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| Brocton Paper Chase |
| Issue 73 **February 2025****Here’s looking forward to the arrival of Spring:****Welcome to the Spring edition of the Paper Chase, which we hope you will take the time to read and find it useful. Please retain this for future reference as there are some important dates included about Community Events and Village Hall Events for you to enjoy during 2025.****Contents**

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| **Pages 2-4** | **Parish Council Update** |
| **Pages 4-7** |  **Parish Community News, including future Parish Community events** |
| **Page 8** | **Village Hall Events**  |
| **Pages 9-10** | **Latest Update from Shugborough** |
| **Pages 10-13** | **Information from Staffordshire Libraries** |
| **Page 13** | **Update from Staffs County Council – Reporting Highways issues** |
| **Page 14** | **General Information and Contact details** |
| **Page 15** | **Who Does What** |
| **Page 16** | **Annual Parish Meeting Invitation – 30 April 2025** |

**Parish Council Update****Parish Precept.** At the November and December 2024 Parish Council meetings the Councillors considered the budget for the financial year 2025/26. The Councillors were acutely aware of the current cost of living challenges that will be affecting many and therefore, wanted to keep any increase of the Parish Precept as low as possible, whilst still continuing to deliver the services our Parishioners value. In previous editions of the Paper Chase, improvements to the play-park have been mentioned and some work on this has already been achieved, through the installation of new fencing between the play-park and the Village Farmhouse. Some of the equipment in the play-park and the surface tiles under the equipment are in need of replacement. Additionally, the increase to Employer NI that will come into force from April 2025, will affect the Parish Council budget and we have had to budget for this. With all of this in mind, the Councillors have taken the decision to proceed with an increase to the Precept request for 2025/26, which will amount to an increase of £1.38 per annum from last year, based upon an average Band D property. The Councillors remain committed to achieving value for money, wherever possible and will strive to obtain grants and funding to help support with the play-park improvements, which is a long-term plan for the Parish. A breakdown of the 2025/26 budget will be available on the Parish website for residents to view. **Parish meeting dates for 2025/26. All our meetings are held in Brocton Village Hall, Old Acre Lane, Brocton, from 7.30pm, unless advertised differently.** The following Parish Council meeting dates for 2025/26 have been agreed:* 2 April 2025 – Parish Council meeting
* 30 April 2025 – Annual Parish meeting **\*\***
* 7 May 2025 – Annual meeting of the Council, followed by Parish Council meeting
* 4 June 2025 – Parish Council meeting
* 2 July 2025 – Parish Council meeting
* AUGUST – no meeting
* 3 September 2025 – Parish Council meeting
* 1 October 2025 – Parish Council meeting
* 5 November 2025 – Parish Council meeting
* 3 December 2025 – Parish Council meeting
* JANUARY 2026 – no meeting arranged
* 4 February 2026 – Parish Council meeting
* 4 March 2026 – Parish Council meeting

**\*\* Annual Parish meeting – 30 April 2025.** This is your meeting and we invite you to join us. Our focus this year is on the environment and we have secured some interesting speakers this year: * SCC’s Waste Minimisation Officer – have you ever wondered how you can deal with your household waste in a more environmentally friendly way, then come along and hear what you can do.
* SBC’s Bee Friendly Officers – the Parish Council is keen to do what it can to help our bees and we need your help too, so come along and hear all about what you can do to help sustain and promote our bee population.

There will also be a short video about a Hedgehog Highway Project, that we thought may be of interest.The meeting will end with a chance for you all to mingle with your Councillors and enjoy some light refreshments. There will also be the opportunity to tell us what you’d like us to do for you – whilst our powers are limited, we are always willing to listen and are keen to help where we can, so we need to hear from you. Our community events are well received, but could we do more, do you have some fresh ideas for us to think about? Why not come along and share your thoughts/ideas with us – **we hope to see you there.****Civic Amenity Visits (Bin lorry)** – the dates for the bin lorry visits for 2025 have now been confirmed by 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 March 2025; 17 May 2025; 12 July 2025 and 11 October 2025**

This service is for excess general waste only that cannot be disposed of using the other options available, please visit [www.staffordbc.gov.uk/binday](http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/binday) for more details. Items collected on these visits cannot be recycled or reused due to contamination issues caused by the unknown composition of waste deposited on each visit.**Please note – sofas and armchairs are not accepted.****This service is not for business/commercial waste.****Parish Community News****Christmas 2024****Christmas tree** – this looked lovely again. Thank you to Brocton Nurseries for their very kind donation**Carol singing:** This was well supported, despite the damp, cold conditions – thank you to all who supported this event. Big thanks to members of Berkswich Choir for joining us for another year. We hope that all who attended had an enjoyable time. Thank you to all the Parish Cllrs who did a brilliant job comparing the event and carrying out a quiz, at the same time.**Father Christmas** – we were lucky enough to receive a visit from Father Christmas again:We hope everyone had fun and enjoyed the visit from Father Christmas. ……**Future Parish Community Events for 2025*** **VE Day celebration – 8 May 2025.** Save the date, more details to follow.
* **Halloween – 26 October 2025**. Save the date, more details to follow.
* **Carol singing on the Village Green**. This event is proving to be very popular and will go ahead in December 2025, more details will follow in a future edition.

**……****Book Swop** – sadly, it has come to the attention of the Parish Council that the Book Swop is not being used as intended. Recently a pair of shoes and a TV remote control were found in there. Also, books had been left on the floor of the phone kiosk and of course, they got wet and had to be disposed of. The Book Swop is not a dumping ground for unwanted items. We have no idea who is treating the Book Swop in this way, but it is an asset for the village and needs to be treated as such. Sadly, a number of years ago, we lost our lovely volunteer, who ‘dressed’ the Book Swop in line with the seasons, she stepped away for personal reasons and for the fact that items she had used to ‘dress’ the Book Swop were stolen, which was unacceptable. Since then, it seems that a small minority, and we don’t know if these are residents or from outside the village, are not treating the Book Swop with the respect it deserves. If this asset is to be maintained for the benefit of the Parish and residents, then we need your support to help ensure it is treated respectively and used only for its intended purpose. If any residents are willing to help maintain the Book Swop, then please let our Clerk know. We all need to work together to help maintain this lovely asset for the enjoyment and benefit of all. Thank you for your support.**Community Bus Service -** Residents may be aware that during October – December 2024, the Parish Council worked with Community Link to trial a return shuttle bus service to Stafford town. Unfortunately, the take up for this service was very poor and, therefore, in December 2024, the Cllrs took the decision to end the trial, as it was not economically viable for the Parish Council to continue to subsidise. In the future, if there is interest in reinstating this service, then the Parish Council may be willing to explore this again. Please let your Cllrs or our Clerk know. …..**Notification of Cycling Event** - Glorious Gravel are running a cycling event from Tackeroo Campsite at Cannock on **Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 March 2025.** The Events Manager has offered assurances that the events are not races and there is no mass start. They do not publish times in speed order or provide any ranking for those completing the ride and do not encourage race type behaviour. The rides are fun, social events that allow people to meet other riders whilst enjoying a good ride exploring new areas.Riders will receive a full brief before the event which includes, amongst other things, that we expect them to respect the rules of the road and obey the highway code/countryside code.For more details visit: [www.gloriousgravel.com](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CBrocton%20Parish%20Counc%5CDocuments%5CPaperchase%5CFebfruary%202025%5Cwww.gloriousgravel.com)…..**Please take Notice: Identity theft**A resident in Sawpit Lane has recently made us aware that he has been victim of some form of identity theft. He became aware of the problem when he started receiving credit card bills, for an account he was not aware of, and had not received the credit card. Purchases had been made in Rugeley and Cannock.He does not know how the thieves intercepted the card. One possibility is that it was fished out of the external post box, which has now been removed. Please take care of personal information and communications.**If you post on Facebook, your birthday for example, please be aware that this is valuable information to thieves.****Road safety in village** – **Reminder message** Community speedwatch activity will be re-commencing in the village from February. We have secured the support of our local Police to attend future speedwatch activities, as/when they are able to do so. We do need more volunteers, so if you are willing to give up a small amount of your time, to help support your local community by helping reduce speeding through the village then we want to hear from you.519314674-HVolunteers cannot carry out speedwatch activities until they have received the relevant training, which is provided by Staffs Police. Training is due to re-commence in the Spring and we are currently waiting to hear details of dates and venues.Please contact our Parish Clerk, clerk@brocton.staffslc.gov.uk who will confidentially retain your details and get in touch with you about training.Many residents are concerned about the speed that traffic passes through the village, so why not step forward and help the Parish Council and our current volunteers tackle this issue for the benefit of all, you will be helping making the village a safer place to live in.We look forward to hearing from you.……**YOGA – classes are still taking place in the Village Hall.** Classes are for all abilities on Tuesdays, from 10.30am – 12.00noon.To book a place please contact: Diane Ralphs, British Wheel of Yoga Teacher DIP/PRANAYAMA DIP/BWY MEDITATION DIPEmail: diane.ralphs108@gmail.comTel: 01785 660417 / text only mobile 07709 613107**Village Hall Update on events – 2025**Happy New Year from all of us at Brocton Village Hall! We had a very successful end to 2024 with our Christmas Bazaar and Christmas Meal. Both were extremely well attended and helped to raise essential funds to support the upkeep of the hall, some of which has funded much needed replacement roofs on 2 of our sheds. Thank you to everyone for supporting these events, be it attending, donating or volunteering. We have been busy planning our events diary for 2025, details for the first half of the year are below. Further details will follow on Facebook and by using posters in the village. Please note dates and events are subject to change. • Saturday 25th January - Quiz Night• Saturday 15th February - Rummage Sale • Saturday 22nd March - Paella Night• Saturday 29th March - Glass Fusion Workshop with Afternoon Tea• Saturday 12th April - Family Games Day• Saturday 10th May - VE Day Community Event • Saturday 17th May - Rummage Sale • Wednesday 21st May - Annual General Meeting (All welcome)• Saturday 14th June - Family BBQ Why not pop the dates above in your diary now or remove the page from the Paper Chase and keep it safe!The Committee have set up a Friends of Brocton Village Hall group who support the Committee with the running of events and maintaining the Village Hall. We are always looking for new volunteers who would be interested in offering help as and when they can, no obligation, no need to attend meetings or become a trustee. If you would be interested in helping to keep our Village Hall running for future generations then please email chair@broctonvillagehall.org.uk. We also have a Facebook page dedicated to sharing what's going on at the Village Hall, please search for Brocton Village Hall and like/follow our page to keep up-to-date with the latest news. The Hall is also available to hire for private functions and can be used for meetings, lectures, classes, etc. Please contact Val Bates on 01785 661518 or email info@broctonvillagehall.org.uk for further information on booking the Hall for any of the events.……**Information about what is happening at Shugborough**Here at Shugborough, things are underway for our biggest project yet – **Shaping Shugborough: Designing for a Sustainable Future.** A tree next to a building  Description automatically generatedIn February 2024 we received planning approval from Stafford Borough Council and we spent the following months preparing our teams operationally and carrying out a series of enabling works. From the beginning of this year our contractors O’Brien, will be arriving on site to set up their site compound.Soon official construction will begin and Shaping Shugborough will be underway. The building process will last 18 months, and we will be ready to open our new site in Spring 2026. Most of the building works will be taking place on the eastern part of the estate, which will limit the impact on visitors to the estate. From time to time, we may have to close paths, including those through the former sports pitches, Lichfield Drive and Bluebell Walk. Any emergency closures will be posted on our website and social media at the earliest opportunity. The relocation of the vehicle entrance to the Lichfield Gates will improve safety and visibility for those arriving by car. The new car park's position will eliminate the need for cars to drive through the parkland, allowing us to reinstate historic paths, reopen the disused Lichfield Drive, and refresh the visitor experience. The brand-new visitor reception will offer a range of facilities, including accessible and family-friendly toilets, a Changing Places toilet, a coffee shop, a dog wash, and a visitor shuttle drop-off area. As part of our sustainable vision for Shugborough, the new visitor reception building will be constructed using renewable, locally sourced materials. A timber structure with straw bale infill will be used to minimise the carbon footprint during both construction and operation. We are also excited to introduce a refreshed play experience at Shugborough, nestled in the woodland known as ‘Underlay Cop’. Designed to inspire the senses and spark the imagination, this new play area will be accessible to visitors of all ages and abilities, ensuring everyone can join in the fun. Following consultation with local schools, we cannot wait to unveil a star attraction: a trio of zip wires running side by side, including one that is fully accessible. This feature promises an unforgettable adventure, where families and friends can enjoy the thrill of soaring through the trees together. A building with a slide and a tree  Description automatically generatedGetting to this stage has been a huge effort and we could not have got here without our dedicated staff, volunteers and partners, all working together to bring the vision for this project to life. **Stay connected with Shaping Shugborough!**Discover more about *Shaping Shugborough: Designing for a Sustainable Future*, through our onsite interpretation, where you can explore the vision behind the transformation. We will also be sharing stories, updates, and behind-the-scenes progress on our social media channels, so be sure to follow along!For more information visit our website:[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/shropshire-staffordshire/shugborough-estate/shaping-shugborough](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/shropshire-staffordshire/shugborough-estate/shaping-shugborough) and stay up to date with all the latest developments. ……**Staffordshire Libraries****Cannock Chase Area Libraries - There is always a warm welcome at Staffordshire Libraries**Did you know Staffordshire Libraries provide safe, warm, and welcoming spaces with access to lots of great services, such as FREE books and electronic resources. With a Staffordshire library card, you can download eBooks, eAudio books, eMagazines, eComics, and eNewspapers on the go!At Staffordshire Libraries you have access to Wi-Fi and desktop computers and can use a range of subscriptions such as Ancestry, Driving Theory Test Pro and Go Citizen and much more, FREE across our 43 libraries.Staffordshire library staff and volunteers can signpost you to information and services in your local area - getting you the help and support you may need. Many of our libraries can help with online applications for Bus Passes and Blue Badges, and our Business Start-Up Hubs can provide anyone looking to start a business with information to get them on the right path.**Cannock Chase Pre-Loved Uniform Market is back this February!**The Pre-Loved Uniform Market is delivered by the Salvation Army Church and Staffordshire Libraries. Supported by the People Helping People Fund, Community Fund, Staffordshire County Council, Tesco and Morrisons.Donations of school uniform are gratefully received at Drop off points: Cannock Library & Hednesford Community Library – during normal opening times and at The Salvation Army, Anglesey Street, Hednesford – Monday – Thursday 2pm-5pmFor more information contact hednesford@salvationarmy.org.uk (Phone: 01543 426128) or cannock.library@staffordshire.gov.uk **Local Studies Open Days at Cannock Library**Join us on Wednesdays every month to explore Cannock and the surrounding areas through our collection of old photographs, newspapers, maps and more.We’ll have different themes throughout the year and we’ll be showcasing our resources in displays every month.* 5 February 10-12 & 2-4pm Cannock in the 1960s
* 12 March 10-12am Fashion in 1970s
* 2 April 10-12 & 2-4pm
* 7 May 10-12 & 2-4pm VE Day 80th Anniversary
* 4 June 10-12 & 2-4pm The High Street
* 2 July 10-12 & 2-4pm Flower Power (1977 Cannock Flower Festival)

Please contact Cannock Library 01543 334525 email cannock.library@staffordshire.gov.uk for further information.**Stafford Riverway Link Exhibition – Cannock Library** Available to view from **Tuesday 25 February – Monday 14 April** (duringlibrary opening hours)The Exhibition is organised by the Stafford Riverway Link (SRL) and includes a selection of artefacts unearthed by SRL volunteers while clearing and excavating the site of the Stafford Branch Canal at Baswich where the navigation left the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal close to St Thomas Bridge (Bridge 101). Many of the items can be attributed to the former inhabitants of the Lock House and others may have been discarded when the navigation was open. The waterway, also known as the River Sow Navigation, was in use from 1816 until the 1920s, and the Lock House was occupied until 1956.  The group that was to become the SRL was founded in 1997 and aims to restore the 1½ mile navigation into Stafford.   The display also gives some information about the Lock Keepers and their wives and asks members of the public looking at the exhibition whether they are related to these folk. Further information about the Stafford Riverway Link is to be found on their website:  [www.stafford-riverway-link.co.uk](http://www.stafford-riverway-link.co.uk/) ‘**Way Marker’ a new ghost story from Weeping Bank and Staffordshire author A.G. Smith – Now rescheduled after the cancellation in November.**Weeping Bank brings engaging, candlelit performances of ghost stories to community spaces, creating intimate and unique experiences for both avid and reluctant readers, gothic horror fans and lovers of traditional storytelling.Cannock LibraryThursday 13th March7:15pm arrival for a 7:30pm start. £5 per person. (15+ only)Refreshments available during an intermission.Contact Cannock Library on 01543 334525 email cannock.library@staffordshire.gov.uk **Cannock Library is looking for volunteers – can you help?**Volunteering at your library is flexible and designed around your interests.**5 reasons to volunteer at Your Library:**You decide how much you would like to volunteer - all we ask is two hours a week[Make new friends](https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Libraries/volunteer/Meeting-new-people-video-transcript.aspx), since 2016 over 850 people have volunteered across our library network[Develop new skills](https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Libraries/volunteer/Develop-skills.aspx)Anyone can volunteer - you don't need qualifications or particular skills[Make a difference](https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Libraries/volunteer/Make-a-difference.aspx) to your communityAt Cannock Library we need volunteer(s) IT Buddies, to assist people with use of library computers and other IT basics.We are also looking for volunteers(s) who might like to run a regular Lego club for young people. We have lots of Lego, but someone with a love of Lego and enthusiasm to support young people to get creative is what we are looking for.Please contact Cannock Library initially on 01543 334525 or email cannock.library@staffordshire.gov.uk or complete an online application form [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Libraries/volunteer/Apply-to-be-a-volunteer](https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Libraries/volunteer/Apply-to-be-a-volunteer.aspx) After you have applied a Community Support Officer will be in touch to discuss your volunteering requirements.…..**Update from Staffordshire County Council, Highways teams******A new way to report highway issues.****The way you can report potholes and other highways issues has been completely revamped.The county council’s [ReportIt system](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/http%3A//www.staffordshire.gov.uk/reportit%3Futm_medium%3Dgovdelivery%26utm_source%3Demail/1/010001949c6b7dc2-5e514b7c-b658-4c7d-a46c-29fe62342281-000000/O3KjYjPO1d0Y3kX6SmnBP7rBK8fvfd_77xGUZloSkEc%3D389) has undergone a transformation to make it easier for residents to report highways issues. The new system is more user friendly, and gives people the option of having their own account where they can track the progress of their reported issue.In response to customer feedback, people can also now report the condition of a whole road, and the language has been made much simpler.The system has taken a year to develop, and although it has been tested extensively, the county council is inviting people to provide feedback that will further shape the system.Reports made to the previous ReportIt system have been transferred over, so there is no need for people to make a new report.Staffordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Strategic Highways Mark Deaville said: “This system has taken over a year to develop, and I hope it will make things easier for residents who want to report an issue on Staffordshire’s highways. This work is a really important part of our ongoing mission to fix more roads and improve customer satisfaction."For more information visit: <https://formshighways.staffordshire.gov.uk>……**General Information****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*

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| 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:

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| Brocton Parish CouncillorsChairman: Cllr Robin Bates Robin.bates@brocton.staffslc.gov.ukVoce Chairman: Emma FaunchEmmabroctonparishcouncil@gmail.comCllr Bethan Smith Bethanbroctonparishcouncil@gmail.comCllr Georgina ThomsonGeorginabroctonparishcouncil@gmail.comCllr Andrea PughAndreabroctonparishcouncil@gmail.comCllr Jonathan Howelljvhbroctonpc@gmail.comCllr Lewis Brownlowlewisbrownlowbroctonpc@gmail.comClerk to the Council - Jill Davies, 29 The Crescent, Stafford ST16 1ED Tel. 01785 598434Email: clerk@brocton.staffslc.gov.uk | **Stafford Borough Council Representative**Cllr Peter Edgeller*Phone contact details to follow*pedgeller@staffordbc.gov.uk**Staffordshire County Council Representative**Cllr John Francis 01785 665490john.francis@staffordshire.gov.uk**Members of Parliament:****Stafford Constituency**Leigh Ingham Email: leigh.ingham.mp@parliament.ukTel: 07562 918814**Stone, Great Wyrley and Penkridge Constituency**Sir Gavin WilliamsonEmail: gavin.williamson.mp@parliament.ukTel: 01902 846616 |

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

**Invitation**

**Annual Parish Meeting**

Wednesday, 30 April 2025 at Brocton Village Hall, from 7.30pm

Come along and meet our invited speakers: this year our meeting has an environmental focus: Waste Management, Bee Friendly strategies and protecting our Hedgehogs

Meet your Parish Councillors and enjoy some light refreshments