

Great Bardfield Annual Parish Report

May 16th 2014



Report design and editing: Jenny Rooney

Many thanks to all those who contributed photographs especially Ian Fox, Doug Joyce, Paul Boon, Anne Barney, Chris Morrell, David Meldrum, Anna Bass and David Burgess.

Cover: *Charity Coffee Morning for Helen Rollason Cancer Charity at Toddler Group*



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Great Bardfield Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting 2014

To be held Friday 16th May at 8.00pm in the Town Hall

Agenda

- 1 Chairman's Introduction
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of the Meeting held 26th April 2013
- 4 Matters Arising
- 5 Parish Plan Refresh – update by Janet Dyson
- 6 Parish Council Report and Accounts
- 7 District Council Report
- 8 County Council Report
- 9 School Report
- 10 Charities Report and Accounts
- 11 Town Hall Report and Accounts
- 12 Bardfield Times Report and Accounts
- 13 Items of Report
- 14 Closing remarks

The Annual Parish Report containing the above reports, and those of other village organisations, is available on the evening to all those attending and additional copies will be available from the Community Information Point.



Chairman's Introduction

This report is far more than an account of the work of the Parish Council, it's a celebration of a year in the life of the community that is Great Bardfield. You don't even have to read the text – just look at the pictures and you will see what kind of village we live in. I don't mean the historic houses and the beautiful countryside, lovely though they are, I mean the people. It's people who make communities work. Throughout the report there are pictures of people of all ages doing things in Great Bardfield. Some are doing creative things like singing, acting, playing in bands; others are growing vegetables, arranging flowers, conserving the countryside, protecting precious plants like the Bardfield Oxlip; some are playing sports, enjoying the youth club or a game of boules or carpet bowls, or riding their bikes for charity. There's always something going on and life here is never boring!

This year we are missing some people. We have lost Geoff Potter, Phyllis Cornell, Pam Jealous, Michael McDonald and Maureen Williams, all of whom gave so much to the village in different ways throughout their lives. But, look at the front cover picture of the Toddler Group and you'll see that life goes on. Read about how our primary school celebrated its 150th anniversary. See how much they care about their village. We didn't need Ofsted to tell us that our village school is good – though we're pleased that they did.

There are gaps to be filled, jobs to be done. If you've got some spare time or



a skill to share find out what's needed. Read the Youth Club report on page 45 and contact Katrina to see what help you can give. Phone Clifford and drop into the Town Hall on carpet bowls night. Speak to Ian about your future acting career. Ask Mick if he'd like a hand keeping the Memorial Green tidy. Volunteer for Museum duty.

There are changes too. Another housing development in Bendlowes Road will bring some new faces into the village. Changes are planned for the Vine. We have sadly lost The High Barn. There will be a new Headteacher at the school. We will miss Mrs Barney who has done so much for so many children and for the community over the last 15 years. We thank her and wish her well in the next stage of her life.

So this report is a special document because it records a year in the life of our village. Last year we won the Communication Award presented by the Essex Association of Local Councils, for our report and the *BT*, a brilliant achievement. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this year's report, particularly to Jenny Rooney for compiling and editing it. Now read on ... ☺

*Janet
Dyson:
Parish
Council
Chairman*



Great Bardfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on Friday 26th April 2013

1. Chairman's Introduction

Cllr Janet Dyson welcomed those present, including County Councillor Roger Walters and District Councillor John Finbow and members of the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

In her opening remarks she referred to the 2013 Annual Report, which was available at the meeting, and contained reports from many village organisations together with those from our District and County Councillors. She thanked Jenny Rooney for the production of the Report and all those who contributed, saying that it not only illustrated what a lively community we live in but raised the profile of Great Bardfield in the wider community.

She also mentioned the new affordable housing project, to be known as Castle Shot, developed with English Rural Housing for local need. Allocation of the 12 units had now been made and all of the successful applicants have the necessary links with the parish.

Attention was drawn to the Parish Council's decision to 'freeze' the Precept for another year although, with the advent of the Localism Act 2011 and the wish to devolve more responsibility to parish councils, this could be difficult to maintain whilst still providing the desired level of service in the future. It was noted that the general difficulty in obtaining funding for large-scale projects has

impacted on the development of the new pavilion project.

Cllr Dyson concluded her opening remarks by thanking those people who give so generously of their time, skills and talents to make Great Bardfield such a lively, active community.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Walsh and Holmes.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held 27th April 2012

These were approved and signed as a true record of the meeting. Proposed Jenny Rooney, seconded Cllr John Finbow.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Neighbourhood Policing Team

The Chairman announced that the meeting would divert from the Agenda slightly by allowing PC James Draper, neighbourhood police officer, to make a short presentation so that he could return to his duties; he was accompanied by PCSO Gail Chittendon.

PC Draper explained that he had been with the Essex Police for ten years, eight of which had been as a community officer, a role that he really enjoyed. Following the recent restructuring he had 'inherited' a



further nine parishes, entailing a heavy work load which meant he could not attend as many meetings as he would wish. He gave an overview of activities for the period 26th April 2012 to 26th April 2013, when there had been a total of 164 calls from Great Bardfield of which 52 were recordable crimes, none associated with traffic incidents. These included five of criminal damage, 11 of theft, five drug-related, six theft from motor vehicles, 14 burglaries (sheds, garages), one burglary (house), and four assaults. The figures for the 2011–12 period were 148 calls of which 28 were recordable crimes, but he said this did not indicate there had been an increase in crime last year, simply that a different method of recording had been used. He reminded the audience that the statistics actually represented a safer community, and compared this with the 40 incidents a month recorded in Bocking. He concluded by taking questions from the floor. The Chairman thanked both officers for attending.

6. High Barn Arts – A Community Investment Company

Paul Boon, one of the Directors of High Barn Arts, explained the transition of the High Barn events venue to becoming a CIC and how the cost of running the business, maintaining the building and being able to attract the artists required, had led to the need to diversify. As a CIC it is a 'not for profit' organisation. In addition to existing activities the company was becoming involved in training, work experience and working with the Nathan Timothy Foundation, a

song writing charity working with children. They were also looking at how music and art can help with such things as bullying and other social problems. Another stage of their work was with local primary schools and they hoped to extend this to senior schools. Much of their work would continue as before and they had a busy calendar of artists booked. Paul thanked all the volunteers who came forward after an appeal and said their contribution to running the High Barn was invaluable.

7. Community Speedwatch

This presentation was given by Tim Hayward-Smith, Community Speedwatch Co-ordinator, who explained how the problems of speeding vehicles experienced in Bridge Street, where he lived, led him to become involved. Following training by Braintree Police he is now able to undertake the various duties involved, and he provided statistics recorded at the one hourly sessions which confirmed that on one occasion 14 drivers and on another, 18, exceeded the speed limit by between six and 15 miles per hour. There had been disappointment following a recent recruitment campaign that just one person had come forward, although they currently have 11 members in total, which includes residents of Little Bardfield, Cornish Hall End and Finchingfield. One of the main problems is that they have to share a speed gun with these parishes which impacts on the number of sessions they can carry out. Ideally the residents of Great and Little Bardfield would like to work



together with their own equipment. There was a discussion regarding the possible purchase of a device and the Chairman suggested that it might be possible to undertake such a purchase if the cost was shared. In answer to a question from the floor regarding volunteering, Tim confirmed that even offering one hour a month would be valuable. The Chairman thanked him for his excellent presentation and said the matter of the purchase of a new speed gun would be discussed further by the Parish Council.

8. Parish Plan Refresh

The Chairman explained that a Parish Plan informs the Council's work for a certain period of time, at the end of which it is necessary to refresh the plan. The process for a new Plan was started with a public workshop on 25th February 2012.

Paul Boon, Chair of the PPR Steering Group, was invited to update the audience on the progress so far and he explained that from the initial workshop a core group of volunteers formed a Steering Group which has met regularly to develop the questionnaire necessary to gather information from all residents. Progress has been slower than they would have liked but the questionnaire is in its final stages. There will be a range of questions, which, when the answers are analysed, will provide the Parish Council with information about what the community, including the younger residents, feel is important, what they like or dislike about the village and so on. Paul said it was really important that when the

questionnaires were delivered to the households, they were completed and returned to make the whole exercise meaningful.

The Chairman thanked Paul for his presentation and hard work, and emphasised to the audience the importance of the data provided and that, although supported by the Parish Council, the Steering Group was made up of residents who acted independently of the Council; this was an essential requirement of the project.

9. Parish Council Report and Accounts

(a) Parish Council Review

As a full report was published in the Annual Report, Cllr Ruffle, Vice Chair, highlighted just a few key items from her review of the 2012–13 year. She stressed that the completion of the Local Affordable Housing project on the Braintree Road is a significant achievement and stems from the feedback from the previous parish plan and a separate survey carried out in the village some two years ago.

The 12 units, ranging from one-bedroom to three-bedroom properties, were built for, and have been allocated to, local people with an identified need. Cllr Ruffle added that the quality of the build impressed Council Members and applicants alike. The landscaping and garden areas made for a very attractive site, which is to be known as Castle Shot, the historic name for the field on which the development is built.

The Community Information Point, which is open two mornings



a week, continues to attract many visitors, and provides a wide range of information. It also issues recycling and dog-poo bags free of charge. Through a successful grant application a new black and white A3 copier has been purchased, which can be used by local groups, and a resident kindly donated a very new colour printer.

The relationship with the School Council is maintained and their next visit to a Council meeting is due on 14th May, when they will observe the work of the Council and report on issues they and other pupils have noted.

There have been a number of planning applications for improvements and extensions together with applications for work on trees.

Cllr Ruffle said the Council were very concerned about the condition of the green lanes and bridleways caused by inappropriate use by some off-road vehicles leaving them unusable for others. The Council have been lobbying ECC for some time to get winter closures on these lanes when most of the damage occurs and have been well supported by Cllr Walters in this endeavour.

There were other items that regularly appeared on the Council's Agenda, a couple of which were difficult to resolve – pot holes and dog mess. The former relied on the County Council and the latter on a very few dog owners who had no regard for the village or other residents.

Cllr Ruffle concluded by thanking everyone for their support during the year.

(b) 2012–13 Accounts

These were presented by the Clerk, as the Responsible Financial Officer of the Council. She explained that the income and expenditure was presented within the Annual Report, in pie chart format for an 'at a glance' overview. However, she had detailed figures with her if more information was required, and the full Audited Accounts would be made available to any resident on request.

Precept: in view of the general economic climate and despite increasing costs, Members agreed to freeze the Precept to avoid any additional burden on the parish rate. Of course this has to be balanced with the Council's ability to carry out their responsibilities and will be reviewed on an annual basis. Electricity supply and maintenance has increased, along with other areas of expenditure, including the Council's insurance premium to £1834.17 (from £1758.05).

As always, every effort is made to obtain grants for the work of the Council, to ease the burden on the Precept. This has become more difficult since the recession and funding opportunities harder to come by, however, despite this, the following was achieved:

Grants, Donations and Fund-Raising achieved towards the Council's work:

- £1400 from Stansted Airport Community Trust to purchase a computer for the Community Information Point



- £1,330 from BDC towards street cleaning/village handyman
- £2,131.50.51 from the Photographic event and sale of cards and calendars for the Pavilion Project
- £348.35 profit on the Firework Display

In addition to general on-going expenditure, maintenance and repairs, the following expenditure was approved:

- Donation to St Mary's Churchyard maintenance
- Donation to Essex Air Ambulance
- Queen's Jubilee: – as mentioned last year, work continued on the Quiet Space which was officially opened when a commemorative bench was installed. Jubilee mugs were also purchased to present to children at the village school when they held their celebration.

10. District Council Report

Unfortunately, there was no report from Cllr David Reid, local District Council member, however Cllr John Finbow was in attendance and gave a brief report on the work of Braintree District during 2012–13 and also took questions from the floor. Contact details for both Councillors were provided in the Annual Report.

11. County Council Report

This was presented by Cllr Walters and published in the Annual Report in full. In summary, the points covered included:-

(i) ECC's budget for 2013–2014

This was agreed by Full Council on 12th February, with vulnerable people, businesses, motorists, pedestrians and first-time buyers among those who will benefit. The council has also agreed to freeze council tax for the third successive year. The authority would be spending £180 million over the next four years on maintaining and enhancing its network of 8,500 miles of roads and footpaths. This would mean the council will be investing an additional £35 million over the next two years, on top of the amount it had already pledged to spend.

(ii) In partnership with the district and borough authorities, ECC intend to launch a **Local Authority Mortgage Scheme** to help first time buyers get onto the property ladder and get the property market moving.

(iii) Essex County Council is launching a new website to keep residents informed of plans to improve the **provision of superfast broadband** in the county. The Superfast Essex website will feature information on how the project is progressing, case studies of those who have benefited from faster broadband speeds, and a link to a tool that checks current broadband speed. The website will also allow residents and businesses to register their need for better broadband where they are. It is important that as many residents and businesses sign up to www.superfastessex.org as possible. This information will then be used to decide which areas of Essex will receive an upgrade first.



iv) At the Cabinet meeting on 19th February, ECC has approved the **public health priorities for the county** in preparation for taking over responsibility for Public Health on 1st April this year. The Department of Health has confirmed that ECC will receive ring-fenced grants of £48,874,000 for 2013–2014 and £50,242,000 in 2014–2015 to commission public health services.

12. School Report

This is published in full in the Annual Report and, as the Chair of School Governors was unable to attend, the Chairman gave a brief overview of the school year. The school, which celebrates its 150th anniversary in early summer, continues to be very active and in 2012 were able to include celebrations linked to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics.

Year 6 achieved above National figures in English and Maths, children took part in fund raising for Children in Need and Comic relief, there was a visit to Barleylands Farm and visits from professional musicians and a theatre group.

There is an active School Council who work hard to improve the quality of school life and are involved in decisions about the school. They have visited a Parish Council meeting to learn about local democracy and share their ideas for improvements in the village.

Unfortunately, the numbers fell from 125 to 120 this year; a downward trend which is common to all local small schools. It is hoped this would change as it was vitally important that the school maintained its

numbers as its loss would significantly change the dynamics of the village.

13. Charities Report

The report was presented by Cllr Hayward, in his role as Treasurer, who said that despite the much reduced interest rates, an income of £18,543 was achieved and payments totalling £20,597 were made for the benefit of Great Bardfield residents. These included youth projects, books for university students, baby and toddler group, personal assistance, religious groups and sporting clubs.

He emphasised how fortunate the parish is to have had the very generous bequest from the late Miss Chrissie Samms which enabled the Trustees to give assistance and support to residents.

14. Town Hall Report and Accounts

The Town Hall Committee Chairman's report stated that the hall was regularly used by village groups as well as a mix of occasional functions throughout the year. The fund raising events held throughout the year included the Art and Craft Fair, Christmas Carols and Grand Draw evening and quiz nights. The intention is to spend money on maintenance of the Hall's exterior during the coming year. There was thanks for the work of the Committee and appreciation for the financial support of the Parish Council.

A copy of the 2012–13 accounts had been submitted to the Parish Clerk which showed a total income after expenses of £18,656, an increase of £744 over the previous year. The Art and Craft fair achieved £1,165, and lettings to village organisations



£3,071 and casual bookings £4,050. Other income was £3,000 from the Parish Council, £1,211 from fund-raising events organised by the Committee and £6,182 cottage rental.

15. Bardfield Times Report and Accounts

David Yates, Joint Editor, reported that the magazine continues to thrive and is delivered free to over 700 households within the parish, thanks to a team of volunteers. One source of revenue is the Bardfield Cinema Club, which, along with advertising, is a much needed income to offset the printing costs of £7,400. On a positive note, recent changes have improved the look of the magazine with an increase in contributors, with some excellent articles covering a wide range of topics.

16. Items of Report

There were no items of report; however, Ros Gourgey asked if she could donate an Oak sapling to the village. She had recently attended a reception at Buckingham Palace together with other members of the Woodland Trust who were each presented with a sapling from one of the Royal estates. Her offer was readily accepted and a suitable site would be found for this.

17. Closing Remarks

In her closing remarks the Chairman thanked all those attending, those who had contributed to the Annual Report and those people who gave their time and energy for the benefit of the community. She also thanked her fellow Councillors and the Clerk for their support during the year. ☺

Parish Council Review 2013



Carolynne Ruffle – Vice Chair

As Vice Chair of the Great Bardfield Parish Council I am pleased to present the Parish Council Review for the last 12 months, i.e. May 2013 to April 2014. During that period we have held 11 full Parish Council meetings plus additional meetings on specific subjects or issues.

The Council's remit covers a broad range of issues from reviewing and commenting on planning applications, to supporting the building of affordable housing, street cleaning and street lighting, and liaison with county and district councils, and the police authority.



In May 2013 tenants moved into their newly built homes at Castle Shot. The Council liaised with English Rural Housing who manage the properties and all were allocated to families, couples and single people with a connection to the village. Members of the Council attended the official opening of the development, hosted by the Rural Community Council of Essex, in September.

During the year we have considered around 20 planning applications, more than we saw in the previous year. Although we don't have decision-making powers we do make comments and recommendations on every application to Braintree District Council planning department. We also consider and comment on tree works which require permission in the conservation area (around 10 this year).

Planning applications have varied from the installation of a new window, solar panels and small extensions to complete properties.

Some are more contentious than others – these include an application to build a home in close proximity to one of the village's most historic buildings and a development of five new homes on amenity land off Bendlowes Road. The former was rejected by planning officers thanks to some excellent representation by Bardfield Historical Society and English Heritage. The latter is going ahead. However, during the process, we pursued residents' concerns, particularly around traffic issues and loss of parking and garages in the area. We successfully negotiated with Greenfield Housing to underwrite

the cost of removing local residents' garages on the site, originally this cost was to have been borne by the residents.

These new properties will be added to the local authority housing stock as affordable homes but, being owned by Greenfield, will not have the same requirement for applicants to have local links to the village as do those at Castle Shot.

We have been working on revised plans for a new, more affordable, pavilion at the playing fields. Unfortunately it remains very difficult to obtain sufficient funding to progress this quickly. Works have started in preparing for the new building; trimming hedges and tidying the boundaries of the playing fields, we will soon be removing, replacing and re-siting the children's play equipment to provide more car parking space, and improving access and parking.

This year your council have replaced two noticeboards in the village with new sturdier boards; bike racks were installed at the playing fields; we decided that the memorial bench on the School Green was finally beyond any more repairs and have replaced it with a new bench; we have considered the siting of dog bins and added a new one. Though dog-bins are well used by many residents we have a perennial issue with those who decide not to use these facilities and we have worked hard with the dog warden to reduce this problem. Unfortunately we still seem to have too many stealthy dog walkers who leave unwanted mess on pavements and footpaths.



We continue to fund and operate the Community Information Point and review the service that it offers, from availability of information about local services, photocopying facilities and providing recycling and dog-poo bags to residents. Thanks to Jenny Rooney for her excellent service in the CIP.

Following several requests from residents we have been looking into installing Christmas lights in the village so hope to add to the local seasonal cheer this year.

We continue to report problems with potholes and road surfaces to County Highways department, with some success, though some areas remain difficult. Some of our green lanes have been damaged by off-road users and Highways have done some extensive work to some areas over the last year. We would prefer to restrict use by some unsociable off-roaders but as the lanes are public rights of way, restriction is difficult.

We aim to maintain a good relationship and close contact with our local rural policing team who have attended several of our council meetings this year. They have supported the local speedwatch programme and we also worked successfully with them during the year to address vandalism at the playing fields, with the culprits undertaking agreed reparation instead of a potential criminal record. Unfortunately, the rural policing team is small and, we feel, spread very thinly. We have written to the police authority both to congratulate them for their work with our community, and also with our concerns about their ability to continue to provide a sufficient and visible service to us.

We have a good working relationship with the village primary school. The children's school council attended one of our meetings and vice versa. The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Barney, head teacher, for all her hard work and wish her the very best for her forthcoming retirement. We have also liaised with and supported the Pre-School this year in developing their activities.

Following a protracted loss of electrical power to the village in October, we have reviewed our Emergency Plan to include power outages lasting in excess of 24 hours. In this instance we aim to provide support based from the Town Hall. We have also been in communication with the power distribution company to better understand the issues and to raise our concerns about how to ensure that information is provided to the community.

The Parish Plan working committee put together a questionnaire, distributed throughout the Parish in October. More information about the results of this questionnaire of residents will be presented here tonight, and over the coming weeks and months the Council will be assessing parishioners' views and priorities. These will guide the future work and focus of the Parish Council over the next few years.

I would like to thank you for your support of your Parish Council tonight and during the year.

Carolynne Ruffle
Vice Chair, Parish Council



Parish Council Financial Report

For the year ended 31st March 2014

This is a brief report to highlight items of income and expenditure. Full accounts will, of course, be available to view when these are prepared for annual audit.

Precept: Over the past few years the Parish Council has, despite increasing costs, agreed to freeze the Precept. However in the light of a reduction in the Local Council Tax Support Grant of 13.5% a necessary increase was approved at 4.5%. This will result in an increase of 1.49%, or 0.72 pence per household per year; the impact of the change somewhat reduced by the increased parish housing stock (i.e. Castle Shot).

As always, every endeavour is made to obtain grants for the work of the Council, to ease the burden on the Precept. This is becoming more difficult since the recession and funding opportunities are harder to come by. Although funds were not as plentiful as last year, the following were achieved:

Grants, donations, fund-raising achieved towards the Council's work:

- £1,396 from BDC towards street cleaning/village handyman
- £2,349 from the Photographic event and sale of cards and calendars for the Pavilion Project
- £913 profit on the Firework Display

- £200 private donation towards maintenance of the existing pavilion

Insurance: For many years the Council has been insured by Aon but now more companies are providing suitable insurance for Local Authorities and negotiations with Zurich achieved a saving of £654.

Electricity Supply: A gradual introduction of more efficient lamps has resulted in a saving of over £60 per month and a refund of £754 in respect of the 12 month period in which the new lamps were in use.

In addition to general on-going expenditure, maintenance and repairs, the following expenditure was approved:

- Donation to St Mary's Churchyard maintenance
- Donation to Essex Air Ambulance
- Donation to CAB
- Replacement bench on the School Green
- Replacement notice board at Brook Street

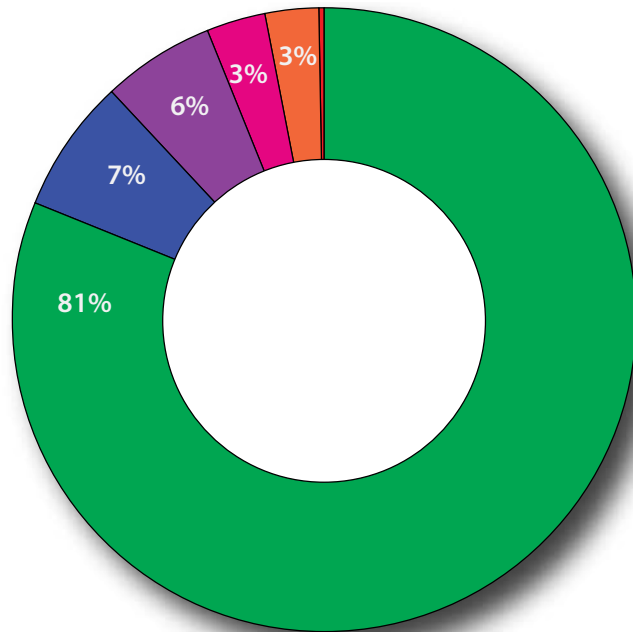
Kate Fox – Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer



Parish Income

For the financial year ended 31st March 2013

- Precept and Parish Support Grant
- Verge cutting/village cleaning (agency arrangements)
- VAT refund
- Pavilion/playing field hire
- Sundries and substation rental
- Bank interest

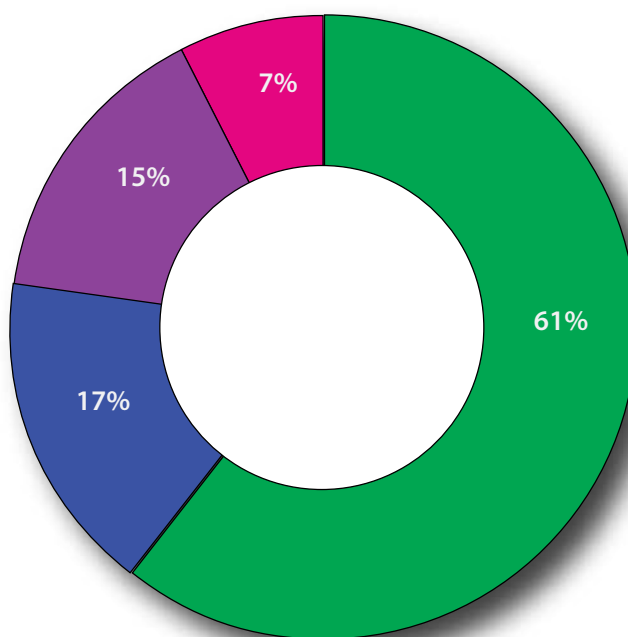


Precept and Parish Support Grant	£31,196.00
Verge cutting/village cleaning (agency arrangements)	£2,613.00
VAT refund	£2,233.00
Pavilion/playing field hire	£1,145.00
Sundries and substation rental	£1,126.00
Bank interest	£30.00
Total	£38,343.00
Pavilion Project fund stands at:	£48,739.00
Reserves and special projects account:	£56,105.00



Parish Expenditure

For the financial year ended 31st March 2013



Village amenities/Capital schemes	
CIP: Town Hall rent/IT and BT rental/staff	£3,703.00
Grass cutting/Pipers/memorial/churchyard/open spaces	£3,438.00
Public lighting – supply and maintenance	£3,062.00
Pavilion Project	£1,921.00
Town Hall: grant and substation rental	£2,111.00
Capital schemes	£2,531.00
Playing field pavilion	£2,332.00
Verge cutting/street cleaning (agency arrangements)	£1,346.00
Subscriptions and donations	£917.00
Staff/expenses	
Salary/postage/copying/misc office exp/sundries	£5,903.00
Admin	
Gen admin/telephone/audit/stationery/insurance	£5,289.00
VAT	
VAT	£2,639.00
Total	
	£35,192.00



Essex County Council Report



Cllr Roger Walters

1. At the Full Council meeting on 11th February, ECC agreed a budget that invests in jobs, people and infrastructure and the Leader of the Council, Cllr David Finch, announced that millions of pounds of additional funding would be spent on key issues including road and footpath repairs, schools, apprenticeships and flood management over the coming year.

ECC announced plans to invest in other areas including:

- £2 million for flood management across the county to help put in place protective measures at a time of unprecedented and prolonged bad weather. A further £1m of emergency funding has also been released to tackle road flooding across the county.
- An extra £17 million to tackle the impact the recent bad weather has had on the county's roads.

- £1 million to provide more equipment and better facilities for young people – helping to build stronger communities.
- £1.4 million for providing care and support to people with physical and learning needs to enable them to live as independent a life as possible.
- £500,000 to support young people looking for jobs through helping to provide an additional 260 Apprenticeships through the Essex Apprenticeship Programme – allowing a total of 515 new apprenticeships to be created under the programme during 2014–15 in key areas such as engineering, digital technologies and care services.

The Leader of the Council warned, however, that while seeking to build on the traditions of the Council's 125 year history, it was a 'budget of difficult choices' with more tough decisions needed in the future. The Council needs to save at least £235 million by 2017, with £107 million savings being made in 2014–15. Furthermore, while ECC has been able to freeze council tax and achieve a balanced budget for 2014–15, further work is needed to fully balance budgets for 2015–16 and 2016–17.

2. The Leader was pleased to announce that council tax would be frozen for the fourth year in a row. It had been anticipated that there would be a rise of 1.49 per cent – equating to an



additional 31p a week on a band D property – but ECC decided to freeze council tax again after receiving additional income from the County's Borough, District and City councils, as a result of economic growth and greater council tax collection figures.

3. Also announced at Full Council was the provision of £1m for a School Improvement Fund to give children the best start in life by raising standards and leadership in primary schools. The Schools Improvement Fund will support school leadership in primary schools through the establishment of the Essex Primary Leadership Academy which will celebrate success, attract the best new talent to Essex, and nurture and support the best teachers in the county to become great primary leaders. In addition the Fund will look to create local approaches to improving schools following on from the recent launch of the Basildon Excellence Panel.

4. Following the longest sustained period of wet weather that Essex has experienced for many years, ECC has announced that £1m of emergency funding will be released to tackle road flooding across the county. District, Borough and City Councils have been asked to identify their five worst flooding hotspots so that ECC can, with their support, begin the emergency operation of dealing with 60 flooding points across Essex by clearing culverts, emptying and jetting gullies and removing debris.

Essex County Councillor Rodney Bass, Cabinet Member for Highways

and Transportation, is also calling on the emergency services, drainage authorities, landowners, water authorities, rangers and the Environment Agency to play their part in helping to clear up these flooding hotspots.

5. Over 4,200 Essex residents signed up for a chance to save money on their gas and electricity bills with the Essex Energy Switch.

The 4,262 residents who registered for the scheme received their personalised offers and details on how to switch from Friday 28th February. There was absolutely no obligation to accept the offer. The Essex Energy Switch had been organised by Essex County Council in partnership with District, Borough and City councils, and delivered by iChoosr, an independent provider which specialises in collective energy switching.

6. The route of the Essex leg of the Tour de France which takes place on Monday 7th July has been announced. The cyclists will enter the county north of Saffron Walden and race through Uttlesford, Braintree, Chelmsford and Epping Forest before heading to London.

Roads on, and connected to, the route in Essex are anticipated to be closed as follows:

- Uttlesford and Braintree:
7.30am – 4pm
- Chelmsford: 8am – 5pm
- Epping Forest: 8am – 5pm
- Epping Forest A414 area:
8am – 5pm

This length of time is needed to allow the route to be prepared, infrastruc-



ture to be put in place and removed afterwards, the Tour's publicity 'caravan' of vehicles to travel through the stage, the race itself and the safe dispersal of spectators. The route will need to be clear of all public vehicles prior to the road closure time, with pedestrian access available while the roads are closed through stewarded crossing points.

A map of the route can be downloaded from our website www.essex.gov.uk/Documents/tdf-TheRoute and more information about the Tour de France in Essex can be found at essex.gov.uk/documents/tour_faq.docx.

7. Work is still continuing around the impact of the new Care Bill, the biggest reform of adult social care since 1948, which is expected to receive Royal Assent in April 2014 with the bulk of changes taking place on 1st April 2015. The aims of the new Bill include:

- Promoting individual well-being by offering a wide range of good quality care and support services, giving people more control and choice.
- Financial protection so everyone will know what they have to pay towards the cost of meeting their eligible needs for care and support.
- People will be protected from having to sell their home in their lifetime to pay for any care home costs.
- New rights for carers

ECC welcomes the proposed reforms but has concerns that they are underfunded and estimates that the cost to the Council could be £40m in 2015–16 alone. The Council also

feels that the time-scales are unrealistic and has called for a one-year delay to the changes.

8. A survey to look at how residents use recycling services across the county is the start of a process to review and understand how recycling centres need to change in order to meet the long-term requirements of residents, and to ensure the service is delivered in the most cost-effective way for Essex taxpayers. ECC currently operates 21 recycling centres located across the county, at an annual cost of around £6.4m.

Significant investment in kerbside recycling services has been made in recent years by ECC and district, borough and city councils, which has resulted in fewer residents needing to dispose of waste at recycling centres.

In addition, although many of the centres are modern purpose-built facilities, it may be the case that some of the older sites may no longer be best placed to meet the needs of a modern recycling centre.

The waste portfolio Budget once again has to rise largely because of an increase in Landfill tax of £8 per ton. Therefore our revenue budget for waste together with Trading Standards will rise by £3.6m to £67.7m

Additionally, we continue to face pressures from the volatility of waste arisings. Currently the rate of increase is 1%, thought to have been brought about by the poor weather resulting in wet materials. A 1% rise in waste costs us £600 so it is critical that we encourage as much recycling as possible.



We currently have high recycling in Essex at 52% but working with our District Partners and with additional recycling from our MBT plant we have every confidence we will reach our Strategy target of 60% by 2020.

A further £1.3m and capital of £15.1m have been included in the budget for the MBT facility and the supporting waste transfer stations. The MBT plant, which will treat our 322,000 tons of residual waste, is due to open later this year which will mean that in future years our residual waste will be reduced in volume and weight as an engineered Solid Recovered Fuel. This means that if we can find markets for the output from the plant in the energy from waste markets we will no longer need to be sending waste to landfill.

Also in this year we will be awarding a contract for the disposal of food waste by either anaerobic digestion or In Vessel Composting, this together with our MBT plant will lead to the long term stabilization of treatment and disposal costs for the County.

Our challenge this year is our savings target of £2.6m. To make this target we will have to work with our District partners to reduce the money we pay to them under the IAA agreement to help cover the cost of collecting recycling.

We are confident that by working together with the Districts to be more efficient we can achieve the savings.

We are also currently reviewing the customer experience of safety and suitability of our Recycling Centres for the longer term and looking at how we rationalise the non-household waste.

As part of this we are doing a trial of providing a chargeable trade waste facility at two of our CA centres.

9. I applaud the continued support for Trading Standards because TS not only works to protect you and me from unscrupulous traders. They save lives by protecting us from drugs, dangerous alcohol, stopping knives getting into the wrong hands to mention but a few dangers. For me the most important thing they do for us is preventing vulnerable and aged people being scammed by unscrupulous door-step traders who can destroy the health and well-being of people living at home on their own.

10. Finally, we are keen to see our community energy scheme make cost savings for us and I would remind people to register, as we only have one week before the energy auction which will set the prices you can have and I am hopeful that in the future I shall be able to report back on a Scheme to save money on petrol and diesel for us all.

Cllr Roger Walters



District Council Report

This past year has seen significant challenges for the District Council. Despite the reduced funding from central Government, delivery of services is performing well. We have recovered funds invested in Icelandic banks totalling £4.5m and are hopeful of recovering a remaining £250,000 in the near future. In addition to reducing Council Tax for the second year in succession, and not having implemented an increase for four years we have delivered the following achievements:

Environment

- More than doubled the number of businesses who receive a trade waste recycling service, with 172 businesses signed up so far.
- Improved the cleanliness of town centres through a targeted campaign.
- Reduced litter by 55% across the District through an education campaign supported by proactive enforcement.
- Completed a door step campaign to raise awareness of recycling and food waste collection services which resulted in a 4% increase in participation.

People

- Constructed over 0.3km of new footway/cycle path in the District. Supported the development of 10 Community Led Plans.
- Invested £124,234 in 11 community projects through the Mi Community Scheme.

Prosperity

- Launched the 2013–2026 District Economic Development Prospectus setting out key priorities to create the conditions for economic growth.
- Held a successful evening especially for rural businesses, hosted by the Chairman of Braintree District Council.

Performance

- Increased satisfaction and reduced cost of the refuse and recycling service.
- Carried out a review of off-street parking and produced a strategy to implement a three-year action plan.
- Achieved high customer satisfaction level for a number of key services.
- Delivered a balanced budget for 2014–15 with no cuts in services, despite reduced funding from central Government.

For 2014–15

- The opening of the £9.5m new leisure centre in Witham
- Building of 100 affordable homes district-wide
- The launch of the new Local Authority Mortgage scheme to help first time buyers
- Support for new business start ups and apprenticeships for young people
- Investment in waste and recycling services to householders and businesses.
- The purchase of new community transport buses to ensure this service remains reliable for our most vulnerable residents

Cllr Finbow continues to serve on the Licensing Committee.

Cllr John Finbow and Cllr David Reid Three Fields Ward



Great Bardfield Charities

The first of the Great Bardfield Charities was established over 100 years ago, when a philanthropic resident bequeathed funds in his will for the benefit of other residents. Since that time, many other residents have left money in their wills to the Charity for the benefit of others.

The Charity operates under a scheme, which clearly defines the purpose and terms under which the funds are allocated. The scheme is overseen by the Charities Commission, which invests the capital funds for us and we receive interest from the capital, quarterly. Under the scheme, the Charity is able to assist with the social, health and educational needs of the residents of the parish of Great Bardfield. The Trustees meet quarterly to consider applications. Meeting dates are notified in the *Bardfield Times* and on the Community and Charity website. In extraordinary situations, Trustees will consider applications between meetings.

The Charity Expenditures over the Year April 2013 – March 2014 are outlined as follows:

- Total income including interest: £18,543
- Total expenditure: £17,080

Examples of grants made in the last year include:

- Youth projects
- Help with fuel costs
- Educational projects, equipment and books
- Provision of medical equipment

- Village groups, club and societies
- Religious groups
- Personal assistance including hospital travel

The Charities Committee is accountable to the Great Bardfield Parish Council, and the administering Officers for the Year 2013 – 2014 are as follows:

Pat Coles – Chair

Dell Cottage, Dunmow Road, Great Bardfield
01371 810780

Brenda Poston – Secretary

Buck House, Vine Street, Great Bardfield
01371 810519

Tony Hayward – Treasurer

Little's Farm, Beslyns Road, Great Bardfield
01371 810320

Debbie Rogers – Minutes Secretary

Dixons, Bridge End, Great Bardfield
01371 811083

Alan Bray – Advisory Trustee

Claypits Farm, Mill Road, Great Bardfield
01371 810489

The Charity Accounts are audited yearly by Bill Mules, and we thank him for his on-going professional support.

All applications to the Charity are considered carefully, confidentially and without prejudice by the Trustees. Organisations or individual villagers can approach any of the Trustees at any time with requests for assistance in making applications.

This report, together with the audited accounts are deposited with the Clerk to the Parish Council.

Pat Coles





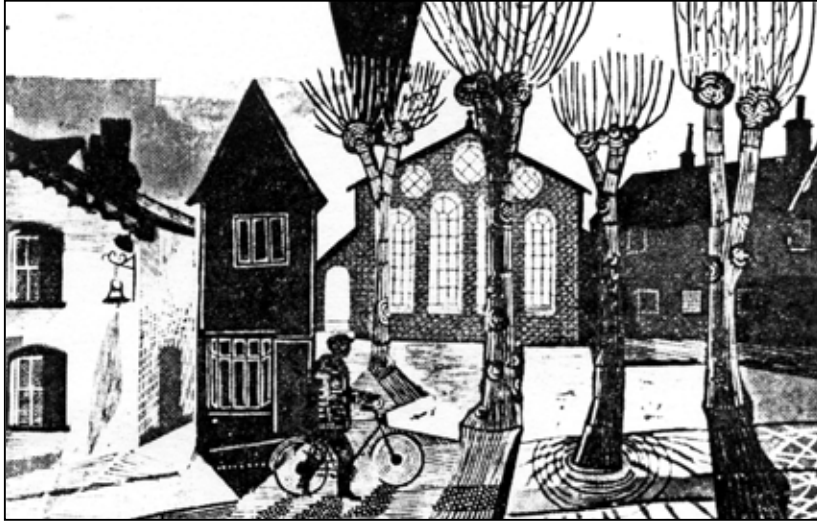
Bardfield 2013–14 in pictures

Top row: Restored Church spire and weather vane celebration, School nativity play, artist Chloe Cheese, Bardfield Brass. Next row: Bardfield Folk Club, Bardfield Players in "Present from the Past", Charity Bike Ride at the Bell, Jill Burt receiving Boules trophy from Chris and John Maidman. Next row: Castle Shot, Janet Dyson officially opening new housing development, Co-op re-opening celebrations, Horticultural Spring Show preparations. Bottom row: Remembrance Day, Bardfield floods, Players' performance and supper, Annual 10k race.





Town Hall Report



*Great
Bardfield
Town Hall
by Edward
Bawden*

Over the last year the Town Hall has performed its function with not too many problems. We lost two of our regular clubs, Pilates and the children's acting group Stage Right, but a new exercise group – Circuit Training – has started with participants of nearly all ages from around 11 years to well over 50.

The usual events of the year have gone on in the Hall. The Bardfield Players put on two plays for three evenings each, there were a few parties and various quizzes have been run as fund-raisers. The film nights have had some good evenings with very good films being shown to appreciative audiences. The Youth Club asked if they could use the Hall over the winter months on available Friday evenings, and when they have enough adults to supervise, and this appears to have worked well.

The Committee organised its regular events throughout the year. In May we held our Art and Craft Show

which was well attended, and the village Boules Competition at the Town Hall ran from May to October, ably managed by Carolynne Ruffle (Mme Boules).

The Bardfield Players' November production was enhanced with a hot meal on two evenings provided by the Town Hall Committee. This was a success and we were able to share the

profits of the two evenings which Jenny Rooney and team catered for.

In December the Christmas Carols and Town Hall Christmas Draw evening took place. As in recent years the Brownies and the Bardfield Community Choir did a very good job in raising the Christmas spirit. Again the Hall was very well attended for this evening.

Last summer we had the exterior of the Hall repainted. It may not seem a big task, being of brick construction, but there are plenty of awkward-to-reach window frames and barge boards to be prepared and painted.

Financially the committee has managed funds well throughout the year, and finances have been good.

We are fortunate in having a dedicated committee who all work hard to help keep the hall running relatively smoothly.

Jim Bray — Chairman



The Bardfield Times

The *Bardfield Times* has had an excellent year. Thanks to the hard work and diligence of Kate and Ian Fox, our advertising revenue has risen by over £4,000 and we have been in the happy position of being able to make small donations to other charitable causes in the village.

We are not only grateful to our advertisers for choosing the *BT* but to our readers and contributors for their support. Each month we receive a steady stream of ideas for features, letters, photographs as well as regular articles and notices which all help make the magazine interesting, diverse and informative for our readers, and attractive for our advertisers.

We are fortunate to have excellent local printers, Paul Clark Printing, who deliver a quality product each month without fail. Having held their printing costs for several years the company was quite justified in asking for a small price increase.

Thanks must go to the entire *BT* team – advertising, editorial, typing and proofing, distribution (come rain, wind or shine), Jackie Newton for looking after our finances and Janet Dyson for her role as Consultant Editor. Sincere thanks to all our contributors – regular and occasional – please keep your stories coming in!

We were very proud to win the Essex Association of Local Councils' Communication Award last year for the *Bardfield Times* – a real team effort and immensely gratifying to know we are producing a quality magazine.

Our increasingly popular monthly Cinema Club, which has replaced the Open Gardens Day as a source of income, is run by the *BT* team. We rely heavily on the technical and administrative support of many friends to make the Club a success. Sincere thanks to those of you who unfailingly turn up on a Friday night to set up and dismantle the equipment, put out and put back the chairs, provide the refreshments and take the money on the door.

Jenny Rooney and David Yates (Joint Editors)

The Bardfield Times			
Statement of Account for Year Ending 31 st March 2014			
		2013 – 2014 £	2012 – 2013 £
Opening Balance		(£86.30)	£428.82
Income			
	Advertising	11065.00	6254.00
	Subs/Sales	241.94	114.80
	Donations	–	30.00
	Fundraising/Cinema	2175.13	1978.10
		£13,395.77	£8,805.72
Expenditure			
	Printing	8227.00	7400.00
	Stationery	13.98	7.24
	Postage	129.24	129.50
	Cinema	1311.06	1284.85
	Donations	500.00	–
	Other	334.72	70.43
		£10,516.00	£8,892.02
Closing Balance		£2,879.77	(£86.30)
Current A/c £3,507.96			
Cash in hand £140.50			

Jackie Newton – Treasurer



Great Bardfield Historical Society



*(Above
from left)
Janet
Dyson,
Gill
Morrell,
and Bill
Gustar at
the AGM*

This has been another successful year for the Historical Society with an interesting and well-attended programme of talks and visits, including a fascinating evening with our Parish Priest, Rev. Dr. Robert Beaken on the role played by Archbishop Cosmo Lang in the crisis resulting from the abdication of Edward VIII in 1936. The High Barn provided a perfect setting for John Walker's talk on the timber-framed buildings of Great Bardfield.

In September the first Ariel Crittall Memorial Lecture was given by artist Chloe Cheese who shared her memories of growing up amongst the artists of Great Bardfield. She gave some delightful insights into the open house exhibitions of the 1950s and how artists such as Edward Bawden and John Aldridge influenced her own development as an artist. Most interesting was the collection of artefacts, photos and artwork she

brought to illustrate her talk, much of it by her mother, Sheila Robinson, including this beautiful etching of Bridge Street looking towards the White Hart (see opposite).

At the AGM in March we exhibited Edward Bawden's drawings for the lithographs he created to illustrate the King Penguin book *Life in an English Village*, published in 1949, alongside other works from our Bardfield Artists collection. Many people came to see this special exhibition – a rare opportunity as lack of a proper exhibition space in the village means that our collection has to be stored by Braintree Museum. A major challenge for the future is how to bring this unique collection back to Bardfield.

The Cottage Museum and the Cage are open from Easter until the end of September. The time given by the Committee and volunteers who staff the Museum during the season is much appreciated. Our publications on aspects of the history of the village continue to sell well and new publications are planned.

The Society monitors all planning applications for alterations to listed buildings in the village, raising issues whenever this is relevant. We have recently been instrumental in the refusal to allow an application to build a house in the grounds of the Grade 2* listed Gobions, a significant house in the Village Conservation Area. Plans are underway to mark two of the most significant historic houses in the village with Blue Plaques. These

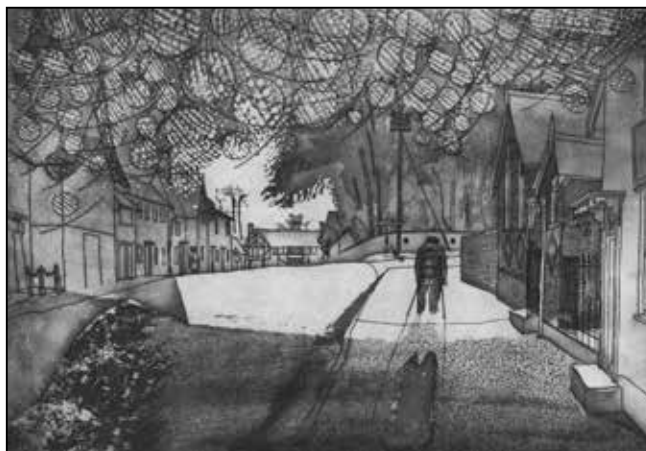


are Place House, home of William Bendlowes, Sergeant-at-Law to Queen Elizabeth I and, later, of artist John Aldridge, and Brick House, home of artist Edward Bawden.

The Society also hosts visits and gives talks to other historical societies and groups, providing a much needed boost to our income.

The majority of the Society's income goes into running and maintaining the Cottage Museum. Recently the chimney was repaired because water was coming in, and inside, the ceiling around the chimney breast was patched and lime-washed.

During the year the Committee has been engaged in discussions with the Bardfield Charities to try and negotiate arrangements which are more favourable to the Historical Society. The Museum will be open during the season this year and a decision about its future will be made at the next AGM. Another challenge!



The Historical Society is always pleased to welcome new members and volunteers to help man the Cottage Museum – a short training course is given. It is a relaxing way to catch up on village history – you might even get a cup of tea!

For more information contact Gill Morrell on 810919 or Janet Dyson on 810838.

*Above:
'Bridge
Street Seen
Through
Eye-lashes'
by Sheila
Robinson*

Janet Dyson – Chair

Programme of Talks and Visits for 2014–15

Wed 21 st May	<i>A History of Photography</i> – Will Edwards
Wed 18 th Jun	<i>The Tower and its Prisoners</i> – Brian D'Arcy, ex-Yeoman Warder
Wed 9 th Jul	<i>Oliver Cromwell: Hero or Villain?</i> – Rakesh Pathak
Wed 19 th Nov	<i>250 Years of Farming History</i> – Ashley Cooper
Sat 7 th Mar (2015)	<i>AGM and Social Evening</i>
Sun Jun 22 nd	<i>Visit to Alderford Mill, Sible Hedingham</i> 2.30pm (See posters for details of this and other planned visits)

Unless stated otherwise all meetings are in the Friends Meeting House at 8pm.
Look out for posters giving further details



Bardfield Horticultural Society



The Summer Show – ready for the judges – always a colourful display

Not for the first time has the weather played a part in influencing our horticultural calendar, and in 2013 the extended cold winter, which lasted well into March, caused upsets for many gardeners.

Fortunately, a break in the weather in February allowed guest speaker Ray Drew, a specialist and judge of alpine plants, the opportunity to share with us a trip to the Gothenberg Botanic Gardens in Sweden, an institute with a world-wide reputation for its magnificent rock garden and alpine treasures.

A heavy fall of overnight snow welcomed in our March Spring Show, but despite the adverse conditions most of the judges duly arrived on time and exhibitors struggled through with their daffodils and other spring flowers. The domestic classes were well supported and the school children contributed with a grand display

of hand-coloured pictures and poems. A very successful event was enjoyed by all, despite the conditions, and on a day when several other local societies cancelled their own shows.

For the seventy people attending the Spring Supper held in April, food was the main item on the agenda, and very appreciative they were too of the efforts of our own wonderful cooks. And this splendid social evening was rounded off with a quiz organised by Linda Gustar.

Instead of the traditional garden visit in June, the society decided to invite local people as well as members to join them on a tour of the Kings Seeds trial grounds and seed processing plant at Coggeshall. On a windy but sunny afternoon a small group of dedicated enthusiasts were instructed in the finer points of seed testing, processing and packaging.

By August the weather had changed from very cold to extremely hot. Holidays and the heat wave took their toll on both the Summer Show exhibitors and exhibits, and entries were down on previous years especially in the domestic classes. Nevertheless, there were good displays of summer flowers and a successful produce stall thanks to Peter and Janet Morris.

Our traditional Harvest Supper was held in the Town Hall in October when a number of new faces were tempted to celebrate with us. All were well-fed, and later well-entertained by Esther Cooke, who sang some popular songs and invited the audience to join in the sing-along.



A short time later, the events calendar came full circle with the AGM. After the formal proceedings the audience was treated to cheese and wine during which Mark Wood, a local speaker, presented a comprehensive guide to the butterflies of our region.

Regrettably, in December we learned of the sad death of Phyllis Cornell, so soon after the death of her own daughter Marion. Together and as inseparable companions they had supported the horticultural society in so many ways and over so many years, whether preparing and serving food and refreshments in the kitchen or exhibiting flowers and domestic entries at the shows. At our Spring Show we paid tribute to Phyllis with



one of the finest of horticultural traditions, an arrangement of spring flowers.

Lynne Joyce

Bardfield Oxlip Recovery Programme

The Bardfield Oxlip recovery programme continues to prosper in both Piper's meadow and on the Ash Ground, where significant changes have been made.

Under the stewardship of the Jordan family at Great Lodge Farm, and after consultation with various Essex Wildlife organisations, the deer and rabbit fencing was dismantled from the meadow area and re-erected around the adjoining 'woodland site' known as Purple's Spinney. This was felt to be a better use of resources as Oxlips (top right) had failed to thrive in the drier parts of the meadow, and were being consistently and severely damaged by deer in the spinney. Already this change has paid off and early indications are that the Oxlips are once again thriving. This conservation measure will also help to protect two additional 'rare' species growing in the spinney, notably Herb Paris (*Paris quadrifolia*) (middle right) and the Golden Saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*) (bottom right).

Oxlips are thriving in the meadow, however, mainly along the margins of the brook leading out of Purple's Spinney, where they are protected from cattle grazing by simple wire fencing.





Oxlips have also been successfully established both in meadow and woodland situations nearby. The establishment of Oxlips on Piper's Meadow, Bridge Street, appears to have reached an equilibrium, with some areas of the meadow being better suited to plant survival than others. This was much to be expected from results of initial test plantings across the meadow. From now on only routine grassland management happens. Subject to weather, the meadow gets two full cuts during the season: a 'topping' in early March to allow the Oxlips to break

through and flower above the canopy of herbage, followed by a main 'hay cut' in late August when the grass is removed (helping to reduce soil fertility). To allow for comfortable public access across the site, a figure-of-eight pathway is regularly mown. When the Oxlips are not in flower there is plenty of other wildlife too, particularly in the summer when butterflies are abundant.

Plantings at Long Green



Plantings of native trees and shrubs in the spring of 2010 are now established and need only general maintenance to aid their growth and survival. With adequate rainfall over the last year the young saplings have finally reached a stage when they can survive with only the minimum of intervention.

There is still the problem of litter to address, but no vandalism attributable to off-road vehicles. Wild Cowslips are now well-established in several places amongst the herbage and should flourish and spread as conditions allow. Many seeds prefer bare ground to germinate and establish, so no sudden explosion of Cowslips should be anticipated. However, the road maintenance and cutting back of the trees, hedges and general herbage along Coney Green in 2013, will allow for additional opportunities to enrich the flora along the verges of the lane.

Annual sowing of our native Bluebell has

continued at the southern end of the byway amongst the larger trees and bushes. Over the years, the broadcast technique of sowing seed onto bare ground in the autumn has been very successful and flowering should begin in spring 2015 from the first sowings made in 2010. Annual seed-sowing along the lane will continue for several years to come yet, but some tangible progress is at last being seen.

With the Bluebells a small number of Oxlips were also transplanted to an Oak grove adjacent to the track. Whilst all of the original plants have survived and flowered annually, this site has not really suited them and natural colonization has been disappointing. A few self-sown seedlings have managed to establish, but are clearly struggling in the dry conditions under the trees. Much better alternative sites occur nearby in the wet ditches, but these are also favoured by the off-road motor-cyclists.

D W Joyce



Great Bardfield Allotments



*Late
spring
on the
allotments
and
another
growing
season
begins*



We are now going into our fourth year with the allotment plots on the Vine Meadow and everyone is pleased with the results, albeit growing different vegetables.

It was another odd growing season with a dull summer which meant we did not need to water as much and such a mild winter that some of us were still picking fruit into November! One of us grew enough potatoes to last from July to March! A good yield of varied vegetables was had by all plot holders.

One of our plot holders, put a “bug and beehive” hanging from our tree to encourage insects, and some gardeners plant specific flowers that encourage insects and bees to help us be organic.

The compost bins, which were donated by the Rural Community Council of Essex, are working well and beginning to rot down so we can use the compost. The RCCE check with us from time to time to see how we are and to advertise various things they are doing in the community.

Because we all go and look after our allotments at different times of the day, information is shared via our informal newsletter. This is put up in the shed when there is something that needs sorting out or any news to share.

Tansey Bolsom



Freshwell Health Centre

The NHS is an ever-changing beast. As the demands of the government and needs of the patients evolve, the health centre team continue to strive to provide high quality, local, timely care for the community. Our in-house ultrasound, gynaecology, minor surgery and cardiology services continue to be well reviewed by both our own patients and those from neighbouring practices.

We continue to welcome other providers of health and social care to use our facilities including the Pain Team from Broomfield, the Village Agents, the Hospice Outreach Project (HOP), IAPT Counsellors, Age UK (toenail-cutting services), Dieticians, Health Visitors, District Nurses and Midwives. We lost our in-house Citizens Advice clinic this year, but we have been lucky to gain the services of Hearing Help Essex, a charity which can clean and service hearing aids.

Staff News

We are fortunate to have a very consistent and dedicated team at Freshwell and are aware that this is an important asset.

Following the birth of her second child, a daughter, in March, Dr Kim Andrews is currently on Maternity Leave. Her replacement, Dr Jonathan Siew is an experienced local GP who has joined us for three days a week until September.

Dr Shaw is now working as an adviser with The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

(NICE) developing their national guidelines on gynaecology.

Hannah, one of Dispensers, became a mother in September 2013 and we look forward to welcoming her back in June. Our Junior Assistant, James, is about to take his A levels with a view to starting medical school in September. We wish him every success.

This April, Jen Terris joined our management team and it is hoped that the experience and knowledge she brings to the practice will help us develop our services further.

CREAMER Fund Support

The tireless fundraising efforts of the CREAMER Fund help us with the on-going costs of the equipment they provide for us (eg liquid nitrogen for our cryotherapy clinics) and also allow us to purchase new and updated items. Last year, the equipment they provided included a couch, trolleys, otoscopes and 24 hour blood pressure monitors.

Patient Feedback

Thank you to all patients who took the time to complete one of our Patient Satisfaction Questionnaires. Again, we received lots of encouraging comments which are a real boost to staff morale. We were allowed to develop our own questionnaire again this year – for this and the development of our action plan following the questionnaire results we owe many thanks to our Patient Reference Group (PRG). A report of



their involvement, the results of the survey and our plan are available to view on our website www.freshwell.co.uk. A summary of our action plan is also being displayed on our information screen in the waiting room.

Future Plans

Our dispensary was designed over 20 years ago and is rapidly outgrowing its capacity. We are currently talking to a local architect about redesigning the reception, office and dispensary areas of the building. These major improvements will take time, so please bear with us, but should



enable us to provide a more efficient and confidential service. As always, we welcome your ideas and feedback, either by phone (01371 810328), post or in person.

Linda Cutts, Practice Manager

CREAMER Fund Report

Thank you to everyone who has supported the CREAMER Fund so well this year; buying and selling tickets, donating prizes, painting pictures, making donations, buying books and puzzles, and providing encouragement to the Freshwell staff and the Trustees.

Our accounts are available to view on our notice board in the surgery, with a list of our purchases. We have been able to build up a reserve of funds, which is essential to maintain the existing equipment. Some of this equipment is very complex, needs regular servicing and calibration, and will eventually need replacing.

This year, Dr Oliver completed the digitalisation of the x-ray facility and

even managed to sell some redundant equipment on e-bay!

Kelly and Geoff Bishop of the Horse and Groom have raised money through holding a Summer Ball last year, to fund the purchase and installation of three defibrillator machines, for Finchingfield, Cornish Hall End and Stambourne. Defib machines are now also being installed in Wethersfield, Great Sampford, Great Bardfield and Blackmore End. The CREAMER Fund trustees will contribute to the cost of these further units, when there is a team of trained operators in place, in each village.

Christopher Blewett



Great Bardfield WEA



*A caricature of composer John Taverner
(c1490–1545)*

©Bodleian Library

Great Bardfield WEA has been offering courses in the village for many decades. We usually run two courses a year, one in the autumn term and one in the spring term, meeting at the Friends' Meeting House on a Monday evening.

Each course consists of a series of ten lectures and the audience is usually encouraged to participate with their own views and experiences, as well as ask additional questions, if they wish. We are a friendly group, always welcoming life-long as well as new members.

Over the years the subjects have ranged from art history to world discovery, poetry to philosophy and music to literature.

Depending upon the chosen subject or tutor, our audience can vary in number from ten to thirty.

In addition to the series of lectures we also try to include a day outing to further explore a relevant topic further afield. Even those villagers who might not have been able to attend the course are welcome to join these outings.

Our two most recent courses covered choral music, and discovering the new monarchy of around 500 years ago. The music course, presented by Professor Chris Green, covered over twenty choral works which had changed the world, ranging from compositions by John Taverner in the sixteenth century to those in the twenty-first century by Sir John Tavener.

Our spring course this year was presented by Richard Till, a local tutor from Thaxted, who encouraged us to discover, through original source material, the new methods of monarchy adopted by the Tudors and Stuarts. The WEA and our branch welcome adults of all ages. For more information contact me

on 01371 811233 or Ros Gourgey on 01371 810832 or visit www.wea.org.uk.

Annette Joyce

**A better world –
equal, democratic
and just; through
adult education
the WEA challenges
and inspires
individuals,
communities and
society.**

WEA vision statement



The Bardfield Players

The Bardfield Players have continued their success of previous years, by providing two very well received productions: *Present from the Past*, last May and a trio of one-act comedies, *Doctors, Dogs and Dracula*, last November. The latter was produced in collaboration with the Town Hall



committee which, for two nights, provided an excellent hot supper to the audience who were seated at tables. This joint event delivered a profit of £1,100 which was split between the two groups.

Audiences have been generally strong, although a phenomena, known in professional circles as “The X-Factor, Factor” had an effect on the numbers attending on Saturday evenings. For this, and other reasons, (one being that it is much more fun to perform to an audience instead of an empty hall), we included a public performance on Wednesday evenings, in addition to Thursday, Friday and Saturday. These proved popular to an extent, attracting audiences of between 30 and 60.

The 21st Century Storage Facility (shed), which was constructed behind the Town Hall last year, has proved to be a great asset, enabling us to store more things (furniture etc) which we would otherwise have had to throw away. It has also enabled other users of the hall to make use of the freed-up

store room space in the Town Hall. However, there are several other items that we are looking to invest in for the future, for example, staging that can be easily assembled to extend the playing area of the stage. Currently we have to use extremely heavy and rather dangerous wooden extensions that are

stored under the stage and cannot be left out because it reduces the floor space in the hall. The sections are safe enough once they are up, but each one needs three strong people to put them in place, one of whom has to lay on their back and support each section with their feet so that they can be hooked on to the front of the stage. Although replacement staging will be very expensive it is definitely something for the future.

We have a lot of very keen and able people who form the Players, but there is always room for more help. As far as the actors are concerned, we would benefit from a wider age group to cast from (I can only get away with playing a 40-year-old for so long).

So, at the risk of being ageist and offending the very talented group we currently have, if there are any talented people under 35 who would like to come and join in, then please do!

Ian Ruffle
Chairman, The Bardfield Players



Primary School Report



*Above:
Anniver-
sary Party
in glorious
sunshine.
Right:
children
finding
out what
the school
was like in
Victorian
times*

Another exciting year has flashed by. Perhaps the most memorable event was the School's 150th anniversary in June.

The week started with the Year 2 and 3 children dressed as Victorian children, experiencing what it was like in a Victorian classroom ... they got a bit of a shock! The left-handed children were taken to the front of the class and threatened with the cane if they used their left hands again! There was no asking for help and they were told off if the work wasn't correct. Light relief came after play when the children looked at some Victorian resources including a back-straightener – used if you were not sitting correctly. In the afternoon, many children took part in a Music Hall with the children singing, juggling, and performing a melodrama, as well as an excellent performance from the strongmen.

On Tuesday, many classes carried out Victorian activities, with copper-plate writing being a success. On Wednesday, Year 3's organisational skills came to fruition with the Anniversary Party. The class made



bunting, organised the menu with the catering staff. Invitations were written and sent to guests, and all we wanted was sunshine, which we had. A wonderful time was had by all.

The first ever educational trip the children went on was to the beach in 1923. So, on the Thursday, the whole school, including all the staff, travelled by double-decker and coach to Mersea Island. Years 4,5 and 6 went to East Mersea to look at the geographical features of a coastline – something they had been studying in class. The youngest children looked at the different shells (many came back to school with them), carried out some beach-combing, and then built a variety of sand sculptures. Ice-creams were consumed by all before we returned to school. There was so much collaboration and team-work between all of the children. All in all, a memorable day.

At our Friday celebration assembly we turned back time 150 years and Mr Sibley, Head Master, walked into the hall, brandishing his cane. Mr Sibley spoke about what it was like



at Great Bardfield School 150 years ago and quoted from the evidence collated from the School Log Book. A group of children from Year 5 and 6 played a medley on the Victorian hand-bells and finally we watched a photo montage of the week created by Mrs Way, a parent governor. It is a wonderful record of the anniversary celebrations.

In the following week, our Year 3 children welcomed past pupils, teachers and Mr May, past Headteacher to the school. The visitors walked round the school, observed the children learning and compared the school to when they had been there. We were delighted to welcome one lady who had been a pupil 78 years ago. Photos were looked at, as well as the Punishment Book! At the end of the tours the visitors were given refreshments (a wonderful Victorian Sandwich Cake) prepared and served by the children. We were delighted to hear from Brian Goldsmith, an ex-pupil who now lives in America. We are still in communication, and he sent a small donation to the school which we spent on a bench and daffodil bulbs.

Great Bardfield Primary School is a good school. We were visited by an OFSTED Inspector in May, and were delighted with her findings. The inspector judged Great Bardfield School to be a good school and one that is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs and prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. Here are some highlights from the report:



*Tie-dyeing
by Year
2 as part
of the
African
theme*

'Pupils are polite, courteous and get on well with learning in lessons. They collaborate well in groups'

'Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel safe and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe'

'Children in the Reception year achieve well in all areas because of good teaching and effective support from staff.' They work well together in developing their reading and language skills'

'Teachers display good subject – specific knowledge, they make sure pupils are fully involved in their learning by asking searching questions.'

'The teaching of reading is strong.'

'The Headteacher, supported by the other senior leaders, staff, and the governors communicate high expectations and have been successful in driving improvement'

'The governors support the school well and are committed to raising pupils' achievement'

'Pupils' strong sense of responsibility is reflected in their commitment to the work of the school council'

Well done: to our Year 6 pupils for their continued hard work, determination, and achievement in their



	Reading School	National	Writing School	National	Spelling Grammar Punctuation	National	Maths School	National
Level 4 +	100%	86%	93%	83%	93.3%	74%	100%	80%
Level 5+	40%	45%	40%	30%	60%	48%	33%	35%

end of Key Stage 2 SATs and teacher assessments (see results table above).

Chernogiv: “A smile brings rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged, and sunshine to the sad ...” There were so many smiles (and a few tears) at our Special Smile Box assembly in October. We were able to share our assembly live with the children in the Revival Centre in Chernogiv, Ukraine, via our skype connection. The children from both countries waved to each other and sang songs. An interpreter was on hand to share messages from patients and parents with children at the Centre. George Mills was overwhelmed at seeing Dr P and his wife who we have heard so much about. Dr P then wrote us a lovely letter in which he says that everything that is collected brings joy and much satisfaction ... and he wished us all strong health. The Centre staff were so excited about the link (so was I!).

Curriculum: Over the year, the children have had some exciting learning themes. The children have found out about WWII, the Ancient Greeks, Space, Rainforests, and two classes studied a selection of Roald Dahl books and A Village in Africa. This term, themes are minibeasts, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Australia, and Rivers Deep and Mountains High. At the end of the spring term we welcomed International Gymnast,

Danny Lawrence. He is one of Great Britain’s top gymnasts and has represented the country since 1999. He put the children through some strenuous challenges and then gave a performance to both parents and children.

Tabor Science and Engineering Day:

Well done to our team of young Scientists who took part in the Science and Engineering Competition at Tabor School. The school won for the second year running. This time we keep the trophy!

Friday Celebration Assemblies:

These continue to be a great success with children and parents celebrating the successes of the children, whether it is reading, writing, maths or swimming, a child has the opportunity to be proud of what they have achieved.

Speedwatch:

Equipped with a speed gun and ready to assist the police, our Year 5/6 class were given the opportunity to help the local community. The children assisted police officers with speed checks outside school. Motorists who were found to be speeding were given a warning notice and then asked to speak with the youngsters, who explained some of the serious consequences that their driving behaviour could have. Tyler said that the drivers had been influenced by listening to the their comments and it would



make a difference in the future. The children agreed it was very interesting to hear what the drivers had to say when questioned!

This project came about after Olivia Grinstead wrote a piece in the *Bardfield Times*. We are grateful to the new Community Speedwatch group for involving our children.

Staff: We welcomed Mrs Sharman as our French teacher as Mrs Loader left to take up a post as a class teacher in another school. Mrs Loader had worked at the school for 11 years, initially as Deputy Head and latterly as PPA cover teacher.

Mrs S Naylor, who taught Year 3 one day a week also took up a full-time teaching post in a local school. Mrs Stowe, who taught our mixed Year 1/2 class three days a week, left to take up a full-time class teacher position.

Two Learning Support Assistants staff joined the school, Mrs Rust and Miss Tether, and then left to take up full-time positions in other schools.

We also welcomed Miss Burt and Mrs Foster as Special Needs LSAs

Governors: Mr Bryan Chapman took over as Chair of Governors in September, Mr Iain Geddes stepped down as Governor, whilst Mrs Brandl joined the Governing Board.

The PTA: The school is very fortunate to have such an active PTA which organises many events to raise funds for the school. The fete was a success, as usual, thanks to the school and community support. The Inflatable Day was a very wet event, but children nevertheless still bounced away!

Firework night was as good as ever and the weather was kind to us. At the Christmas Festive Fun event a magical grotto was created on the front playground for Father Christmas. And for our Pamper Day the hall was miraculously transformed into an oasis of calm for the many relaxing treatments on offer.

And finally ...

This is my last term as Headteacher at Great Bardfield Primary School. I have thoroughly enjoyed the 15 years that I have led the school and taken it forward through the ever-changing times in education.

I personally would like to thank the local community for their support during my time at the school, and know that Mrs A Kerrell, the new Headteacher, will wish to continue and build on the strong links the school has with the local community.

Anne Barney – Headteacher



Tuesday Club

The group has been in existence for 22 years and meets on the second Tuesday of each month to enjoy talks and demonstrations covering very diverse, and we trust, interesting subjects.

Up to the end of 2012, our meetings were held in the evenings at the Town Hall. It was decided, by popular request, to change to 2.30pm in the afternoon, from January 2013, hopefully to help increase our membership and to alleviate the problem of dark evenings in the winter months.

This year we have opened the membership to both Ladies and Gentlemen and of course visitors are always welcome. Annual membership is £15.00, visitors £3.50 per meeting.

After our talks we have tea, coffee and biscuits, and a raffle with proceeds going to our chosen charity. Last year we raised a sum of £150 which was given to The CREAMER Fund. The

charity of choice for 2014 is the Essex Air Ambulance.

We also organise a summer outing, a theatre trip, and have occasional bring-and-buy plant and book stalls.

The highlight of last year was our Christmas lunch at the Vine Inn, with 25 members attending – a very delicious and happy occasion.

December 2013 saw the retirement of Marian McDonald who has held the reins since 1992. A Christmas hamper of her favourite food and drink was presented at our lunch with a heartfelt vote of thanks for all her hard work.

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to everyone. For further information please contact me on 01371 811401 or email adriennepoulson@btinternet.com

Adrienne Poulson

2014 Programme

We have enjoyed:

- 14th January *Woodland Trust* – Sally Hepher
- 11th February *17th Century Thaxted* – Ken Baker
- 11th March *A Medical Mission to Ghana* – Beverley Vincent

Still to come:

- 13th May *The BBC Archives* – Norma Jones, followed by Bring and Buy plant stall
- 10th June *Around the World on a Container Ship* – Peter Hesketh
- 8th July *Group Outing*: A short Historical Walk around Finchingfield – with Ron Hawkins, followed by afternoon tea at Bosworths.
- 12th August *The Journey: In the Antipodes* – Barry Kaufmann-Wright
- 9th September *The Art of Dowsing* – Colin Peal
- 14th October *Yarn about Yarn* – Becky Pointer
- 11th November *Tales in the afternoon* – Carl Merry, Storyteller – last year we were all mesmerised, you could have heard a pin drop.
- 9th December *Christmas Lunch*



Great Bardfield Carpet Bowls

Despite reporting last year that for the first time the number of members fell below the level needed to participate in the Essex County League, we recruited two new members and competed in the League's 2013–14 season. We began well, at the top of the league, but sadly faded during the season, finishing just under midway. Because of illnesses and other absences it was hard to field full teams in the latter stages. We also arranged some friendly fixtures with other clubs in the area.

We attended various charity events and the Essex county competitions which are held at Braintree. Everyone who represented our club did us proud. The best performance was by Lynda Richardson who reached the semi-finals of the Essex Singles. This is a mixed competition and for the first time ever the competition was won by a lady. Well done to Val Kidd from Great Yeldham.

If you remember, Lynda and I were Essex pairs champions in 2012. We went on to represent Bardfield/Essex in the Six Counties Champion of Champions, coming 2nd, and 4th in the National Champions of Champions.

The Great Bardfield Club started in 1990. I would like to pay tribute to a founder member, Michael McDonald; he was still visiting the club up until a few weeks before his death. A gentle man and a very good bowler who is greatly missed.

Despite encouraging a few new members to join us, it can still be a

struggle to get a team together. So, for those new to the parish, carpet bowls is an ideal way of meeting new friends here and in other local villages. We would warmly welcome new faces to the club, so please don't be shy in coming forward. The club meets every Wednesday at the Town Hall from about 7:45 pm.

I would like to dispel a couple of myths about carpet bowls. Firstly, it is not a sport for old fuddy-duddies! Just look at the competitors in the world bowls championships on TV. Secondly, despite the name 'carpet' it is not the toy game that you play at home. The bowls are 10cm (4 inches) in diameter and the carpet is 10 x 2 metres. It is a proper, skilful, sport – open to all. We even let male and female compete together! It is cheap, as the club provides the equipment. It prides itself on being friendly and is as competitive as you wish to make it. If you would like more information about carpet bowls call me, Cliff, or Lynda on 810782.

Unfortunately Bardfield no longer has an outdoor lawn bowls green but there are many clubs around that would welcome any interest you may have in the playing the full-size game. There are nearby clubs at Dunmow, Thaxted, and Stebbing. Lynda and I play at Quendon. The outdoor season is now upon us so if you would like contact details we should be able to help you out there too.

Clifford Richardson



Bardfield Community Choir



*Above and below:
Bardfield
Community
choir
performing
Vivaldi's
'Gloria'*

The Community Choir has been running for nearly four years now and has had another enjoyable and successful year. This year we have been very fortunate to have found an excellent accompanist, Avril Nelson. Avril has made a huge difference to our rehearsals and performances, enabling me to concentrate on conducting the choir.

During the last year the choir has sung at several local events, including a concert in Shalford Church and leading the carol singing at the Town Hall Christmas Raffle Evening, with

plenty of audience participation. Our repertoire is very broad ranging from pop, folk and jazz to classical – something to appeal to all musical tastes.

In the spring term we took on the challenge of learning our first full Choral work, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, which we performed for our friends and supporters in April. The choir really rose to the occasion and it was very gratifying that all the soloists and small groups who sang the arias came from the choir. It was certainly a test of our musical skills and generated a tremendous sense of achievement.

There's no doubt that singing is fun and makes you feel good! We have around 50 members of all ages whose aim is to sing for pleasure. Most of our music is arranged for three or four parts, sopranos, altos, tenors and basses.

New singers are always welcome so if you enjoy singing come and give it a try. You don't need to be able to read music and no previous singing experience is necessary. New music we are learning includes *Rock Around the Clock*, and Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Love Change Everything*.

We meet on Tuesday evenings at 8pm, usually in the Town Hall. We each pay £2 per rehearsal which covers costs of hiring the hall and buying or hiring music.

For further information phone me on 810838 or visit 'Choir' on the Parish Council website.

Janet Dyson, Musical Director





Great Bardfield Youth Club



Our village youth club has undergone a lot of very welcome change in recent months and what this signifies is that the people involved nowadays care about the standard of the service they provide and the club is a lot better for it.

Long cold winters have never been much fun at the drafty old pavilion but we have always soldiered through without much thought of the comfort either of ourselves or more importantly the members. The current supervisors, justifiably, were not happy with this and they suggested moving the youth club to the Town Hall during the dark winter months. To be honest, I was doubtful of the potential success of this move but I am very happy to have been proved wrong. Sarah and the Town Hall Committee have been very accommodating and the members have enjoyed their warmer evenings immensely. They have been able to

enjoy games in the larger hall not possible in the old pavilion and the warmth and dry conditions have been appreciated by all. There has been absolutely no damage in the hall or complaints about noise or nuisance. We hope, with the continuing support of the Town Hall Committee to retreat to their welcome cosiness again next Autumn.

We have also restructured the Management Committee which is working very effectively. After almost six years of loyal and enthusiastic service, Mandy Boon, who no longer lives in the Bardfields, has decided to call it a day. Mandy is one of the few people who have stuck at the club and ensured its continuing success and the club and the kids of Great Bardfield owe her a great deal of appreciation.

Despite attempts to escape, I am retained as Chairman but my job has been made so much easier by the creation of a new position – Club Leader. This role is enthusiastically fulfilled by Katrina Ralston who is now responsible for the everyday running of the club and decisions



regarding its long-term direction. Katrina brings the youth, energy and commitment which after six years was becoming a problem for this weary 63 year old! She has fresh ideas and approaches, is always happy to listen to advice and sometimes even takes it! I am absolutely confident that along with the rest of us, the future of the club is both secure and exciting with the input of Katrina and the others.

Dawn Luxford continues as Treasurer (after over six years!) and Lisa Ray takes over as Secretary and is in charge of procurement. Stuart Ray and Jan Andrews continue as supervisors but clearly we need more. There are a few waiting in the wings and hopefully Cheryl Mellon will return at some point when her house is repaired.

However, to be able to guarantee a safe, weekly club, we need a few more supervisors and there is no better time to join than the beginning of the summer.

We have events planned at Stubbers adventure centre and a New Pavilion/GBYC Fundraising day of family rounders on Sunday 13th July supported by the Bell who will provide the BBQ.

The club website is under reconstruction and will be launched soon



and the pavilion was spruced up for our return on 25th April. We even have hot water now after the Parish Council kindly responded to our murmurs of discontent.

So ... if you would like to become part of a young (with one exception), enthusiastic, energetic, sociable, friendly team who care about the youngsters of our villages please contact Katrina on kmralston@gmail.com. You only need to commit to a couple of hours a month on a Friday evening and you will really make a difference by contributing to your Community. We are short of males in particular and especially those with energy and enthusiasm. Young supervisors are also encouraged and *Youth Club Supervisor* always speaks volumes on your CV or Personal Statement for Uni.

Come and enjoy the summer at GBYC (or show this to someone who would)!

Steve Slemmings, Chair

Great Bardfield Parish Council



Cllr Janet Dyson
Chairman
01371 810838



Cllr Carolynne Ruffle
Vice Chairman
01371 810986



Cllr Simon Walsh
01371 810451



Cllr Tony Hayward
01371 810320



Cllr Darren Hockley
01371 810898



Cllr Steve Slemmings
01371 810098



Cllr Alicia Holmes
01371 810563



Mrs Kate Fox
Parish Clerk
01371 810111
clerk@greatbardfield-pc.gov.uk
www.greatbardfield-pc.gov.uk

Community Information Point

Town Hall Cottages
01371 810327
gbcip@btconnect.com

Open Wednesday and Saturday 10.00am to 12 noon for information and advice. Dog-poo bags and clear recycling bags are available to residents of the parish free of charge.

