

Your council

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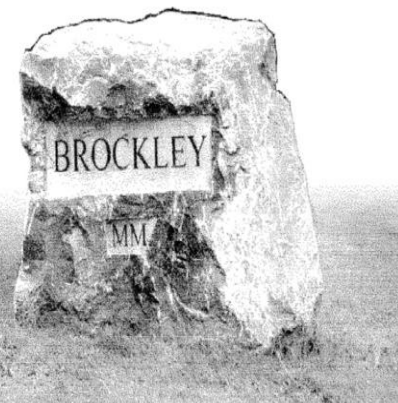
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Brock's News



THE ANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF BROCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

May 2025

Issue 23

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025

The 131st APM was held at St. Bridget's Church on 23 April, and it was good to see a good turnout of residents.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Welcome and thank you for coming.

Your council has met 9 times since our last APM in April last year, at St Bridget's during the winter months, and St Nicholas in the summer.

Following a council decision, the number of meetings of the council has been reduced from 10 to 8 per year. No meetings are held in February, June, August and December. However, should an important matter arise, the council is able to convene a meeting at any time.

There are 6 councillors: Me, Julian Ridge, Bryan Smith, Mike Fishwick, Emma Folkes and Stephen Parsons who was co-opted onto the council last year following the APM. Thank you all for your continual support and your contributions to Parish business throughout the year. Andy Warren is our clerk, whom we are very grateful to have, and may I take this

opportunity once again to thank him on our behalf for all the background work he does between meetings. Financially, we remain in a relatively healthy state. In January the council agreed on a 10% uplift on our annual precept for this year, which equates to a grand sum of £45.68 per annum for a Band D property. During the past year we received an additional £9,732.46. This is the Community Infrastructure Levy, (CIL) received for the development of two dwellings behind Brockley Stores.

This money cannot be used to cover general administrative costs and there are regulations on what it may be used for. I'll speak more on this later.

As a Parish we have very little recurrent expenditure. However, North Somerset Council still faces a deficit in their budget and are continually reviewing what responsibilities can be devolved to local Town and Country Parishes. Over the past year, the council has been engaged with several key issues concerning the Parish. I will address these each in turn.

First: Road Safety and road conditions

Parishioners have rightfully raised their concerns about the dangers imposed by the increase in traffic flows and the speed with which traffic passes through the lanes. Most of the roads within the parish

currently have the national speed limit of 60 mph as their speed limit.

Acting on advice received from North Somerset Highways that to request a blanket 20 mph limit on all roads within our Parish is a highly unrealistic proposition in both the short and long term, the Parish council agreed to purchase and erect several 'Twenty is plenty' signs along the roads wherever possible. Mindful that this is not an enforceable speed restriction, your Council is lobbying North Somerset Highways to extend the 40 mph zone along Brockley Lane from the traffic lights, and along Chelvey Road, from the A370. We are also using Chelvey Batch as a test case for a 20 mph limit. To assist our case, the parish council has established a spreadsheet to record traffic incidents, many of which go unrecorded even if the police are involved. So however minor, I urge you to report these to us. Thank you.



As a further deterrent “Bobby” a ‘scarecrow traffic cop’, was constructed and placed in the hedgerow opposite Manor Farm. Several parishioners did comment that some motorists seemed to slow down a bit when passing ‘it’. Unfortunately, “Bobby” disappeared one night, whether moving on through boredom we cannot be sure. His whereabouts remain unknown, and we may yet receive a ransom note!

The Council is aware that flooding continues to be an intermittent problem along some roads in the Parish; notably in Chelvey Batch, in Chelvey Lane by the waterworks, along from Chelvey Church and in Chelvey Road on the bend towards the A370. NSC has improved its drain suction capabilities, but many drains are not ‘blocked’ but collapsed and hence require repair rather than maintenance. Equally, potholes continue to develop, roadside edges are collapsing, and verges damaged because of the increased traffic flows through our lanes. NSC has revised the procedure for pothole repairs and anticipates a better response time to for their repair. Please may I ask you all to continue reporting potholes to the NSC via their website. It also helps if you would let us know, this helps to strengthen our arguments for an improved road maintenance service.

Second: The Bus Service Improvement Program (BSIP) and the Brockley crossroads changes.

Technically, the work at the crossroads is completed. In April this year, First Direct began to take delivery of new electric powered buses which will eventually replace the X1 fleet. These will be fitted with the electric devices to trigger the lights at the crossroads. Hopefully the buses will then use the bus lanes but as to whether this will deliver any benefits to the overall service is another matter! We are still awaiting the results of an audit that we have been advised should have been carried out post completion. A few years back, the council planted a significant number of daffodil bulbs in the green areas at the crossroads. This area was severely disturbed during the traffic works. We waited until after Spring to assess whether

the bulbs survived; not many did. We will be approaching the BSIP team to fund their replacement. With respect to all other planned BSIP schemes, notably at Backwell, Cleeve and Congresbury; these are still in various stages of planning but will be going ahead in some form or another. The Woodhill crossroads is now complete.

We continue to petition for improvements to both the access to and for the provision of shelters for the bus stops in the Parish. Last year I reported that NSC had recently just completed a review of the bus stops. We still await to hear what is being proposed for our stops.

Third: The Local Draft North Somerset Plan (LDP) to 2040 and the Grove Farm development

I have some sympathy for North Somerset Council in respect of endeavouring to publish a valid Local Development Plan. The Local Development Plan 2023-2039 had to be withdrawn for a revision resulting from an unexpected clause in the new National Planning policy introduced by the previous Government in November 2023. Following the introduction of new Government housing targets NSC has been imposed with a target of 23,895 dwellings over the plan period (15 years 2025-2040) an uplift of some 8,500 dwellings from the previous target. In February this year, NSC issued a map of all potential sites for housing. Following consultation with the public, NSC hope to publish a new version of the LDP 2025-2040 for consultation in Jun/July of this year, with a view to presenting it for approval to the Planning Inspectorate in November. I hope that Tom will be able to update us on this status later. The issues we remain most concerned about in particular are the changes to the Brockley Settlement Boundary between Backwell Parish and ours, developments within green belt areas, the overall increase in the number of houses being proposed and the lack of confirmed infrastructure improvements to support the growth.

This leads onto the Grove Farm development.

Outline planning permission for between 500-600 houses at Grove Farm was granted in March this year. This was to be expected having skim-read North Somerset Council’s response (which ran to over 130 pages) which sadly overruled virtually all objections raised. However, this is still very much an on-going issue and I’m sure will continue to occupy us in the year to come. Your council will remain vigilant and raise objections when necessary.

Lastly, and of immediate concern, is the Community Governance Review which NSC is required to conduct every 10 – 15 years. The objective is to consider parish boundaries, parish ward boundaries and councillor representation throughout the local area. Whilst we have been reassured that there is no intention to amalgamate councils, we have discussed this as a possibility. Brockley Parish Council, along with Butcombe, are amongst the smallest in the district. Your council is of the opinion that the status quo should be maintained but should we have to join with another town or parish council; Cleeve offers the best profile match. On a more positive note, I previously mentioned that we had received just over £9000 of CIL money. To date we have committed to replacing the wooden posts on the triangle by Brockley Elm and are researching the costs of repairing the black and white signposts in the parish and the turnpike stone on the A370. I will also mention that we do approach The Bristol Airport Community fund trustees when we consider a proposal falls within the criteria for a grant. We have met with success in the past., notably our Parish noticeboard in Brockley Lane.

At this juncture, may I thank all the Parishioners who pitched up and took part in our annual litter pick. Once again, I’d like to thank all Parishioners who gave feedback on their views about the issues I’ve talked about. Equally, thank you to all those who responded directly to NSC on several of these issues. It is reassuring to us as councillors to know that we

are representing the broad consensus of much of the Parish. To ensure this continues and to encourage open debate, this year we have elected not to invite a speaker, rather to have an 'open forum' to hear your views on matters of local interest affecting and involving the Parish.

Hopefully you will take the opportunity to raise questions on any of the above issues and others in our open forum end of the meeting.

Thank you.

Tessa Jarman, Chair

PARISH CHURCH OF ST BRIDGET'S



Our regular services are at 9.15 am on the first three Sundays of each month. Please also check on the noticeboards or in the Backwell and District Magazine in case there are special services for festivals. Our website will also be a useful guide.

www.stbridgetschelvey.co.uk

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES

Parish Council meetings take place on the first Monday of the month (except February, June, August and December) and are held at 7pm. Venues will be either St Bridget's or St Nicholas. This is subject to change so check our website for up-to-date information.

2025/26 dates (subject to change):

7 Jul 2025	1 Sep 2025
6 Oct 2025	3 Nov 2025

5 Jan 2026	2 Mar 2026
13 Apr 2026	11 May 2026

Agendas and minutes are available to view on the website.

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH BROCKLEY



News from St Nicholas Church.

We have a new email address: enquiries@stnicholas-brockley.co.uk

If you were not aware, there is a monthly newsletter available on email only that gives details of upcoming activities and events at the church. It is free to receive, but you need to request to go on the distribution list. Just send a message to the email above and you will receive the next edition and all subsequent ones. The address is not used for any other purposes or distributed to third parties.

We hold varied fund-raising activities throughout the year and the church is also available for private hire subject to approval from the CCT who own it! If you have an idea for an event or would like to join the Friends of Brockley Church, please get in touch via the email address. We are open to a whole range of subjects and can offer help and support if you want to run something yourself.

August 30th will see Brockley host Martin Stephenson, a wonderful singer songwriter from the Northeast. Martin's band is called

The Daintees and was formed in the 1980's so has a long history of music making. Martin is absolutely thrilled to be coming and has played Cleeve Village Hall a few times so knows the area well. He always attracts fans travelling from afar to see him so we are expecting this one to be very popular. His original music crosses genres - pop, folk, country, new wave, but all wonderful songs, and he is a great storyteller too.

Tickets are available online <https://wegottickets.com/event/657106>

Please come and support your local church!

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR TOM DAW

Tom was elected as the District Councillor for Wrington (which includes Brockley) in November 2023.

Tom can be contacted by email Thomas.Daw@n-somerset.gov.uk and mobile 07377 401879

2025 LITTER PICK

Like many other parish councils, we organised an annual litter pick which this year took place on 5th April. We would like to thank the eleven parish-ioners who gathered at Manor farm to discuss tactics and to get bags, a litter picker, and a high-vis jacket. About a dozen bags of rubbish were collected from around the parish containing all manner of things! Thank you also to those who could not attend but who still join in by collecting litter on an alternative day and to those who collect throughout the year whilst out walking. If people see litter, they are more likely to think it is ok to drop more and so keeping on top of it means the annual pick is easier, but more importantly, our environment and wild-life benefit. Please note that fly-tipping can be reported on NSC's site

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/parking-travel-roads/street-cleaning/fly-tipping/ MF

DOG POO!!

Let's talk about poo, dog poo. There has recently been an increase in the fouling of footpaths in the parish which is both unpleasant and potentially dangerous.

There are two main problems associated with dog poo. Firstly, it can easily be trodden on or driven over by push chairs or buggies and then unwittingly transferred to inhabited spaces which is unpleasant. Secondly and more importantly, it can contain pathogens which can cause disease in humans and animals.

The main diseases that can be contracted by humans include E Coli and Toxocara worms, both of which can cause serious illness, especially in children.

Farm animals can be exposed to some potentially fatal diseases such as Neosporosis and Sarcocystosis.

Neosporosis is caused by cattle ingesting the eggs shed by animals that have eaten infected meat or are already infected and can cause abortion. As there is no effective treatment available an outbreak can cause serious financial loss.

Sarcocystosis affects sheep and cattle and can cause neurological disease which can be fatal as well as making the carcass of infected animals unsafe to eat.

The message is, therefore, whenever you exercise your dog anywhere where people are likely to walk or where farm livestock graze, please pick up any poo and dispose of it correctly, not by hanging it in trees or on fences, nor by putting it in randomly dumped containers as has happened recently near Brockley Way, requiring someone else to dispose of it. It is your responsibility to clean up after your dog. **JR**

BRISTOL AIRPORT - UPDATE

Bristol Airport has provided the following update for the local community.

Public transport improvements

This Summer, a new Public Transport Interchange will be opened at the Airport. It will see the number of

bus/coach bays increasing from five to 16 and enhance services and accessibility for customers whether arriving or departing. The development includes an additional multi-storey car parking and an enlarged Drop Off and Pick Up area. The new Public Transport Interchange hub will be a major contribution to Bristol Airport's commitment to improving public transport links across the region.

Dealing with illegal parking

This year, Bristol Airport will contribute a further £50,000 towards a Planning and Parking Enforcement Officer for North Somerset Council, to help mitigate the potential impacts arising from unauthorised offsite parking and anti-social parking. Enforcement Officers have so far investigated 49 cases related to unauthorised airport parking; issued contravention; and enforcement notices. Work continues on a multi-agency action plan to tackle problems associated with inconsiderate and illegal parking with a meeting scheduled for May.

Funding for local community groups

Bristol Airport's Local Community Fund and Diamond Fund has awarded £29,000 to 16 local charities and community groups across North Somerset and South Bristol at its first meeting this year. This includes funding for new equipment for Felton Volunteer Litter Pickers, a solar panel project for Winscombe Community Association, hall improvements for the Compton Martin Parochial Church Council, travel subsidies for educational sessions at FarmLink Education Ltd in Wrington and also charitable contributions to Hope's Place and the Baby Bank Network. Visit the Airport's website to find out more on the Funding available. We hope you find this update helpful.

Bristol Airport

PRESS RELEASE ON HOUSING

With the increasing pace of house building we feel that it is appropriate to make our feelings known and the following press release has been prepared which we plan to distribute to the relevant local media.

"Brockley Parish in North Somerset has existed for 150 years as a democratically elected statutory body responsible for delivering services, representing local concerns and acting as the point of contact between our local communities and Government. We are a tiny group with a population of 281 within an area of 464 hectares. In 2025 a chill wind of change is blowing, and many challenges now face Brockley Parish and its Parishioners.

North Somerset Council has been given the target to build 24000 houses over the next 15 years and the parishes of Brockley and Backwell could well see at least 1000 houses being built

For Brockley the likely housing development site is Grove Farm and for Backwell it is Farley Fields. Development at this scale will have a huge impact on our Parish in terms of roads, schools, healthcare, infrastructure and wildlife.

Brockley Parish as its name suggests is rich in wildlife including colonies of greater and lesser horseshoe bats with 12 other species of bats feeding in the parish. The birds of Brockley include Goldfinches, Blackbirds and Song thrushes, Nuthatches, Barn owls and Tawny owls, Green Woodpeckers Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Buzzards, Ravens and Sparrowhawks. All are now under threat because of planned housing development.

Parishioners' voices have already been raised and objections made but the direction of travel looks to be unstoppable!

Planning law and regulations are complex and challenging, but your Parish Council will always strive to speak truth to power and fight to protect this small corner of North Somerset."