

## **Bucklesham Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report May 2025**

It has been another very busy year for Bucklesham Parish Council and my first in the role of Chair.

We welcomed Kathryn McDonald as a new Councillor this year. Kat has already proved herself to be a valued member of the team, bringing a wealth of transferable skills, and we thank her for the contribution she has made to the Council so far.

A further 'thank you' must go to all of our Councillors – we are blessed with a group of volunteers that have a wide range of knowledge and skills, and all of whom give their time and energy to ensure that all things Bucklesham are dealt with honestly, with sincerity, integrity, and independence.

Thanks as always go to our District Councillors, Lee Reeves and Mike Nimnney. Both have continued to support the Parish in all that we have asked of them.

I would like to say a big thank you to our Clerk, Ruth who deserves all the accolades possible. She has continued to conduct herself in a positive, diligent and professional way, constantly keeping us in order and amazingly finding avenues of grant funding to enhance the assets of our Parish. So Ruth, many, many thanks, and we look forward to your continued support in 2025/26.

### **What have we achieved this year:**

- The continued excellent collaboration with our very active Community Council – thanks to all involved, particularly Lynda Seagroatt, who is a fantastic liaison between the two groups, and the rest of the Committee: Jackie Brunning as Chair, Tracey Thompson as Secretary, Lois Mackinlay as Treasurer, David Riddleston and Sarah Hall as Committee members.
- We successfully completed the Community Asset Transfer of the Allotments from East Suffolk Council and have built a good working relationship with all tenants discussing many items. We have installed a new Notice Board, negotiated grass cutting costs and more recently a quote for gates and fencing.
- We presided over many planning applications, often visiting the sites in question, and have built a reputation with East Suffolk Planning Department and local developers as a Parish Council that likes to work *with* residents and ES Planning, and support those who wish to retain and protect our village assets.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds have enabled us to continue to help with Village Hall improvements and on-going maintenance, provide ongoing improvements to the Playing Field, and many new roadside signs.
- We have now seen the completion of Oak Tree View and we welcome all new residents. It has been very encouraging to see so many of those new families joining in with village life.

- We were unsuccessful in our lengthy campaign for a speed reduction on the C375 Brightwell Road to protect the village school and the children therein. We felt we had come to the end of all avenues open to us and passed on the baton to the school children's parents in the hope that they achieve more.
- We dealt with many Highways issues, including the media involvement in getting the footpath from the village to the school free of the dreaded hemlock plant, missing signs, speeding traffic, and uneven and dangerous paths.
- The addition of the bike jumps after a request from some village teenagers and the installation of the accessible roundabout.
- We initiated the New Play Equipment Project and have started the ball rolling with a consultation event, a sponsored Bounce-athon raising over £1,300, and several grant applications. This will be a mammoth task and will no doubt be our main focus over the next year.
- As well as all of the aforementioned (and there may be more), the Parish Councillors have participated in:
  - the Felixstowe Peninsula Partnership;
  - Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) Forums and Conference;
  - extensive Councillor training;
  - an Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) Conference;
  - and planning conferences.

What a year we have had! Moving forward through the next 12 months we will continue to manage our budget as prudently as possible. Our precept balance sheet is under the constant pressure of inflation, and only due diligence will see us remain in the black and achieve the necessary reserves for the future.

In closing, I must record the biggest compliment I have had since my time on the Council, when being elected by my fellow Councillors as Chair. It was in very sad circumstances that the election was necessary and I must pay tribute to our previous Chair and long-standing Councillor, David Brinkley. David was a fantastic Councillor and his knowledge and experience was invaluable. His calming influence is very much missed and we can often hear ourselves as a group asking, 'What would David do?' when we are faced with tricky situations. I hope to be able to continue David's good work.

Once again, thanks to you all for your continued support.

Cllr Clive Lenton

Chair, Bucklesham Parish Council.

## **Bucklesham Village Hall Annual Report for May 2025**

It has been another very busy year for the Village Hall Committee.

Our long standing Cleaner, Bridget, retired in the Summer months after many years service. Lynda's husband, Terry Seagroatt, agreed to step in temporarily at very short notice, and was persuaded to continue in the role on a permanent basis after a few months. Terry and Lynda manage the Hall's cleaning regime as a team and this arrangement has proved to be extremely successful. It is clear to all who use the Hall that it is spotless, and we continue to receive numerous compliments as to the high standard of the cleaning. Terry and Lynda visit the Hall on a daily basis, ensuring that everything is in order for each booking. They have also introduced a number of excellent ideas which has ensured the efficiency of the management of the Hall and improved the experience for all Hall users. Ruth expressed her thanks to both Terry and Lynda for the level of help they have offered her and for easing the burden of the Clerk's role on many occasions.

The Women's Institute have folded so will no longer hire the Hall on a monthly basis. The new Art Club only lasted for 3 months but folded due to lack of numbers, as did the Yoga classes on a Friday evening. All other regular bookings were maintained and bookings for private parties continued to increase. Some village hobby groups have struggled due to low numbers and this is a concern as those groups are facing difficulties in covering the hire charge. Hire charges for these groups were not increased this year.

We successfully received four more Grants. Bucklesham Fuel allotment Charity helped with our fuel bills which had increased considerably again this year. Huge thanks go to the Bucklesham Parish and Community Councils for their continued financial support. This is very much appreciated. The Hall hire charges cover the annual costs of running the Hall but do not allow for anything else. Because of this financial support from the Parish and Community Councils we were able to protect this village asset. We repaired the sprung wooden floor, sanding it and re-varnishing it returning it to its former glory. We also had a cleaning cupboard built for Hall users which has made it easier to insist users clean after themselves. We also improved the hatch area and installed a picture rail and both of these improvements allow hall users to decorate the Hall during their hire if they want to but has ensured the Hall is not damaged with tape and tacks.

The continued success of the Hall is due to the dedicated Committee working together as a great team to protect our fantastic community hub for the whole village, our new fantastic Hall Caretakers, Terry and Lynda, and the Grants we were successfully able to secure from various funds.

The Committee agreed to remove 'and Foxhall' from the name of the Hall as there is no support from Foxhall Parish or Community Councils or Foxhall Fuel Allotment Charity and no Foxhall residents help on the Committee. The original Hall had been 'Bucklesham', the Charity Commission has the Hall registered as just 'Bucklesham' and the original Trust Deeds and Constitution is just 'Bucklesham'. A new sign is on order reflecting the change.

**Mrs Ruth Johnson**, Clerk, Bucklesham Village Hall Committee

# **Bucklesham Community Council**

## **Annual Report 14 May 2025**

The Community Council consists of the following members;

Jackie Brunning – Chair  
Lois MacKinlay - Treasurer  
Tracey Thompson Secretary  
Lynda Seagroatt  
David Riddleston  
Sarah Hall

### Past Events

On 8 June 2024 the Community Council held an afternoon tea party to celebrate D-day in the village hall. Bunting was hung up throughout the village. We tried to replicate a street party in the hall by having rows of tables and decorating the hall in a 1940s theme with flags, blacked out windows, sandbags and newspaper cuttings from the era. The villagers enjoyed afternoon tea and a children's entertainer kept the children amused whilst the adults listened to the singer singing songs of the era. It was well attended and we had a lot of complimentary feedback.

On 18 May and 9 November 2024 we had a craft fair in the village hall which was well attended both times by both stallholders and customers. Stallholders are giving very good feedback and wanting to have their name placed on the list for the next craft fair. We served refreshments and homemade cakes donated by the villagers which are always very popular and raised a good sum of money to help pay for future events.

The Beasts of Bucklesham calendar went to print in September 2024. It proved very popular with villagers supplying photos of their pets, and all 200 copies were sold raising a good amount of money to go into future events.

On 8 September 2024 the Tour of Britain cycle race passed through Bucklesham. The Community Council hung up bunting near the school field and were kindly allowed to use the school field to invite villagers to gather there to see the race pass. Cow bells and flags of various nationalities were handed to those attending to encourage the cyclists on their way. A representative from Twisted Oak Bike park kindly attended and anyone could bring their bike for a free check-up.

On 5 May 2025 the Community Council held an afternoon tea party to celebrate VE Day in the village hall. As before with the D-day celebrations, bunting was hung up throughout the village and the hall was decorated with bunting, flags and some wonderful enlarged black and white photos of the celebrations which took place at the time. Once again afternoon tea was served and the children's entertainer and singer provided the entertainment. This event was again well attended and we even had a waiting list. The

Community Council also provided special commemorative VE Day badges which were given to any villager over the age of 80 years old.

On 8 May the beacon was lit to commemorate VE day and the community council provided the bugler and the singer as entertainment.

The Community Council has also made donations from profits towards the village hall repairs and to the new playing field equipment.

#### Future Events

The Community Council plan to hold a craft fair twice a year as these are very popular. We also are planning to have a Scarecrow trail.

### **Bucklesham Primary School Report May 2025**

It has certainly been another busy year at Bucklesham as we continue to encourage all children to 'work hard and aim high'. Last July we had a visit from Ofsted to confirm our current 'good' status. They said that 'this small, caring school has a big vision for children's lives'. We certainly think we live out this big vision for children with the breadth of experiences and opportunities that we offer the children. They went on to say that 'pupils like their school and they attend regularly. They are happy and safe because staff have pupils' physical and mental welfare at the forefront of their minds. If pupils ever have a concern they can turn to a teacher for help. Pupils' behaviour is calm and respectful because of their teachers' high expectations'.

The children have enjoyed a lot of curriculum enrichment activities around our locality such as trips to Foxburrow Farm and beach school at Languard Nature Reserve in Felixstowe as well as further afield to London with our older children. The younger children have visited Bucklesham Church for a pancake race on Shrove Tuesday and Rev Nick is regularly attending to do assemblies at school. We have had theatre groups and author visits in school to inspire the children. Our gardening club are just finishing a garden for the Suffolk Show so please come and see us on the stand on the Wednesday morning and say hello. We have been working with Suffolk Wildlife Trust on a 'Wilder Schools' project to set up a Forest School area within our grounds and to educate the children about protecting our habitats around school. Coastal MP Jenny Riddell-Carpenter has also visited school to chat to myself and Head Pupils about the 60mph speed limit and some of the issues we face in education. She has been helpful in raising these issues with Suffolk County Council.

We have a few spaces in some of our year groups; please contact us if you would like to have a tour of our school or to get involved in volunteering.

Miss Rachael Rudge, Head Teacher