

Minutes of Bradfield Annual Parish Assembly held on Friday 22nd April 2022 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr. A. House (Chairman of Bradfield Parish Council), 18 parishioners, District Cllr. R. MacKinnon, Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk).

Apologies: Apologies of absence were received from Mike Ashbrook.

1. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20th April 2021.

The minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday 20th April 2019 were agreed and will be signed by the Chairman.

2. Matters arising from the minutes.

There were no matters arising.

3. Report from the Parish Council (Cllr. House).

Welcome to the Bradfield Parish Assembly 2022. The format will be altered from previous years, and clearly different from last year! Last years APA was held as a virtual meeting, and I concluded with the words "Let us hope this will be a 'one off'".

So, we are back to a physical meeting. It will cover a single year April '21 – March '22. Covid-19 is still very relevant so there will not be an invited speaker and reports presented from local groups and clubs will be restricted this evening. All submitted written reports will be available on the Parish Council website in due course.

Your Parish Council continues to meet monthly on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm. We started the year as we had finished last year, with virtual meetings via Zoom. We resumed physical meetings in July '21 using Bradfield Village Hall's main hall so that there was 'social distancing space' for both Councillors and members of the public, as lockdown restrictions were being relaxed. Our thanks to the Bradfield Village Hall Management Committee for enabling the hall to be available for us to use. The Council reverted to a 'virtual' meeting in February of this year due to the 'omicron' variant concerns but met physically again at the Village Hall in March. As the main hall is no longer available to us for our first Tuesday regular meeting, the Parish Council has started to meet in St Peters Church, Southend Road. This enables us to maintain both space and ventilation as we get to live with Covid-19.

Our new Parish Clerk for Bradfield, Mrs Helen Pratt, has been in post since April 2020, but it wasn't until our Council meeting in July '21 that Helen had seen us all physically! Helen has been a great addition to the Council with her mastering the technology associated with virtual meetings and brings a wealth of knowledge and skills that we didn't fully realise were missing from our previous incumbents. The changes have been subtle, un-noticed by most but means that the Council conform and comply more fully with requirements. Helen has also undertaken additional CiLCA training so further enhancements are likely!

I would like to thank your Councillors for their time, energy, and enthusiasm for the Parish of Bradfield and for their continued help and support during the year.

Your Councillors for this reporting period were:

Mike Ashbrook - Cock Lane

Rosemary Balsdon - Dark Lane

Kimiko Dearing - South End Road Vice PC Chair

Paul Henwood - South End Road	PC Footpath Officer
Andrew House - South End Road	PC Chair
Paul Isherwood - Bradfield Village	PC Incident Officer and Pang Valley rep
Steve O'Reilly - Heath Road	
Tim Wale - Tutts Clump	
Bob Wyatt - South End Road	Alms Houses rep

The Parish Council currently has a full complement of Councillors following the Election in May 2019 and subsequent co-option of volunteers. The full Council will be subject to elections in May 2023 so please do consider getting the application forms completed and submitted next year. Details will appear on the Bradfield Parish website and in Newslink as appropriate. The details printed in Newslink are only notes, and not the official 'minutes of the meeting'. The minutes are available on the Parish Council website.

Bradfield Parish is fortunate that many take a great interest in what happens within the Parish and are prepared to get involved.

Historically, planning has consistently taken the greatest amount of Council discussion times in meetings, and this year has been no different. The Parish Council are consultants to around 50 planning applications to West Berkshire Council annually. During the last twelve months there were 51 applications that your Parish Council commented on – we only objected to 9 of these, offering Support or No Objection to 42. The Parish Council is increasingly offering comments to WBC, for 'Conditions' to be applied to an approval, if it were to be granted, particularly where there are local reasons of concern. These comments have proved invaluable where Planning Applications have been taken to the Planning Inspectorate on appeal.

Applications have again been varied:

Single and two storey extensions, loft conversions, conservatories and orangeries, new build developments and 'change of use' applications. Retrospective applications, that is applications made to regularise what has already been done have also been made during the year. These are unfortunate occurrences particularly when permission is NOT GIVEN, and remedial action to reinstate or demolish is required. Listed Building applications and Planning Applications that also require a Listed Building application in tandem have been more prevalent this year. By far, Bradfield College has again been our biggest single client, in all respects, with Planning Applications, Listed Buildings Applications and certainly all the associated paperwork! The Colleges association with St Andrew's School, Buckhold has further increased the applications received in more recent months.

Not all planning applications are referred to Bradfield Parish Council for comment or consultation. A number of these applications are to discharge or comply with 'Conditions imposed', when permission is granted by West Berkshire Council or the Planning Inspectorate. Your Parish Council are commenting where applicable and appropriate on such applications, particularly with Planning Inspectorate decisions, where such 'Conditions' may or may not have been imposed. There have again been several West Berkshire Council planning refusal decisions that have been taken to the Planning Inspectorate on appeal this year. To date, all have been DISMISSED (refusal upheld) during the last reporting year.

The Parish Council are requested / required to act as the eyes and ears locally for West Berkshire Council, for approved developments where the build doesn't reflect what was approved and where development is undertaken without permission. The Parish Council report such instances to the 'Enforcement Team' at WBC who will then react to the information given with various degrees of

urgency depending upon the 'harm' being caused. Bradfield Parish Councils experiences, more recently, have been considered disappointing and the outcomes very questionable. Bradfield Parish Council have challenged several of the 'decisions' made during 2022. Enforcement Issues are not noted in the Newslink, due to the nature of the individual perceived infringements, but are discussed openly during Council meetings!

The Bradfield Village Hall Development project continues to be challenging for Councillors. The recent update of the Business Plan for the project has yet to be discussed at a Parish Council meeting and it will be following that debate that any change in the Councils position will be resolved.

Highway issues always run a close second to planning applications at Parish Council meetings. The condition of the roads and the footways (pavements to you and me) in the Parish, continue to raise concerns. Markers in front of houses – bricks, rocks, lumps of wood and so on, still persist around the parish. These can be dangerous for pedestrians, particularly with a greater number of residents partaking of regular daily exercise around our rural roads, keeping socially distanced, as well as damaging to vehicles. They are illegal, particularly when within a small distance of the highway, removal is enforceable should they be deemed to be a danger to the highway, and the landowner liable for any damage or injury sustained in the event of an incident!

Speeding continues to be a major issue on many of our parish lanes and within our villages. Roads of particular concern are Ashampstead Road in Bradfield Village and South End Road in Bradfield Southend. West Berkshire Council have deployed their 'Smart SID' for extended periods along these same roads. These machines can operate in ghost mode – essentially recording but not displaying to the motorist their speed, it's not that the battery is dead! Flooding of road issues have been notified to West Berkshire Council with works indicated to be undertaken on Buscot Hill, Bishops Road (at the junction with Cock Lane) and South End Road.

Following a very detailed presentation by a parishioner in the public forum at one of the monthly Parish Council meetings, comments and observations were detailed to West Berkshire Council regarding the speed, signage, drainage, and physical state of Union Road. There has subsequently been a programmed road closure for investigatory works to be carried out. The Parish Council has not yet been advised of any findings from those investigations to date.

There is to be a new footway installed from Hungerford Lane towards the Common following continued requests from the Parish Council and aided by our District Councillor. The footway from Hungerford Lane towards Bradfield Southend is also to be resurfaced. Both of these projects are due to be done this summer (2022). As strange as it might sound, the two projects could be done by different contractors and at different times! Road closures may also be involved!

Hedges and hedgerows continue to cause concern. Letters requesting 'cutting back' rather than 'trimming' have been sent to residents, where appropriate. It is important that hedges are kept cut so that pedestrians can use pavements, motorists can see signage and to keep site lines at junctions visible and safe for all.

The Parish Council are keen to keep and protect our specimen and heritage trees and woodland areas within the parish. Prompted by West Berkshire Council placing 'tree preservation orders' (TPO's) on individual trees and areas of trees, as planning applications are submitted, we are looking to secure additional and wider protection of our rural landscape before any development removal takes place. This will take time as 'block' submissions are not feasible.

Cars parked on pavements, along South End Road are an ongoing issue, often forcing pedestrians onto the road to get passed. Thanks to Pete Harrod for his support in the storage and replenishment of the parish salt / grit bins and to all those who treat the roads local to them, as and when required. It is worth commenting that the provision of the Grit / Salt is made for use on ROAD and FOOTWAYS, and NOT for use on Private Property! Thank you.

Dog fouling issues on footpath and footways still remain a problem, with particular concern being along routes used by children walking to schools and at the college, as well as our 'green areas' around the cricket green and village hall playing field. Increased dog ownership and daily exercise during Covid-19 restrictions have impacted on the volumes of deposits on both footpaths and in the dog-waste bins.

There were 'emptying' issues of the parish 'dog waste bins' from both Parish Council's contractor service operators during the previous year, Covid-19 related in both cases at different times. That has not repeated this year, but we are aware that one of our contractors' contracts is up for renewal this year which will have financial implications going forward.

Members of the Parish Council have attended a West Berkshire Council District Conference and Pang Valley Flood Group meetings during this report period. The Parish Council has been consulted and commented on numerous other topics during this reporting period.

The Council has secured 'Members Bid' grant funding from West Berkshire Council, with District Councillor Ross MacKinnon's help, for help with the purchase of two defibrillators and three public benches to replace the damaged, ageing, and missing benches around the parish. All have now been installed at their required locations. The defibrillators are located at 'The Vets' in Tutts Clump and at the Cricket Pavilion, Bradfield Southend, the benches are positioned in Heath Road, on the cricket field in New Way and by the river down at Bradfield College.

Grants to local clubs and organisations, within the parish, have totalled almost £8500 this year. Awards have been made only to those who submitted written applications to the Parish Council detailing how or where grant monies have or would be utilised.

The Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial was well attended with over 50 attendees. Thanks to Bradfield College for the Honour Guard and bugler, and to all who placed wreaths at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

The Bradfield Christmas Lights Perpetual Shield was awarded to 'Hollywell Cottage', Rotten Row Hill. This was the second year in a row that Hollywell Cottage has won. This year's judge had much to consider with over 150 properties with lights shining on judging night!

The Parish Council welcomes speakers / members of the public to address the Parish Council in the Public Forum at the beginning of the monthly Parish Council meetings. This enables you to express your thoughts, concerns and wishes directly to the Council ahead of or in conjunction with pending planning applications.

The council would like to thank all who have written or attended the monthly Parish Council meetings and have voiced their concerns and thoughts during the year. Hedges, trees, bonfires and clean air issues, youth activities and facilities, speeding and road problems, building and planning applications feature heavily in the public participation. Please continue to voice your thoughts and

take such active involvement in your Parish. Thank you for attending the Parish Assembly this evening.

4. Report from District Councillor Ross MacKinnon.

It has been a busy year for both me and West Berkshire Council.

During 2021 WBC continued to support vulnerable residents during to COVID pandemic through our Community Hub and also distributed millions of pounds in business support grants, with particular focus on the leisure and hospitality industry.

I had a nasty illness from July to September, which is usually a quiet time for council business but was anything but this year.

On 13th August the clubhouse at the former football ground at Faraday Road in Newbury was burnt down, the same weekend that a group of Travellers took development into their own hands at a large site in Thatcham, creating construction and hard standing without planning permission. Councillors and officers worked incredibly hard to obtain an injunction preventing further development.

In September we welcomed refugees from Afghanistan under the resettlement programme for those who assisted UK forces in that country. Initially they were housed in two bridging hotels before longer term settlement across the UK.

October saw sad news with the death of Cllr Peter Argyle, ward member for Tilehurst South and Holybrook. Peter was a gentleman and had served residents of Tilehurst since 1997 and will be sadly missed. Cllr Biyi Oloko was elected at the subsequent byelection.

Our new CEO, Nigel Lynn, joined us in October, replacing Nick Carter who had been CEO since 2005.

December saw the opening of the new footway in Ufton Nervet for which I was delighted to be successful in obtaining funding. Children and adults walking from Camp Road up to SUN school no longer have to walk in the busy highway.

The new year brought further COVID grants to businesses affected by the Omicron variant and the continuance of our Household Support Fund, providing support to those in financial need over the winter period.

Rough sleepers in West Berkshire have been reduced to zero which is an outstanding achievement by the Housing service in particular.

In February Storms Eunice and Franklin impacted us but thankfully not as hard as other parts of the country. Our Emergency Planning response pulled together all of the necessary elements to minimise the impact on our residents.

I was pleased to obtain confirmation of the funding needed to build the new footway in Bradfield Southend from Hungerford Lane towards Bucklebury Common.

The WBC budget in March contained a Council Tax rise of 4%, less than the maximum rise of 6%. Combined with last year's rise of just 1.99%, over the two years WBC had the lowest Council Tax rise in England.

Finally we have the awful situation unfolding in Ukraine – WBC will be providing support to any refugees housed in the district as we have done with refugees in recent years from Syria and Afghanistan.

5. Report from Bradfield Village Stores and Post Office (prepared by Helen Hyde and read by Bill Roundtree).

From the start of 2021, we maintained our weekday opening hours of 8.30 to 6.00pm, which also meant a slightly reduced wage bill. The initial indication is that we appear to have just about broken even with our accounts.

During the year many staple goods like bread, fruit and veg etc. experienced price increases, and we expect that this will accelerate this year with increased inflation. Although we are a community enterprise, we have to operate on a commercial basis if we are to remain a viable local resource, hence more volunteers are always welcome.

I am pleased to report that our staff salaries are to be increased in April to reflect the updated National Minimum Wage; however, these additional costs have a direct impact on our financial situation which will affect our future profitability.

In the PO, 2021 was a challenging year. Although we do receive a lump sum from PO Ltd, much of our income is on commission, hence bureau sales were severely impacted as overseas travel was limited during the pandemic. Overall, the PO received £33k remuneration, which after staff costs of £36k left a deficit of £3k.

This frustration of operating a PO that loses money is offset by knowing that we provide an essential service to our community. We rely on the Shop retail side performing well enough so that we can cover the deficit. We are engaging with PO Ltd to do all we can to ensure that the village will always have access to the services that a Post Office provides.

All the activity in the Stores would not have been possible without our hardworking team, in particular our General Manager Kate Brealey. She is well supported by 8 staff in the shop, 3 in the PO and 10 volunteers, everybody working part time.

Input from the Management Team was extensive, mainly because of the additional tasks associated with the Lockdowns. I would like to thank them for the generous time they give and their invaluable support. The shop simply couldn't run without them.

There are a large number of people who contribute to the success of the shop and the P.O. Those not yet mentioned are, of course, our customers. We thank every single one of you. Please continue to support us in 2022!

6. Standby Volunteer Group (prepared and read by Jeremy Caddy).

Standby is part of a group of volunteer driver schemes across West Berkshire which support those who; do not have the use of a car, cannot use public transport or can no longer drive. The service is designed to help them attend appointments at local hospitals, general practices, wellbeing centres, dental and opticians services.

The Standby service is based at Theale Medical Centre and serves residents in the villages of Bradfield, Theale, Englefield, Stanford Dingley and Calcot. The service is staffed by volunteers. We are indebted to Marion and Peter Moulder who managed the service from 2011 till July 2021, prior to it resuming after COVID restrictions.

This report includes comparative data from 2019-20, prior to the closure during COVID, to provide a benchmark for the service.

The report explores how to mitigate the reduced levels of activity since reopening. The destination data clearly show the need to re-advertise the service in 2022-23. Advertising has begun in Calcot to

increase awareness of the service and more will be done in different settings over the coming months.

We are pleased to announce that thanks to the grants and client contributions we have received we remain in balance. At 45p per mile this service is very cost-effective saving clients on average £2.35 per mile compared to standard taxi fares locally. We look forward to further developing the service in line with clients' needs in 2022-23.

7. Bradfield Village Hall Management Committee (prepared and read by Christine Evans).

Whilst most village halls closed their doors at the beginning of the pandemic, Bradfield Village Hall remained in operation and has been in use throughout the last two years. During the first lock down, every table the hall possesses was laden high with shop stock, which enabled them to cope with the huge increase in demand and home deliveries. Two groups, who were allowed to continue meeting, transferred to our hall when their original venue closed and we are glad to say they have not wished to return from whence they came. Sunshine Club also continued to use the building, and are still here. We did not charge the shop for using the hall, only the other groups, which did mean we have had some, albeit reduced income throughout.

For some months, meetings of other groups have been spasmodic but now all the regular activities are back to normal, with only one lost. Children's parties have become popular again, some new activities are in the pipeline and more one-off bookings are now coming through. Just this month, we have invested in a new booking system which should make life easier for users as well as for us.

However, there have been plenty of issues with the building to deal with. All three roofs have needed repair; the damage on the main roof done by Storm Eunice is still to be rectified due to supply problems with the replacement material. Much of the electrical wiring needed replacing, as did the 60 year old meter. The oil boiler had to be replaced with a more eco-friendly infra-red system. During preparation work required for the new building, investigations of the drainage system highlighted the fragility of the pipes under the tarmac, necessitating restrictions within the car park, in particular with heavy vehicles. There are continuing issues with the surface drainage in several areas of the tarmac, especially in the front. The antiquity of the gents toilets is also a major cause for concern.

We are extremely grateful for several covid-related grants from West Berkshire Council, which have enabled us to cope with the considerable extra maintenance costs at a time when our income was much reduced.

We would like to thank the Parish Council for their grants towards the upkeep of the grounds and also for the assistance with the erection of the barrier and bollards preventing access to the field following the visit of the travelling community back in the Summer of 2020.

In October 2021, we were delighted to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Hall's opening with a tea party in the hall. As a committee we are very keen to encourage all opportunities for the community to get together.

- Last Summer, we hosted the Watermill Theatre on a glorious Summer's evening out on the field, an event we will be hosting again this year.
- The recent Race Night with the Young Farmers was a resounding success and much enjoyed by all.
- The monthly market continues to be popular, and

- just this week a regular Thursday Coffee Morning has started, which was extremely well attended.
- On 2nd May the Community Fun Day will take place here. Representatives of local organisations have been invited to run stalls and the monthly market traders will be here too. The aim is to bring the locals together for some fun.
- We are also looking forward to hosting the Platinum Jubilee Picnic on the field in June.

This all emphasises the reason why the Village Hall was built originally, back in 1951 – to provide the facilities and opportunities for the locals to get together as a community.

8. Bradfield Almes Houses (given by Lynda Bennell, Clerk to the Trustees of the Almshouses)

The terrace of four Almshouses was built in 1810 by Stephen Wilson a local landowner and intended as housing for the poor of the Parish and they are now valued as affordable housing in the village.

Over the past two centuries there have been many changes to the original buildings to reflect changing times. Wash houses were added in the 19th century; running water, electricity, drainage and central heating in the 20th century.

Following the sad loss of one of our residents in August 2020 we took the opportunity to completely refurbish the vacant property, No.4, updating it to be suitable for the 21st century.

Essential structural and service improvements included fire proofing, damp proofing, new thicker loft insulation, new plumbing and re-wiring.

In addition the trustees decided to add a few 'nice to have' 21st century items. Part of the main bedroom was annexed to create an upstairs toilet as the only one was downstairs, Not very handy in the night... The bathroom became a shower room with all new fittings and a new more modern kitchen with extra cupboard space was fitted.

It was also felt there was a need for more electrical sockets both for safety reasons– in discouraging the use of trailing extension leads-and to take account of the fact that we all have more appliances and re-chargeable gadgets now.

All this came at a substantial cost not just for the renovation but also due the loss of income during the works.

No.4 is now occupied with a happy new resident in a modernised home but our reserves were depleted to fund it all.

Later in February and August 2021 nos.1 and 3 unexpectedly became vacant, again giving us the opportunity to update them to the same standard as no.4, and avoiding disruption by having to work around our residents at a later date. These works are still underway and have been made possible by a 10 year loan from the Almshouse Association; The Englefield Charitable Trust has also generously donated to support the improvements.

Such intensive refurbishment workover a short period of time inevitably led to a net deficit of 39k for the year ended 31st December 2021

In spite of this and with costs still rising, by the end of this year, 3 of the 4 Almshouses will have been extensively refreshed to a high standard and we hope will require minimal maintenance for the foreseeable future giving us a chance to build up our reserves again.

The vacancy at No.1 has been advertised recently in Newslink, on notice boards and on local social media, and these adverts will run until the end of this month.

The Trustees are currently reviewing the applications received so far and look forward to being able to offer a smart home to a new resident.

As Clerk to the Trustees the question that I'm asked most is What do you have to do to be considered for an Almshouse?

We favour single people or couples, over 55 and with a connection to Bradfield or the surrounding area. They should be of limited means and in need of housing because their current accommodation is unsuitable, maybe too large, too expensive or is to become unavailable.

If you know anyone who might be interested, they still have time to apply and my contact details are in the current edition of Newslink and on the Parish Council notice boards.

9. Bradfield WI (Prepared and read by Karel Webb)

2021 was a memorable year for lots of reasons, the main one being the Covid 19 pandemic which has changed our lives by having to stay at home, sanitise, test for the virus regularly and generally isolate. This has been very difficult for us, especially trying to organise WI meetings for our members. Many of whom live alone and appreciate the companionship.

Our monthly Committee meetings from February until July were carried out in our own homes on our computers via Zoom and we have done our best to stay in touch with members by sending County newsletters, goody bags and Round Robins either electronically or physically through the doors via our cascade system to ladies without computers. The welfare of our members has been paramount at this difficult time, and we have done our best to keep in touch and where appropriate send good wishes cards and flowers, which seem to have been appreciated.

Our first face to face meeting was held in July in a members garden with a bring and share supper under our gazebo brought into service again after some years, and was followed by another meeting in August with tea and cake served in another lovely garden in The Laffords. In September we were back in the garden again in Admoor Lane where we had a demonstration of flower arranging.

October saw us for the first time returning to the Village Hall where we heard all about 'Internet Dating' and then once again in November for the return of a poet, all very entertaining. Our Christmas party in December proved to be a challenge and for the first time all the food was bought in and served by the Committee duly masked wearing latex gloves and despite the precautions we had to make, I think the members had a good time having returned to some sort of normality.

A successful recruiting drive has resulted in at least six new members and hopefully there will be more.

We still have not been able to celebrate our Centenary, we have encouraged members to participate in creating a list of '100 Random Acts of Kindness' and 'Photographs of what we have been doing during the lockdown' both of which are uplifting to view and illustrate what caring members we have.

The closure and sale of Denman College is ongoing and a source of sadness to those of us who have enjoyed courses there in the past.

Lastly, the Committee have been working so very hard to keep in touch with all members by various means and have gone above and beyond by 'keeping the show on the road' and I would thank them so much for all their efforts which I am sure we all have much appreciated.

So, onwards and upwards to this year where we have been meeting again monthly in the village hall and where our current membership has increased to 42, a record.

10. The John Simmonds Trust (John Bishop)

The John Simmonds Trust has 12 trustees and 20 people working on site.

The Trust has returned to a normal programme of activities this year and is expecting approximately 12,000 young people to visit.

The site of the charcoal burning has been redeveloped as the Oaklands building, a specially designed learning site for young people with special educational needs. A generous donation was made to the project from the estate of Stuart Featherstone, a past pupil from Brookfield. The building has now been officially opened in memory of Stuart. Year 7 pupils from Brookfield and The Castle Schools complete a one day a week, twelve-week course, enabling the facility to help 120 pupils a year. The staff gain a much better understanding of young people through these courses.

11. Gardening Club (prepared by Tony Powell)

After a quiet year in 2021 with only one talk in the Village Hall, 2022 has started well. We had over 70 people at our first meeting to hear Pippa Greenwood give an interesting talk on pests and diseases and how to prevent or cure them without resorting to nasty chemicals. We have a full calendar of talks for this year as well as a coach outing and garden visits. This is all detailed in the new format BGC newsletter which is available in the village shop and local garden centres.

12. Rainbows and Brownies in Bradfield (prepared by Helen Randall)

Girlguiding in the village has certainly changed over the last couple of years, with a brand new Rainbow unit being opened in March 2020 and a new leadership team in place for the existing Brownie group. We currently have 16 Rainbows and 17 Brownies and have room for more members. The Rainbows are trialling an exciting new national scheme, where girls are able to start from the age of four and this is working well.

The last two years have been interesting in terms of programme delivery, but who knew how much fun you could have on Zoom and in the car park of St Peter's Church!!! Magic shows, cooking, escape rooms, crafts, games and learning new skills were still all possible.

Last summer with restrictions easing we were able to get out and about much more, with trips to Rushall Farm and Thirtover, our local Guide house where the girls can do lots of activities from low ropes to grass sledging, as well as Mortimer alpacas, which was rather popular. Last month, we were finally able to attend our Region's Legoland takeover day, which had been postponed from 2020.

We have some great plans for the summer term ahead, pond dipping, first aid training, narrow boat trips and building campfires and we are really looking forward to growing both of our units and making lots of new memories for the girls!

We will be at the community fun day, so please pop over to say hello if you would like to find out more.

13. Bradfield Historical Society (prepared by Gordon Patterson and Jacqui Clark)

Bradfield Historical Society, which has been operating for some 5 years, has had to put its events on hold for the last two years. The society was started by Martin Parsons (retired Professor of History at Reading University), Dorcas Ward (a graduate in History from Cambridge University) and Gordon

Patterson. We all live locally and many of the presentations have covered topics of local interest. This, combined with other topics of national interest, has given us a balance in the breadth of subjects covered. Our venue is Bradfield Cricket Club Pavilion, which has proven to be excellent in facilitating for the presentations. We have use of the bar from 7pm on the evening, which has enabled a nice social interaction for everyone.

After two years of being unable to put on events, we are delighted to be re-launching on Monday 25th April at 7:30pm. Dorcas Ward, who lived at Copyhold Farm (at the junction of Southend Road with Union Road), will be drawing on childhood memories and much recent research to give a fascinating insight into the family farm in Bradfield in the war years and immediately after. There is no entry fee, but a donation of £3 per person towards expenses is appreciated and no advance booking is required. Typically, we hold five events per calendar year and are open to ideas on interesting topics and/or speakers of local and national historical interest. We have a great programme planned for the remainder of this year and well into next year. We're very grateful to Newslink, as the local parish magazine, for promoting all our events. We hold a database of people who wish to be informed about events and always welcome new names to be added. Attendance at events typically ranges from 40-60 people. After each presentation there is an opportunity to ask questions, which typically is lively and produces very interesting interaction.

Thanks for the opportunity to convey this information to the Bradfield Parish Council. We are grateful for your support in this way.

14. Bradfield Village Hall development (prepared by Julie Noakes).

In tandem with the considerable work being done to run the hall, moving forward with the building project has been a significant priority for Trustees. To this end, in the summer of 2021, they instructed our architects JBKS and relevant consultants, to carry out the technical and design details for the hall and some external areas (RIBA Stage 4) to the point of being able to go out to tender. This work is now virtually complete, with a huge number of technical details, plans and drawings prepared. These include the designs for the foundations, roof, drains, toilets, bar and tea area, electrics, heating system, external works, including the bin store for the shop and hall, car charging points and much more.

A construction plan indicates how the site will be laid out during this time with the children's play area and the old hall remaining open for as long as possible during the construction phase. Some of the detail incorporated into the designs has been used in the annual revision of the Bradfield Village Hall Business Plan (shown on the BVH website) such as the new internal layout plan and the estimated income stream from the car chargers and PV array, not previously included in the viability calculations.

The cost of all this work (approx. £120,000) is being covered by a grant from West Berkshire Council (which is due to be claimed next week), and with money already donated.

It was undertaken to enable building to take place as soon as all the funds are available as the technical stage can take a long time, whereas the tender stage is much shorter. During this very complex process, cost saving measures have been incorporated following advice from the consultants and once a contractor is appointed, discussions on these lines will continue.

As of April 2022, some £730,000 has been raised for the construction of the hall and most of the car park, from a likely cost of some £1,800,000. The pandemic has made fund raising much more difficult due to many grant funders diverting their resources to helping covid-related projects.

Fortunately, this situation is gradually changing and applications for grants and appeals for donations are on-going. Most of the funding streams available for the MUGA and playground need to be spent within a twelve - month period, so can only be applied for after the building of the hall starts.

It is hoped that enough will be raised to go out to tender by the end of the year, although it is acknowledged that the state of the building industry is not ideal at the moment. However, the current planning consent is valid until September 2024,

15. Bradfield Village Market (prepared by Julie Noakes).

The Village Market, held in the Village Hall on the second Saturday of each month, was restarted, following its discontinuation because of Covid, in July last year. All of the previous stallholders have returned and some new ones have joined too. Items being offered include plants and other things for the garden, preserves, jewellery, knitted and craft goods, herbal teas, pies, cakes, bric a brac, and birdseed to name but a few!

The stallholders give 10% of their takings to the Village Hall Project Fund and since the Market reopened last July £987.21 has been raised. There is quite a gathering too of coffee drinkers each month, which adds to the really nice atmosphere at the market.

16. Bradfield Cricket Club (prepared by Helen Borthwick).

Bradfield Cricket Club has made great progress over the last 10 years since the fire in 2012 and we are hopeful that we can continue to move forward in the next 10 years!

The facilities at the club are superb and we are able to offer a good standard of hospitality to visiting teams. The playing surface and surrounding outfield are well-maintained by volunteers under the leadership of our Head groundsman, Tim and are appreciated by both local and visiting spectators and players. In recent times, we have added practice nets, an electronic score-board and all-weather wicket-covers to our facilities.

Local groups such as the Parish Council have helped with the financing of additional benches and the replacement of trees and most recently the installation of a potential life-saving Defibrillator. We are grateful for their support and other groups and individuals who have made financial contributions.

On the playing front, the club made history last year when it entered three teams in the Thames Valley League for the first time. Unfortunately, the Covid Pandemic had a big influence and affected availability causing a 'knock-on' selection problem across the club. We managed to field three sides on most occasions and were able to introduce a good number of our developing teenage players to a longer and higher level of competitive cricket.

Following a number of years of absence, the club also re-entered the Mid-Week league last season. The team played a Twenty /Twenty format and this proved to be very successful and will be repeated this summer.

The Junior section continues to flourish drawing players from Bradfield Primary and other local schools. We run teams across the Under 15 to Under 9 age ranges in the Berkshire league. Our popular 'All-Stars' course for the Under 7s already has 44 children signed up for this summer and it will be good to see all the youngsters (and their supporting adults!) returning next month on a buzzing Friday evening for practice and BBQ sessions!

The club has a growing number of Associate Members, many of whom come to watch the matches and support the teams. Others attend our social events such as the quizzes or get involved in other ways.

As the club moves forward, we are always looking for members whether it be playing, officiating or helping out. We are part of the Bradfield community and our superb facilities and setting have been much admired and, we hope, will continue to be appreciated by all those who visit the Cricket Club.

17. Bradfield May Fayre (prepared by Rosemary Balsdon).

Bradfield Mayfayre 2022 would have been in its 40th year this year had Covid not got in the way.

But sadly, I have to sincerely apologise on behalf of the Mayfayre Committee; we had to make the decision to cancel the Mayfayre this year. So many things have changed since May 2019 when our lives became governed by rules. Some of our stalwart committee members have stepped down for all sorts of reasons and we have recruited new ones who have stepped up but that is not enough to run without enormous responsibility on a very few members. I don't think many people actually realised just how much work was done by our chairman, Jimmy Balsdon, who very sadly passed away in May 2019. The village and I miss him – he did do so much for the Village. All this means it's not viable to run the Mayfayre in 2022.

We all like to enjoy a fantastic afternoon on bank holiday Monday and catch up with our friends and neighbours but unless we can find some 'yellow shirt' brigade to join the jovial band of Mayfayre helpers it really cannot happen. So please volunteer.

We understand that this a huge blow for our community and especially to those organizations who benefit from the donations that we give out after the event every year.

But we shall with your help run the Mayfayre 2023 so please save the date , Monday, 1st May 2023.

And the Mayfayre committee would like to wish the Community Day this coming bank holiday and the Jubilee Tea party every Good wish for successful and dry days.

18. Bradfield Methodist Burial Board (prepared by Andrew House).

It has been a relatively quiet year for the Bradfield Methodist Burial Board, Tutts Clump in 2021-2022. During this time, we have had two additions to the resident congregation at Tutts Clump. The ashes of Mr William Kennedy arrived in the summer of 2021, and Mrs Sylvia House took up residence in the family grave in November. Neither of the arrivals were from Covid related issues and we have welcomed our lack of trade in the difficult weeks and months of the last couple of years.

Thank you to Bradfield Parish Council for your grant support towards the upkeep and maintenance of this local facility.

19. Bradfield PCC report (prepared by Tony Powell).

Over the last year the church, along with most other organisations, has felt the disruption of the Covid pandemic.

We are now back to our normal service pattern but things are not quite 'as normal' because Jules Gadsby, the priest in charge in this parish has moved on to a new ministry. This means that we are in the process of finding someone new which is something not just for the congregation but for everyone in the parish. Hopefully the school will be having an input and anyone else who wants to be involved should come and talk to us.

We had a lovely celebration of Easter last weekend, and there are other events planned for the rest of the year so keep an eye on Newslink, the parish magazine, and come and join us.

Other parish news is that Bradfield College has now formally taken over St Andrew's church and we are excited to see the building have a new lease of life. The churchyard is still the responsibility of the PCC and we want to thank the Parish Council for their recent grant. Part of that was for the marker posts for the cremated remains area.

20. Bradfield Pre-School (prepared by Tina Collins, not read due to length, but available after the meeting).

I would like to let you know about some of the wonderful things the children have been doing at St. Peter's Preschool over the past year.

As you can imagine, no two days are ever the same, we plan for each term in advance based on the children's interests but these always change as the children develop new skills, thoughts and ideas... which is exactly why we love what we do!

Last **Summer** our topic was about 'Stories and Rhymes'. We looked at classic stories such as Snow White, Red Riding Hood, Goldilocks and the 3 Little pigs. We discussed emotions when we talk about Snow White, looked at safety when finding out about the wolf in Red Riding hood, explored taste when reading about Goldilocks and learnt about perseverance when thinking about how the 3 little pigs got on with house building!

During this term, we decided to purchase a butterfly garden to teach the children about life-cycles. Not only did they get to see for themselves the stages and changes a caterpillar goes through, they also learnt about colour, shape, health and wellbeing. We reinforced their learning by introducing the 'Little Arabella Miller' rhyme and reading The Very Hungry Caterpillar story.

We managed to raise funds via a photographer coming in and the Rags2Riches scheme. Unfortunately, due to restrictions, our annual sports day didn't take place. We were able to purchase a SMART TV with what we had raised this term. This helps us to access the internet and strengthen our learning on certain topics.

Autumn term started quietly as we settled in our new starters. When they were settled, we began our topic which was about 'People who help us'. We set-up our own surgery taking on the roles of Doctors, Nurses and Carers. We learnt how to put people in the recovery position and learnt what number to ring in case we ever need help. We invited PC Baker to visit, he explained to us how the Police force help and care for us, he demonstrated some of the equipment he uses, then he showed us his Police car. As you can imagine the children were very excited to hear the siren and see the blue flashing lights. Thinking about the key-workers that carried on through the pandemic, we looked at shopkeepers, postmasters, delivery services and teachers. We wanted to help the children understand the importance of the different roles people play within our community.

We entered the village scarecrow trail - we recreated the Twinkle Twinkle Little Star rhyme by making a star shaped scarecrow and dangly star pictures of the children, which we hung on the tree outside the church. We were awarded 4th place and the proceeds of the trail. Along with other funding we purchased new signs for the preschool and church.

We then explored our annual celebrations of Halloween, Bonfire Night, Diwali and Christmas. When we discuss Halloween, we always steer the subject off ghosties and ghoulies. This year we introduced the Pumpkin Jack experiment. We bought and carved a pumpkin but left the seeds inside. We then have been watching 'Pumpkin Jack' decompose, we hope he will return again next

year. We bring Halloween, Bonfire Night and Diwali together to enable us to explore light, colours and different textures such as rice, sand, water and glitter.... that you keep finding all year round!

Toward the end of term, we organised our Christmas fundraiser, we had some electrical issues with the village hall, but we still managed to perform our nativity and then move over to the church to have our Christmas fayre. We made flyers and posted them while out on a village walk, we also invited the reception children from Bucklebury Primary, who were able to attend via the Bucklebury Bus. This event helped us raise funds purchase specialised books based on Personal, Social and Emotional development which is a prime area of learning with the EYFS.

Spring term came with a new update of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. The changes have been made to improve outcomes for young children, particularly in language and literacy. With this in mind our key worker system is now based more on the individuality of a child instead of what is 'age appropriate' for the child.

Our topic was 'The Outdoors' - we began by exploring Space. We created our own space station and rocket so we could visit stars, planets, and the moon. We learnt that there's a flag on the moon and attempted to see if it could be seen at night, but it hasn't been spotted yet! For this topic, we took our learning outside as we went in search for mini beasts, spider webs and other animal homes. We made compasses to help us navigate our village walks; while on walks we left some hand painted stones for the village children to find. Then, *as is we had planned it* – we explored weather. With thanks to storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklin, we were able to see the results of what weather can do.

Toward the end of the term, we visited Rushall farm, we had a nice but chilly visit with an Easter egg hunt and Easter bonnet parade. We sent the children home with an Easter goody bag and a 'sponsored find' to keep them active during the Easter break. We had to re-jig our end of term dates due to the way West Berkshire council pay us and where this year's Easter falls. With this in mind, we have decided to set our own term dates for 2022/23 which will be similar to the local schools except for 3 additional days and an early end to Autumn term.

Over the past 18 months we have been raising funds to help complete our garden project. The garden improvement project originally started just before the pandemic so we've been a little disrupted, but I am happy to say that we now have a two-story playhouse, a new see-saw, new colourful fencing with one side becoming a busy wall, new planting and new resources. The Bradfield Parish Council have been very generous by donating funds that have helped with our garden project. Remaining funds will help facilitate educational visitors which will help us prepare our children for school learning.

21. Any other business.

Rosemary Balsdon, thanked Andrew House for all he has done for the parish and for being such a diligent chairman.

Those present were invited to join in light refreshments after the meeting.

22. There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.