

Missing Link!

Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Newsletter - June 2021

Stop Press!

Yoga classes in the Village Hall to return in July, all being well. See the last page for more details!

The next Parish Council Meeting will be on July 6th and not June as previously stated-for details see www.brookthorpe-with-whaddon.com

The Parish Council currently has vacancies for two more Councillors. Contact Anne Szabo on 01452 536940 for details!

The Village Hall hopes to hold a Summer Celebration this year subject to Covid Rules allowing mixing outside and in without social distancing! Await details by email ASAP!

If you have something you would like to see in the **August issue** of Missing Link then contact me using the email address below. Thanks

Eric Hibbert

The content, accuracy and/or views expressed in any article or details incorporated in diaries of events in any issue of the Newsletter are not necessarily the responsibility of the producers of the Newsletter. Neither do they necessarily endorse any claims made. It is the responsibility of the reader to establish accuracy if they so wish. The Newsletter will not be acting as a letterbox for argument or dispute! Produced by Eric Hibbert - (Whaddon) hibberteric@yahoo.com

Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon - Parish Council Matters!

Chairman's Report 2020/2021

Firstly, I would like to thank you all and the Parish Council for your attendance at the remote meetings, logging in and out and in and out on Zoom meetings throughout the last year.

Thank you to the following for their past and continued support – **Clerk** – Anne Szabo, for her continued support and expertise in Council matters.

County Councillor – Keith Rippington, who unfortunately was unable to continue his duties due to ill health.

District Councillor - David Mossman for his continued support, especially during this year, which has been difficult for him personally.

Village Wardens Local Police - For their support, and for conducting speed monitoring in the village, which we trust will continue in 2021 / 2022.

Eric Hibbert – For his continued technical support and in preparing the newsletters.

Nigel Bone – For the continued distribution of information to parishioners.

Paul Gaze - For all that he gives back to the village.

Rhodri Rhys – For supplying the replacement bench in St Swithuns churchyard

Martin Coles - For his outstanding work and commitment lobbying SDC, GCC, planners and developers regarding Whaddon Fields. Without his hard work and hours and hours preparing emails on behalf of the Parish Council we would not have been able to cope with the continued onslaught of changing information.

The small number of the Parish who attended meetings and contributed when possible.

I would also like to thank Lynda King who resigned from the council, for her many years of dedicated service to support the community. I wish her all the best for the future.

John Hendry (Chairman).
Rhodri Rhys (Vice Chairman).
Dave Kasper
Paul Gaze
2 x Vacant Positions (Any Volunteers)

The last year has been a challenging year for the Parish Council, with the cancellation of the elections we lost our General Power of Competence as we fell below the 2/3rds of elected members, thus reducing our spending powers etc. However we have dealt with the following:

Essential replacements and repairs, Grants and Charitable Donations.

Village Hall - £1,000 St Swithun's - £750
Mind - £200 Alzheimer's Society - £200
NHS Charities Together - £200
Bus Shelter repairs - £240
BT Phone Box - £1,250 Verge Cutting - £800

The Precept was reduced by 5% to £17,350 in line with a 5% reduction in budgeted spending.

Planning

Several applications were passed although several objections were made, many were rejected and some referred to DCC. I strongly believe that SDC need to be more supportive and understanding when dealing with planning applications that are affecting residents within Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Parish and take more notice of the comments from ourselves and this small village community.

We have held meetings regarding the possible major housing development at Whaddon Fields. Planning for this has not yet been submitted but there is great concern locally regarding this. Where JCS plans have this site allocated for possible future use by GCC to build 3000 homes should they require it. The Parish council will continue to advise parishioners on this and push the local authorities for clarification.

Burglaries.

Theft continues to be an issue affecting houses, out buildings, farms, and agriculture businesses. This is together with dog theft, a national phenomenon as thieves move out of the cities where there are increased camera systems in use. We will continue to advise the public of issues raised by local police alerts via the email system, and a close working relationship with the Police.

Covid 19 Lockdown Restrictions.

As we are all aware these are unprecedented times. The local elections were cancelled and as previously stated this resulted in the Parish Council no longer having the required number of elected councillors sitting.

With the recent elections on the 8th of May I am happy to report that we now have regained our qualification for General Power of Competence.

We are from 18th of May able to hold meetings again in the village hall but numbers are restricted to a maximum of 15, so entrance will be on a first come, first admitted basis. However we do intend to purchase electronic equipment to stream the meetings in the future so more of the community are aware of the local issues without attending the events in person.

continued

Contact details

Clerk to the Parish Council
Anne Szabo 01452 536940
brookthorpe@gmail.com

Emails with the councillors contact details were sent out at the start of the lockdown, and a mailshot issued to homes known to be without internet access. I do hope that you are all well and coping in these difficult times and feel free to contact the councillors if you have any concerns or issues which need to be addressed.

In full time employment and with a growing family, my time on council activities is sometimes restricted, but I will continue to do my best to serve the community with the support of my fellow councillors.

Thank you

John Hendry - (Chairman)- (Brookthorpe)

Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Parish Council.

BROOKTHORPE WITH WHADDON

RECONCILIATION – MARCH 2021

Prepared by A Szabo RFO

Current A/C 30/3/2021	£28,780.85
Less unpresented Cheques	<u>£ 600.00</u>
	£28,180.85

Balance B/F 1 st April 2020		£23,741.57
Receipts	+	£20,032.18
Payments	-	<u>£15,592.90</u>

£28,180.85

Unpresented Cheques

1127 £200

1128 £200

1129 £200

Housing Development Whaddon - Concerns!

Up to 3,500 houses for Whaddon Fields! *an article dated 6th March*

If all the developers' schemes are approved by Stroud Council then Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon will have a population larger than Stonehouse or Dursley even though the land is not needed by the Council for its own housing. And the work could start next year.

If the Local Plan is adopted in its present form next year as intended and County Highways approve the developers' transport plans then planning applications could be lodged next summer. These could have a secondary school for 900 pupils for the Marling School group opening in 2023 by the M5 in Brookthorpe. The main developer is Taylor Wimpey who have a Masterplan cover about 300 acres North of Naas Lane to Whaddon Church with LQ Estates and Newland Homes having plans for the rest of Tuffley Farm in Grange Road. With the Persimmon estate there now being built this would put up to 3,500 houses between Naas Lane and Grange Road using the existing roads in the village. Added to this will be the approved 720 houses at Winneycroft in Matson

The school is being promoted by Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust being the Marling School group and have funding agreed by the Government. This entrance for the site is in the old Stroud Road by the motorway bridge. The plan is to open the school before any housing is built and so pupils will have to travel from elsewhere, possibly Hunt's Grove and Kingsway. There are no plans at the moment to upgrade Naas Lane.

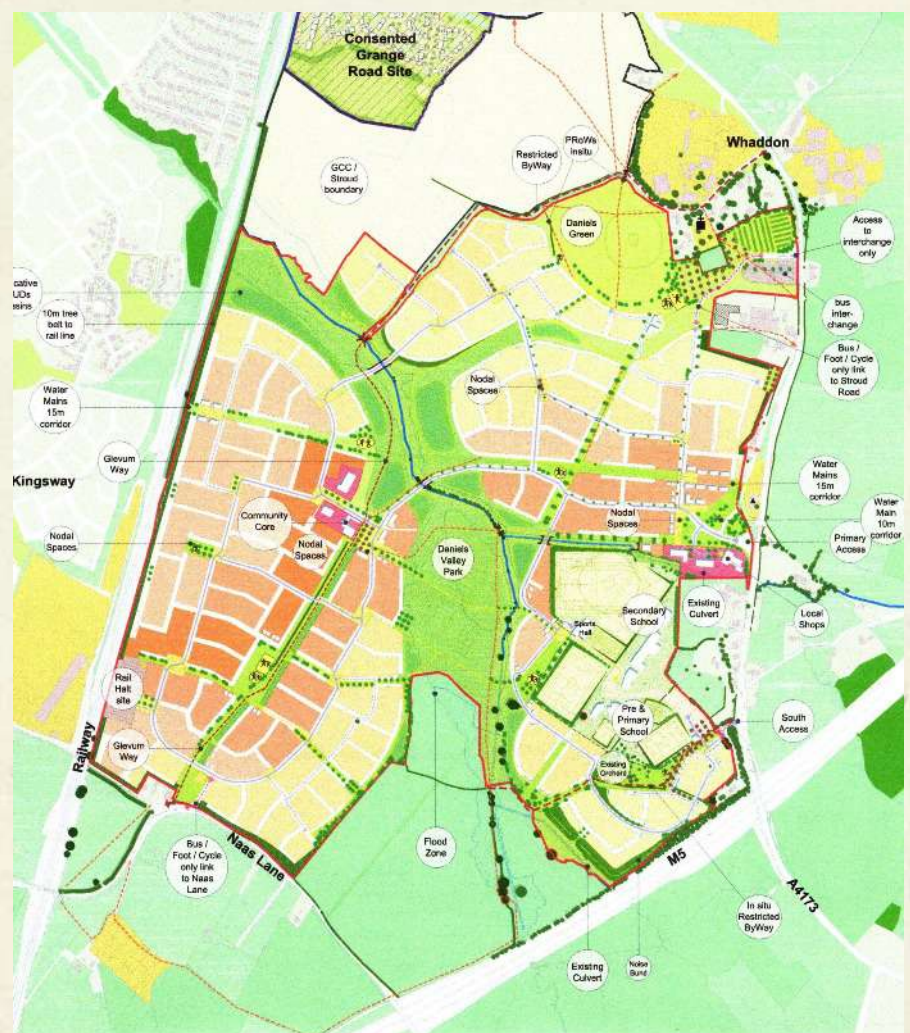
This article was produced for the Village Voices magazine distributed in April. It is repeated here for awareness reasons. There have been developments since, all of which are being closely monitored by Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Parish Council.

Taylor Wimpey's agents believe that their scheme will go through. Perhaps the deciding factor will be the Stroud Road roundabout in Tuffley which is over capacity already as confirmed in the County's Atkins Report on St. Barnabas. It is now the worst traffic junction in the City and the County has several options to improve it and close Reservoir Road but none take into account extra housing in Whaddon. Taylor Wimpey have their own plans to remove the island but they are confidential until their Transport Assessment is published in May or June. They are also preparing their own Environmental Impact Assessment following the requirements of a Scoping Opinion from SDC. That can be seen at SDC Planning at **2020/0492/EISA**.

We are consulting with the developers and are in touch with our councillors and MPs but all must wait for the Joint Core Strategy Review for Gloucester's housing requirement and County Highways' response on the transport issues. This will become known later this year and in the meantime we are looking for support as our parish only has 120 houses. So, any villagers who want to use their voice or see the plans and reports please contact me on. This will affect us all.

Martin Coles - (Whaddon) martincoles7@hotmail.com

martincoles7@hotmail.com



Village Hall News!

Secretary's Report 2021

Since my previous report which was circulated in June of last year, there is unsurprisingly little to comment on in the way of activity.

The committee has continued to meet albeit virtually. Most of the discussion has been concerned about preserving the fabric of the building and keeping the grounds clean & tidy.

We are indebted to Paul Gaze who has ensured everything has been well maintained carrying out regular checks and many d-i-y tasks. Inside the hall, sanitizers have been installed to comply with Covid requirements.

Outside, the lawns particularly at the rear have been kept well and parts have been re-seeded which has in effect created more space for activities.

Alison Phillips our cleaner has also continued to work all through the pandemic for which we are grateful.

Work on the refurbished phone box was completed by Eric Hibbert and Paul Gaze and it now houses the defibrillator and a small collection of paperbacks. Thanks to them for a job well done.

There was some limited activity at Halloween aimed at the children and Christmas lighting and decoration was put up for the festive season. Vicki Smart, one of the committee who organised this will elaborate during the meeting.

Lisa Smith, who had served on the committee for 4 years stepped down during the year.

Sadly we have to report that Eileen Browne, the yoga tutor for many years died last July after a long illness. There is the possibility that yoga sessions will resume as someone has expressed interest in holding classes.

Looking to the future, the committee has decided that the hall will re-open from June 21st. the date recommended by the Government for the lifting of the remaining restrictions.

We obviously hope that our previous hirers will feel able to return to holding their various activities.

Understandably the project to raise funds for an extension has been placed on hold during the pandemic. Eric Hibbert our Chairman will comment in more detail in his report.

Thanks as always to fellow committee members Lauren Amon, Amanda Hendry, Lynda King and Vicki Smart, to Annie Gaze who keeps the finances in good order and provides regular up-dated information and finally to Chairman Eric Hibbert who "keeps the flag flying".

When I took on the role of Secretary in October 2009 I had in mind to fulfil 10 years. Obviously in these rather uncertain times things have not gone quite to plan. However I am giving notice that I intend to step down at the Annual Meeting in 2022. Hopefully this will allow time for a successor to be found.

Nigel Bone - (Brookthorpe)

**Bookings being taken
from 21st June
assuming Covid
Restrictions permit!**

**Contact Nigel Bone
01452 812628**

Chairman's Report 2021

Comprehensive reports from Both Nigel and others cover the events and other matters during this difficult Covid period stretching back to 23rd March 2020. It was hoped that we would be back to normal from June onwards but that was not to be and now wait with bated breath a welcome return to some form of general freedom and unrestricted use of the Hall from June 21st onwards. Of course this is subject to the Governments Road-path going to plan, so fingers crossed!

Bookings will be taken from June 21st unless further restrictions prevent us from doing so.

Most of you will not be aware that apart from the Government restrictions we are also required to comply with the onerous guidelines as stated by our insurers. In line with many other similar establishments we have found it impossible to open up even a little.

My sincere thanks to all the Trustees who have regularly attended Zoom meetings over the past year and wherever possible within the guidelines managed to put on several events around the Hall for the enjoyment of parishioners and passers by.

The Grounds of the Hall have been meticulously maintained by Paul Gaze, who takes great pride in its appearance, so thank you as always Paul.

In-between Lock downs Paul and I managed to finish the refurbishment of the Phone Kiosk which now houses the defibrillator and our paperback swap library. My thanks to the Parish Council for fully funding this and to Martin Gaze and Jeremy Prout for their assistance in re-locating the Kiosk to its new home in the Hall grounds.

Inside the Hall we have added further hygiene and hand sanitising facilities in preparation for future opening. I said in my last report that I wanted to establish the Hall as a destination in its own right and believe we have done just that regardless of COVID, so please enjoy it!

continued

Village Hall News!

The location of the Hall makes it a real centre piece of the Village of Brookthorpe and is constantly on view to locals as well as those passing through, many compliments have been received. Thank you!

We are as you are no doubt aware Trustees of the Hall's Charitable Trust, there are currently seven of us but there is always room for one or two more. Sadly but not unexpectedly Nigel Bone (our secretary) will be retiring next year so we will have a vacancy for secretary. Nigel has formed a large part of the backbone of the Trust for many years and has played a crucial role in our well-being, providing the booking contact, liaising with numerous organisations and authorities and promoting evening events as well as taking and producing the minutes. He will be missed but I know he will still take an interest in the future. Thank you Nigel its been a pleasure working with you.

In 2019 we began producing a Newsletter funded by the Parish Council. Due to Covid this petered out in 2020 but will start again this year with a May edition. It will cover news and articles and be produced every two months. A simpler version may appear in-between should something special come up. We have also contributed articles to "Village Voices" over the last 18 months and will continue to do so. I mustn't forget the splendid day-to-day News/Warnings Nigel provides to all of us by email as and when! This is of course something he has always done and not part of his Trustee role.

Many years ago as a former Parish Council Member/Chairman I set up a website for the Parish Council which displays minutes, articles, reports etc. for all to view. They are in the process of adopting a new website platform in order to conform with the latest guidelines/regulations etc. As a result we are in the process of building our own new and exclusive website that will be launched in June. The address will be www.bvhtrust.uk so keep an eye out for all the latest from us from then on, including the new Newsletter!

So where do we go from here? Well given a return to freedom we will be organising some events for the Parish ASAP and looking for quality entertainment to put on in the Autumn/Winter. Together with the anticipated return of our traditional and hopefully new hirers we hope to be fully back in business again very soon.

Fundraising for the Halls extension can begin in earnest to enable us to make this a reality in the near future.

Now during the closure of the Hall you may be wondering how we have managed to survive with very few if any hiring's throughout. Well we are all volunteers so we don't get paid and our bank balance was relatively healthy at the start of lock down. Fortunately our empty running costs are low, general maintenance and upkeep is managed basically free of charge by myself and Paul Gaze. There are other costs which are incurred by employing qualified professionals where and only when required. We were able to attract some Government Grants designed to ensure that facilities such as ours do not fold so we are currently in a good position to move forward with our plans for the future.

May 6th will see the Hall being used by Stroud District Council as a Polling Station for local elections. This has been cleared by our insurance company and all Covid regulations will be in force, the responsibility resting with SDC. The Hall has been approved for use, there will be one way in and one way out and social distancing/hygiene rules coordinated by their staff. This does not signal the official reopening of the Hall!

So Finally I'd like to thank everyone who has supported the Hall and events in the past and plead with those who have not supported in the past to make an effort to support us in the future. We are a Charitable Trust totally reliant normally on hiring's and event support to remain a viable entity. Our profits are small but we exist to provide a service to the community around us. The trustees give of their time and expertise for free and go to great lengths to make things happen in and around this Village owned historical asset, one we should all be proud of and make a special effort to support.

Eric Hibbert - (Whaddon)



Village Hall News!

Report on Grounds and Maintenance activities at Brookthorpe Village Hall 2020/21

During COVID restrictions I have conducted weekly inspections of the Hall to check there has been no damage to the fabric of the building. The water system has been run (hot and cold) and the w/c's have been flushed. All these inspections have been 'logged' to satisfy the Insurers.

On a Monthly basis I have also conducted inspection of those matters affecting safety. Operating the Emergency Lighting, checking Firefighting Equipment, Checking First Aid Boxes and checking the Defibrillator. Ground's maintenance has involved regular Grass Cutting and occasional trimming of the front Hedge and boundary Hedge by the Severn Trent site. After spending a lot of time in the previous year on cutting back the boundary hedge with School House there were areas of bare ground that was seeded, including the area under the two small trees by the Sundial. Some areas were also levelled and graded.

Areas of the grass that were heavily weed infested were treated and this is an ongoing task to get rid of persistent weedy areas.

On the Maintenance side I repaired a small but persistent leak from the flat roof by the rear corridor to the storeroom. Both the old Shed and new Storage Building were treated with Timber Preservative.

Following the Inspection of the Electrical Installation a number of older Emergency Lighting fittings were identified as requiring replacement and as a result a total of seven Emergency Lighting units were replaced. Also, the glass Lighting Globes in the main hall were taken down and cleaned and all six Light Bulbs were replaced.

The Upholstered Folding Chairs were all Steam Cleaned and Vacuumed as they were some unpleasant stains and mildew appearing on the seats as they were not being used on a frequent basis.

Paul Gaze - (Brookthorpe)

Limited Events in Lockdown!

Despite not being able to hold our usual events at the hall, the committee has been celebrating key events over the last 12 months. These have included:

VE Day

As everyone will remember, 8th May saw the whole country remember and celebrate VE Day

Originally, we had hoped to hold a big event at the hall but instead we had to settle with decorating the front with bunting and flags for all to see and enjoy.

Holly and Jack Smart made a banner that recognised not only our heroes from the past but also our present heroes who were (and still are) supporting and helping everyone during these uncertain times.

VJ Day & Remembrance Sunday

Again, we decorated the front of the hall with bunting.

Continued



Village Hall News!

Halloween

Instead of holding our annual Halloween Party this year, children were asked to create a scary scarecrow to be put on display outside the village hall.

We had 10 scarecrows that suitably scared everyone that passed.

With help from the committee, we also decorated the front with ghosts, mummies, carved pumpkins and even a big black spider crawling over the hedgerow.

You may remember that weekend saw some high winds which meant we saw a few arms and wigs drop off – but that just added to the spookiness!!

Just to say a big thank you to all who took part - always a big effort to organise anything like this and it only ever works when everyone helps out.

I hope everyone that passed it on Halloween night enjoyed it too!

Christmas

Unfortunately, we couldn't hold our annual Christmas Fayre – but we did decorate the large window at the front and the tree outside with festive lights.

Of course it goes without saying that we hope to be able to hold more events this year. Its a great opportunity to get the community together and I think everyone will agree that its been a long time coming!

Vicki Smart - (Brookthorpe)

Future Events!

Enjoy an early-afternoon YOGA practice that invites you to tune into yourself, clear your mind, awaken & energise your body. This Hatha Yoga Practice incorporates focused breathing, mantra and meditation.

Beginning Tuesday 5 July, Brookthorpe Village Hall

1.30-2.30pm £8

Join Annet for a Yoga practice that guides you to strengthen your ability to be present, move in harmony with your breath and to feel into your heart. This practice includes pranayama, mantra & meditation.

Beginning Thursday 1 July, Brookthorpe Village Hall

6.30-8pm £11

Annet - 07811 304684

Comments/Questions

'I visit the churchyard at Brookthorpe regularly and would just like to say a huge thank you to who ever has been working so hard lately to tidy it up ! It has obviously taken many hours of hard work .
It really is looking so much better .

Thank you
Rebecca warner '