



Report for Bawdsey 2015

Village Hall and Recreation Ground: As in most villages, the village hall is at the heart of the community and holds regular events throughout the year. Bawdsey's village hall and recreation ground is not administered by the parish council but is a Charitable Trust (Charity no.1090564), set up in 1976 and hence has its own committee. In 2015 the village hall obtained funding to buy a large industrial cooker and heater run by Calor gas which will make it invaluable as a Rest Centre in case of an Emergency. The following events took place in 2015-16.

Deben Dip: 14 swimmers braved the water on New Year's Day and raised £152.50 for the Bawdsey Quay Visitor centre.

Bawdsey Wassail: On Sunday 25th January, at the instigation of a French resident, a group met at the amenity area near Bawdsey Quay where the trees were blessed by Rev Ruth Hatchett and wassail songs were sung after which the group retired to the village hall for homemade soup.

Marmalade making Day: On Thursday 29th January residents were invited to come along and make marmalade together for the price of £5.

Jumble sale: Held on Saturday 21st February this raised £520.

Easter Egg Hunt: Held on Good Friday at the VH, this event also invited adults to sample homemade hot cross buns and hot drinks. £100 was raised for BQVC.

Village fete and Dog Show: A cold cloudy day did not deter visitors to this popular event on the May Bank Holiday Monday which raised £4,500.

Car Boot and Garage Sale: Another popular event in September raised £228 for the BQVC.

Firework Night: This annual event took place on Thursday 5th November at the bottom of East Lane on a field owned by the local farmer, Chris Mann. A creditable display for such a small village.

Christmas Lunch: The Coffee and Chat group which meets on the first Thursday of each month held their annual Christmas lunch on Thursday 3rd December with everybody bringing a plate of food.

Carol Singing: Villagers met up on Friday 18th December to sing from door to door collecting money for the Children's Society.

Winter Talks: In the winter months, the Bawdsey Haven Yacht Club holds talks of general interest. In previous years, they have been held at Bawdsey Manor but permission has been withdrawn so these took place in the village hall. Robert Simper, local farmer, gave a talk in January on Farming in the Sandlings. February's talk was Orford Lighthouse and in March Cruising in Europe by Richard Hare, all well attended.

The Medieval Port in Bawdsey was the subject of a fundraising talk in November given by Peter Wain, Chair of the Bawdsey Quay Visitor Centre working group. Subtitled A Tale of Wine, a Woman and Pirates it attracted a big audience and raised £231.73. Gosford as the area was called was an important port in the 14th century with significant trade with Calais, then an English outpost.

Bawdsey Market: The market ran from June-October once a month in the village hall selling local produce. Bawdsey Market was a runner-up in the Suffolk Coastal Business and Communities Awards held at Milsom's in Kesgrave. A grant to purchase a banner to advertise the market was obtained through district Councillor Christine Block.



Bawdsey Quay Visitor Centre: In 2013 Suffolk Coastal District Council offered to hand over to Bawdsey Parish Council a large amenity area at Bawdsey Quay. The council agreed to this plan on the condition that the council would pay for an independent sewage and water supply. (These facilities came from Bawdsey Manor in the past.) Since that time a Working Group of the PC has been working tirelessly on a plan to build a modern visitor centre on the site. A business partner was chosen, Di Clouting, who will run a cafe on the site. Di already runs the Boathouse cafe at the Quay.

Many fundraising activities took place over the course of the year together with successful grant applications including one for £8,000 from the Suffolk Empowering Communities fund which has paid for an architect, Modece Architects of Hartest to design a green VC. Match funding of £3,500 was obtained by locality grants and the Parish Council gave £5,000. Fundraising activities by the community raised £950. SCDC has also awarded a capital grant of £10,000 and a revenue grant of £4,090. Furthermore an Amenity and Accessibility grant of £6,000 has been awarded specifically to build an outdoor classroom on the amenity site. In order to raise awareness and foster community engagement, a plan to install 40 bird and bat boxes in the amenity area, paid for by residents who will sponsor a box was initiated. Some 20 boxes have been sponsored to date at a cost of £20 each.

Plans have been slowed down by the necessity of conducting soil investigations to determine the ground conditions for the build and it has emerged that pilings will be necessary. A business plan is underway and when this has been approved by the parish council and the district council, the transfer of land will take place.

Coastal Matters: Bawdsey is very vulnerable to coastal erosion and to flooding. Furthermore there is the danger of people getting into trouble along this stretch of the coast and nowadays people smuggling is also an issue. Woodbridge and District Safer Neighbourhood Team included immigration and smuggling between Bawdsey and Orford in its list of January priorities. In January the traditional New Year Ferry and Refreshments to raise funds for Felixstowe Volunteer Coastal Patrol Rescue Service raised £1,063. A new group called Bawdsey Coastal Partnership was set up comprising landowners and representatives from interested parties to think up ways to protect the coastline. The Deben Estuary Plan was adopted by Suffolk Coastal District Council, the first of such plans in the UK, masterminded by Cll Christine Block, a Bawdsey resident.

Housing: House prices in Bawdsey are above the national average and over 30% of the houses in the village are second homes. The old cottages are often bought as weekend retreats, a case in point being a 3 bed-roomed terrace house which sold at £245,000 (originally priced at £275,000) this year. None of the whole row of five cottages is lived in full time. A larger semi-detached cottage with a generous garden sold at £321,000 bought by retirees this time. The problem of affordable houses for locals is very real.

New housing in Bawdsey is often contentious. This was not the case with the two new executive-style houses built on a field next to Cranes Garage which sold for £490,000 and £475,000 respectively.



More controversial was the decision to grant planning permission for 13 houses to be built in a meadow behind Bawdsey Primary School against the recommendation of the parish council but approved by the primary school which needs higher pupil numbers. The original planning application was for 26 houses so the likelihood is that the smaller number will be big family houses. This means that the village envelope has been extended to include School Meadow.

Bawdsey Radar Trust: The Trust put in for a bid of £1.4 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2015 to transform the transmitter block, home to the radar museum, to a modern facility and to fund an exhibition to make it a fun and vibrant attraction. The Transmitter Block was part of the world's first operational radar stations. Radar played a vital role in the Battle of Britain and was the starting point for many world-changing inventions. Match funding of £300,000 is needed and May Wain Chair of the Trust put out a plea for donations. The Transmitter Block was open 12 times this year including a free Open Day to mark the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. (Mary and Peter Wain with re-enactor WRAF and volunteer)



Shingle Street: This pretty seaside hamlet is part of Bawdsey parish. On Saturday September 26th they ran an event entitled Time and Tide-A Day of Shingle Street Nostalgia, serving teas and exhibiting old photos of the village together with a Classic Car Display.

Bawdsey Manor: Now a private language school, the Manor held an Open Gardens event on Saturday 9th May 2-4pm in aid of the East Anglian Air Ambulance. A £5 entrance fee was charged. The Manor is in receipt of English Heritage funding for the renovation of its Dragon Tower and one of the conditions is to allow access to the building once a year.



Election Year: Five of the eight parish councillors stood down in May 2015. Seven residents put their names forward and an election was held. The names of the new councillors were Richard Tricker, Mark Dovey, David Baker, Tony Osmanski and Chris Mann. David Baker, Vice-Chair, resigned in November and the council are looking to co-opt a new councillor.

St Mary's Church ran a Flower Festival on 4th and 5th July on the theme of Memories of the Sea, raising £506.80 for church funds. In September there was a Battle of Britain Service. The church was a designated RAF church for personnel of Bawdsey Manor when it belonged to the RAF. Success in that heroic battle was assisted by the development of radar before WW2. £156.29 was forwarded to the RAF Benevolent Fund. The annual Harvest Festival service took place in late September with pupils from Bawdsey primary School holding a separate service at the church on the Friday before. A popular Harvest Supper took place in October.

The Reverend Ruth Hatchett together with the vicar of the adjoining parish travelled to Calais in October with a carload of winter clothes, toiletries and shoes for migrants in the camps there.

Remembrance Day Service was held on Sunday 8th November with a poppy wreath laying ceremony at the Memorial in the Memorial Gardens.

Bawdsey Primary School: A new nursery class started up in September 2015. It is hoped that this will lead to higher pupil numbers. The acting head Rob Duncan was confirmed in his post this year.

Jenny Webb

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