



Bramerton Bugle

Seasons greetings!

Wow! Just occasionally something happens that simply takes your breath away, although as the years slip by it now takes something pretty amazing to knock me off my feet. You may recall a few details about the parish council's long-running attempt to get a footpath installed along Surlingham Road - we consulted parishioners about this in 2021 and in the last edition of the *Bramerton Bugle* we reported that we had raised well over half the money for this, and that we needed a raise a further £14,500 to pay the full cost. It takes some believing but within only a few days of that edition of the *Bugle* being pushed through doors we had secured the full sum, thanks to the great generosity of a number of very publicly-minded parishioners. Wow indeed!

With no further need of a government loan, and having received confirmation from Norfolk Highways that the price they quoted at the beginning of the year was still valid the Parish Council agreed unanimously to proceed with this venture.



Towards the end of August councillor Marcel Pfrang and I met on site with the area highways surveyor and a representative from Norse, the contractors engaged by Norfolk Highways to carry out the work on the ground. Due to other commitments the installation will probably not take place until February, March or April next year, and for the safety of those doing the work it will be necessary to close one lane of the road for most of the time, and for a few days it may be necessary to close Surlingham Road completely. Norfolk County Council will publish a formal notice about this in the local press. During lane closures traffic will be controlled by lights and during full closures diversions will be signposted. Clearly these closures will be a nuisance to residents, but the

contractors have assured me they will do their very best to keep disruption to the minimum.

Those who raised concerns about wheeling buggies etc along a rough path will be pleased to know that contractors have agreed that the path will be finished with a hard top, something similar to the tar and chippings used on many local roads. This whole project is a huge investment by the Parish Council and it is good to know that so many residents support us with this venture.

On another matter entirely, the alarming rise in the cost of everyday goods, especially the price of electricity and other fuels, will have an impact on all parishioners so please make time to check on neighbours who may be finding this winter very difficult. Remember too that residents facing financial difficulties can always apply in confidence to our local charity Bramerton Helping Hand for assistance. Please contact Dick Meadows (dick.meadows@virgin.net) or ring 01508 538771.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a very happy Christmas, and peace and good health in the year ahead.

Keith Wheeldon
Chair, Bramerton Parish Council

HM Queen Elizabeth II

Just a few months ago in our last edition of the *Bramerton Bugle* we were looking forward to our celebrations for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. Councillor Duncan Butler organised the building of our bonfire which was lit at the appointed time on June 2nd to coincide with the lighting of hundreds of beacons and other bonfires across the country. On the following Saturday many parishioners enjoyed a delightful afternoon at Graham and Kirstie Perfitt’s farm in Framingham Lane. On both occasions the weather was excellent and attendance was very good. Our thanks to South Norfolk Council for their financial support and to all who helped organise these great community events.

So it was with great sadness that we learned of the Queen’s death at Balmoral Castle just three months later. For a great many residents Queens Elizabeth II is the only monarch they have ever known. Despite some ups and downs there is no doubt she has been a stabilising influence on this country and overseas during her incredibly long reign. At the September Parish Council meeting councillors spoke warmly of their memories of Her Majesty and marked Her passing with two minutes silence.



Memories of our Jubilee celebrations

Buses and taxis

We are fortunate to have a bus service running through the village but there are gaps in the service when residents may need to get to or from appointments or social events. In these circumstances residents in nearby Surlingham are able to call a taxi and claim a refund of 50% of the fare up to a maximum of £10, their SPATS scheme. You can find details on the Surlingham website. *[Continued on page 3]*

The Parish Council is interested to hear from anyone who would be willing to help set up and run a similar scheme here in Bramerton. It would involve seeking grant funding from Norfolk County Council and setting up a system for participants to claim their share of the taxi fare. If you are interested please contact the chair, contact details on page 4.

Emergency plan



Last year we asked parishioners to help with the emergency plan for the village and we are very grateful to all those who responded. We have now put together a one-page summary of key information and a copy is enclosed with this *Bugle* so you can pin it up somewhere handy at home. There's also a copy on the website <https://bramertonpc.wixsite.com/bramertonpc> .

Left: Flooding on the Recreation ground

Local elections

The term of office for the Parish Council comes to an end next year and elections will be held for parish and district councillors Thursday 5 May 2023, so make sure you are registered to vote. You can contact the South Norfolk elections team on 01508 533704 or by email at elections@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk .

If you would like to have more say about key decisions made by local councils and a greater influence on the way council tax money is spent then you might consider standing as a local councillor. To find out more about becoming a councillor contact the Clerk, speak to one of the existing councillors or why not come along to one of our meetings. Parish Council meetings are held at the Village Hall once a month, usually on a Monday and last around two hours. Between meetings there are emails and papers to read, often relating to local planning proposals. Except where there are pressing issues there are no meetings in August or December.

Speeding

Until recently Angie and Ashley Turner took responsibility for organising the community speed watch rota and for moving our SAM2 speed camera. They recently moved away from the village and we wish them well in their new house. We are very grateful to Dick Meadows who takes over as speed watch co-ordinator and to Peter Marshall who has kindly agreed to move our SAM2 camera to the various locations around the village as we are legally required to do at regular intervals.

The SAM2 camera provides us with very useful data about the number and speed of vehicles passing through the village. We know, for example, that on average over the past two years around 50,000 vehicles pass through the village each month. The great majority of drivers adhere to the speed limit, however, around a quarter still exceed the 30mph limit.

Community speed watch volunteers are out and about in the village most weeks at clearly visible locations which are all agreed by Norfolk Police. Details of those observed speeding are passed to the police who issue a letter to the vehicle owner, highlighting the dangers of speeding. The police take further action against repeat offenders. To help maintain a regular presence the speed watch team is looking for more volunteers so if you are interested please contact Dick Meadows dick.meadows@virgin.net tel 01508 538771.



Bramerton Society

The last Bramerton Society annual meeting in 2018 was poorly attended and only two people agreed to sit on the committee. Since then there has been no response to requests for further support made at the annual village meeting. Those two committee members have decided that the Society should close down and this decision was agreed at a recent Parish Council meeting. The Society held a small sum of money at its closure which has been transferred to the Parish Council account, £3.23 from the Society's closing bank account and petty cash of £26.65.

Trees and ponds

The Parish Council is responsible for over 350 mature trees on The Common by the river, on the Recreation Ground in Easthill Lane, and on land on Mill Hill adjacent to the Community Orchard and allotments. We are very fortunate to live in such a green and leafy village. These trees are regularly surveyed by a professional arboriculturalist and over the last seven years our tree warden, Jane Wheeldon has overseen a detailed maintenance programme. She recently decided to step down and we are grateful for the outstanding work she has done for the parish. We are very pleased that Sally-Ann Meadows has agreed to take over this demanding role.



If you have visited the Recreation ground in the last few weeks will have noticed that the large willow on the edge of the pond has fallen and been removed. The tree surgeons brought in heavy lifting equipment to move the trunk from the bottom of the pond, which was fortunately dry at the time. To gain access to the pond they cut also back all the brambles on the side nearest Mill Hill and you can now see the full extent of the land it covered and the extensive size of the pond.

Some years ago the pond was infested with *Crassula helmsii* and over the summer Native Landscapes working on our behalf completed a three year programme to eradicate this invasive weed. We will

continue to monitor the pond to make sure the weed does not take hold again.

At the time of writing the pond remains dry despite prolonged and heavy rain in recent days. It probably needs dredging as there is a substantial build up of silt, mainly from leaf litter. We've set up a working party to consider how best to landscape the area around the pond. If you have any relevant expertise in such matters we would welcome your input, please contact the Parish Clerk.

Litter picking

Bramerton is a clean and tidy village because people living here take care of the environment and value living in pleasant surroundings. Many thanks to those who, when out for a walk regularly pick up odd items of litter and dispose of them carefully. We very much appreciate your community spirit.

Contacts

Yvonne Wonnacott, Parish Clerk, email bramertonpc@outlook.com tel 01508 494635. Please remember that Yvonne works part time so you may not get an immediate reply.

Keith Wheeldon, Parish Council chair, email wheeldonbpc@icloud.com tel 01508 538279.

Vic Thomson, district and county councillor and Broads Authority representative email vic.thomson.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk tel 07973 113260