

# ANNUAL BERGH APTON PARISH MEETING – Wednesday 4th April 2019

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## 1. Chairman's Welcome

David Skedge warmly welcomed everybody to the meeting and hoped they all enjoyed the refreshments prepared by Janet Skedge.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Barry Stone, Teresa Osborne (School), Pat Mlejnecky (BACAT), and Paul Blazer (Bergh Apton Parish Charities)

## 3. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## 4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

6.1 CIL funding – Clerk confirmed that it was her understanding that CIL monies could not be used for re-decoration of the Village Hall as this question had arisen at the last meeting.

6.2 Website – Clerk had reported the issue of the website re-directing to other sites of an unsavoury nature and was not aware of any further incidents.

## 5. Reports from Parish Organisations

### **BERGH APTON PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS – Julie Gosling – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer - Accounts Commentary 2018-19**

During the year the Parish Council recorded Actual Income of £21,965.08 (£22,485.17) and Expenditure of £20,341.06 (£3,687.50). Year-end cash balance is £35,195.39 which includes a CIL earmarked reserve of £26,530.92, leaving £8,664.47 in the general fund.

Income consisted of Precept payment of £4,137 (£3,838), CIL payment of £15,626.58 (£18,407.21), £1,669.50 from Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership bid (half cost of SAM2 unit) and a £500 donation towards the Table Tennis table from the Paul Bassham Trust.

Expenditure this year has mainly been concentrated on the refurbishment of the play area, a total of £10,057.88 has been spent on groundworks and repairs, a new swing unit, replacement of the bark and safety matting. The intention is that a Climbing dome and an outside table tennis table be purchased in the coming financial year. All monies spent on the play area have been provided by the CIL payments from developers of plots in the village.

Other costs include the purchase of the SAM2 unit at a cost of £4,006.80, half of the cost being supported by the grant from Norfolk County Council, the remainder provided from CIL. A donation to the school of £2,000 (again from CIL monies) was also made towards improving the school's facilities.

Regular on-going costs of note are the Clerk's salary £2,096.64 (£1,574.22) an uplift due to increased hours and national pay scale increases; insurance £375.33 (£372.95); dog bin emptying £90; payroll and pension services £216.12 and village hall hire £120.

Donations have also been made to the newsletter, Norfolk Accident and Rescue, the hire of a bus for the school to enable pupils to visit the WW1 soldiers, BYRUS and churchyard maintenance.

## **BERGH APTON PARISH CHAIRMAN – David Skedge**

In May a new four year term will begin for the Parish Council following the elections on the 2nd May. At present we do not know who will be on the Parish Council at that time. It is now appropriate to thank the people who have successfully brought the Parish Council to this point over the last two years. Firstly I would like to thank our clerk, Julie Gosling, who was new to the role in 2017. Her commitment and professionalism have ensured that Councillors have been kept on their toes. She has supplied a very clear record of the Council's business in her minutes. Hugh Porter, our Vice Chairman, has a keen interest in the environment and has been a member of the working party for the project to maintain and improve the play park using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money. He is also our representative on the Village Hall committee. What can I say about John Ling? He has been involved in everything we do and has worked tirelessly. He is also on the working party for the play park together with Janet Skedge. Three Councillors have indicated that they no longer wish to serve. Richard Herring has been extremely useful on projects, such as the bus shelter, where you have to accept getting your hands dirty and SAM2. I must also thank Paul and Renata Thornber for their judgement over the last two years.

### **Planning**

Planning is a very important part of the Council's business occurring throughout the year. If the item is contentious or we have any uncertainty we like to arrange a site visit.

At present there are five "windfall" developments in the village. On Threadneedle Street the eco house is nearing completion. On The Street Michael Whiting is building a detached house. Three other sites have planning permission but have not commenced. Bussey Bridge, a two bedroomed dwelling. Mill Road, two separate sites for detached properties.

Also a site, to the north of Cooke's Road near the Village Hall, for two houses has gone to appeal. This demonstrates a healthy demand in Bergh Apton for housing, even without any estate development.

The Greater Norwich Local Plan(GNLP) encompasses Bergh Apton and follows on from the Joint Core Strategy(JCS) under which Bergh Apton was allocated two estate developments. One, Hawthorn Drive, has been completed. In 2016 a call commenced requesting developers and landowners to submit sites. In Bergh Apton we have nine sites that have been put forward. During the consultation period, which ended on the 14th December 2018 ,the Parish Council commented on all nine sites. Our comments can be seen on the GNLP website, together with those of many residents. The GNLP partners are at present deliberating. They are expected to choose sites, to be available for consultation, during October 2019. This plan runs and looks forward to 2036. Therefore, I would ask that careful consideration is given to sustainability when the sites are chosen. Climate change is pressing, so the availability of brownfield sites, good access to hospitals, and making use of the NDR all come to mind. Surely, large estates, on greenfield sites in rural areas, are out of date. With the latter in mind we have joined with the CPRE in it's "pledge".

## **Traffic**

Bergh Apton has many miles of mostly narrow winding roads without pavements. Naturally there is a concern about road safety. Only Mill Road, Threadneedle Street and Church Meadow Lane have 30mph speed restrictions.

We applied to Norfolk County Council for a 50% grant to purchase a speed monitoring machine (SAM2) We were successful and acquired the machine in 2018, the remainder of the cost was borne from our CIL fund. We were delighted to receive training from Westcotec so that the machine could be fitted at the beginning of December in Mill Road. We have now covered three different locations in Mill Road and one in Threadneedle Street outside Fieldside. SAM2 is currently on Church Meadow Lane. Julie prepared a rota for moving and maintaining the machine. As it has to be moved every four weeks and the batteries recharged regularly, it is labour intensive. Our team of six volunteers consists of Mike Rimmer, Richard Crome, Richard Phillips, John Burrage, Richard Herring and myself. Mike Rimmer has undertaken the onerous task of monitoring the machine, downloading the data. If anyone feels they have the ability to deputise for Mike we would be pleased to hear from you. This is a tricky IT task so I would like especially to thank him. Thank you too to the other four volunteers. I hope you are as concerned, as we have been, to see that nearly 30% of vehicles travel in excess of 30mph. Many of these reach nearly 40mph. Unfortunately the results for Threadneedle Street mirror all the results from Mill Road, so there is a speeding problem throughout the 30mph zone and we have the evidence.

This leads me on to mention an accident that occurred in September 2018 at the junction of Mill Road with Threadneedle Street. An Alington resident had his nearly new Nissan Qashqai written off. A van emerging from Mill Road collided with the Qashqai pushing it right across the road into a large bush on the opposite side. This could have been very serious as the driver had difficulty getting out and he had smelt fumes from the dashboard. We have asked for improvements for the junction

and we hope Barry Stone will have good news for us tonight as he has authorised payment from his personal fund to pay for the improvements.

### **Playpark**

I hope you will have all seen the big improvements already made to the playpark. These have all been financed from CIL money. We have new swings and matting and the whole area has been covered in a thick layer of new bark. Kevin Parfitt and his family cleared the area including removing large lumps of concrete and tree stumps. This was no easy task.

We have also ordered a specialist climbing frame called Ben Nevis. We expect this to be installed shortly in the space provided.

Many thanks to John Ling, Hugh Porter and Janet Skedje for their work on this project.

### **Other matters**

These are all the brainchild of John Ling.

To commemorate the centenary of the end of WW1 John prepared life size figures of all the soldiers from Bergh Apton that had died during the Great War. Following research these were placed at the entrances of the properties in the village where the men had lived. Alington School arranged a tour of the village to see the figures. The cost of the coach being paid for by the Parish Council. The children were very interested. This helped them with their project about the Great War.

On the 8th July the Parish Council held a "Meet and Greet" function in the Village Hall for old and new residents to mingle and for new residents to become aware of the organisations in the village. Thank you to the Village Hall for providing refreshments. The Bergh Apton information booklet had been revised and reprinted in June, and was distributed at this function.

A new Acer projector has been purchased for £430 using CIL money. This replaces a worn out projector. John Ling is the custodian of the projector which is used by village organisations.

This is a rather sad time as our four year term is now coming to an end. During the last two years we have had a settled council and I believe we have been capable of tackling everything which has come our way. Those of us who have put forward nomination papers for the next four year period hope we will be able to serve you in the future.

The Parish Council would like to thank the Village Hall committee for providing this splendid venue for our meetings.

## COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR LODDON DIVISION – Barry Stone

2018/19 was a funny old year and one that I will want to forget in many ways. It started with me having to surrender my driving licence owing to a small seizure I had in January, this resulted in over six months unable to drive. As a consequence, I had to suspend attendance at Parish Council meetings, and I would like to thank you all for your kind thoughts and forbearance.

In May 2018 my wife Margaret was installed as Chairman of Norfolk County Council and as her consort I have been expected to accompany her to numerous functions both in Norfolk and other counties. This has further hampered my ability to attend Parish Councils on a regular basis and will continue until she is replaced on 7<sup>th</sup> May this year.

In July 2018 I was appointed Chairman of the Business and Property Committee and this has also been fairly time consuming although very rewarding. We are increasingly having to re-evaluate the buildings and property we own to ensure that if we need the buildings, what goes on inside them either works at capacity providing services or creates income to subsidise other services. Income generation has become essential in order to maintain our essential services including the sale of properties no longer required. I also have responsibility for the nearly 17,000 acres of County Farms which also need to generate more income for the council.

Once again, many thanks for your understanding and forbearance although it has not prevented me from being fully accessible via email or phone to help with any problems or queries you may have had.

I hope normal service will be resumed in the near future and I will once again be able to attend all Parish Councils on a more regular basis.

There follows a more formal roundup of the County Council's activities for the year ended March 2019.

### Norfolk County Council - 2019/20 budget

In February 2019 Norfolk County Council agreed a £409 million revenue budget for 2019-20. This budget is balanced, is robust and allocates our resources across Norfolk's people and communities in the best way we can, while protecting the frontline services the people of Norfolk rely on so dearly.

The Council's Government funding has reduced by a total of £204m between 2010/11 and 2018/19 and its revenue support grant will fall from £39m to zero in 2020/21. During this period, the council has made savings of £364m, including efficiency savings of £246m. This has resulted in the difficult but necessary decision to increase the County Council's share of Council Tax by 2.99% this year.

The key points of the budget are:

- A £409m net revenue budget – representing the Council Tax income which contributes to running the council and its services
- The Council's share of band D bills will rise to £1,362.24 from April.
- Savings of £31.6m in 2019/20, rising to a total of £79.4m over the next three years

- Examples of increased investment from April include £6m to address growing demand on adult social services, and £14.5m to tackle pressures on the looked-after children service

## Caring for your infrastructure

In November 2018 Norfolk received an additional £12.694m from the Government to spend on road maintenance. To date 125,000m<sup>2</sup> of worn out highway surface has been removed and replaced with 26,600 tonnes of brand new asphalt.

Greater Norwich has been awarded £6.1m by the Department for Transport, following a successful bid in the first round of Transforming Cities funding.

Transport for Norwich put forward eight sustainable transport schemes and applied for a £7.3m contribution from the £60m pot. Of these, six were awarded money.

For more information about the project and full details of the newly-funded projects, please visit [www.norfolk.gov.uk/transformingcities](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/transformingcities).

## Delivering the Western Link

The County Council is proposing to create a Norwich Western Link to improve travel between the A47 and Broadland Northway (formerly the Northern Distributor Road) and tackle transport problems in the area.

The council published four shortlisted options for a Norwich Western Link - three new dual carriageway roads and a single carriageway upgrade to the B1535

The council is aiming to start construction on the Norwich Western Link in late 2022.

For more information about the project visit [www.norfolk.gov.uk/nwl](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/nwl).

## Norfolk ranked fourth in national highways and transport survey

Norfolk has been ranked fourth out of 28 similar councils in a national independent survey which looks at satisfaction with highways and transport services.

The highest scores for the county were for traffic levels and congestion, and the condition of roads and footpaths. These are all things that people consistently say are important to them and in which Norfolk is ranked strongly compared to other councils.

Altogether 113 local authorities signed up for the 2018 survey. Out of the 28 county councils and larger unitary authorities in the peer group, Norfolk ranked in the top 10 for:

- Condition of highways
- Highway maintenance
- Public transport info
- Ease of access (for disabled people)
- Local bus services
- Community transport
- Pavements and footpaths

- Cycle routes and facilities
- Traffic levels and congestion
- Management of roadworks
- Traffic management

## **Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing**

Norfolk County Council has awarded the contract for Great Yarmouth's Third River Crossing to BAM Farrans – a joint venture between two construction industry leaders.

Following a competitive tender process, BAM Farrans will now be working with the project team at the county council to finalise the detailed design and construction requirements for the bridge.

So far, £98m of funding from the Department for Transport has been awarded to Norfolk County Council towards the anticipated £120m cost of the project.

For more information about the Third River Crossing, please visit [www.norfolk.gov.uk/3rc](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/3rc).

## **£11m boost for broadband in Norfolk**

Thousands more homes and businesses in Norfolk will be able to access Superfast Broadband thanks to Norfolk County Council securing an extra £11m funding.

Currently 92% of homes and businesses have access to download speeds of 24Mbps+ per second. The Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) programme is set to deliver 95% coverage across the county by the end of March 2020, but the council is not content to stop there.

BBfN rollout started in July 2013 when 42% of Norfolk properties had access to Superfast broadband. The new contract is expected to be signed early this year (2019).

To find out if superfast broadband is available in your area, visit [www.betterbroadbandnorfolk.co.uk](http://www.betterbroadbandnorfolk.co.uk).

## **Caring for your economy**

Norfolk County Council has received national praise in Parliament for its approach to improving mobile phone signals in the county.

The Council's Digital Innovation and Efficiency Committee commissioned a survey earlier this year on mobile signals across the county. The results were used to create an interactive map and more than 200 council owned sites have now been identified in areas of poor mobile reception. These are being offered to mobile operators as potential sites for new masts.

Norfolk County Council secured £8m from the UK Government Digital, Culture, Media & Sport department's Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) fund.

The £8m funding is part of an £11m programme to upgrade more than 370 of Norfolk's public-sector buildings to the latest ultrafast connection speeds. It will enable 230 schools, 108 Norfolk County Council Corporate buildings (including 38 libraries) and 34 fire stations to be upgraded to gigabit (1,000 mbps) fibre internet connections within two years.

Norfolk businesses can also apply to a voucher scheme that will provide up to £2,500 per business to fund their connection and pay the first-year running costs.

## Caring for your children and families

This year we launched our new Early Childhood and Family Service. We believe this will have greater reach to those more isolated children and families in need of help and advice, through increased local support, easier to access information and crucial outreach work while continuing to deliver services previously offered.

This commitment means adapting the way we deliver services in response to the changing needs of Norfolk's children and young people. This transformative approach is one we are implementing across all our services.

We will be moving, not removing, some services into libraries, nurseries and community centres, alongside our 15 new service bases. Crucially, this more efficient use of infrastructure means money can be invested on delivering the services that we know are needed and valued by you to a greater number of children and young people, across Norfolk.

Norfolk County Council will be investing £120m in special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision in the County

In March 2019 we secured Government funding of up to £17m to build a new 170 place school in the county for children aged 3-19 with complex needs.

We proposed plans to create more than 500 extra school places, in four new special schools plus specialist bases at mainstream schools.

We have approved an initial investment of £4.8m in the current financial year, to allow the first phase of work to begin as quickly as possible.

A new special school, specialising in social, emotional and mental health, is likely to be the first project to get underway. The school will be developed on the former Alderman Swindell School site, in Great Yarmouth.

The first of 11 homes for Norfolk's care leavers has opened this year, following £5m of investment from Norfolk County Council.

The County Council has worked with young people to make sure that the accommodation meets their needs and four of the homes are now finished.

When finished there will a total of 25-30 beds across the 11 properties.

Without the new properties the young people would need to live in residential care or in placements with another provider, at a cost of up to £6,500 per week. The new homes ensure they have the right support, are able to learn to live in communities in a supported way and reduce the overall cost to the Council.

## Adult Social Care

People affected by loneliness and social isolation in Norfolk can now turn to a comprehensive range of new services for help and support.

The new services include a county-wide network of “Life Connectors” who work directly with people to provide coaching, practical advice and support to help people make and maintain relationships and strong links within their community.

The new services include outreach, promoting volunteering opportunities and benefits, asset mapping and addressing rural issues such as transport and use of technology in order to support people to become and stay well-connected in their local area.

The Carers Charter was launched on 30 November at County Hall. The event coincided with Carers Rights Day, a national campaign which brings unpaid carers, organisations and local communities together to help carers understand their rights.

The adoption of the Charter by the County Council is a bold, innovative and radical move designed to improve the lives of carers. They constitute an enormous and largely hidden resource saving the public purse billions of pounds a year.

For more information visit [carersmatternorfolk.org.uk](http://carersmatternorfolk.org.uk)

This year we announced £29m capital investment scheme to deliver 3,000 extra homes for older people in Norfolk over the next ten years. Norfolk requires 2,842 extra care units by 2028.

Increasing the provision of extra care housing to match future demand will deliver approximately £4m gross revenue saving per year.

The Living Well Homes for Norfolk Strategy and Position Statement can be found here ([www.norfolk.gov.uk/livingwellhomes](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/livingwellhomes))

## ALPINGTON AND BERGH APTON VA SCHOOL – Teresa Osborne

We have had another happy and successful year at school. This school year has seen all the pupils participating in musical, cultural and sporting activities. Our children enjoy taking part in sport, drama and musical events, they are keen competitors in local sports events and have been selected to represent South Norfolk at competitions such as cross country running. The children have taken part in various trips to the theatre, various museums, Norwich Castle and cathedral as well as a residential trip to How Hill last summer term. We have also been pleased to be invited again to hold our Harvest, Christmas and Easter services in our two village churches. Thanks to everyone who makes that possible for us.

The children and their families are very mindful of the needs of others. During the summer the children held a sleep over for YMCA and at our Annual Harvest Festival service at Yelverton church produce was collected and distributed through the Salvation Army. The shoebox appeal was well supported and it was lovely to see so many shoeboxes at the service in Bergh Apton Parish Church. The Christingle service was also successful with the money going to The Children’s Society. In addition our families have been generously donating goods to the Norwich Food Bank each term.

This year the children and their families have raised sufficient sums to purchase a defibrillator, which will be housed at the school. They are also keen to make it available to the local community in this area of the village and so the plan is to position the defibrillator on the outside of the school premises in an appropriate cabinet which will be connected to the electric source.

We remain a school of choice for many parents and our children continue to achieve high standards in their learning. We were amongst the top 1% of schools for achievement in maths and reading. However, we do try hard to ensure the children receive a broad and balanced education and ensure the curriculum offers a variety of interesting experiences for children both inside and outside of the classroom. Outdoor learning has been very successful and is popular with children and parents.

## **BERGH APTON COMMUNITY ARTS TRUST – Pat Mlejnesky**

In February last year our event was ‘Songline for Doggerland’. Through song, story and film we explored that vast tract of land which once connected the British Isles to Europe. A once, rich and fertile land where people of the Mesolithic Age once lived and now lies beneath the grey North Sea. Fossils of the creatures that once roamed there have been found and through theatre and readings we introduced Charles Darwin and his theories as to the evolution of Man. Our events are eagerly awaited and before we even advertised this event half our tickets were already sold.

We hope to put on another event, ‘Tom Tiddler’s Ground’ in May and possibly June 2020.

## **BERGH APTON CONSERVATION TRUST – Tony Davy**

Bergh Apton Conservation Trust has had another busy year managing our beautiful nature reserve, engaging with local young people, and providing regular events for members, their guests and other visitors. As last year, we had summer excursion jointly with Bergh Apton Local History Group, an idyllic afternoon at Howe Hill. Details of all these ongoing activities are available in our own annual reports (see [berghaptonconservationtrust.org](http://berghaptonconservationtrust.org)).

Tonight, I want to draw attention to a few more exceptional developments. Anyone who has visited the reserve in the last couple of weeks might have seen our informative new interpretation panels, one near the entrance to Church Plantation and the other on the footpath near Valley Marsh. We hope that these conspicuous panels, based around a colourful map of the reserve, will be helpful to visitors, at the same time reminding them to be respectful of wildlife on what is first and foremost a nature reserve. They also incorporate weather-proof dispensers for the brand-new edition of our publicity leaflet, which provides very similar information.

Mammals have come to the fore for the first time. Last summer, Graham Moates kindly carried out a multi-faceted survey of the reserve that revealed 12 mammal species (including useful records for yellow-necked mouse, water shrew and water vole). His observation of signs of water vole activity were fully vindicated a few weeks later when Clive Britcher (who has provided many fine images from the reserve in the last year) photographed one ploughing across the duckweed in our original pond. Subsequently, we have signed up with the Norfolk Mink Project and purchased a ‘mink raft’ to deploy on the reserve, in order to try and protect our water voles from this scourge.

The exciting development of the year is the Chet Valley B-Line. The bee population in Britain is declining at an alarming rate, posing a significant threat to British conservation and agriculture. Wild honey bees are nearing extinction whereas managed bee colonies have declined by 53% between 1985 and 2005. The Butterfly Index, used by the UK Government as the main indicator of trends in terrestrial invertebrates on enclosed farmland (such as that which covers most of south Norfolk), has showed a 41% decline since 1976. One proposed solution (by the charity Buglife) is for the establishment of nectar-rich (and otherwise wild-life friendly) corridors to link 'islands' of remaining high biodiversity.

Bergh Apton Conservation Trust is taking the lead in promoting a B-Line along the valley of the River Chet – the first in Norfolk. Central to this is our own 10 acres of marsh, wetland and woodland but it will run all the way from Poringland to Hardley, including we hope many other sites of conservation value. Poringland Parish Council have agreed that the B-Line could start in its Community Land Project when that project is up and running and this is now included in their parish plan. This land includes springs which are a source of the Chet. At the other end, we have Chedgrave Common and various other interesting sites. Chedgrave and Loddon Councils have recently passed motions in general support. A number of private land owners along the valley have already agreed to support us with sympathetic management. We also have support in principle from The Broads Authority and Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

We aim to make people aware of how they can help pollinators by providing 'stepping stones' along the B-Line, whether it is on farms, gardens, allotments or community areas. We are also seeking funding to provide practical assistance with this. Many people are interested in pollinators. The B-Line will enable them to be part of a co-ordinated effort to improve things for bees, butterflies, hoverflies and other pollinators and should over time increase public participation. A talk by Paul Hetherington of Buglife that highlighted the desperate problems of pollinators (organized by Rodney Aldis under the auspices of South Yare Wildlife Group on 14 March) was attended by c. 140 people. We received very favourable coverage for the B-Line on Radio Norfolk and in the Eastern Daily Press.

Last but not least - this year is the Trust's Silver Jubilee, it having been founded in 1994. Doesn't time fly? As part of our celebrations we have commissioned three drone flights to make a video record of our nature reserve through the seasons this year. Our main celebration will be on Saturday 20 July. We will shortly be announcing details of events for that day, including a guided walk around the reserve in the afternoon and a Bring-and-Share Supper at the village hall in the evening.

## **BERGH APTON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP – Linda Davy**

Bergh Apton Local History Group has two main centres of activity: one is the collection, preservation and ongoing research into all aspects of Bergh Apton life, the other is to provide opportunities for members to expand their knowledge and skills connected with local history. Our programme of talks, visits and historical re-enactments are open to both members and guests. The Centre of East Anglian Studies, the activity at Caistor Roman site and other local history groups are all extra activities that members are involved with.

Last November the centenary of the end of World War1 was commemorated throughout the country. The Local History Group, masterminded by John Ling and Chris Johnston organised a very moving display of local men who were killed during that conflict. Cut-out soldiers, incorporating information about the individual, were displayed outside their last address, or as near as we could

get to it. Those without that information were displayed at the church. This generated much interest, including being featured on the television news. Many people, including groups of school children, paid special visits to see them.

The County Archive Centre and the County Archivist, Gary Tuson, have been extremely helpful with our new project to preserve and catalogue the many documents and artefacts that have a new home at the Village Hall. This is very much a work in progress and we are still feeling our way. Yesterday's session made good progress and we would be happy to see anyone who would like to come and help

We continue to assist the many visitors who come to the village pursuing their family history.

We welcome everyone, members and guests, to our events and activities and assure our newly arrived residents that all the local organisations will give them a warm welcome.

## **TREE WARDEN'S REPORT – Linda Davy**

The Tree Warden Group is now under the guidance of the Tree Council. The activities have moved more towards tree maintenance by extending knowledge of pruning, protection from animals, tree diseases and managing the effects of extreme weather. There are also opportunities to take part in practical conservation work. Several times this year I have given guidance to householders wanting advice on felling or pruning trees that have become over large for their property. I no longer receive planning information regarding tree or hedge issues in this area so this hampers early intervention.

## **BERGH APTON VILLAGE FETE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – John Ling**

The fete of 2018 was on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July at the Manor. Conditions were perfect – right in the middle of that superb spell of summer weather.... that may account for the excellent result that the day's efforts produced a total of £3,600 to be divided equally between the village hall and the parish church that are, and always have been, the chief organisers and the beneficiaries of the day's efforts.

I'll just pick out a few highlights. Food and drink – as it does every year accounted for almost half the net income even after accounting for the costs of purchasing the raw materials.

The five stalls in this category (Ice Cream, Teas, Pimms and BBQ) between them raised over £1,100. In the day's sunshine we could have sold twice as much ice cream had Paravanis as our supplier been open on a Saturday afternoon, and the weather no doubt escalated demand at the Pimms Marquee.

At the other end of the income scale – but playing a major role in providing entertainment for the young children who come to the Fete – we need to thank those who run stalls for face-painting, Milton's games, the Bran Tub, Toys and Bowling for a Hamper. Between them they may produce only a modest total of just over £200 but who are a key part of the day's events.

And I'd like to say a huge 'thank you' to both our old band 'Savior Fair' who retired last year after supporting us for fourteen years with the sort of easy-listening music ideal for a country fete and to

their successors who played for us at the 2018 fete and who seamlessly slipped into much the same style – though the average of the players was probably half that of our old friends in ‘Savoir Fair’.

The good news is that the new boys are coming back to play again this year .... and that they do this gig for us for love!

I must thank the team that makes the Fete the joy that it is. That would not be possible without the input of a team of nearly 100 people who, to a greater or lesser extent – but all essential – work for several days before Fete, during it, and for a few days afterwards – to make it happen.

Last year the leadership of this team was assumed by Rob Bates who seems to have survived the experience having taken over from Milton Harris. So we do all thank Rob and his team for a really good day’s entertainment and a superb financial result that is a key element of the Village Hall and Parish Church income.

Finally, we also thank Kip and Alison Betram once again for their generosity in both allowing us to trample once again over their beautiful garden. Not only to host the event, but to join the fun as part of the team. And they will once again allow us to do the same thing all over again this year on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July – the second Saturday in July .... So make a note of the day in your diary.

## **BERGH APTON NEWSLETTER – John Ling**

The first newsletter in the current series hit the streets twenty-seven years ago. That’s before any of you Millennials in the room a glint even in your grandparents’ eyes . . .and for those of you who, like me, struggle to recall events even of yesterday, it’s beyond memory.

So I thought it’d be worth recalling that Issue No 1 was published on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May 1992 in response to a request by Bergh Apton residents for a means of telling them what had happened in the village recently and what was going to happen over the next couple of months.

It was then, and with the most recent - 162<sup>nd</sup> edition - still is a companion to the Eleven Says magazine published by the church communities of the eleven villages in the Bramerton Group . . and distributed by the same team of volunteers.

In its lifetime so far it has been edited by five people, the late Eileen Lain-Rogers, Lorie Lain-Rogers, Sally Leigh, Milton Harris and now, since October last year, by me. You’ll find a summary of my own editorial philosophy on the front page of the current issue.

It began as 3 or 4 sheets of A4 paper stapled-together onto which typed or handwritten contributions were glued and the final paste-up was printed by a commercial printer (for a time at HM Prison, Norwich!). Since those early days, and with the advent of natty desktop-publishing programmes like Microsoft Publisher, it has morphed in to a 12-page, four-colour production printed, folded and stitched in Loddon by John Roberts.

We publish it six times a year: at the beginning of February, April, June, August, October and December. The deadline for material is always the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month before the next publication date (and it’s always noted on the back page of the previous issue).

We distribute a copy to every house in the village at an individual cost of about 47p per copy - an annual cost of circa £750. At 4 pence per page of local news and material that seems to me a modest cost and I must, at this point, thank the seven organisations who share that between them.

They are, in some sort of alphabetical order, Bergh Apton and District Society, Chet Valley Vineyard, the Community Arts Trust, Conservation Trust, Local History Group, Parish Council, Parochial Church Council and Village Hall Trustees. To all of them I am most grateful and trust that they will continue to respond generously when I bring round my begging bowl.

As editor, and in an ideal world, my hope is to be so inundated with reports and articles about what has happened . . . and notices and encouragement to attend things that are going to happen, that I have to cry “Enough . . . No More!!” as the deadline for contributions draws close.

That, as far as I know, is a rare event . . . and hasn't yet happened in my time but it has come close because in the last two issues I have had to side-line my own baby – a walk round the village at the time of the 1911 Census.

But if there are gaps to fill it is a simple task with regular slots including the Village Diary. Other elements are those news-worthy items people have told me about or that I've I have picked up somewhere and, sadly, obituaries of Bergh Apton people or those with local connections who have died. The overall aim is to send out into the village a newsletter with something in it for everyone.

So, this evening, I'd like to encourage all of you who'd like to bring something to the attention of your fellow residents to tell me about it so that we can work out how the Newsletter might help you to publicise it.

If you've done something interesting (as long as it's legal!) or you're planning something (as long as it's legal!) do tell me. If you are the secretary or spokesperson for an organisation – particularly a village-based one – do tell me what you are planning so we can put it in the diary and do an article about it. In this way, let's see how we get on together to keep the pace up and the Newsletter content rewarding to read.

Finally, I need to put on record my thanks to the people who bring this newsletter to your door. I'm not sure if they have ever been recognised by name but now is a good time . . . so thank you . . . first to Milton Harris who organises this kindly flock and finds new people to tend a patch when it comes vacant.

And thank you also to the kindly flock itself - Eileen Bircham, Janice Blackett, Joe Diamond, Sue Hill, David Horn, Gillian Kent, Bob Kerry, Janet Skedge, Pat Waters, Rosie Whitby, Ann Woods and Shelagh Yallop. Six times a year and in all kinds of weather, this band of brothers and sisters tread the highways and byways of Bergh Apton to bring the newsletter your door.

## **BERGH APTON VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE – Hilary Ling**

Over the past year the Village Hall has been busy – with Regular Users and Private Hirers. The rental income now covers our outgoings.

We have a new User – Mary Lovett's singing group on Thursday afternoons.

The Coffee and Chat is particularly successful – held on the third Wednesday every month from 10-12; we have had a Christmas wreath-making workshop (and this year's will be on Wed 4 December), and the Christmas Bingo is popular and will be on Friday 6 December this year.

The History Group are hiring a shed to hold the village archive.

The container will be removed when the ground is dry and hard. Thanks to John Ling for keeping on top of the maintenance of the hall.

We have a Jumble Sale coming up on Saturday 13 April and our AGM is on Wednesday 1 May – do come to both these events. The Jumble Sale starts at 2 o'clock and the AGM serves refreshments from 7-7.30.

## **BYRUS YOUTH GROUP – Emmi Ward**

The work within BYRUS Youth is going well.

Thurton Youth group is going well. I have 4 regulars, and a few others who are coming here and there still. We have some chill time, play games and have a bit of time where we have a chat and some discussion time around a question to do with Christianity. They have been engaging with it and it's been great getting to know them on a deeper level. Philippa and Norwich Youth for Christs gap year Tash volunteers. In the Autumn term, I took 3 of them to Encounter, which is Norwich Youth for Christ's worship evening for young people. This was great fun, and although we didn't make it this term, I aim to keep inviting. I also plan on inviting them along to Sunrise in the Summer Holidays. This is similar to Newday, but on a smaller more local scale, and I felt would suit the young people better. The week away is run by Meadow Way Chapel, which Norwich Youth for Christ partners with.

This group is going steady, but my aim would be to have more young people coming so that the group grows and we engage with more young people. During the summer term, I plan on inviting the year 6's to come along, so they can transition from Explorers, to the Youth Group Halo.

Explorers is going well and steady. We have on average 5-10 children coming each week, but that has been growing, and we have started on average, getting more than 10. We play lots of fun games, and have a questions that we explore a little bit. We also often do a craft. As a project it is growing and lots of relationships are being built all the time. I am now working, in the primary school 4 mornings, a week. I work with a child one-to-one, but often end up working and engaging with many different children in the school. I have built a good relationship with the children, the teachers and I often see parents in the school. This is a great way of getting to know more parents in the community. They then know who I am and what I do.

Surlingham was going well, we went weekly in the summer term last year. But the young people started to choose to spend time in the sunshine rather than come to the youth café. This isn't unusual in youth work terms, it happened to all my projects, Poringland included.

However, when we started back in the Autumn term the volunteers I had, had were no longer available, and therefore, I have hardly been able to run it as a project. I've got a plan in place to contact the primary school, to enable the year 6's to come along. This means I am getting to know them before they go to high school and would then potentially bring their friends, I'm ready to go. However, until I have volunteers I can't advertise or approach the school, as I cannot guarantee I can run. So, I have contacted Clive who runs the Surlingham Website, and the Surlingham Newsletter. I

have had some interest, but nothing concrete yet. But, it's encouraging that it has progressed, and it feels like I'm getting somewhere, slowly.

## **BERGH APTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL - Patricia Waters**

The Church in Bergh Apton continued to flourish in 2018 and the average attendance at regular services is twenty-two and there are thirty-five names on the Electoral Roll; eight people reside out of parish.

At the Annual Vestry Meeting, the appropriate Nomination Forms having been tendered for Mr John Ling and Mrs Shirley Rimmer and there being no other nominations, Mr Ling and Mrs Rimmer were unanimously elected to serve as Churchwardens for a further year.

Services were held in the Parish Church most weeks. The exceptions were once a month when congregations from the Benefice met together in one church (unless they were held at Bergh Apton, of course) and on fifth Sundays when a combined Service was held for all eleven parishes in the Bramerton Group. The continuity and frequency of Services is important to the regular worshippers at Bergh Apton Church and our Rector, the Revd. Christopher Ellis, works hard to ensure this is maintained, assisted by members of the team of Authorised Worship Assistants who prepare and lead a Service once a month.

The traditional services were held as usual: Mothering Sunday when posies were distributed to the congregation; the Shoebox Service in November when shoeboxes filled with presents for children in Novi Sad were blessed and sent on their way; and, to celebrate the birth of Jesus, Candles by Candlelight and the great favourite, the Crib Service on the afternoon of Christmas Eve when Shirley Rimmer's story of the events surrounding the Nativity was dramatised by the children who donned costumes and headdresses to portray the characters and animals.

The Remembrance Day Service was well attended, especially poignant this year as we commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War which was signalled by bangs from fireworks at the far end of the churchyard just before 11 o'clock and the silence symbolising the ceasefire before the Last Post sounded. This part of the Service was held at the War Memorial and watched over by the four figures on the gate representing W.W.1 soldiers as we honoured them and their fallen comrades from this village.

The PCC met six times during 2018. A contractor has been appointed to install an under-pew heating system but the works have been delayed by misinformation from the Diocesan Office and will be carried out early in 2019.

Three successful Fund Raising events were held in 2018: the Fete in July under Rob, the new chairman, produced a record profit of £3,600, the Quiz and Curry in October, and Lardal Kantori, a Norwegian Choir, that entertained us once again in November. The Horse Show was not held because of the imminent arrival of the organiser's baby but the Dog Show did take place and, perhaps because it was on one of the hottest days of a very hot summer, was a flop with few entrants and most of the revenue of £148 was from the raffle.

The annual DIY day was held in May when a team of workers cheerfully applied themselves to spring-cleaning the church, some with the use of ladder and steps to carry out tasks not able to be tackled during the weekly clean.

The churchyard was kept tidy by work parties from the Community Service Teams on four days. The workers were sustained by refreshments mid-morning and afternoon and bowls of soup at lunchtime. Between the workdays John Ling cut the grass pathways. In addition the PCC appreciates the generosity of Kevin Parfitt who, at no cost to the PCC, regularly keeps the grass on the church field topped. We engaged the services of a Tree Surgeon who carried out a survey and gave an itemised quotation for the works that need to be done. The PCC is grateful to the Parish Council who made a grant of £200 towards the costs of maintenance of the churchyard.

The PCC considers it is vital that the church building and the churchyard are maintained to the highest standards. Complimentary remarks are often recorded in the Visitors Book.

The monthly luncheons, known as "Tuesday Friends", continue to be enjoyed by villagers who appreciate the opportunity to meet in the 'Welcome Area' at the rear of the Church for a meal prepared by members of the congregation and others in the village. The PCC is pleased that the Church can be used for events as well as Services and Bergh Apton Community Arts Trust staged another play there in February.

## **THE CHRISTOPHER TENWINTER TRUST – Carrie Kerry**

The Christopher Tenwinter Trust is a parish charity arising from the Will of Mr Christopher Tenwinter dated 22nd June 1599, where the income from a parcel of land owned by him was left "for the use and behoof of the town of Burgh-Apton".

The five Trustees currently are: Revd Chris Ellis, Carrie Kerry, Chris Johnson, Richard Crome, Kevin Parfitt

This charity continues today with a modest annual income of approximately £1,000.00 from investments, Building Society Interest and the rent of just over 11 acres of land owned by the Trust.

The Trustees meet annually in November in order to make donations for associations and individuals of Bergh Apton, ie, donations towards the pensioners Christmas lunch, occasionally for specific requests from Alington and Bergh Apton School or Playgroup (which benefits Bergh Apton children) or smaller donations towards the cost of hospital car parking for residents who find themselves frequently attending hospital with long term health conditions.

For the year to 31 st December 2018 the income was £963 and the Trustees donated £1,051 for the benefit of those who live in the parish of Bergh Apton.

If anyone knows of any need of help from the Christopher Tenwinter Charity please contact any of the Trustees.

## **BERGH APTON PARISH CHARITIES – Paul Blazer**

The Bergh Apton Parish Charities is financially sound and continues to receive a good return on the investments currently held. The charity distributed £2,210 to 26 recipients during the year end 31 December 2018.

The next AGM is due to be held in November 2019.

## **6. General Parish Issues raised by members of the public**

- 6.1 A member of the public raised the issue of the traffic generated by Green Pastures and the highway problems around the junction of Mill Road and the A146. Clerk was requested to follow this up with Highways in terms of a reduction of the speed limit at this point. A further point was raised regarding the lighting at this junction and it was suggested that a light is required at the junction adjacent to Bilcar. Clerk to contact Highways to ascertain any possibility of this being provided. The Parish Council also agreed to look at this with the possibility of funding from CIL monies if this were permitted.
- 6.2 A member of the public requested that as the projector had now been replaced consideration be given to replacing the sound system shared within the community as well. John Ling to investigate possible suitable systems and bring back to a future Parish Council meeting for discussion.

## **7. Any Other Business**

None.