

# ANNUAL BERGH APTON PARISH MEETING – Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018

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## 1. Chairman's Welcome

David Skedge welcomed everyone to the meeting and was pleased to see such a good number of members of the public and some new residents to the village.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Barry Stone, Hugh Porter (Parish Councillor), Chris Mewton (Website), Emmi Ward (Byrus) and Paul Blazer (Bergh Apton Parish Charities)

## 3. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## 4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

No matters arising.

## 5. Reports from Parish Organisations

### BERGH APTON PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS – Julie Gosling – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer - Accounts Commentary 2017-18

During the year the Parish Council recorded Actual Income of £22,485.17 (£11,075.76) and Expenditure of £3,687.50 (£4,668.38) resulting in surplus of £18,797.67 (£6,407.38). Income consisted of Precept payment of £3,838 (£3,580), VAT refund of £138.80, CIL payment of £18,407.21 and transparency fund bid of £101.16.

Costs were similar to previous years. Clerk's Expenses were £112.78 (£115.95) and Clerk's Salary £1,574.22 (£1,573.44). Training costs were incurred as a result of the new clerk in post and increasing regulations imposed upon the Parish Council £138. Insurance costs were £372.95 (361.65). CIL reserve money of £575 was spent on improvements to the Play Area.

Other expenditure included the purchase of the plaque for the Rowan Tree planted for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday (£137.65), contribution to the churchyard maintenance (£300), adoption of the phone box on Cookes Road (£1) and hire of the village hall for meetings (£105).

The Parish Council had year-end cash balances of £34,199.63 which includes a CIL earmarked reserve of £24,340.97, leaving £9,858.66 in the general fund.

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

Looking back this has been a year of exceptional opportunity for your Parish Council. It is one we have all been excited by and enjoyed.

This year seemed to start badly. Liz Robinson, our Chair, an experienced Councillor and formerly also on Brooke Parish Council, resigned both as Chair and Councillor. Liz was hard working and oversaw the village celebrations for Queen Elizabeth 2<sup>nd</sup>'s 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday, which were a great success.

Also Philippa Fuller, who had been our Clerk for 13 years, announced her retirement. We are indebted to her for her genial service over so many years. Phillipa advertised for her replacement, and we were very lucky that Julie Gosling applied to fill the vacancy. Julie was appointed and has been a revelation in her role.

You will realise the Council was not up to the strength needed to operate properly. Three additional Councillors were needed to support Hugh Porter, Renata Thornber, Janet Skedge and myself. Very soon Richard Herring, John Ling and Paul Thornber were co-opted. Richard and John had both been Councillors before, which was a great advantage to us.

The year started with the Community Governance Review undertaken by South Norfolk Council which saw the possibility of Bergh Apton being combined with the other Parish Councils. However this was successfully opposed with an exceptionally high turnout of 84 villagers making comments that they wished Bergh Apton to remain as a separate entity. The recently approved Governance Review confirms that the village will not be combined with other Parish Councils.

The Parish Council also considered the issue of speeding within the village, which was felt to be hazardous, as many built up residential areas are subject to the national speed limit. We approached Norfolk County Council requesting the 30 mph limits be extended to Church Road, The Street and Cooke's Road. However, current Council guidelines prevented this being allowed . It costs money to change speed limits and there is no money in the pot. In addition, the Parish Council successfully bid for money from Norfolk County Council under the Parish Partnership Scheme Initiative to fund 50% of the cost of a SAM2 sign to be erected in the village at various points within the 30mph limits on Mill Road, Threadneedle St and Church Meadow Lane. This will be purchased in the new financial year 2018/2019, the remaining 50% funded by CIL money.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is payable by developers. The Parish Council receives a proportion of the levy which enables us to fund projects which qualify under the rules. For example the SAM2 sign previously mentioned. A contribution will be made to Alpington and Bergh Apton School for construction works to allow for it's expansion and also refurbishment of the playground. The school is liable to fund 10% of these works. Currently the school has 17 to 18 children from Bergh Apton out of a total of 125. The fund of CIL money has given us the opportunity to consider improving the play area behind the Village Hall. A working party of Hugh Porter, John Ling and Janet Skedge is presently beavering away, looking at the existing equipment to see if it needs replacement or repair. They are also investigating the purchase of some new items, a play dome, a new swing including a baby seat and an outdoor table tennis table are some of the ideas. Hopefully this will be affordable. If anybody has further ideas which meet the criteria, for use of the CIL money, the Parish Council would be pleased to hear from them. The Parish Council also adopted another BT phone

kiosk on Threadneedle Street. As yet it's future is undecided, but any ideas would be gratefully received. Given its situation it could be used as a mini bus shelter with minimum outlay.

Another large project for the Parish Council has been the consultation process on the Greater Norwich Local Plan, drafted by South Norfolk, Norwich City and Broadland councils. The plan sets out the strategic framework for the area until 2036 and considers options for future growth and sites proposed for future development. The Parish Council made comments on the basis of trying to preserve Bergh Apton as a rural village and not be exposed to over development. The consultation period ended on March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2018 and there has been a good response from Bergh Apton residents although the website was not particularly easy to negotiate. Major concerns for residents were speeding traffic on our narrow roads and desire to protect our rural environment. The Joint Core Strategy, the forerunner of the GNLP, does not expire until 2026. Under its hierarchy Bergh Apton was classed as a 'Rural Service Village' which meant that in 2015 2 estates were allocated to the village for new housing. The development opposite the Village Hall is almost complete. The other development on The Street has been started. I mention this because it demonstrates how great is the demand to build in our village. The position of Bergh Apton under the GNLP is at present uncertain as decisions have not yet been made on Growth Options and hierarchy. Bergh Apton has now been classed as an 'Other' village because the school is too far away on roads without pavements. We await the conclusions of the Consultation report with interest.

There have been some contentious planning applications during the year and we have made site visits where necessary so that we are certain we understand the issues fully when making our comments to South Norfolk Council.

In commemoration of the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday the Parish Council planted a tree at the site of the Dance Sculpture at Scop Hill. Due to potential future maintenance difficulties this has now been re-sited adjacent to the sculpture by Norfolk County Council and they have further agreed to source and erect a suitable plinth for the plaque which the Parish Council have purchased commemorating the occasion. Thanks are due to my Vice-Chairman Hugh Porter for his work obtaining this plaque.

I would like to thank all my fellow Councillors for their enthusiasm and hard work throughout the year. I feel we have become a really good team, which makes the task so much easier. Julie, has I said earlier, been a revelation. She has willingly undergone any training available and is keeping us on a straight path with matters such as Data Protection.

The Parish Council would like to thank the Village Hall Committee for providing the venue for their meetings, and were particularly in favour of the cushions at the January meetings, and were particularly in favour of the cushions at the January meeting which made the evening much cosier.

## **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FOR BROOKE WARD - Cllr John Fuller**

### **South Norfolk Council – Annual Review**

There are 380 Councils in England and South Norfolk Council is officially one of the highest performing. The respected Local Government Chronicle placed us in the Top Six Councils nationally at its awards ceremony. And elsewhere, we were the first public sector organisation in Norfolk to win the coveted Investors In People Platinum designation for the work we do to enable our staff to work more effectively and efficiently to serve you better.

Last year 1300 new homes were delivered in South Norfolk. That's nearly 1pc of the entire national total of new homes. There are now many more affordable homes locally than before the right to buy started and our housing team are finding two socially-rented homes for families every business day.

But new homes need to go alongside investments in the infrastructure that improves quality of life. At Wymondham a £4m investment in better leisure & fitness facilities has seen a 60% increase in the number of visitors and we now teach 2000 youngsters to swim each year.

We're just about to start a similar £2m upgrade at Long Stratton on top of the completion of a new All-Weather pitch so that more and more people have the chance to lead healthier and active lifestyles.

Broadband is another key piece of infrastructure and we have signed a contract with a local provider to increase the number of fast-internet radio masts from 10 to 28. This means that by this Summer the 5000 homes that BT cannot and will not connect to fast broadband will get proper access to the digital world – Broadband is a critical utility and we will be one of the first rural districts to get 100pc fast broadband coverage to everyone.

A planning application has been submitted for the Long Stratton Bypass and homes to be built alongside. There is a lot of work to be done before it becomes a reality but the finance is in place to deliver it with Council, Government and Developer Contributions.

Together with improvements at the Hempnall Crossroads, the dangerous Hales junction and shortly after, the developer-paid George Road, Loddon roundabout, contributions to the Diss Market Triangle and a new school in Wymondham, housing development is paying the bill for improvements that improve quality of life for everyone.

It's not just about housing and infrastructure and strengthening the economy. You Council seeks to solve peoples' problems one family at a time.

A good example is the way we help people stay independent in their homes for longer. This sort of work saves the NHS a fortune. In the last 3 months we have had a staff member sitting at the hospital as people are admitted to the ward. We identify the people who will be needing a little help at home when they get better: perhaps a hand rail in the bathroom, a wheelchair ramp or even something as simple as booster-feet under a favourite chair. We do this work whilst the patient is getting better so they can get home quicker.

In just 12 weeks we helped 100 people, halved the average stay in the hospital and saved 380 bed-days and life was better for each of these people as they recovered – some of whom could have been one of your aunts, uncles or grannies.

That's just one example of our work which covers preventing homelessness, sorting our debt problems, helping youngsters find rented home or ensuring landlords keep promises to tenants.

We mustn't also forget the work we do to help small businesses and this year we have been able to reduce the rates bills of the smallest firms by more than the Government expects so that, especially, rural pubs, shops & garages can remain open for longer.

Everyone knows that finances are tight in local Government so we have invested in becoming a low-cost operator. It means that our Council Tax is 20% less than inflation since 2007 yet we do more. As an example, 62% of our ten most popular transactions are now applied-for online via our website. It means that we have fewer administrators, can deal with problems faster and at times when it is convenient for our customers – even if the office is closed.

These efficiencies are important but they are not enough if we are to deliver the 86 services for residents. So that's why we are looking to more with our neighbours in Broadland Council. Both councils have similar geography, scale and outlook. We are seeing whether a single team that works for Both Council will benefit our communities on a scale residents can recognise and relate to.

Working more closely together offers both councils increased capacity and resilience, together with greater financial stability whilst taking advantage of commercial opportunities to deliver better value for our residents. Our taxpayers expect a local government that moves with the times and innovates, while retaining and attracting the most talented staff, offering them positive futures and career development opportunities.

Our joint aim is for two strong councils, working together with the ambition and resources to make our combined area one of the best places to live and work in the country.

Finally, all these things work on a district-wide basis. But we're delivering locally too. We still offer community grants and very locally have assisted projects in Brooke like the WI Community Café that combats loneliness, the Mens Shed in Poringland that does so much good work in the community. We contributed to the Brooke defibrillator and helped Bergh Apton put on the Village Play. And in Seething a contribution was made to the new playpark.

Everything we do aims to make Better Lives and Stronger Economies for everyone whilst keeping the cost down with a dedicated team of staff members and Councillors working with the other parts of Government to improve lives one family at a time, one street at a time and one place at a time.

## **ALPINGTON AND BERGH APTON VA SCHOOL – Teresa Osborne**

We have had a 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 Brancaster 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. 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. A representative from The Children's Society came in to school and spoke to the children about the work they do. In addition our families have been generously donating goods to the Norwich Food Bank each term. The children and families also support charities such as Sport Relief and a children's orphanage in Nepal.

We remain a school of choice for many parents and our children continue to achieve high standards in their learning. We are once again amongst the top 10% 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.

Plans for the summer term include a residential trip to How Hill for the children in Years 5 and 6, various sporting competitions, a summer concert and a summer production based around the Victorians which KS2 are studying as part of their history/geography lessons.

This year has been a very difficult year financially for all Norfolk schools and our budget for 2018/19 is being cut even further. During this period we have needed to upgrade our facilities in order to add value to the children's education and to accommodate new families moving into the local area.

We have been very grateful for the awards given to us by Bergh Apton and Yelverton with Alpington parish Councils from their CIL funding. The money we received has helped us to re-surface our school playground, make a permanent classroom from the old school hall building as well as re-vamp our cloakrooms to create a more spacious central feature to the school. This will allow us to re-house our library so that all the children and their families will gain easier access to the books.

The school will be celebrating its 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and as part of the celebrations we will be holding a street party for all our children on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May which we will combine with a Royal Wedding celebration. During the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> May we will be holding a Community Coffee Morning in the new hall where we will be displaying the old log books and photographs of past pupils, some of these items came from the original Bergh Apton School.

We cordially invite all community members to come along and look at the new work that is taking place as well as view the historic artefacts on display and hopefully enjoy some refreshments.

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

Last year I reported on the excavation of our new, groundwater-fed pond on Valley Marsh and this has remained a major source of excitement and satisfaction this year. It has exceeded our hopes in providing new habitat for many types of wildlife. By the time of our pond dipping day in the spring, pond life, including tadpoles and pond skaters, had already begun to arrive. The pond (and marsh) also attracted distinguished visitors: Dr Geoff Phillips (Environment Agency), Rick Southwood (Natural England), and Dr Dan Hoare (Broads Authority) with his pondlife enthusiasts group. On 2

September we held an inauguration ceremony, attended by 24 members, on a delightful sunny afternoon; the Stoneworts in the pond were burgeoning, the water was gratifyingly gin-clear and we were mesmerised by the aerial mating exploits of the dragonflies, as they helped to populate the pond. The sparkling wine probably also contributed to atmosphere.

This was also the occasion for unveiling our magnificent bench seat in memory of the late Phyllis Ride. Phyllis was a founding member and loyal friend to the Trust in many ways. We are most grateful to her cousins for donating the bench, which was made from English oak by Harry Stebbings of Great Hockham, and to Lorie Lain-Rogers for procuring and installing it. It can be found in a scenic spot at Valley Marsh for the benefit of members and visitors seeking a quiet moment.

We had two excursions this year. The first, in June, was to see the wildlife and management at Marston Marsh, Eaton. We were shown round by Matt Davis of the Norwich Fringe project, who had first whetted our appetites for the area in his talk after our 2016 AGM. It was remarkable to see 60 acres of marsh beautifully managed for wildlife and amenity so close to the city centre and obviously enjoyed by so many people. The second visit, joint with Bergh Apton Local History Group, was to West Stow Country Park in July. Many of the participants were members of both organizations, so an exploration of the famous Anglo-Saxon village provided a focus for a day that also showed us many plants and animals of Breckland and the valley of the River Lark.

We have hosted visits by the Brooke Scout group and The South Yare Young Explorers. These involve a happy blend of recreational and educational activity (such as pond dipping) with valuable management work (raking, cutting, sawing and pulling up sycamore seedlings). The Beavers and Scouts came first in the light evenings of high summer and they returned in September, along with the Cubs. Our regular work days have focused on the reserve: cutting and raking vegetation, building bridges and dams. They have benefitted from the assistance of visiting groups doing community service.

Our annual pond dipping in May was exceptionally successful; some two dozen folk, including many of the children for whom it is primarily intended, explored our several watery habitats, including both ponds, dykes and the River Chet, and made many exciting discoveries. Bob Kerry led his customary two hedge surveys; we are now close to having surveyed all the hedges in the village. The traditional midsummer barbecue on the 'millennium pageant' field was held on 24 June, courtesy of Christopher and Liz Meynell. With the lengthening nights of autumn, we held our first bat walk for some years in September. Ben Jervis introduced the evening with a talk about bat biology in the church until the light faded and, as he predicted, the bats we came closest to were actually flying in the church itself. This was followed by a walk on and around the Trust reserve using bat detectors. The AGM in September was followed by an illustrated talk by Prof Tony Davy about his several decades of work on the ecology of salt marshes. Our customary Fungus foray with Dr Tony Leech in October was as successful as ever, despite indifferent weather. The Christmas party was, as ever, the best-attended meeting of the year! Last month we again organised a group of volunteers for the highly successful village litter-pick and an amazing assortment of materials was duly taken to the tip.

An important development for the future is collaboration in the possible establishment of a B-line. B-lines are a national initiative from Bug-Life being promoted locally by Rodney Aldis. The idea is to establish a network of nectar-rich corridors for the increasingly hard-pressed populations of bees and other insects. Various routes in Norfolk have been researched by Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT)

and the Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service (NBIS) but none has yet been established. Poringland PC has been given a substantial site for amenity purposes by the housing developers, that includes springs which feed tributaries of the River Chet. There is a proposal from Rodney, supported by Cllr Henry Gowman (chair of S. Norfolk Tree Wardens' Network) that part of this might be set aside as one end of a 'Chet Valley B-line'. Potentially our nature reserve would be at the mid-point and Chedgrave Common at the far end. If this was agreed there could be a campaign to persuade land-owners in between into sympathetic management. This already has the support of Bug-Life, NWT and the South Yare Wildlife Group. This is an exciting proposal with huge conservation potential.

## **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. The latter is the one that has the higher public profile. Our programme of talks, visits and historical re-enactments are much enjoyed by the membership and their guests. We also join with the Centre of East Anglian Studies, the activity at Caistor Roman site and other local history groups to widen our sphere of knowledge

As an example of our commitment to engage with villagers both established and new arrivals, the History Group is holding a free event to provide an opportunity to learn more about the history of the village. We hope to see some fresh faces in the audience.

We are in dialogue with the County Archive Centre as to the best way to preserve and catalogue the many documents and artefacts that are held in a number of homes around the village. We are still exploring the feasibility of having a permanent centre where research can be undertaken and where we can help the steady stream of visitors who come to the village pursuing their family history.

As this year is the centenary of the end of World War 2 Remembrance Sunday will incorporate rather more strands of history than usual, and will incorporate features that are being organised throughout the country.

We welcome everyone, members and guests to our events and activities and hope our expanding village will support the local organisations.

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

The Tree Warden Group has moved from under the umbrella of South Norfolk Council and is now under the guidance of the Tree Council. The activities have moved more towards trees 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 .Where local planning issues have implications for existing trees and hedgerows I have, on several occasions ,tried to protect them but I fear with little positive results. Unless they are in a Conservation area or have protected status there is very little that can be done to prevent owners managing their own land.

## **BERGH APTON VILLAGE FETE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – Milton Harris**

Good evening ladies, gentlemen and members of the Parish Council.

Over many years the Bergh Apton Village Fete has been held in the grounds and gardens of Bergh Apton Manor and once again by kind permission of Kip and Alison Bertram the 2017 fete was held on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July, opened for us by Amelia Reynolds of the BBC TV's "Look East" she was accompanied by her husband David Whitely who presents "Inside Out East" on BBC1 frequently on Monday evenings, also their two daughters Annabel and Cleo were with them. Their family presence lent a good theme to the day as a nice family day out and we were well blessed with a good crowd of some 270 plus people spending time and money in the fabulous environment that the Bertrams willingly made available to us. The monies made from a very successful fete was equally divided, as it has been for several years, between the Village Hall and the Church and this last year raised the grand net total of some £3,099.

As I said when some years ago I agreed to take over the Chairpersonship of the Fete Committee, that I would do it until the event capped £3,000, having at last reached that figure with a lot of help from a wide variety of folk who have spent time over the years planning, preparing and running the various stalls and for this I owe you all many heartfelt thanks, but as I said having reached that magic figure of £3,000 I am very pleased to hand over the reins of fete Chairperson to Rob Bates who has kindly offered to replace me. So I trust that he will get as much support as I have been lucky to receive over these past few years. Thankyou

The Fete this year will be on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2018 look forward to seeing you there.

## **BERGH APTON NEWSLETTER – Milton Harris**

The Newsletter has run another successful year with a variety of people submitting articles, we have also been able to keep within a reasonable budget and thanks to several organisations and many individuals we are lucky that we can still afford to keep the show on the road. Last year we were given the opportunity to enter our Newsletter into a competition for National Parish Magazine Awards 2017. Out of 410 magazine entries nationwide The Bergh Apton Newsletter achieved 27<sup>th</sup> place which considering the magazine that won on closer examination was some 56 pages in length makes me/us very impressed that with all the generous help we have received we should all be proud that our community can produce such a successful Newsletter. Thank you.

## **BERGH APTON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – Sue Bewick**

Good evening everyone, another year has passed in the life of Bergh Apton village hall and it has been a busy one. The hall has continued to be well used by both regular groups such as the weekly dog training classes, yoga, parish council, the Bergh Apton society and singing group to name but a few and it continues to be used by others on occasions throughout the year. Our ongoing annual events include the church unity lunch, the harvest lunch and the annual quiz and chips events organized by Milton Harris to raise funds for our church. Also, the Parfitt family continue the

tradition of cooking Christmas lunch and the New Year's breakfast for our community. This New Year's breakfast was as excellent as ever so many thanks go to Kevin his family and team of volunteers who make these occasions so special.

The Bergh Apton History group hold their annual supper here each winter; this year's event marked the reign of William and Mary as Co regent monarchs.

Other uses of our Hall include bingo nights, organised by Evy and compered by Ray and Lynton, Race nights and concerts and other events ran by the Bergh Apton players and the Bergh Apton society. The hall continues to be used as a Polling Station. Also, other organizations hold meetings and events here too. Our secretary Hilary Ling takes all private hire bookings and this year the hall has had a wedding party, birthday and other celebration parties to name a few.

The village hall committee continues to run the monthly coffee and chat mornings on the third Wednesday of the month. These mornings are very popular with villagers stopping in to catch up with friends.

The village hall trustees also run annual jumble sales to raise funds and Tiff Phoenix runs an annual wreath workshop prior to Christmas, which is always very popular. The grounds continue to be maintained by a local gardener with the committee organizing extra gardening and spring cleaning days to keep our village hall in its lovely state.

This year has seen the planning and erection of two new sheds to be used as storage. The village hall members aided expertly by John Ling enabled the emptying and safe removal of the old railway carriages from behind the hall and the construction of the two sheds is complete including electric points and lighting.

This year has also seen the erection of new housing opposite the village hall, the builders Pentaco used the car park for the duration of the build and also as agreed they have top dressed the car park and tarmacked the two entrances. The grass area to the rear of the car park was also used as an overflow car park and Pentaco agreed to reinstate the grass where it was torn by the vehicles - this work is outstanding to date. They have also agreed to pay last year's water bill. They also used the village hall on Fridays for meetings and Hilary and Evy provided them with hot drinks and bacon baps each week. The building work is now completed.

We look forward to another productive year for the village hall and our community.

## **BYRUS YOUTH GROUP – Emmi Ward**

The work within BYRUS Youth is going well.

Surlingham is going steady. We have a group of 5 – 10 boys who are coming each session. I organise activities and games as well as a tuck shop for them. We are steadily getting to know. I have a question in the café that creates conversation, and tries to get the young people thinking about what life is really about. My aim would be for this project to happen weekly instead of every 2 weeks, so this can continue and build stronger relationships. I am looking to attend a benefice service soon to meet people, to update them and ask for volunteers.

Thurton Youth group is going well. I have 4 regulars, and a few others who are coming here and there. 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 Tim volunteers. 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.

Explorers is going well. We have on average 5-10 children coming each week. I have also started volunteering in the primary school, which means I am able to build relationship with the kids, teachers and parents. This is great way of letting the community know who I am and what I do. At Explorers we play lots of fun games, and have a questions that we explore a little bit. I have recently started to introduce the kids to Veggie Tales.

As a project it is going steady and lots of relationships are being built.

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

The Church in Bergh Apton continued to flourish in 2017 and the average attendance at regular services increased to twenty-two, two more than last year.

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, unless they were held at Bergh Apton, were once a month when congregations from the Benefice met together in one church and on fifth Sundays when a combined Service was held for all eleven parishes in the Bramerton Group. The Unity Service was attended by worshippers from various denominations in the area and was followed by a 'Pot Luck' lunch in the Village Hall. Nearly hundred and forty people gathered for both the Remembrance Day Service and the Christmas Carol Service by candlelight, that latter fewer than usual because it was held on a Friday (Christmas Day falling awkwardly on a Monday made it difficult to hold all similar Services in the Benefice on a Sunday near Christmas).

Three Services were specially planned with children in mind. The first was on Mothering Sunday when posies, prepared by children the previous day under the guidance of Maria Phillips, were blessed and given to their Mothers and to everyone at the Service. The second was the Shoebox Service in November when shoeboxes filled with presents for children in Novi Sad were blessed and sent on their way. The Crib Service on the afternoon of Christmas Eve attracted over eighty people of all ages. Shirley Rimmer's story of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus was dramatised by the children, and the adults, who donned costumes and headdresses to portray the characters and animals.

The PCC met six times during 2017. They agreed that the heating is unsatisfactory and John Ling is investigating an under-pew system. Events will be held to finance this and the funds ring-fenced.

The church has a steady stream of visitors and it is important that it is kept in good order. Finding a cleaner has been unsuccessful and it has mostly fallen to Shirley Rimmer to ‘hoover up’ in readiness for Services, something that must be rectified by having a rota of people to implement the rolling schedule of tasks she has drawn up. The annual D.I.Y. spring cleaning day was held in May when a team of cheerful workers applied themselves with vigour to polishing woodwork, washing floors and removing cobwebs.

The necessary, but generally unnoticed, jobs that needed to be done were carried out. Among them, cracked tiles in the utility room were replaced by John Ling; he and Lorie Lain-Rogers cleaned out gutters and hopper heads; Mike Rimmer installed the replacement churchyard lights; and our Rector exercised skills from his previous profession to re-site the stopcock in the utility room and install a new valve. We are grateful to them all for giving up their time.

The Quinquennial Inspection was carried out at the end of 2016 by Matthew Thomas and his report was received in April. There is nothing urgent to be carried out.

The churchyard was kept tidy by work parties from the Community Service Teams on five days in the summer and autumn. The work to be carried out was assessed by Shirley Rimmer and areas with special plants were left uncut until their growing season was over. 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 is grateful to Kevin Parfitt who regularly keeps the grass on the church field topped, generously at no cost to the PCC.

The usual three main Fund Raising events organised by Milton Harris were held again in 2017. The Horse Show and Fun Dog Show in May and the Fete in July were well supported, as was the Quiz and Chips in October. In addition, The Poringland Singers treated us to a concert on St George’s Day, Lardal Kantori, a Norwegian Choir, entertained us once again in November, for what has become their annual visit, and Stone Angel, a Norfolk group of singers and instrumentalists, delighted an appreciative audience with a wide variety of folk songs in October.

A new Fete Committee chairman is now required. Milton Harris has retired after many years in that role, as he said he would when the profit from the event achieved £3,000 – and it did this year.

The monthly luncheons, known as “Tuesday Friends”, continue to be enjoyed by villagers who appreciate the opportunity to meet together 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 willingly agreed that Bergh Apton Community Arts Trust could stage another play there. Performances were held in January and February 2018.

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. We are grateful to the visiting clergy who fill the gaps in the schedules and to members of the team of Authorised Worship Assistants who prepare and lead a Service once a month – more frequently if no clergy is available. During the year Revd. Chris officiated at one wedding, one baptism and five funerals or interment of ashes.

## **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 Alpington 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 2017 the income was £1,057 and the Trustees donated £1,001 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 £2,160 to 27 recipients during the year end 31 December 2017.

The next AGM is due to be held in November 2018.

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

- 6.1 CIL funding – Sue Bewick queried whether it would be possible to bid for CIL funding for decoration of the Village Hall. Clerk to check whether this would be a possibility under the funding regime.
- 6.2 Website – A member of the public reported that on a recent visit to the Bergh Apton website she had been directed to another website of an unsavoury nature. Clerk asked to check with Chris Mewton whether he was aware of any abnormalities with the website.

## **7. Any Other Business**

None.