

Gazeley Parish Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

Chairman's Summary May 2024

It's been a busy year following the Gazeley Parish Council 2023 elections. The council's been working very hard to engage all the members of the community on as many aspects as the parish council can have an impact on this includes, cricket hut & field, village street lighting, roads and highways, planning permission and village community activities. Additionally, the parish council has made extra effort to try and make parish council meetings inviting, inclusive and open to everyone to ensure that everyone feels they have their voice and concerns listen to, obviously the parish council has limited ability to correct everything.

In February 2024 the Parish Council welcomed a new Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer who is responsible for ensuring that the effective management of all council resources. Please remember our Clerk is part-time and here to aid the Parish Council make positive steps within our community.

The Parish Council have engaged with West Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council to obtain funding to upgrade Street Lighting in the village. This is an ongoing process which hopefully will rectify and provide significantly improved lighting for everyone in the village.

Some progress has been made on the forge and its repair and rebuild; however, the progress has been slow, and the parish council continues to work and monitor the owner to ensure that this work can be completed timely, and, in a compliant, and effective manner, we can all hopefully agree that at least the area is a little more organised and tidier.

Overall, the parish council is pleased it is now making positive steps for Gazeley and will continuing to work towards making the Parish a wonderful place to live.

The Council and I look forward to working with Gazeley village in the coming year.

Paul Kinnon
Chairman Gazeley Parish Council

WHO & WHAT IS THE PARISH COUNCIL?

Gazeley Parish Council has 7 unpaid Councillors representing an electorate. Once elected, parish councillors sit on the council for a maximum of four years and if they then want to stay in the post they can stand for re-election.

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings and may speak during Public Forum on matters that are on that meeting's agenda. The Parish Council is not permitted to decide on matters that have not been duly advertised to the public unless any matters are considered urgent or are authorised in the Parish Council's standing orders.

The Parish Council's major role is to represent the parish on issues affecting us to the District and County Councils, and to regional and central government, and other agencies. It is responsible for the Sports Field, some parish grass cutting, its own street furniture (noticeboards, litter bins, dog waste bins, seats, bus stops and some street lighting) and through the Parish Paths Partnership, ensures that registered Rights of Way are open and maintained. It maintains open spaces: children's play area, the Village Green, Recreational Field and Village Pond.

The Parish Council considers and comments to the Local Planning Authority on all planning applications (statutory consultee). The Parish Council supports other charitable groups and organisations which work within the village where ever possible.

Gazeley Parish Council Year End Accounts

Bank Reconciliation at 31/03/2024

Cash in Hand 01/04/2023	20,957.14
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ADD

Receipts 01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024	23,038.27
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43,995.41

MINUS

Payments 01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024	19,859.81
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Cash in Hand 31/03/2024

24,135.60

(per Cash Book)

Cash in hand per Bank Statements

Petty Cash	31/03/2024	0.00
Treasurers Account	31/03/2024	3,323.99
Bus Bank Instant Account	31/03/2024	20,811.61

24,135.60

Less unrepresented payments

0

24,135.60

Plus unrepresented receipts

0

Adjusted Bank Balance

24,135.60

YOUR CURRENT PARISH COUNCILLORS ARE:

Paul Kinnon (Chairman)

Sam Raithatha (Vice Chair)

Laurence Chapman

Stuart Jolly

Robert Connelley

Kevin Grimwood

Judy Moatt

To contact the Parish Council

Clerk: Karen Peck

Email: parishclerk@gazeleypc.co.uk

District and County Councillor contacts

Councillor Roger Dicker email: roger.dicker@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Councillor Colin Noble email: colin.noble@suffolk.gov.uk

Copies of this report are available online

Any enquires regarding this publication please contact the Parish Clerk (details above)

ANNUAL REPORTS FROM VILLAGE GROUPS

All Saints' Church, Gazeley Annual Report

Headlines

Canon Chris Childs, our Vicar, has now been with us for 3 years and we are extremely lucky to have him. In addition to his roles in the 5 parishes of the Kennett Valley Group and as Rural Dean of the Mildenhall Deanery, he has recently been appointed Team Rector of the Forest Heath Team Benefice of 16 parishes. His energy and his ability to relate to everyone are an inspiration to us all. Under his enthusiastic leadership, we have continued to focus on ensuring that the Church remains central to the life of the village and that its significance extends far beyond its core purpose as a place of worship.

The past year has been rather overshadowed by the need to raise funds for the complete replacement of the tiled roof over the east end of the Church, which is projected to cost approximately £125,000. However, we are delighted to say that our various fundraising events and initiatives have been so generously supported and that our applications to grant-funding bodies are going so well that we might be in a position to start the work this autumn. The purpose of these repairs was never simply to make the Church watertight again but also to protect the precious carvings on the ceiling of the chancel which we now know to be very rare and of national importance. We are therefore investigating whether we can extend the project to include repairing the damage that has already been caused to them and conserving them for future generations. We hope that we may even be able to revive our previous plans to install a toilet and kitchen in the Church.

Services

Our full pattern of regular services has continued, and the average size of our congregations is steadily increasing, although we would always love to welcome more of you! We were especially pleased that our traditional Christmas Eve crib service attracted over 250 people. To widen interest for both children and adults, we have hosted a number of special services, several of which have been attended by people from across the Mildenhall Deanery. They have included –

- A *Taizé* style service of music and meditation;
- A Communion service led by Stephen Oliver, the former Bishop of Stepney;
- A ploughman's lunch in the chancel after the Group Harvest Festival service;
- A service of prayers for the conflict in the Middle East;
- A Carol Concert by the Newmarket Town Band;

- The service to induct Chris Childs as Team Rector, which was led by Bishop Martin; and
- A service and lunch for the World Day of Prayer.

Other Events

Perhaps inevitably when we are dealing with an 800-year-old, Grade 1 listed building, our activities may sometimes appear to be dominated by the need to raise funds but, as we have said many times, we have no reserves and nor do we receive any money from the Diocese or the national church. On the contrary, the sum that we must pay each year to the Diocese now stands at £12,500 and that is before we even think about our own running costs and regular outgoings, let alone the cost of any repairs. Apart from a grant from the Parish Council towards the cost of maintaining the churchyard, which it increased significantly this year and for which we are very grateful, we receive no public funds, and we are dependent for the vast majority of our income on the generosity of private individuals and whatever we can raise by our own efforts. Thankfully, most of our fundraising events have proved very popular. Highlights have been the Affordable Art Show; a display in the Church by the owls from the Hawkeye Falconry; and a Garden Party at Bovills Hall, all of which we will be holding again this year.

Although money is of course essential for everything that we do, we would not want to give the impression that it is for us the be-all and end-all. In fact, some of our events have only broken even or have actually made a loss but we regard all of them as an opportunity to welcome and to engage with people who might not normally come to the Church. In the same vein, in order to maintain and strengthen our connections with the wider community, members of the congregation have helped to organise other activities which are not directly church-related. For example –

- At Harvest and Christmas, we collected substantial quantities of goods on behalf of the Open-Door foodbank in Newmarket; and
- Members of our Church community have supported and assisted with –
 - The monthly village coffee mornings;
 - The visits of the Rural Coffee Caravan; and
 - The monthly community lunches in the Village Hall.

Rewilding the Churchyard

As reported last year, having taken advice from specialist bodies, the PCC reviewed its policies and decided to rewild parts of the churchyard and to manage it in more

environmentally friendly ways. It has to be said that this met with some adverse comment, but it was always going to be a long-term project, involving an element of trial and error until we could arrive at the most appropriate scheme of maintenance and cultivation. However, we feel that we have now achieved just about the right balance between the mown and unmown areas. Hundreds of bulbs and seeds of assorted species of wildflowers have been planted and are now beginning to grow and the results are very attractive.

And finally

Last but by no means least, we should express our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has attended our various events or who has contributed either financially or in practical ways to keeping the Church going. We are very conscious, firstly, that there are limits to what can be achieved by the same, small band of volunteers and, secondly, that we cannot and should not take for granted the continued generosity of our supporters. To all of them, we are truly grateful.

Simon Gash

Gazeley History Society Annual Report

The past year of the History Society has been very successful, with an interesting range of topics from speakers at our monthly meetings .

Attendance has been good, and we have been pleased to welcome increasing numbers of visitors from surrounding villages in addition to our loyal Gazeley supporters.

Talks or visits are planned up to the end of this year.

Very big thanks to those who have kept us going.

We are also very keen for volunteers to help with the practicalities of finding speakers, spreading the publicity, and help on the evenings. Any offers to Hilary Appleton please.

Our finances are healthy. Any questions to our treasurer Margaret Gash.

As people may know, we had plans to produce a book about Gazeley's history, which had to be put aside, largely due to Covid.

Now, however, we now have a proposal to put together a more modest small book, which will focus on the oral history of past and present residents of Gazeley and nearby villagers. We have most of the content already. Costs for copy editing, printing and publishing are being determined.

The History Society will contribute towards the costs.

Publication date projected to be summer 2025.

Any comments or questions to:

Hilary.appleton@gmail.com

Tel 01638 750725

Mobile: 07825 078126

Gazeley Village Annual Report

For the second year running the Gazeley Village Hall will be running at a loss.

This year though has seen a much larger loss than last year, almost doubling. Even though outside bookings have increased (e.g. children's parties, events, etc) they still don't cover the outgoings.

We are very lucky to welcome our once-a-month regular bookings like:

- Parish Council
- WI
- History Society
- Coffee Morning
- Community Lunch
- Coffee Caravan
- Table Tennis

With cost of electricity and oil all going up, we estimate that the village hall costs approximately £600 a month to run (£150 a week).

Our biggest outgoings are electricity, heating oil, cleaning costs, gardening maintenance and broadband. Thankfully during covid we managed to secure some funding grants which have kept us afloat, and means we have money in the bank to fall back on. But we don't want to keep using those funds, as they will of course be gone very quickly.

Currently our only funding event is the Big Cash Bingo, which can raise anything from £100-£300 per event. There are 7 bingos this year booked in the diary.

The Gazeley Village Hall Committee has asked if people would like to join us, ideally people with a get-up, and go attitude who would like to help us put on events, marketing to get us out there and updates to our website. The issue we have is that our 3 senior members all work full time, and we only have a small number of members besides them. Without more support the village hall is going to be in desperate trouble going into this next financial year. Ideally,

we would like a representative from each of the monthly groups mentioned to join our committee, as well as some more members.

Unfortunately, our calls to arms prior has not been successful with people stating they would join and then not turning up. We have spoken to the Entertainment Committee about working alongside, so together we can put some event on that will include the hall use and splitting any profits between the two groups.

Dalham & Gazeley WI Annul Report

Our women's institute may be small in number (20 members in total) but our activities are many and varied.

The 23/24 season started off with a delayed AGM which we had to hold in **June 23** due to most of the officers 'calling in sick' in May. With new officers elected, our season kicked off in style with the following speakers/events -

June – David Howell from **Medical Detection Dogs**, a charity based in Milton Keynes. They train and develop dogs from puppies to adult dogs to carry out groundbreaking research to improve early diagnosis of cancer and other diseases.

July - Sarah Clarke spoke about **What Happens to the Rubbish in Your Bins**. She brought an array of everyday items we throw away and explained how the waste management is controlled in Suffolk and assured us that nothing in Suffolk goes to landfill but rather most of it is burned. Most of the recycling plants are private and explain what you can recycle and what you can't. Quite eye opening.

August – is the month for our relaxing summer social where we get to show off our baking/cooking skills and share a homemade buffet and a natter.

- **26th /27th** – we provided refreshments for the **All Saints Church Affordable Art Show** which brought in much needed funds for the church roof and the WI. This was our 2nd year of being involved and we've been invited to do it all again in August 2024. A great event.

September – no speaker for this month. We had a quiz instead. However, the scoring system got a bit complicated, but we got there in the end!!

- **16th** – **New Members Meeting** at the Village Hall. Well, attended with visitors from surrounding villages. We provided refreshments plus the usual mix and mingle. Oh, and it raised our profile in the community.

- **17th** – Visit to the wonderful **Porters Lodge in Cavenham**. A working garden with a tearoom serving delicious cakes and pastries and being such a warm day, we sat outside in lush surroundings. Definitely worth several more visits.
- **25th** – Members attended the **Gallops Group Meeting** hosted by Newmarket Evening WI at the King Edward Memorial Hall. Approx. 45 members from Chevington, Wickhambrook and Mildenhall WI's with guest speaker telling us all about Witches and Witchcraft in East Anglia.

October - Cheryl Brighty attended from **Artistry in Cocoa**. This was the second visit from Cheryl, and she demonstrated how to temper chocolate and explained the intricacies of getting the temperature and cocoa content just right. We were all able to sample her work and it brought in a lot of visitors, so we know that chocolate sells!

- **7th** – Meet up in **Sudbury at the Henny Swan** for a river trip followed by lunch. The weather was a bit balmy for October and had a lovely sunny day and the food wasn't bad either!

November – speaker for this month was Edward Gildea brought us his fascinating illustrative talk on **The Realities of Climate Change**. By showing us photos and videos of his various sailing trips around the globe he made us see through his eyes his firsthand experiences of melting ice flows etc. and urging us all to rethink who we vote for at the next election as he himself is trying to make small changes by standing as an MP for the Green Party.

December – we welcomed back Lindsey Barrell this time as her other persona **Ms Cherry Bombe** with her talk on **Burlesque, Me & The WI**. She was certainly very colourful in her bright red and black ensemble, all stitched and embellished by hand. Wonderful handiwork but don't think she had managed to persuade any of us to join her – sewing yes but Burlesque no!

January 2024 - there had been various discussions around the **Dalham & Gazeley WI Birthday** and through a bit of research and various info gleaned, it was discovered that 2023 was actually our **90th Anniversary**. Sadly the committee didn't properly realize this until December 23 so instead of going with our annual Christmas dinner at The Plough, we decided instead to have lunch and combine that with a mini 'nod' to our 90th birthday. This was held at The Bedford Lodge in Newmarket where approximately 20 of us attended for an afternoon tea. Much fun had by all.

February 2024 -we welcomed back Janet Brown to give her talk on **Living on a Narrowboat**. She illustrated this through slide photos of the narrowboat she shared with her

husband and how she was thrown into the floating world of travel but at a very slow pace. Also, explanations of different types of locks they encountered.

March 2024 - Sophie Ellis gave her very thought-provoking presentation on **What Really Goes on Inside Our Prisons**. Having been involved as a civilian in various prisons in East Anglia primarily at Wayland prison in Norfolk, she presented a series of statistics on how many people are currently in our prisons, the demographics on female to male occupancy and asked us some challenging questions on what do we want our prison system to achieve. Very thought provoking.

April 2024 - and so our season wrapped up in with Marc Williams and his talk on **Arthritis Actions, Self-Management & You**. He talked at ten to the dozen with a lot of info and myths surrounding both types of Arthritis and the diet question was turned on its head. Marc is very likeable and informative, and we gleaned a lot of info and what support networks there are out in the community but the main message was do keep moving but go at your own pace. So, what is in store for our next season?

2024/2025

May 2024 – our AGM

June 2024 – Adrian Tindall – “Virtual tour of Bury St Edmunds”

July 2024 – Iestyn Edwards – “My Tutu Went AWOL”

August 2024 – our Summer Social

September 2024 – Roger Pugh – “The Most Secret Place on Earth”

October 2024 – Helen Hellier – “Design a Herbaceous Border”

November 2024 – Polly Saltmarsh – “My Role as a Paintings Conservator”

December 2024 – TBC

2025 – awaiting confirmations. Will publish soon so watch out in the Gazette and village Facebook page.

We have lots to look forward to and I hope by sharing this it will attract many more to see all that the Women’s Institute in Gazeley can offer. We get together for 2 hours a month and is a great community resource. Pay us a visit on the 1st Tuesday of the month.

Debbie Saldana – President, Dalham & Gazeley WI

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GAZELEY SPEED WATCH: SOME BACKGROUND

About 2 years ago the group was initiated by a group of villagers who were concerned about the speed of the traffic going through our village. It is well known that the higher the vehicle speed, the higher the risk of injury or death in the event of an incident. We approached Suffolk Police and their community liaison supported us in setting up the community speedwatch group. We had training from some of their officers and they provided all the equipment (radar gun, signs, Hi-Vis). Each volunteer has to have a background check carried out by the police before being allowed "out on the streets".

We are now a group of 8, **but are still looking for new members**. We usually set 2 - 3 sessions per month, where we monitor in set locations (again by the Police) usually for one hour. We record the details of each vehicle that exceeds 34 MPH. This is the cutoff under which the Police will not take any action. I then send the data to our liaison officer who verifies the vehicle and then takes the appropriate action.

For the first recorded instance, the vehicle owner receives a letter from Suffolk Police advising that they have been recorded speeding and pointing out the dangers of high speeds in built up areas. For the second instance a more strongly worded letter is sent and if there is a 3rd instance, the vehicle is the subject of targeted activity by the police.

It is important to note that we have no direct powers of sanction, but we hope to remind / educate drivers into obeying the law, simply by our obvious presence. The streets of Gazeley are multi-user (vehicles, pedestrians, with or without dogs, children, cyclists and horses) and being on a national cycle route, the 3 Churches walk route as well as the Icknield Way - there are plenty of non vehicle users.

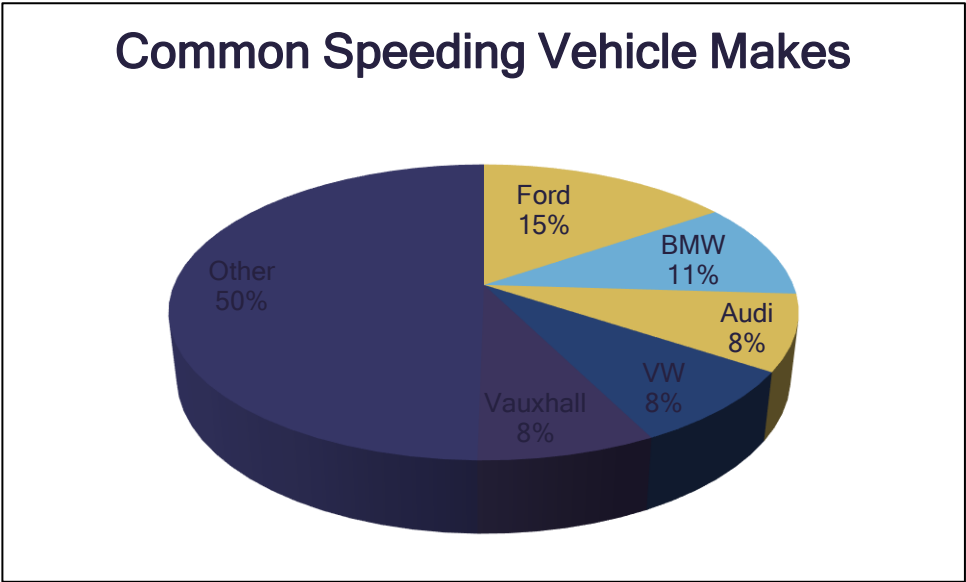
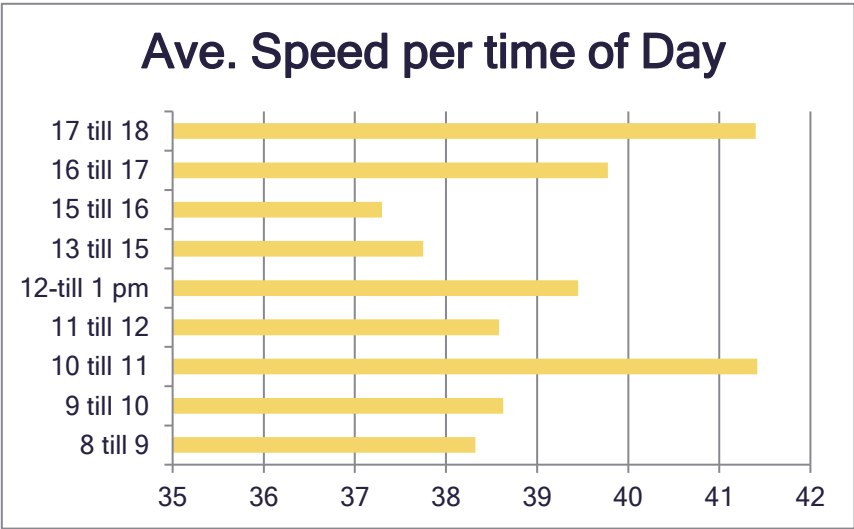
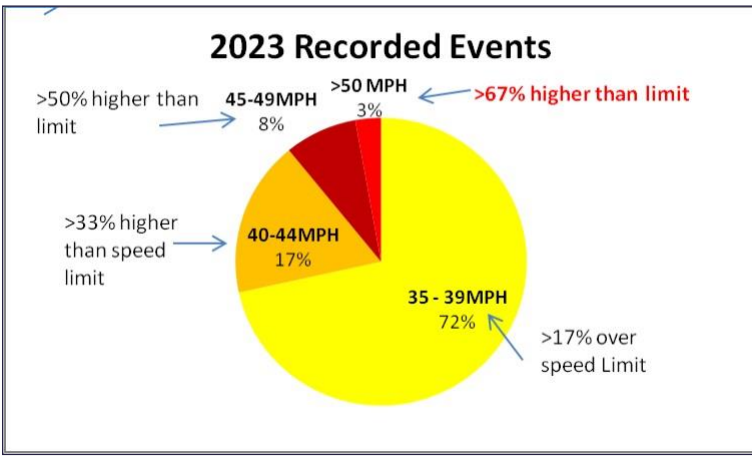
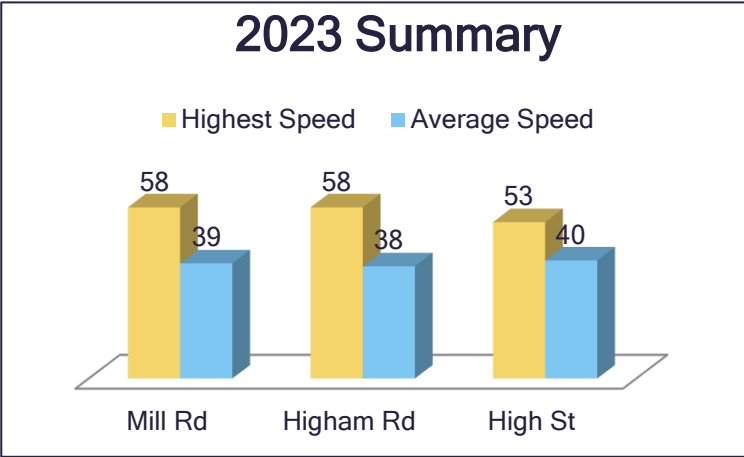
Our data collected over the past 2 years, clearly shows there is an issue with too much traffic travelling too fast - thus posing a danger to other road users. Our initiative is essentially cost free to the village and hopefully reinforces the message on the static speed indicators placed in the village.

- Sessions populated by 2-3 volunteers
- 3% were sent police letter
- 3% had a second police follow-up
- In 2024 to date, 11% of those vehicles passing us are exceeding 34MPH
- So far **no** agricultural vehicles have been seen to exceed 30MPH 👍
- Max speed recorded = 58MPH
- 28% of recorded vehicles travelling at 33% more than limit

We always need more volunteers, so if you have an hour or so per month to spare and would like to like to participate in this community activity, please contact me at speedwatchgazeley@gmail.com.

Full training and PPE is provided after completion of police registration.

SOME STATISTICAL PLOTS FROM 2023 DATA



I have been sent some data by Kevin from the SID machine. The data dump was formatted in terms of average speeds per each half hour period. It is very difficult to glean anything systematic from this data format. A straightforward dump of raw data would be more helpful in determining the numbers of speeding vehicles.

However, as an example of what analysis is possible, the data can show the maximum speeds measures in any one day. Below is a snapshot over a 10 day period. It seems that most days, there is at least one vehicle passing through in excess of 40MPH.

