



The Brock News

ISSUE 66

SPRING 2018

Your Parish Council

Chairman:

Pete Wales 622514

Vice-Chairman:

John Wingham 622292

Councillors:

Mark Böckle 624603

Michael Croker 622035

Ian Holden 623408

Maureen Holding 622780

Russell Horne 624389

John Korbey 01425 627746

Henry Mellor 624587

Harry Oram 622500

Kevin Whittle

(Wootton) 01425 615381

Parish Clerk:

Mary Pattison 622829

Admin Assistant:

Mina Beckett

Groundsmen:

Kevin Baker

Ray Rideout

Parish Council meetings are held every third Tuesday of the month, except August and December, in the Village Hall at 7 pm. Planning committee meetings are usually held on the last Tuesday of the month. Time is allowed for the public to raise any concerns and ask questions at the beginning of the meetings.

Chairman's Notes

It was with deep sadness that I learnt of Ken Thornber's death shortly after the Parish Council had bestowed the first and only Honorary Freedom of the Parish on him at our Annual Parish Meeting. He was an exceptional character whose commitment and contribution to the Parish will long be remembered.

Since the last Newsletter, Russell Horne has filled the contested casual vacancy on the Council. Previously Chairman, Russell has continued with his efforts to install SuperFast Broadband throughout the village, see the report later on.

Cllr Michael Croker has also been very busy with the War Memorial renovation project. The garden improvement work was carried out by him and our ground staff in time for the Remembrance Day service when many positive comments were received. Unfortunately, we struggled to raise volunteer marshals, as was the case for the Christmas event. If these events are to continue and you are willing to help in the future with a few hours of your time please contact the Clerk.

On the financial front, I am very pleased to confirm that there is yet again no increase in the Parish Council Precept this year. It will therefore remain not only below other comparable villages but also well below the average level for the Forest as a whole.

We have agreed provisional terms with Brockenhurst Village Trust and are now in the process of planning to build a new Parish Council office and details are in this Newsletter. We presently estimate that this will cost in the region of £140,000 of which we already have £70,000 in our reserves. We will need to raise £70,000 from the Public Works Loan Board at a fixed rate of interest but if you have any comments or

concerns about this then now is the time to raise them through The Clerk.

We have, however, received over £50,000 in the form of Open Space Developers Contributions for Holmwood (formerly the Watersplash Hotel). The funds cannot be used to build the new office, but we have some ideas such as a village sign. We would welcome your ideas as we would like all residents to be able to benefit from them.

Parking on Balmer Lawn Road has been getting worse over the years. Aided by an article in the Lymington Times we eventually persuaded NFDC to take enforcement action which resolved the issue. If necessary this will be repeated in future years. Work has also been completed there by the Forestry Commission to replace the dragons' teeth. The safety issues, due to the unstable river bed, remain and people are needlessly endangering themselves by entering the water.

In other news, it has been suggested by our County Councillor that we write to our Member of Parliament, Julian Lewis, to protest against further austerity as it is having a negative impact on village life, such as the loss of the crossing patrol outside the village school. There has also been a spate of bike thefts in the village. I understand that the culprit has been apprehended and is now off the streets, since when there have been no other thefts but please be aware and lock your bike if you leave it.

The hole in the village ford off Waters Green also remains and we urge you to take care if driving or particularly cycling through it. Repairs have proved ineffective so far with no further work planned until after the waters subside in the Spring.

Best wishes
Pete Wales

Planning Update

The PC planning committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month, in the village hall to consider its view on all the planning applications that relate to Brockenhurst, including Wootton. In general additions or alterations to properties get permission because they are within the constraints of the planning policies of the National Park.

The National Park Authority is the Planning Authority for the whole of the Park and decisions are made either by the Planning Officers under Delegated Powers or by the Development Control Committee, meeting on the third Tuesday of each month.

One example is the proposed development of the Lloyds Bank site. This is a central part of Brockenhurst which needs sorting

out. For two years we have been without a functioning bank and the building is deteriorating. Unfortunately, the latest proposal was narrowly rejected by the Development Control committee, even though we approved the proposal. Anyone is able to put their view on any development or proposal to the planning committee, either in person at the monthly meeting or by contacting the office. If you are making a comment on an application direct to the NPA it is helpful to us if you email us with a copy. You can also view plans in our office, please contact the Clerk to arrange a convenient day and time.

John Korbey

***** * Brockenhurst Village * * Hall car park works * *****

Work is being carried out on the village hall car park from 13th March to approx. 13th April. From 20th March there will be no access to the lower part of the car park, and entry and exit will be via the top cattle grid. It is hoped that the work will be finished sooner than 13th April. Access to the PC office may be restricted at this time, please check on 622829.

Lost Glasses

A pair of glasses has been handed in to the Parish Clerk. They were lost at the Pancake Races on Tuesday 13th February. Please contact the Parish Council office on 622829 if you think they are yours.

Friends of Brockenhurst Station

Following completion of major works at Brockenhurst Station the Parish Council is seeking volunteers to be "Friends of the Station" to enhance the station environment, form a more welcoming atmosphere, and encourage greater community use of the railway.

Many stations throughout the country have similar organisations and train companies are actively encouraging friends groups and establishing good working relationships.

Aims of working together:

To encourage use of the railway through a variety of regeneration and community activities.

To promote the station as a gateway to Brockenhurst, The New Forest and Lymington areas.

Improving the environmental and operational upkeep of the station

Enhancing the historical heritage of the station

Volunteer Roles

Volunteers will be part of an existing corps of volunteers to:

Regularly visit the station to conduct surveys

Alert South Western Railway of any damage, vandalism or disrepair

Suggest improvements for overall benefit of customers using the station

Assist with plant provision and tending

Distribute publicity

Assist with community event planning. e.g."

Music at the Station" events

South Western Railway will continue to manage the line and station and be responsible for its cleanliness decorative order and repair.

Volunteers will not take on tasks currently performed by South Western Railway's staff or agents.

If you are interested, in the first instance please contact the Parish Clerk, contact details on the back page.



A Village Sign project.....

The Parish Council has received a suggestion that the village should have its own distinctive free-standing sign. These are quite common in Sussex and the east of England and help to foster the idea of a community proud of its past and locality. A good example of a recent one is at Peasmarsh and a photo of the unveiling last summer is available at www.peasmarsh.org.uk/12341

No decision has yet been taken on whether to go ahead with the sign and the cost should be around £4,500. We would like to invite the submission of designs for the sign and these will be put on display at the

Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 24th April. Brockenhurst College has also been invited to submit designs and the students have worked on the project with enthusiasm. Two potential sites have been suggested so far, Waters Green or near the watersplash.

If you would like to put in an entry please ensure we receive it at the Parish Council Office in Highwood Road (via email preferably) by 10 am on Monday 9th April. Further information is available from the Parish Clerk on 622829 or clerk@brockenhurst.gov.uk, or via our website www.brockenhurst.gov.uk.

Superfast Broadband

We were pleased that customers connected to BT Open Reach Box 1 near the Catholic Church could, from early January, order super fast broadband from their internet supplier. Unfortunately those customers serviced by Box 2 along Rhinefield Road cannot be connected yet since a further technical problem has arisen requiring yet another re-siting of the new box to accommodate fibre. This involves re-approvals from the relevant authorities. Hampshire County Council and BT Open Reach are doing all they can to expedite this process.

Parish Council Office Consultation

The Parish Council has rented an office from Brockenhurst Village Trust (BVT) for many years. Our office was most recently in a 'Horsa' hut developed by the Ministry of Works and built in 1948 with a design life expectancy of 10 years. This was on BVT land but when this was demolished BVT made the actors changing rooms in their hall available to the Parish Council as a temporary solution to our accommodation needs.

Councillors believe that in view of the amount of work carried out a new permanent building is required in the village. This needs to provide ease of access so that all can walk to it but also provide parking for the

public and disabled. No viable options have been identified so given this lack of office accommodation Councillors have discussed various solutions with BVT. The Trust are willing to grant a long term lease to provide a solution provided the Parish Council uses its own funds to build the property.

This would provide the Parish Council with security of tenure whilst obtaining value for money including VAT efficiency. Under the agreement, The Trust would obtain best terms as required by The Charity Commission, whilst using land which otherwise would remain as a waste area.

The project costs are estimated to be £140,000. The Parish Council has sufficient reserves to finance half this cost which has been raised over the years from existing Council Tax payers. In order to finance the build The Parish Council proposes to request a loan of £70,000 from HM Treasury at a fixed rate. This would be repayable from future Council Tax but there is no intention to raise the Parish Council's share of the Council Tax to fund the repayments. It is possible to meet the repayments from current income. Indeed, given that interest rates are low this is likely to be the case for the foreseeable future.

Pete Wales, Chairman

