



Great Bardfield Annual Parish Report

April 29th 2016



Report design, layout and sub-editing: Jenny Rooney.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed written reports and to all those who have sent in photographs to illustrate this document, especially Ian Fox, Doug Joyce, Paul Boon, Chris Morrell, Katrina Ralston, Brenda Poston, Claire Oldroyd, Will Edwards and Alison Kerrell.

Cover: Family fun run (Ian Fox).



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Great Bardfield Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting 2016

To be held Friday 29th April at 8.00pm in the Town Hall

Agenda

- 1 Chairman's introduction
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of the meeting held 24th April 2015
- 4 Matters arising
- 5 Parish Council report and accounts
- 6 District Council report
- 7 County Council report
- 8 School report
- 9 Charities report and accounts
- 10 Town Hall report and accounts
- 11 *Bardfield Times* report and accounts
- 12 Items of report
- 13 Closing remarks

The Annual Parish Report containing the above reports, and those of other village organisations, is available on the evening to all those attending and additional copies will be available, free of charge, from the Community Information Point and Between the Lines bookshop.



Chairman's introduction

I am very pleased to introduce the Annual Report on the work of Great Bardfield Parish Council and the many organisations in the village. As always the report shows the amazing range of activities and organisations in this lively, thriving community. If you can't face reading all these words the excellent photographs will tell you the story of a year in the life of this English village.

Following the council elections last May five parish councillors were elected unopposed leaving two casual vacancies to be filled through co-option. We are very pleased to welcome Cllrs Iain Graham and Paul Kennedy to the Parish Council team.

This year we have extended the brief of our Footpath Committee to include the wider village environment. The Environment Committee picks up on any problems from footpaths, broken fences, litter, rubbish and any areas of the village that need attention so they can be dealt with quickly.

The new village information map, designed by local artists David and Chester Meldrum, is ready to be installed on School Green, and a permanent speed indicator is now in place in the Dunmow Road.

Progress on the pavilion project has been slow this year but the new equipment for the children's play area has been ordered and work to prepare the site will begin shortly. The up-dating of the Parish Council website is underway and we're pleased to have re-established our link with the School Council.



A matter for significant consideration, not only for the Parish Council but for all members of our community this year has been the question of how Great Bardfield should develop in the future. The Braintree District Local Plan has been through a period of consultation and will identify sites considered to be appropriate for development across the district. The Parish Council is aware of the need to keep a balance between 'nimbyism' and ensuring that any development is appropriate, keeping the essential character of Great Bardfield and the other historic villages along the Pant Valley. We also all need to remember that if we don't use the local services we have, shops, school, pubs, buses, for example, we will lose them.

Well done to the Town Hall Committee who have organised a very successful fund-raising campaign to restore the roof, drawing support from local groups and also attracting grants from several sources. The Town Hall is at the centre of village life, well used by so many groups and managed and maintained by volunteers. We also appreciate the work of the *Bardfield*

*Janet
Dyson:
Parish
Council
Chairman*



Times team who produce an excellent quality, interesting, informative magazine, delivered free to every house. The Community Facebook page is also a valuable channel of communication about what's going on in the village.

This year the Historical Society has put Great Bardfield firmly on the map with their installation of blue plaques on two of the significant houses in the village. The Bardfield Artists are attracting national attention this year – how much do you know about them? Visit our lovely, newly-thatched Cottage Museum and find out about them and other interesting information about the history of our village.

We are very lucky to have such a variety of clubs, societies and activities in the village – something for all ages and tastes. These would not happen without the time and commitment of the many volunteers who run and support them, for example as school governors, youth club leaders, Town Hall committee members, baby and toddler group, museum volunteers and Horticultural Show organisers to

name but a few. Read their reports to see what they've been doing this year. I know that some of the older residents were delighted to receive Christmas hampers organised by an impromptu group of volunteers – a lovely gesture.

Particular thanks are due to Mick and Sue Gell for their care of the War Memorial Green, village handyman, Ian Ruffle, Ian Fox for IT and communication support and Jenny Rooney for her work in staffing the CIP and the production of this report. We also recognise the work of our Parish Clerk, Kate Fox, who supports the Council in so many ways beyond her job description.

We remember a number of people from our community who have sadly died this year including David Holmes, Evelyn (Peggy) Swift, Violet Clapson, Beryl Maidman, Dr Colin Reynolds, Peter Williams, Gill Morrell and June Smith.

**Janet Dyson, Chairman,
Great Bardfield Parish Council**

*David
Slow with
his mother,
Kathy,
unveiling
the blue
plaque
on Place
House*





Great Bardfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on Friday 24th April 2015

1. Chairman's introduction

The chairman said how pleased she was to introduce the Annual Report on the work of Great Bardfield Parish Council and the many organisations in the village. As always the report showed the amazing range of activities and organisations that exist in this lively, thriving community.

The Parish Plan Refresh project has been completed this year. We would like to thank the committee of volunteers chaired by Paul Boon; Jenny Wright, Mick Gell, Sue Gell, Mark Wells, Tony Hayward, Tony Battye, Penny Battye, and Sarah Boon, who all put so much work into this project. Everyone in the village had an opportunity to have a say about how local services could be improved; whether they would like to see more housing in the village, whether they would be prepared to pay more for improved sports and leisure facilities and how they would like to see Great Bardfield develop in the future.

Progress has already been made on several of these issues, including the new village information map which was on display at the Parish Assembly and the installation of a speed indicator in the Dunmow Road.

Although the council had moved forward on several major projects during the year, sources of funding for specific schemes such as the new pavilion were getting harder to access. Members were frustrated by the diminishing and deteriorating services of, for example, policing and highways,

and have argued very strongly for improving or extending services such as public transport – the decision by Essex County Council to cut the bus service to Saffron Walden disappointed the regular users of this service. These experiences have prompted the Council to ensure that wherever possible it takes on responsibility for procuring and delivering our own services – if only that could extend to repair of potholes and replacement of road signs!

This month the Parish Council reached the end of its four year term of office and five of the existing councillors have been nominated to stand for election. Two members have retired from the council and will be very much missed. Cllr Alicia Holmes has served two four-year terms and made a strong contribution, particularly on planning issues. Cllr Tony Hayward was retiring after 45 years of service on the Parish Council, 15 years as its Chair. He also served as representative on the Executive Committee of the Essex Association of Local Councils and the Braintree Association of Local Councils. He became Chair of the National Association of Local Councils and had the honour of being awarded an OBE for his services to local government.

The chairman acknowledged his major contribution to the village as a Councillor; his extensive knowledge and expertise have been invaluable and will be greatly missed. A presentation was made to Cllr Hayward from his



Parish Council colleagues and clerk in recognition of his years of service from May 1970 to its conclusion following the election in May 2015.

The chairman also wished to record the contribution of the many volunteers who run and support the activities and organisations in the village as school governors, youth club leaders, Town Hall committee members, football team managers, museum volunteers and Horticultural Show organisers to name but a few. She particularly wished to thank Mick and Sue Gell for their care of the War Memorial Green, village handyman, Ian Ruffle, Ian Fox for IT and communication support and Jenny Rooney for her work in staffing the CIP and the production of the Annual Report.

2. Apologies

These were received from Patricia Walsh, Annette Joyce and Paul Kennedy.

3. Minutes of the Parish Assembly held 16th May 2014

These were approved and signed as a true record of the meeting. Proposed Jenny Rooney, seconded Mick Gell.

4. Matters arising

The chairman suggested that as most items would be covered during the course of the evening, and there would be an opportunity to ask questions at the end, that she move on to the next item. This was agreed.

5. Parish Plan Refresh

With the aid of a power point presentation the Chairman outlined the process that had taken place to

inform the council's work for the next four or five years. There had been an initial public meeting, the forming of a committee of residents mentioned in her opening remarks and a parish-wide survey. The result of this highlighted key issues of:

- Development of sports and leisure facilities.
- Identifying and meeting future housing needs.
- Improved Broadband.
- Village information map.
- Traffic and parking issues.
- Improvement of public transport.

There were questions regarding housing and plans for the Bardfield Centre, which had only just been received and were on display at the meeting. Also the expected delivery of the Vehicular Activated Sign – which would be early in the 2015–16 financial year.

6. County Council report

The chairman introduced Cllr Roger Walters who summarised his report which could be read in full in the Annual Report.

At Full Council on February 10th, Essex County Council passed the budget for 2015–16. The budget froze council tax for the fifth year in a row, meaning that the average resident will have saved £335 during over this period. Residents continue to pay the lowest council tax in the whole of the Eastern Region.

Outlined in the budget was a record level of investment in our capital programme. In 2015–16, the council is investing over £270m in key infrastructures such as schools,



roads, flood defences and superfast broadband. The budget also sets out plans to invest £1bn over the next five years in a capital programme to deliver the infrastructure that will see the county remain strong and prosperous well into the future.

National offer day was 27th February for children starting secondary school from September 2015. Out of some 15,000 Essex parents, 19 out of 20 parents – 95% – were allocated a place for their child in one of their first three preferred schools. Of these, more than 17 out of 20 (over 85%) were offered their first preference, and well over nine out of 10 (92%) were allocated one of their two top preferences.

Essex County Council recently received confirmation from the Department of Education of a grant of £41.4m in respect of increasing school places, bringing the total amount of funding to support the creation of new school places over a four year period up to 2017–18 to £137.7m. The funding reflects the growing pressure on school places in the county. The grant is to support the expansion of existing maintained schools, free schools or academies and to establish new schools.

The budget also saw significant investment in the county's roads, footpaths, bridges and public rights of ways – with £130m going into our highways network to help drive economic growth, reduce traffic congestion and further improve the condition of our roads.

A major initiative aimed at making country lanes safer and calmer by turning them into Quiet Lanes is being adopted by Essex County Council. Quiet Lanes would continue to receive

a basic level of maintenance but the route's status change would help calm the traffic, HGVs would be banned and a 20mph limit would be implemented as standard practice. ECC will initially ask each of the county's 12 Local Highways Panels to identify two roads to be considered as Quiet Lanes.

The Superfast Essex programme has already enabled over 20,000 new superfast broadband connections across Essex and during 2015 and early 2016 we plan to enable a further 45,000 across the county, reaching 87% of premises across Essex. We aim to expand superfast connectivity to 95% of Essex premises by 2017–18.

New figures show the number of young people who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) is at an all-time low in the county. The current percentage of young people in Essex who are NEET stands at 4.4% meaning that out of the 50,000 young people Essex County Council has responsibility for supporting, 2,146 are NEET, demonstrating Essex County Council's commitment to jobs and careers for young people and economic growth across the county.

A new Park and Ride facility is to be launched in Colchester in April 2015. This will increase the number of people able to access Colchester town centre from the north and help ease congestion on the surrounding roads.

In total, nearly 9,000 Essex households have signed up to the Essex Energy Switch over the past 12 months following two separate awareness events, with registrants saving on average £262 in the latest auction. Following the second successful phase of the Essex Energy Switch, letters and



emails with market-leading energy rates were sent to 4,500 Essex residents, more than all other community switch programmes in the country.

In conclusion Cllr Walters explained his continued work with Essex Trading Standards and that we have to be very alert to scams – whether doorstep trading or scam emails and letters.

A question from the floor referred to the damage to the Memorial Green and lack of action to undertake repairs to that and the directional sign. Cllr Walters offered to support an application via the Local Highways Panel for this work and the Clerk would prepare the necessary paperwork.

7. Parish Council report & accounts

The report was presented on the evening by Cllr Ruffle, Vice Chairman and the key points are detailed here.

For the period from May 2014 there were 11 Parish Council meetings and several sub-committee meetings on items such as planning, finance and playing field improvements.

Perennial issues for this village, are speeding, parking and irresponsible dog owners. Speed assessments by our own Speedwatch group and the police have confirmed that speeding does occur regularly along Dunmow Road, by cars entering and leaving the village.

We review and comment on all planning applications pertinent to the parish. This year we considered over 20 applications plus several tree works. There had been no applications for multiple units during the year however, just prior to the meeting, plans were received for 10 small residential units at the Bardfield Centre and these were on display for comment.

In the last year Braintree District Council (BDC) had to withdraw their proposed Development Plan and start work on a new Local Plan, due to the increases in housing required by central government. For BDC this requirement is estimated to be for between 750 and 950 homes per year between 2014 and 2033. She said that it would be naive to expect all this development to be restricted to the major towns in the district and it will have an impact on villages such as Great Bardfield. So far, the District Council has issued their Scoping document, to which this council has responded, and two local landowners have submitted proposed development sites following BDC's Call for Sites. The council were aware in advance of these proposed locations and submitted their comments to BDC. Any such proposals will have to go through further consultation and approval processes.

Dialogue has continued with Essex Highways department as it has proved very difficult to get them to attend to a range of highway issues in a timely manner, despite repeated reminders and concern about safety.

Progress continues on the playing fields and pavilion project, albeit slowly. Funding is now very hard to obtain. However, with some money due to the parish as part of the 106 agreement to build new housing off Bendlowes Road, the council is in the process of obtaining quotes and designs for the new playground area (on display at the meeting). The intention is for this to be installed in the next few months, together with landscaping and improvements to the access roads and car parking.



Thanks to the CREAMER Fund we have been able to have a Defibrillator installed in the telephone box in the High Street and have a second to install once we have permission to use the other telephone box, situated in Braintree Road.

There is disappointment that communications with our local policing team have deteriorated. New policies mean they are no longer encouraged to attend Parish Council meetings or provide tailored reports on local crime/policing. The council have written to senior police officers and the Police and Crime Commissioner with their concerns but priorities are now elsewhere and we are advised that information is 'available on their website' should we need it.

The Community Information Point continues to be funded, supplying recycling and dog-poo bags, local information and access to district and county council literature, bus timetables, photocopying and internet searches for residents. The CIP is open twice a week and we thank Jenny Rooney for providing an excellent service to residents.

Following requests by residents for Christmas lights for the village, provision of lighting on the School Green was investigated with the idea of illuminating the oak tree. However, to provide an electricity supply and sufficient lights to make a satisfactory display proved to be much more expensive than anticipated. An alternative solution was to have lights fitted to the façade of the school, and to supply and light a tree in the playground that could be enjoyed by the whole community. These lights

remain in place and will be reused each year, with electricity supplied by the primary school.

Accounts: The clerk ran through the main details of the financial report highlighting principal areas of income and expenditure. A key change over recent years is the lack of funding opportunities for major projects. This, together with the 15.5% reduction in the funding received from the District Council resulted in the council reluctantly having to increase its precept by 6.9% to keep pace. This equates to £0.28p per eligible household per month. A full set of accounts will be available to view at the time of Audit in June. There were no questions from the floor.

7. District Council report 2014–15

The Chairman introduced Cllr John Finbow and he explained that the past year was challenging for the District Council because of financial pressure as a result of reduced funding from Central Government. However key areas and their priorities were identified as detailed below:-

Place:

- Reduced litter by 68% through delivery of a targeted anti-litter campaign.
- Invested in technology and introduced new refuse and recycling routes.
- Installed solar panels on our leisure centres to reduce carbon footprint and cost of electricity on each site.

People:

- Supported vulnerable people in the community.



- Opened leisure centre in Witham and improved existing centres.
- Refurbished four play areas across the District.

Prosperity:

- Supported the set-up of 75 business start-ups across the district in conjunction with Ignite.
- Invested £1m in a Local Authority Mortgage Scheme operated by Lloyds Bank to help first-time buyers.
- Enabled the delivery of 173 affordable homes in the district
- Introduced a discretionary rate relief scheme for 536 retail businesses.

Performance:

- Provided value for money – reviewed investment strategy to maximise income from assets resulting in an anticipated extra income of over £1m.
- Improved operational efficiency of waste services – reduced costs by £200k pa.
- Reviewed democratic representation resulting in a reduction from 60 to 49 Councillors from May 2015.
- Purchased investment properties to generate income to support delivery of key council services.
- Introduced “My Location” on the website enabling residents to easily access information about the area in which they live.

Partnership:

- Engaged with strategic businesses, through the District Business Leaders’ Board, to support improvements to key economic

infrastructure, including business sign-up to the A120 improvement campaign.

- Established a District Employment and Skills Board and conducted an employer skills review to address employer skill needs.
- Set up a Health and Wellbeing panel with partners to reduce the health inequalities in the District.

Cllr Finbow was standing down at the forthcoming election after many years of service to Great Bardfield and the wider community. The Chairman expressed her thanks for his support over the years and this was echoed by those attending the meeting. He in turn said it had been a pleasure to work with the Council and its Clerk and how proud he was when Great Bardfield won Village of Year in 2009.

9. School report

Cllr Dyson presented this on behalf of the Headteacher and urged those present to take the time to read her superb report which illustrated the work of the teachers and children at the school. Details of all their activities were included in the annual report together with some excellent photographs.

10. Charities report

Pat Coles, Chair of Great Bardfield Charities, explained that the first of the Great Bardfield Charities was established over 100 years ago, when a philanthropic resident bequeathed funds in his will for the benefit of other residents. Since that time other Bardfield residents have left money in their wills to the charity for the benefit



of others with a significant bequest by Chrissie Samms.

The charity operates under a scheme, which clearly defines the purpose and terms under which the funds are allocated. The scheme is overseen by the Charities Commission, which invests the capital funds for the charity which receives interest from the capital, quarterly. Under the scheme, the charity is able to assist with the social, health and educational needs of the residents of the parish of Great Bardfield.

The trustees meet four times a year to consider applications, and meeting dates are notified in the *Bardfield Times* and on the Community and Charity website. In extraordinary situations, trustees will consider applications between meetings.

During the 2014–15 Financial Year the total income including interest was £19,279 with total expenditure of £18,512.99. Grants were given to youth projects, educational projects, provision of medical and disability equipment, school uniforms and help with fuel costs for those in need.

Pat thanked her fellow trustees for their help and support during the year.

11. Town Hall report & accounts

This was presented by Acting Chair, Carolynne Ruffle. The Town Hall continues to be a popular venue and total income last year was £16,500 – unfortunately expenditure was £16,800. This was due to a loss for the year of £316 mainly due to write-offs of debts from hall hire. Casual lettings income decreased by £1,062 but village group bookings increased slightly. Income from the Art & Crafts Show,

the Christmas Draw and other events run by the committee all increased over the year. The 200 Club is a good source of revenue; all subscriptions were down compared to last year but still at a high enough level to pay prize money. Regarding the building, there are works planned including improved toilet facilities, however of more importance are roof repairs. It is also intended to undertake a property valuation during the coming year. Carolynne thanked all those on the committee for their hard work during the year.

12. Bardfield Times report & accounts

Thanks to the diligence of Jackie Newton, and Kate and Ian Fox, the magazine has maintained its strong financial position, so much so that, as well as making some charitable contributions to local causes, we have been able to thank our trusty army of distributors and regular contributors with a buffet supper. Funds also come from the Cinema Club, the success of which is very much down to the support of volunteers.

The redesign of the *BT*'s cover was undertaken by Jenny, with the help of Ian Fox (now our staff photographer), last November and has proved very popular. The advertising section, too, is much improved; Kate and Ian have included new advertisers and tidied up or redesigned many of the other ads. The magazine is an excellent marketing tool that yields many a new customer.

The magazine itself offers what it is hoped is an interesting and varied diet of local features in addition to the pages of regular contributions. The “Village People” series continues to



flourish, with nine additions over the last ten editions. These include a chart-topping rocker, a nineteenth-century farmer, a round-the-world sailor and a marathon-running postman, with subjects ranging in age from twelve to ninety. It continues to amaze the editors that a population of 1200 can furnish so many engaging characters. Other features have ranged from sparkling wine to the general election via the Melbourne Cricket Ground, all written by people of this parish, twenty-one of them in total last year.

The regular contributors continue to give us the bulk of the copy. Mac Beanland's new series "Nature Notes" is a fascinating addition, for which we thank him. Tony Hayward's remarkable series of "Countryfile" articles, which arrive promptly (handwritten) each month, has prompted a letter to say that it forms a major and valuable source of information and knowledge.

Statement of Accounts: There was

a question from the floor regarding clarification of balances which the Clerk would follow up and report back.

13. Items of report

There were no items of report and no further questions from the floor.

14. Closing remarks

The Chairman closed the proceedings by thanking the residents and the District and County Councillors for attending and emphasised the importance of the Annual Report as a reflection of life in the community. She also wished to thank her fellow Councillors and Clerk for their support and work during the year.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Kate Fox
Parish Clerk

*Right:
hoar
frost over
Bardfield*



*Far right:
swan
sighted on
reservoir*





Parish Council review 2014–2015



Cllr Carolynne Ruffle – Vice Chair

As Vice-Chair of the Great Bardfield Parish Council I am pleased to present the Parish Council Review for the last 12 months – May 2015 to April 2016. This report summarises the activities of the Parish Council over the last year. The council is made up of seven parish councillors; five were re-elected unopposed in last May's local elections and two are new to the council having been co-opted to fill the remaining vacancies.

During the year we held 11 Parish Council meetings and several sub-committee meetings on items such as planning, finance and playingfield improvements.

We review and comment on all planning applications pertinent to the parish. This year we considered over 20 applications for work to trees in the conservation area (for multiple trees in some cases) and around 25 planning applications including listed building

consent for repairs to the structure of a house, conservatories and minor extensions, and larger developments such as the conversion of the barns at the Vine Inn into holiday lets. We raise objections where we feel necessary – for example where there may be loss of off-street parking or a proposal that would be detrimental to the historical street scene.

The largest, and most contentious application this year was for 37 properties to be built on arable land off Braintree Road. Though we recognise the pressures on housing and the requirement of the local authority to build up to 18,000 properties over the next 17 years, we also feel it is our responsibility to safeguard our village for the future and to ensure that any development is appropriate in size, and location and that it meets the needs of local people. We encouraged the developer to stage a public meeting to allow residents to see the proposals and have an opportunity to raise questions. The main concern from residents was that this proposed development was the 'thin end of the wedge' being at the edge of the village and that allowing development here could potentially result in housing extending further along Braintree Road, changing the character of the village. Critically, the location is outside the village envelope, BDC's own limit for permitted development.

The Parish Council objected most strongly and encouraged residents to make their voices heard. Although no decision has formally been made



we understand that BDC's Call for Sites (as part of their current review of the Local Development Plan for the district) has resulted in more than three times as much land being offered, as is required to satisfy their housing development needs.

We keep abreast of proposed developments and other issues in neighbouring parishes, particularly where our own infrastructure and community may be impacted. This council wrote to Essex County Council in support of Finchingfield residents over proposals to close Finchingfield Bridge for several months this coming summer, and we are keeping up to date with potential development proposals for land south of Great Saling and at the Wethersfield MOD base.

We will be consulted on BDC's draft Local Plan expected to be issued in the next few weeks. This will outline the sites proposed for development throughout the district – plenty of reading for us – to which we will make our response in due course.

The Parish Plan Refresh which resulted from consultation with village residents and was launched at the last Parish Assembly, has guided the work of the Parish Council this year. All issues are reviewed at each Parish Council meeting to monitor and drive progress. A map for visitors is shortly to be installed on School Green. This will indicate the key points of interest together with village services, and was designed for us by a Bardfield-based business – Sherbet Creative.

Our new councillors have been instrumental in revitalising our local footpath network, establishing an agreed maintenance plan with ECC's

Public Rights of Way officer to share the work. Local volunteers undertook some clearance last year and the most popular paths will continue to be monitored and kept tidy. We are also pleased to report that the footbridge over the River Pant which was damaged by a fallen tree over two years ago has, at last, been replaced and opens up this path again.

The Footpaths Committee is now a Footpaths and Environment Committee, having its remit extended. At each Parish Council meeting we discuss areas of the village that need attention. As a result of this focus on the environment, over the past year we have undertaken several improvement projects including the repainting of the posts and rails around Causeway and School Greens; the refurbishment of the Memorial Green including planting new roses; liaison with the Co-op Group to (i) prevent delivery lorries turning at and damaging the Memorial Green and (ii) replace the double bin outside the shop damaged by one of their lorries; encouraging residents not to leave their bins outside their homes when they don't need to and regular litter picks around the village (still not enough). Of course, we have to thank our village handyman, Ian Ruffle, who undertakes much of this work, but also local volunteers for their contribution to keeping this village looking as well-cared for as it is.

The Parish Council is also responsible for managing regular grass cutting, brook clearance and street lighting. We are currently planning a new street light for Crown Street, a particularly dark spot in the village. We have also tidied hedges and verges where



no one else has taken responsibility, including those outside Castle Shot and Northampton Meadow.

As usual, we continue to receive reports and concerns about speeding, parking and irresponsible dog owners. We have installed our own permanent speed warning sign on Dunmow Road, partly funded by this council. We recognise that much of the village is not designed for the quantity of cars now using its roads and requiring parking spaces. Many properties, particularly in the centre of the village, do not have off-street parking and the patience and cooperation of all residents is vital. At some times and in some locations, common sense and considerate parking can be lacking. We do consider proposals to help improve this but solutions must work for all residents and not only for those in cars.

We requested the repainting of Keep Clear signs in Brook Street, last July, and chased numerous times. They have just been completed at the beginning of April. We had considered getting it done ourselves, but we are not permitted, by law, to undertake work on the highways – an appointed contractor must do it. This seems to result in a long wait for a bit of white paint, not to mention the time taken to fill in a few potholes. I note we have had several drain covers and holes repaired in the last few weeks – a new year and a new budget.

Despite some frustrations with the processes we do have a good relationship with our elected District and County Councillors. We are pleased that both of our two District Councillors regularly attend our Parish Council meetings. They provide useful

information about decisions and discussions at BDC and issues facing other local parishes, so we thank them for their support of this council. Roger Walters, our County Councillor, is an effective point of contact when we need support in our dealings with ECC.

With regard to the Playingfields and Pavilion Project we can report that we have placed an order for new play equipment which we hope will be installed for use this summer. We are aware that current equipment is now very tired or has been vandalised and is unusable. Most of this is to be replaced with a range of equipment for toddlers through to teens. The playground area is to be relocated slightly to provide more car parking space and improved access to the site of the planned new pavilion.

The Parish Council fund the Community Information Point, which is a central point for literature and other information on parish, district and county council services, local schools and colleges, bus times and routes. We also continue to supply recycling and dog-poo bags (the latter funded by the Parish Council), photocopying services and internet searches for residents. The CIP is open twice a week and we thank Jenny Rooney for providing this excellent service to residents.

We have been disappointed with the loss of our local policing team and poor communication on police matters. Any information we now get regarding crime and other policing issues is rarely pertinent to our village as it covers the whole of Braintree and Uttlesford Districts where policing teams are focused on and based in Braintree and Saffron Walden, and contains little



evidence of any rural police presence. We no longer have police attendance at Parish Council meetings and have generally seen a marked erosion of all police services.

We were sad to see the closure of the Bell Inn at the end of March. Angie and Liam have moved on to other things and we wish them well. Our concern is that the Bell will not re-open as a pub, though we are assured by BDC that it is highly unlikely that change of use would be permitted. At the time of writing, we understand that a new tenant is in discussion with the owner of the Bell and hopes to re-open in May. We, along with other residents of Bardfield, will look forward to having

two pubs back in operation and a choice of somewhere to have a beer after this meeting. A reminder that all village services rely on you to use them to remain viable.

Thank you for attending tonight and supporting your Parish Council.

**Carolynne Ruffle, Vice Chair,
Great Bardfield Parish Council**

*Right:
speed
controls on
Dunmow
Road*

*Far right
top and
bottom:
residents
tidy up the
village*





Parish Council financial report

For the year ended 31st March 2016

This brief report is to highlight items of income and expenditure. Full accounts will of course be available when these are prepared for annual audit.

Precept: This coming year sees an increase in rates across all authorities for the first time in five years, due to the reduction in government support. This has led to a decrease of 14.5% in funds provided to parish councils to enable them to carry out their work. To help maintain its level of income, this Parish Council approved a small increase of £750 (3.8%) in the Precept, which equates to £3.14 per eligible household per annum.

Insurance: It was agreed to accept the quotation from Zurich and elect for a fixed payment for a three-year term.

Annual audited accounts 2014–15: These were approved without reservation by PFK Littlejohn, the appointed auditor.

Pipers Meadow: Following the submission of the 10-year programme, work has now started on clearing brambles and overgrowth and quotes are being obtained to replace the existing fencing.

Grants, donations, fund-raising: Income from these sources continues to be difficult to obtain but the following income was received:

- £1396.38 from BDC towards street cleaning/village handyman and related works.
- £555 from sale of Christmas cards
- £1,152 profit from the firework display event.

- £500 from Bardfield Charities for the cost of new roses for the Memorial Garden.
- £500 from *Bardfield Times* towards the cost of the Village Map.

Bardfield calendar: Unfortunately due to lack of submissions the exhibition could not be held and subsequently the 2016 calendar was not produced. However, it is hoped that this will not be the case for 2017. Not only has it been a good community event but both the calendar and cards have been extremely popular and good fund-raisers.

Playground project: As mentioned last year, this project has progressed, albeit slowly, due to ongoing discussions with BDC planning department. It has taken much longer than envisaged but the order has now been placed with Wicksteed and it is hoped that the new equipment will be up and running in time for the summer holidays – if not sooner. The initial cost for the refurbishment is in the order of £31,000 plus the cost of the fencing and gates – in the region of £14,000. It is hoped that the overall cost will be contained with the help from volunteers in dismantling some of the existing equipment and fencing.

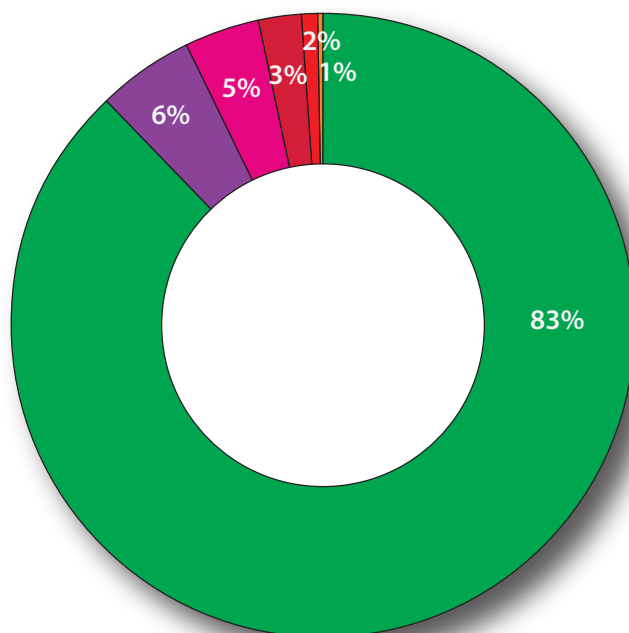
Kate Fox
Parish Clerk and
Responsible Financial Officer



Parish income

For the financial year ended 31st March 2016

- Precept + Parish Support Grant
- Verge Cutting/Village Cleaning
- VAT Refund
- Donations/Insurance claim
- Sundries & Substation Rental
- Pavilion/Playingfield Hire



Precept and Parish Support Grant	£32,853.00
Verge cutting/village cleaning (agency arrangements)	£2,233.00
VAT refund	£1,903.00
Donations/insurance claim	£1,356.00
Sundries and substation rental	£898.00
Pavilion/playing field hire	£312.00
Bank interest	£32.00
Total	£39,587.00
Pavilion Project fund stands at:	£54,897.00
Reserves and special projects account:	£62,300.00



Parish expenditure

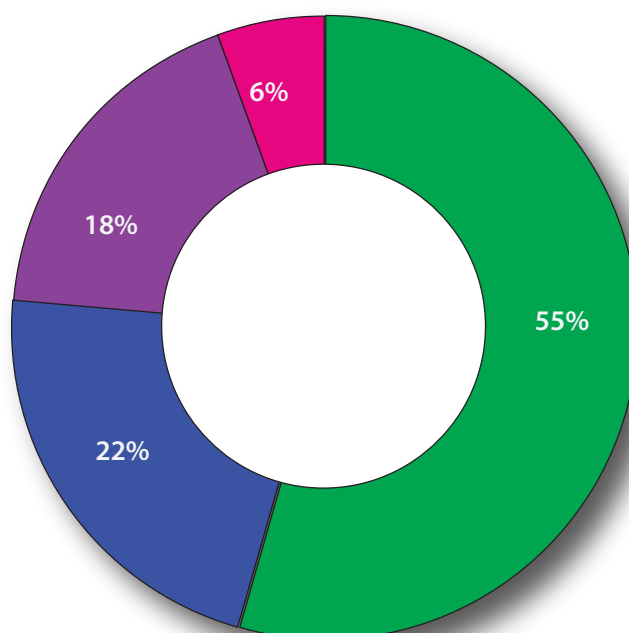
For the financial year ended 31st March 2016

■ Village amenities/
Capital schemes

■ Admin

■ Staff/expenses

■ VAT



Village amenities/Capital schemes	
Grass cutting/Pipers/Memorial/churchyard/open spaces	£3,830.00
Town Hall: grant and substation rental	£2,607.00
Public lighting – supply and maintenance	£2,377.00
Pavilion/Playingfield Project	£2,424.00
Verge cutting/street cleaning (agency arrangements)	£1,689.00
CIP/Town Hall rent/IT and BT rental/staff	£1,398.00
Capital schemes	£825.00
Subscriptions and donations	£646.00
Staff/expenses	
Salary/postage/office expenses/web site	£6,319.00
Admin	
Gen admin/telephone/audit/stationery/tax/insurance	£5,227.00
VAT	
VAT	£1,592.22
Total	£28,939.22



Essex County Council report

1. County Council budget 2016–17

At Full Council on February 9th, Essex County Council passed the budget for 2016–17. The impact of cuts from central government means that ECC has to save more than £1m every week for the next four years. The budget saw council tax rise by 1.99% for the first time in five years and the introduction of the government's Social Care levy of 2%, equating to an increase of 84p per week for a Band D property.

Despite the pressures, the budget outlined £1.8bn of spending on public services for residents and a £1bn capital investment plan for the next three years. Cllr David Finch, Leader of Essex County Council, set out five key areas for investment in his budget speech.

- Business: an economic powerhouse.
- Taking care of our elderly and vulnerable.
- A first-class education system.
- Sustainable public services.
- A greater role for local communities.

2. Business rates

In October 2015, Chancellor George Osborne stated that local authorities would retain all business rates (aka National Non Domestic Rates) collected locally by the end of the decade. This potentially offers new opportunities to create better links between business rates and supporting infrastructure for commerce, by offering local leaders more powers and incentives to stimulate economic growth and investment in public services. This is worth up to £26bn for councils. Currently only 50% of this comes back to local authorities. The formula for determining its allocation does not give favourable terms to ECC, which will receive only £164.3m in 2016–17. As at Quarter 3 of 2015–16, £500m was collected from local businesses but only £219m has come back to 13 Essex local authorities and the Essex Fire Authority.

3. Devolution

We have heard a lot about devolution recently. The Chancellor announced more deals across the country in his budget, including an East Anglia deal



Cllr Roger Walters

with an elected mayor. The Leader has said previously that devolution is perhaps one of the most important opportunities for local government in a generation. This is because the United Kingdom is the most centralised country in the West. We raise less revenue at a local level than almost any other developed economy and we have limited levers to pull at a local level to improve people's lives.

4. Superfast broadband

The roll-out of superfast broadband in Essex has now reached a further 10,000 homes and businesses across the county since the last programme update was issued in November and work remains on schedule. It means around 85% of the county now has access to speeds of 24Mbps and above, to increase to 87% by this summer.

Residents are reminded that nobody is automatically connected to superfast broadband when fibre becomes



available – residents need to ask their provider to switch to fibre, or buy a fibre service.

Superfast Essex and the government have launched a Satellite Broadband Scheme to help those who have no, or slow, broadband connectivity to access a basic broadband service. Full details including eligibility criteria, instructions on how the scheme works and how to apply, along with FAQs are all available at www.superfastessex.org/satellite.

5. Streetlighting

ECC has announced that it will convert some 19,000 of its streetlights to LED, saving around £900k a year in energy and maintenance costs, as well as carbon taxes. The streetlights affected will be those that remain on all night.

Beginning this year and scheduled to be completed in 2018, the LED conversion project will deliver payback over ten years and a return on investment of 115% by year 2020. Electricity consumption of the affected lighting stock is estimated to reduce by 63% as a result of the LED conversion project. The authority is investing £9.2m in the project, £4.3m of which will be forward-funded by an interest-free government loan.

6. Lower Thames Crossing

Options for a new Lower Thames Crossing are being consulted upon and ECC is urging businesses to respond. The council believes Highways England's proposed dual carriageway bored-tunnel crossing, with entrances and exits east of Gravesend and Tilbury ('location C'), connecting junction 1 of the M2 to the M25 between junctions 29 and 30 ('route 3'), will deliver the largest benefits to Essex. Route 3

provides a strategic link between the Channel Ports and the Midlands and North, as well as improved connectivity to and from Essex. It will create better network resilience. Research shows, depending upon the direction, south or northbound travel, and time of day, 23% and 34% of drivers respectively would use route 3, rather than the existing crossing.

Details on the proposals and the consultation can be found at www.new-thamescrossing.co.uk. The Highways England consultation closes on March 24th.

7. Education

We want to make sure Essex has a first-class education system. That is why we have set ourselves a target of every child in Essex attending a good or outstanding school by 2018. ECC has worked successfully to support school improvement across Essex:

- 82% of Essex primary schools are now rated good or outstanding, up from 65% in 2010.
- 81% of Essex secondary schools are now rated good or outstanding, up from 63% in 2010.
- 100% of special schools are now rated good or outstanding (as of January 2016).

We want to see this record of success continue. We want Essex to have the finest schools with the best teachers in the country. And we want every child in Essex to have a place in one of those schools.

8. Demand Responsive Transport initiative

Demand Responsive Transport (DaRT) is being introduced in parishes in the north of Essex. This exciting new service will allow residents to travel between 0600 and 2000 Monday to Saturday. It increases the opportunities to travel and improve access to shopping, health appointments, work, school or college. It can also be used to visit friends and family. Passengers can travel alone or as a group. Concessionary Bus pass holders can use the service for free after 0900 Monday to Friday and all day on a Saturday. To find out more, visit www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-Roads/Getting-Around/Bus/Services/Demand-Responsive-Transport-DaRT.aspx.

**Cllr Roger Walters, Essex County Council
Member for Three Fields with Great Notley**



Braintree District Council report

Achievements 2015–16

Place:

Our priorities are to:

- Keep our district clean and tidy.
- Protect our environment.
- Provide green space for everyone to enjoy.

To support this in 2015–16 we have:

- Continued to support an anti-litter campaign across Essex and participated in campaigns that reduce waste resulting in an 83% reduction in litter across the district and a 41% reduction across Essex.
- Been awarded 'Local Authority of the year' at the Keep Britain Tidy Awards for the council's innovative approach to creating a cleaner and greener district.
- Installed additional solar panels on Witham Leisure centre and new solar panels on the Discovery Centre and Unit 9, Lakes Road.
- Worked with Essex County Council to open a new Adventure Sky Line visitor attraction at Great Notley Country Park.
- Expanded our recycling waste service in flats to an additional 300 sites.

People:

Our priorities are to:

- Support vulnerable people in our community.
- Promote safe and healthy living.
- Encourage flourishing communities.

To support this in 2015–16 we have:

- Introduced a home inspection and handyman service to help frail

residents as part of our action to reduce hip fractures in the district.

- Worked with the Health and Wellbeing Panel to reduce obesity levels across the district by delivering local activities to encourage residents to eat well and increase activity levels.
- Delivered the second stage start of the Friends Life Women's Tour and follow-up festival to encourage cycling and other physical activities.
- Refurbished three play areas at Rosebay Close in Witham, John Ray Park in Braintree and Tabor Field in Braintree.
- Successfully supported community groups to deliver local projects through the Mi Community fund by awarding 21 grants.

Prosperity:

Our priorities are to:

- Increase job prospects and support business.
- Promote and improve our town centres.
- Secure appropriate infrastructure and housing growth.

To support this in 2015–16 we have:

- Promoted inward investment through a dedicated website and increased marketing activities.
- Invested £500,000 in a business loan scheme to help the district's businesses expand and grow to create new jobs and support enterprise in town and rural areas.
- Completed the extension to Springwood Drive Enterprise Centre.



- Delivered two Area Business Forums providing business support to local businesses.
- Delivered 60 affordable homes across the district and exceeded the four-year target set in 2012 to provide 400 affordable homes.

Performance:

Our priorities are to:

- Provide value for money.
- Deliver excellent customer service.
- Improve access to our services.

To support this in 2015–16 we have:

- Carried out a review of all public sector land and property within the district to identify under-utilised assets, opportunities for sharing or disposing of assets and the potential for developing sites for additional housing.
- Redesigned our website to be more responsive, improving access on a range of devices for our customers.
- Increased our long term investments to £12m and increased the amount that can be placed in individual pooled funds to £5m.
- Identified opportunities to develop income for the authority under our Better at Business Commercialisation Programme.

Partnership:

To support this in 2015–16 we have:

- Worked with the leaders of all the Greater Essex Authorities on a devolution proposal to explore how devolved powers could benefit residents.
- Continued to lobby for improvements to the A120, A12 and rail links ensuring co-ordination with the Local Plan proposals.

- Worked with health partners to launch a social prescribing model for residents, connecting them to non-medical sources of support and activities taking place across the district.
- Established a business rates pooling arrangement with nine Essex authorities which will result in additional resources being available to the Council.
- Continued to explore the opportunity of a shared building control service between eight authorities.

See page 28 for a more detailed report from Cllr Schwier and Cllr Tattersley of Three Fields ward who represent the interests of Great Bardfield at Braintree District Council.







***Top row:** Re-thatching Cottage Museum, Morris dancers in the High Street, Richard Bawden unveils blue plaque at Brick House, Fireworks night at the playingfield. **Next row:** Messy church, Horticultural Spring Supper, new boules court. **Next row:** Yr 6 end of year production, Finchingfield Beavers at Town Hall Carols, pool at the youth club, Boules winners 2015, **Bottom row:** Garage Sale, Bardfield Brass, Primary school children at opening of Hall Field.*





Three Fields Ward report

May 2015's District Council elections saw the fulfilment of an election promise by the Council's Conservative Group to reduce the cost of democracy. One way this was achieved was by reducing the number of councillors from 61 to 49, a saving of around £50,000.

For residents of the Three Fields Ward (Great Bardfield, Finchingfield, Wethersfield, Shalford, and Panfield) this meant the amalgamation of parishes to create a new ward served by two Councillors instead of the previous three.

This has given us the opportunity to attend more parish meetings; a specific slot on the agenda allows us to feed back issues which affect your parish, and lets us offer a general briefing on significant district-wide matters. Our District Council responsibilities mean it will not always be possible to attend every meeting but we aim to stay in close contact with your parish representatives.

The council's key achievements since the May 2015 election are provided, but we are particularly pleased to highlight the following:

- We endorsed successful bids to the council's Mi Communities Fund for improvements to Great Bardfield and Blackmore End community and village halls.
- We maintained budgets to ensure our district remains one of the cleanest in the country.
- We developed successful and popular recycling schemes.
- We increased the emphasis on health initiatives in rural areas.



Cllr Peter Schwier



Cllr Peter Tattersley

- We provided additional financial support to the County Council to ensure superfast broadband reaches our more rural areas quicker.
- We made financial provision to provide infrastructure before major house building schemes were put in place.
- We ensured a continuous emphasis on the needs of our rural population in health, business, education, and housing.

We are now looking forward to the challenges of the next 12 months:

- We will take advantage of new planning rules giving increased accessibility of mobile phone signals in rural areas.
- Whilst recognising the government's targets imposed on local councils for new housing, (estimated for Braintree District to be around 14,500 over the next 17 years or 850 per year), we will endeavour to ensure that these are located appropriately in areas with adequate infrastructure, whilst recognising the wishes of parish councils.
- As ongoing central government grant reductions will continue to affect local government at all levels, we will ensure greater emphasis on value for money and efficiency.

If you wish to contact us our email addresses are:- cllr.pschwier@braintree.gov.uk and cllr.ptattersley@braintree.gov.uk.

Cllrs Peter Schwier and Peter Tattersley



Great Bardfield Charities

I am pleased to present the report of the Great Bardfield Charities covering the last 12 months from May 2015 to April 2016.

During this period we held quarterly meetings, where trustees considered the many applications for grants received from our community.

The charity operates under a scheme, which clearly defines the purpose and terms under which our funds can be allocated. The scheme is overseen by the Charities Commission, which invests our capital fund, and it is the interest, accrued quarterly from this capital fund, which is paid to the charity.

The trustees are continually mindful of the generosity of our benefactors, and it is only through them that we are able today to assist the residents of the parish of Great Bardfield with social, health and educational needs.

Alongside the invested funds, the Great Bardfield Charities owns the Grade 2 listed Cottage Museum on the Dunmow Road. This little 16th century, timber-framed, thatched building with a long history of use as an alms house, was bequeathed to the charity in 1584, and today is rented and safeguarded by the Great Bardfield Historical Society. The trustees are pleased to announce that re-thatching will be finished in the coming weeks, giving the Museum a new lease of life.

The charity expenditures over the year April 2015 – March 2016 are:

Total income inc. interest: £19,600
Total expenditure: £18,900

(NB – these figures are unaudited at the time of writing this report.)

Examples of grants made in the last year include:

- Contributions for fuel payments for pensioners and others in need.
- Educational projects, travel, equipment and books
- Provision of medical and disability equipment and hospital travel expenses.
- Village groups, club and societies, including toddler, pre-school and youth groups.
- Cricket ground sporting expenses.
- Town Hall roof repairs.
- Memorial garden replanting.
- Re-thatching the Cottage Museum.

The Charities Committee is accountable to the Great Bardfield Parish Council, and the administering officers for 2015 – 2016 are:

Pat Coles – Chair

Dell Cottage, Dunmow Rd, Gt Bardfield 01371 810780

Brenda Poston – Secretary

Buck House, Vine St, Gt Bardfield 01371 810519

Tony Hayward – Treasurer

Littles Farm, Beslyns Rd, Gt Bardfield 01371 810320

Debbie Rogers – Minutes Secretary

Dixons, Bridge End, Gt Bardfield 01371 811083

Alan Bray – Advisory Trustee

Claypits Farm, Mill Rd, Gt Bardfield 01371 810489

The trustees meet four times a year to consider applications. Meeting dates are notified in the *Bardfield Times* and on the community and charity websites. In extraordinary situations, trustees will consider applications between meetings. All applications to the charity are considered carefully and without prejudice by the trustees. Organisations or individual villagers can approach any of the trustees at any time with requests for assistance in making applications.

The charity accounts are audited yearly by Bill Mules, and we thank him for his on-going professional support. This report and the audited accounts are deposited with the clerk to the Parish Council.

Pat Coles – Chair



Town Hall report

The Town Hall committee is responsible for managing the use, maintenance and repair of the Town Hall, ensuring its ongoing service for the community and beyond. The committee meets monthly and most members are involved with one or more of the clubs or societies that use the facilities.

Regular users include Bardfield Choir, Bardfield Players, Carpet Bowls Club, Mothers and Toddlers, Horticultural Society, Cinema Club, the Parish Council and yoga classes. The hall is also hired out for private parties, fundraising events and weddings.

Our AGM has just taken place so we have just elected our new committee. We would like to thank Denise Reid, who has stood down as our Treasurer, after many years' valuable service on the committee.

Our main focus this year has been to raise funds for the refurbishment of the Town Hall roof, following a survey which revealed that it needed remedial work to the slates and, specifically, the nails keeping them in place. With over £50,000 required for this work, a daunting amount of fundraising activity faced us and we expected it to take us several years. We have been so pleased that new committee member, Patricia Walsh volunteered to apply for grant funding and that her efforts have been so successful, with grants being awarded by Bardfield Charities, Stansted Airport Community Trust, Essex County Council Community Initiatives Fund and Braintree District Council Mi Community Fund. These grants, totalling more than £35,000, plus local fundraising efforts such as the 'Sponsor a Slate', Ben Waters' 'Raise the Roof' event and the Vine Inn's gala evening, mean that we have been able to book the work to take place this August/September. Although the hall will be surrounded by scaffolding we are assured that it can remain open over the summer.

We have had other expenses this year too, including some rewiring, replacement of fire exit signs and installation of emergency lighting; The installation of a new glass washer, new folding tables, urn and kettles. Hiring fees do not cover all the expenses of running

the hall, nor the other improvements that we intend to undertake in the next few years. We will need to continue our fundraising and thank the community for their generosity in helping us add to the funds. Thanks go to Ian Holmes for organising the 200 Club which also raises funds for hall improvements. The 200 Club will contribute to the cost of insulating the roof, while we have the opportunity to get under it.

Thanks go to all the committee for their hard work and support this year. Thanks to Jenny Rooney and Chris Couldridge who have also left the committee this year and Mike Jones and Darren and Jan Egan who have recently joined.

We are sorry to have to report that we are not able to stage our annual Art & Crafts Show which has been so ably organised by Brenda Poston and Lesley Graves these past two years. Unfortunately, Brenda and Lesley have other commitments this year and we have been unable to find volunteers to take it on. We hope that it can be resurrected for 2017 and beyond, if someone comes forward to organise the artists and their contributions.

We recently resurfaced part of the car park to provide a larger boules pitch for use by residents of Great Bardfield. I can confirm this surface has been designed to be parked on so no parking space has been lost for hirers.

Thanks again for your support.

Carolynne Ruffle
Chairperson



The Bardfield Times

This has been a year of consolidation and development.

One worry for the editors has always been that too few people of the village contribute to the magazine. This year has seen a heartening improvement; as well as our regular writers, we received letters and articles from 45 villagers on a wide variety of topics.

Regular contributors must be thanked for sticking to the onerous task of meeting monthly deadlines. There are nineteen writers on whom we rely for much of our copy. In the last eighteen months we have added two new columns: Mac Beanland's "Nature Notes" and Paul Boon's "Tec Tips", both of which have proved popular and generated much correspondence. With Paul's monthly piece, we feel we have better balanced the magazine's content, addressing the difficulties of a rural population struggling with inept telephone, WiFi and other services.

Our series, "Village People", continues to generate interest. Over the past year, 15 villagers have been interviewed or contributed their own pieces. Thanks go to Ruth Walker and Joyce Yates, our ace reporters, who have provided several of these in-depth reports. It continues to amaze all of us that one small community can provide such a range of diverse and fascinating characters. Since the present editors began to work on the magazine, more than 70 locals have been grilled, and their stories have diverted and educated the rest of us.

Financially, we seem secure, thanks to the ceaseless efforts of Team Fox and

their merciless pursuit of advertising revenue – so much so that we have recently advertised in the *BT* to offer support for local causes. Several donations have been made in this past year to societies and local organisations. In this and elsewhere, Jackie Newton, as ever, has been meticulous in her handling of all matters financial.

Finally, we must not forget the selfless delivery team, headed by the Coles, who regardless of the elements ensure the *BT* lands on the doormat before the first of each month.

David Yates and Jenny Rooney (Joint Editors)

The Bardfield Times		
Statement of Account for Year Ending 31st March 2016		
	2015-16	2014-15
Opening Balance	£972.83	£2,879.77
Income		
Advertising	10,851.95	7,978.00
Subs/Sales	244.00	230.12
Donations	–	50.00
Fundraising/Cinema	2,472.01	2,843.85
	£13,567.96	£11,101.97
Expenditure		
Printing	7,081.00	7,740.00
Stationery	563.81	108.20
Postage	141.84	168.47
Cinema	1,825.03	1,562.47
Donations	2,150.00	550.00
	£11,761.68	£10,129.14
Closing Balance	£1,806.28	£972.83
Current A/c – £4,832.44		
Savings A/c – £3,002.42		
Cash in hand – £51.00		

Jackie Newton – Hon Treasurer



Great Bardfield Historical Society

*Gill
Morrell
– much
missed by
us all*



This year has been overshadowed by the loss of Gill Morrell who died in September. Gill had been our excellent secretary for many years and we are indebted to her for all her work in managing the design and manufacture of the blue plaques. We miss her greatly.

The society has had an exciting and successful year with a full programme of talks and visits. The highlight of the year was the unveiling of two blue plaques. The first, at Brick House, commemorates artist Edward Bawden who lived and worked there from the early 1930s until the late 1970s. The second plaque, at Place House, commemorates artist John Aldridge who lived there from 1933-1983 and also William Bendlowes, Sergeant at Law to Queen Elizabeth I who lived in the house from 1564 and is remembered as a philanthropist who provided alms houses, a school and endowed a charity which continues to

this day, administered by the Bardfield Charities. At a reception held in the Town Hall Dr. Malcolm Yorke, author of a number of books on the artists of Great Bardfield, spoke about their significance and introduced his most recent book, published by the Victoria and Albert Museum, *Bawden, Ravilious and the Artists of Great Bardfield*. The plaque at Place House was unveiled by Mrs Kathy Slow and members of her family. Mrs Slow worked as housekeeper to the Aldridges for 25 years – she remembers that her first job was to polish the brass doorknocker. Artist Richard Bawden unveiled the plaque to his father at Brick House.

For several years the society has discussed the future of the Cottage Museum. We agreed last year to continue to run the museum and to explore ways of developing it – this is ongoing. The Bardfield Charities who own the cottage have funded the new thatch so the Museum is looking particularly attractive for the new season – we hope for lots of visitors. Our funds have been swelled this year by income from sales of society publications and village walks and talks. Another significant source of income has been from the Grand Draws with works of art generously donated by Richard Bawden, Chloe Cheese and Linda Richardson.

At our AGM special thanks were given to local artist and printmaker Linda Richardson who, with husband Philip, will shortly be moving to the Shetland Islands. Linda has done so much for the Historical Society over



*Celebrating
the blue
plaques –
Richard
Bawden,
Janet Dyson
and Peyton
Skipwith
November
2015*

the years and has been particularly generous in sourcing works of art for our own collection and for the prize draws. We wish them well in their new life, and thank you Linda for all you've done for GBHS.

Thanks to the committee for all their support during the year; to Marilyn

Edwards who has taken on the role of Secretary, and to all the volunteers who do museum duty. We look forward to another year of interesting talks and visits and developing the work of the society.

Janet Dyson – Chair

Programme of Talks and Visits for 2016–17

Wed 4 th May	<i>A Career in the Police Force</i> – Colin Maddock
Wed 8 th June	<i>Americans in Wethersfield 1939–45</i> – Dr Vernon Williams
Wed 6 th July	<i>History of Weaving</i> – Richard Humphries
Wed 7 th Sept	<i>'Capability' Brown and Audley End</i> – Lizzie Sanders
Wed 5 th Oct	<i>History of Courtaulds & the Wool Trade</i> – John Miners
Wed 2 nd Nov	<i>Tracing Vanished Mills</i> – David Morgans

Ariel Crittall Memorial Lecture (Autumn 2016)

Date to be confirmed *Eric Ravilious* – James Russell

Thur 2nd June *Visit to New Hall* – 2.00pm
Date to be confirmed *Church visit* – venue to be confirmed

Sat 8th Mar (2017) *Annual General Meeting and Social Evening*

Unless stated otherwise, all meetings are in the Friends Meeting House at 8pm.
Look out for posters giving further details. To book a visit please telephone Marilyn Edwards on 810555.



Bardfield Horticultural Society



Summer Show 2015

In common with many similar organisations around the country, age-related issues are a real challenge to the future health of the Bardfield Horticultural Society. In 2015, our President, Len Horsnell, sadly passed away at the age of 90. He was an exceptionally active member up until the end; a true organiser and great at simply getting things done. He will be much missed by everyone.

The annual calendar of events, tailored to suit the wishes of its older members as well as to encourage younger ones, comprises a winter lecture, followed by spring and summer shows of vegetables, flowers, cookery and handicrafts. At the shows every effort is made to include children from an early age, nursery and upward, with artwork and “novelty” garden entries.

Interspersed between these major garden events are the very popular Spring and Harvest Suppers at which

food and entertainment are provided to all (both members and guests) at a modest price.

A local summer garden visit is usually arranged subject to travel and weather and a new venture, a floral art morning, has also been started in order to widen the appeal of the society to a wider range of gardening interests.

Thus, in 2015 we began by welcoming Jim Buttress as our guest speaker. Jim is a former superintendent of the royal parks, broadcaster and RHS judge (*Britain in Bloom*), and a very popular down-to-earth character in the gardening community.

In March the floral art morning was launched with great success. A month later, Bardfield won the Inter-village Floral Art Shield at the Finchingfield Show shortly before savouring the delights of the Spring Supper.

June was celebrated by a well-attended visit to a member's garden



in Shalford, at which tea and home-made cakes were amply provided. The Summer Show was held in the Town Hall in early August, and whilst proving successful from the point of view of entries received and new exhibitors attracted, was disappointing in regard to visitor numbers attending in the afternoon.

In September, Bardfield was awarded first prize in the Inter-village Vegetable Competition, held at the Shalford Show, thanks to Peter Morris, who coincidentally was awarded the National Vegetable Society's prestigious gold medal for services to horticulture.

And finally in mid-October, the Harvest Supper was celebrated in style by 80 people enjoying the exploits of a local magician along with members' prepared foods and drink.

The AGM was held a few days later at which £100, raised by raffle at the Harvest Supper, was donated towards the Town Hall Roof Fund. At this



meeting Peter Morris was elected as the new president of the society.

Floral Art class

In summary, despite the challenges, 2015 has proved to be another successful year for the Bardfield Horticultural Society: but the future can only be assured if there is a continuity in horticultural interest and commitment from the younger generations.

Lynne Joyce

Spring Show 2015





Bardfield Oxlip Recovery Programme

The populations of oxlips at the two sites in the parish, the Ash Ground/Purple's Spinney at Great Lodge (see photo top right) and Piper's meadow in the village (see photo bottom right) have now reached a measure of equilibrium.

As plants reproduce mainly from seed rather than vegetatively, the populations are not expected to expand to any great extent within the confines of their closed grassland communities. In the absence of bare ground, seedlings which are relatively slow growing are unable to compete with the stronger growing grasses and perennial herbs. However, where conditions are favourable, established plants are expected to increase in size and vigour and maintain a relatively stable population.

Management at Piper's meadow in particular has been designed to restrict grassland growth whenever possible – mainly by doing a late summer “hay cut”, when the grass is removed and no fertilizers applied. Lowering fertility in such a manner is an established practice in maintaining wild-flower meadows, although it can take a considerable length of time to achieve effectively, perhaps twenty years or more.

Within the confines of Purple's Spinney at Great Lodge the situation is greatly different. The re-erection of the deer fencing has enabled oxlips within the wood to flower and set seed without damage.

Previously damage had been severe, with greater than 95% of the flower heads being eaten by deer before maturity. In 2015 this figure had dropped dramatically and great numbers of seed heads reached full maturity.

It is likely that where ground conditions permit, and many favourable areas are clearly visible, seedlings may be able to establish and create new populations of mature plants. It may take perhaps five years or so before anything of real substance can be confirmed, but the signs are promising.

The fencing combined with a strategy of limited clearing and coppicing to open up the tree canopy should enable this recolonization process to proceed at



a faster rate as the light levels improve.

In summary, the Oxlip Recovery Programme is proceeding much as hoped. Management regimes have been established and should remain unchanged for the time being at least. But success at Purple's Spinney is not assured and is critically dependent on maintaining the deer-fencing in good order, thereby controlling grazing damage.

D W Joyce





Plantings at Long Green

The native trees and shrubs planted at Long Green (Coney Green) in the spring of 2010, have now begun to thrive despite the poor ground into which they were first planted. The native spindle trees were covered with fruit in the autumn of 2015 and the field maples awash with the fading-yellows of falling leaves.

Establishment complete, the dangers and management henceforth should be focussed upon controlling grazing-damage (mainly from deer) and possible vandalism. To this end it is important to maintain fences and tree guards in good order for some time to come yet. Beneath the trees the ground flora is unexpectedly lush with grasses and wild flowers, and the cowslips derived from seed harvested nearby form part of the rich meadow community.

At the southern end of the lane the annual broad-casting of seed of our native bluebell have continued on an annual basis much as before. As many as ten or more small areas have been seeded over the years, since the work was started in the late summer of 2010. Although the ground conditions for seeding have proved exceptionally challenging over the years, the soil beneath the trees being hard, dry and poor, germination has been generally good and establishment better than expected.

When the project was begun it was known that bluebells, sown in the natural environment, can take several years to flower from seed. This indeed proved to be the case but thankfully a few inflorescences appeared for the first time in 2015 so our patience



has finally been rewarded. We now look forward to a more productive future, although annual seed-sowing will continue for several more years to come yet.

D W Joyce

*Above:
spindle trees
covered in
fruit*

*Below: Long
Green in the
autumn*





Great Bardfield allotments

It was another interesting year at the allotments; a mild spring made us think ahead to warm summer days so we were all well prepared. However, we then seemed to have a bit of a delayed start, with a few warm days but not much consistency. As a result, some vegetables were slower than others; runner beans and courgettes, in particular, were not in such glut as in previous years.

This being our sixth year, for the first time tomatoes did better. Success was definitely due to growing an Italian variety which can survive all weathers.

Another challenge was the pigeons;

we all seem to be netting our various vegetables to keep them off. Someone made a lovely scarecrow, and a watchful owl was put in place to scare them off – not sure how well they worked.

The plot holders are a mixture of retired and working people so some plots are weed free, and others are understandably a little weedier, but everyone agrees how lucky we are and we are already planning what we will be growing this year.

Tansey Bolsom





Freshwell Health Centre

The NHS is a political hot potato and although the public are told that NHS funds are protected, the reality is not quite so clear cut. The surgery has recently been informed that we face very significant funding cuts from April. Despite this, we continue to strive to find additional efficiencies and maintain the level of service we provide to our patients.

Our in-house ultrasound, gynaecology and cardiology services continue to be well reviewed by both our own patients and those from neighbouring practices. We continue to work with and welcome other providers of health and social care into our facilities including the Pain Team from Broomfield, the Community Agents, Farleigh Hospice, Age UK (toe-nail cutting services), Hearing Help Essex, dieticians, health visitors, district nurses and midwives. We will shortly be adding the Alzheimer's Society to this list.

Staff News

We are fortunate to have a very consistent and dedicated team at Freshwell and are aware that this is our most important asset. Dr Barrett is about to depart for maternity leave as she is expecting her first child in April.

Hannah, one of our dispensers, was blessed with the arrival of twins at the start of the year and we look forward to welcoming her back at the end of the summer.

We do not have a Junior Assistant at present. Four of our previous junior staff are currently studying at medical school, two of whom are due to qualify this summer.

Creamer Fund support

We are forever grateful for the tireless fundraising efforts of the CREAMER Fund. They support us with the ongoing costs of the equipment they provide for us (eg liquid nitrogen for our cryotherapy clinics, X-ray expenses) and also allow us to purchase new equipment (eg ear syringes). Over the past year they have also extended the number of defibrillators available in the local community and funded the lovely new outdoor gym in the village.

Patient Feedback

Thank you to all patients who took the time to complete one of the Friends and Family Test leaflets or on-line reports. This is a national initiative and we are monitored on the feedback we receive. We have had some lovely comments to feed back to staff. The practice has also been working closely within the community to ensure patient safety is maintained during the planned bridge closure.

Future Plans

Phase one of our building development is now complete and the admin staff have a lovely new suite of offices upstairs. This clears the way for Phase Two which includes a new, bigger dispensary. We hope building works will get underway very soon.

As always, we welcome your ideas and feedback, either by phone (01371 810328), post or in person.

Linda Cutts
Practice Manager



CREAMER Fund

The CREAMER Fund trustees meet four times a year. As always, I would like to thank the trustees for all their hard work. I would particularly like to mention Sylvia Gould and Kay Painter. When we go home from our meetings, they go to work on our behalf, implementing the decisions we have made.

I would also like, on behalf of Sylvia, to thank all the volunteers who assist her in running the various fund-raising events, including selling the raffle tickets. The trustees all do their bit, but it is wonderful to have extra help when it is needed.

Our funds are increasing all the time. Most of the money now comes from patients, who have appreciated the care they have received from all at the Freshwell Health Centre. They want to ensure others in the community continue to benefit from exceptional care in their time of need.

We continue to spend money on equipment that we feel will enhance the health and well-being of our community. With that in mind, we

have granted money towards outdoor gym equipment, which has recently been erected in Finchingfield.

We intend to provide a list of this year's purchases, and post it on our notice board so you can all see where the money has been spent.

We receive contributions on a regular basis, some of which are anonymous, towards maintenance, calibration and replacement of equipment. This is very helpful and much appreciated, as the maintenance and calibration costs are now over £5,000 a year.

We do not just want to build up a fund, we want to use this money wisely. Our future plans include providing extra equipment, not available through the NHS, to help with resourcing some of the new rooms now being completed at the surgery.

With your help, the CREAMER Fund continues to flourish.

Christopher Blewett



Update on defibrillators

Statistics on Community Public Access Defibrillation show that early defibrillation can increase the survival chances of a person who has suffered sudden cardiac arrest by as much as 50%.

This can be very difficult to achieve in rural areas where ambulances and medical help can be some distance away. Here, community defibrillators are essential, as the time window from collapse of a victim until a defibrillator can be brought to them is less than five minutes.

The cabinets containing the defibrillators have been placed in telephone boxes, village halls and local public houses and can be opened by a member of the public with an access code given by the emergency services during a 999 call.

As part of the Community Heartbeat Scheme, public awareness sessions and community training have also been given where units have been installed in villages. The CREAMER Fund continues to support this lifesaving community equipment within our catchment area should anyone like to make an approach.

Six defibrillator machines were delivered to the Freshwell Health Centre in the autumn of 2014, directly purchased by the CREAMER Fund. These were installed as follows:

2 in Great Bardfield

1 in Shalford

1 in Great Saling

1 in Stebbing

1 in Little Sampford

Seven machines have already been



Great Bardfield's defibrillator on the High Street

installed in local villages, in an initiative led by Kelly Bishop of the Horse and Groom Public House, Cornish Hall End. They were financed through the Parish Councils and various fund-raising events and are located in Cornish Hall End, Stambourne, Wethersfield, Blackmore End, Great Sampford and two in Finchingfield.

The parish of Toppesfield is keen to install a unit which we are happy to fund once a suitable location has been agreed. We have also had a request from Hempstead. At our last meeting of the CREAMER trustees, it was agreed that we would fund this, if it is still required.

Christopher Blewett



Great Bardfield WEA

*Professor
Chris
Green
studying a
score*

Great Bardfield WEA has been offering courses in the village for many decades. We usually run two courses a year, one in the autumn term and one in the spring term, meeting at the Friends' Meeting house on a Monday evening. Each course consists of a series of ten lectures and the audience is usually encouraged to participate with their own views and experiences, as well as ask additional questions, if they wish. We are a friendly group, always welcoming life-long members as well as new members.

Over the years the subjects have ranged from art history to world discovery, poetry to philosophy and music to literature. Depending upon the chosen subject or tutor, our audience can vary in number from thirteen to thirty.

Our first course this academic year covered the history, beliefs and philosophies of the ancient classical Mediterranean world.

The Orchestra was the title of our spring course presented by Professor Chris Green, the artistic director of Trianon Music Group. This course covered the many aspects of staging an orchestral production illustrated through various historical events.



This year we were pleased to welcome new members from Great Bardfield and our neighbouring villages. The WEA and the Great Bardfield branch offer courses for adults of all ages. For more information please contact Annette Joyce (01371 811233) or Ros Gourgey (01371 810832) and visit the WEA website on www.wea.org.uk.

Annette Joyce



A better world –
equal, democratic and just;
through adult education.



The Bardfield Players

It's been a funny old year. Early in 2015 it became clear that almost everyone involved with the Players had other commitments preventing them from devoting the time and effort needed to put on a full production.

So, a plan was hatched. We decided to stage a Murder Mystery over two nights in May. We knew we could do it as it would involve minimal rehearsals, no line-learning (as all the performers could use a cunningly disguised script to crib off), basic lighting and an uncomplicated set, which Chris Couldrige and myself built over a couple of weekends. Thus, *Who Killed the Vicar?* took shape.

To make it a bit more of an event we invited the Town Hall committee to get involved and they prepared supper for 80 people each evening. Needless to say the whole thing was a rip-roaring success. Despite one of the performers not attending any rehearsals and being late for the show, it was a really good laugh, and a good time was had by all. Not only that, we raised £1,100 which was split between the Players, and the Town Hall.

For many years (since well before I started), whenever a performance was put on, the dreaded Stage Extension had to be erected. This terrible thing was the cut-off front of the stage – done so that the floor would be big enough to play badminton on (and latterly

carpet bowls). It was only a metre deep, but ran the length of the stage in four sections each of which must have weighed a hundredweight, and someone (me!) had to go underneath it to guide it into position while at least two others risked injury by picking it up.

We had been heartily fed up with this process for many years, so we finally decided that we could afford to buy a new one. This was organised by Paul Boon, and we are now the very proud possessors of a new light-weight stage extension which takes two people

ten minutes to put up, without any risk of serious injury. The old one remains underneath the stage for posterity.

We hoped that after the summer everyone would be available to put on a proper play. This, sadly, was not the case, and after discarding all the possible plays that we had hoped to put on, and scouring the library for plays with a much smaller cast, we eventually found a really good one with only four people. But, at the last minute, someone backed out, which left us with just three actors and me with a bout of depression.

So I thought it best for us all to have a break, and start again in 2016. We are now happily in rehearsal for *Confusions* by Alan Ayckbourn to be performed in May.

Ian Ruffle
Chairman





Primary School report

Aim High – Try Your Best – Go Far

Since writing last year's report things at Great Bardfield Primary School have moved on a pace. The summer term saw our Year 6 children enjoy a very successful residential visit to the Isle of Wight. We took 14 children on this trip and it was wonderful to see their independence and maturity blossom as they learnt to be more responsible for themselves and their belongings.

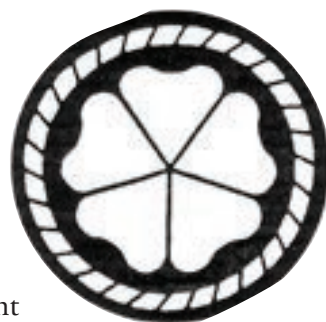
We also enjoyed another whole school trip out, this time to the seaside at Mersea Island. We had beautiful sunshine and the children really built on their social and creative skills paddling and building sandcastles together. We have decided to make whole school trips a regular occurrence – once a term. Of course another feature of the summer term for our Year 6 children is the dreaded SATS. We were very proud of how the children approached the tests and were pleased with our results.

Additionally our younger children were learning about animals and where various foods come from. They thoroughly enjoyed a day out to Boydells Dairy Farm at Wethersfield.

Learning to be excellent sportsmen and women

Sport is very important to the children. They thoroughly enjoy learning new sporting skills and taking part in a wide range of sporting activities. Our new Houses this year meant that Sports Day took on even more meaning. The children are very competitive

but respectful of their friends. They liked having the challenge of competing in the different races and showing their skills and talents at their best.



A sad farewell to our Year 6 pupils

The end of the school year can be a sad experience as we send our children on their way to the next step of their education. The children, however, didn't get too down as they presented a play about school life. Watching them present their version of the Nativity was hilarious as this perspective allowed them to remember happy memories of their times passed at the school. The whole school sang their hearts out and our final assembly was a fitting and uplifting end to a very busy and successful year.

A brand new school year

We began the new school year with a very determined and optimistic mindset, ready to build on the successes of the first year of being a new team. We also reflected together as a staff on what we could improve and make even better. We are enjoying being part of the Dunmow Consortium of schools. School-to-school collaboration and improvement is very much the way forwards, we feel, to drive up standards and help our pupils to achieve their full potential. Being part of the consortium also brings lots of opportunities to take part in joint projects.





Our Key Stage Two children had lots of fun reading the *How to Train Your Dragon* stories at the beginning of the autumn term. They also had the chance to meet the author Cressida Cowell. They found this very inspiring as she explained her thought processes and how she turns her ideas into her brilliant stories.

We are very lucky at Great Bardfield Primary to have Michael Condon a well-known and respected local sculptor as part of our parent body. Michael very kindly gave up days of his time to work with groups of our children and children from other schools to create the eight foot flying dragon which is the centre piece of our school. The children decided that she is a girl dragon and named her Blaze. Blaze represents what can be achieved when we have some expertise, creativity, determination and collaboration.

The children also continue to take part in sports activities and competitions through the consortium which they really enjoy. These have included football tournaments (see photo on left of girls' football team), hockey training and most recently our Key Stage 1 children took part in a dance festival.

Smile Box assembly and other charities

During the autumn term we once again invited George Mills into school and the children were very proud to create 123 shoe boxes for him to take to the orphanages that he supports in the Ukraine. As a school we actively fund-raise for many charities and this year we have also raised money for Macmillan Cancer, Sports Relief and have donated food to the Braintree Food Bank. We have worked very hard with the children



to raise their awareness of the importance of British values. These fit together very well with our school values which run through the heart of everything that we do at Great Bardfield Primary School.

We believe passionately in the importance of children learning to have Respect and Resilience and to be Resourceful, Reflective and Responsible. We have seen these values make an impact on the children's self-awareness and self-control which has meant that behaviour has improved to an even better standard. When we have visitors or take the children out on a visit it is always wonderful to receive compliments about our well behaved and well-mannered children.

We have had a variety of visitors to our school this year, some Headteachers from our consortium schools and colleagues from the local authority. They have worked alongside us to look at our provision; what we are doing very well but also ways in which we can get even better. Our visitors have

given us very positive feedback which we have valued as a school because it has shown us how we have improved and how far we have come as a whole school community over the last year.





Providing a rich, varied curriculum

We have faced some challenges this year with the demands of the new curriculum and learning how to assess this. We are finding that the increased expectations on the attainment of the children has meant that we have had to be creative and objective in how we can teach the important key skills and knowledge the children need to work within their band.

At Great Bardfield we encourage our children to take part in a broad range of activities both in lessons and through a variety of after school clubs which our teachers and LSAs run.

We were delighted that some of Year 6 children had the opportunity to learn the ancient art of bell-ringing at the parish church. The children practised their skills throughout the autumn term and were then able to ring the bells to welcome everyone to our Christmas Carol Concert. We were very proud of their achievements.

Four corners of Britain day

On 1st March, St David's Day, we were in the fortunate position of having four

members of the teaching staff from the four corners of Great Britain. In order to make the most of this we decided to organise a day where the children could come off timetable and visit the four regions. Mrs Kerrell hosted Northern Ireland, Mrs Aldred hosted Scotland, Mrs Mach hosted Wales and Mrs Crow hosted England. The children had a wonderful time enjoying stories, food and dancing from the different regions. We were very lucky to have Mr Iain Geddes pipe the children in to school with the bagpipes and his wife Caroline teach us all Highland dancing. The children got so much from this experience and it really brought their learning and understanding to life.

Easter Egg hunt

We most recently enjoyed the end of term celebrations for Easter and we were joined by the Easter bunny who helped the children use their thinking and problem solving skills to complete a sheet of clues



*Year 6
Visit to
the Isle of
Wight*



which led them to the ultimate prize of an Easter Egg.

Our school community

We are incredibly lucky at Great Bardfield Primary school to have conscientious and tenacious Governors who work very hard to support the school with being the best that it can be. Our parents are very supportive and believe and trust in our school. We all have high standards and we are all striving together to make our school the best place of learning for our children.

Things to look forward to in the summer term

The summer term is always a fun-packed term with lots of outdoor learning opportunities. Our Year 6 children are working very hard for their SATs and even gave up some of their Easter holiday to do extra preparation. They will once again be visiting the Isle Of Wight for their week-long residential trip in June. Some children will be taking part in the Mayday celebrations in Great Saling and we will also be supporting the village car boot sale in May. We will of course be holding our annual Summer Fete in early June. Also we will welcome our new Unicorns when they have a taster afternoon after the May half term. The end of the term will see a school production and a special Leavers' Assembly.

Moving the school forwards

Great Bardfield Primary School continues to be at the heart of the community and we are very proud of our children and our school. However we want our school to be the best that it can be and are therefore constantly seeking to improve and make our provision even better.



Fun in the sun on our whole school trip to Mersea Island

I count my blessings every day that I have the opportunity to work in such a beautiful village with so many like-minded dedicated people. The children who attend Great Bardfield Primary School are incredibly special. They make us all smile, laugh and remember the wonderful gift that we have been given, to help to shape the minds of the adults of tomorrow.

Mrs Alison Kerrell – Headteacher



Mrs Kerrell at the seaside with the children



Tuesday Club

The group has been in existence since 1990 and meets on the second Tuesday in each month to enjoy talks and demonstrations on diverse and, we trust, interesting subjects.

We meet in the Town Hall at 2.30pm. Annual membership is £16 – visitors £3 per meeting. We are pleased to say that our subscription remains the same for 2016 but as speakers become more expensive, this may have to be reviewed in future years.

We enjoy tea or coffee and biscuits, at a charge of 50p, following our talks. A raffle is held with proceeds donated to our chosen charity for the year.

Farleigh Hospice was the charity of our choice for 2015. A donation of £130 was presented to Sheila Gunson in January, when she talked to us about the fundraising, facilities and nursing care both in the Hospice and at home

Unfortunately, the proposed theatre visit to Chelmsford in February this

year had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers to make it viable but we have high hopes that the September production will be well attended.

The summer outing took us to Bardfield Vineyard in July. The weather let us down really badly so we were not able to look around the vineyard or enjoy the lovely gardens. Fortunately we were able to stay inside the beautiful Anne of Cleves barn, built in the reign of Henry VIII, where Rebecca Jordan, her family and staff shared the history of the estate and the barn, followed by an enjoyable wine tasting.

Our Christmas lunch, very well attended this year, was a delicious and very happy occasion. The venue again was the Vine Inn, where Stephen Mann and his excellent staff, looked after us extremely well.

Adrienne Poulson

2016 Programme

We have enjoyed:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 12 th January | <i>Farleigh Hospice</i> – Sheila Gunson |
| 9 th February | <i>Bygones and Poetry</i> – Margaret Suckling |
| 8 th March | <i>Mock Magistrates Court</i> – Dawn Roche (a really thought-provoking and interesting afternoon) |

Still to come:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 12 th April | <i>A Demonstration on Sugar Flowers</i> – Diana Forrow |
| 10 th May | <i>Your Handwriting Analysed</i> – Barbara Weaver |
| 14 th June | <i>Into the Mix, Cooks and Kids</i> – Joyce Yates |
| 14 th July | <i>Summer Outing – to be announced</i> |
| 9 th August | <i>My Holiday of a Lifetime</i> – Adrienne Poulson |
| 13 th September | <i>Hands on Flowers</i> – Mandy Boon |
| 11 th October | <i>Tripe and Trotters</i> – Brian Carline |
| 8 th November | <i>Entertainment With a Touch of Yule</i> – Elaine Barker |
| 13 th December | <i>Christmas meal</i> |



Bardfield Community Choir

The Choir has around 50 members of all ages and meets weekly in the Town Hall (Tuesday evenings, 8–9.15pm). We are accompanied by our wonderful pianist Avril Nelson and sing a wide range of music including classical, pop, jazz and traditional songs. Our repertoire this year has included the *Lacrimosa* from Mozart's *Requiem*, a medley of songs from *Oklahoma*, an Irish folk song *Down by the Sally Gardens*, and Adele's *Someone Like You* – something for everyone.

We sing for pleasure but also enjoy performing and this year the choir sang at the Christmas celebration in the Town Hall, at the Vine's Christmas Extravaganza and, in July, in the gardens of Whinbush Farm to raise funds for St Mary's Church. During the summer months a smaller group



meets to sing madrigals and part-songs, outside, weather permitting.

New members are always welcome, no previous experience is necessary, you just need to want to sing with other people. For further details contact me on jm.dyson@btinternet.com.

Janet Dyson
Musical Director

Bardfield Community Orchestra

The orchestra has grown during the last year – we now have larger string, woodwind and brass sections and are able to tackle a wider range of music. New music this year includes *Jupiter* from Gustav Holst's *Planet Suite*, written when he was living in Thaxted, *Renaissance Dances* and music from the *Lion King*.

A generous donation from the *Bardfield Times* has enabled us to buy more music – full sets of orchestral music are expensive. The level of difficulty is about Grade 4+ so if you once played an instrument that has been

quietly sleeping in its case for years, dust it off and come to a rehearsal – it's amazing how quickly it comes back!

We rehearse once a month on Friday evenings in the Town Hall starting at 8pm – for details of rehearsals contact Camilla Bucknell, camilla-bucknell@hotmail.com or Janet Dyson jm.dyson@btinternet.com.

Janet Dyson,
Musical Director





Great Bardfield Youth Club

The club seems to finally have turned a corner. We have been joined by new and enthusiastic supervisors Kellie and Scott Forbes along with Louise Grinstead and Clare Lee. Kellie has taken charge of organising trips for the club's members already with great success. There are plans for more exciting and fun adventures in the coming year. Be sure to check out our website www.gbyc.co.uk and our Facebook page www.facebook.com/GBYouthClub for all the latest updates and news.

We are getting closer now to being able to re open the club every Friday night which would be wonderful in the coming light and hopefully warm summer months but we are still a few people short to be able to fill the rota every week. So, as always, I ask you to please think about giving up a few

hours of your time to help support the local community by providing an important place for our young people to meet, socialise and have fun. If you are interested in finding out more please do contact me at kmralston@gmail.com.

The new café is finished and looking lovely and the members are all now enjoying the space. Many hands helped in getting the work done but one person in particular put in many hours to complete it and he deserves a mention. So a huge thank you to Mike Jones for the massive amount of time and energy you so kindly donated to the club.

We have also been very fortunate that we have received generous donations from the Bardfield Charities who kindly donated £400 and the *Bardfield Times* who kindly donated

*Right:
relaxing in
the newly
equipped
café*

*Far right:
Club
activities
including
air hockey,
and at
Stubbers,
kayaking,
and
generally
having a
lot of fun*





£200 to the club. This money helps us pay for all the improvements and buy more equipment making the club better for all members.

All positive things but sadly we also say farewell to long-serving Chairman Steve Slemmings who has decided to step down. It's fair to say that if it hadn't been for Steve's involvement there wouldn't have been a youth club. He has worked tirelessly over the years to keep it going and now deserves a well earned rest from all things GBYC related. We all hope he'll still come and visit us from time to time.

Steve asked if he could write a few words to conclude:

"After eight years, I realised all I was doing was protecting GBYC from closing down again but not moving forward. Katrina joining was a massive boost but with three young children, she can't do everything. The recent arrival of new supervisors has brought an energy and enthusiasm to the Club that an OAP like me cannot provide. I'm proud to have been involved with GBYC over the years but mainly I am relieved that at last I can withdraw knowing that with the beginning of a strong foundation of younger supervisors, they will be able to build a network of helpers that can support the club that the kids of Great Bardfield, need and deserve.

At last I feel like a Grandad. I can pop along to the club some Fridays but at the end of the night, I can give it back.

Well done Katrina, you're doing a great job" – Steve.

Katrina Ralston
Youth Club Leader





Great Bardfield Carpet Bowls

It has been a very good year for our club. In the 2015–2016 winter season we fought off local competition to win the North West Area Essex County Carpet Bowls Association Winter League. We now go forward to represent this area in the overall Essex League Finals.

The season started very well and we were at, or near the top of, the league throughout. Unlike last year we maintained our form through to the end winning the final game 7-1.

We competed in the Summer Singles League in 2015 but sadly did not repeat our success of 2014. We are again competing in the 2016 League and we have a strong group of players so we are looking forward to a good summer.

We arranged friendly fixtures with other clubs and villages in the area and attended various Charity events as well as all of the Essex County competitions which are held at Braintree. Everyone who represented our club did us proud. Two of our members who also bowl for Rayne won the Essex pairs competition and we wish them well for the Six Counties (East Anglian) and National Champion of Champions.

The club began in Great Bardfield in 1990 and I am glad to report it is still going strong. Each year I say that we do still need a few more members to bolster our numbers.

For those new to the parish; not only is carpet bowls an ideal way of meeting new friends locally but it is also good for finding out about other villages in the area. If anyone new to

the area would like to try your hand, we would really welcome new faces in the club. So if you think it might be worth a look, please don't be shy in coming forward. We meet all year round on a Wednesday at the Town Hall from about 7:45 pm.

I would like to dispel a couple of myths about carpet bowls. Firstly bowls is not a sport for old fuddy-duddies – just look at the competitors in the world bowls championships you see on TV – it's a sport for all. Secondly, despite the name 'carpet' it is not the toy game that you play in your lounge. The bowls are 10cm (4 inches) in diameter and the carpet is 10x2 metres. Carpet bowls is a skilful sport open to all, the young and not so young, the able and less-able bodied. Finally it is cheap as the club provides the bowls etc. It prides itself on its friendly nature and is as competitive as you wish to make it. If you would like more information about carpet bowls call me, Cliff, or Lynda, on 810782.

Unfortunately Bardfield does not have an outdoor lawn bowls green now but there are clubs at Dunmow, Thaxted, and Stebbing. Lynda and I are going to play at Castle Hedingham this summer.

The outdoor season is now upon us so if you are new to the area and would like contact details we should be able to help you out here too.

Clifford Richardson



Great Bardfield Parish Council



Cllr Janet Dyson
Chairman
01371 810838



Cllr Carolynne Ruffle
Vice Chairman
01371 810986



Cllr Simon Walsh
01371 810451



Cllr Iain Graham
07831 595555



Cllr Darren Hockley
01371 810898



Cllr Steve Slemmings
01371 810098



Cllr Paul Kennedy
01371 810540



Mrs Kate Fox
Parish Clerk
01371 810111
clerk@greatbardfield-pc.gov.uk
www.greatbardfield-pc.gov.uk

Community Information Point

Town Hall Cottages
01371 810327
gbcip@btconnect.com

Open Wednesday and Saturday 10.00am to 12 noon for information and advice. Dog-poo bags and clear recycling bags are available to residents of the parish free of charge.

