

# **Bawdsey Parish Council**

## **Chairman's Report 2014 – 2015**

### **Council Meetings**

Bawdsey Parish Council (BPC) met six times in addition to the AGM, for its regular meetings. There were also several planning meetings and a number of special meetings on particular topics, such as the Local Plan Review and parking & highway issues.

### **External Meetings**

Throughout the year Parish Councillors have attended meetings on behalf of the Council. These have included SALC; Alde & Ore Association and the Alde & Ore Estuary Partnership; Police Forum; Deben Estuary Partnership; Green Print Forum; Environment Agency coastal meetings; Emergency Planning briefings; etc.

The attendance of individual councillors and their feedback ensures that Bawdsey PC is well informed and briefed on current issues.

### **Planning Matters**

For details of individual **Planning Applications** – See the Planning Applications Table.

Consideration of Planning Applications continues to be a major part of the Council's workload and this year there has been a major Review of the SCDC Local Plan, especially the Site Specific Allocations, and a major proposed development in School Lane to consider. The latter Application is now withdrawn but obviously, a new Application may arise.

### **Bawdsey Community Amenity Area**

A major activity for the Parish Council again this year has been the Amenity Area at Bawdsey Quay. SCDC had offered this to BPC but on condition that BPC maintain the existing services, including the public toilets. The Working Group, led by Peter Wain, has made excellent progress this year. A number of grants have been obtained to enable all the preparatory work, such as obtaining planning permission and undertaking site surveys etc. to be undertaken.

The major highlights this year have been

1. Agreement with SCDC to transfer the Amenity Area and provide up to £180k to provide independent sewage and water supplies to the Amenity Area.
2. Planning Permission for the Visitor Centre / Café has been obtained.
3. An outline Agreement with our Business Partner (Di Clouting) has been signed.
4. Grants and donations totalling £17k have been obtained.
5. Plans, structural engineer reports, soil analyses and site surveys have been produced.

### **Emergency Planning**

This topic will be covered in the Vice Chair's report.

### **Coastal Protection**

When the Parish Council were involved in the preparation of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), we were always making the point; it was pointless to defend the coast, if the sea could flood in through the

Estuaries. This eventually led to the Estuary Partnerships being formed, particularly the Deben EP and the Alde & Ore EP. These have now developed good plans to defend the estuaries. However, meantime little has been done on coastal protection. For the last 3 winters, emergency works have been undertaken at the north end of the “East Lane” rock revetment, but this has done little more than move the point of attack further northwards. So we have now come full circle and we are in danger of defending the estuaries and not the coast. To this end a new Partnership has been formed, the Bawdsey Coastal Partnership”, to come up with plans to defend the Bawdsey coastline. This has already commissioned a report into future options, which will be presented in June 2015.

### **Policing & Safer Neighbourhood Team**

The Mobile Police Station continued its monthly visits to the village and many villagers continue to find it very useful. There have been 10 crimes reported in Bawdsey this year. (see the SNT Report for further details).

**Village Hall & Recreation Ground Committee** – The Parish Council gave £500 to the VH&RGC to make the Village Hall self sufficient in an emergency. For further information – see the Emergency Planning Section in the Vice Chair’s report

### **Bawdsey CEVCP School**

The 3 major highlights this year have been

1. The school was inspected by Ofsted in June 2014 and was awarded an overall Good Rating, with some areas being Outstanding. This was an excellent result given that the school had an acting Head Teacher at the time.
2. Following Mr Green’s resignation in spring 2014, the Governors undertook a detailed analysis of the best way forward for the school, considering options such as; a further partnership, a 2 or more school Federation or reverting to a single Teaching Head for the School. This final option (of a teaching Head) was the result of the study.
3. In October 2014, Mr Rob Duncan was appointed as the Head Teacher, after a rigorous selection process.

### **Bawdsey Website**

Having launched the Website in 2013, it has been a struggle to maintain it these past 2 years. Jenny Webb, our new Clerk, will gradually start to put more material on the site.

### **East Anglia Offshore Wind (EAOW)**

After a fairly quiet year on the offshore Windfarm front, we have just learnt that EAOW 1 will go ahead but at a reduced capacity from the initial application. For that reason, they are now proposing to bring the power ashore as AC (Alternating Current) rather than DC (Direct Current). They announced this change in the run-up to the election and claim it is a minor change. However, the Subcommittee and the new Parish Council will need to investigate this further.

### **Parish Precept**

The Parish Precept (the sum raised for Parish expenditure through the Council Tax) was increased from £6,300 in 2014/15 to £6,600 in 2015/16. This was a rise of 4.76% and was agreed in order to raise our

reserves, partly to assist with the planning of the Amenity Centre work and partly to anticipate further activities being devolved from the County and District down to the Parish. This Precept of £6,600 equates to £32.35p for a Band 'D' Property and there are currently 195 households paying Council Tax in Bawdsey.

### **Donations**

A donation was made to the VH&RGC for making the Village Hall an emergency centre. (see above.) The Parish Council is yet to make its regular donations to local charities and it is intended to seek the views of Parishioners at the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Parish Council laid a wreath at the Remembrance Day Service to commemorate the Centenary of the start of the First World War.

### **Acknowledgments**

On behalf of the whole Parish Council, I would like to thank the following:

1. SCDC Cllr Christine Block who again has been invaluable to the Parish Council, with her advice and support on so many issues, especially planning, coastal & estuary issues, footpaths and car parking and SCDC strategic thinking. (see also 4.)
2. SCC Cllr Andrew Reid for his attendance and support on County wide issues and for generally keeping us apprised of SCC thinking.
3. PC Karen Clabburn and the rest of the Safer Neighbourhood Team.
4. Peter Wain, Graham Smith, Jacky Mercer, Graham Turner (BPC Chair), Brian Johnson (BPC VC), Rawdon Saunders (BPC) and Liz Mark (BPC), Di Clouting (Partner) and Christine Block (SCDC) for their work on the BCAA project. Peter and Christine in particular, have put a considerable amount of time and effort into this project.
5. Rawdon Saunders (BPC), Sandra Carter and Richard Tricker for their continuing 'watching brief' on the EAOW Windfarm Applications.
6. Ray Kay for again auditing the PC accounts in advance of the External Audit. This is the ninth year Ray has audited our accounts for us and he audits at least 4 other Parish Council accounts, so we are truly indebted to him.
7. Our Parish Clerk, Jenny Webb. Jenny only joined us as Clerk last autumn but already has become an invaluable support to me and the Council.

Finally, this is my last Report as Chairman, as I step down to concentrate on my others roles and to spend more time with my two new grandchildren. I have enjoyed my time as Councillor and being Chairman and will remain friends with all the Councillors and Clerks who I have worked with over the past 12 years. My last major activity was to persuade a number of new people to stand for election, so I know the Parish Council will carry on in excellent hands.

Graham Turner – Retiring BPC Chairman