

Brocton Paper Chase

Issue 51

August 2018

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Parish Council in Brief

The Annual Meeting of the Council took place on 2 May. The purpose of this meeting was to elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman. Cllr Robin Bates was unanimously re-elected to the office of Chairman and Cllr Julie Perry was re-elected as Vice Chairman for a further year.

Annual Parish Meeting. Residents shared their continued concern over the apparent lack of activity on behalf of Staffordshire County Council in respect of Cannock Chase. The Parish Council are in regular contact with the County and, whilst no specific details were available to share with residents (other than the latest communications within the Paperchase), the Chairman offered his re-assurance that the Parish Council will continue to monitor any developments and share these with the residents. The latest situation within AONB was also raised, which is also of concern to residents. There are currently no AONB Officers within Staffordshire County Council, however, as of July 2018 a recruitment campaign is ongoing and hopefully an Officer will be appointed within the coming months.

Brocton Parish Council – Chairman’s Annual Report 2017/18

Presented to the Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday, 25 April 2018

By Cllr. Robin Bates

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Parish Council’s work during the past year.

2017/18 has been my 3rd year of acting in the capacity as Chairman to the Parish Council and unfortunately the issues of reductions in funding that I reported on last year have continued. However, as a Parish Council we remain committed to providing the best possible service we can, to you, the residents of Brocton and the surrounding areas. As always, we continue to rely heavily upon the support of volunteers, for which we remain ever grateful.

New Councillor

I am delighted to confirm the co-option of the latest member of the Parish Council – Mrs Beth Smith. Beth joined us in October 2017 and is a very welcome addition. Due to personal circumstances, (she had an addition of her own in January), she has not been able to attend many meetings, but I am sure that will change as we progress through 2018.

Brook Lane and Chase Road

I reported on Brook Lane last year and unfortunately this continues to be a challenge to the Parish Council, diminishing resources of both the County and Borough affect what can be achieved and the matter of historical classification still remains outstanding

At a recent meeting with the rights of way officers, they stated that as far as they were concerned, Brook Lane was a bridleway, and would be maintained to bridleway standards, that is, suitable for horses and walkers. Not necessarily suitable for motor vehicles. With regards to having the route upgraded to a BOAT, they said that as Highways were short of money, they are very unlikely to take over something that is going to cost them additional money.

While at the meeting we raised the state of Chase Road. Again, this is classed as a Bridle Way, so as long as it is maintained to a standard fit for a horse, that is all the council are required to do. They blame the damage on excessive use by motor vehicles and say that one possible solution would be to close it to through traffic.

The Parish Council will continue to lobby the County and the Borough regarding these matters.

Cannock Chase

In the summer of 2017 the hot topic was most certainly the launch of the consultation by Staffordshire County Council, which generated significant concern within the village. The Parish Council was caught a bit on the back foot by this matter, through no fault of their own, however, I am pleased to report that we were able to react quickly to arrange meetings, with Officers from the County Council in attendance, which were well supported by the residents. These meetings allowed the opportunity for residents to convey the strength of feeling in relation to the matters being consulted on and I believe were very valuable to the intelligence being gathered by the County Council. I am also of the opinion that the strength of feeling took the County very much by surprise and has certainly caused proposals to be re-considered. I am also very grateful to the hard work of a number of residents who worked tirelessly on this matter, by gathering evidence, which resulted in the Parish Council being able to present a robust challenge to the proposals being considered to the County Council. It just shows what can be achieved when we all work together.

Brocton Community Speedwatch

I can report that the Community Speedwatch Group has been re-established in the village. During the Summer of 2017 a number of residents raised concerns about the speed of the traffic coming through the village. The Speedwatch Group held its first day of 'speed watching' in September

2017 and out of 67 cars who travelled through the village, 20 were speeding. As the weather has not been very conducive for a number of months, there has been little activity, however, as the weather improves so will the speed watch activity. I wish to thank the volunteers who willingly give up their time.

Picnic in the Park 2017

This event was held on Wednesday, 2 August 2017. The weather was kind to us on the day, with the rain holding off until the evening. The event was supported by Brocton Football Club and Brocton Brownies, alongside the ever-popular bouncy castle and face painting. Music was provided by Derek Sharpe and both John and Karen Sulway supported with access to the play park and car parking matters. Unfortunately, the turnout on the day was very low and the Parish Council have decided to not hold the event in 2018, however, are keen to hear from residents if they would wish to see a community event in 2019 and what type of event would interest them. Please send any suggestions to the Clerk for consideration.

I wish to thank all of those who supported the event in 2017 and look forward to arranging another community event in 2019.

Community Approach/Rights of Way

In October 2017 communication was received from Staffordshire County Council, by all Parish Councils, advising all that it would be reducing the amount it spent on environmental and amenity maintenance. Ultimately, this means that more work will be coming the way of Parish Councils and SCC launched a website to offer advice and put the accent on 'self-help'. We don't fully understand exactly what the impact of this will be for the Parish, as yet, however, what we do know is that this will affect the maintenance of the many local rights of way around the village and therefore, the support of local landowners, whose responsibility it is to maintain stiles/gates on their land, is vital. The Parish Council will continue to do what it can and calls upon residents to be 'our eyes and ears' on the ground, if you see overgrown rights of way/broken stiles, etc let us know.

Please see the May Paperchase for the latest information about how you can support the Parish Council and County Council.

SCC will continue to meet its statutory obligations, covering routine and reactive maintenance of highways, major resurfacing work, pothole repairs, grass cutting for visibility, gritting, gully emptying and drainage improvements.

Phone kiosks

You will be aware that both of the kiosks in the village were purchased by the Parish Council from BT towards the end of 2017 for the sum of £2.00. The Parish Council now wish to put these to use to the benefit of the village. The Parish Council wishes to install a defibrillator in the kiosk located on the junction of the A34 and Sawpit Lane and has been working with the charity AEDdonate, since February 2018 to raise the funds needed. This campaign needs your support and will benefit the village. So far, the donations on line have reached £460.00 which is a great start.

Thank you to the local businesses that have supported us by having a collecting bucket on their premises.

STOP PRESS. Our County Councillor, Councillor John Francis has agreed to use money from his Community Fund to match what we have already collected, so we should have enough money to go ahead with the installation.

It is hoped the other kiosk on Pool Lane can be used as some form of community resource and the Clerk is looking for volunteers from the village to get involved.

Details of the campaign and interest in the Pool Lane kiosk were included with the February Paperchase.

Website

You may have noticed the updated Parish Council website and if you haven't I encourage you to visit it - all feedback welcome. We were able to update the website via a successful grant application. You may recall I spoke last year about improving communication between the Parish Council and the residents of the village and the updated website is the start of this process. I also touched on the merits of setting up a Facebook page which the Clerk will continue to pursue during 2018.

Broadband update

At last I can report that the Broadband upgrade in the village has now been completed.

I hope that you are enjoying the superfast speed and are maximising opportunities available to you, including shopping around for the best service/price.

Village Hall

The Village Hall was set up in the 1950's for the benefit of the residents of Brocton and at that time there were 9 Trustees, of which the Parish Council was one. However, since that date that number has reduced to 3, the WI, Brocton Play group and the Parish Council. The Parish Council

wishes to fully understand its legal obligations as the main trustee of the Village Hall and, as such, is currently investigating these with the Charity Commission. We are also looking into how other Parish Council's support their Village Halls, so that, in discussion with the Village Hall Committee an appropriate support package can be agreed and offered, if required.

Litter

Sadly, litter continues to be an issue for the village. Our latest litter busting events took place on Wednesday, 28 February, which covered the Cannock Road end of the village and on Saturday, 24 March, which saw us tackling the issue at the Milford end of the village and then back to Cannock Road because after just a month there was a considerable amount of litter again. Please continue to provide your support to any litter campaigns arranged by the Parish Council and refer to the Paperchase and Parish Council Notice Boards for dates of future events.

Finally, it is important that I acknowledge much of the work undertaken by the Parish Council would not be possible without the support of many people who willingly give up their time. The voluntary work that a number of you regularly provide is hugely beneficial to the village of Brocton and to the Parish Council and is also of significant financial benefit. I would like to take this time to say 'thank you' to all of you. This includes my fellow Parish Councillors, our Borough and County Councillors – Frank Finlay and John Francis. Not forgetting John Sulway, who has regularly inspected the children's play park for a number of years. However, it is with regret that I inform you of John's decision to step down. Last but not least Alan Siddons, our internal auditor, for whose services we are ever grateful.

Robin Bates

Chairman

Brocton Parish Council Summary of Receipts and Payments for year end 31 March 2018

31/03/2017		31/03/2018
	RECEIPTS	
11330.00	Precept/Concurrent	11670.00
161.88	Building Society Interest	38.27
1731.22	SCC urban grass payment	1731.22

75.00	Donation	75.00
1309.86	VAT Repayment	1197.62
0.00	Transparency Grant	1472.30
	Bank interest	1.36
14607.96	<u>Total Receipts</u>	16185.77
	PAYMENTS	
10273.03	General Admin, Insurance, Printing, Salary	7201.98
575.01	Civic Amenity Visits	625.00
2262.86	Playing Fields & Open Spaces	950.20
2674.00	Highways, verges & rights of way	2307.50
220.00	Village hall	220.00
0.00	Miscellaneous	49.44
40.00	Training fees	140.00
1193.58	VAT recoverable	892.66
50.00	s 137 expenditure	100.00
17288.48	<u>Total Payments</u>	12486.78
	GENERAL FUND	
24841.04	Balance as at 1 April 2017	22160.52
14607.96	Add Receipts	16185.77
-17288.48	Less Payments	-12486.78
	Amount of Grant expenditure in next financial year	-569.34
22160.52	<u>Balance as at 31 March 2018</u>	25290.17

Dates for Your Diary

Parish Litter Pick – Saturday, 22 September at 10am

The Parish Council needs volunteers to help keep the village clean and free from litter, so if you can spare a couple of hours please come along and help your Parish Councillors and volunteers.

Please meet at the Chetwynd Arms car park, by the speed camera.

Brocton Village Hall events

- Weds 22 Aug** **Coffee morning.** 10am – 12 noon. Come along for a chat and cake with friends new and old – all welcome. Bring and buy sale,
- Sat 8 Sept** **Last Night at the Proms.** 6.30pm start. Cost = £10.00, tickets from Brocton Post Office
- Sat 15 Sept** **Rummage Sale.** 1.00pm – 3.00pm. Stalls to include ladies/gents' clothes, books, bric-a-brac, furniture, toys and more. Be early for the best bargaining, admission 20p on the door. Refreshment's available.
- Sat 20 Oct** **Jazz Night – with bar & meal.** 'Barbara and all that Jazz'. Easy listening jazz. 7.30pm start. Cost = £15.00, tickets from Brocton Post Office.
- Weds 24 Oct** **Afternoon Tea.** 2.00pm – 4.00pm. Come along for a chat and cake with friends new and old – all welcome. Bring and buy sale.
- Sat 17 Nov** **Christmas Bazaar.** Doors open at 2.00pm. Opportunity to purchase those special gifts for your loved ones and for our younger visitors, a chance to visit Santa's Grotto. Refreshment's available.

Further details for all of the above events contact Chris Allan, 01785 665466, visit the website www.broctonvillagehall.org.uk or email info@broctonvillagehall.org.uk

Thank you's on behalf of the Village Hall

Brocton Village Hall would like to extend their thanks to Dave Perry and his fellow DJ's for their generosity in staging the 'soul night' in the Hall in June,

And to Jacob and Joe, for not only entertaining the other children at the BBQ with origami, but for generously giving what they raised to the Village Hall.

Parish of Berkswich Church events

Thurs 13 Sept Parish Coffee morning. 10am – 12 noon. To be held at the home of Anita & David Wright, 'The Garth', Broc Hill Way, Milford. Many stalls – cakes, produce, plants, books, bring & buy, raffle, etc. Contributions welcome on the morning. Admission £2.00, children free. Why not come along, as an added bonus you will be able to enjoy their beautiful garden. Lots of parking space.

Fri 5 Oct Harvest Supper. 7.00pm start. To be held in the Community Hall, Baswich Lane. £8.00 Adults, children £4.00, family £20.00, includes hot meal, glass of wine, plus raffle and entertainment.

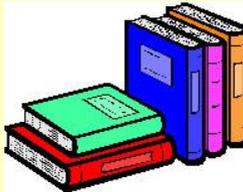
Sat 27 Oct Silent Auction. 7.00pm onwards. To be held in the Community Hall, Baswich Lane. NO AUCTIONNER, write your bids adjacent to the Lots. £5.00 Adults, £2.00 children, includes finger buffet, bar and raffle. **Bids close at 9.15pm.**

Sat 24 Nov Christmas Fayre. 2.00pm onwards. To be held in the Community Hall, Baswich Lane. Features SANTA in his grotto, hot mince pies, tea, coffee and hot punch. Giant tombola, cakes, toys, plants, books, gifts, toiletries, knitted goods, craft stalls, etc. There will also be raffles and competitions. **A truly festive occasion.**

Civic Amenity Lorry Visits 2018-19

The Civic Amenity Lorry will visit Brocton, parking at the top of Chase Road from 9.00am-11.00am on the following Saturdays: 15 September, 3 November and 26 January 2019.

Mobile Library Visits



Mobile Library Visits in Brocton

Brocton Village Green: 10.15 – 10.45am on Wednesdays as follows:

22 August, 12 September, 3 & 24 October and 14 November 2018.

Please visit website for more information; www.broctonparishcouncil.co.uk

Please support this service or its future may be in doubt.

Ladies Exercise Class, re-commences 6 September

Brocton Village Hall, Thursday evening 7.30 – 8.45pm.

Suitable for all ages and abilities. For more information contact Monica Mudway on

01785 662868

Yoga Classes, re-commence on 10 September

Brocton Village Hall, Monday afternoon 1.30 – 3.00pm

Brocton Village Hall, commenced Tuesday 16 January 2018, 4.30 – 6.00pm

To book a place please contact diane.ralphs108@gmail.com or mobile 07709 613107

Neighbourhood News

Parish Council Elections May 2019

Why should I consider becoming a Parish Councillor?

2019 is an Election year for the Parish Council and for Stafford Borough Council. If you care about local democracy why not think about becoming a Parish Councillor for Brocton. Parish Councils make all sorts of decisions on issues that affect the local community. Probably the most common topics that a Parish Council gets involved with are planning matters (they are statutory consultees), crime prevention, managing open spaces and campaigning for and delivering better services and facilities.

Parish Councils only have limited powers to make decisions, however, they do have the ability to negotiate with, and the power to influence, those other organisations that do make the final decisions (such as the County and Borough Councils, health authorities, police etc).

With this in mind, Parish Councils can be extremely powerful. As a local issue, you only have to look to the events that took place in the summer of 2017 over the consultation on Cannock Chase, for a first-hand example of the influence the Parish Council and the local community had when they worked together. The organisations that make the final decisions know that a Parish Council gives the best reflection of how a community feels about something, and its views will be taken seriously.

By becoming a Parish Councillor you will become someone your community will look to for help, guidance and support, as well having the power to influence decisions for the benefit of the people you serve. Seeing your community change for the better, as a result of decisions you have helped make, is something that can give you a sense of achievement and pride. Think about it, right now, May 2019 may seem a long way off but it will be here before we know it.

If you would like to find out more about this important community opportunity please contact the Clerk clerk@brocton.staffslc.gov.uk or watch out for further articles in the future releases of the Paperchase.

Defibrillator update – following all funds being secured for the purchase of a Defibrillator for the village, I am pleased to be able to report that the Defibrillator has now been installed into the phone kiosk on Sawpit Lane/Cannock Road, which was a little earlier than expected.



A small publicity event will be held to officially ‘open’ the Defibrillator and details of this event will be added to the Latest News section of the Parish Council website www.broctonparishcouncil.gov.uk. Please check this out for updates and why not come along to support this event. It is hoped that SCC Councillor John Francis will officially ‘open’ the Defibrillator on behalf of the village.

Parking on footpaths/grass verges – the Parish Council has been concerned for some months now about the number of vehicles that regularly park on the footpaths and / or grass verges within the village. This is occurring throughout the village and is causing difficulties to pedestrians when using our footpaths, particularly wheelchairs users or parents/grandparents with pushchairs. Whilst parking on the pavement is not illegal, Rule 242 of the Highway Code states: ‘**you MUST NOT leave your vehicle or trailer in a dangerous position or where it causes any unnecessary obstruction of the road**’. If your car is reported or seen by a police officer and judged to be either in a dangerous position or causing an unnecessary obstruction of the road, you could receive a Fixed Penalty Notice.

We are also aware that there are a number of contractor vehicles who park in this way which is contributing to the damage of the grass verges and have been putting forward our comments regarding this, when consulted on during any planning application process, to Stafford Borough Council where it is considered there may be a problem. The Parish Council, along with Staffordshire County Council have only limited resources to maintain the grass verges within the village. We have also recently been in touch with the local PCSO and drawn this to their attention, who have agreed to monitor the situation when they visit the village.

So please please ... respect your village grass verges and be considerate of your fellow residents when parking your vehicle.



Bus shelter on Pool Lane – you may have noticed the bus shelter on Pool Lane has gone. The Parish Council took the decision in May to remove this, given its poor state of repair and the fact that it is no longer required, as buses do not come through the village any more.

In April 2018, the Parish Council were approached by a relative of a deceased resident of the village, wishing to donate a memorial seat to commemorate her life in Brocton, where she spent many happy years. Arrangements are being made for the seat to be installed on the site of the old bus shelter and it is hoped, by both the donator and the Parish Council, that the residents of the village will enjoy using the seat for many years to come. Thank you very much to the donator, who wishes to remain anonymous.

Work on Cannock Chase

Staffordshire County Council will be undertaking a small amount of bracken spraying work in Oldacre Valley where it has begun to re-invade heathland and grassy areas on the southern slopes of the lower valley reaches. They will also be carrying out a more extensive area of bracken control in the more remote East Sherbrook Banks area, to keep it from overshadowing the heather, bilberry and grassland habitats present. Advance warning signs and notices have been displayed. The required statutory notifications have been submitted and the County Council will only use experienced and qualified contractors to undertake the work, using an herbicide that has been used safely on the Chase and in the wider countryside for many years without harm to people, their pets or wildlife

Brocton Football Club



During the close season Brocton appointed Kevin Weldon as their new first team manager. Kevin managed Heath Hayes' U-21 team last season, they enjoyed a successful season finishing in the upper reaches of the U-21 West division of the Midland League.

The team commenced their pre-season training sessions at the end of June and began their series of friendly practice games on 10th July with a home fixture against Port Vale. With world cup final games dominating the sporting calendar, the original opening friendly, away at Eastwood Hanley on 7th July, was cancelled, due to a clash with England's quarter final game with Sweden, a stage which many believed would not be attained!

At the time of writing there have been two pre-season friendlies – the Port Vale game which ended 3-0 to the visitors, and Coventry Alvis which ended all square at 1-1.

Port Vale, who play national football in League 2 basically fielded an academy side, they did however field two players who had played at championship level, and so as well as being a good workout for Brocton, they can be reasonably satisfied with the score line.

There will hopefully be two youth teams playing at Silkmore Lane again this season, being at U-17 and U-18 levels, and a link has also been established with an U-10 team which will play games at Hixon. The club continues to value its association with youth team football.

The long dry spell meant that the pitches at Silkmore lane were very hard, however the ground staff managed to keep the playing surface in good condition, and a lot of money has been spent over the close season improving the drainage on the main pitch.

The first team will compete in the FA Vase again this season but did not finish high enough in the league table last season, to compete in this year's FA Cup.

The league season starts on 4th August – early fixtures will be available soon on www.pitchero.com/clubs/broctonfc

General Information of Interest

Staffordshire Archives and Heritage Service are participating in a new touring exhibition 'Through the Eyes of a Child' which opened in July

For those of you who are interested in First World War history, the William Salt Library took delivery of its annual book order in May and has an intriguing book detailing a new theory on the failure of the Battle of the Somme, entitled 'Somme Into the Breach', which asks whether a

North Staffordshire soldier gave up crucial secrets to the Germans in the lead up to the battle led to the failure of the offensive.

Why not pay a visit, you never know what interesting information you may uncover.

Stafford History Centre update. The Heritage Lottery funded project continues to receive support from groups, societies and organisations across the county. The planned £4million centre will be located in Eastgate Street, Stafford and will hold historical records and collections up to 1,000 years old.

The building will incorporate an extended and refurbished Staffordshire Records Office, and the ground floor of the renovated Grade II* listed William Salt Library. Along with a new community exhibition space, modern search rooms and additional strong rooms, the centre will play host to a packed programme of activities!

The project has received nearly fifty individual pledges of support to date, with a range of organisations including local history societies, educational bodies, libraries and museums, all demonstrating their backing for the project.

The Staffordshire History Centre wants to work closely with many different partners in a two way mutually supportive network, building on a shared interest of the history of Staffordshire. If you feel you are part of a group who would benefit from being part of this network, you can contact staffordshire.archives@staffordshire.gov.uk to find out more.

The project follows months of planning and consultation with local people, history groups and local historians. [Read more about the background of the project.](#)

Should you require any help or assistance with any matter you can contact any of the people below who will be happy to try to help.

To report fly tipping; grimewatch@staffordbc.gov.uk or call 01785 619402.

Who do I call if there is a power cut?

If you need to speak to Western Power Distribution in an emergency, perhaps because you are experiencing a loss of power supply, you can use the following numbers:

Landline users: 0800 328 1111 Mobile users: 0330 123 5008 * calls to 0330 numbers cost no more than a local rate number from a landline or mobile.

Brocton Parish Councillors

Chairman: Cllr Robin Bates – 661518

Vice-Chairman Cllr Julie Perry – 07973
193146

Cllr Leslie Lee - 664521

Cllr Roy Middleton - 660182

Cllr Lynne Smith - 662976

Cllr Larry Goff – 07502 226980

Cllr Bethan Smith – 07545 540804

Stafford Borough Council Representatives

Cllr Frank Finlay – 664531

Staffordshire County Council Representative

Cllr John Francis – 665490

Member of Parliament

Mr Jeremy Lefroy Tel: 01785 252273

Email: jeremy.lefroy.mp@parliament.uk

www.jeremylefroymp.co.uk

Clerk to the Council

Jill Davies, 29 The Crescent, Stafford ST16 1ED, Tel. 01785 598434,

email: clerk@brocton.staffslc.gov.uk

Useful Contact Numbers

Staffordshire Police Non Emergency Number: 101 www.staffordshire.police.uk

Crimestoppers: 0800 555111 you can call this number anonymously with information about crime.

Neighbourhood Watch Membership Local co-ordinator: Cllr Robin Bates – Tel 01785 661518

Staffordshire County Council. www.staffordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 111 8000

Stafford Borough Council. www.staffordbc.gov.uk Tel: 01785 619000

Deer Casualties: Telephone Staffordshire Police non emergency number: **101**

Good Neighbour Scheme. Tel: 07599 956939

To report fly tipping: grimewatch@staffordbc.gov.uk or call **01785 619402**

Every endeavour has been made to ensure information contained in this publication is correct at the time of printing.