

**BADWELL ASH PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF PARISH AGM
BADWELL ASH VILLAGE HALL
TUESDAY 6TH MAY 2025 7.00PM**

Present:

Cllrs Richard Morris (Chairman), Stephen Russell (Vice Chair), Will Draper, Nick Harvey, John Morgan, Clare Taylor, Mark Tomkins, Tavid Dobson (Parish Clerk) and Lainey Pace (Minute Secretary)

Also Present: County Cllr Andy Mellen, District Councillor Richard Winch and 3 members of the public.

1. Welcome from the Chairman

Councillor Morris welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

2. Minutes of the Parish AGM held on 23rd May 2024

The minutes had previously been circulated. These were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

Reports

3. Report from Richard Morris – Chairman of Badwell Ash Parish Council

Councillor Morris read his report out at the meeting. (report attached)

4. Report from Richard Winch – Mid Suffolk District Councillor

District Councillor Winch gave a summary of his report at the meeting. (report attached)

5. Report from Andy Mellen – Suffolk County Councillor

County Councillor Mellen gave a summary of his report at the meeting. (report attached)

6. Report from Stephen Rose – The Parochial Church Council of Badwell Ash

Stephen Rose was not present. (report attached)

7. Report from Ed Walsh – Chairman of the Badwell Ash History Society

Ed Walsh was not in attendance. (report attached)

8. Report from Clive Hawkins – Chairman, Badwell Ash Village Hall

Clive Hawkins read his report out at the meeting. (report attached).

9. Report from Stephen Rose – Badwell Ash United Charity

Stephen Rose was not present. (report attached)

10. Report from Midge Hawkins – President of Gt Ashfield and Badwell Ash WI

Midge Hawkins was not present. (report attached)

11. Report from Sarah Sharps – Editor of the Badwell Ash Broadsheet

Sarah read her report out at the meeting. (report attached).

12. Report from Karol Tomkins – member of Green Connexions Group

Karol read out her report at the meeting. (report attached)

Signed as an accurate minute of the meeting



Chair of Parish Council

Chairman's Report 2025:

It was another busy year for the Parish Council with the focus this year being on improving the appearance of the parish as well as progressing the Neighbourhood Plan.

It has been great to see the level of interest from members of the community in supporting the Parish Council activities, including the Neighbourhood Plan committee, creation of groups to support local planning, delivering of broad sheets, litter picks and general offers of help across a number of activities to support the parish.

The Neighbourhood Planning team which is made up of a cross section of Parish Councillors and members of the community have had a very busy year and without their hard work and dedication we would not be in such a good position for the fast-approaching referendum. We started this journey in late 2023 with the expectation that it could take 2-4 years to complete based on other local Parish Councils experiences. I am really pleased that we believe the end is in sight and we hope to be completed within 2 years. This will then be a valuable document for the parish as we move forward, but we are already using the feedback from the parish that we collected in multiple surveys and the open days that were so well attended in making future decisions for the Parish.

It is important to recognise the volunteers who have supported the parish in trying to improve the overall look of the village, from the teams who tender the flower trugs, planting around the village gates to the painting of the telephone box, bus shelter, villages gates, cleaning replacing of the village signs, making sandpit covers, creation of a book exchange and clearing the foot paths around the parish.

The Parish Council had the opportunity to increase the number of councillors which allowed us to share the workload as the parish continues to grow. This also gave us the opportunity to designate councillors with specific roles, a great example of this was the free "Thermal survey" that Councillor Tomkins ran in February.

I believe it's important that the Parish Council continues to evolve, and we had the opportunity at the beginning of January to refresh the structure of how we run the Parish Council. I want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Councillors and a number of members of the community for the way they all stepped up and took on additional workloads to keep the Parish Council running. It has been an accelerated learning curve; we are only human so minor mistakes have been made. But I am confident that the changes we have made including the creation of new roles and the appointment of new team members will continue to benefit the parish.

The parish has the benefit of a very active Parish Council, and I would like to thank the Councillors and the wider team that support the parish for all the hard work that happened during the last 12 months and I'm excited to see what we can achieve in the next 12 months.

Richard Morris (Chair of the Parish Council)

Badwell Ash Annual Parish Meeting May 2025

Mid Suffolk District Councillor Annual Report

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

The government's devolution and local government agenda is basically bringing an end to our district and county councils in the next couple of years. These will be replaced with unitary councils covering all services, very significantly fewer councillors to do the work. There is some expectation that parish and town councils will fill the gaps in local community support, but there isn't much Government guidance on this currently.

Alongside this, the establishment of an elected mayor for Suffolk and Norfolk combined, with their own offices and staff, may hopefully raise the profile of our county in terms of grants etc., so the character and priorities of that elected mayor will be crucial.

Mid Suffolk council will ensure a seamless transfer of our services to the new Unitary system, whatever that may be, and a smooth continuation of those services into the future. Alongside this, we are advocating for retaining transparency and democratic process for residents and local communities.

In the meantime, the Green administration is pressing on aiming to achieve as much as we can do for our residents over the next few years.

Council Finances

Mid Suffolk District Council is generally in a healthy financial position.

For 25/26, we have committed to a capital programme of £36m across the district and c.£80m over the next few years.

We only raised Council Tax by 2% last year and didn't raise Council Tax at all this year as we are mindful of the cost-of-living pressures for our residents.

Unfortunately, our ring-fenced Council housing service is not in a good financial state – see below.

Supporting thriving communities

We have launched a £2.5m programme to develop the high street in Stowmarket (our largest town) as well as targeted support for our smaller towns and rural communities.

For example, in Stowmarket we are working with landlords to bring under-utilised properties (including empty shops) back into use. This involves us buying buildings, renting buildings in the short term or helping to support their refurbishment and improve the look of the shop fronts. The council is especially keen to develop the town with arts and cultural experiences, tourism, community activities, retail, small business workspaces, leisure, food and drink. Namely activities that bring something new to the town.

We are proactively assisting our core cultural and arts organisations such as the Food Museum and the John Peel Centre.

Sports activities are also a high priority including a new 3G football pitch, multi-use games area and mini athletics track in Stowmarket and the refurbishment of our leisure centres in the district. The launch of a rural sports facilities fund of £1.5m over the next two years allows local sports clubs to bid for project funding.

Support for biodiversity

Protecting biodiversity is a major concern, and the council has a multi-prong approach to bring improvement. In September 2024 the council organised a call for land to help put landowners in touch with organisations that can support them in managing their land better for wildlife.

We are also purchasing several specific areas of land to protect priority habitats while allowing controlled public access. These sites range from small pieces of land under the stewardship of local village organisations to larger sites of over 50 acres where we will work in partnership with organisations like Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

Then there is our work to improve the river quality of the Dove, Gipping, Rat and Deben – working with stakeholders and landowners to support and enable sustainable management.

Planning and housing development

The current Labour government has increased Mid Suffolk's housing target by 37%. Our response is to work with our communities to create a local planning framework and to support the creation of neighbourhood plans. This brings greater assurance that the required houses will be built while taking into account local priorities such as the exact locations for housing, the affordable housing mix, the tenure types and the

desired biodiversity requirements. This is a more nuanced approach than just focusing on housing targets councillors believe more likely and very importantly to receive community buy in.

Our Joint Local Plan Part 1 has been up to date since 2023 and we've been meeting Government targets and using the Plan to have some control over where and how housing development can happen.

Government have now shifted the goalposts in terms of the number of homes across the district and increasing the powers of developers. Our decisions at planning committee are constrained by this legislation of course, and our local plan is being revised to take Government changes into account.

We have increased council tax for second homes and for long-term empty properties.

We are also making the process of gaining approval for energy efficiency measures for listed buildings more straightforward.

Council Housing

Mid Suffolk would like to build more council houses for local families. However, many councils are restricted in doing this because of the significant historic housing debt. We inherited a debt of over £115mn. Currently 25% of council rents are being spent just to service the debt. Therefore, this money is not being spent on our housing.

Nonetheless the council are still extremely focused on improving our existing council housing and are investing over £10mn in improvements this year for items such as roofing, kitchens and bathrooms. The scheduling of this work is based on a detailed exercise we have recently completed to assess the condition of every single council house in Mid Suffolk.

We have also been working hard to improve the service that we provide to our tenants.

Home insulation

A core priority for the council and the Green Party is to improve the insulation of our homes. This reduces costs for householders, reduces energy use and keeps people warmer. We are currently investing over £2mn in Cosy Homes scheme for the private sector where we offer a free assessment and installation service while ensuring the right technical standards are applied to any installation work. A further £2mn is being invested to create energy efficient council homes.

Enhanced recycling

Comprehensive changes are being made to significantly improve our recycling processes. Mid Suffolk is not even in the top 200 councils for recycling.

The enhanced recycling initiative will involve weekly food waste collections.

Residents will receive a food waste caddy for use in the kitchen and an outdoor caddy which will be emptied each week.

There will also be two recycling bins. One just for paper and cardboard which will result in higher recycling performance. The other bin will be for general recycling and extended to accept glass and later soft plastics and tetra-paks. Special arrangements will be made for residents with limited space either via smaller bins or shared facilities.

The council is investigating other areas of recycling – small electrical items, textiles, batteries – to improve the district's efforts to reduce and reuse.

Gateway 14

The Council owns the Gateway 14 Business Park. The Range which is the first business operating at Gateway 14 already employs over 600 people. 200 of these are from the local area and most had been unemployed for over 2 months.

Two sustainable building companies Bauder and Assan Panels have been attracted to Gateway 14 in the last 18 months. This will bring a further 100 jobs to the area.

A significant grant-funded investment is being made in a purpose-built Skills and Innovation Centre. The centre will help address the region's skills gap and have a particular focus on digital, AI and green skills. The project will cost £18.8m of which £16.66m is funded by Freeport East and the remainder by Mid Suffolk. The centre will offer office space for high growth start-ups and will be used for training, working in partnership with the Universities of Suffolk and Essex, West Suffolk College, Suffolk New College and Colchester Institute.

Grant support for the Community

Our Community Team is friendly, approachable, and happy to help community groups to access grants within Mid Suffolk and externally.

The Locality Budget has increased to £10,000 per district councillor, and I am always pleased to be approached about possible grant applications.

Finally

I would like to express my thanks to the Parish Council and to all the church, community and charity groups for all their hard work this year. Those involved don't get paid for what they do. They are all trying to do the best for our community.

Annual Parish Report – 2024/25

Councillor Andy Mellen

Division: Thedwastre North

Councillor Contact Details:

Mobile: 07790 992619

Email: andy.mellen@suffolk.gov.uk

Motions

My group passed three successful motions at council over the year:

1. In May 2024, we proposed that the council lobby the government for proper, long-term funding for local councils and support policies to address the long-term funding of adult social care. We tabled this motion as the Local Government Association had recently estimated that councils in England will have a funding gap totalling £4bn over the next two years. Suffolk County Council is predicting a 'budget gap' of £33.1m for 2026-27 so this is a very real concern for Suffolk and will affect Suffolk's local services.
2. In July 2024, my group tabled a motion that the council would do everything it could to avoid delays with local infrastructure funded by developer contributions. We were aware that a lot of local projects that are due to be paid for by developers are very overdue, in some cases for years – for example, new pedestrian crossings for roads where there is new housing. Sometimes these works are due to be undertaken by the developer and the delay is caused by them, but our motion acknowledged that the design and programming of works by Suffolk County Council was also often delayed.
3. In December 2024, my group successfully proposed a policy for the council of 'Roofs before Rural' regarding solar panels. The motion noted that the new Labour government was proposing to triple the amount of solar power in the UK by 2030 and set out the council's position that rooftop solar was preferable to 'solar farms' which are becoming an increasing sight across the county. The council agreed to write to the government to seek assurances Suffolk's best quality agricultural land would be protected.

My group also proposed the following motions which were voted down by the Conservative administration at council:

1. In October 2024, my group tabled a motion to revise the Highways Maintenance Operating Procedure so that repairs to footways and pavements would be prioritized in areas with heavy footfall, or where a recent fall had been reported. This motion was rejected by the Conservatives.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganization

Since the publication of the government's White Paper in December, Suffolk councils have been scrambling to develop their proposals for reorganizing local government. Under the new system, Norfolk and Suffolk will have a joint mayor (with elections held in May 2026) leading a mayoral authority, with two tier government (county councils and district/borough councils) replaced by unitary councils – single councils that undertake all local services like

education, adult care, waste collection, housing and highways. Suffolk County Council's administration have been clear that they would prefer a single unitary council for Suffolk, and they ratified this decision by voting for it in the council chamber on 13 March and at Cabinet on 18 March. Opposition councillors, like my group and the Labour group, are less convinced that one massive council would bring decision-making closer to the communities, which is what devolution is supposed to enable. Councils have to submit interim plans to the government by 21 March, then detailed proposals in September, with a decision from government by the end of the year on what will happen. It is likely that councillors for the new council/s would be elected by Suffolk residents in May 2027, a year after the mayoral elections.

Suffolk's Library Service

At Cabinet in March 2025, the council administration voted to bring Suffolk's libraries back in-house at the end of the current contract for the library on 31 May. Suffolk Libraries, who have held the contract since the service was divested in 2012, were the only bidder for the contract, but negotiations broke down and the council felt it had no alternative but to bring the libraries back under council control. The proposal to do this was passionately opposed not just by Suffolk Libraries, but also Suffolk residents and the many volunteers and Friends groups who work for and raise money for libraries in their communities.

Following the Cabinet meeting, both my group and the Labour group submitted requests that the decision be 'called in' – a process by which an issue can be tabled at a meeting of the council's Scrutiny Committee to be looked at more closely. Both the requests were rejected by the council on Wednesday 27 March after being reviewed by the council's monitoring officer.

Norwich to Tilbury Pylons

At Cabinet in May 2024, the council voted to object to the proposed Norwich to Tilbury 400kV grid reinforcement and call for a pause until alternative options had been explored. The proposals which were reviewed included 183k of pylons, with four sections of underground cabling through and near the Dedham Vale National Landscape (the new name for an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Waveney valley. The council were keen that more underground cabling take place in the Waveney valley than proposed, and it was agreed more generally that energy projects in the county needed to be coordinated better to reduce the impact on residents and the local environment, particularly as so many of them are due to be under construction at the same time. Other councils in the area have also objected to the plans. Since then, the National Grid has confirmed it will not be proposing any further underground cabling in the plans, holding several consultations with local residents which have been largely negatively received.

State of Suffolk's Roads

In July 2024, a report was brought to Scrutiny Committee which looked into the condition of Suffolk's roads, the amount spent by the council to repair them and how repair works were prioritised. The findings were that amount of funding available for repairing highways was around £17m per year, but £50m per year would be needed for an optimal programme of resurfacing. Works are prioritised by the council's Highway Maintenance Operational Plan, which sets out the parameters for repair work and the order of priority repairs. Unsurprisingly, main roads and roads which have a lot of traffic are prioritised over quieter

roads which do not. Having said this, the council is currently undertaking a scheme of resurfacing residential roads which have fallen into disrepair, having announced an additional £10m of funding for this project in May 2023.

Council Budget 2025-26

In February 2025, the council voted to adopt its proposed budget for the 2025-26 financial year. This included approving a maximum rise in council tax this year of 4.99%, including the 2% social care precept for adult care. The budget this year does not include borrowing from the council's reserves, which was a concern last year. Instead, the budget relies on delivering £28.4m of savings across many council services. Cost pressures for the council include care purchasing for adult social care, Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and placements for children in care. There is still a lot of concern about the level of debt the council is carrying from the Designated Schools Grant (DSG), a debt which is due to increase this year by £62.175m. Councils are allowed by the government to hold this 'negative reserve' until March 2026. The government is yet to come up with a solution for this issue after that date; many councils are holding enormous levels of this debt which they would not be able to pay off if they had to. In addition, the councils have to borrow money to cover the interest on the debt which affects their finances every year: over 2025-26, the debt will cause a £6.8m cost pressure for the council. The rising DSG debt is mostly for council services for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The council is also forecasting that in the next few years, it will have budget 'gaps' that will only grow: £33.1m for 2026-27, and £96.2m in 2028-29. The council has lobbied the government for better funding – my group proposed a successful motion on this in May 2024. The council hopes that Local Government Reorganization (see above) will make enough savings to improve the medium and long term picture for local services.

Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services

In June 2024, the council was subject to an Ofsted inspection of its social care services for children and young people, known as an ILACS inspection (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services). These inspections are undertaken approximately every three years to judge how the council are performing in their function to support children who are vulnerable and in need of protection. Previously, in 2019, the council had been rated as 'Outstanding', but in 2024 it had dropped two grades and was assessed as 'Requires Improvement'. This meant that the council had to prepare an action plan for improvement, which was submitted to Ofsted and the Department for Education. The council has recruited extra staff to and has organized peer reviews with other local authority to learn how to improve practice. It has also established a new Strengthening Services for Children and Families Board chaired by the council's Chief Executive, Nicola Beach. The council particularly needs to improve services for care leavers and ensure that young people leaving care are aware of the support they can access until they turn 25.

Improving Services for Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

Following the poor Ofsted/CQC inspection report published in January last year, the council has been trying to improve SEND services. In May last year they produced and submitted a SEND Strategy, and in June they produced a Priority Action Plan for improvement, including

extra funding of £4.4m to recruit more staff, including Educational Psychologists. In July the council approved an additional £9.1m over three years to increase capacity to clear the council's backlog of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and Annual Reviews. This was funded from council reserves.

In January 2025, the council's Public Health team presented a SEND Needs Assessment for the county at the Health and Wellbeing Board, which forecast that SEND demand in Suffolk has risen sharply in recent years and was likely to continue to rise. It also found that delays in EHCP assessment, ADHD and autism assessment and support, and access to mental health services for young people were unsatisfactory and in some cases getting worse, like speech and language therapy.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Inspection

In February 2025, the government published a report following its recent inspection of Suffolk's Fire and Rescue Service. Inspections for fire services are relatively new, with the first ones undertaken by the Home Office in 2018. The inspection report was not complimentary; it found that the service was good at preventing fires, protecting the public and that it met requirements for responding to major incidents, but also that it needs improvement in several areas, including improving culture and morale, and behaviour of senior leaders, who it advised should act as role models and show they are committed to the values of the service through their behaviour, improving communication with fire service employees and making sure they felt confident about raising concerns. This report was followed shortly afterwards by allegations in the press by the Fire Brigades Union that Suffolk County Council had made mistakes processing firefighter pay and pensions for years and has not addressed them properly or listened to employee concerns about the errors. The council subsequently announced additional investment of an extra £1.6 million over two years to improve the service.

Warm Homes in Suffolk

This year saw the end of the Warm Homes Grant fund, in which £5m of government money intended to improve insulation and make houses more energy-efficient was returned to the government unspent by the council. The reason given for this was that the criteria for the scheme, which was set by the government, was too stringent and meant that many Suffolk families who needed help were unable to access the funding. There are still schemes available to help with making homes more energy-efficient though – The Suffolk Loft Insulation Offer is funded by the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group (which includes Suffolk County Council) and this scheme will only close once the allocated funding has all been spent. Suffolk County Council is also running a new scheme to offer residents interest-free loans to upgrade the energy efficiency of their homes, that includes insulation but also solar panels, glazing and heat pumps. Loans are from £2k to £15K to be repaid over a maximum of seven years at 0% interest, but in order to be eligible, properties must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band below C. Increasing insulation and making homes more energy-efficient will not only save people money on their heating bills, it is also helping the environment as less fuel will be consumed to keep homes warm. Please signpost people to these schemes using the links below:

- For the Suffolk Loft Insulation Offers, residents should visit <https://highloft.co.uk/pages/suffolk-council-200-loft-insulation-contribution> and fill in the form to receive a discount code
- For the interest free loan scheme, homeowners can check to see if their property has an existing Energy Certificate with an EPC band and record of their property size at gov.uk/find-energy-certificate. They can apply for the vouchers by visiting suffolkenergyassessment.co.uk. This scheme started in November and vouchers are being distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Update on Flooding

Following the Storm Babet flooding in October 2023, the council announced it was investing an extra £1m in investigating the causes of flooding and taking action to prevent further floods. As the lead local flood authority, the council undertakes investigations into flooding in the county regularly, but the level of flooding in autumn 2023 meant that far more investigations would need to be made than in other years. A year later, in November 2024, the council announced it would be allocating a further £1.5m from its reserves to deal with recommendations made in the 10 investigation reports published so far. A further 38 investigation reports have been commissioned by the council relating to Storm Babet flooding. The council also announced it would be writing to the government to request £20m to protect Suffolk from flooding, given that extreme weather will become more likely due to the effects of climate change.

In October 2024, Cabinet agreed a £2m contribution from the council towards protecting the A12 from flooding at Benacre, south of Lowestoft. Erosion of the coast meant that road would likely be flooded at that location at nearly every high tide within a couple of years. The total cost of the works, which includes two new pumping stations, clay embankments and a new saltmarsh, will be many millions, with the Environment Agency committing over £30m and Sizewell C agreeing to fund the rest. Since then, it has been revealed that the cost may be higher than expected, and the council has agreed to allocate and put aside an additional £2.7m contribution in case it is needed later in the construction period.



St Mary's Church BADWELL ASH

From Stephen Rose <sjrose.surfacing@btinternet.com>

Date Thu 2025-05-08 18:43

To badwellashpc@outlook.com <badwellashpc@outlook.com>

Hi Tavid

Below is our church report for 2024 to 2025.

St Mary's Church started this period in an interregnum, but in September our new priest Catriona was installed as curate-in-charge. Our church held many events over the year, including Easter Egg Hunt, £1 sale, Plant Sale, and Art Exhibition. Since our new priest has been installed we have had bigger attendances at church services.

Our church had a lot of urgent repairs throughout this period and was unable to pay its Parish share in full. It's highly unlikely we will be able to pay again this year, which in the long run could mean closing our church. Our repair bill for St Mary's church grows ever bigger but we are doing everything we can to make ends meet.

Stephen Rose
Church Warden

Sent from my iPhone

BAHS Summary for PC Meeting 6th May 2025.

The Focus for the group this year has been to build on the success of the exhibition that was held in the church in conjunction with the annual Suffolk churches ride and stride day in September 2024 giving visitors to our church a flavor of village life past and present. On show was ongoing research into Parkers farmhouse, the White Horse Pub, Church Cottage and a look back on 100 years of the WI. Also available to see were the Graveyard maps, our recorder books, tower tours and footage from the village pram race and the unveiling of our current village sign as well as aerial footage of our church. Again, this was well received, and we have gained several new members.

The Facebook page remains popular with a large following and the website is still receiving a high proportion of hits with requests for information about relatives from around the world. Updating the website has become a priority for the group. The plan is to update the site and make it easier to navigate.

Ed Walsh continues in the role of chairman for another year. Moving forward the group now contributes bimonthly to the broadsheet. Recent topics have included a behind-the-scenes tour of the Hold (Suffolk Archives in Ipswich) 100 years of the WI in Badwell Ash and a review of occupations of those who lived here before us. The village is growing and becoming more diverse, and this is the focus for this year's exhibition which will again be held in the church in September.

If you are interested in joining us, we meet bimonthly in the Lounge Bar at the White Horse pub. For further details please contact me via the website.

BADWELL ASH VILLAGE HALL – CHAIRMANS REPORT APRIL 2025

Another year has passed with yet more eventful changes taking place at the Village Hall.

Continuing the aim of improving the community spirit, the Trustees of the Village hall by way of their endeavours, have further improved the fabric of the Village Hall adding more appeal and focus to this the hub of the Parish. To this end organised events have included Jumble Sales, Coffee Mornings, a Quiz Night and Christmas Fayre. We also welcomed to the venue the local WI with their Christmas Fayre.

Regrettably we lost a couple of our weekly bookings but gained new replacements. Our regular long term users continue with good attendances. Added to this we have gained more individual bookings, which have been most welcome and appear to be on the increase, due we believe to improved facilities.

With the continued view of supporting the local community, by it having a Village Hall fit for purpose, the Trustees embarked on a major refurbishment plan, as indicted in last year's report. This has involved the replacement of the external cladding together with new insulation of the larger hall. Also the provision of a new veranda canopy serving both halls, as well as a courtyard to enhance social gatherings. Naturally such a programme needed funding and we have been fortunate in securing from five local government bodies, our County and District Councillors, the National Lottery Fund and the Bernard Sunley Foundation. Unfortunately, our Parish Council were unable to provide any financial support. With the programme fully funded we were able to proceed, with the cladding and insulation completed and the canopy and courtyard work due to commence next month. Therefore we give a big thank you, to all of the aforementioned who supported us.

Furthermore we are indebted to an anonymous benefactor, who kindly funded the installation of a CCTV system at the hall, for the benefit and wellbeing of all hall users. To that person our sincere thanks. The installation coincidentally followed on from incidents of vandalism around the village hall last year.

During the winter period we instigated an overhaul of our Health and Safety issues and can report that compliance has been fulfilled and is being maintained.

With our Logo now in full use and our Website up and running, it is tinged with sadness for the developer of both and fellow Trustee, Cliff Rowbottom, has sadly passed away. Along with his loss we have also lost the services of Caroline, Angela and Frank and thank them for their past input. We have now been joined by Chloe Peart and Ed Walsh.

Planning for further future development is already in hand, with priority being given to the replacement of the old inefficient heating in the larger hall, as well as redecoration of this hall. For this we will once again be seeking funding, as costs are currently beyond what our coffers will bear.

Over the past twelve months our programme of development has been vindicated, for the improvements made to the hall has encouraged greater use and more bookings. An attractive hall is a viable hall, aesthetically and financially and one the community can share in and use with pride.

The Trustees continue to have the best interests of the community in mind, whilst improving the hall, and will continue to do so. Our focus is on the future and the ongoing needs of one and all.

In closing I wish to record my personal thanks to all Trustee members of the committee past and present for their contribution and commitment to the cause, The Village Hall.

Clive Hawkins.

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



Outlook

Badwell Ash United Charities

From Stephen Rose <sjrose surfacing@btinternet.com>

Date Thu 2025-05-08 18:51

To badwellashpc@outlook.com <badwellashpc@outlook.com>

Hi Tavid

Below is our yearly report.

The Trustees of Badwell Ash United Charities met in Dec and refreshed our list of recipients. 14 people received £40 each. St Mary's Church and Badwell Ash Silver Ash club both received £50 each.

Stephen Rose
Trustee

Sent from my iPhone

GREAT ASHFIELD & BADWELL ASH WI 1924 - 2025

REPORT FOR THE PARISH COUNCILS

PRESIDENTS REPORT May 2025

We have enjoyed another busy year with some excellent speakers. At our AGM in May 2024 our Committee was re-elected for the year.

Celebration was the order of all things during 2024. In April 2024 we held an open meeting and our speaker Tim Foreman From SERV Suffolk and Cambridge, also known as the "Blood Runners," gave a very interesting and informative talk. We were somewhat shocked as to how much the NHS relies on them and how hard the volunteers all work. June saw us all celebrating our Centenary with an afternoon tea (provided by Casper's Catering) in Badwell Ash Village Hall. We also had a magician entertaining us. Everyone worked together to create a memorable afternoon. Our July meeting was a garden visit to Fullers Mill and was part of our celebrations. Beautiful gardens to wander through, with some delicious refreshments to end the afternoon. August, our garden party was held in the beautiful garden of Kate and Ian. An enjoyable afternoon, which included a Bring & Buy Sale. We had another Open Meeting in September with our speaker Dr Stephen Ashworth, a Professor of Chemical Physics & Science who gave us a talk on Kitchen Chemistry. An entertaining and amusing evening which also included some rather loud bangs and flames! October saw us listening to a talk on "How to help our Hedgehogs" with Jonathan Housego. We all learnt many tips on how to help them. We held another very successful Christmas Fayre in Badwell Ash Village Hall. Lots of varied stalls, and with a good flow of visitors who also enjoyed the refreshments on offer. Our November meeting speakers pulled out at the last minute and Nancy managed to find Cheryl of "Artistry in Cocoa" as a late replacement. Cheryl showed us how to make truffles in several different ways and told us all about the history of chocolate. It was very good, educational and entertaining, with delicious samples. December saw the culmination of our Centenary celebrations with a Members Christmas Lunch held in the Lord Thurlow Hall in Great Ashfield. Casper's Catering once again catered for us and served us all a delicious meal and even did all the washing up. January 2025 our meeting was "Wimbledon behind the Scenes" with Wendy Smith a former line judge. Unfortunately our February meeting had to be cancelled. Our March meeting saw us with two speakers from The Suffolk Punch Trust based at Hollesley Bay. These iconic horses are woven into the history of our agricultural county. Another Open Meeting in April with a fascinating talk by Lucy Lewis who was Britain's first female bomb disposal expert. The meeting was very well attended with many visitors joining us and very much enjoyed by all.

Our membership has remained steady and we have had new ladies join us. Unfortunately our longest serving member of some 44 years sadly passed away recently. She will be sorely missed. 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

The Badwell Broadsheet - 2024/25 overview.

The Badwell Broadsheet is a bi-monthly (published six times a year) newsletter that serves the residents of Badwell Ash, Long Thurlow, and Badwell Little Green in Suffolk.

The 8-12 page publication is distributed by a dedicated team of volunteers in February, April, June, August, October, and December. It provides a regular channel for sharing important parish news, updates on Parish Council activities and local societies. The newsletter also includes information from the village hall, upcoming events, and other items of interest relevant to the residents of the three villages.

What went well

- In 2024/2025, we consistently produced an 8-page A4 issue every other month. We produced a 12-page issue in April/May.
- The Broadsheet Survey was incredibly successful, proving the value of the newsletter. There were more replies than anticipated, showing residents are engaged with The Badwell Broadsheet and are interested in what it offers.
- Overall, the feedback from the survey was positive, with comments on content suggestions, gratitude for the publication, and acknowledgement and thanks for being consulted.
- 19% of those who answered the survey expressed interest in helping out in some capacity.
- We secured sponsors for each issue, with the exception of February/March, where we made the decision not to include a sponsor, and to advertise the position for Parish Clerk and FO instead.
- We secured regular content from the Local and District Councillors, as well as contributions from the Village Hall, WI, local history society, carpet bowl group and St. Mary's Parish Church. We also have regular content from a local gardener, wildlife enthusiasts, Walsham Sports Club, the 4Cs, and others.
- We implemented an Editorial Calendar to give guidance to the team on deadline dates.

2025/2026

Aims and objectives for the following year.

1. A new name and byline. - The Broadsheet. The newsletter for the villages of Badwell Ash, Badwell Little Green and Long Thurlow.
 - The majority of people refer to the newsletter as 'The Broadsheet'; therefore, the colloquial name will not change. By adding the byline, we will include all the villages the newsletter serves, and remove the 'Badwell' aspect of the title.
2. Advertising
 - To increase advertising (and subsequent revenue) to x per issue to enable the newsletter to be mostly self-funded. A dedicated person from the Parish Council will need to volunteer to run the advertising side of each issue.
3. Consistency and proofreading.
 - Consistency is crucial for any publication, and a dedicated proofreader plays a vital role in this process. While the editor assembles the content, writes certain aspects of the newsletter, and performs initial proofreading, having a second person review the copy (rather than any design elements) is essential.
4. To approve and implement the Editorial Guidelines

- Editorial guidelines provide clarity to newsletter contributors. The guidelines cover
 - Purpose and scope
 - Communication principles
 - Submission guidelines, such as deadlines, content and images
 - Code of conduct and complaints
 - Accessibility

5. Online content, further reach and comms

- An outcome of the Broadsheet Survey was to improve our online presence. A number of people wanted to read the newsletter online, without realising it was already available on the website. Therefore, we should consider options to improve the Parish Council website as part of a bigger comms project. Additionally, having a presence on Facebook and Nextdoor, as the Badwell Ash Parish Council, might be beneficial.

6. A comms steering group

- All the above cannot be achieved by one person, and communication is key to making the village newsletter a success, therefore setting up a steering group to manage comms would be beneficial.

Green ConneXions

During the Neighbourhood Plan consultations lots of people said that the things they valued in the parish were the countryside on our doorstep - the footpaths - the flowers - the hedges - the trees - the dark skies - the wildlife - and that these were worth preserving and - hopefully - improving.

The Neighbourhood Plan commissioned a wildlife survey of the village which gave pointers on what could be enhanced.

At the same time many people were also saying how important it was for our villages to be "green" - to be less polluting and to be more energy efficient.

Pondering on this the Neighbourhood plan steering group decided a 'green' project group was needed so an article was placed in the Broadsheet asking for interested residents to make contact with a NDP group member.

Early this year a small group of us met to decide what to do - and we called ourselves "Green ConneXions"!

We realised straightaway that if we wanted to try to improve on things we first needed to know where we stood at this moment.

How can you measure progress if you don't know where you are starting from?

So we needed some bench marks and to do that we needed some surveys

So that's where we have started. We're pretty amateurish (there ARE only four of us!) - but we have started!

Our first survey - one very cold winter morning before the bin men came round - was to see what percentage of houses put out recycling bins? It was a bit rough and ready - but the answer was 70.9 % - less than we

expected.

There could be lots of reasons for this so we'll do it again in the Autumn and see if our first figure was broadly accurate or not. Then we can start asking "could that figure be higher" and "how could we encourage that"?

Our next survey was to see how many solar panels we have in the parish. In Long Thurlow there are 10 houses with 116 panels, Badwell Green no panels and Badwell Ash 26 houses with 245 panels. What could we do to improve these figures.

Our next planned survey will be a pond survey.

Ponds were once widespread throughout the Suffolk countryside and - as well as providing drinking water for cattle and working horses - they were a haven for wildlife - particularly insects - which in turn encouraged frogs and toads and birds.

We have found a tame expert and we plan on going pond dipping one weekend to find out about the health of our ponds.

And if they are not in good shape - what might we do to encourage them back to health?

(if any of you fancy pond dipping, please join us!)

Our future plans include a Brown Bin survey, get the Parish to take part in the RSPB Garden Bird survey and responding to Suffolk Wildlife Trust's NDP Survey recommendations to erect bird boxes around the Parish, for which we will be looking for funding.

Members of the team have also been involved in the thermal imaging project, the Spring litter pick and the toad watch. The toad watch this year was actually very disappointing as only 30 toads were taken across the road in 25 evenings, compared to 143 last year. The number of toads saved were down in the other local sites but Badwell Ash's were the worst.

So that's where we have got to so far - and that's with just four people

Think what a dozen people could do!