

BOTTISHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

24 MAY 2022

REPORTS

Cllr Jon Ogborn, Chair, Bottisham Parish Council

To begin my presentation I would like to commence by thanking my fellow Parish Councillors for their continuing faithful service to the village. It is the work of unsung volunteers like these that helps to make Bottisham such a great place to live. I would ask you to take the opportunity when you can to thank them for their service - too often all they get are the grumbles about things that are wrong!! I would also like to thank our Clerk, Jonathan Giles, who has done sterling work and been a tower of strength for the Council during a very challenging year. Thank you too to our County and District councillors who attend our Parish Meetings and have given us excellent support throughout the year.

The challenge of being a councillor increased when we had to move all meetings on to Zoom as soon as the pandemic struck. But we returned to live meetings last autumn and you are all welcome to come and listen in to our meetings on the first Monday of each month. There is also an open forum prior to the start of the meeting, for any resident to address the Parish Council or raise questions.

We have three vacancies on the Parish Council and are actively seeking to fill these - you should have a copy of our recruitment flyer on your seat. The shortage of councillors significantly impacts on our ability to serve the village. So could I ask you to seriously consider whether you are able to support our village by becoming a councillor? It is a very worthwhile way in which you can contribute to your community. Please ask me or one of the other councillors if you would like to find out more about the role.

The day-to-day business of the Parish Council has seen us dealing with a number of "bread and butter issues" to preserve and maintain the fabric of the village - with lamp posts repaired, trees removed, litter and graffiti dealt with and repairs to roads, footpaths and bus shelters, to name but a few items. While it is not a primary responsibility of the Parish Council, councillors have also played a part in facilitating discussions between the police, the Village College and local retailers about the anti-social behaviour we have experienced - and we will hear more about this shortly. However there are two key projects we have been involved in, since our last Annual Meeting in October, that I would like to mention in this report.

Firstly the appeal to the Planning Inspectorate by the developers of the proposed Retirement Village off the High St - appealing against the decision of ECDC to decline their planning application. This consumed a huge amount of council time, both in preparing our input and then taking part in the appeal itself - which was held on Zoom due to the pandemic. The appeal was spread over two weeks and was a mammoth exercise. I would like to express enormous thanks to the planning working party who bore the brunt of the work. I would also like to also acknowledge the outstanding and costly input made by Dr.Keith of the Medical Practice. Our thanks too go to Charlotte Cane our District Councillor and residents who gave excellent input to the appeal.

We were delighted that the appeal was rejected by the Inspector. However, if you have managed to read his Report, you will know that the decision was not straightforward. What is clear is that, if at any point the Local Plan (the document in which the District Council sets out detailed policies and specific proposals for the development and use of land in its area) is deemed insufficient to meet housing needs, Green Belt designation may not be sufficient to protect land around our village from

development. The question then arises as to what we can do to secure that protection. A key action will be the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. This is where the community (not just the Parish Council!) gets together to establish a vision for an area, including general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood, and the allocation of sites for development. At its May meeting, the Parish Council decided to convene a group representing the community, to explore the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Bottisham. If you would be interested in playing a part in this, please could you speak to Cllr John Wilson who is our planning lead after the meeting.

Secondly - the new cemetery. When we commenced the process of acquiring a new cemetery, we were warned by our consultant that this would be a project of many years - and this has been proved to be true. The first meetings about the cemetery were in 2012 - and I would like to thank all the councillors and residents who have served on the working party over these years. The final design of the cemetery has been reliant upon agreement with the National Trust who hold the chosen site off Lode Rd in trust. Due to the status of the land, they wished to involve their landscape experts in the design, to ensure it accorded with their national objectives - but this came to a halt for many months while COVID put all the key staff on furlough. However, we finally agreed a design last autumn that I believe is both elegant and practical, and in March received the support of the main National Trust board to cooperate with a compulsory purchase by ECDC. It is very unusual for the Trust to support a compulsory purchase of land in trust and we are grateful for their support of our community. Our planning consultant is putting the finishing touches to the planning application and we hope to submit it by the end of this month. There is still a way to go on the project, but we trust we will have the new cemetery completed before we run out of space in our current cemetery - which is getting very full!! We presented the draft design for the new cemetery at the Annual meeting last October. There have been some tweaks to it since then and you can have a look at the final version we are submitting in the informal session afterwards.

The annual accounts for the Parish Council will soon be posted on our web-site for you to review if you wish. In recent years we have been building up a reserve to help cover the costs of the new cemetery. In addition, with COVID stopping much planned activity over the last two years, we significantly underspent against budgets and have been able to carry forwards a reserve of over £166K into this financial year. We believe this is sufficient to cover the costs of the initial purchase. For the construction phase we are able to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board at a very competitive interest rate over 50 years and are confident that our current precept will adequately cover the costs of any loan. I would add that our precept still remains quite low for East Cambs villages like ours - and you can be assured it should continue so despite this major project.

Cllrs Charlotte Cane & John Trapp, East Cambs District Council

(Bottisham Ward, including Bottisham, Brinkley, Lode with Longmeadow, Reach, Swaffham Bulbeck, Swaffham Prior and Westley Waterless)

1 COVID-19

1.1 This has been the third year of COVID-19, and following the Government's removal of all precautions early in 2022, the virus continues to run rampant. A limited programme of booster vaccinations began earlier this year.

1.2 The District Council administered various rounds of COVID grants to local businesses during the year. The Council got off to a slow start, and we have expressed concerns during the year at the way in which some of its spending decisions have been made.

1.3 We supported a motion to the Full Council contrasting the behaviour of local residents during lockdown with the law-breaking of the Prime Minister. The ruling group amended the motion with one change – deleting all expression of disappointment at the illegal events in Downing Street.

2 Mepal Outdoor Centre

2.1 The Council's planning application to replace the popular Outdoor Centre with an unwanted crematorium was finally published in August 2021. The Council's own survey showed only thirteen per cent of respondents wanted a crematorium at Mepal, which is ten miles from an existing crematorium.

2.2 21/01216/F3M is an application for 'construction of a crematorium and associated service and administration building, function building, memorial garden, natural burial areas, pet cemetery, car parking, new vehicular access from the A142 north of the site and landscaping'. The original planning statement prepared by the applicant's agent, Nexus Planning, stated that the applicant was East Cambs Trading Co Ltd, the Council's trading arm. A colleague questioned this and it was hastily changed to East Cambridgeshire District Council. Once again, the Council leadership is blurring the boundaries between the Council and its commercial trading arm. We submitted objections to the proposal, on the grounds that the need for an additional crematorium has not been evidenced, and that the transport assessment significantly understates the likely traffic. The application has yet to be determined, with a new deadline of 6 May 2022.

2.3 Meanwhile 21/01054/DEM was an application to demolish all buildings at the Outdoor Centre. This took place just in time for Christmas 2021.

3 Planning

3.1 Last year the Government was poised to publish proposals for radical changes to the planning process. A year later, we are still waiting. Meanwhile, East Cambridgeshire's Local Plan is now seven years old, after an update in 2019 was discarded by the ruling group after three years of work and an Examination in Public. It is becoming increasingly outdated, with insufficient policies to address climate change or air quality as well as issues which need to be reconsidered such as parking space provision or electric vehicle charging points.

3.2 The Council's limited review of its current (2015) Local Plan is still ongoing. It concentrates only on policy GROWTH1 and housing numbers.

3.3 Although the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority decided to close down the previous Mayor's '£100K homes' scheme, East Cambridgeshire District Council has expressed its enthusiasm to proceed with it. Four '£100K homes' have been advertised in the development at the bottom of Forehill in Ely, and several on the site of the former Paradise Pool. Those promoting this scheme have never satisfactorily explained how those taking it up will avoid being trapped in properties they cannot afford to move out of if they find they no longer meet their needs. And these properties will make only a minute contribution to filling the huge gap in affordable housing in East Cambridgeshire.

3.4 Neighbourhood Plans are under way at Reach and Swaffham Bulbeck with Charlotte working with Reach and John with Swaffham Bulbeck.

3.5 The Council has approved changes to its list of projects eligible to receive funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy paid by developers. This now includes the £1M the Council agreed to pay in 25 annual instalments towards the A14 redevelopment, but also health provision, community facilities, and water management and flood prevention across the district.

3.6 The Council considers Community Land Trusts as a means of producing affordable housing in the District, but some CLTs remain controversial. We supported a motion on CLTs in October, asking the Council to review issues arising from CLT proposals in Stretham, Little Thetford, and Wilburton. The meeting was handled appallingly, with the partner of a Councillor permitted to make offensive and slanderous comments in the guise of a public question, in total contravention of Council rules of procedure. No attempt was made by the Chair or Senior Officers to stop it.

3.7 In February the Council lost a significant planning appeal in Soham. It failed to defend three of its reasons for refusal of a major development by Persimmon. The Inspector said there had been a significant shortfall in development against the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan housing requirement to date, and that the plan 'cannot be said to have been effective in delivering the anticipated housing need to date'. He further stated that even if the Council could currently demonstrate the housing land supply it said it had (more than 6.5 years), there had been significant under-delivery against the plan to date, and there was a 'persistent failure' to meet housing requirements. 'There can be no certainty that the strategy contained in the [Local Plan] will deliver sufficient housing in the long-term of the plan period,' he concluded. 'In fact, the evidence before me suggests that it will not.'

3.8 In April the Council won the Appeal against its refusal of planning permission for a 'Retirement Village' in Bottisham. The Inspector did not agree with all the arguments raised by the Council or by the Parish Council and other interested parties. However, he upheld the refusal because:

- there would be harm to the permanence, openness and some of the purposes of Green Belt land;
- a robust Alternative Sites Assessment had not been provided, so he could not be sure that there are not suitable, available and deliverable non-Green Belt alternatives;
- there is also harm, albeit with only a low to moderate weighting, to the character and appearance of the area, the wider landscape, and the heritage assets of Bottisham Conservation Area and the Bottisham House Grade II Listed building.

3.9 Also in April the Council won the Appeal against their refusal of planning permission for a tennis court at Chalk Farm, Bottisham. He upheld the refusal because:

"The proposed development would be inappropriate development, which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. There would also be moderate harm to the openness of the Green Belt as well as encroachment on the countryside."

3.10 Again in April, the Council lost the Appeal against their refusal of prior approval to convert barns to residential dwellings at Anglesey Farm, Lode. This revolved around the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (the GPDO). The Council had argued that the barns could not be converted to dwellings under the GPDO, but the Inspector found that the conversion was allowed under the GPDO.

3.11 In September 2021 the Council won the Appeal against their refusal of Planning Permission for Heath Road, Swaffham Bubeck. The Inspector upheld the refusal because:

"the harm to the character and appearance of the area would be overriding and there would be conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations of sufficient weight or importance that determine that the decision should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan and therefore, planning permission should be refused."

4 Finance and assets

4.1 The Council's budget was thrown into confusion in January, when an increase in Council Tax was recommended in the report presented to the Finance & Assets Committee. The Leader of the Council amended the budget at the meeting, to remove every recommendation, and refer the decision to the Full Council with no recommendations until the very last minute.

4.2 The Council once again froze its share of the Council Tax in its February budget. The plans in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for an increase of £5 per annum at Band D, the maximum allowed, were put off for a year.

4.3 We proposed an amendment to devolve the Rural Services Delivery Grant of £169,000 to Parish Councils, and to allocate £10,000 to investigate options for Civil Parking Enforcement, to address the

problems caused by illegal parking and speeding around the District. This would have been funded by joining the Combined Authority's Community Led Housing Support service, saving the costs of providing it in-house and drawing on the extensive experience of ACRE in community engagement. We also proposed to cut the £25,000 (33 per cent) proposed increase to the Council's PR budget. This amendment was defeated.

4.4 The budget included setting up a £2M Growth & Infrastructure Fund, to be funded from money handed back to member Councils by Cambridgeshire Horizons, a 'not-for-profit organisation responsible for driving forward the delivery of sustainable new communities'. We proposed that £0.5M of this fund should be used as a contribution to a safe pedestrian and cycle crossing at the A10 BP roundabout at Ely—a problem largely of the District Council leadership's making. This proposal was defeated by the Council's leadership.

4.5 Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority has expressed concerns that the repayment profile of its loan of over £20M to East Cambs Trading Company for the MOD homes at Ely is slipping, and it may not be repaid by the due date of 31 March 2023. The District Council agreed to lend the Company a further £7.5M, partly so that it can repay its current loan from the Council, and partly so that it can start new projects at MOD Phase 2 and 3, and at the Paradise Pool site which the Council is now proposing to sell to the Company.

4.6 The Council's Bus, Cycle, Walk working group continues to meet. In July it drafted a response to the County Council's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan, and a letter to parish councils listing walking and cycling routes identified last year as being in disrepair, obstructed by street clutter, or insufficiently lit, and asking for an update on their condition. The working group requested spending on feasibility studies from Sustrans for five priority cycling routes in the district:

- Fordham-Burwell
- Haddenham-A142
- Little Downham-Ely
- Littleport-Chettisham-Ely
- Swaffham Prior-Reach-Burwell

The Council also agreed a Cycling & Walking Strategy to be used in influencing County Council and Combined Authority plans for active travel.

5 Operational services

5.1 Having been pressed into declaring a Climate Emergency in October 2019, the Council approved its second Climate Change Action Plan in June. We have been pressing the Council to go further and faster in tackling climate change. At the meeting of the Combined Authority Board at the end of June 2021, the Leader of the Council proposed an amendment to water down the Combined Authority's response to the Commission's recommendations, and abstained on the response itself when this amendment was defeated.

5.2 The Council remains one of the few left in the country which is refusing to take responsibility from the police and adopt Civil Parking Enforcement. The ruling group's preferred course of offering up its staff as police volunteers hit the buffers, as did its proposals to pay for PCSO staff or give police powers to its own staff. Instead it is now simply 'supporting' a police pilot scheme to target a few 'hot spots' using community volunteers. It rejected a call from us to investigate Civil Parking Enforcement, the system used by nearly every other Council in England to tackle illegal on-street parking.

5.3 The collection of residents' black bag waste and recyclables has deteriorated. Difficulties recruiting and retaining drivers began in September, and by November the local press was reporting

allegations of low morale, bullying, stress and other staff concerns. These were denied by management. Green waste collections were cancelled from mid-December to the end of January, then it was announced that waste collection rounds were being permanently reconfigured from the end of March.

(The new collection day for Bottisham, Brinkley, Lode, Long Meadow and Westley Waterless is Monday

The new collection day for Reach, Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior is Tuesday.)

The first few weeks of this change have not gone smoothly, with large numbers of uncollected bins, in some cases left for days or even weeks.

5.4 The Council's intention to purchase several new waste vehicles has been put on hold because of the lack of clarity about the Government's waste strategy intentions. Lead times between order and receipt are around twelve months, so this spending will need to be carried forward. This is not the first time this procurement has been delayed, and it risks existing vehicles being run beyond their planned working life and becoming more difficult to maintain.

6 Full Council

6.1 We supported a proposal to the Full Council that East Cambridgeshire should address the lack of 'Changing Places' toilets in the district for people with severe disabilities; and review disabled access to all public toilets and signage on them for invisible disabilities. East Cambridgeshire was the only District in the county not to be awarded any money at all by the Government in its recent funding round to improve Changing Places toilet provision, because it did not request any funding. The Council's leadership delayed giving a response to this proposal by referring it to Finance & Assets Committee.

6.2 The Council leadership passed a motion to rule out congestion charging in Cambridge. We opposed this motion, as it was premature because the consultation is still on-going and we think it is better to engage with the Greater Cambridge Partnership than to rule out one possible part of the solution. Traffic in Cambridge is set to grow by 30 per cent in the next ten years, and there is a serious lack of funding for public transport. Without this, many people who cannot drive, or cannot afford to buy, insure or fill up a car, are left with limited or no options for travel. The Greater Cambridge Partnership has been consulting for some time on ways to relieve traffic congestion in Cambridge and improve public transport into the city. These consultations are still ongoing. One of the options on the table is some form of congestion charging to pay for better public transport. There would need to be regular reliable and affordable public transport, provision for shift workers, people with disabilities, community transport, volunteer drivers etc. But *if* congestion charging reduces the queues at the Quy roundabout and delivers better travel for our area it *might* be an acceptable option.

7 Administrative issues

7.1 The Council experienced several email outages during the year, in some cases lasting several days. A colleague asked searching questions and did not receive particularly full answers.

8 Combined Authority

8.1 A new Mayor was elected in May 2021. This resulted in the scrapping of the CAM Metro and the '£100K homes' project, the latter taken up by East Cambs District Council. A new Chief Executive was also appointed, and the Combined Authority has decided to make its permanent home in offices in Huntingdon.

8.2 During the year, the Combined Authority's Climate Commission published its ambitious report; the Government announced there would be no more money for affordable housing, and snubbed the Combined Authority's bus improvement plan.

8.3 In better news, the Combined Authority has recognised the need to develop further education provision in Ely. Ely, Littleport and Soham have also received funding for a variety of 'Market Town Masterplan' schemes.

9 Finally

9.1 We continue to offer online Zoom surgeries, advertised in the village magazines and are holding our first face-to-face surgery since the lockdown on Wednesday 25 May at 6.00pm at Reach Village Centre.

It is a privilege to serve the residents of our parishes, and we thank them, the Parish Councils and their Clerks, for their hard work and dedication during the last year.

Mr Jonathan Barrett, Clerk, Bottisham Local Charities

Purpose

The object of the charity shall be to relieve persons resident in the parish who are in condition of need, of hardship and distress.

Method

Widowers and widows who are pensioners are given relatively small amounts of cash quarterly. Last year four were helped in this way.

The bulk of our work is in helping Bottisham residents who are in need. In 2021 there were 22 people who received help. They chose to either have money credited to their account at the local Co-op or at their utility provider.

Money can also be given to help those serving an apprenticeship, with tools or equipment. Also, those starting a course of Higher Education can be helped with books or devices.

History

The funding of this charity goes back a long way. The start can be traced to Thomas Pledger, who, in 1600, left £40 to buy land whose rent should go to 6-8 'ancient inhabitants'. Giles Bream, who was related to the Alington family, one of whom was an MP for Cambridge in the sixteenth century, left money in his will of 1621, for "poor men of good character" in Bottisham. Money given to pensioners today, is taken from the "Giles Bream Fund."

Later, through the centuries, others gave money or land, which was to be invested or rented out, and the money was to be given to the poor in Bottisham.



BVC Report for Parish Council meeting 24 May 2022

<p>Henry Morris Conference</p>	<p>Re: Henry Morris Centenary Conference – Bottisham Village College 4.45pm - 7.30pm Thursday 30 June 2022</p> <p>This year marks 100 years since Henry Morris became Director of Education for Cambridgeshire, a post that he held for 32 years. He was one of the greatest educational thinkers of the 20th century, inventor of the Village Colleges, and community education, an idea that has spread all over the world.</p> <p>A conference is to be held to celebrate his achievements and to show the inspirational work that is still going on in many Cambridgeshire schools, supporting local communities with adult education, mental health, shared sports facilities and much more. There will be no charge for attendance.</p> <p>The event will bring together a wide group of people: Head teachers and school staff; politicians; council officers; academics and people who have benefited from Henry's legacy in different ways.</p> <p>The conference will look at practical issues like how adult education is funded in the schools that provide it and will consider the relevance of Henry's philosophy and values today, and how schools can work at the heart of their communities.</p> <p>Further details about the conference and joining instructions are available below.</p> <p>https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/henry-morris-centenary-conference-tickets-305682022157</p>
<p>Extended schools</p>	<p>Extended Schools</p> <p>We have continued to increase the range of clubs and activities available at lunchtime and after school; and work on concerted recruitment drive and means of more effective communication to both students and parents/carers as to the daily schedule, and sign up process</p>

Enrichment
Spring/summer

Spring term data

- The number of clubs on offer has increased from 43 to 48 (these are refreshed each term and shaped by the students)
- 560 students signed up for at least one club
- The number of disadvantaged students signing up for clubs has increased from 157 to 187, with an increase in the number of SEND students from 27 to 60, and an apparent decrease in the number of PP students

Next steps

- We are delivering a Summer term Enrichment evening on 8th June

This follows on from the success of the evening delivered in the Autumn term. It is a one off extended collaborative event after school where the PE, Creative Design and Performing Arts faculties are excited to be offering a wide range of activities for students to experience alongside their peers. Our target audience is PP students yrs 7 – 10, with offer of assistance in the form of transport which has been identified as a one of the barriers to attendance

- We are currently looking to at the school cloud enrichment package for next year which will enhance our offer in promotion, improve registration, communication and data collection. Feedback on this from other trust schools is very positive.

Enrichment – day trips (Spring & Summer term)

Sports trips

- Netball (Copper Box): 52 (yr 7 – 11)
- Basketball (O2 Arena): 52 (yr 7 – 10)

PP target audience

- 15 yr 9's Graham Water Boat building (3 days)
- 15 yr 8's Clip & Climb (Cambridge)
- 12 yr 8's Cultural trip (London)

Activities week (11th – 15th July)

Collapsed week for year's 7, 8 & 9 with an inspiring and enriching programme package including residentials, day trips and celebration.

Year 7 Camp (Eden Vale, Norwich)

Yr 7 :258 signed up Yr 11: 50 camp leaders

Year 8 Bushcraft Residential (Boughton Woods, Northamptonshire)

	<p>145 signed up</p> <p>Year 8 In school: 156</p> <p>Year 9 in school: CREST award / DofE/ Teamwork</p>
Sports Centre	<p>Exercise classes Monday Aqua Zumba 6.15-7pm Tuesday Yoga 6.15-7.15pm Wednesday Zumba 6.15-7pm</p> <p>New morning slots for swims & gym sessions Thursday 06.30-08.30am Friday 06.30-08.30am</p> <p>Clubs & Activities at BSC up and running: Judo Swimming lessons Monday – Sunday Archery Tuesday's, Thursday's & Saturday's Tang So Do Monday's Football – Monday – Sunday New Inflatable session every Sunday 13:00-14:00 (sold out every week) Parties back up and running with June fully booked.</p> <p>Free school swimming lessons for all year groups after school Monday Year 8's Tuesday Year 7's Wednesday Year 9's Thursday – Female only session Year 10's & 11's – adhoc sessions due to low numbers.</p> <p>Staff only swimming sessions Friday 3:05-5.00pm</p> <p>Currently planning fundraising events with Bottisham FC our partner club in the summer to raise funds for the club.</p> <p>Recently acquired:</p> <p>New boilers New disabled pool hoist New Acid injection unit Half term timetable PP Family free swims Monday – Wednesday between 4-6pm (HBB & Chris Darling to organise) £1 swims from Thursday 2nd – Sunday 5th June.</p>

<p>Community Library</p>	<p>Bottisham Library is shared between the college and community, providing learning resources for all.</p> <p>Monday Closed</p> <p>Tuesday 3-5 & 6-8</p> <p>Wednesday 10- 11.30</p> <p>Thursday 3-5</p> <p>Friday 6-8</p> <p>Saturday 10-12</p> <p>The library is well stocked with a range of fiction and non-fiction books for all ages as well as being a resource centre where there is access to computers and a photocopier.</p> <p>In the summer term, during the Wednesday morning session, the Community Library invite different year groups from Bottisham Primary School where they experience the library, participate in a range of activities, and read some books.</p> <p>The College have recently donated some money from the Government catch -up fund for the purchase of some new books. The Community Library have decided to use this money to restock their range of new fiction for children of primary age and below.</p>
<p>Echo club</p>	<p>Working on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New waste manager contract (nothing to landfill) and recycling • Woodland and wild meadow project