

**BADWELL ASH PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**BADWELL ASH VILLAGE HALL**  
**THURSDAY 23 MAY 2024**

**PRESENT:**

Councillors Richard Morris (Chairman), Stephen Russell (Vice Chairman), Will Draper, Roy Woodfine, Nick Harvey, Bill Woodhall.

Carole Rose (Clerk to the Council), 5 members of the public.

**1. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Morris welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

**2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 9 May 2023**

The minutes had previously been circulated. It was agreed these were an accurate record of the meeting and were therefore signed by the Chairman.

**REPORTS**

3. Report from Badwell Ash Parish Council - Councillor Morris read his report out at the meeting (report attached).
4. Report from Richard Winch, District Councillor – due to its length, the report was not read out but would be filed with these minutes. (report attached).
5. Report from Andy Mellen, Suffolk County Councillor – due to its length, the report was not read out but would be filed with these minutes. (report attached).
6. Report from the PCC (Stephen Rose, Churchwarden) – The Clerk read out the report. (report attached).
7. Report from the History Group – The Clerk read out a report on behalf of Ed Walsh, the Chair of the History Society (report attached)
8. Report from the Village Hall - A report was read out by Clive Hawkins, Chairman of the Trustees (report attached).
9. Reports from Badwell Ash Church Charity and Badwell Ash United Charities (Stephen Rose, Trustee) – the Clerk read out the report. (report attached).
10. Report from Mrs Midge Hawkins, President of the WI – This report was read out by the Clerk (report attached).
11. Public Forum – No matters raised.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

Carole Rose  
Parish Clerk  
25 May 2024

**BADWELL ASH PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**BADWELL ASH VILLAGE HALL**  
**TUESDAY 9 MAY 2023**

**PRESENT:**

Councillors Richard Morris (Chairman), Stephen Russell (Vice Chairman), Will Draper, Maciej Siarkowski, Roy Woodfine, Nick Harvey, Bill Woodhall.

Carole Rose (Clerk to the Council), 8 members of the public.

**1. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Morris welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

**2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 10 MAY 2022**

The minutes had previously been circulated. It was agreed these were an accurate record of the meeting and were therefore signed by the Chairman.

**REPORTS**

3. Report from Badwell Ash Parish Council - Councillor Morris read his report out at the meeting (report attached).
4. Report from District Councillor – no report due to recent District Councillor elections.
5. Report from Andy Mellen, Suffolk County Councillor – The Clerk read out Cllr Mellen's report in his absence (report attached).
6. Report from the Reverend Philip Merry on behalf Parochial Church Council – The Clerk read out the Vicar's report in his absence (report attached).
7. Report from the History Group – The Clerk read out a report on behalf of Pat Monk in her absence (report attached).
8. Report from the Village Hall - A report was read out by Clive Hawkins, Chairman of the Trustees (report attached).
9. Reports from Badwell Ash Church Charity and Badwell Ash United Charities – no report received.
10. Report from Mrs Midge Hawkins, President of the WI – This report was read out by the Clerk (report attached).
11. Public Forum – No matters were put forward.

(All reports to be retained with the Minutes on file)

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

Carole Rose  
 Parish Clerk  
 15 May 2023

  
 R A Morris 20/5/2024

## **Chairman's Report**

The Parish Council has had another busy year with improvements made to both Badwell Ash and Long Thurlow villages with more facilities improved now that we are just about 'back to normal' after 3 very disruptive years.

With the generous contributions from the District CIL pot, we have been able to achieve the following for the village:

- \* The second stage of the play ground which includes a table tennis table, basketball hoop and 4 pieces of adult exercise equipment has now been installed. This has proved very popular already.
- \* We have installed a second solar lamppost in the village hall car park which helps lighting in the winter months without being intrusive to the neighbouring properties.
- \* The Parish Council has also purchased the village hall drive from a property developer and erected two telegraph poles which has enabled broadband to be installed by the VHC in the village hall. This asset alone will prove very helpful to all who use the village hall facilities.
- \* We have also contributed £10,000 to the VHC which they have used to install new heaters in the small hall and replace old windows with modern UPVC versions.

One of the largest projects the Parish Council is currently committed to is the Neighbourhood Plan. This project was started in the Autumn of last year and hopefully will be completed in the Summer of 2025. This will prove a very valuable document for the Parish and it has been gratifying to have so many residents help and contribute to this. A special vote of thanks must go to the NP Sub-Group who have volunteered to take this project on with a huge time commitment involved. We are very grateful to them all.

I am delighted to say that the Parish Council is at full strength at the moment – heading into a General Election as well – and we very much hope to continue our good work within the village over the next 12 months.

As you will no doubt be aware we have submitted a planning application for a Multi Use Games Area on some of the land kindly donated by Roy Le Grice. While some residents are against this proposition, many others who have recently moved into the village think it will be a brilliant asset. The Parish Council have decided to await the outcome and advice of Mid Suffolk District Council on these plans and will then arrange a public open day so all residents will have the chance to make their comments and observations in person. A final decision will be made taking everyone's opinions into consideration as to what is best for the Parish.

Lastly I must thank my fellow Parish Councillors for their unwavering support over this last year, which is all voluntary, and the Clerk who always does far more than she should!!

RM

23 May 2024



## Mid Suffolk District Council – Walsham Le Willows Ward

Badwell Ash, Great Ashfield, Hunston, Langham, Long Thurlow, Walsham Le Willows, Wattisfield

### Mid Suffolk District Councillors’ Annual Report for 2023/24 For the Annual Parish Meeting – 2024

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- New administration

The result of the May 2023 elections was that the 24 elected Green Party councillors officially became the administration at Mid Suffolk. Councillor Andy Mellen, as Leader outlined our initial priorities to lead and work with other bodies to address the challenges faced by our communities: cost of living, affordable homes, local services, public transport and climate change.

A cabinet of six councillors was formed and I am The Cabinet member with responsibility for Housing and Property. Other roles were provided to members of Council across all political parties in line with our view of collaborative politics.

A Plan for the next few years was agreed which placed environmental and social responsibilities at the heart of everything the Council does.

- Budget

For 2023/24 the General Fund budget was for approximately £15.5 million with an expected £2.3 million surplus which will go into reserves. Funds have also had to be provided from the Housing Revenue Account for the backlog of repairs that has built up.

For 2024/25, net expenditure on services is budgeted at £18.5 million with a 2% increase in council tax. Council home rents increased by 7% and sheltered housing service charges also increased. This has been done to ensure the Council can afford the repairs and maintenance that are needed. All these increases are due to inflation, costs of energy and other cost increases.

The Council has reserves of over £28 million as at the end of the financial year plus an expected dividend from the Gateway 14 business park. Plans for this are on a variety of work including new foot/cycle paths, land for biodiversity and green spaces, regeneration of Stowmarket town centre, improved sports provision in the district and enabling community-led housing.

Approval was also given to increasing council tax on empty homes in 2024/25 and implementing increased council tax on second homes in 2025/26.

- Thriving towns and villages

A group of Councillors has been working on issues around sustainable transport. A new rural transport grants scheme with a pot of £600,000 was set up to help provide passenger transport options across the district.

Approval was gained for the financing of a Green Skills and Innovation Centre on Gateway 14 (G14). This will in part act as a centre of excellence for local businesses and a training



site for adults needing new skills. Also on G14, The Range is due to move into the largest building on site and a deal with a sustainable roof products supplier was agreed.

In Stowmarket, the first part of the sports project was approved and work will commence this year for new pitches, an athletics track and other improvements at Chilton Fields and next to the high school.

In conjunction with Suffolk County Council, Mid Suffolk provided much support to residents and businesses affected by the floods of Storm Babet and Storm Ciaran.

- Environmental sustainability

The Council launched the *Cosy Homes* scheme, a £2 million project to insulate homes for free. Separately a grant of nearly £1 million was received for retrofitting council homes.

A new *Pride in your Place* grant was established to provide every parish with additional funds to improve the environment for their community.

The Council continues to encourage local groups to improve areas for wildlife and a call for sites from landowners was made so that more trees can be planted across the district. The annual Tree for Life scheme was again a success and tree, hedging and wildflower packs for communities across the district.

The Council published its Carbon Reduction Management Plan with a focus for this year on improving sheltered housing and further work on the leisure centres.

- Planning and Housing

In November 2023, Part 1 of the Joint Local Plan (JLP) for Mid Suffolk and Babergh was approved and adopted. The JLP sets out a planning framework to guide development in the districts over the period to 2037. JLP Part 1 provides a set of strategic and local development management policies against which planning applications and appeals will be assessed. There are 10 strategic policies (such as on affordable housing, climate change and tourism) and 32 local policies (such as on biodiversity, historic environment and sustainable construction).

With regards to Part 2, the Inspector had acknowledged that 90% of Mid Suffolk's housing target is already allocated (either via existing permissions or sites allocated via Neighbourhood Plans) and that this is central to future policies. Work has been continuing on this with public consultation expected later in 2024.

Separately, to support this, the Council is working on Supplementary Planning Documents. The first three, currently at draft stage, are on Housing, Biodiversity and Intensive Livestock and Poultry.

The Council continued to oppose the Norwich to Tilbury pylon project raising significant concerns, particularly over the impact on the environment and the effect on local communities.

Mid Suffolk's annual monitoring report showed that 1,257 new dwellings were built in the district in 2022/23, of which 299 were affordable. This met 144% of the Government target. There are 6,916 outstanding planning permissions (as at 01/04/23) which are either not

started or under construction. Mid Suffolk has 10.88 years of housing land supply, well above the Government target of five years.

Over £1.5 million was provided to parish and town councils in the form of the Community Infrastructure Levy during the year.

- Supporting the community

We support local events and community groups where we can and particularly link local groups with external fundraising via the Mid Suffolk community team. Almost £550,000 was allocated by Mid Suffolk District Council Direct to communities across the district from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

In Walsham Ward this included:

- Solar panels and battery system for Walsham Le Willows village hall
- Money for surfacing of a footpath from Wattisfield Road to Walsham Le Willows Sports Club
- Outdoor fitness equipment at Badwell Ash Village Hall
- Refurbishing of Great Ashfield village hall

Mid Suffolk District Councillor

Richard Winch

[Richard.winch@midsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.winch@midsuffolk.gov.uk)

07931 709486

Mid Suffolk District Council: [www.midsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk) 0300 123 4000



## Summary Notes

The following is extract of highlights from the District Council annual report.

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Approval was also given to increasing council tax on empty homes in 2024/25 and implementing increased council tax on second homes in 2025/26.

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# Annual Parish Report – 2023/24

The work of Suffolk County Council during the past municipal year

Councillor: Andy Mellen

**Thedwastre North division** (Badwell Ash, Elmswell, Finningham, Great Ashfield, Hunston, Langham, Norton, Stowlangtoft, Tostock, Westhorpe, Wyverstone & Woolpit).

**Councillor Contact Details:**

andy.mellen@suffolk.gov.uk

## Suffolk NSIPs

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) are major infrastructure projects of national importance, and the majority of Suffolk's NSIPs are associated with the generation or transmission of electricity. The decision to allow an NSIP to proceed is made by the relevant Secretary of State, not councils, although the county council is a statutory consultee for many projects. There are a high number of projects in Suffolk currently, with more in the pipeline:

- Drax – a gas power plant on the former Eye Airfield
- East Anglia Three offshore windfarm is under construction
- Two new offshore windfarms, East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two, were approved by the Secretary of State in March 2022
- EDF began construction of Sizewell C nuclear power station in January 2024
- National Grid are proposing grid reinforcement works from Bramford to Twinstead, with a decision expected later this year
- National Grid's Norwich to Tilbury stretch of the 'Great Grid Upgrade' programme, a controversial pylon route proposed for construction through the middle of the county
- SeaLink proposals for an undersea cabling route between Suffolk and Kent is due to see significant onshore infrastructure at Friston, near Aldeburgh
- LionLink (previously known as Eurolink) proposes undersea cabling to link the UK with the Netherlands, with landfall proposed either above or below the Blyth estuary
- Sunnica Solar Farm, a 2,500 acre proposed solar development for Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk, has still not been approved by the government, with a decision due in April
- A new 750 acre solar farm, White Elm, has been proposed for Mendlesham in Mid Suffolk, with consultation due to begin in the autumn

## Flooding in Suffolk

From end of October 2023, Suffolk suffered a winter of repeated flooding, most notably Storm Babet, when Debenham, Framlingham and Needham Market were particularly badly affected.

Suffolk's total rainfall during October 2023 was 117.9mm (4.5in) which the Met Office report as being 90% more than the average expected rainfall for the month. The drainage systems in the county were unable to cope with the volume of water. Suffolk County Council have committed an extra £1m for flood investigations to try and prevent future incidents; where usually there are only three or four such investigations each year, for 2023 the number is likely to be near 100 investigations.

The government offered funding to households affected by flooding, with many also able to access further money for preventative works.

### **RAAC/Condition of School Buildings**

In September the council held a scrutiny session on the condition of school buildings, which was very timely as the news has just begun reporting on the number of schools with RAAC, some of which had to delay the start of term or close buildings due to safety concerns. RAAC, which stands for Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete, is a lightweight building material, cheaper than concrete, which was used extensively in buildings between 1950 and 1990 but has a lifespan of 30 years. Nine schools in Suffolk reported they had RAAC onsite, out of around 230 nationally.

Councillors were able to question council officers from the council's Schools Infrastructure team about RAAC, the schools in Suffolk affected and the support they were being offered.

### **New Suffolk Fire and Rescue Control Centre**

The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) have recommended that the council leave the current control centre partnership with Peterborough and Cambridgeshire councils and open a new control centre in Suffolk by the end of 2024. This would create significant extra cost, but it was agreed that it was necessary for the safety of Suffolk residents as the Fire Service had significant concerns about the running of the joint venture, particularly a new IT system which had been significantly delayed. A new temporary site for the control centre was needed from December 2023, and work will now begin to find a more permanent site in the centre of the county close to major roads.

### **New Highways Contract**

From 1 October 2023, Suffolk County Council entered into a new Highways contract with Milestone, following the end of the previous contract with Kier. The new contract promises better communication with councillors and Suffolk residents, and contains incentives for the new contractor to work efficiently – for example, undertaking other works needed in the same geographical area when they are called out. The performance of the contract will be scrutinised after 12 months to assess Milestone's performance and is for an initial period of 10 years, with the option to increase it a further 10 years.

At the same time, a new contract for street lighting was entered into with McCann. This contract is due to last for seven years.

### **Budget Meeting: Green, LibDem & Independent Amendments Declined**

In February 2024, the Council's budget for 2024/25 was voted in. The Conservative budget proposed an increase in council tax of the maximum 4.99%, which breaks down into a 2% rise for the Social Care Precept and a 2.99% increase in general tax.

Council services have faced another year of spiralling demand and additional cost pressures, and the council's administration have had to draw £16m from council reserves to balance their budget.



The proposed budget included a 100% cut to arts and museums funding, with a temporary fund set up for 2024-25 using the remaining Covid funding from the government to allow some time for these organizations to adapt and find other sources of income.

It also proposed that all local archives and records be centralised to The Hold in Ipswich, a decision which has been vigorously opposed in both Lowestoft and Bury St Edmunds, where communities want to keep their record office buildings in the area.

My group acknowledged the difficulty of the council's financial position and proposed a minor amendment – that instead of using all of the leftover Covid funding for arts and museums, half should be allocated to supporting young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), a service the Conservatives were planning to cut.

### **Funding for the Arts**

The element of the budget which proved most controversial (and even reached the national press) was the Conservatives' decision to cut 100% of arts funding from April 2025. As mentioned above, their budget proposed to use the last of their Covid funding from the government to provide arts and museums funding for the 2024-25 financial year.

We proposed that £250k of the 2024-25 funding for arts and museums be allocated from the council's core funding, as this is an important distinction for arts organizations when they are applying for other sources of income. This amendment was declined.

The Conservatives backed down on the 100% reduction in funding from April 2025 onwards, and shortly before the budget meeting announced a £500k funding pot which arts and heritage organisations can bid for in the 2025-26 financial year. This could mean the funding for arts and museums is spread more thinly, but means more organizations are likely to benefit. As budget decisions for 2025-25 will not be made until the February 2025 council meeting, this decision is not yet ratified.

### **Ofsted/CQC Inspection of Suffolk SEND Provision**

Suffolk County Council and its NHS partners who provide SEND services (the 'Local Area Partnership') were inspected by Ofsted and CQC in November 2023, with the inspection report being published on 30 January 2024. The inspection found 'widespread and/or systematic failings' in the county's SEND provision and is the second poor inspection result since SEND inspections were introduced in 2016 (the previous inspection being in November 2016). The Local Area Partnership had to submit a priority action plan to Ofsted and CQC by 7 March 2024 detailing how they would address the systemic problems rapidly, including improving the quality and timeliness of EHCP plans (previously known as statements of special educational needs) and annual reviews, improving communication with families and reducing school exclusions for young people with special educational needs.

As a result of the inspection, the two Cabinet Members for children's services and education at the council stood down, and new Cabinet Members have been appointed to these roles. A new full time and permanent Director for Children's Services (DCS) has also recently been appointed, who will start at the council in July.

## **Suffolk Devolution Deal**

After much talk of devolution in the last few years, it looks like this may now happen in Suffolk – though first it has to be agreed by councillors at a debate in July.

Devolution is a process by which regions or cities in the UK can have greater control over decisions in their areas. The government agrees a deal with the area which gives them more freedom to make local decisions about how to spend government funding. This is due to happen in Suffolk from 2025 in areas such as transport and adult education. There will also be a £16m annual investment fund for economic growth, a £5.8m lump sum to regenerate brownfield sites across the county, and a £3m one off investment in retrofitting homes to make them more energy-efficient.

The devolution deal also means the leader of Suffolk County Council would be directly elected by the people of Suffolk, so every four years residents will have two votes, one to elect their local county councillor and the other for leader of the county council. The first election for the directly elected leader will be in May 2025, which is the next county council election. There could be problems with having an elected leader if they are from a different political group to most of the other councillors; the leader can choose a Cabinet and control the council's agenda, but without the votes in the council chamber they might find it difficult to get things done.

There is a consultation being held about the deal right now, and you can find out more about it and fill out the survey here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/devolution>

## **Libraries Consultation**

On Tuesday 25 March, Cabinet reviewed the results of the recent consultation about the Suffolk library service, which is due to go out to procurement in the summer. Broadly, the members of the public who responded to the survey agreed with what libraries currently provided, including community and digital services, and the mobile library and home library services for people who were housebound. Recent pop-up libraries in village halls did not score highly in the consultation and it is unlikely these will form part of the service in future. It is also likely that mobile libraries will run from smaller vehicles in future. The successful bidder for the new libraries contract is likely to be announced in November, with the new contract starting from June 2025. The contract will be for six years with an option to renew for a further six years.

## **Sizewell C Construction Begins**

In January 2024, construction work officially began for Sizewell C nuclear power station on the coast near Leiston. EDF are building a two-reactor nuclear power station that will generate 3.2 gigawatts (GW) of electricity that could power the equivalent of six million homes. The development is highly controversial, not only for those opposed to nuclear power, but also to those in the local communities opposed to the upheaval and impact of the construction on the natural environment, the beauty of the coastline and the effect on tourism and transport routes during the construction period. The construction is projected to take between nine and 12 years, but in practice nuclear power stations often take far longer than planned to build – for example, Hinkley Point C nuclear power station, which began construction in 2017, is now predicted to be operational in 2036, 11 years after it was supposed to be finished.



The government and EDF still need to raise an extra £20bn for the project from private investors which they claim will be in place by the end of 2024.

### **Motions to Council**

With the Conservative administration at SCC having a large majority, motions that our opposition group bring to full council meetings are usually voted down. We did manage to get one motion passed successfully during the year to May 2024, which was for the council to work with its partners to better signpost members of the public to benefits they may be entitled to. This motion was raised as a result of reports that over £15bn of means tested benefits are going unclaimed because people were not always aware of the support they could access to help them, even in times when costs of living are putting serious pressures on families all over the country.

Other motions the group had been unable to bring forward or were voted down included solar power 'Roofs before Rural', to ask the council to commit to prioritise solar panels on buildings and brownfield sites over solar farms on good quality agricultural land, and to lobby the government to reduce barriers to community energy projects. Community energy projects enable local people to produce electricity (for example, by solar panels on schools) to reduce bills, with any extra electricity sold to the grid, making a profit which can be reinvested locally.

In July my group proposed a motion to make it easier for communities to lower speed limits on rural roads where the safe speed for driving is clearly lower than the current National Speed Limit. The motion suggested that on these roads, a lower speed limit than 60mph would encourage many drivers to slow to a more appropriate, safer speed, thereby reducing accidents and making roads safer for all users. This motion was voted down by the Conservative administration.

We also tabled a motion on flooding in December, which among other things, proposed to increase the frequency of clearing drains and gullies around the county; however, the Conservatives proposed an amendment removing this recommendation and passed a weaker motion which did not include any changes to the usual schedule of drainage works.



**badwellashpc@outlook.com**

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**From:** Stephen Rose <sjrose surfacing@btinternet.com>  
**Sent:** 14 May 2024 19:26  
**To:** Badwell Ash PC  
**Subject:** Church / Hester Maria Payne Trust

Hi Carole  
Below is a small statement from St. Mary's church. Howard is away.

REC

Philip Merry, our priest, retired in August 2023. Since then St Mary's Badwell Ash has been in an interregnum. In March we interviewed a new priest and she will be licensed in September 2024. St Mary's has had many fundraising events and has managed to pay its parish share in full in 2023. We had 240 people at our Christmas Carol service and 60 people at our Harvest Festival, which mean they were both record attendances. We also managed to finish off our new cemetery and that was consecrated by the Bishop Martin Seeley in October.

Hester Maria Payne Trust  
Trustees Howard Newman and Stephen Rose  
(St Mary's Church Badwell Ash) received the interest from the trust, and the money goes into the fabric fund as usual.

Best Regards  
Stephen Rose

Sent from my iPhone

## BAHS Summary for PC Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.

The group put their focus this year on two exhibitions to show the work that has been done. The first was at the Village Hall as part of the village coronation for King Charles celebrations. This was well received with lots of discussion about the village nowadays and celebrations in time gone by.

The second exhibition was held in the church in conjunction with the annual Suffolk churches ride and stride day in September, giving visitors to our church a flavor of village life past and present. On show was the research the Graveyard maps, our recorder books, tower tours and footage from the village pram race and the unveiling of our current village sign. Again, this was well received, and we have gained some new members.

The Facebook page remains popular with a large following and the website is still receiving requests for information about relatives from around the world.

At the beginning of this year Pat Monk or chairman stood down after 10 years but remains a vital member of the group. Ed Walsh has taken on the role of chairman. Moving forward the group now contributes bimonthly to the broadsheet and we are continuing research into the history of the White Horse pub other buildings that have an interesting past. The village is growing and becoming more diverse, and this is the focus for this year's exhibition with will be on the 14<sup>th</sup> September in St Mary's Church.

## **BADWELL ASH VILLAGE HALL — CHAIRMAN'S REPORT APRIL 2024**

The last year has again been very busy but immensely rewarding at the Village Hall with lots of good things happening.

With the aim of building community spirit within the Parish the hall trustees have organised some great events – a Coronation Afterparty, a Summer Fayre, a Christmas Bonanza, a coffee morning, two really well supported quizzes and not forgetting two fundraising jumble sales last year and this.

We have seen a gradual increase in bookings -both regular and occasional. The 4C's craft group has become a regular monthly booking alongside the Parish Council and Silver Ash whilst we have been delighted to see new regular weekly bookings for pilates, yin yoga and a new rainbows group. Our other weekly groups – indoor bowls, art class, and two dog training classes continue with good attendances. We continue to welcome all enquirers who might have aspirations to start new regular groups at the hall.

The trustees' drive to improve the standard of facilities at the village hall has continued apace – the remaining old external wooden doors and windows have been replaced with more energy efficient and attractive Upvc units - the small hall has had new led lighting and eco-heating and has recently been redecorated - the large hall has had new wall lights and curtains and generally been spruced up with the removal of surplus noticeboards and general repairs – all the cumbersome small tables have been replaced by Gopak folding tables- the electrics in the entire hall have been brought up to latest standards with a new consumer board installed and a 5 year inspection certificate issued. Last, but certainly not least, we are absolutely delighted to report that in the last few weeks we have had Broadband and Wifi installed at the village hall which will open up a whole new horizon of opportunities for hall users. It is disappointing to note that the woeful performance of BT & Openreach over a period of some 14 months delayed the broadband installation but our dogged persistence has at last paid off.

The majority of the capital improvements have been funded by grants received from the Parish Council, Mid-Suffolk District Council and locality grants supported by our two councillors -Andy and Richard. We are immensely grateful for this financial support which has augmented the use of some of the village hall charity's own reserves. All our improvement projects are researched carefully to ensure that we get value for money from trusted contractors who have all delivered both on time and within budget.

The trustees' endeavours to heighten the profile of the village hall across the parish are also continuing. Our new logo is now adopted and its use is being standardised. Work has begun on our new interactive website to work alongside the information page on the Parish Council website.

In accordance with the charity's governance document, the Annual General Meeting was held last month when the charity trustees were appointed for the current year. In the last year we have welcomed new members – Angela, Frank and Rita who have replaced Sarah and Helen who have stood down.

What next is perhaps an obvious question? The trustees are keen to continue the momentum of physical improvements to the premises – both to enhance the enjoyment of existing all users but, as importantly, to make the village hall an increasingly attractive venue for our community. This



hopefully will stimulate more regular and occasional bookings which will enable us to keep hourly hiring costs as low as possible despite the charity facing generally increasing costs such as utility bills.

We are well advanced in planning two major improvement projects which we aim to see completed before the end of this calendar year – both will have a major and immediate positive impact on the experience of those using the village hall. Firstly, we are looking to replace the tired external metal cladding and inadequate insulation with modern materials which meet current building regulations. Secondly, we are looking to upgrade the courtyard area and canopy to become a pleasant social space which can be enjoyed by users of either of the halls or for community events. The aim is to provide a natural flow from the hall to the play area and playing field. We are well advanced in seeking a range of tenders for the work and our next step soon will be to seek commitments of grant funding from the Parish Council and MSDC before we can gauge the need to seek further grant funding elsewhere.

So – there you have it – we have a financially viable village hall run by an enthusiastic committee of trustees – I would like to record my personal thanks to each of them for their contributions over the past year and ongoing.

Clive Hawkins

Chair of Trustees – Badwell Ash Village Hall (Registered Charity No 279997).

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**badwellashpc@outlook.com**

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**From:** Stephen Rose <sjrose surfacing@btinternet.com>  
**Sent:** 14 May 2024 21:57  
**To:** Badwell Ash PC  
**Subject:** Badwell Ash United Charity's

Hi Carole,  
I can't get hold of Jane, so if you don't hear from her you can use the brief statement below.  
Best Regards  
Stephen

**Badwell United Charities:**

In Dec 2023 Trustees Richard Pratt and Jane Storey asked Stephen Rose to become a trustee. He accepted. It was decided for the trustees to continue to run the charity and not hand over to Midsuffolk. Stephen Rose has agreed to put a piece in the Broadsheet explaining how the trust works and how people can apply for the money at Christmas. The trust handed out money at Christmas as usual and gave some to the Silver Ash Club and St Mary's Church Badwell Ash.

Sent from my iPhone

GREAT ASHFIELD & BADWELL ASH WI

Our Centenary Year 1924 - 2024

REPORT FOR THE PARISH COUNCILS

PRESIDENTS REPORT May 2024

We have enjoyed another busy year with some excellent speakers. At our AGM in May 2023 our Committee was re-elected for the year.

Firstly I would like to give a sincere thank you to both the Badwell Ash Parish Council and the Great Ashfield Parish Council for their generous donations towards our Centenary Celebrations. They are very much appreciated and will be used to buy a gift for each member and to pay for the entertainment booked for our party in June.

We enjoyed a varied programme during the last twelve months. In April 2023 we held an open meeting and our speaker Mary Newton; a Forensic Scientist who gave us a riveting talk about her job and an insight into some very challenging cases. In May we had a Coronation Themed Meeting and our AGM. June a local Jeweller Tony Strowger brought along some very desirable pieces of Jewellery and explained how they were made. Our garden visit in July was to the beautiful Moat House gardens where we also had a delicious cream tea. August saw our garden party being held in Badwell Ash Village Hall due to the inclement weather. It was an enjoyable afternoon which included a Bring & Buy Sale. Other speakers were Robert Halliday on Suffolk Calendar Customs, Geoffrey Kaye on Crystal Palace and the Great Exhibition and Mike Wabe on Dickens A Christmas Carol. Another open meeting in October was an interesting insight into the work of Medical Detection Dogs. January 2024 saw us 'Going Underground in Bury St Edmunds' (metaphorically of course) with Martyn Taylor a local author. February we enjoyed a members tea party with the committee hosting the members and we did some quizzes some of which proved to be head scratching! Our March speaker Celia Graham from the National Trust gave us an interesting talk about Working Lives at Ickworth in the 1930's.

Now I must not forget our first Christmas Fayre held in November 2023. The Committee decided that it might be worthwhile trying to raise funds for our Centenary by having a Christmas Fayre. We had over 20 tables booked and it was such a success that we are going to hold another one on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

Our membership has stayed steady and although we have lost some members we have had new ladies join us. We always extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to join us. Do come along and see what we are all about.

Midge Hawkins  
President