

# MINUTES OF BAINTON AND ASHTON ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING Held from 6pm on Tuesday 7th May 2024 at the Reading Room, Bainton

Present were Cllr S Lucas (Chairman of the Parish Council), Cllr I Walsh  
Clerk J Rice  
18 residents

## 1. Apologies for absence. Cllr M Lucas sent apologies.

The Chairman Cllr S Lucas thanked everyone for coming.

## 2. Minutes of the last parish meeting on 9th May 2023.

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 3. Annual report from the Chairman on last year's activities and an update on parish projects.

The Chairman started by saying the Parish Council are making a plea for more residents to come forward to be co-opted to a Parish Councillor position. She outlined the options if no-one does come forward and if they lose one of the current Councillors – this would mean that Peterborough City Council appoint a City Cllr to the roles until a local person can be co-opted. This is considered an ideal solution for local community decisions and action. Cllr Lucas then explained that another option is to merge with another neighbourhood council, but they have to agree to this, it can also take a year to do and a consultation has to take place with the electorate.

### **Membership and Governance**

During the last year 2 councillors, Michael Perkins and Cliff Stanton, resigned their membership.

I would like to thank them for their contributions and hard work for the community, particularly Cliff, who served tirelessly for 9 years.

Martin Lucas joined Irene Walsh and I to give us a total of three councillors. We three councillors have been re-elected for a further term of office.

However, to be quorate and make any decisions, the BAPC Standing Orders requires at least three parish councillors to be present at any specific meeting, and there are five positions on the Council to cover a number of responsibilities. Despite advertising and contacting individual residents we have been unable to recruit to the 2 outstanding vacancies on the Parish Council.

This position is not tenable for any long period of time. If the PC cannot function the procedure is that Peterborough City Council would appoint councillors from anywhere across Peterborough and we would therefore lose our strong local representation.

The PC will therefore consider a number of options to secure the future of the PC including amalgamation with small local parishes.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our Clerk, Jenny Rice, who continues to bring a wealth of experience to the role. She continues to provide excellent legal, procedural, and financial advice and ensures the smooth running of the Council. I would also like to congratulate Irene Walsh who has been elected as our City Councilor for the Barnack Ward.

### **Parish Issues and Council Action**

#### **Speeding Traffic in Bainton.**

Early in 2022, in response to requests, the Parish Council organized a public meeting attended by concerned residents, the police, PCC Officers and Ward Councillor David Over. Several possible strategies were discussed to cut down on speeding on the main B1433 through Bainton.

As a first step two Auto Speedwatch cameras were purchased and installed by the PC to add to the existing mobile MVAS camera, both to record speeds and act as a deterrent. Work continues to analyse the data obtained so far, and discussions with the relevant Police Superintendent continue towards Cambridgeshire Constabulary formally adopting the Speedwatch system.

Parish Councillors and our Bainton Traffic Residents Group also organised a meeting in Bainton Reading Rooms with our Police and Crime Commissioner and our local MP.

The Neighbourhood Police Team have also met with the PC and members of the Traffic Residents Group.

The Traffic Residents Group continues to work closely with the Parish Council and will make recommendations to it. Councillor Walsh is the council representatives.

### **Change of Speed Limits**

The priority is to identify and action effective measures which will reduce actual traffic speeds below the 30mph limit and improve the general safety of the area.

To this end the PC has formally requested Peterborough City Council to implement the setting up of a 20mph speed limit through Bainton to replace the existing 30mph signs.

The PC has also identified funding for this proposal which will be subject to consultation when PCC publish their Traffic Order.

Also proposed is a 40mph speed limit from the top of Highfield Road to the existing 20mph sign at the bottom. This will improve safety on this single-track road which is heavily used by walkers, cyclists and horses.

A meeting with the relevant Highways Officer took place in Bainton 2 weeks ago where we were told that the Traffic Order and consultation would commence on 9 or 16 May for 4 weeks. A letter will be delivered to every household and other interested parties such as the local bus companies would also be contacted.

On a broader front, with the help of Councillor Over and the support of the Traffic Residents Group, the PC are working with other local parishes across the Barnack Ward to develop measures which would reduce speeding not only within but between villages.

In conclusion, on behalf of the PC, I'd like to place on record the outstanding work this year of the Bainton Traffic Residents Group lead by Andy Totten and their dedicated efforts to push forward the implementation of effective traffic controls. We sincerely thank them.

### **Planning**

The parish council's response to planning applications has been coordinated this year by Martin Lucas. Following a suggestion by resident Mr. David Hare, an informal group has been set up to assist Martin. This consists of Mr. David Hare, retired designer, Mr. Steven Beresford, retired chief quantity surveyor, and Mr. Sean McManus, retired senior building inspector

### **Barnack Road (B1443) stone wall next to the pavement**

The declining condition of this wall continues to be cause for concern. The PC have made several complaints to the Peterborough City Council who told us the Building Control Division have been surveying the wall every six months. Their view is that the wall is safe.

### **Anti-Social Behavior on High Field Road Ashton.**

On most days cars park along the length of the road, particularly towards the south end. The stops are usually for no more than an hour, occur mostly during the day and usually involve solitary men.

Although there may be times when the drivers are simply taking a break there have been reported incidents of inappropriate behavior including deliberate exposure. Passing residents have made reports to the police and some

have met with officers of our local neighbourhood team. The police say that they have increased patrols in the area at the request of the PC.

As a footnote the continued parking on the verges has created several large compacted barren areas which are having a real impact on the integrity of the area as a County Wildlife Area.

The PC has held a site visit recently with representatives from PCC, Highways, Conservation Officers, and the Wildlife Trust to consider how we can reduce parking and the verges can be more effectively protected. A number of proposals were discussed including protecting the areas and increased signage. We await action.

Meanwhile I'd like to recognise the efforts of those Ashton residents who continue to set up informal groups to collect the litter which accumulates around the parking areas.

### **Flooding in Bainton and Ashton.**

In early 2024, like much of the rest of the country, we experienced unusually heavy rainfall. This had two effects.

The harvesting of root crops by local farmers was severely delayed and when it was finally attempted the heavy farm machinery had an inevitable destructive effect on some of the verges, notably High Field Road. I'd like to thank those farmers involved for their immediate and sensible efforts to reconstitute as much of the verges as possible.

Secondly the heavy rainfall caused minor flooding at the north end of High Field Road. This was reduced as local residents acted quickly to clear blocked drains and to open new trenches from the road to the ditches. There were also further incidents of blocked drains in Bainton.

The proper dispersal of surface water is the joint responsibility of Peterborough City Council, Anglia Water, and the Welland Internal Drainage Board. It's also the responsibility of local residents and landowners to ensure that ditches on their property boundary are properly maintained.

Peterborough City Council have also been contacted to make them aware of the issues.

Following requests from the Parish Council a representative of the Welland Internal Drainage Board came along to a meeting with residents and the PC. Anglian Water Board were also contacted regarding the over flowing drains and steps have been taken by them to improve the drains. However, the major problem is the increasing levels of surface water.

BAPC are very happy to report that given the number of agencies involved we have been able to secure a Teams meeting next week with all involved agencies so that the problems experienced by Bainton and Ashton can be discussed and hopefully actions agreed.

I would like to thank those residents of Ashton who came together to help residents who were experience flooding problems and to clear drains and ditches.

### **John Clare Countryside - Nature Recovery Working Group.**

Local efforts to protect the natural environment are coordinated by our Nature Recovery Group made up of residents and chaired by Julie Stanton. Particular thanks are due to both Julie and Cliff Stanton for their exceptional expertise and commitment.

This group has continued to meet to work to deliver our plans and to co-ordinate with the 19 Parishes that are part of the John Clare Countryside Project lead by the Langdyke Trust. The JCC project plans and delivery strategy have been updated to reflect recent developments notably the formal involvement and endorsement of the large local estates of Milton, Burleigh, and Walcott.

The PC is represented by Susie Lucas in the John Clare Countryside Steering Group, which is comprised of representatives from the Langdyke Trust, The Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Nene Park Trust, and Peterborough Environmental Trust.

I would like to congratulate Cliff and Julie Stanton who recently received a Peterborough City Council Civic Award in recognition of their considerable work to support the environment.

### **Report from Nature Recovery Group by Julie and Cliff Stanton**

Langdyke Trust

- Purchase of a new reserve has just been completed - an ex-gravel pit alongside the Maxey Cut north of Helpston. Bought by donations. Will be known as Christ's College Nature Reserve. It will not have open access but guided walks will be organised. Two viewing platforms to be built, accessed from Maxey Cut.
- Unfortunately, it has not been possible to organise visits to Bainton Heath Nature Reserve recently. The access issues are still being negotiated by National Grid who own the Bainton Heath Reserve. This has meant that the reserve volunteers are not able to get in to clear paths around the site.
- Lots of good news: Turtle Doves on the reserves in the Maxey Cut area; orchids and invertebrates at Swaddywell Pit Nature Reserve etc. See Langdyke website for lots of info and for walks on the reserves guided by local experts, ie there's a nightingale walk going on at Castor Hanglands tonight. Consider joining the Langdyke Countryside Trust to support all the good work they do in our local area. John Clare Countryside
- Updated vision strategy and operating structures are being developed by all the JCC partner organisations including major landowners, individual farmers and smaller landowners.
- Liaison between the Parish nature recovery teams and John Clare Countryside is now through Cluster Groups which split the parishes into groups with similar ecological conditions. We are grouped with Barnack, Ufford and Southorpe and our cluster lead is Laura Osborne from the BCN Wildlife Trust. Bainton and Ashton nature recovery team have been attending the meetings to discuss local nature recovery projects, share best practice and identify funding opportunities.
- Representatives from B&A nature recovery team attend the recently reconvened JCC Verges Sub-Group which brings together parishes, Peterborough City Council, Wildlife Trust and local Ecological Consultant Sarah Lambert. Bainton and Ashton Nature Recovery
- Sheepwash. Frustrating delays. Work started late last autumn but came to a halt because contractor unable to get timber out of his woodland because of waterlogged ground. Hope that work will recommence soon and be completed by end June at the latest. We are hoping for grant from JCC for new signage at the Sheepwash, organised through the Cluster group. The iron guard will be removed from the Sheepwash pond and suitable pond vegetation added to improve the water quality for aquatic life.
- Bainton Green Road County Wildlife Site. PCC have added the cutting of these verges to their CWS verge cutting contracts. The verges will be cut twice a year, in June and late September, in the same way that Highfield Road CWS is managed. The verges are responding to the reduced mowing with good plant species spreading out across the verges. The deep rutting that has occurred during this very wet winter is regrettable.
- Bainton village verges – sensitive mowing regimes started in 2020 are continuing. The verges are due to be cut next week and most verges in Bainton will be mown this month. Daffodils do create a problem especially in areas where the grass grows very vigorously in the daffodil patches. Rather than waiting, as is previous years, until all the daffodil leaves have died back, in some areas in particular along Tallington Road, the daffodil leaves will be cut back mid May. This should still give the recommended minimum time of 6 weeks after flowering before cutting the leaves back. Please see Green Spaces notice board tonight for more info on how the verges are managed.
- Ashton village verges – mowing will continue as in the last few years, keeping sight lines clear on the tight bends, and mowing in the vicinity of the village triangle. Some plug planting and seed sowing of appropriate wildflower species is being considered for autumn 2024/spring 2025. JAS/CJS 7/5/2024 Their full report is here for reference too.

### **Restoration of the Sheep Wash**

The PC has obtained grants totaling four thousand pounds to fund the refurbishment of the Sheepwash from the Langdyke Trust and Milton Estates. Thanks to both organisations. The contractor who has been appointed was delayed by the wet weather, but work continues, and we hope will be completed soon.

### **Investigation of Land Use**

Several residents have noticed that a substantial number of cars are now permanently parked on the land just north of the B1443, about a mile east of Bainton. We know of no evidence that there has been any formal application to reassign its status as agricultural land.

The PC has sent a letter accompanied by photographs to the PCC planning enforcement department expressing our concerns and asking for action to be taken. We understand that an enforcement officer has visited the site. We have received additional details of damage done to the site which have been passed to PCC.

Our Clerk is in regular contact with the Planning Enforcement Officer to check on progress.

### **Events and Meetings**

Regular liaison with the Northern Area Police Neighbourhood Team

Liaison with the Langdyke Trust and John Clare Countryside

Organising stalls at the Bainton and Ashton Family Festival featuring the work of The Good Neighbor Scheme, John Clare Countryside, and the Nature Recovery Group.

Nature Walks organized by The Nature Recovery Group and Langdyke Trust

### **Projects**

#### **Good Neighbour Scheme**

This continues to develop across the Peterborough Local Parishes and includes volunteers from Bainton and Ashton ready to support residents. We recognise their work and thank them for their practical commitment to our community. Susie Lucas is the local vice-chair and a trustee.

#### **Regular Meetings Attended by Parish Councillors**

Barnack Ward Meeting

Rural Peterborough Good Neighbor Scheme

JCC Steering Group

Parish Councils Liaison

Nature Recovery Working Group

Traffic Working Group

Allotment Association

Police Liaison

Church Liaison

#### **In Conclusion**

Firstly, sincere thanks to my fellow parish councillors, past and present, for their hard work and practical commitment to supporting our community.

I would like to thank all the residents who are contributing to our Parish Working Groups. Their input contributes hugely to the work of the PC.

Thanks also to those many residents of Bainton and Ashton who work with the PC and other village groups to try and make our Parish a great place to live.

Lastly, please don't forget, we need you. We need to hear your views, your ideas, and your concerns. And we always welcome residents' attendance and participation in our meetings, and are always looking for more councillors.

Thank you.

Susie Lucas B&A Parish Council Chair

7 May 2024

**4. Finance report from the Clerk**  
**Finance report for end of year 2023/2024**

		<b>BAINTON AND ASHTON 2023 - 2024</b>		
<b>EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET</b>				
<b>Ex VAT</b>				
	<b>LAST YEAR</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>% of Budget</b>
<b>Payments</b>	<b>EXPEND</b>		<b>TO DATE</b>	
Staff costs inc hmrc	4128.1	4050	4318.93	106.64%
Clerk expenses, mileage, h/ office	508.65	600	509.1	84.85%
Insurance	425.34	450	463.55	103.01%
Room Hire	210	250	27	10.80%
Council/lor expenses/admin/bank	284.3	300	206.17	68.72%
Subscriptions/P news/ICO/GNS/pol	472.54	600	386.6	64.43%
Training/conference	50	500	275	55.00%
Audit	125	300	125	41.67%
Footpaths			0	
Verges contract below			0	
Parks & Open Spaces/verges	2646.5	2250	2568	114.13%
Allotments maintenance	253	250	250	100.00%
Allotments rent	250	250	250	100.00%
Allotments water	241.32	200	177.31	88.66%
Asset Maintenance/Washdyke	496.95	450	234.45	52.10%
Website & email/correspondence	69.88	250	118	47.20%
s137 payments/ donations	200	300	300	100.00%
Misc/Xmas/events		500	555.66	111.13%
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>10361.58</b>	<b>11500.00</b>	<b>10764.77</b>	<b>93.61%</b>
		<b>Budget</b>	<b>Cum.</b>	
<b>Receipts (excluding VAT)</b>				
Precept	8096	12005	12005	100.00%
Grant PCC/grass	1460	2250	2250	100.00%
Verges contract			0	
Water bill payment/receipt	241.32	200	142.29	71.15%
allotment rent	250	250	250	100.00%
Interest	53.33	20	134.84	674.20%
Grants (Washdyke, JCC and Milton)	4000		500	
Other receipts (not in budget)			0	
Village project			0	
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>14100.65</b>	<b>14725</b>	<b>15282.13</b>	<b>103.78%</b>
<b>Projects/extra expenditure</b>	<b>LY spent</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Spent</b>	
<b>Sheepwash C/F £4000</b>		4000	90.08	2%
	735.06		0	
<b>NRP C/F 1000</b>	699.06	1000	0	0%
<b>Traffic calming</b>		2500	296	12%
<b>Website/email addresses</b>		725	725	100%
<b>Autospeedwatch cameras from reserves</b>	1558.5		0	

<b>Total Reserves/projects</b>	<b>2992.62</b>	<b>8225</b>	<b>1111.08</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>13354.2</b>	<b>19725</b>	<b>£11,875.85</b>	

Bank reconciliation		£	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March
B/F balance			7509.67	7509.67	7509.67	7509.67	7509.67	7509.67	7509.67	7509.67	7509.67	7509.67	7509.67	7509.67
plus receipts	to date	0	7563.34	7592.03	7592.03	7592.03	7769.11	15146.61	15646.61	15682.36	15682.36	15682.36	15682.36	15717.97
	month	0	7563.34	28.69	0	177.08	7377.5	500	35.75	0	0	0	0	35.61
less payments	to date	970.76	2374.95	3270.12	4609.27	5287.75	6385.22	6810.6	8837.1	9990.03	10723.05	11085.42	11085.42	12151.09
	month	970.76	1404.19	895.17	1339.15	678.48	1097.47	425.38	2026.5	1152.93	733.02	362.37	362.37	1065.67
Balance			<b>6538.91</b>	<b>12698.06</b>	<b>11831.58</b>	<b>10492.43</b>	<b>9813.95</b>	<b>8893.56</b>	<b>15845.68</b>	<b>14319.18</b>	<b>13202</b>	<b>12468.98</b>	<b>12106.61</b>	<b>11076.55</b>
Bank statement	Unity Bank current	2415.66	7940.05	6708.88	5369.73	4691.25	3986.07	10688.19	9161.69	8008.76	7275.74	7275.74	7275.74	6097.7
	Instant access	5094.01	5094.01	5122.7	5122.7	5122.7	5157.49	5157.49	5157.49	5193.24	5193.24	5193.24	5193.24	5228.85
		<b>7509.67</b>	<b>13034.06</b>	<b>11831.58</b>	<b>10492.43</b>	<b>9813.95</b>	<b>9143.56</b>	<b>15845.68</b>	<b>14319.18</b>	<b>13202</b>	<b>12468.98</b>	<b>12468.98</b>	<b>12468.98</b>	<b>11326.55</b>
less adjustments	payments	970.76	336	grass cutting			250							250
Agrees with balance above	late	6538.91	<b>12698.06</b>		<b>10492.43</b>	<b>9813.95</b>	<b>8893.56</b>	<b>15845.68</b>	<b>14319.18</b>	<b>13202</b>	<b>12468.98</b>	<b>12106.61</b>	<b>12106.61</b>	<b>11076.55</b>

## NOTES

1. Basic budget 93.6% spent, and projects expenditure only 14% spent as some not completed eg traffic calming and Sheepwash refurb. One project – to get Councillors onto gov.uk email accounts with a new website - was achieved.
2. Some budget headings underspent, eg subscriptions (as Good Neighbours free for a year), less training undertaken, asset maintenance less spent. Underspend flows through to general reserves. Room hire invoice received early April, so not paid in this year's accounts.
3. Extra income received from 2 grants applied for from PCC Community Leadership Fund; £500 in November (and £537.67 in March/April 2024) – to be spent on Sheepwash bench/plinth, signage and flowers/bulbs in Highfield Road and County Wildlife Site. Additional income received also from interest payable on separate account of £134.84.
4. The allotment association continue to pay their own way, paying the rent for the land and the water bills (both repaid to the Parish Council who pay the bills) but the Parish Council paid towards some maintenance of the fencing there this year.
5. The City Council pays for the grass cutting via a grant. The precept increased by approx. £26 pa for an average Band D property and this year by £4.67pa – this is considered good value to run and maintain the village's assets, build up the reserves again (and pay the Clerk! There was a higher than average national (government) pay award)).
6. The Parish Council donated £300 to village groups as part of their powers - Village Tribune and Reading Room for a "chatty bench".
7. Bank balance of £11078 includes £2200 traffic calming earmarked, £4k Sheepwash refurb. earmarked and 1K nature recovery earmarked still. Total £7200
8. Leaves general reserves of £3878, which is a healthy amount. Due in part to slight underspend on basic budget of 6% with careful monitoring of expenditure.

**Jenny Rice, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, April 2024**

### 5. Annual reports/updates from village groups:

Irene Walsh, Parish Councillor, explained that she has recently been voted in as City Councillor/Barnack Ward Councillor and now has this twin hatter role. She said she was very grateful to those that voted for her and explained the priorities affecting wards at present of the Emerging Local Plan and her involvement in this, as small villages cannot sustain large scale development and the need to retain character of villages is important.

- a) The Bainton and Ashton Parish Council Allotment Association
- b) The Langdyke Trust and John Clare Countryside (Not present), incl Nature Recovery
- c) The Buttercross Club
- d) The Reading Room

- e) St Mary's Church
- f) The Poors Charity
- g) The Good Neighbours (Rural Peterborough) Scheme (not present)
- h) The Bainton Traffic Calming Group and Speedwatch

**Bainton and Ashton Allotment Association.** Update for calendar year 2023.

#### 1. Background.

The Association occupies a plot of land on the eastern edge of Bainton, immediately south of the road to Helpston, for the purposes of recreational horticulture. The plot is leased by Bainton and Ashton Parish Council from a local landowner. Under the terms of that lease, the council has consented to allow Bainton and Ashton Allotment Association to manage the plots on behalf of the council by dealing with individual plot holders. All plot holders enter into an annual lease agreement with the parish council.

The plot was originally divided into sub plots using an old Saxon land measurement of ten poles per sub plot as recommended by the National Allotment Society, approximately 250 square metres. The size derived from wartime research into how much land was needed to provide a family of four with vegetables and fruit for a year.

In reality, and in normal times, this is a large piece of land to be cultivated by hand which demands a regular input of time and effort. In today's busy life, with multiple calls on time, few can manage such an undertaking. In fact, we have only two full sized plots now and over the years people have taken on smaller plots. Currently, the Association offer plot sizes to new plot holders that suit their needs. This gives us the flexibility of being able to offer small plots for those wanting to just grow cut flowers for the house as well as half sized plots for the keen fruit and vegetable growers. Our smallest plot is 3 metres by 1 metre and is worked by our youngest plot holder who is 11 years old.

#### 2. The Association.

The Association is run on behalf of the council by a management committee of six, all bar one residents of Bainton or Ashton. There are 3 office holders, a chair (Chris Fuller), a secretary (Jane Mason) and a treasurer (Graham Fletcher). It is true to say that the successful day to day running of the allotments is down to the efforts of Jane and Graham. In addition, we have invaluable IT support from Ian Abbott-Donnelly who does his best with the technophobes. The Association has a Facebook page and also a WhatsApp group for plot holders to exchange information. The Association is a member of the National Allotment Society and insurance cover for plot holders is arranged through Chris Knott insurance.

There is a hierarchy used to allocate vacant plots -

- Bainton and Ashton residents have priority when applying for a plot and in fact a spare piece of land is held in reserve if such an application arises outside our normal annual cycle.
- If there are still vacant plots, these are offered to those applicants who live in adjacent villages within a four-mile radius.

#### 3. The Allotments.

Currently we have 26 plot holders across a wide age range taking up all of our plots. It is nice to see the younger members bringing children along to enjoy the outdoors, play with manure and walk on their parent's seedlings. Generally, we prefer to avoid empty plots; untended plots quickly grow weeds whose seed are a nuisance to neighbouring plot holders and give an untidy air to the entire site.

Work on the allotments is obviously seasonal, at this current time there is a lot of activity in raising seedlings and planting out, general tidying up of plots and preparation of flower/vegetable beds for the coming summer. As is probably common across all allotments at this time, and more particularly in the autumn, talk is of access to copious quantities of well-rotted animal dung. This, in a major agricultural area, is not that easy to source curiously enough and when found is expensive. The summer and early autumn months bring a harvest of fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers which delights the local rabbit, muntjac and pigeon population. By late autumn activity dies down to spreading compost or manure on the plots then the plot holders go into hibernation until spring, much like hedgehogs.



Looking ahead, work continues to be necessary on the infrastructure of the site. In particular, the wire fencing is on its last legs, or rather, posts. The fencing is regularly checked and work parties held to do the necessary work. Financial support from the Council this year helps meet these and other maintenance costs. The committee members get involved in the running of the allotments; particular mention should be made of Graham Fletcher's extensive maintenance work on the site, Jane Mason assiduously weeding the wildflower bund.

#### 4. Engagement with the community.

The committee takes seriously its community engagement role, both internally and in the link with the two villages of Bainton and Ashton. Internally, we are well aware of research findings showing that gardening has important health benefits, both physically and mentally. Half in jest and wholly in earnest, I tell new members that if they plan for an hour's work, then expect to be at the allotments for two hours to allow for chatting to other plot holders. We have a mix of ages and sexes amongst the plot holders and can boast of a Dutch born member with a musical background who has given evening recitals and an Indian whose family do a very good curry night for us. Externally, we plan every year to have 'open day' type events to engage with local people and events in planning include a Mad Bingo evening in May, a coffee and cake open morning in July, a curry evening in August, a quiz in October and possibly a film night/fish and chip supper evening in January. The film Peter Rabbit was mentioned which, given his brethren's depredations on our carrot crops, seemed apt.

Chris Fuller, 28/4/2024.

### **Report from the Reading Room 2024**

Chairman's Report What's new over the last year:

- Very minor maintenance in the past year
- New outside light on route to car park
- With some help from the Parish Council we have been able to install a new 'Chatty Bench' at the front of the building, somethings that is becoming popular in many locations around the country.
- Thanks again to Clive Haylett for his continued upkeep of the lawn, the bushes and the window boxes - it makes a great impression as you come into the village.
- And after 14 years of service we must give a big thanks Andy Totten for his work as our 'Booking Secretary'. We wish him well as he transitions 'up-North'.
- Angela Womack is in the process of picking up bookings with some support from Ruth Evered when Angela is on holiday.
- We will be looking for a new management committee member later in the year, so if you are interested then do let me know.

Bookings for 2023 (15th Nov 22 to 15th Nov 23) 546 hours (10% down on 2022) 300 individual events (was 350 in 2022) But 30% more diversity of events Allotment AGM Allotment Bingo Allotment mtg Bainton & Ashton Pop-up Art Gallery: Bainton Poors AGM Birthday party Buttercross Club Christmas party Coronation mtg CR Gender Party ET Harp Session Family day mtg Good neighbours Head of Highways visit Helpston Speedwatch Inner wheel quiz John Clare Countryside Cluster Nichola Meditation Parish Council Meeting Party Peakirk speedwatch Photo shoot Pilates with Nichola Police Rural Crime Meeting Reading Room AGM Sam's Full Body Exercise Class Sewing Group Meeting Singing Group Speeding fundraiser Table Tennis, Wreath making Lots more small events, but booking time down 10%.

### **St Mary's Church Annual Report 2023/2024**

St Mary's once again had a successful Primrose Festival last spring. Due to the timing of Easter and the weather, we had fewer primroses but still enough to make a show.

We celebrated the usual round of special days: Mothering Sunday (thanks for the primroses, Mrs Bratley), Easter, St Mary's Day, Harvest, Advent Carols, and a combined Carol Service and Nativity. For 2024 I'm looking at splitting these into two and possibly holding the Carol Service midweek.

Coming out of Covid, our numbers have held up well. The morning Communion services are well-attended for such a small village, and the creative Taize service can attract people from across the area.

However the Book of Common Prayer Evensong on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays has not weathered so well. We are experimenting through 2024 with some different services: starting with three services in April, May, and June on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday afternoons, reflecting on Christian faith in the light of Gardens – and in particular the lovely churchyard.

We are starting discussions with the diocese to put a toilet and servery into the west end of the church (next to the bell tower). This will enable us to offer far more facilities for functions, while keeping the forward pews (to the east of the doorway) as they are, to maintain the Victorian pew / pulpit / choir stalls scheme.

And we've been monitoring the building's movement across the year to determine whether the plaster falls we had in 2020/1 were due to the church's closure during lockdown, or ground movements that might need serious work to remediate. After 12 months, this is still being watched.

Thanks to all villagers and wider who have supported us. And though I can't name all, particularly those who manage the day-to-date maintenance of the church, the finances, and keeping the place clean and ready for worship. Special thanks this year however to those organized, set up, and staffed the Family Day – and the Dymond family for allowing us to use the grounds of Bainton House these last few years. Graham Fletcher, who has nobly organized the Family Day for so many years, tells me that we're all set for this year's as well, on July 7<sup>th</sup>.

*Revd Gary Alderson*

*Rector of Barnack with Ufford, Bainton, Helpston, and Wittering*

*Assistant Rural Dean of Peterborough*

*The Rectory, Millstone Lane, Barnack PE9 3ET tel: 07503975588*

## **Bainton Poors Estate**

### **ANNUAL REPORT FOR VILLAGE MEETING-MAY 2024**

Following the recent refurbishment of the Reading Room, the Trustees were pleased that there were no significant items of capital expenditure relating to the Reading Room in 2023 (and so far in 2024) and the Accounts, prepared to the end of September 2023, show that the Charity retains a healthy balance. Indeed, our cash and investment balances are now back to 2020 levels before both the Pandemic and the refurbishment project.

We have continued to provide the Reading Room Committee with financial support to assist with the ongoing running costs whilst user numbers are rebuilding after the lockdown induced closure of the building.

The Trustees held their AGM in December and for the second consecutive year the Charity did not make any grant or loan payments to individuals in the villages. We DO have funds available for this purpose. Indeed, apart from ownership of, and responsibility for, the Reading Room, it is the main purpose of the Charity. Unfortunately, we yet again did not receive any direct applications for assistance. We did have one third party referral but on investigation concluded that assistance would not have fallen within the Charity's remit.

We would very much like to resume such grants and would ask all villagers to let any of the Trustees know if they are aware of anyone/family who may need such help particularly if the cost-of-living upsurge continues. All approaches will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

Meetings were held between the Chair of Trustees, the Parish Council Chair and Richard Astle of the Langdyke Trust to explore if there are opportunities for the Trust to implement any environmental projects on land within the Poor's ownership. The importance to the Charity of the secure and stable income that it receives from the letting of the land

for agricultural use (our primary source of income) was explained and discussed and, as yet, no firm proposals which would work for all the parties have been arrived at.

At the AGM, Tony Gowers announced that he would be stepping down as a Trustee after 30 years of service. The Trustees recorded a vote of thanks to Tony for all his work over the years. A replacement Trustee is to be nominated by the Parish Council.

Nigel Clough

May 2024

### **Traffic Calming Working Group**

This group of concerned residents has now been in action for over 18 months since speeding vehicles through Bainton was raised as a major issue in 2022. Following the groups formation, we have worked alongside the parish council in pressing for change through traffic calming measures through the village. A wish list of potential measures for calming traffic through the village was drawn up, discussed and presented to the parish council, Peterborough city council, Cambridgeshire police and crime commissioner and our local MP. After much discussion, the options which were chosen as the most appropriate in terms of cost, practicality and being achievable in the short term were a signed 20 mph speed limit through the village and auto speedwatch cameras.

Since then, through working alongside the parish council, we have added road narrows signs to Tallington road, two auto speedwatch cameras both ways on the B1443, and speed camera signs at all entrances to the village. The procedures to implement 20 mph limit through the village was initiated last year but has been delayed by staff sickness for a considerable period but is now underway again. A full public consultation is part of that process and that should start shortly.

The speed cameras have now been in operation since December 2022, and are operated and managed by a small team from the traffic calming group who actively monitor and manage the cameras on a daily basis. The cameras have amassed a huge amount of information and data since installed and together with data from the MVAS board have confirmed that in excess of 50% of vehicles vastly exceed the 30 mph speed limit on a daily basis. Since the coverage of the cameras are very limited, the issue is far bigger than the data we collect. The data collected by the cameras include car registration, colour, make, time of day, speed, whether the car is taxed, mot, or sorned. Each time a vehicle exceeds the speed limit, the camera takes a picture, which is then verified by one of the team, before being saved on the system.

The data collected is and can be invaluable to the police should they choose to make use of it to enforce regulations. However at the moment their systems, resources and manpower means they cannot currently use any of the data collected by the cameras. Other police forces in the country have adopted the data and are using it for enforcement. We are constantly striving for the same.

Prior to the installation of the cameras, we were constantly told that the fact you perceive a car is speeding, does not necessarily mean that it is, due to tyre noise, road surface, etc. Since we've had the cameras we can prove beyond doubt that we have a major problem that we are seeking to address.

Since we started, we and the parish council have approached everyone in authority in Peterborough and Cambridge for assistance in addressing this issue. We have ensured that the name Bainton is a name everyone is aware of. We have had meetings with our local MP, the police and crime commissioner for Cambridge and local police. After nearly two years, we have had a response from the chief constable for Cambridgeshire. We had a meeting a fortnight ago with Superintendent Paul Rogerson, who is head of partnerships and prevention for Cambridgeshire police and is the lead on speedwatch. We are leading the way for change and have spoken to and are being watched by countless other villages and Pc who all have the same or similar issues, and are keen to follow our lead.

The data we collect is similar to the speedwatch data. Only without three people in yellow high viz vests standing beside the road for an hour. It is very frustrating to say the least, that with all this data, no one is interested, as yet.

As I said earlier, other police forces are starting to use the auto speedwatch data. On a recent email regarding how frustrating it all is, Tim Gibbs, who is the owner and inventor of the auto speedwatch cameras wrote: our opinion is that some forces are doing more political posturing about their efforts than the efforts themselves. In Somerset, some traditional community speedwatch teams are giving up because it's more words than actions. They feel patronised and angry. But keep at it. It's champions like you that make changes happen. Other forces are slowly joining the system and there will be a tipping point where non adopting forces will be noticeably behind the curve.

In his correspondence to us, Nick Dean, the chief constable said: Auto speedwatch is not a system that we currently support in Cambridgeshire, that is not to exclude its future use. Superintendent Paul Rogerson said: Auto speedwatch is not something that I've worked with directly. My team have briefed me on the technical and financial issues, however I'd really like to explore the potential with you.

We've had our meeting with him, just, he's suitably impressed on the system, and he's gone away to discuss further, ask some questions, etc. We have offered to work with the police and come up with a system which will use selective data from our cameras instead of the traditional speedwatch data which is less reliable. We will continue our dialogue until Cambridgeshire police works with us in educating those driving irresponsibly through Bainton.

By Rob McNeish

## **The Buttercross Club**

For the villages meeting on 7th May, 2024.

It is pleasing to report that the Buttercross Club continues to thrive. We have members from Bainton and Ashton as well as from nearby villages such as Barnack and Helpston. Our membership remains ladies only but we always have one or two 'open' events to which husbands and non-member friends are invited. Our AGM is always in February. —We do not have a January meeting as it would be very early in the month - we meet on the first Wednesday - and people are recovering from the Christmas and New Year festivities.

We had a very successful programme of events/activities in 2023 and this year's diary of events is equally diverse. For example, in March our guest speakers were Rita Turiccki and Diane Wheatley. They gave a talk on the art of quilting and brought with them an array of their very beautiful work. In April we welcomed James Kudlinski who gave a talk entitled 'The Other Side of Stamford 1895 to 1928'. Our last meeting was on May 1st, and we welcomed auctioneer David Palmer. He gave a talk but also agreed to look at one small antique per person - there was no lugging that life-sized statue of Socrates along! We have events worked out for the rest of this year. These will include our usual Harvest Lunch in October, arranged for us by Anne Harrison-Smith, and our Christmas Celebration in December to which we welcome guests. We are taking a break in August as people are on holiday or entertaining children or grandchildren.

The success of the club depends on its healthy membership and also on the hard work of the Committee. We have a new chairperson, Jill Plant, who replaces Sheila Bratley. Sheila was founder member of the club. We owe her a great debt not just for being instrumental in the formation of the club (in the 1980s) but also for her continued hard work and support. Sheila remains on the committee and we have seven other members at the time of writing this report. Our finances are well looked after by our treasurer, Helen Fancourt, and a successful monthly raffle does mean that, although our club was begun for friendship and enjoyment, we are

also regularly in a position once a year, to support a charity chosen by our members. This is thanks to their generous raffle prize donations and continued purchase of raffle tickets.

Georgina Beresford

6. **Concerns or issues from residents or village groups** – a chance for residents and groups to raise any item they wish to be considered by the Parish Council.

There were no questions from the public.

7. **Farewell and thanks** to David Over, Ward Councillor. Cllr Over was not present but thanks had been expressed at a previous meeting. Cllr Irene Walsh takes over in this role following the elections on 2/5/24.