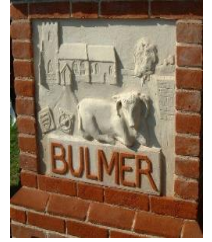




# Bulmer Parish Council

Mrs Claire Waters (Parish Clerk)  
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## ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 7.30pm, Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023 held at Bulmer Village Hall

The Annual Parish Assembly is not a Council Meeting – it is for people and groups of the Village to publicly talk about local activities and celebrate our community

**Present:** Cllrs Crawshay, Harvey, Nichols, Raymond  
**In the Chair:** Cllr Raymond  
**Clerk:** Claire Waters  
**Also Present:** 9 parishioners and representatives of village groups

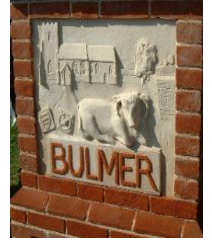
## MINUTES

<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	<b>Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday 16th May 2022</b> The minutes were approved as a correct record of events and signed by the Chairman
<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	<p><b>Chairman's report for Bulmer Parish Council 2022/23 – Cllr R Raymond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome to everyone. The last year has been hard for everyone with the cost of living going up. As a Council we have tried our best to keep our costs down and cut back where possible but we do have a lot of grass and hedges that need looking after</li> <li>• I would like to thank Cathey Ponty and Mike Hall for being part of the Council last year and doing a major part of sorting out the Platinum Jubilee beacon. They will be missed</li> <li>• We do have a new Councillor who will be joining us in May so let's hope she will bring fresh ideas and ways of looking at things</li> <li>• Last year we bought the bench at the Village Hall and the beacon to mark our late Queen's Platinum Jubilee.</li> <li>• I would like to thank Barbara Rawlins and her team who keep us up to date with delivering flyers and the What's Going On newsletter, which Cllr Laurence Nichols has taken on. I know he would like help in filling the pages so if you have any news please let him know.</li> <li>• Barbara also manages the litter picking team and we are lucky to have a very good team but I know any new volunteers will be welcomed</li> <li>• Mike Crome has been busy managing the allotments on behalf of the Parish Council and keeping things in order, thank you Mike</li> <li>• We are very lucky to have Maggie Skipper and her team who run the Village Hall and Skylarks</li> <li>• Cllr Nichols along with Cllr Crawshay and Cllr Harvey keep an eye on Coes Meadow and runs working parties with volunteers. They have been good this year at keeping the costs down and have requested only £1500 grant from the Parish Council for 2023-24, helping us to keep the precept down</li> <li>• As we move forward we have to look at ways of letting the village develop and grow.</li> <li>• Parking seems to be a big problem in the village and I would ask people to think when and where they leave their cars</li> <li>• We are going to try letting Church Meadow (School Meadow) grow wild to help the wildlife in the village and hopefully help with the carbon footprint of us all</li> <li>• We have an ongoing problem with kerbs and roadsign repairs needed which we keep asking for help from Essex Highways but they don't seem to think we are important enough to deal with the problems. We can only keep plugging away at this.</li> <li>• Lastly I would like to thank Claire, our clerk who does more than anyone would think behind the scenes to keep us running and legal – thank you Claire</li> </ul>



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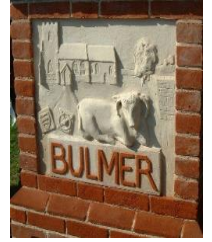


<p><b>ECC</b></p>	<p><b>Cllr Peter Schwier: Essex County Council report</b></p> <p>Cllr Schwier referred residents to his full annual report which will be put on the Bulmer website or alternatively a printed copy can be requested from the Parish Clerk. He keeps the whole Hedinghams Division of 33 parishes updated by triaging information and forwarding important emails to Parish Councils via the clerks. Cllr Schwier covered the ECC budget, and the pressures on services at the County Council, with continued delivery of services remaining a top priority. His role as Climate Czar for ECC means he works across various ECC portfolio areas, liaises with organisations and businesses and gives opinions at Westminster on climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycling: BDC is the collection authority and ECC is responsible for the disposal of all waste. Performance on recycling is good but the aim with the help of residents is always to do better.</li> <li>• Highways: Cllr Schwier does his best but cannot always fix the problem. Essex is one of the largest counties in the country and funding doesn't meet demand. A new method of pothole repair is being trialled using Kevlar and recycled plastic. Apart from reporting problems on the Essex Highways online page <a href="https://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us">https://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us</a>, he urged residents to use the Emergency Highways phone number 0345 603 7631 if public safety is at risk.</li> <li>• Potholes: a resident queried the poor quality of repairs with the fix not properly sealed. Cllr Schwier explained that a temporary pothole fill is often used, before a proper repair with a tarmac seal is done later.</li> <li>• Footpath at A131: A resident reported the footpath being too narrow to use due to untrimmed verges and hedges. Cllr Schwier responded that property owners have responsibility for their own trees and hedges. It was noted that overgrowth of grass and weeds on verges is a problem, and fly tipping in roadside ditches makes it difficult for landowners to trim them</li> <li>• Cllr Schwier urged everyone to keep reporting to BDC for emergency verge cuts and fly tipping and ECC for highways issues. An accurate location is essential and he recommended residents use what3words <a href="https://what3words.com/">https://what3words.com/</a> as this pinpoints an issue to a precise 3 metre square on the map</li> <li>• Cllr Schwier was thanked for his efforts on behalf of Bulmer Parish Council, including assistance with an ongoing parking problem which is not easy to solve.</li> </ul>
<p><b>BDC</b></p>	<p><b>Braintree District Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Wendy Scattergood was unable to attend the meeting and is retiring at the May election. The Chairman expressed thanks for everything Cllr Scattergood had done for the village during her terms of office, in particular on issues regarding planning. She wished her on behalf of the Parish Council a very happy retirement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ALL MEMBERS</b></p>	<p><b>GUEST SPEAKERS - Representatives of village groups and organisations:</b></p> <p><b>Bulmer Village Hall: Maggie Skipper</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Village Hall is a charity, and the Parish Council is the custodian of the deeds to the land. The hall is hired out for parties, meetings and clubs. Covid did some damage to the usage but groups are now coming back</li> <li>• Decorating at the hall is now completed and the next stage is to upgrade facilities starting with new crockery.</li> <li>• Coronation events are being arranged working closely with the church. The afternoon tea was planned for a maximum of 40, but 60 tickets have now been sold.</li> <li>• Village Hall future: There are concerns about the ongoing management of the hall with many current committee members stepping down as they get older. They have requested additional committee members with no response at all. By the end of the year, the hall may have to close if there are not enough people on the committee. They are looking for new ideas and the Village Hall AGM takes place on 24<sup>th</sup> May – please come along</li> </ul> <p><b>Skylarks: Maggie Skipper</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skylarks was set up 15 -16 years ago and fills a need for people to socialise who may be on</li> </ul>



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their own or retired. There are currently 29 members, this has reduced from 40 since Covid as some people became more anxious about socialising. It's a social club and certainly not just for old people. It also provides a single point of access to help and support for anyone who needs it. Visiting groups include Community 360 and a library is also run with donated books. Anyone in the village, male or female, who is on their own is welcome. Everyone is very friendly so please encourage others to join us.

## **St Andrews Church: Liz Fulcher**

- Work to Church tower is now completed at a cost of £45,000. £10,000 of this was granted from Friends of Essex Churches
- Re-ordering of the Church interior – this work is ongoing. We are still waiting for approval from the Chelmsford Diocesan Registry. We are hoping it will not be much longer before permission is granted.
- We welcomed Rev Claire Wilkingson to our team in July. Rev Claire is responsible for Great Henny, Lamarsh, Alphamstone, Middleton and Bulmer churches. Rev Kate Sale was priested in October and will be here in the North Hinckford team for 3 years to complete her training
- We have a new contractor for the grass cutting in the churchyard at a more competitive price. He has done one cut so far. A wildflower area has been sectioned off behind the church overlooking Vicar's Orchard. The lower churchyard is now full for future burials. An area in the south east corner of the old churchyard next to Church Meadow where it backs on to the houses in Church Road will be used in the future
- The organ tuner is looking out for a second organ to replace our current instrument
- There was a joint venture with the Village Hall Committee in arranging the Fish and Chip lunch to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on 5<sup>th</sup> June last year. We held a Strawberry Cream tea in church the day before to celebrate the Jubilee. Thanks to all from the village who provided scones and cakes
- We will be holding a coffee morning in the Church on the morning of 9<sup>th</sup> September during the Ride and Stride event (see below). Everyone in the village is warmly welcome

## **St Andrews Church: Revd Kate Sale**

- Ride & Stride event 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The benefice of north Hinckford is 100m square and all the benefice churches are joining in this event to raise funds for the 15 churches which will all be open on the day with their own individual events planned. Participants walk or cycle between churches and raise money through sponsorship. A map has been drawn up, Bulmer is central and has the largest church so being used as a starting point. A BBQ and bar are planned at Bulmer Village Hall.

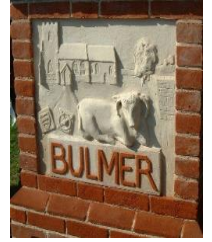
## **St Andrews C of E Primary School: Helen Padgett (Governor)**

- The federation between St Giles' Great Maplestead and St Andrew's Bulmer continues to flourish. At the beginning of this year Wethersfield C of E Primary joined the federation which has become the Chorus Federation
- While budgets are tight and costs increasing, the federation has helped considerably with savings resulting in the quality of education being enhanced at St Andrew's. At the beginning of the academic year in September the school continued to have four classes. There are currently 77 children on the school roll with 20 children applying for 15 reception places in the autumn term. The school has 11 children attending from Bulmer
- The federation continues to provide opportunities for the children to work together on shared experiences. This has included learning, sport and trips out for all three schools, for example a recent Young Shakespeare workshop on A Midsummer Night's Dream at St Andrews. The school continues to provide sports coaches and a music specialist for music tuition. We recently introduced i-rock band lessons in drums, keyboard and electric guitar. The emphasis, as always, is on delivering a broad and balanced curriculum experience.
- The school has brought all of its library and class book stock up to date through the School



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	<p>Library Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pebbles pre-school continues to work well with the school and now have school lunches provided by St Andrews</li> <li>• We now have a dedicated outdoor learning leader who is just about to complete her Forest School leader training. All classes are taken over to Bakers Field which is now known as Bakers Wood. New equipment has been bought and an externally sourced woodland management plan has been written.</li> <li>• The school received a 'Good' result in its recent SIAMS inspection. <i>"The vision is lived out in the school. It is exemplified in the high-level provision, organisation and creativity in pace to respond to the needs of all"</i></li> <li>• Please see the schools' website for more information and regular news <a href="https://www.sab.sgasa.uk/">https://www.sab.sgasa.uk/</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Allotments Officer: Written report from Mike Crome, read by the clerk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the current high cost of living, I am pleased to say the allotments continue to provide not only home grown produce for tenants, but an income to the Parish Council of over £500 per year, as a result of all plots having tenants and no waiting list.</li> <li>• The recent decision by the Council to agree for another stand pipe to be installed for the delivery of water to the far side of the allotments is very much welcome. This will also solve issues where hoses are dragged across other plots damaging crops. Hopefully this will be installed in time for the summer season. <i>The clerk confirmed that quotes are being sought for a final decision to be made, hopefully at the May Parish Council meeting</i></li> <li>• The decision to charge a refundable deposit of £50 to new tenants has not caused any issues. This is to cover the cost of clearing the plot in the event this is necessary when an agreement is terminated. Unfortunately, there is one plot that is in an unsatisfactory condition and not being used, but the tenant continues to pay the rent. Their agreement in this case was prior to deposit being charged. The tenant next to this plot has complained about the perimeter weeds of this plot now invading his plot.</li> <li>• News is awaited on the proposed installation of the UKPN power transformer being installed near the main entrance, in order that tenants can be informed. <i>The clerk confirmed there is no confirmed date yet for work to start</i></li> <li>• The cutting of the grass perimeter by Councils contractor is welcomed.</li> <li>• I understand that invoices for allotments, garden and grazing rents will in future be produced and sent out by the Parish Clerk, I will provide any assistance required to complete the task.</li> </ul> <p><b>Neighbourhood Watch: Written report from Tom Dickinson</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bulmer Neighbourhood Watch is alive and well. We continue with our 14 local co-ordinators covering all parts of the Bulmer Parish area. Details are available on the village website <a href="https://e-voice.org.uk/bulmerpc/neighbourhood-watch/">https://e-voice.org.uk/bulmerpc/neighbourhood-watch/</a> Assistance and advice can be obtained by contacting any of the co-ordinators.</li> <li>• Luckily we continue to be a low crime area and long may it continue.</li> <li>• Tom Dickinson, Lead Co-Ordinator. Should anyone wish to be added to the email list or act as a co-ordinator please contact me by email at <a href="mailto:solomoncount@gmail.com">solomoncount@gmail.com</a> or phone 01787 370016</li> </ul>
<p><b>ALL MEMBERS</b></p>	<p><b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/ QUESTION &amp; ANSWER SESSION</b></p> <p><b>Rev Kate Sale:</b> Given the rewilding of Church Meadow, will overflow car parking from the village hall be available for the Ride &amp; Stride event on 9<sup>th</sup> September?</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Agenda item for May meeting. The clerk will confirm with the grass cutting contractor the expected timing of the autumn cut and rake of Church Meadow</p>
<p><b>CHAIRMAN</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Close of Annual Parish Assembly – the meeting closed at 20.29pm</b></li> </ul>