

Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Parish Council - Chairman's Report 2019 / 2020

Firstly, I would like to thank you all and the Parish Council for your attendance at meetings throughout the last year.

Some special thanks past and present goes to Anne Szabo (our clerk) for her continued support and expertise in many subjects related to the Parish Councils wellbeing.

Thank you to the following for their past and continued support.

- Village Hall Committee.
- County Councillor – Keith Rippington.
- District Councillors,

A special thanks to David Mossman for his continued support, especially during this year, which has been difficult for him personally.

- Village Wardens.
- Local Police for their support.
- Eric Hibbert – re the Website.
- Nigel Bone – re the continued distribution of information to parishioners.
- Paul Gaze for all that he gives back to the village.
- The small number of the Parish who attend meetings and have contributed whenever possible.

The last year has been a challenging year for the Parish Council and I personally would like to thank them all for joining this great parish we all live in and love.

We have two new members whom I would like thank and welcome to the Parish Council, Rhodri Rhys and Paul Gaze. I would also like to thank Steve Betts who has resigned from the council, for his many years of dedicated service to support the community, I wish him all the best for the future, he will be missed.

John Hendry (Chairman).

Rhodri Rhys (Vice Chairman).

Lynda King.

Dave Kasper

Paul Gaze

Vacant (Any Volunteers)

It has been a big and challenging year for the council members. However, in the past year we have dealt with the following:

Essential replacements and repairs.

GRANTS Issued – as follows -

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Memorial Bench | £ 957.43 |
| Village Hall | £ 4,500 |
| Community Events | £ 2,500 |
| St Margaret's | £ 500 |
| St Swithun's | £ 750 |
| Stroud Valleys Project | £ 50 |
| Winstone's Wish | £ 100 |
| Alzheimers Society | £ 100 |
| Newsletter | £ 1,200 |
| BT Phone Box | £ 2,500 |

Precept £ 15,000

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 two possible major developments – A proposal for a 74 bedroom hotel at the motorway services, and a housing development suggestion by the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) at Whaddon Fields. The latter is not yet been submitted but there is great concern locally regarding this. The Parish council will continue to advise parishioners on this and push the local authorities for clarification. To prepare for this possible development and the need to engage professionals to build a case against this, an increase in the precept to £18,500 for next year was agreed.

Traveller's site

Some improvements have been made, however Stroud District Council need to take a more active role in the management of the site, and the safety of the parish. Particularly when PCSO's attending Parish Meetings have reported concerns when trying to go onto the site.

Burglarys.

Theft continues to be an issue affecting houses, out buildings, farms, and agriculture businesses. This is a national phenomenon as thieves move out of the cities where there are increased surveillance 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.

St Swithuns Church.

Last year there was damage to the grounds and the car park was being used for unsavoury events and activity, this year the Parish Council has funded the purchase and installation of new gates to protect this area. The church has in return agreed for parishioners to use the car park for any large personal events, and also be used as an overspill car park for social events organised at the Village Hall.

Verge Cutting.

Last year it was agreed to have one extra cut per year to improve the safety in the local roads after concerns had been raised by the public. This is ongoing by a local contractor which gives greater control in the management and scheduling of this service.

Covid 19 Lockdown Restrictions.

As we are all aware these are unprecedented times.

The local elections were cancelled and this has resulted in the Parish Council no longer having the required number of elected councillors sitting, which restricts our spending powers until there are new elections. But rest assured the council is still working hard to support the community, now holding the monthly meeting remotely to discuss local issues and communicate these to the public.

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

I know that I cannot commit the level of time spent previously by Steve Betts due to my ongoing work and personal commitments. 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-with-Whaddon Parish Council.