

BISHAMPTON & THROCKMORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Throckmorton Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 24th April 2023

There were 6 members of the public present, including District Councillor Tucker, County Councillor Boatright, Parish Councillors Boocock (Chair), Tucker and Wood

In attendance: Julie White, Parish Clerk taking the minutes.

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish meeting for Throckmorton. Apologies were received from Liz Poulter, Phil Poulter, Mike Davis and PC Martin Kennedy.

2. To Approve the minutes of the Throckmorton 2022 Annual Parish Meeting

The draft minutes were on the website and copies of the minutes were distributed around the room. Everyone was in favour of the minutes being signed as a true and accurate record.

3. Chairman's Report – A review of the past year -key themes

- PERSONNEL – we welcomed our new clerk at the start of the year and Julie is now doing an exemplary job running the day-to-day business of the council. We also brought the council numbers back up to full quota welcoming Cllr Deborah Rolls to the team.
- GRANTS AND DONATIONS - those made this year include those for: -
 - The History Society
 - Bishampton Tiddlers for updated play equipment
 - Gardening Club for jubilee planting and funding for new planters
 - The Bish, Bosh Bash committee toward this year's event

... and normal Christmas and similar events.

- PLANNING has been a busy area, and with Wychavon not achieving their 5-year land supply – developers are pushing to challenge the normal planning rules. Despite this we have had some success in opposing several inappropriate proposals, including for land off Main Street and land off Broad Lane.
- The final consultation on the SWDPR and Throckmorton New Town saw the Parish council again working closely with neighbouring parishes – finally producing a thorough 43-page report highly critical of the Throckmorton proposals. Like other groups in staunch opposition – we now await the formal legal review by the Planning Inspectorate who will decide the soundness or otherwise of the plans.
- TENANCIES - We had hoped for a quieter year for the tenancies but with Gina and Marc resigning the Dolphin lease less than halfway to term, and the 11th hour withdrawal of our first selected replacement, this proved not to be the case.

After losing almost two months and with the hospitality sector facing massive new challenges – we faced the very real prospect of long-term closure of the Dolphin and being unable to meet our loan commitments. At this point we were approached by the Ounce team – and were delighted to ultimately agree terms which enabled them to get the pub open again in time for Christmas.

- FINANCE - With loss of rents and costs of changing tenancies, financially the year has been difficult – and with rising costs we have again had to make a small increase to the precept – despite only setting a break-even budget. We hate to increase the load on households but realistically have no other option.
- COMMUNICATIONS, We continue to build our communications, provisions Website, Social Media, Newsletters, Noticeboards and community Views boxes and recently our information provision has been rewarded with the LGA FOUNDATION level Award.

Some other Work in progress items include:

- The Community bus project – currently seeking further pledges toward our target
- New residents “Welcome Packs” for people moving into the villages
- Further work at the Nature reserve – including over 100 new saplings being provided through the National Forest -
- A new beneficial relationship with Pershore College for the management and improvement of Shorthorn Wood

I can't end without expressing our collective thanks to the many people who contribute both to council and community:

- The council team, your councillors who volunteer their time and energies
- Our clerk who tirelessly runs the day-to-day business of the council and keeps us all informed and in order
- Our Lengthsman
- Our DISTRICT and COUNTY councillors for their support of the parishes,

But I would also like to thank the many volunteers who support our facilities and amenities,

- Our footpaths warden Phil Poulter and his team,
- The teams here at the Villages Hall and at Throckmorton Parish rooms,
- All those who lead and contribute to organisations, clubs and societies,

and also to the many who contribute by supporting others and simply being good neighbours and friends.

Village life is something to be treasured - especially in these challenging times so on everyone's behalf a big and sincere thank you to everyone who contributes to it.

Thank you!

4. Report from the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), West Mercia Police

March 2023:

In March we have seen a slight increase in business burglary's/thefts, the solar farm off Broad Lane Bishampton has been targeted 4 times between the 6th -8th March. The suspects are targeting the cables at the back of the solar panels. Our rural crimes team has been in contact with the victims and completed site visits, I have emailed all our local response officer's to make them aware and the incidents were added to our local briefing page. I have also sent out a NHM bulletin around these incidents and continue to patrol the area in the evenings.

February seems to be a fairly normal month with general crimes been recorded. 18 crimes in total for the entire month reported in Pinvin, Wyre Piddle, Lower Moor, Throckmorton and Bishampton. No real patterns or spikes to report.

January: Again this month seems to be a fairly normal with no major patters or spikes in crimes. There were 16 crimes recorded across Pinvin, Wyre Piddle, Lower Moor, Throckmorton and Bishampton. Four theft's from motor vehicle's but they were spread out over Pinvin and Wyre piddle.

Local intelligence: We believe that local offenders are using the roads around Throckmorton and Bishampton as a cut through to avoid ANPR camera's over the last 4 months we have recovered 3 stolen cars in the area.

We have had a series of criminal damages in the surrounding villages involving catapults and ball bearing, due to the locations and distance's travelled it maybe that the suspects are using a vehicle/s. We are asking all residents to be vigilant and report and suspicious activity.

Over the next few months we are going to start using Neighbourhood Matters as our main way of communicating with the community. We will still be using other social media but NHM allows us to be more targeted In our communications, to speak to residents confidentially and for them to respond impartially without anyone seeing their responses. We will also be using the platform to complete surveys, crime prevention advice and advertise any events or surgeries we have organised. If we could try and push / advertise NHM in the local community that would be a great support to us.

Again, I'm very sorry for not being there in person this evening,

5. Brief Reports from the County and District Councillor

County Councillor Boatright gave the following report:

- Adult social care is a problem and just under 75% of the entire council tax is going towards it. Cllr Boatright asked that if anyone does know vulnerable person to please let the authorities know.
- Cllr Boatright highlighted that the County Council was unsuccessful in obtaining Government funding in relation to a travel strategy.
- A review of the A44/B4804 corridor will look at ways to stop ways to try and stop traffic from cutting through the villages.
- Highways have recognised Long Lane as not being fit for purpose.
- Potholes have been particularly bad due to weather conditions. The Council have opted to patch the holes this winter and they will be fixed properly once the weather is drier.
- The funding which was previously allocated to change the 3 tier system to 2 tier in schools is no longer available so the 2 tier transition is on hold.

District Councillor Tucker gave the following report:

- **SWDPR** – there is currently a team analysing the consultation responses and assigning a policy reference to each response. It is unlikely that the final submission will go to the Planning Inspectorate before the end of July. It is currently unclear if the planned changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will apply. It is a concern that the intension is still for a single road into the new town for Phase 1 which will consist of 2000 houses. A briefing is to be arranged for Parish Councillors. Wychavon District Council will have the opportunity to modify its submission and once it has been accepted by the Inspector it will be published.

6. Parish Paths Warden's Report:

Phil Poulter submitted the following report:

The footpath volunteer group has continued to clear vegetation from around stiles, gates and gaps throughout the year. There are some issues with regard to farmers/landowners not reinstating footpaths after cultivation practices resulting in some rights of way being partially blocked or difficult to navigate. WCC Countryside Services are aware of these problems and did say they would be 'running a bit of a campaign on this sort of thing this year' and I know they have contacted one of the land agents involved. We are still waiting for the replacement finger waymarker posts in Throckmorton and opposite The Larches on Hill Furze Road. The gate opposite The Larches giving access to the footpath (BP598) towards Throckmorton cannot be opened; this has been logged on WCC website. (The proposed solar panel installation on Larches land will not impede this footpath.) The Parish Footpath Noticeboard which was a casualty of last year's winter storms has now been re-erected. An old ditch crossing has been replaced on BP-543, which crosses the solar farm to the east of Badgers' Walk, the new bridge being 90cm wide rather than the usual 60cm. A second ditch crossing on BP-516, the northern perimeter of the solar farm, has also been widened to 90cm. These 2 wider ditch crossings will enable these paths to be wheelchair accessible in the future. Thanks to Robert and Linda Tarver for their support in storage and transport of materials for these 2 jobs and John Mujinga from Infinis for his support with re-alignment of BP-543. The gate leading to BP-543 had recently been inappropriately locked preventing access between 'Badgers' Walk' bridlepath and the parallel footpath. This is currently being addressed by Fiona Argyle at WCC and Darren Kemp the construction site manager. The closure of BP-543 has now been extended until October. The ditch crossing on BP-514, the path towards Rous Lench, had to be re-seated after it was lifted in the January floods. Additionally a gate was re-positioned on the footbridge which leads off BP514 towards Abberton. Following the barn fire at Nightingale Farm in December 2021 the footpath across the farmyard was blocked until the new barn had been constructed in 2022. Footpaths BP-532 and 533 which go south from Babylon Lane behind Nightingale Fields, across the farmyard and behind the houses south of Nightingale Farm have now been made more accessible by clearing vegetation and putting up new waymarker signs. It is possible to circumnavigate the village from several starting points 'off road' except for the stretch from the end of Gunnings Lane to the corner of Abberton Road. These activities that keep our footpath network open can only happen with the support of the volunteers who regularly help me, so thank you Bob T, John G, Russ J and Tim C. Finally thank you to various people who have reported issues they come across during their walks around the parish. Please contact me directly or via Julie White, clerk to the Parish Council.

7. Reports from Bishampton organisations

Reports were received from the following organisations. All reports are appended to these minutes.

- **Bishampton and Village Hall Trust (BATVHT)** submitted by Bev Churchill
- **Bishampton Village Store.** Submitted by Paul Blackburn
- **Throckmorton Parish Rooms** submitted by Peter Chatterton
- **Neighbourhood Watch** submitted by Clare Elwell

8. Open Session

Peter Chatterton thanked the Parish Council for the £500 grant for the Bish Bosh Bash fete.

Charles Tucker gave an update on Shorthorn Wood.

It was another successful year and Charles thanked everyone involved.

The edge has been strimmed and it looks very good. Lots of stones were put down in February 2022 which made it more comfortable to walk around. Alder coppicing is all done. This has resulted in poles

which will be turned into charcoal later this year or early next year. Woodland Management Grant. A Management Plan to the Forestry Commission was submitted in May 2020, expecting a £1000 grant to be paid. This never materialised, despite many emails. We have withdrawn this plan and will resubmit it in accordance with the current template under Countryside Stewardship. This would attract a £1500 grant. Students from Pershore College are using the wood as a training venue. Another batch of students are due to visit in a couple of months.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 20.22

Signed

.....
Chair

.....
Date

Chair Report for Bishampton, Abberton and Throckmorton Villages Hall Trust

BATVHT held their AGM on Monday 7th March. Business was duly concluded with the re-election of eight of the nine previous Trustees thereby aiding us in continuity, team work, mutual support and cooperation between ourselves, the Parish Council and the rest of our community. We are all volunteers who take on this responsibility which at times can be quite a mind field, for example, Health and Safety Law, Insurance, Liability etc, but we do it for the benefit of the community. Our main aim is to focus on a Village Hall that is welcoming and provides a local facility for us all to use and enjoy. However at the time of writing the roles of the newly elected Trustees are in discussion.

During last year we had reports of vandalism in the play areas. With consultation with the Parish Council CCTV was installed to try and discourage anti-social behaviour. We are grateful to the PC for money towards this and to the Stonelands Trust who also donated. We also had an unexpected reduction in our insurance premium due to this added security measure.

The hall floor has been a major cause for concern. The work, as most of you are aware, did not go according to plan. The company involved came back several times to try and rectify the problems and are still due to return again. Thank you everyone for your patience and understanding.

This coming year we already have some plans. Live and Local productions, Mikron, Movie nights and lots more. Look out for other hirers events such as the fete by Bish Bash Bosh. Look out for our clubs events and to see what classes are here. There is something for everyone.

This year we will be having new carpet on the stairs and in the front entrance area. This should look particularly welcoming.

Unfortunately we do have a major problem with Ash Dieback in the grounds of the village hall. Five Ash trees will have to be taken down and also the poplar tree will be pollarded. The costs for this will be around £5,000.

All in all the running costs for 2023 will be high with the above projects and the rise in the running costs of the hall the Treasurer will be keeping a firm eye on the accounts.

With the 2023 budget in mind there is little room to be complacent. We need the hall to be used. Funds from events and funds from it being hired out is what keeps the hall going financially. Please support us. As the VH committee is small we need help. If you can organize a one off event, have an idea about a club or need to hold a 'bit of a do' then please contact us. We are reluctant to put up the hire rates. But if we have to we will have no alternative but to do so.

I would like to thank all the members of the Parish Council for all their hard work and especially Liz who has been our liaison between us.

A special Thank You to the Village Hall Committee. You are a great team and as the song says 'we will survive'.

Bev Churchill
Chair of BATVHT

Bishampton Village Store Report 2023

The last year has seen a reduction in turnover after easing out of lockdown , particularly with the Royal Mail strikes which affected us at the most important time of year in the Post Office.

Generally speaking the shop, cafe and Post office are well used and in order to promote that usage we have recently adopted new suppliers that give us access to a wider range of products than we've had in my 3 years here (ps. This is pretty much my 3rd anniversary now!)

I want to thank all those who continue to use us no matter how little they purchase. I would also like to thank the Parish Council for their support this year in particular.

There are challenges ahead with inflation, shortage of supplies and changes to banking and mail. I feel that Bishampton Village Store can ride this with the support of the village and those in the surrounding area.

Report for Throckmorton Parish Room for the year ending 31st Dec 2022

We had eighty bookings throughout the year in 2022, 30% of those were people or groups outside of the local area which included Bands for rehearsals, Cycling clubs, Businesses' that work from home and use the room for meetings, and first aid courses. Most of the other were local fitness classes, committee meetings and Birthday parties. The income from letting was £1824 and the cost of upkeep of the Hall was £2,114 giving us a loss of £290. The hire cost has been £8 per hour ever since The hall opening, but we have increased this to £10 per hour, from January 1st 2023 due to the massive increase in electricity cost, where our 2022 electricity cost was £580 for the year, based on our new tariff for 2023 using the same usage as in 2022 this would be £1,850 a 340% increase. I have been Monitoring the usage over February and March when we have had high usage users and it looks ok, but will keep a check where possible for the coming months.

The only maintenance in 2022 was replacing the outside light by the front door, although there is a problem with at least one fluorescent lamp in the Hall, but as they are no longer being made we will have to look at replacement with LEDS and because some are maintained lamps with will be expensive.

Work for this year will be re painting the exterior.

Peter Chatterton,

Bishampton & Throckmorton Neighbourhood Watch

The official website for neighbourhood watch is 'Our watch'

- Members can log on to www.ourwatch.org.uk click **join us** and search using their postcode. Select **Bishampton & Throckmorton** and complete the joining details.
- Facebook users can also search to follow Bishampton & Throckmorton NW for alerts.
- Villagers also have the option of joining a WhatsApp group by texting or calling 07947017183 to be added or email: bishamptonnw@gmail.com
- In an emergency or crime in progress always use 999
- Otherwise use 101 or report online <https://www.westmercia.police.uk/ro/report/>
- You can report a crime, a road traffic incident, domestic abuse, a missing person, antisocial behaviour, fraud bribery or corruption, lost/stolen vehicles, lost found property, civil disputes, war crime and hate crime 24/7 via this method.
- To upload dash camera footage search online West Mercia operation snap or use : <https://www.westmercia.police.uk//police-forces/west-mercia-police/areas/west-mercia/campaigns/campaigns/2019/operation-snap/>