

Brocton Paper Chase

Issue 67

February 2023

Looking forward to the arrival of Spring:



Welcome to the Spring edition of the Paper Chase, which we hope you will find interesting. Please retain for future reference, as there are some important dates contained within, regarding Community Events and Village Hall Events that will be happening during 2023 for your enjoyment.

Contents

Pages 2-4	Parish Council Updates and Parish Councillor vacancies
Page 5	Parish Community News
Page 6	Parish Community Events
Page 7	Village Hall Events
Pages 8-10	Information from SCC
Pages 10-11	information from SBC
Pages 11-13	General Information
Page 14	Contact details
Page 15	Who Does What
Page 16	Invitation – Parish Council Meeting

Parish Council Update

Parish Precept. At the November and December 2022 Parish Council meetings the Councillors considered the budget for the financial year 2023/24. In recognition of the current financial situation, the Cllrs were very keen to keep any increase on the Parish Precept as low as possible, whilst still committing to delivering for you, our Parishioners. With this in mind, the decision was taken to proceed with a small increase to the Precept request for 2023/24, which will amount to an increase of just 6p per annum from last year, based upon an average Band D property.

The Councillors remain committed to achieving value for money for the residents of Brocton and will always strive to obtain grants for projects/activities wherever possible. A breakdown of the 2023/24 budget will be made available on the Parish Council website in due course for residents to view.

Parish meeting dates for 2023/24. The following Parish Council meeting dates have been agreed for the year 2023/24:

- 6 April 2023 – Parish Council meeting
- 3 May 2023 – Parish Council meeting
- 24 May 2023 – Annual Parish meeting **
- 7 June 2023 – Parish Council meeting
- 5 July 2023 – Parish Council meeting
- AUGUST – no meeting
- 6 September 2023 – Parish Council meeting
- 4 October 2023 – Parish Council meeting
- 1 November 2023 – Parish Council meeting
- 6 December 2023 – Parish Council meeting
- JANUARY 2024 – no meeting arranged
- 7 February 2024 – Parish Council meeting
- 6 March 2024 – Parish Council meeting

**** Annual Parish meeting – 24 May 2023.** This is your meeting and we invite you to join us. This year we are going to try something a little different – our approach will be less formal and we want you to meet your Parish Cllrs and tell us what you think of us and what we do for you – do you know?? Is there something specific you'd like us to do?? Whilst our powers are limited, we are always willing to listen and are keen to help where we can and so, we need to hear from you. Our community events are well received in the village, but could we do more, do you have some fresh ideas for us to think about? Why not come along and share these with us, we will also provide you with some refreshments to enjoy.

In addition, we will be joined by Alastair Bentley, SCC's Rights of Way Officer. We are keen to support Alastair in his task to establish a vibrant band of volunteers to improve and help maintain the very lovely bridleway paths and walks we have around the village. **BUT** Alastair can't do it all by himself and he needs your help, so come along, hear what he has to say and you never know you may be inspired to sign up, get out in the fresh air and support the ongoing work.

Also, in attendance, will be Robert Taylor, SCC Ranger who will be providing an update on the Deer Safety Project that is currently being managed by SCC.

Civic Amenity Visits (Bin lorry) – the dates for the bin lorry visits for 2023 have now been confirmed with Stafford Borough Council. The dates are shown below and will be from 9.00am – 10.00am. The lorry will park in the layby at the top of Chase Road.

- 8 April 2023
- 1 July 2023
- 14 October 2023

Dates for 2024 will be agreed towards the end of this year.

Stafford Borough Council wish all residents using the bin lorry service to be aware of the following: due to a change in legislation, we will no longer be able to accept sofas or armchairs at the 2023 Civic Amenity Visits. This is due to legislation around Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) which are found in soft furnishings, these items cannot be crushed (as they would be in the collection vehicle) and need to be collected separately either by arrangement with Stafford Borough Council or taken to designated containers at the Household Waste Recycling Centres in Stafford and Stone.

Parish Councillor vacancies

There are currently 2 vacancies on the Parish Council. We need the support of local residents to help. 4 out of our 5 current Parish Councillors have busy jobs and 3 have young families and it is very difficult for them to juggle all of their other commitments alongside volunteering for their Parish Council, but they do it as they are committed to helping their community. If they can do it, why can't you – you only need to give up a small amount of your time to help??

Our Councillors say a commitment of approx. 2 hours per week, plus attendance at monthly meetings would cover what is needed. Please contact our Parish Clerk to express your interest clerk@brocton.staffslc.gov.uk

Parish Community News

There is a new Picnic table in the play park on Sawpit Lane for all to enjoy. This has been very kindly donated by Lesley Badger, in loving memory of her husband Lew Badger. Lew served the Parish of Brocton for many years as a Parish Councillor and the Parish Council was delighted to give their permission for this lasting memory of Lew to be installed in the park.



On behalf of Lesley, her family and the Parish Council, we hope that the table will be enjoyed by residents of Brocton and visitors to the park for many years to come.



Community Speed Watch – thank you to everyone who volunteered to attend the Speed Watch training event that took place in the Village Hall on Saturday, 18 February. The event was delivered by Staffordshire Police Community Speed Watch team and we were very grateful for their support. Speeding through the village has been of concern to the Parish Council for quite some time now and Community Speed Watch is only one of the initiatives that we are currently exploring as part of an overall Road Safety campaign for the village.

We do need the continued support of the community to help us make the roads in the village safer for everyone, human and wildlife.

Village Friends event – our first Village Friends activity took place on Sunday, 12 February and much cake was enjoyed by all who attended. We hope this will become a regular event, where we can all come together, have a natter, enjoy refreshments and cake, children can enjoy crafts and support our Village Hall, at the same time. Thank you to everyone who took the time to attend, we hope you enjoyed it and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

Parish Community Events for 2023

Litter Picks – the dates for the Parish Litter Picks for 2023 have been agreed and will take place on the following dates:

Sunday, 26 March

Sunday, 25 June

Sunday, 8 October

Meeting place will be at the speed camera on Cannock Road, outside of the Chetwynd Arms, where tea and coffee will be available for all volunteers, courtesy of the Chetwynd Arms.

Easter 2023 – there will be an Easter trail for all to join and Easter Bunny will be visiting too, date to note:

Saturday, 8 April

Open Gardens – we are looking for entries, so if you are interested, please contact Cllr Andrea Pugh, andrea@broctonparishcouncil@gmail.com More details to follow, watch our FB page and the Parish website.

Kings Coronation – Parish Council is working with the Village Hall Committee and will jointly host an event in the play park on Sawpit Lane. Date to note:

Saturday, 6 May

More details to follow, watch our FB page and the Parish Council website.

Halloween – pumpkin trail. More details to follow.

Christmas 2023 – carol singing on village green. Date to note:

Saturday, 2 December

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Village Hall

Village Hall events – Brocton Village Hall Management Committee have advised of the following events that will be taking place during 2023 for your enjoyment:

- 25 February – 70/80's disco
- 1 March – Coffee morning, from 10.00am until 12noon
- 17 March – Quiz Night, from 7.30pm
- 22 April – Rummage Sale, afternoon
- 6 May – Kings Coronation celebrations
- 9 May – Annual General Meeting, from 7.30pm
- 10 June – French Meal Night, from 7.30pm
- 29 July – BBQ, afternoon
- 9 September – Last Night of the Proms, from 7.30pm
- 16 September – Rummage Sale, afternoon
- 14 October – Quiz Night, from 7.30pm
- 18 November – Christmas Bazaar, afternoon
- 9 December – Christmas Meal, from 7.30pm

Events may be subject to change. Further details of each event will be publicised nearer the date.

Brocton Village Hall welcomes enquiries about hirings, both on an ad hoc and more regular basis, depending upon availability. Anyone wanting to hire the Hall should use the links available on the Contact Us - BVH (broctonvillagehall.co.uk) page or ring 01785 662868.

Information from Staffordshire County Council:

Investment update

This year, county councillors will be looking to agree 50 million to repair Staffordshire's roads and footways.

This will allow us to continue our work to create smoother journeys for the people of Staffordshire, but with 6,200km of roads in the county, we have to ensure we make the most out of the funding we have.



This means working smarter, and continuing to look at different ways we can repair our roads. Following on from our trial of the Thermal Road Repairs machine last year, we're trialling lots of different ways we can maintain our roads with a view to developing these ideas and implementing them in the next financial year.

Gully cleansing investment



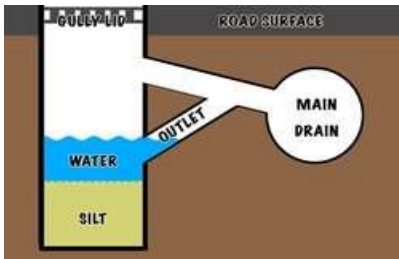
Over the next few months, you might see our crews out and about repairing and cleaning road gullies at places across the county where flooding occurs.

We have been working closely with local members and community representatives to identify problem hotspots in their areas, and these sites will be prioritised and attended to with a dedicated resource.

This extra investment by the council will certainly help the drainage problem, but won't solve it completely. What it will do is allow us to target some of the reoccurring issues we know people care about.

Reporting drainage issues

Many highway drainage systems are very old, and their capacity simply cannot cope with the storms that we now see more regularly. This can mean water takes longer than usual to drain away during intense rainfall. Whilst it is tempting to report a problem like this to us during rainfall, we would always advise to wait until 2 hours after rainfall has passed.



Don't forget, it is common to find a small amount of water lying at the bottom of a gully pot.

In areas where it is safe to do so, you can help by clearing the leaves off the tops of gullies and removing any nearby weeds.

Further information and guidance can be found by visiting our dedicated webpages: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Highways/flooding/highway-drains

Winter Gritting

Our gritting crews are doing a fantastic job in keeping the county's roads open for road users, and our winter operations will continue to run right through until April.

So far this year our gritter drivers have completed over 2100 treatments across the county - meaning they have been on the road for around 4900 hours and covered 108,453km (67,389 miles) - that's the equivalent of driving to Lapland and back over 15 times.



You may not always see us, as we mostly grit during the night.

Please be considerate if you do see a gritter on the road - our gritter drivers work in some very tough conditions to keep the roads clear and we may need to operate at a slower speed to ensure an even and adequate spread of our salt rock.

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Information from Stafford Borough Council:

6p on council tax for Stafford residents – residents will pay just 6p a week extra in tax to SBC from April 2023. Car parking and garden waste collection charges will be frozen; major investment will continue; and popular events like the spectacular fireworks during the 'Christmas Lights Switch On' will still go ahead.

Plans have also been put forward which will see an extra 1700 of the hardest hit families in the Borough pay no council tax in the next financial year. Cllr Smith, Cabinet member for Resources has outlined a programme of proposals that could go ahead despite SBC facing a potential shortfall of around £900,000.

The annual amount of council tax for a Band D property paid to SBC will be £168.52 for 2023/24. The full details can be seen by visiting www.staffordbc.gov.uk/committee/council

Fly Tipping

Litter louts could face court action if they dump rubbish illegally in Stafford. A recent case saw a Stafford resident was ordered to pay fines and costs of £294.00. After a tip off from a resident an Enforcement Officer from SBC visited the site and found black domestic waste bags containing children's toys (pictured).



Cllr Mark Winnington has commented that fly-tipping can have a serious impact on an area and residents who take pride in their community demand action is taken against those who blight the area. Those who illegally dump rubbish should expect to be fined or prosecuted and face a criminal record – so hopefully this case will serve as a warning to others who think it is acceptable to fly-tip in Stafford Borough.

SBC need help from members of the public to report instances of environmental crime, such as littering or abandoned vehicles, so action can be taken. More than 500 cases of fly-tipping have been reported in the last 12 months, costing around £30,000 to clean up.

To contact SBC in confidence, email grimewatch@staffordbc.gov.uk or call 01785 619402. Or visit the dedicated webpage www.staffordbc.gov.uk/grimewatch to highlight illegal rubbish dumps and to see how residents can get in touch with information.

General Information

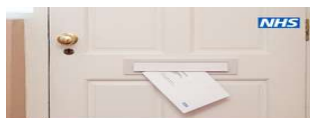
NHS information for residents: If you need urgent medical help this winter, whether that be for symptoms you're worried about, if you or a loved one has fallen or injured themselves, if your child has injured themselves or is unwell, or if you've got a dental problem, you can get immediate help by heading over to www.111.nhs.uk. You will answer a few questions about the health need, and get instant support and advice about how you could self-care, or where you need to go to get further support. If you don't have access to the internet, or if your little one is aged five or under, call '111' for the same help and advice.

If you are told you need to go to an Emergency Department (A&E) and it is not life-threatening, you may not need an ambulance. Think whether a family member or friend can take you, or help you get there.

If you're trying to get an appointment at your local GP surgery, remember, it might be better to see another member of the qualified team members within your practice – seeing your GP isn't necessarily always the best option, and might mean you waiting longer. If your practice does not have any appointments available, ask about Enhanced Access appointments. You may be able to visit another practice within a few miles of your own surgery, much sooner.

In life-threatening emergencies, you should always dial 999 immediately.

Cervical cancer



Don't ignore
your cervical
screening invite



Cervical cancer is one of the most preventable cancers. Yet, in England two women die every day from it. HPV vaccination and cervical screening can help prevent, and one day, end cervical cancer. However, uptake has been falling in many parts of the country.

Don't ignore your screening invite letter - it's a few minutes that could save your life.

For more information, visit the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-screening/>

Build Family Resilience



In most instances parents and carers dig deep to find the resources and resilience needed to help their families and face the challenges that arise.

However, the need to find financial and health security may result in less time spent as a family together and fewer opportunities to focus on family wellbeing, leading to potential negative impact on mental health.

This year the STEM4 charity is focusing on how parents and carers can successfully adapt to challenging life situations, and deal with their own stress and anxiety, while navigating their family through difficult times.

Visit their website to find more information on teenage mental health and support and advice for parents/carers of teenagers, <https://stem4.org.uk>

Dark Skies and Star Count



Nothing beats looking upwards at the night sky to see velvety blackness, with twinkling constellations. Our buildings and roads emit light, and this can affect our view of truly dark skies. Light pollution doesn't just spoil our view of the skies – it can also be very bad news for insects and other wildlife. The AONB together with the Countryside Protection for Rural Environment CPRE have a Dark Skies project to help our community and visitors to better appreciate and enjoy the wonder of dark skies, better understand the effects of light pollution on human well-being, wildlife and sustainability, and encourage everyone to protect and enhance dark

skies and reduce light pollution in the area.

Every winter, CPRE, the countryside charity, runs a citizen science survey called the Star Count, in which people count the number of stars they can see with the naked eye in the Orion constellation. This year's Star Count takes place from 17th – 24th February and the results will be used to produce a map of which areas have the darkest skies.

If you want to find out more, please visit <https://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/star-count-2023>

Elections – 4 May 2023

Local and Parish Council Elections will be taking place on Thursday, 4 May 2023. All voters will be required to show photo ID to vote at polling stations. You will only need to show one form of ID, but it needs to be the original version and not a photocopy.

Below are some examples of accepted forms of ID at polling stations:

Passport or Driving Licence; Blue Badge; Older Persons Bus Pass; Disabled Persons Bus Pass.

If you do not have any form of photo ID, you will have to apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate, to vote at a polling station. You will need to register to vote before applying for a Voter Authority Certificate. The deadline to apply for this Certificate will be 5pm, 6 working days before the date of the election. You can apply online or by post.

For more details on Voter ID, please visit: www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Who do I call if there is a power cut? If you need to speak in an emergency, perhaps because you are experiencing a loss of power supply, you will now need to contact National Grid and you can use the following numbers: 105, from a landline or mobile or 0800 328 1111 from a landline or 0330 123 5008 from a mobile. * calls to 0330 numbers cost no more than a local rate number from a landline or mobile.

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:

Brocton Parish Councillors

Chairman: Cllr Robin Bates
Robin.bates@brocton.staffslc.gov.uk

Vice Chairman: Cllr Bethan Smith
Bethanbroctonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Cllr Emma Fauch
Emmabroctonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Cllr Georgina Thomson
Georginabroctonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Cllr Andrea Pugh
Andreabroctonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Clerk to the Council - Jill Davies,
29 The Crescent, Stafford ST16 1ED
Tel. 01785 598434,
Email: clerk@brocton.staffslc.gov.uk

Stafford Borough Council Representative

Cllr Andy Cooper
01889 881895
ACooper@staffordbc.gov.uk

Staffordshire County Council Representative

Cllr John Francis
01785 665490
john.francis@staffordshire.gov.uk

Member of Parliament

Theo Clarke
Tel: 01785 252273
Email: theo.clarke.mp@parliament.uk
Website: www.theo-clarke.org.uk

<p>WHO DOES WHAT: There are 3 tiers of Local Government in this area and 3 Local Councils with separate responsibilities, Councillors and budgets. The main services for each authority are:</p>		
<p>Staffordshire County Council:</p> <p>Births, Deaths, Marriages & Civil partnerships Business</p> <p>Advice, Support and care for adults</p> <p>Care for children and families</p> <p>Children and early years</p> <p>Community</p> <p>Education and learning</p> <p>Environment</p> <p>Health, wellbeing and leisure</p> <p>Heritage and Archives</p> <p>Libraries and Arts</p> <p>Roads and Highways (<i>including grass cutting & weeds</i>)</p> <p>Transport</p> <p>Telephone: 0300 111 8000 Email: contactus@staffordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: www.staffordshire.gov.uk.</p>	<p>Stafford Borough Council:</p> <p>Planning Applications & Advice</p> <p>Recycling, bins and waste</p> <p>Council Tax & Benefits</p> <p>Car Parking Road Closures,</p> <p>Abandoned Vehicles</p> <p>Street cleansing, litter & graffiti</p> <p>Parks, sport & fitness</p> <p>Housing & Neighbourhood complaints</p> <p>Business Rates, Licensing, permits & advice</p> <p>Environmental Health</p> <p>Community Safety</p> <p>Voting & Elections</p> <p>Customer contact: 01785 619000 Email: info@staffordbc.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: www.staffordbc.gov.uk</p>	<p>Brocton Parish Council:</p> <p>Grass cutting – throughout the village and at the Village Play Park on Sawpit Lane</p> <p>Village Play Park – maintained and owned by the Parish Council. Regular inspections of the park supported by volunteers</p> <p>Noticeboards – 3 located at various sites within the village</p> <p>Book Swap – owned and maintained by the Parish Council, with volunteer support</p> <p>Defibrillator – located in the phone kiosk, located at the crossroads with Sawpit Lane and the Cannock Road. Owned and maintained by the Parish Council, with volunteer support</p> <p>Planning – statutory consultee</p> <p>Village Green – owned and maintained by the Parish Council, with volunteer support</p> <p>Bus shelter – located on the main Cannock Road, owned and maintained by the Parish Council</p> <p>Community Speed devices – 2 devices, located along Sawpit and Pool Lane. Owned by the Parish Council with regular battery changing carried out by volunteers</p> <p>Community Speed Watch – equipment owned by the Parish Council</p> <p>Telephone: 01785 598434 Email: clerk@brocton.staffslc.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: www.broctonpc.co.uk</p>

Invitation



Annual Parish Meeting

Wednesday, 24 May 2023 at Brocton Village Hall, at
7.30pm

Come along to hear what is going on in
your village, we will be joined by SCC's
Rights of Way Officer and a member of the
Deer Safety Project team.

Meet your Parish Councillors and have cake and a
drink.