

Bradwell Parish Council's Report

Cllr Harry Hamilton, Chairman Writes

It is my belief that the most important aspect of my role as a parish councillor is to maximise the benefit of the council as a whole to the residents of our village. It is important to realise that parish councillors are all volunteers, that is we choose of our own free will to give up our time in order to serve and help our community in the best way we can.

I think it is fair to say that this year has been particularly challenging operationally for the council. The four yearly election in May saw only nine councillors returned of a possible 15. This situation then became more discouraging for the council with the resignation of the clerk in early September and then the subsequent inability of the council to recruit a successor in a reasonable time frame.

The lack of personnel both in terms of employees and volunteers has made it very difficult to push forward with our ambitious projects that we would have wished to implement for the residents of the village. Nevertheless, as a team with the support of a number of local organisations we have managed successfully to do a number of projects and events around our village. I am grateful to my fellow councillors in particular Cllr Sargeant and Watson for their support and help this year. For me personally as chairman this has been extremely challenging resulting in an unexpected major increase in my workload which as an unpaid volunteer I had not expected, I will therefore not be standing for another term as chairman.

The parish council continues to network and to try and integrate and work effectively with other organisations in the community, such as the Old School Village Centre, the Bradwell Library Reading Room, the allotment association, the Methodist Hall and St. Nicholas Church to name only a few. I continue to feel privileged to work with such a wonderful team of individuals in both in the council and beyond in the wider community.

As stated previously one of the most important characteristics of a parish councillor or indeed any individual is the ability to listen. Therefore, we continue to strive to respect the right of anyone to put forward their opinion, the public is always welcome to attend our meetings and there is a place at the beginning of our meetings when residents can talk to us and make representation to us about any issue that concerns them.

Over the last twelve months we have made a number of changes and improvements to what we offer to the residents.

So what has the parish council been doing over the last twelve months and what is it trying to do going forward.

Ironically one of the major events that started the year was the Bradwell village annual waste armistice day in May 2023 when residents of the village had a chance to get rid of some of their waste and clutter from their homes. This was then repeated in April this year. On this occasion we actually managed to completely fill the dustcart with some of the extra waste going into an auxiliary vehicle that had been provided.

Thanks to the help and work of Cllr Sergeant this year has also seen the installation of another four new litter bins around the village. Again given the usage and the number of times I have had to report bins for overflowing I think they were well placed and very much needed.

In August the Bradwell Village Show took place, this continues to grow year on year and was again a community event and the parish council is very grateful for the support it continues to get from other organisations such as the Allotment Association and the Old School Village Centre in the village.

Sadly, in December the parish council had to make the operational decision to discontinue the youth club due to a poor participation rate in the village. The council considered it could not justify the ongoing cost of the club with such a poor attendance rate. It however hopes to re-launch an inhouse version on a three-month trail in the near future.

Thankfully in January we managed to appoint a small clerking team to deal with the problems around our village. Our new clerks are now starting to get to grips with some of the issues of concern around the village and operationally are now having an effect. We however continue to be stifled with a shortage of councillors, still only having 10 of a possible 15 to share the load.

The latest release of the local plan in February, while not perfect, does reveal for the most part that the planners have listened to our requests and have given most of the sites protected green space status for the village such as the Hoblands plantation, Gipsies Green; the War Memorial site (Church Walk); all allotments sites. It would seem that parks such as Mill Lane and Green Lane already have protected status. There is still some concern re Bluebell Woods which is still being looked at.

In April we managed to launch the first ever Bradwell Village Fun Dog Show. Thanks to the work of Cllr Watson and our new clerks the event was a great success. With prizes and rosettes and trophies being awarded to a number of competitors. The best in show being won by Zeus. The event was a great success with nearly £900 being raised for three local animal related charities.



The gifted land, given to the village by Mr Dale King, known as the Kings Garden on the corner of Beccles Road and Kings Drive continues to be worked on. The land transfer is now complete, the plot has been cleared, a fence erected at the back and the wall recently repaired. Permission has been given to lift and coppice the tree which has a protection order on it at the back of the plot. With a shortage of councillors progress has not been as quick as we would have wished.

Plans going forward.

We also have three major and substantial projects under consideration to improve the Village of Bradwell and to try and offset the effect, which we have little power to control, of the major building projects currently taking place. These include:

- To complete the Kings Garden on the corner of Beccles Road and Kings Drive

- To relaunch an in-house version of the youth club on a three month trail
- To put on another fun dog show in April/May 2025
- To Create a park on Green Lane with a Café in the Leo Coles Pavilion for the residents to enjoy.
- To create King Charles III Coronation Park incorporating the Hoblands plantation in South Bradwell

I think it is fair to say that these are ambitious plans and given that currently we only have 10 of a possible 15 councillors in place, we really do have our work cut out and we sincerely hope that our friends in the community will continue to work with us or better still join us to enable us to fulfil these aspirations.