

Annual Report on the Activities of the Buckworth Parish Council

1st April 2019 – 31st August 2020

Members of the Parish Council

Bob	Hart (Chair)
Maggie Hatley	
Alastair Henderson-	Begg (Responsible Financial Officer)
Fiona	Morrison (Acting Clerk to the Council)
Sharon Ward	

The Council held regular meetings up until the Covid-19 lockdown in March. Since then the Council has only met twice remotely.

There have been significant changes in the make-up of the Council since the last AGM in May 2019. Phil Cooper, who was Chairman of the PC at the last AGM resigned in July 2019, as did Hazel Cooper, who, although not a Parish Councillor, served as the RFO. Both Phil and Hazel had served on the Council and supported other organisations in the village for many years, we will miss them, not least for Phil's organisation of the Mayday walks, and Hazel's church bell ringing.

In November, Margaret Warrener also retired from the PC, we will certainly miss the homemade soup and rolls that Margaret regularly provided for the May Day walks and other events.

I am sure that you will all join the PC in thanking Phil, Hazel and Margaret for many years of service to the parish and the wider community.

Following Phil's resignation in July, Maggie Hatley accepted the role of Chairman, and continued in that role until March 2020, when she resigned the Chairmanship, but remained as a Parish Councillor. The Parish Council would like to thank Maggie for her service as Chairman.

Since last year, Sharon Ward and Alastair Henderson-Begg have both been co-opted onto the Parish Council, with Alastair taking on the vacant role of RFO. More recently, I have also been co-opted onto the Parish Council before being asked by my fellow Councillors to take up the role of Chairman following Maggie's resignation as Chairman.

The planned events for 2020, included the annual Mayday walk and a major celebration of VE day, unfortunately these events were cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Although the formal VE celebrations were cancelled, we did manage to hold 'socially distanced' garden parties, complete with flags and bunting.

During the lockdown, several village households regularly held Zoom Quizzes after the weekly Clap for the NHS; this helped maintain appropriately distanced social contact during these difficult times.

We will look to establish other events once social distancing is relaxed.

The last 18 months has also seen new residents move into the village, and I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Mel and Maria, who moved into the vacant cottage on Barham Rd, and have been working hard clearing the 'forest' that has grown over the last 5 or more years. I'd also like to welcome Claire and David, who have recently moved into Peacehaven, taking responsibility for Phil and Hazel's garden legacy.

Other notable actions/ activities in the last 18 months include; Carols around the Christmas Tree enjoyed by all who attended, followed by Mulled Wine in the Club, Photos being uploaded to the website in place of the Mayday walk, and those villagers completing laps around their gardens during the deepest part of lockdown. I understand that Kay completed 500 miles, wore out a pair of special boots, and wore a groove in her garden!

Financial Report

Buckworth maintains a healthy financial surplus to allow us to respond to unforeseen needs. During the financial year 2019/2020 we had total receipts of £2,437.60 with total expenditure of £1,979.38. Our largest expenditure continues to be grass-cutting which accounted for £1,135.00. This was a significant reduction from the previous year resulting from using a different contractor BEAM.

Every year the Council expenditures are audited. This year Roger Walters, who had carried out this task at no cost to the village, resigned as auditor due to pressures of his (paid) work. We thank Roger for his help in past years. We were able to find a new auditor and we have made our return to the Government central auditors as required by regulations.

Contacting the Parish Council

Over the last year, we have set up a Facebook page for the Parish Council so that we can share information with the Parish using social media. This page has been used a lot during the pandemic to share important updates and guidance, helping people to keep safe.

You can still contact the Parish Council by emailing the Acting Clerk at: buckworthclerk@gmail.com

Members of the public are always able to attend the first ten minutes of all Parish Council meetings to ask questions and/or raise any concerns that they may have.

We are keen to hear from you about any issues/concerns that you have so please get in touch and if it falls under the remit of the Parish Council, we will be happy to discuss further.

STOP PRESS

The Council has received notification from Anglian Water that they intend to commence construction of a sewage treatment facility to '*resolve existing environmental issues*' here in Buckworth. This will provide the facility for mains sewerage for all residents. The Parish Council will be contacting Anglian Water to obtain further information. We will publish this as soon as possible and will call a village meeting to discuss the proposals.

All Saints Church

(Written by Diane Simmonds - Secretary to the PCC)

2019 – 2020 has been a very busy year for our small congregation and it's PCC, our main focus has been on ensuring the good upkeep of this historic church and churchyard, by raising money to cover our running and repair costs. We pay our "Parish Share" in full, but need to constantly raise funds, as the church collection and other contributions do not cover these requirements. Our fund-raising, often linked to key church festivals, has been hard work, enjoyable and successful.

The main activities during the year were the popular "100 Club"; the July Jazz Festival and Supper with "Barry Palsers Jazz Trio"; Harvest Festival and Supper (with the very successful Food Bank collection); Christmas Jazz and Afternoon Tea; Carols by Candlelight with the Alconbury Community Choir and completion of the work on the North Aisle roof and "Smartwater" installation.

We are delighted that all these activities and events were very well supported by the village and surrounding communities.

This year we said goodbye to Hazel Cooper, our Treasurer for over 25 years. Her unstinting care of our finances and her love of the church have been key to retaining its place in the community. We will greatly miss her and husband Phil, who both did so much work for All Saints.

Buckworth Cricket Club

(Written by Sharon Ward – Chair)

The Cricket Club continues to thrive within the village, providing a lively meeting place with regular events and activities happening, including Friday Night Drinks, Food with Friends, Sunday Recharge and a number of clubs (fly-tying, get growing, craft club to name but a few).

We had a very busy Christmas and New Year, including the performance of a 'Radio-Play' and had lots of exciting plans coming into 2020 until these were sadly curtailed by Covid_19.

At the start of lockdown, we pulled together a Buckworth Response Team to support the village and community during this challenging time. A number of Whatsapp groups were set up to ensure that people were able to get shopping, prescriptions and also importantly social contact with others. As a club, we held a stock of non-perishable goods and offered a delivery service for these and other items from the club within the village.

The committee used the closed period of lockdown to redecorate and modernise the inside bar area of the club which has gone down well with members. We have also purchased more outdoor seating in order to maximise our outdoor space and ensure social distancing is possible.

As well as facilitating a number of different activities and events throughout the year, the club has raised a substantial amount of money for a local mental health charity and also collected food for the local food bank at Christmas.

The committee have continued to meet on Zoom throughout this time and with the relaxation of lockdown, the club is now reopen for Friday Night Drinks every Friday night ensuring a 'Covid secure' environment for all. We will be reinstating other events/clubs when it is safe to do so in light of the ever-changing picture of Covid_19.

The club now has an active Facebook page and new noticeboard where all events and activities are promoted.