



Blofield Parish Council

Newsletter 8

September 2023



It has been a while since our last newsletter as the Council has been really busy. Included in this newsletter are updates on the new school, the old school, renovations at the Courthouse, new bridges and foot paths and recent funding success.

NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN BLOFIELD

As the population of the Parish continues to grow, there is inevitable pressure on our existing, well used village halls, and increasing demand for new community facilities. The Parish Council currently holds significant section 106 and CIL monies accumulated over several years and it is the intention to use these funds to invest in new facilities at the old School site, which will be transferred from Norfolk County Council to the Parish Council on completion of the new school.



EIBE—Initial proposal for the old school site

approved funding of £370K for play equipment projects in the Parish following a grant application to them by the Parish Council. It is anticipated that work may start late 2023 / early 2024.

The Parish Council has developed some early ideas for the new community hub at the old School site and is keen to consult with all residents to ensure that any investment at the site provides facilities and activities that truly meet the needs and aspirations of the local community. Please help us by completing a brief survey / attending a drop-in session to consider the options and possibilities for the new community facilities.

The survey will be open from October 1st, throughout the month of October and can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BlofieldResidentSurvey>

or via the QR code.



The drop-in session will be held on Tuesday 24th October from 2.00pm to 7.00pm at Blofield Courthouse. The session offers an opportunity to ask questions and give your feedback to representatives from the Parish Council and to our consultant advisors, FMG Consulting, who have been appointed by Broadland District Council. If you have any questions about the survey or drop-in session, please contact Tim Mills at FMG Consulting.

Email: timmills@fmgconsulting.co.uk

This work is funded by the UK Government
through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund



Good News on recent funding efforts

The Parish Council are aware that times are increasingly difficult due to the cost of living crisis, so it worked hard to set the Parish Precept (the amount each household contributes to the parish) at last years figures. But the cost of living also affects the services and facilities within the parish so the Council continues to work hard to increase parish funds by applying for grants. We have recently been awarded :

- £5,000 from Cllr. Andrew Proctor members grant
- £7,000 from Green Infrastructure Officer at Broadland DC
- £5,000 from the Conservation Department at Broadland DC
- £500 from Cllr .Paul Newstead members grant, Broadland DC
- £12,000 from the Parish Partnership Scheme—Norfolk County Council
- £370,000 from National Highways for play equipment
- Award of a grant to conduct a feasibility study to look at developing the old school site



Applications for this year's grants are currently being submitted.

On July 21st Norfolk County Council approved the planning application for a new school off Plantation Road, Blofield. The entrance will be from the new access road which will be shared with the Blofield Surgery. The new road is already well under construction and it is hoped that work will commence on the new school in October this year with the pupils moving into the new complex towards the end of 2024. As part of this project a zebra crossing and a raised platform at the junction of North Street and Plantation Road will be installed to increase road safety.

New School Update

Once the move is complete the old school playing field and the single classroom (just in front of the vehicular access) will be transferred to the Parish Council for open community space. This won't happen immediately as the playing field will still be required by the School until their new play area is established, but this should be no later than the Summer of 2025.



Land Transfer

The two small parcels of land in Farman Way have now been formally transferred to the Parish Council. The larger area, to the north of the site is still owned by Broadland District Council, but the Parish Council are working with them to start establishing the site. This area is due to be transferred to the Parish Council once the new school is complete. Out of the 120 saplings the Parish Council and BADCOG planted in January this year, we are pleased that 114 of them seem to be thriving.

Dualling of the A47 from Blofield to North Burlingham

This road project was approved earlier this year following a legal challenge, but that decision has now been referred to the Court of Appeal. As part of this project the main gas line is to be relocated and works for this have already begun, regardless of the outcome of the appeal. This will result in some road closures so please see the Parish Council website for up to date details.

The Parish Council and Blofield Allotment committee members have been working closely with National Highways and their partners Galliford Try to mitigate any disruption.



Marty's Marsh

The west bank of the culvert and the underside of the wall of the culvert by the main entrance to Marty's Marsh have recently been reinforced to prevent under scouring by the water. This work should mean the culvert is structurally sound for many years to come. Final works to support the resident eels and allow them to travel upstream will take place shortly. A footpath has recently been installed from the main gate of Marty's Marsh from Blofield Road, it heads south towards the Lackford run where a pedestrian bridge is to be installed to create a path through to Cremers Meadow. Construction of the bridge is due to commence once all approvals have been granted and it is a joint project with Brundall Parish Council. The new footpath will be completed following the construction of the bridge. The bridge has been delayed due to the presence of water voles which are a protected species. The Parish Council would like to thank Norfolk Rivers Drainage Board for their help with obtaining planning

permission and environmental permits to allow all the work to go ahead and for all the works on site. Grants were applied for from Broadland District Council - Green Infrastructure Officer, Norfolk County Council's Parish Partnership Scheme, Cllr .Andrew Proctor members fund to top up the funding from the Parish Council.

Norfolk Wildlife Trust have also kindly donated some scythes and rakes to assist with the maintenance of the area and Richard Codling, a Parish Tree warden, made and installed an owl box.



Marty's Marsh new footpath to river



Regular work parties are organised by 'The Friends of Marty's Marsh' to help maintain this area. These are normally held for a couple of hours on a Saturday morning. If you would like to help please contact the clerk who will give your details to the organiser. Dates are normally on the Parish Council website and everyone is welcome.

Surgery Extension Update

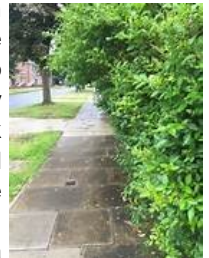
We are pleased to announce that the much needed extension to our practice is now taking place. The extension will provide more clinical space, a larger dispensary and a refurbished reception area to serve our growing population. We are excited about the opportunities this will present the practice in offering a wider range of clinical services to our patients as well as giving more space to grow our current clinical team. The project will take around 10 months to complete. Our practice and services will be operating as usual during this time.

Katie Doughty—Practice Manager

Hedges and Trees

Homeowners are again reminded that if their hedges or trees border a public footpath then it is their responsibility to cut these back to the edge of the footpath. Overgrown hedges obstructing the footpath can be reported to NCC Highways, who if they have to, will trim back overhanging vegetation and charge the individual home owner(s) for this work.

On walking the village a number of footpaths are now severely restricted by some hedges.



NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE ACTION PLEASE

Blofield Courthouse

Following the article in our previous newsletter the Council is pleased to announce that the restoration of the Cupola has been completed at the top of the Courthouse. It required listed building consent to be totally removed and rebuilt whilst keeping as much of the original as possible. The Parish Council has worked closely with the Conservation Officer at Broadland District Council and would like to thank him for kindly granting us £5,000 towards the restoration. The corroded cast iron down pipes have also been replaced to stop the water damage and help alleviate damp in the solicitors room and there has been some re-pointing of the brick work. As a listed building, routine maintenance is a priority to fulfil our responsibilities as the owner. The Council would also like to thank EFL Ltd, On Board Scaffolding, MT Daniels Ltd. and Lime Creative Brickwork for all their help.

Blofield Courthouse is run by a committee of volunteers and there are a number of vacancies on the committee, if you would like to help and know more about what this role involves please contact

info@blofieldcourthouse.org.uk



POSTWICK PARK AND RIDE has reopened - Please use it or lose it !!

The Parish Council has been one of the local councils lobbying Norfolk County Council to reopen Postwick park and ride. The service will run from Monday 4 September.

The service will run every 20 minutes starting at Postwick at 07.30am with the last journey back from the bus station at 18.10pm, Monday to Saturday, and passengers will be able to travel for one price at any time of day.

All-day travel tickets will cost £3 for adults, £2 for concessions and 17-19-year-olds, £1.50 for children aged 5-16 and under fives go free.



Digital copies of this publication are available at : blofield-pc.gov.uk

Printed copies are available to pick up at : Blofield Heath PO, S&S Mitchell Blofield, Blofield PO,
Blofield Fish & Chip Shop, Blofield Library

Alternatively please contact the Parish Clerk

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of the Newsletter via email in future and be added to our mailing list please contact our Clerk at : clerk@blofield-pc.gov.uk

Please refer to our General Data Protection Regulation Policy and General Privacy Notice on our website at : <https://www.blofield-pc.gov.uk/policies-procedures>

Chair :- Stuart Smith

Clerks to the Council :- Eleanor Bannister
Sarah Osbaldeston

Blofield Parish Council
e-mail: clerk@blofield-pc.gov.uk Tel: 07703 124544
e-mail: finance@blofield-pc.gov.uk