim purporting to be a Police Officer investigating a fraud involving the victim’s bank account. The offender persuades the victim to withdraw cash or send their credit card by handing to a taxi driver who will courier to the offender. The offender can be very plausible offering bogus numbers for the victim to call to confirm that a Police Officer has contacted them.

**Suffolk County Council:**

County Councillor submitted a report to the meeting retrospectively which is attached as an addendum

**St Edmundsbury Borough Council:**

There was no report.

**Parish Council:**

Simon Kiddy, Chairman of the Council, presented the annual report of the work of the Parish Council. The village garden re-design has been agreed and new plants and shrubs will be purchased and put in later in the year.

The Parish Council continues to support the broadband in the Village Hall which has been very useful particularly with the computer classes there.

Play equipment checks are done on a regular basis and thanks go to those on the rota for this.

The wooden edging surrounding the Glade on the Recreation Area was completed together with new bark chips.

The annual Bonfire Night was once again well supported. The donations from those attending were generous as usual and helped to cover nearly all the costs.

The village archives are finally being attended to and thanks go to the team for that.

The Parish Council Precept has been kept the same despite the fact that St Edmundsbury Borough Council is reducing the Parish grants by 25% per year. The reserves remain around the level that the auditors recommend.

**Village Hall**

Wendy Mansfield said that it had been another eventful year - this time due to a power surge which destroyed much of the hall's electrics. A number of new lights have been installed. The heating has been haywire and really needs a simpler system altogether. Thanks must go to all the clubs and associations that have battled on during the cold or hot heating spells and apologies to those who couldn't use the hall because of it. Some events were not well supported e.g. there had been a very interesting evening on antiques from an excellent speaker Barrie Stevenson from Cowlinge but only 12 people were there; also the children's party (which had been such a success last year) had to be cancelled as only 3 had booked.

Events currently planned are 'An evening with Joyce Grenfell' and a wine & beer tasting evening.

There was a question from the floor regarding the bell. Wendy said that quotes were being sort for this.

Another question was regarding the current positioning of the bottle bank. Wendy said that it needed to be moved to take it further away from the houses nearby. This will be done.

**The Bradley Bugle**

John Barnett said that Stuart Wilson had sent his apologies but had said that he was managing to produce the Bugle without too many problems. John Barnett said that new advertisers had come forward and the advertising income was now over £500pa.

**Village website:**

John Barnett said that the village was most fortunate to have such a brilliant website all courtesy of Mike Brophy's dedication.

**Litter pick:**

Geoffrey Vollam said that the litter pick had fewer helpers this year but the main areas in the village had been completed. Thanks must go to the helpers who turned out and Anne Smith who provided the refreshments for afterwards.

**Neighbourhood Watch:**

John Barnett said that they were a small group which meets twice a year to discuss any problems and ideas. A new person has just come forward to represent Fox Green.

**Community Speedwatch**  
John Barnett said that the local Speedwatch area now has 3 villages Great Bradley, Cowlinge and Thurlow. They are a team of 3 in Great Bradley, 2 in Cowlinge and 2 in Thurlow. In addition to the team on the ground taking vehicle speeds there is a new Vehicle Activated Display which people may have seen in Horringer and latterly Haverhill at the top of the hill. This is smaller than the current one we share with Hundon and designed to be locked on top of fixed poles and left in position for 3-4 weeks at a time and then moved to another location. The prices for a machine given so far vary from £1,200 to £3,500 and a full spec and cost will need to be decided before any further discussion with other local councils. However, there was general approval of the idea at the meeting.

**Great Bradley Farms:**

Charles Ryder said that the project for the undergrounding of cables had been going on for some years now and the MOD had been dragging their feet but there now appears to be a possibility that it will be done later this year.

The permissive footpath up the hill to East Green has also been a long drawn out affair but the signage should be going up later this week.

He fully supported the efforts of the Parish Council with regard to the problem of dog fouling.

All the roadside trees have been checked and some necessary surgery will be taking place.

Heavy machinery can cause problems of erosion of the verges in Water Lane. It is hoped to alleviate this with the creation of a new field entrance opposite the existing one. This will permit machinery to cross directly from one field to another without having to use the Lane.

Allotments. It is good to see these coming back again. He is considering where these might go and hopes to have some ideas in the not too distant future.

Wildbird seed is to be planted at the bottom of the Spinney. Five Black Poplars have just been planted - three to the North and two to the South of Bradley bridge.

The Spring Barn concrete slab area will be used as a grain area for a period this Autumn.

Events planned for this year are: Bluebell Walk 19th April, Farm Walk 31st May, a tour of Broxted (old RAF Stradishall) in the Autumn. A bird survey at Broxted found 47 species and this survey will now be done annually for the next 25 years. Thanks must go to Les & Anne Bunyan for all their work at Broxted and their photo collection from there.

Thanks go to Simon Kiddy and John Barnett of Parish Council for all their work for the Parish.

Rowan Sylvester-Bradley asked about supply of woodchip for a possible community burner. Charles said that the supply was there - he had actually suggested this to the Prison.

**Reports from other village groups/organisations:  
Parochial Church Council:**   
Geoffrey Vollam read the report from Sue Ireland. PCC members are Revd Derek Hollis, Sue Ireland (Churchwarden) Geoffrey Vollam (Treasurer) and Keith Willington.   
The pattern of a communion service at 11 am on the second Sunday of every month has continued, with occasional Benefice Services at 10 am. Although we have lost several regular members from the village, services are well attended and offer a chance to catch up with others from across the Benefice over a cup of coffee afterwards.   
The church building is in reasonable order though there are always maintenance items requiring attention. We are especially grateful to the cleaners and flower arrangers who keep the church interior looking clean and well-cared for. Last year were able to pay our share of the Quota to the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and lpswich: this goes towards the upkeep of the Church, including clergy stipends and pensions.   
The fete was last year’s main fundraising event and a record £2,700 was raised. We were lucky to have beautiful weather and the added bonus of Murray’s Wimbledon win to round off the day. A 5% donation was reserved for charity.   
This year’s fete will be on Sunday 6 July and the first planning meeting will be on 23rd April, further details in the Bugle. As always, offers of help will be welcomed with open arms so do get in touch if you would like to be involved. We particularly need people to set up tables the day beforehand and clear them away afterwards. Great Bradley Farms will be sponsoring a hamper draw and tickets will be distributed with the June Bugle. Last year’s produce show was cancelled because of the cold spring but this year there will be no excuse for not putting on a great show of flowers, fruit and vegetables. Keep an eye on next month’s Bugle for more details.  
**Workers Educational Association:**Geoffrey Vollam said that in September we at last succeeded in obtaining ‘History of the English Language Pt.2’ with Dr Rosemary Williams, only just in time because she has now returned to live in Wales. This was a fascinating exploration of English from Shakespeare to the present, including accents and dialects, grammar, and the future of our language. English is a ‘killer language’, which because of its flexibility, its willingness to adopt foreign words if they seem effective and its wide use in commerce and science has become the major world language. We may perhaps be allowed a frisson of schadenfreude when we contrast the status of English with that of French, so zealously protected by the Academie Francaise.   
Still a need to get it right though — a sports shop in Tokyo has the English shop sign ‘The Athlete’s Foot’ and a Swiss restaurant wine list proclaims ‘Our wines leave you nothing to hope for’!   
In January we were fortunate to hear Wendy Barnes from Little Bradley talk to us about ‘Manor to County to Country: Bradley & district in the Domesday Book environment’, which in spite of having a long title was a thorough and entertaining look at Domesday records in this district, including near parts of Cambridgeshire.   
Although the Norman Conquest was in 1066, the Domesday Survey was started in 1085 and completed in 1087. It recorded the amount of land, ploughs, farm animals, smallholders, freemen, villeins and serfs (slaves) across England. The primary purpose was to revamp the tax system to provide William with wealth, to settle the many land disputes and to record to whom each landholder owed homage/service/rents. Apart from the Domesday Survey, the destruction of the Anglo-Saxon nobility and the confiscation of their lands, the building of castles (mainly of wood at the outset) and our stone cathedrals, one might well ask ‘What did the Norman Conquest ever do for us?’ Perhaps it started our suspicion of things European!   
There is an event at Little Bradley church on 17 June which will follow up some of the more local aspects that Wendy brought to our attention.   
The WEA meets again in September, on Wednesday mornings from 10.15 to 12noon, with a ¼ hour break for tea/coffee, which is free. You may attend the 1st session as a taster without paying if you do not wish to continue with the rest of the course. Further details will appear in the Bugle shortly.   
WEA provides an informative and enjoyable social break in the middle of the week and although we had more than 20 people at both courses we should of course be delighted to welcome anybody who wishes to come.   
Many thanks are again due to Peter Smith our chairman/secretary for coping with the administration flow from WEA Cambridge office, and to Anne Smith for her invaluable help in keeping the show on the road. Extra-parochially we are also very grateful to Gill Brown of Balsham, not least for her help with refreshments, and to Alan Bampton of Burwell, our able treasurer.  
**Afternoon Club:** Gill Dunn said that they had had to have a break due to the computer classes clashing on Thursdays. They will move to Wednesday afternoons on the second Wednesday in the month.  
**Art Group:**Pete Smith read the report from Anne Pigden. I am pleased to report that the Art Group has had a good year and we have welcomed several new members which has brought fresh talent and interests into the Group. Jan Couling remains  at the helm encouraging and guiding us into hopefully achieving our goals!

We continue to meet on Tuesday afternoons at 2 p.m. for two hours which go all too quickly.  The Village Fete should again see us mounting an exhibition of some of our work.  
**Scottish Dancing Class**:   
Helen Smith read the report from Ella Hollins. The Scottish Country Dancing class has continued on a Monday afternoon for 2 hours between 2pm and 4pm. Numbers have fluctuated and the unfortunate problems with the Village Hall have meant that a few classes have had to be cancelled because of this. Some of our more experienced dancers have, for various reasons, been able to attend on a less regular basis but we have a higher number of less experienced members who are enjoying their dancing and improving greatly. The majority of our members now come from outside the village, one travelling from Mildenhall each week. We are hoping to have our annual dance in Thurlow Village Hall next month.

**Computer courses:**  
John Barnett said that they had managed to get another substantial grant of £1,800. This has provided funds for 5 more courses, two of which ran last Autumn and two running currently. These last courses are on Windows 8 and Excel and are both sold out. There should be sufficient monies remaining to run one final course in the Autumn. Ideas please for this.   
**Flexible Friends:**Gill Dunn said that the heating problems in the hall has meant it's been a bit hit and miss. Hopefully with the better weather it will now improve. They have room for just 2 more people.   
**Pilates:**  
Helen Smith said that she had had a report from Helen Axon - Pilates Tuesdays 7.30pm

The class has been running successfully since May 2012. The class is ran in 6 week blocks and over the last 12 months the number of people signed up to each block has averaged at 9. This does fluctuate slightly over holiday periods but has been fairly consistent. The majority of class members live in the village but we have had people travel from Newmarket and some of the surrounding villages.

There were some difficulties at the beginning of this year with lights and heating in the hall meaning we had to cancel a couple of classes. This was of course disappointing but I know the village hall committee worked very hard to get this back up and running and cause as little disruption to the class schedule as possible. In addition to this, over the last 12 months the hall hire rate has unfortunately had to increase. This may mean that in the coming months I will need to increase the cost of the class slightly to cover this.

Overall, I am extremely happy with how the class is going. Attendance remains consistently high and feedback from class members is positive. In addition to this all class members have made significant improvements in Pilates so it is a pleasure to teach.

Simon Kiddy thanked the organisations for their presence tonight and the information.

**Recreation Area**

1. John Barnett reported that they were going to try to tackle the problem of dog fouling by using the idea of vivid spray paint around every pile to highlight the extent of the problem. This will be done in conjunction with posters put up to explain what is being done and why and the health problems, particularly to children, from dog faeces.
2. Living Willow structure. There was no further information on this at present.

**Village Archives**

John Barnett said that a small team had been meeting once a week over the latter part of the Winter to begin the work of categorising and then cataloguing every single item in the archives. Thanks must go to Charles Ryder for allowing the team to have a dedicated room in the Bradley Hall offices for all the work to be done and for the archives to be safely stored in future. We have taken a break for the Summer but will return to the task when the weather and nights close in again. The long term aim is hopefully to be able to digitise all the records so that everyone will be able to find them online.

**WW1 commemoration and archive exhibition:**

John Barnett said that a combined exhibition was planned from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th August which was very close to the 100 years declaration of war by Great Britain. Charles Ryder has some wonderful film footage of military exercises in this area which will be shown and anyone else who has any memorabilia from that time is asked if it may be used as well. The archiving team will also be showing some of the material they have been cataloguing and the Coffee Caravan will be coming on Friday 8th as well.

**Village Garden:**

Rowan Sylvester-Bradley said that the new seat has been repositioned behind the hedge with a good view over the valley. The garden itself will be replanted with a selection of shrubs and small plants to a design that his wife Sue has been working on. The village sign will be replaced with a taller post.

**Community event - the Big Lunch:**

John Barnett said that with the success of recent community events it was hoped to be able to run another one this year. The national Big Lunch template whereby people come together and everybody brings something to the party (usually food) was thought by the meeting to be a good idea. There had been a suggestion that the Parish Council could perhaps provide the drinks. Pete Smith asked if the village

Bar-B-Q could be used and this of course would be available if wanted. The national day for the Big Lunch is the first weekend in June but naturally there is no need to go with that date if another is preferred.

**Forthcoming events:**

The following events were notified:

* 19th April - Bluebell Walk - anyone wishing to join in should please let Charles Ryder know.
* 31st May - Farm Walk - anyone wishing to join in should please let Charles Ryder know.
* Big Lunch - likely in June
* 6th July Fete
* 8th-10th August WW1 commemoration & archive exhibition at Village Hall
* 24th August - Ross Skingley said there would be 2 Lancaster bombers flying at Bourne airfield with possible invitations to fly in them.
* Autumn - date to be advised - visit to Broxted (the old RAF Stradishall airfield)

**Any other ideas/problems etc:**

There was a question about the Village Hall lottery. Simon Kiddy said he had done it for 8 years but has now stood down. It needs someone else to come forward to take it on and perhaps rejuvenate it with new ideas.

The Chairman thanked John Barnett for organising this meeting and for all his work for the Parish in general and also thanked everyone for taking the time to come to the meeting and it was declared closed at 8.50pm

Signed: Chair date:

Addendum

Report received subsequent to the meeting from Suffolk County Councillor Mary Evans:

My first year as your county councillor has been a challenge as it has been a steep learning curve.  I have very much enjoyed it not least because it has been such a pleasure to get to know the Clare Division villages and their residents better and to attend the parish council meetings.

It has been a challenging year for the county council too and I feel very strongly that in several key areas we must do better in the next 12 months.

School attainment is improving but not quickly enough to push us back up the league tables yet. Ofsted inspected the county's education service earlier in the year and were critical. It was unfortunate as we were attacked for not having a strategic improvement plan in place yet Ofsted knew the plan was to be finalised within weeks of their inspection.

Results are getting better  but I am glad I serve on the Education Scrutiny committee so we can keep an eye on our schools’ performance and call the education team to account.

Another area of challenge is our new highways contract. It has not been a happy story to date but again performance is improving. Councillors, with the support of the staff working on the ground, have been calling for changes in the way the contract is managed. We have had more staff recruited to the area offices. We have streamlined a bit, but probably not enough yet, the way the contract actually operates.

In my role as assistant cabinet member for roads and transport I am chairing a cross party panel reviewing speed limits. We have issued a report setting the criteria for 20mph schemes and are now looking at the higher speed limits.

The county council is working this year to a budget with savings of £38m. We are not increasing council tax because we don't want to penalise you. However there are more cuts are to come. Our grant has been cut by government and we have to look long and hard at what we do and how we do it.

Locally I have been working with Class 2 at Thurlow School on their anti-litter campaign which has been great fun. As you will recall I helped our MP Matthew Hancock organise a meeting  about speeding on the B1061 last autumn. The county council is now allowing communities to buy their own vehicle activated signs to deter speeding motorists and I am organising a meeting for interested parish councils with Suffolk’s Road Safety Manager Mike Motteram so we can find out more about getting some signs to protect local villages. We do need to act not least because the police have just told me that in their recent three hour speed check in Great Bradley they caught 46 motorists whom they will be prosecuting.

Poor broadband speeds is another problem in rural west Suffolk and I am organising a public meeting in June for local people to meet and hear the latest information from the county council’s team working on the Suffolk Better Broadband programme.

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