



Rackheath Annual Community Meeting Minutes

Held at the Pavilion, Green Lane West, Rackheath

At 7.30pm, Tuesday 14th March 2023

Chair of Meeting: Pippa Nurse (Community Council Chair)

Attendance: Anne Tandy Community Clerk, Members of the Community Council and 14 Members of Rackheath Community.

1. Welcome and Apologies for absence.

Pippa welcomed residents and Councillors to the meeting and advised that apologies had been received from Chris Ashman, Primary School Headteacher

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 10th May 2022

The minutes of the previous Parish Meeting held on 10th May 2022 were approved as a correct record.

3. Community Council Annual Report for 2022/23

Pippa Nurse, Chair, gave the following report from the Community Council:

As a community we have seen great change over the last year with housing developments taking shape along Salhouse Road/Green Lane East & West. We welcome these new residents into our community. Sadly, we have seen 2 public houses close this year, but are hopeful that these will again be a key part of our community.

As a result of the new housing developments there is section 106 & CIL money available to invest in our existing community facilities and create new leisure areas - the community council are working hard (albeit with low numbers) to ensure these funds are used to enhance our community, provide facilities across the community as well as identifying longer term needs in terms of GT16. We are seeking to forge relationships with our neighbouring Parish Councils to ensure that developments that cross over boundaries provide positive outcomes for everyone and future facilities complement each other rather than directly compete.

GT16 - the area north of Rackheath with its own masterplan has halted progress due to nutrient neutrality issues. Taylor Wimpey is investigating solutions and are currently suggesting on site solutions and liaising with Anglian water. Details of these are not known at this time. Further public consultation will be held.

The Rackheath Neighbourhood plan was first published in 2017, the council feel now would be a good time to undertake a review to bring it in line with emerging local plans, update with the changes the village has seen to date and analyse if the plan meets our community needs, both current and future. A working group has been set up and funding options are being explored. We welcome members of the community to participate.

ACHIEVEMENTS / WORK IN PROGRESS

A number of projects have been implemented at the Pavilion – The Clerk will update you on these in her report.

The cabin which was sited at the church on Salhouse Road has been removed by Broadland District Council. Lighting for the adjoining footpath was taken from the cabin supply therefore the community council are now seeking to install a permanent solution to enable lighting of the footpath and as an addition, footpath lighting through Jubilee Park to ensure these areas can be safely used at night. Lighting will include low level bollard

lighting. This project is currently entering a scoping & tender stage. You will already have seen the addition of a footpath in Jubilee Park which connects the access point on Wilkinson way.

We have a two phase approach to extending the play provision within the community. We are expanding the play equipment in the Jubilee Park with the edition of a feature climbing frame with 2 slides, rope snake swing, shuffle bars, benches, toddler equipment and an inclusive roundabout. Installation should be completed this summer. Phase two at Stracey Playing Field will be kicked off in April with a working group which will consist of councillors and members of the community who have come forward.

SAMS2 speed monitoring device has been installed and will periodically be relocated between 5 dual direction sites on Green Lane West & Salhouse Road. It is hoped that this will help with reducing the speed of traffic.

New dog waste bins at either end of the tree belt around the Lovells/Flagship development are on order and we should take receipt of these in the coming weeks.

The adoption of Newman Road woods is still progressing and should be completed by the end of 2023. Recent tree work has been undertaken by Broadland District Council. The council would like to take this opportunity to thank Pathfinders and their volunteers for their continued work and dedication.

SOCIAL EVENTS

To celebrate the festive period, the Community Council funded the Christmas tree which was installed at the Holy Trinity Church.

With the help of the Salhouse Community Tree Nursery, Salhouse Scouts and a few residents, 250 trees have now been planted here at Stracey Playing Field, as part of the Queen's Green Canopy.

The Jubilee event held May 2022 was a success and was attended by many families. A similar event will be held on Sunday 7th May for the Kings Coronation at Jubilee Park. Childrens entertainment will be available, and fireworks will be held in the evening. Rackheath residents and families are welcome to come and picnic in the park. Local groups are being encouraged to hold stalls and provide refreshments.

The membership of the Community Council has changed since our last report. We have said goodbye to Tracy Buckley & Paula Lowe, both of whom worked hard for the community for many, many years. We have welcomed Nicola Kerr and hope to welcome more residents in the coming months.

As the community grows it will become more important than ever to fill the vacancies we currently have, so that we can CONTINUE to carry out the work needed to shape our growing community. If you are interested or know someone who is, please get in touch... we'd love to have a chat with you.

It has been lovely to hear of our community groups news and achievements and would like to thank the organisers of these groups for making their time available so others can come together and share a common passion.

4. Reports Received:

- **Hoveton and Wroxham Medical Practice**

Chris Stace, Practice Manager provided the following report.

Background to the Medical Centre project was given.

Approval of the programme including Rackheath Medical Centre has been granted. Still awaiting approval of the full business case.

Emerging design. Ownership needs to remain in public hands so will be owned by Headquarters in Norwich. Builders have been nominated as Darwin Group because the approval time keeps extending. Means the final design has to be erected quickly and will use Modern Methods of Construction which means it will be built off site in modules and moved into site. An artist's impression was presented. A similar method has been used at Bury St Edmunds hospital.

It will be occupied with a community team as well as general practice. Waiting area is located centrally to aid access to clinical rooms.

It is a self-contained centre so shouldn't be seen as a satellite to Hoveton and Wroxham Medical Centre.

Existing patients of Hoveton and Wroxham Medical Centre will be given a choice of where they wish to be seen when making appointments.

Dentistry was queried by a member of the public and although this is not allocated currently it could be in the future.

Norfolk Police raised the issue of site security given the proximity of the footpath by the railway line. This will be taken back to the design team for consideration.

Construction should be completed by 1 April 2024 and will be open in the summer of 2024.

Tony Emes PPG representative invited residents to communicate any issues with the service provision to him.

- **Norfolk Police**

Police Report: PC 855 JENNINGS Local Policing Neighbourhood Team

A report on local crime figures was presented which included assaults, thefts, commercial burglary and anti-social behaviour.

Speed checks have been carried out and complaints from residents about speed on Green Lane West have been received so this area will now be targeted.

A member of the public raised the following matters:

- There seems to be an issue of Salhouse Road being used for Police training on blues lights. *The Police confirmed that driver training has increased significantly which must include urban, rural and fast roads. Excess speeding on Salhouse Road should be helped by the placement of the SAM2.*
- The Jubilee estate roundabouts are not being used correctly with drivers traversing on the wrong side of the road, particularly at school drop off/pick up. This presents a high risk of accidents. *Police confirm that this has not previously been reported to them but it would not be classified as high priority although it is accepted that it's dangerous, especially with proximity to the primary school. Some Police attendance will be arranged to monitor the situation.*

- **Pavilion & Stracey Sports Park facilities**

The report was presented by Anne Tandy, Community Clerk.

Rackheath Pavilion and Stracey Sports Park

Management Report 2022-2023



Prepared by:
Anne Tandy, Parish Clerk and RFO
Hannah Lawrance, Pavilion Booking Assistant

Introduction

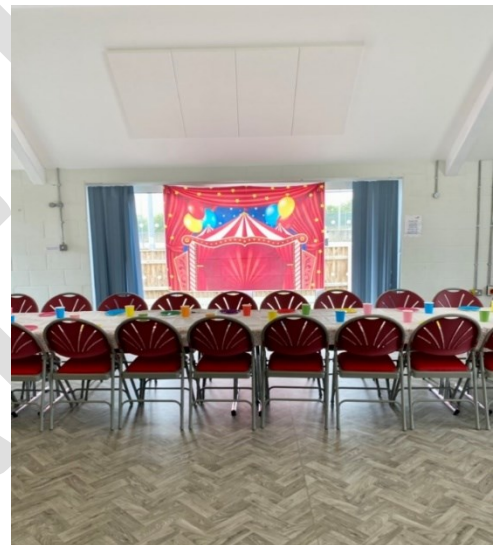
After a tough couple of years, we are pleased to say The Pavilion is really starting to pick up. We have noticed an increase in party bookings and have a nice steady flow of weekend parties. These bookings do seem to increase even more throughout the summer as the rear field appears to be very appealing and perfect for bouncy castles and entertainment.

We have sadly lost a few groups in the past year due to their group numbers dropping off. From talking to the hirers the pandemic was still having an impact and leaving people feeling uncomfortable with getting out into the community. This does now seem to be changing and the current groups running are seeing an increase in their numbers. We await to see what impact the cost-of-living crisis will have on the business. However, we have taken on some new groups on and filled some of the spaces.

There have been some exciting improvements to the hall over the last 12 months, we have new, easy folding and lighter tables which were requested in feedback from hirers, and we also have new wall mirrors which have proven popular with all our activity groups. Speakers and disco lighting for the hall has also been agreed and will be installed at the end of March. All the new installations were funded by a National Lottery Grant.



CCTV is due to be fitted to the outside of the building by the end of March which will help to ensure the building is more secure. On the rear field we have had storage pods assembled which will enable use to move the tables and chairs out of the hall making more room for classes and parties. We are currently waiting for internal lighting to be installed before they will be ready to use. Both of the projects have been funded using s.106 and CIL money.



Management

The management of the facilities is overseen by the Community Council. The Clerk undertakes the task of facility management and has delegated powers to make decisions on the day to day running and dealing with issues as they arise. The Council meets its responsibilities by having in place policies to meet the legal requirements of running a public building. The Booking Assistant manages all bookings, enquiries, invoicing and marketing and reports to the Clerk, where necessary. The cleaning is contracted out as is the grounds maintenance. Building maintenance is currently quoted based on what is required and future plans will need to consider a more contractual arrangement as the building ages and usage increases. Minor snags are addressed as and when, allowing the building to be maintained to a high standard.



Bookings

As of March 2023, the following regular groups are running:

Norwich Yoga x3 per week
Dynamic Dance for adults and children 2x week
Zumba x1
Rainbows x1
Egyptian dance x1
Bible group x1

One off bookings for local meetings and dance classes have helped to raise the profile of the facilities and provide extra income.

Football continued for the Wroxham youth team, who carried out training and matches on Saturday and Sunday mornings with dedicated training sessions on weekday evenings. During the darker winter months portable floodlights have been used by the club to assist with training but many age groups opt for winter training facilities elsewhere.

Eaton Wanderers FC have also joined us this season on a Saturday afternoon and we are looking to increase the adult provision next season.

The Rackheath Playing Field Bowls club continue to play at the Pavilion and they are looking forward to their next season. There are always spaces for new members and they welcome beginners to join them during practice sessions.



Financial Report

Rackheath Community Council
Cost Centre Year Comparison Summary
Cost Centre Pavilion and Stracey Playing Field

	Receipts 2021/22	Payments 2021/22	Receipts 2022/23	Payments 2022/23
Pavilion and Stracey Playing Field				
Staffing Costs		2,321.04		2,924.60
Pavilion Cleaning		2,590.26		2,690.96
Repairs, Renewals and General Maintenance		1,238.00	1,174.67	4,190.13
Hire Income - Pavilion Hall	8,903.79	150.00	8,465.50	
Bowls Club Income	1,500.00		1,500.00	
Football Income	3,989.16		1,133.01	
Pavilion Utilities		5,480.65		5,744.07
Pavilion Fixtures and Fittings		3,785.00		313.17
Grounds Maintenance - Stracey Playing Field	120.00	7,396.14		5,804.26
MPSA Hire	2,022.85		3,245.13	
Grounds Maintenance - behind the Hall		318.12		439.27
Pavilion Advertising		53.17		-
Call Out	50.00			-
Annual Inspections		-		683.59
New and replacement equipment		29.99		-
NET TOTAL	16,585.80	23,362.37	15,518.31	22,790.05

*Figures are correct up to 9 March 2023

Budget 2023/24

	2023/24 Budgeted Payments	2022/23 Budgeted Receipts
Pavilion Cleaning	3,300.00	
Repairs, Renewals and General Maintenance	5,000.00	
Hire Income		12,000.00
Bowls Club Income		1,500.00
Football Income		5,000.00
Utilities	7,500.00	
Grounds Maintenance – Stracey Playing Field	7,000.00	
Totals	22,800.00	18,500.00

Policies and Protocols

The Pavilion adheres to the application legislation including Disability and Health and Safety legislation, fire safety and electrical safety. Risk assessments have been prepared by the Clerk and are reviewed regularly. The Clerk ensures that the correct level of insurance is provided for the building which is approved by the Council. Some of the work undertaken is carried out by contractors such as the cleaning, grounds maintenance, mole control, fire alarm and extinguisher testing and PAT. These contracts are monitored by the Clerk throughout the year and reviewed annually to ensure they continually meet the needs of the business and provide best value for money.

There are in place the following documents:

- Terms and Conditions
- Hire Rates
- Booking Form
- Risk Assessment
- Health and Safety Policy
- Partnership Agreement with the Youth Football team
- Hire Agreement with the Lawn Bowls Club
- Fire Safety
- Waste transfer Notice
- Bad Debt Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Snow and Ice Plan
- Insurance

Future Planning

The Council is about to start on a project at Stracey Playing field to provide play equipment, outdoor gym equipment and refurbishment of the MPSA. There will also be PV Panels installed on the roof to help reduce energy costs. These will all be funded through s.106 and CIL development money.

- **County & District Councillor**

In the absence of Councillors Fran Whymark and Martin Murrell the report was read out to the meeting.

This has been a year of changes at BDC. Working together with South Norfolk District Council (SNDC) we have purchased the Horizon Centre. The collective saving will be about £300k per year, which meant we froze Council Tax again this year. In our quest to reach carbon neutral by 2030 we have just secured a grant to replace the gas boilers with air source heat pumps, adding to the large number of photovoltaic (PV) cells on the roof and car parking area, reducing our CO2 emissions by over 90%. The building is currently being refurbished and we plan to move there in May. Thorpe Lodge will be sold to recover most, if not all, the capital costs.

We have committed to a £3m investment in our Waste Depot, which will see new buildings, PV cells and air source heat pumps replacing existing power and heat sources. With all waste vehicles running on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), reducing our carbon footprint we are reducing CO2 emissions further. BDC committed to all our residents to having weekly food waste collections and in October 2022 we also added weekly collections of small electrical items, batteries and textiles, ensuring more recycling and less going to landfill. We also introduced the new Bin Collection App, giving you a reminder, which bins to put out each week.

Broadland Food Innovation Centre (FIC) opened in 2022. Marking an exciting new era for food production, enabling the processing of food grown in Broadland being processed here, not having to be sent to Midlands or further. The FIC has been purpose built to offer a wide range of food grade facilities for large established businesses and smaller incubation units and test kitchens, with meeting rooms and state of the art conferencing facilities.

Our Help Hub has been nominated for national awards and is held up as a model of good practice. Working with partners including the police, Adult Social Care (ASC), Children's Services (CS), Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Housing Providers, NHS and the voluntary sector, among many others, it continues to extend its reach, to support our most vulnerable during these testing times. The plans are to continue this progress, working together with our partners in the Health and Wellbeing Partnership and the wider Integrated Care System within the NHS.

At NCC there have been significant cost pressures in ASC and CS. We are constantly striving to do more for less and although there have been cost savings the overall spending has increased by £29.6m. Next year's budget for ASC is £249.5m and CS £232.6m, with significant investment in Independent Living Housing (as planned on Green Lane East) and new Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) schools and Specialist Resource Bases (SRBs) being attached to many existing schools.

Over the last year there have been negotiations with Government Ministers about a County Deal for Norfolk. In December 2022 an 'in principle' agreement was signed to bring a devolution package to Norfolk. This will bring additional funding and unlock opportunities to deliver more jobs, housing and investment. If agreed this there would be a change to governance and the election of a Directly Elected Leader who would nominate the Cabinet for NCC. The consultation takes place until 20th March at www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolkcountydeal.

£50m has been received to improve bus routes and reduce fares across Norfolk. The £2 single fare has been extended until June and locally the 5B now runs later to and from the City.

We have been working with the NHS and ICS over the last 4 years to get a medical centre locally. Recent meetings have confirmed that the medical centre (next to the Independent Living Housing, Green Lane East) will have GPs and other services from the Wroxham and Hoveton Medical Centre and with additional community services i.e. midwives, health visitors. Assuming the NHS agree, building will start in September 2023, with completion mid-2024.

NCC have just received funding to open new Family Hubs. Offering support from cradle to career for families, children and young people up to 19 (or 25 if they have special educational needs or disabilities). This single access point will offer support from health, social care, education, voluntary and community groups. There be at least 7 Hubs and an extensive outreach service with access to 'Start for Life' services, supporting the first 1001 critical days from conception to 2 years old.

- **Rackheath Primary and Pre-School**

Chris Ashman, Headteacher sent the following report, which was read in his absence.

Context

The school continues to grow. We currently have 207 children on role. With nearly all the classes either full or almost full. We have 30 children joining us in September's Reception class. The school's nominal full capacity is 218 – working on 30 children per class in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and 32 per Key Stage 2 class.

Since the September 2013 extension we have had 7 classrooms and since January 2014 the Rackheath Bombers have been on site with us. The Bombers became part of the school in September 2019 when it converted from being charity run

In November 2017 the school was rated good by OFSTED. We are waiting patiently for them to come back!

Achievements

After a few years dominated by Covid and the measures we had to put in place because of it this year has been lovely in terms of marking a full return to normal.

Our Results at testing/moderation points (end of Reception, Year 1 phonics, end of KS1 and end of KS2) have been consistently above national average for the last 7 years of testing.

At Key Stage 2 in 2022 - 59% of children reached the expected standard in reading, writing and maths nationally. Our result was 72%

We were 1 of 81 schools in Norfolk to have results above national in 2022 and we were 1 of 45 Norfolk schools to be above national in 2019 and 2022. This puts us in the top 10% of schools for KS2 SATS in Norfolk.

In September 2022 the LEA wrote to the school stating, "that school, leadership and governance is secure and the school is providing an effective education for all its pupils...The curriculum, especially for core subjects, is well planned and effectively implemented... The school is safe, ambitious, and highly inclusive of all children and young people, so all are enabled to flourish."

Our children have lots of opportunities to contribute to school life. The pupil survey of October 2022 showed very positive results.

We believe in creating exciting learning opportunities such as residential trips, visits and visitors as well as special curriculum days and weeks.

Parents are actively involved in school life. Our Friends are very active and parent surveys are very positive. In our most recent survey 100% of parents would recommend the school.

We have lots of extra-curricular clubs and we have achieved good sporting success.

Moving Forward

The amount of building in Rackheath is already having an impact and this will only become more of an issue as more houses are built. We know there are plans to build other schools in or around Rackheath but until these are built, we will increasingly not be able to offer places to all children living in Rackheath. There is no option to increase our capacity due to a lack of space. Any new schools will not be linked to us as any new school has to be an academy.

Cuts to funding remain a huge concern. Despite the school being close to capacity we face a deficit budget in 2024-25 and a significant deficit the year after. Despite the school adding 40 pupils since I started in September 2013, with the same number of classes, our budget is under more pressure than it was then. This is common across the country and is something that needs to be addressed by government urgently.

The impact of Covid and it's after affects and the current cost of living crisis has impacted on our community and has changed the way we work with children and families. Given that more families are being impacted emotionally and financially by the events of the last few years and need our support.

- **Rackheath Village Hall**

Steve Hands, Vice Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee presented a report:

General Comment

Rackheath Village Hall operates as a useful group and function venue for the Village and surrounding communities. Boasting a sizeable stage, large hall, meeting room and kitchen facilities, it is used by regular bookings and parties of a varied nature. Our regular groups include badminton, a range of fitness/keep fit groups, amateur dramatics, home education, young at heart, short mat bowls and, most recently, Wroxham Flower Club. Run by a small group of trustees and volunteers, its facilities are maintained and repaired, but as mentioned last year to this forum, there are significant areas that need to be addressed going forward that will require planning and funding to achieve. The Village Hall is still hoping to gain funding from the Community Council, using money from the new developments to update and modernise the Village Hall which is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan as a `Community Asset`.

Hall Improvement

Like all buildings, maintenance takes a significant sum to ensure the Hall's upkeep. During the last year, the RVH Committee has committed expenditure to redecorate the Hall internally – so far, the toilets, foyer and meeting room have been addressed. The main hall is due to be completed this year and the Committee are looking at the best way of achieving that without excessive disruption to our users. Additionally, the lighting has been much improved by the installation of LED lighting throughout, as well as new fans to help circulation of air in the main

hall. A new ceiling has been put up in the foyer and that now looks much better. The Committee still has to consider the best way to tackle the main hall ceiling and recovery of the floor which is showing increasing signs of deterioration. Finally, with the aid of an architect, the Committee is also progressing an extension to the Hall to provide better storage, reworked kitchen and toilets that meet current requirements. This plan was provided to the Community web page for comment (those that applied to the planned extension were noted) and will be brought to the Community Council for consideration as soon as the necessary building regulations and other measures have been addressed.

Areas Of Concern

As previously mentioned last year, the RVH Committee face a number of issues and concerns that impact the well-running of the Hall and the provision of the facilities it provides:

Increasing Longevity of Committee Members. This situation is becoming critical as my fellow trustees and volunteers get to the point where age and ill-health preclude their continued involvement. The RVH is a charity. My Committee would benefit from an influx of new members who recognise the importance of the facilities the Hall provides for its users and how it should and can be used. (I'd stress that a social club/pub are not on the agenda.) Those who do help us are invariably involved already in other parts of the community. I shall continue to put messages on the Community webpage, but this will remain an increasing concern going forward.

Structure & General Fabric. Maintenance of the Hall and its age is always a worry. My comments on improvements above indicate how we are trying to address some of the issues we face. Following on from my comment last year, we managed to employ a regular cleaner for one half-day a week and therefore rely on users to clean and tidy up after themselves. This is not ideal and it would be beneficial to utilise a volunteer caretaker to help to cover small problems that can arise.

Energy Supply. Energy bills have risen to more than double previous rates. Consequently, whilst the Hall remains one of the most cost-effective hires in the area, those costs have had to be passed on to our users – hire rates rose by 27% in January 23. The Committee have looked at alternative energy solutions but have yet to find one that can be supported (constraints of the building – solar energy, cost, protection from vandalism etc.). The search for a viable, economic, long-term solution continues.

Security & Damage. I previously highlighted the need to consider improved security surveillance due to a spate of damage and mindless vandalism. Although that remains the case, we have yet to determine a solution that is acceptable. The outside security lights have been repaired and the wider security needs remains on the agenda.

Respect For Property & Users. I continue to push the aspect of respect for property. RVH and its grounds are private property. Whilst this is not strongly enforced, Hall users have continued to experience nuisance activities from members of the public and uncontrolled children on the grounds whilst the Hall is in use. I strongly urge the community to respect those who have booked the Hall and acknowledge that the rights of our hirers extend to the grounds as well as the Hall itself.

Summary

RVH has an ongoing role to play in village life and amenities, providing useful facilities to a wide range of hirers. It needs continued community voluntary support to address its maintenance and development and the Committee will continue to seek help to progress and solve issues to ensure the Hall remains viable.

- **Young at Heart**

The Chairman attended as a representative of the group and presented a report.

The group meets weekly at the Village Hall on Tuesday's 10am – 12.00noon. They are a welcoming and friendly group and most of their members are retired. Broadland District Council had a vision to encourage physical activity which was how the group came to be formed in 2016/17. They have won a community award for their activities, running events such as short mat bowling, table tennis, they have a dartboard and enjoy outdoor activities in summer. Supply refreshments are supplied by way of teas, coffees and biscuits and occasionally members will provide homemade cakes. They celebrated the Queen's Jubilee and are looking towards the King's Coronation. It was announced that there will be a free chocolate egg raffle for Easter. New members always welcome.

- **Rackheath Women's Institute**

Frances Pointer, President of Rackheath Women's Institute presented a report:

Good evening, my name is Frances Pointer and I am the President of Rackheath evening Women's Institute. We meet every 4th Thursday of the month at Holy Trinity Church which is an ideal venue and a great location for members and visitors being on the main road. We were anxious at the beginning of last year that we thought we might have to find a new home but so far so good.

Numbers of members vary between 30-40 and a large percentage from elsewhere; Wroxham, Salhouse, Thorpe and Sprowston.

We have an excellent committee and sadly that's the main reason that so many WIs in the area have closed through lack of volunteers. Salhouse, Thorpe End and also Wroxham WI's have now closed their doors.

However, we have now arranged to submit regular articles to the 'Village Book', Salhouse Saga and the Wroxham Bridge magazines so therefore happy to attract new and old members. (These magazines would all be happy to accept articles from other Rackheath groups as well).

We have an excellent programme of speakers with a wide variety of topics and demonstrations. We also try to arrange a monthly walk together with a monthly outing for a theatre visit or lunch and last year we had a Pitch and Putt competition over Mousehold Heath. Every year in May we hold a fund-raising Quiz and Chips evening when we invite other WI's with the fish and chips provided by Jason at the Chip Shop for 80 ladies. Last year we also held a fundraising dance for the Air Ambulance at Heathlands Social Club at Blofield Heath and raised £600.00.

The Rackheath WI was formed in 1981 and we are still going strong so we are hopeful that with all the new houses and influx of new families that Rackheath WI will continue for yet another 40 years. Thank You.

- **Bowls Club**

Richard Edwards of Rackheath Lawn Bowls Club attended and presented a report.

Although the warm weather in 2022 should have favoured outdoor bowls, the extended period of severe drought was damaging to us in a number of ways. In a normal summer it is beneficial to water the playing surface occasionally, especially if a chemical feed and/or selective weed killer needs to be applied. However, the drought was so severe that no amount of watering would have been effective. So, on the advice of our contractors, fewer chemicals were applied and the green was allowed to dry out completely while we waited, unsuccessfully, for rain.

Leaving the grass unwatered turned out to be the right course of action because the grass recovered very quickly once the rains returned in the autumn.

League fixture meetings for 2023 have given stark warning as to the future of lawn bowls in this area. With the number of outdoor players falling overall, it was decided that the only viable way forward was to change league formats to cater for this. Consequently, leagues are reducing the number of blocks in each game from 4 (12 players per team) to 3 (9 players per team). This will reduce income per game by a quarter at the same time as green maintenance costs continue to rise.

We are very grateful to the Parish Council for the reduction in green rental for 2023 and for Broadland for their equipment grant but with higher maintenance costs, fewer matches and declining player numbers are all combining to steadily erode the viability of bowls as an outdoor sport. We shall get through 2023 but with depleted reserves.

All recent attempts to recruit new players have proved largely unsuccessful and in spite of all the new housing development in Rackheath, the demographic profile of the newcomers offer no encouragement that this will change. Perhaps the Council website could be exploited to reach out to new residents?

We are happy to consider all viable options but the last 2 years' experience suggests that lawn bowls is in terminal decline.

However, we are determined to carry on for as long as the club remains viable.

- **Pathfinders**

Ivan Barnard, Founder of the 'Pathfinders'. Director 467th BG Association USA, attended to present the Pathfinders Report for Newman Woods 2022

I could talk for the next ten minutes on the achievements and progress during the past year. Instead, I would encourage you to visit and see for yourselves. However, there are three items, that it would be remiss of me not to mention.

The first is that we have been joined by the "Mousehold Troop" Army Cadets. It is an inspiration to see their enthusiasm and hard work for the project.

The second is the release on YouTube, of a professionally filmed documentary that records the achievements of the "Pathfinders".

The third is the visit of Marybeth Ingram. Whose father flew thirty-three missions out of Rackheath and was awarded two Distinguished Flying Crosses.

Published in the 467th Group Magazine she writes the following article:

"This visit has been very different than I had imagined, yet most wonderful. I wanted to see where Dad served where he was located.

I never thought I'd walk on the exact same concrete path he did, go into the room where he had his meals, the club where he found entertainment, the bar where they bought him drinks if he sighted the target well that day, nor Rackheath Hall where he likely attended the summer party and Christmas party the Stracey family hosted.

I didn't expect to stand where he would have had his shower or walked the road to his quarters. I didn't anticipate learning that being a lead bombardier meant being in the "lead crew" and being in the "lead crew" meant being the primary target of the German fighter pilots.

I learned about the Night of the Intruders and Dad would have been on base that night.

In the centre of Norwich, I was most certainly where Dad may have come on weekend passes and gone to the Maids Head Hotel and most likely across the road to the Samson and Hercules. I stood on the roof of the control tower and imagined B-24's taking off and returning from the airfield.

And, most heartening, I had no idea the depth of respect and gratitude of the British for the USAAF. There's a bond that was established with the veterans and now endures with the sons and daughters of servicemen and woman, maybe even grandchildren.

The restoration of Site 6 will go a long way to keeping the story, the reality of the 467th, in the narrative of family histories hopefully for generations.

- **Rackheath Rainbows**

A report was submitted by Heather (AKA Sunbeam) and read to the meeting in her absence.

I have run the Girlguiding unit of Rackheath Rainbows in the village since 1994. This year is a very exciting year for Girlguiding as they have just launched new Branding and have also started to take girls from 4 years old into the Rainbow section.

For those who don't know about Girlguiding and in particular the Rainbows division, this is for girls aged 4 to 7, we meet weekly and the girls work towards earning badges through a wide range of crafts and activities.

Rackheath Rainbows moved their base to the Sports Pavilion in September 2022 from the Church.

We have settled in really well and find the facilities very clean and modern. We are very grateful to the sports & leisure committee for welcoming us and listening to our feedback and requests, for example installing low coat racks for the girls to use. They have also kindly agreed to providing onsite storage which was a deciding factor in our decision to relocate here and enables us to run our meetings well. Before we move our equipment across (which we've had to have at various leaders homes for the time being), we will need to fundraise for funds to buy new storage shelves (which we had to leave behind) and replacement boxes to make the best use of the space.

At present our numbers are slightly down, so we are on the lookout for any girls aged 4 or 5 to join us, as with the increase of extra fees at present and for the Pavilion hire we need more girls to ensure that we can continue to thrive and meet our costs whilst giving the girls an excellent experience. I have excellent flyers and leaflets explaining about Girlguiding, enrolling girls into Rainbows or even for adults to volunteer, and would be happy to share with anyone interested or if anyone has any suggestions on where these could be located in the village/surrounding areas.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21:21

DRAFT