

## Annual report of Bedfield Parish Council

25 May 2022

I am pleased to present this report for the year ending May 2022. At the start of last year, we were just emerging from Covid restrictions and so it's great to see that established groups and clubs are operating again (the Church Community, Friends First Friday and Gardening Club to mention just three) and that new ones have been set up (the Art and Craft Club and Our Club). Clearly, the community of Bedfield has recovered well from the pandemic.

We have welcomed several new residents to the village and it's great to see them taking an active part in helping at events and indeed, setting them up.

The Parish Council (PC) works hard to keep all residents informed using the recently improved website: [bedfield.onesuffolk.net](http://bedfield.onesuffolk.net)

My thanks to Lisa Crane for her work on an almost daily basis uploading Parish Council information and for establishing new ways of communicating for example, through Facebook. The Bedfield and Monk Soham Newsletter is also successful, and I encourage everyone to make use of it by both subscribing and sending articles for publication. [bedfieldmonksoham@btinternet.com](mailto:bedfieldmonksoham@btinternet.com)

I am aware that there are residents who do not have access to the internet, so newsletters and PC information is regularly available on the village and Community HUB noticeboards.

Many residents will be aware of the sad and untimely death of Steve Harvey who was a valued member of the PC, we send our sincere condolences to his wife, Marion, and son and daughter.

The PC has welcomed a new Councillor, Maureen Whiteman and my thanks go to all members of the PC for their support and commitment to improving Bedfield for its residents. Special thanks go to Geoff Robinson for undertaking the considerable Clerk duties.

It is incredible to think the play area has been in place for almost two years now and it continues to provide a safe place for children of a wide age range to enjoy. Last September, the Community Club Committee organised a successful social event for residents of Bedfield and Monk Soham, combined with the official opening of the play area. It was a glorious sunny day, and it gave everyone that attended the much-needed chance to get together after Covid restrictions were lifted. Thanks to Rob Rogers and his talented musicians for making the event go with a swing.

The Community Club Committee and friends are currently well under way with the planning for the Summer Fete which will take place on Saturday on 9<sup>th</sup> July, we're hoping it will be the best yet, after a two-year break.

The Community HUB continues to develop, with a new clothing bank recently added to the existing recycling facilities; facilities also include a bottle bank and battery recycling when the Pavilion is open.

The Post Office outreach service at the HUB on Tuesday mornings has seen an increase in footfall and the Community Club Café provides a regular weekly opportunity to meet up with friends.

Improvements to the pavilion have recently included replacement LED lighting with sensors in the washrooms and new blinds for the main room, all funded by a grant from Thrive.

A new splay at the entrance to the HUB has improved access to and from the road and I am grateful to Councillor Matthew Hicks for providing some of the funding for this, together with contributions from the Parish Council and Community Club.

The village has an active church community with Reverend Chrissie Smart and the PCC which has organised many successful fundraising events throughout the year, including the forthcoming Queen's Jubilee events.

The village looked beautiful in February with the many daffodils that were planted on verges and on the playing field, thanks to everyone who got involved and especially to Barbara Lee and Lin Ford for the organisation.

Finally, my thanks to Paula Booth who supported the PC to apply for several free trees from Mid Suffolk District Council.

The first trees were planted in the Community Orchard (aka the old play area) and on Hungers Green on the first weekend in December 2021. Thanks go to all the volunteers that helped with preparing and digging holes. Of course, there's more to new trees than just the planting, so because of this work, a new Conservation group has been formed to support the future management of them and other maintenance around the village.

I'm pleased to report that Bedfield also has its very own Tree Warden. Thanks to Bob Whiteman for volunteering to undertake this role.

More trees were planted on the far side of the playing field in February. Also, thanks to Bedfield Town Trust and the Gardening Club for their support with this project.

All this activity demonstrates what an active and vibrant village Bedfield is, and has been, particularly, in the last 12 months. I'm sure this will continue in 2022/23.