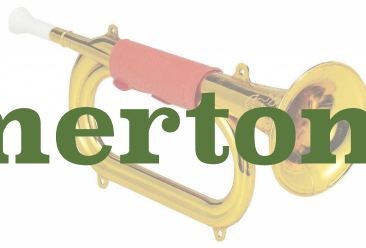


Bramerton Bugle



A new parish council



Keith Wheeldon

A great deal has happened since our last *Bugle*. The term of office for the old parish council came to an end in April and three members decided they would stand down, so at our March meeting we said farewell and thanks to councillors Marcus Pfrang, Robert Prince and Roger Smith. All have given generously of their time for the good of the local community. As many of you will



Richard Simmonds

know, Roger has for many years represented this area as a Norfolk county councillor, a South Norfolk district councillor as well as here on Bramerton parish council, so it was fitting that at his last meeting we marked the occasion with a small presentation which included the award of the freedom of the parish, a ceremonial distinction to mark the very substantial contribution he has made to the benefit of the whole village.



Duncan Butler

Duncan Butler (vice-chair), John Middleton, Richard Simmonds and Keith Wheeldon (chair) decided to stand again and they are joined by three new councillors, Sally-Ann Meadows, James Millson and Kirstie Perfitt, so a very warm welcome to them. We are very fortunate to have a full council once again and we are very ably supported by our experienced parish clerk, Yvonne Wonnacott.



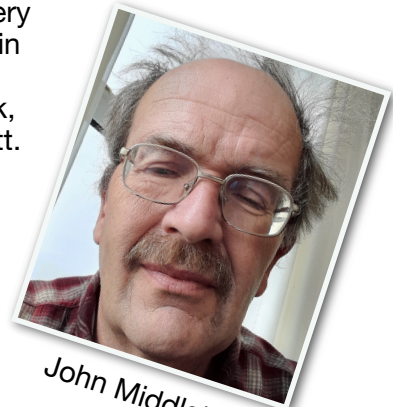
Sally-Ann Meadows



Kirstie Perfitt



James Millson



John Middleton

Surlingham Road Footpath



At last the footpath along Surlingham Road is finished although, as so often with such projects, it took slightly longer than expected. Many apologies for the disruption. It is great to see the path in daily use by local residents. While the road was closed Norfolk Highways took the opportunity to install extra much-needed drains at the end of the road nearest the village sign. This may not prevent further flooding but, hopefully it will keep the water level down. In addition, although it was not included in the original schedule, the contractors also resurfaced the short length of footpath that turns the corner towards the bus shelter and cleared the nearby gully. Norfolk highways are aware that there are other stretches of footpath in the village that also urgently need resurfacing and further work is scheduled for this autumn.

Some good but shocking news!

For some time the parish council has been concerned that we do not have a defibrillator in the village, not least because so many residents are over the age of 60.

Now, with the help of a very generous donation from Bramerton Helping Hand, the parish council is very pleased that by the time you read this we expect to have a **defibrillator installed at the Christadelphian Church** in The Street and we are very grateful to the Church for permission to do so. We have chosen this location for several reasons: wherever you live in the parish you are never more than a mile away; the Church has a large accessible car park, and the defibrillator will be illuminated so it should be easy to find.



The unit is fully automatic and straightforward to use but we will be holding a training session(s) for any interested residents so watch out for more details. If you ever find yourself faced with the possible need to use a defibrillator dial 999 and ambulance service personnel will tell you what you should do.

From our Speed watch co-ordinator

It has been another busy year for the Bramerton Speed Watch team. So far this year there have been around 40 sessions with volunteers recording well over 250 drivers travelling at speeds of 35mph and above in The Street and along Surlingham Road. Some drivers have been clocked speeding at up to 50mph.

Offenders receive a letter from Norfolk Police and a much sterner one if they are caught a second time. Persistent offenders get a visit from the police. Surprisingly perhaps, the majority of sessions include at least one repeat speeder. White van drivers are also disproportionately represented.



Norfolk police tell us that speeding in rural areas is a constant issue. Unlike, for example, drink-driving or the use of hand-held mobile phones, the dangers of speeding have not registered with many drivers. The police and Norfolk County Council Highways' view is that a combination of measures, in our case Speed Watch and our SAM2 (Speed Awareness Messaging) sign, help to mitigate the problem.

For the nine-strong volunteer team it is clear that the majority of speeding drivers - with the exception of those van drivers - are travelling to and from their homes in adjoining villages, principally and most obviously Surlingham as well as Rockland, Claxton and beyond. That is partly evidenced by the number of repeat offenders. It seems that too many drivers observe the speed limits in their own community but not elsewhere.

The Speed Watch team is always looking for more volunteers which would allow us to mount more sessions. Newcomers are given training and can do as many or as few sessions as they wish. Most do one a month.

We're sometimes asked why we operate from the same locations. That is because they are all chosen by the police who also require us to put out warning signs to highlight our presence.

Hedges, trees and ponds

The weather this year has promoted some very vigorous growth of trees and shrubs and, perhaps unsurprisingly, we have had more complaints about overgrown hedges than in recent years. Most of the parish council's hedges were cut at the end of September but a couple were missed but by the time you read this I hope our contractor will have been back to finish the job.

If you have a hedge that abuts a road or footpath please make sure you keep it in trim on both sides so it does not overhang the path, the verge or the carriageway.

Each year we clear some of the weed from the pond on The Street and, as in previous years, the work this autumn will be done for us by The Conservation Volunteers. Expect to see activity there in the coming weeks.

In September several councillors met on-site with staff from the nature recovery team at Norfolk Wildlife Trust to discuss the future of the pond on the recreation ground in Easthill Lane. Despite three years of treatment, at the time of the visit there was still a very small patch of the invasive weed *Crassula helmsii* still present but that has now been removed and we will keep a careful watch for any further incursion. Over the years leaves from nearby trees have fallen into this pond and it now filled with silt. With advice from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust we are preparing a plan for this debris to be removed and for the trees on the pond edge to be reduced in height. We will post details once we have a clear idea of what and when work is scheduled to start.

Bramerton Bowls Club

For years Bramerton Bowls Club was the envy of all the teams we played. We had five members under 18 years of age and four under 50; furthermore, two of our members played for England at under 18 and under 21. However, their successes were a mixed blessing: to progress they left to join a high-level club, taking with them their friends and family. We found ourselves short of players and it looked like we would have to fold.

This spring, after an article in local magazines such as *Eleven Says* we successfully recruited seven new members and, in addition, local leagues agreed to reduce teams from twelve to nine players so we were able to continue and had a good season in 2023.

We still need more players but are able to look forward to keeping the club alive. If anyone is interested in taking up bowls or if you are an experienced player looking for a club, please contact Michael Cooper email bramertonbowls@gmail.com or phone 07479 473471.

Bramerton Helping Hand

With winter almost upon us, the Bramerton Helping Hand charity is redoubling its efforts to help residents who may be struggling to keep warm and pay energy or food bills as temperatures drop.

In the past the charity trustees have made grants to help residents buy heating oil or logs, have boilers and other essential domestic appliances repaired and deal with a host of other domestic emergencies.

Within the last few months the Helping Hand team have paid for a new washing machine, arranged to help with an overgrown garden and contributed towards new books at Rockland Primary School where a number of Bramerton children are pupils. Most recently it was agreed to make a contribution to help pay for a new defibrillator to be installed outside the Christadelphian Hall in The Street.

A wheelchair is also available at no cost for use by those without means of mobility in Bramerton.

Formed in 1989 and funded by the rental of two fields in the village, the charity is an amalgamation of three smaller charities, the oldest of which was established in 1672 to provide 'coals for poor people.'

If you know of anyone who may need help please contact Dick Meadows tel 01508 538771 email dick.meadows@virgin.net. All approaches are dealt with in strictest confidence. They can be made personally or on behalf of someone else.

Dates for your diary



Next year sees the **80th anniversary of the D Day landings and on Thursday 6 June 2024**, as a mark of respect for those who fought in Normandy and especially those who gave their lives there, we are planning to mark the occasion with a beacon bonfire and picnic at the Community Orchard. Make a note of the date in your diary - we'll let you have more details in the New Year.

The next parish council meetings are on 27 November 2023, 8 January 2024, 19 February 2024, 18 March 2024. All meetings start at 7:30 pm in the Village Hall on Easthill Lane. Residents are always welcome to attend.

You can find more information about the parish council, including links to other councils' services on our website <https://bramertonpc.wixsite.com/bramertonpc> .

Contacts

Yvonne Wonnacott, Parish Clerk, email bramertonpc@outlook.com tel 01508 493134. 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.