

Report for Bawdsey Parish 2021

2021 was bookended by high Covid 19 cases. At the beginning of the year, East Anglia was in Tier 4 measures following the spike in Coronavirus cases caused by the 70% more transmissible Kent variant which spread rapidly throughout the UK pushing the death toll above 125,000 and necessitating a third lockdown. By December 2021 a new variant, the milder Omicron, was overtaking the Delta strain which had hit hard during the summer, and government advised caution over Christmas and adherence to Plan B.

Schools were closed in January and February except for children of key workers with home schooling for the majority. Home deliveries by supermarkets became the new norm for many people. Many village events had to be cancelled but Bawdsey May Fete did take place only two months later than normal. 2021 was also the year when the NHS rolled out the vaccination programme which allowed for the relaxation of restrictions from July.

But village life wasn't completely put on hold; farming carried on as usual, the parish council met via Zoom, coastal erosion continued apace and many initiatives such as the installation of coastal photo posts continued. Following the receipt of an AONB grant, the Deben Marine Centre was launched at Bawdsey Quay in the old bus shelter. Great excitement was caused during the summer with the filming of the novel "The Power" by Naomi Alderman for Amazon Prime on land overlooking the sea at East Lane. (See July)

January-February:

New Year's Day Swim. This event was not advertised given the circumstances of Tier 4 Covid measures but eight hardy swimmers, many of them youngsters, turned up at Bawdsey Quay on a cold grey morning for a quick dip. The ferry was not running but the Boat House café opened for a few hours. All in all, it was a much quieter start to the new year than usual.



Stalwart Julie Dovey, Bawdsey resident, and fellow swimmers on Bawdsey Beach

New Lockdown: The PM declared a third national lockdown on 6th January and all schools closed except for children of key workers, necessitating home schooling for many pupils.



Mass vaccinations began initially for the over 70s and the clinically vulnerable. Anyone needing assistance in the village was asked to contact the Resilience Forum or the village's emergency volunteers. Two local coastguards were trained as first responders for the duration of the pandemic. Camper vans at Bawdsey Quay were moved on by the police since travelling during lockdown was prohibited. Survival boxes were given out to vulnerable residents living alone. Church services were paused until further notice.

Planning issues: A new planning application for 3 detached houses on land next to Manor Farm Gardens was received. The Parish Council turned down the application because of fears of inadequate drainage but was later overruled by East Suffolk Council. Development could not begin until a separate access point from The Street was constructed. A new sign was installed at Bawdsey Manor Gardens. By April all the houses on this site were occupied.



The proposed development at Cranes Garage site passed but with 30 conditions including improved external and internal access to the site. No work had begun by December 2021. Hazel Crane who lived in the former office building died on 14th January leaving the whole site unoccupied.

An appeal to permit the development of 17 Acre Barn, East Lane into a new house was turned down by East Suffolk. The development of Middle Barn on Ferry Road was permitted. Crocus Homes announced they would be starting School Meadow development in the summer.

Coastal Erosion: There was a significant land fall at the cliff to the south of the Landmark Path necessitating the perimeter fence around the Scottish Power site to be re-erected six metres landward. At the parish council meeting on 17th January councillors expressed concern to Natural England at the proposed route of the coastal path along the eroding cliff top. They also opposed a route from Bawdsey Quay to Ramsholt along the Deben.

Coastal defences at Bawdsey Manor: Technical experts plus local representatives met to hear proposals to tackle the sad state of the piling in front of the Manor and to prevent further damage to the natural cliff and to the artificial Pulhamite cliff. The coastal footpath from Bawdsey Quay to the Landmark Path in the village had been closed because of the dangers. Likely solutions could include rock armour in front of the piling with additional rock groynes to limit beach movement north and south. A planning application for the work was meant to be submitted later this year. (Just submitted February 2022)

Bawdsey Quay and Ferry Road: Bawdsey Parish Council approved the marking up of car parking spaces on the Quay following random and dangerous car parking over the previous summer. Both Suffolk County Councillor Andrew Reid and East Suffolk Councillor James Mallinder contributed to this from their budgets. The parish council is also intending to rationalise the parking along the approach to the Quay because of severe erosion of the river wall and the danger to public safety of overparking.

Photo posts: An initiative to install a chain of photo posts to monitor the movement of shingle along the coast and the mouth of the estuary has begun. Each post has a “tray” on which a phone can be stood to take a photo of the beach profile. Four have been installed: at East Lane Point, along the sea wall looking towards Shingle Street, Shingle Street itself and at the mouth of the Deben. Photos can be uploaded and sent to the relevant Facebook page. More are planned along the coast. Redshank information panels have been added subsequently.



East Lane Car Park: A new No Parking- Disabled Access sign was erected at East Lane car park due to parked cars preventing mobility scooters from accessing the sea wall by. Later in the year, a No Overnight Parking sign was added to deter camper vans staying overnight in this private car park.



Quiet Lanes: A consultation began on a proposal to classify East Lane, Red House Lane and School Lane as Quiet Lanes to encourage the use of more active forms of travel and lower speed limits by cars.

News from the Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee: ***War Memorial:*** The VHRGC decided to limit the grass area surrounding the war memorial to save on the upkeep of the grass surface and to allow better access for cars to the recreation ground. It will be paved instead. ***Allotments behind the Village Hall:*** Unused land on the allotments has been reclaimed by the VHRGC extending the grassy area behind the village hall and allowing for outside yoga and for more stalls at Bawdsey market in the summertime. ***Wifi at the village hall:*** The village hall now has a wireless connection enabling greater flexibility in the presentation of information at meetings and talks.

February

Snow drifts: The first snow fell on 18th January but didn't last long. After fine weather at the beginning of the month a second Beast from the East hit the coast on 7th February and temperatures fell to -2 degrees. A two-foot snow drift around Bawdsey School made it impassable to motorists. Local farmers helped clear the main road out of the village. A week later came the thaw. Following the snowy weather, another tree came down on to the beach south of East Lane

George Mark's 90th birthday: Another big birthday was celebrated under lockdown as residents congregated on The Street on 13th February to wish George a Happy Birthday. George has lived in the village all his life and was a stalwart Captain of the Bawdsey Cricket Club for 40 years until he was 80.



March-April

Covid Update: Government Figures showed a fall in the numbers of cases in February allowing for the reopening of schools in the second week of March. Covid cases in January topped 1 million with 33,283 deaths. By the end of February, cases had fallen to 293,778 with 16,435 Covid deaths. At the end of March deaths had fallen again by a third to 5,011.

Yellow weather warning: High winds occurred on the night of 10-11 March necessitating a yellow weather warning. The following day a beached seal was found on the beach at East Lane and was taken to the Marine Rescue Centre and later released back into the sea.



Palm oil spillage: Warnings were given of deposits of palm oil on the east coast, characterised by very large numbers of very small pieces of palm oil, dangerous to dogs.

Shingle Street News: Shingle Street experienced a huge increase in visitors over the past two years bringing pressure to the area and threatening the fragile habitat and biodiversity. As an AONB, an SSSI and a Ramsar site (a wetland site of international importance), it was

decided to take away litter bins to encourage visitors to take their litter home. This caused some controversy as did the decision in April to dig up the verges and set down rocks to deter parking along the main road down to the settlement.

A new outdoor swimming group at Shingle Street was set up in April, a branch of the Bluetits Chill Swimmers which challenges participants to swim in and around open water throughout the year, both in the lagoons and in the open sea.

Bawdsey School News: A new pond was constructed surrounded on two sides by a boardwalk, allowing the pupils to observe the wildlife in and around the water. A new kitchen for pupils to enjoy cooking was also set up.

Church News: The churchyard is seriously in need of remedial work to keep it welcoming and safe. Work has begun by lifting the broken branches on the macroparpa. No jumble sale took place this year.

Easter: Easter took place on the first weekend of April and was uncharacteristically warm at 20 degrees. The annual Easter Egg hunt was cancelled due to Covid and there were no Easter church services at Bawdsey. However, the Boathouse Café reopened for takeaways and the Deben Ferry ran from Good Friday to Easter Monday. Schools returned after Easter on 12th April and the mobile library also resumed this month.

New Yoga Class: A new yoga class began in April outside on the Recreation Ground on Tuesday mornings. Together with a Chair-based exercise class held in the village hall for older residents, it has been well supported.

Bawdsey Quay: Suffolk Highways put in barriers restricting parking along the lower part of Ferry Road via a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order thereby losing parking spaces along the river front. It was hoped more people would use the car park at the amenity area just before the Quay. The ultimate aim will be to put in more lay-bys with sustainable surfaces together with benches and planters once the former grass verge has recovered, thus making the area safer for visitors.



The bus shelter at the Quay has been mooted as a potential home for a new exhibition on the Deben to showcase all the research on the river including coastal erosion and salt marsh.

Filming in Bawdsey: Bawdsey has become a prime site for filming with Top Gear filmed at the A site in May and the prospect of Sister Pictures filming “The Power” for Amazon Prime at East Lane later in the summer.

May-June

May was the wettest May for years. The first bank holiday weekend was a washout and was followed by high winds and a yellow weather warning and unseasonably low temperatures of 8-9 degrees C. Nevertheless, East Lane saw record numbers of cars and campervans on the Monday and live music sessions were held at the Boathouse Café. The annual village fete traditionally held on the late May Bank Holiday Monday was put back to the August Bank Holiday. Bawdsey Market started up again on 15th. Covid restrictions were eased on 17th May allowing indoor gatherings with mask wearing despite the R value nationally hovering between 0.9-1.1. Cases in Suffolk Coastal were lower.

Local Elections: These were held on 6th May for Suffolk County Council and the local PCC. Conservative candidate Andrew Reid was duly re-elected.

Annual Parish Meeting and AGM: These two meetings were held back-to-back on 20th May in person after previous Zoom meetings. Minutes were put on the village website.

New houses: Following planning permission, three plots were put on the market for detached houses adjoining the Bawdsey Manor Farm Gardens. Under Offer by May.

June

The first two weeks of June saw a heatwave with temperatures up to 26 degrees. More visitors came to the coast including many camper vans. The proposed dropping of Covid restrictions was to take place on June 21st but because of rising numbers of Covid Cases with the new Delta variant, this was postponed until July 19th. One resident showed his feelings on how the government was dealing with the pandemic. The number of deaths in June was 472.



Bawdsey Satirist

June 2021



August 2021

Filming at East Lane: Preparation for the filming of the novel “The Power” by Naomi Alderman began with the construction of the set on land near the cliffs. This building represented the convent in the south of the United States where much of the action took place. Talks took place between the parish council and the film representatives about traffic management, filming at night and the use of helicopters. Many of the film crew lodged in Ipswich so there was a substantial increase in traffic coming into the village at early hours.



New redshank posts: In tandem with the photo posts, discs showing redshanks were added to the post to raise awareness of this species in decline. (Photo in January section)

Coffee and Chat: For the first time in 2021, the Coffee and Chat group met at the Boathouse Café and sat outdoors enjoying the sunshine. Subsequent monthly get-togethers were held at outdoor cafes such as Swans in Bromeswell and the Marsh Barn café at Hollesley.



Radar Museum reopening: The museum opened on Thursday 3rd June with all timed visits having to be pre-booked and with mandatory mask wearing. Over the past year, Bawdsey Radar produced a series of podcasts called “Under the Radar” about the scientists, the women radar operators on the front line and the politicians. “The Rebirth of Bawdsey” tells of how a group of dedicated volunteers changed an old damp block into the award-winning museum.

A new exhibition celebrating the women who worked as radar operators during WW2 has been installed. A new robot tour is being developed to show those who are not able to visit in person what the radar museum looks like. Operated by remote control, it moves through the block and the virtual visitor views the museum through the robot’s screen as it is positioned in front of the displays and exhibits. (See article in EADT Aug 3rd)

Algae on lagoon: A strong smell of what seemed like sewerage hung over the village. It turned out to be toxic blue algae on the lagoon between East Lane and Shingle Street.

PGL reopens: After a year of inactivity PGL at Bawdsey Manor opened its doors to 400 young visitors in June.

Swifts returning to the village hall: Last year, swift boxes were installed on the back of the village hall and happily swifts have returned once more to nest, thus helping to raise the numbers in the county. It has been estimated there are a flock of 50 swirling round the village.

Flower Festival at St Mary’s: 26-27 June: This festive weekend saw an array of beautiful displays on the theme of New Beginnings displayed in the church. Refreshments were served in the churchyard over the two days, plants were sold, and the church tower was open to the public. £1,137.90, a new record was made for church funds.



July

“Freedom Day” fell on 19th July when all remaining Covid restrictions were lifted although Covid numbers were rising in Suffolk Coastal due to the Delta variant which precipitated a long-drawn-out peak of the Delta throughout the summer and autumn. Case numbers rose to 935,106 in July with 1,591 deaths. The village benefited from fine weather for its events.

Village Garage Sale: Sunday 4th July 10.00am-2.00pm and **Bawdsey Market** on 17th July. Numbers were lower than usual, reflecting the caution people were exercising.

The Filming of The Power: A retrospective planning application for the building of a temporary structure representing a convent on farmland at East Lane was approved as part of the film set. The beach at East Lane was closed for filming from 25th July with shooting beginning on 3rd August.

A letter with information about the filming was sent to every householder regarding noise and light pollution. The film makers liaised with the parish council to minimise the disruption. Vehicles were meant to keep to a minimum of 20mph when moving through the village using a pre-agreed route. The parish council asked for a legacy benefit from the film company for community projects.

Refurbishment of the Bus Shelter at the Quay: Volunteers began refurbishing the former bus shelter to prepare for a new Deben Marine Centre acting as an information centre about the changing coast and estuary. Grants from the AONB Suffolk Coast and Heaths and East Suffolk Council have been obtained to develop this space. It will have information about the coastal erosion in and around Bawdsey, show eight years’ beach measuring at Bawdsey Manor beach, and more recently along the Deben estuary. With the help of volunteers it opened on Thursdays and Sundays to coincide with the opening of the Radar Museum beginning on 1st August.



The former bus shelter now the Deben Marine Centre

Bawdsey Parish Council: Following a consultation with the community regarding how to use any legacy funding from Sister Pictures, BPC found most support for placing some benches and planters along the approach road to Bawdsey Quay. This would not only provide an amenity for visitors but would also protect the verges and limit inappropriate parking.

Awards for Community Assistance: Six awards for 2020 were given to local people who had made a real difference to the quality of life in the village. The first three were awarded to Liz Mark, Lydia Calvesbert and Rawdon Saunders for long service to the community as parish councillors and in the case of Mr Saunders, Chair of Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee. The three others were Ann Morgan, Clynt Garnham and Rob Johnson who all gave special help to others during the Covid crisis.

Bawdsey School News: During the last few weeks of term, school life resumed with a report evening, school sports day, beach school sessions, the year 6 Leavers' Weekend and Leaver's service. In the new term, other activities will resume such as the OAP monthly lunches, Baby and Toddler Group and Parent Assemblies.

August:

Covid-19 cases fell during August, but deaths rose to 3,102 nationally.

This was the busiest month in the village for events with a Pop-up Pub on the Recreation Ground on 7th August, Bawdsey Market on 21st and Bawdsey Fete on the August Bank Holiday. Bawdsey Radar opened on Thursdays and Sunday along with the new Deben Marine Centre. The Boathouse Café was open every day and the Deben Ferry ran a daily service, taking visitors between the Quay and Felixstowe Ferry on the opposite bank.

Shooting of the Power: After months of preparation, shooting began in earnest on Tuesday 3rd August and continued until Friday 27th August with a rest day a week. In weeks two and three, night shooting took place. The coastal path at East Lane was closed causing some complaints from villagers and visitors, and security was tight.

A trailer village was set up in the field next to the car park at East Lane where the actors lived for the time of the shooting, along with such personnel as make-up artists and a catering crew. The site was dismantled very quickly after the end of the shoot so that when the fete took place at the end of the month, the heavy traffic had dissipated, and it only remained for the wooden slats to be removed from the field.



The trailer park for actors and associated film crew and the completed film set



Sign used in the film The Power and the minibus used for the religious sisters at the convent

Bawdsey Village Fete: Despite an overcast day, people flocked to the recreation ground on the Bank Holiday Monday and a record £5,600 was made. The dog show was especially popular as was the tombola, BBQ and teas.



Bawdsey Radar: Despite Covid, the radar museum at the transmitter block weathered the storm extremely well and the final evaluation report of the National Lottery Heritage Fund gave it an outstanding write up saying that “It is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Staff and Volunteers that the museum has thrived. Income from admission was healthy and income from the shop is performing particularly well with the additional development of an online shop. Visitor feedback remained overwhelmingly positive, 94% of people saying that they learnt new information and most mentioned specific facts about the importance of Radar and the Bawdsey Radar transmitter. This suggests that the displays and interpretations are supporting people’s learning and enjoyment of heritage. All respondents would recommend Bawdsey Radar to a friend suggesting that they all had a quality visit. One visitor commented:

“If you want to go and see a good small independent museum display on a subject that might seem a little bit dry with modern curatorial art in action, go and see Bawdsey. A lot of museums could learn from them. I mean that as high praise.”

September-October

The harvest season continued with tractors carting the usual crop of onions to Bentwaters. High-sided turf lorries were much in evidence as turf was cut and rolled efficiently and transported out of the village. The maize crop was harvested and taken as biofuel to the anaerobic digester plant at Bentwaters Plant which produces 3.5MW of green electricity.

Fuel shortages affected the village with the nearest petrol station 10 miles away in Melton.

Covid Numbers stabilised but the monthly death toll was still 3,724. The booster programme roll-out locally was set for October alongside the annual flu vaccinations.

Bawdsey Quay: Line painting on the Quay was finally completed by SCC Highways, making it easier to park tidily. It was funded by the parish council, the district and the county councils.



Church News: The Suffolk Historic Churches Annual Sponsored Cycle Ride took place on 11th September raising £160. A Harvest Festival service took place on 26th. The church asked for donations to the Salvation Army food bank this year. Three hundred items were donated. Singing is now allowed, and masks are optional.

At the parish council meeting in September, the PCC asked the BPC for a donation to shore up the perimeter wall of the church which is in a poor state. Continuous heavy traffic through the village over the years, exacerbated by heavy agricultural machinery and that from the Scottish Power windfarm project not to mention the traffic from the filming company has weakened the wall considerably. Expensive tree surgery in the churchyard has meant that the PCC is in debt after a year of no services and only one fund-raising event. The parish council were willing to consider using some of the legacy funding from Sister Pictures but asked for more informed views of the exact nature of the problem and specific solutions from a professional body.

Parish Council News: The cost and scope of the benches along Ferry Road is being finalised. Details of highways changes and a new access to Crocus' housing development along School Lane have been received. It is hoped building will begin shortly. Concerns surrounding the current speed limit along East Lane have been raised and a petition urging the County Council to change the speed limit to 20mph has received over a hundred signatures. The

parish council is sympathetic to this initiative and will consider it formally at the next PC meeting.

Pop-up Pub: Another successful Pop-Up Pub took place in the village hall on 25th allowing friends and neighbours to meet up informally for a drink and chat.



October:

Covid numbers rose nationally to over a million in October with just over 4,000 deaths. In the village, the last of the film set and the trailer park was dismantled in East Lane. The harvest came to an end towards the end of October and with it the constant movements of turf and maize lorries trundling along The Street.

October was also half term and the last month of the season for the radar museum and the Deben Marine Centre. The Boat House café shortened its opening hours from Thursday-Monday to Friday-Sunday. The foot ferry stopped operating daily and was available only at weekends.

London Maranthon: Village resident, Julie Dovey, ran the London Marathon which had been postponed from 2021. She raised an amazing £2,390 in aid of Chordoma UK, a rare bone cancer charity.



Harvest Supper: For the first time in two years, the Harvest Supper took place in the Village Hall on Saturday 2nd October. A pleasant evening was had by the 20 or so attendees with a quiz following the delicious home-made meal

New Homes: Work began on the new entrance to the small development of three detached homes that will be built to the right of Manor Farm Gardens on raised ground.

Exercise classes in Bawdsey: A yoga and a chair-based exercise class has been taking place in the village hall this year. A new outdoor class with the name The Wake-Up Workout opened on the recreation ground on Monday mornings on a pay-as-you-go basis targeting the core and cardio systems.

Tidal surge: Coinciding with the new moon, a tidal surge took place on 21st October, flooding the Quay and overtopping the bridge leading down to Shingle Street.

Art Exhibition in the Village Hall: An extensive exhibition took place in the VH with local artists, Louise Mock with her distinctive pottery and Alison Calvesbert-Rearden.



November

Covid cases in Suffolk Coastal were up by 439 to 2,369 at the beginning of November. The craft group decided to cancel its weekly meetings until March due to rising numbers. Booster eligibility was open to over 50s and at-risk groups. A new strain of Covid named Omicron was detected in South Africa.

As to be expected, weather worsened with flood warnings and a wind force of 6 at the beginning of November and Storm Arwen at the end of the month. The peak tide was 0.72m above tide tables, once again covering the Quay.

Bonfire Night: Instead of having the bonfire and fireworks on the field at East Lane, a wonderful display of fireworks took place on the turf field opposite the school, followed by a Pop-Up pub at the village hall with BBQ and Pizza.

Green Bawdsey: With the emphasis on COP 26 and climate change, the village was encouraged to think of ways in which it might respond to future pressures. At the parish council meeting, it was decided to review speed limits in the village and to consider more tree planting and hedging to fill gaps in hedgerows. It has been decided to designate Red House Lane, East Lane and School Lane as Green Lanes. It is hoped signs will be installed next year.

Remembrance Day: This event once again was held outdoors in front of the war memorial the grassy surrounds of which had been replaced by a hard surface earlier in the year. The service was taken by the Rev Judith Andrews and was well attended.



December

December seemed to have two halves caused by the rapid escalation of Covid in the UK. Early Christmas celebrations included Christmas meals at the Village Hall and one for the Coffee and Chat group at the Shepherd and Dog in Hollesley. Bawdsey Christmas Market took place on 11th. However by 17th December when people were more worried about the impact Omicron could have on family get-togethers, fewer people attended the Pop-Up Pub and Christmas Party on 17th and the Carol and Christmas Day Services were cancelled.

Village Advent Calendar: From 1st December numbers appeared in the windows of villagers to count down the days to Christmas. **Stained-Glass Window:** Pupils from Bawdsey Primary School made a paper collage to mount in the east window of St Mary's Church for Christmas.



School Meadow Development: Six years after the original planning application went in to ESC, Brookes and Wood began work on this small development behind the primary school. Thirteen units will be built and a small parking and drop-off area for the school.



More Housing News: Three new houses have begun to be built next to Manor Farm Gardens. The site on which Cranes Garage Showroom stands is being sold as a site for a pair of semi-detached houses. One of the oldest houses in the village is being renovated on the corner of East Lane with a new fence enclosing the once open site.

Photo Award: The village was proud to hear that local photographer, Clynt Garnham, had won a national portrait award with the photo of his mother Jean. All 100 prize-winning photos are being shown in public spaces nation-wide.



Christmas: Christmas was wet but mild with temperatures of 13-17 degrees. It was also one of the warmest New Year Eves for many years. There were no new regulations relating to New Year celebrations.

A death at Bawdsey Quay: The owner of a camper van staying at Bawdsey Quay died suddenly of a heart attack just before Christmas. Friends and fellow camper van owners

made a temporary shrine to him by the river spot he loved. This area attracts many visitors including camper vans who enjoy the dramatic sunsets over Felixstowe.



Shrine to John



View across to Felixstowe on 31st December 2021

House Sales in Bawdsey 2020-2021:

House prices jumped nationally by 9.8% in 2021 in part due to the stamp duty holiday.

2 Quay Cottages, Bawdsey Quay: Terraced £404,000 on 3 December 2021

Serendipity, Red House Lane: 4 bed, detached £530,000 on 25 November

Kennelman's Cottage, Ferry Road: 3 bed detached £490,00 on 31 March

Silver Burch, The Manor Farm Estate: Detached bungalow £245,000 on 22 January

12 Manor Farm Gardens: Semi-detached £120,000 on 18 December 2020

6 Manor Farm Gardens: Semi-detached £110,000 17 December 2020 on 14 December 2020

Green Point Granary, Manor Farm Estate: Detached £350,000 on 14 December 2020

Grove Barn, Manor Farm Estate: 3 bed semi-detached £294,000 on 28th October 2020

Jenny Webb, Village Recorder

April 2022