

# **Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Parish Council – Chairman's Report 2023 / 2024**

Firstly - a thank you to the parish council members, Eric, Paul and Rhodri for their regular attendance at the monthly face to face meetings, on the first Tuesday of the month in the village hall.

Thank you particularly to the following for their past and continued support –

**Clerk – Anne Szabo**, for her continued support and expertise in Council matters.  
**County Councillor – Sue Williams** who is in regular contact with the parish council through her monthly reports, but whom we would like to see at our monthly meetings more regularly.

**District Councillor - Demelza Turner-Wilkes** who is new to the role, but has already attended her first parish council meeting and has been active on our behalf.

**Village Warden - Mathew Brisland.**

**Local Police** - For their support in dealing with a number of incidents, for conducting speed monitoring in the village, which we trust will continue and particularly PCSO Nicola Wood who has been very active, particularly with regard to the ongoing issue with EBR25.

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

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

**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.

**David Kasper** - For his many years service as a councillor dealing predominantly with environmental matters who has stepped down from the council at the recent elections.

Lastly but not least the small number of the Parish who attended meetings and contribute whenever possible.

The last year has been a challenging year for the Parish Council. With some meetings having to move due to councilors work or personal commitments. Following the elections and the appointment of Eric back onto the council, we have only just been able to maintain our General Power of Competence at the 2/3rds of elected members. We still have two vacancies and ask anyone who has a couple of hours a month to spare and is interested in this wonderful parish to make themselves known to Anne or myself.

## **Financial Situation.**

I am not going into details of the finances here as this will be dealt with by Anne when she gives her report later. But would like to point out that the Precept for 2024/2025 has been set at £16,000 which is a reduction from the £18,300, set last year. Our budgeted spend is similar to last year, with the shortfall being met from existing funds in our accounts.



## **Planning**

SDC as with last year have continued to be supportive and appear to be taking our views into consideration when dealing with planning applications that are affecting residents within Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Parish.

We do however continue to have major issues when it comes to SDC enforcement actions, some of which are taking longer than a year to be reported back to us and remain unresolved. One in particular the blocking of the bridal path EBR25 at Naas Lane has been on going for several years - I had thought that we were making some progress on this thanks to the efforts of our PCSO Nicola Wood and councilor Eric Hibbert who is now chairing regular multi agency meetings. However it appears that there is an argument that as 'no other complaints have been recieved' various agencies are failing to take action. Even though PROW have a statutory duty in law as part of GCC to keep our Byways and Footpaths open.

We are also having more issues with construction traffic comming up from J12 of the M5 through Haresfield and Brookthorpe to access the new housing development at Matson. We requested additional signage regarding the 7.5 tonne weight limit zone but this has not been forthcomming from Highways. We are now preparing evidence to show the construction companies involved and registration numbers of vehicles, even though their own GPS systems will have highlighted to the compny that they are not adhearing to the restrictions.

We through the efforts of Martin Coles, have been in regular communication with both SDC and GCC, and the planning authorities regarding the possible major housing development at Whaddon Fields. Planning for the 3000 homes has now been submitted. But we understand will not be considered until the Stroud local plan is revised and re submitted towards the end of this year.

## **Burglaries.**

Theft continues to be an issue affecting houses, out buildings, farms, and businesses, although police continue to report that our area has a low volume of incidents when looking at national statistics. 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.

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-with-Whaddon Parish Council.