



BUSHLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Open Meeting held on Tuesday 30th May 2023,

7.30pm at Bushley Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllrs. Lesley Hirons (Chair), Vaughan Latter, Chris Hadfield, Pearl Keen, Jenny McDonagh and Jason Kinghorn

In attendance:

Clerk: Jane Rolfe, County Councillor Tom Wells and District Councillor Jennie Watkins

Chair Cllr. Hirons presided over the meeting attended by 17 Parishioners.

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr Kim Fikry, Headmaster Bredon School, Tree Warden, Chairman of Bushley Village Hall, Upton Safer Neighbourhood Team, Rev Chris Moss and Lengthsman

2. Chairman's Report

See APPENDIX 1

3. Reports from: County Councillor and District Councillor– See APPENDIX 2

Village Hall - See APPENDIX 3

Cricket Club – See APPENDIX 4

St. Peter's Church – See APPENDIX 5

Bredon School – See APPENDIX 6

Tree Warden – See APPENDIX 7

Upton Safer Neighbourhood Team – See APPENDIX 8

Bushley Village News – See APPENDIX 9

Tewkesbury Fields – See APPENDIX 10

District Councillor - See APPENDIX 11

4. Comments and questions from parishioners present

Issues about bonfires, speed of traffic/school traffic through the village, the dangerous Oxhey Crossroads, footpaths and the demolition of the garage on the main road were raised

5. Meeting closed 9.22pm

Signed.......... Dated..........

Chair – Bushley Parish Council

APPENDIX 1

Chairman's Report - May 2023

A Year Of Change

The last twelve months have seen a lot of changes in the parish council.

The most notable change is the stepping down of Nigel Nicoll after many years as councillor and chair. We would like to thank him for his commitment, service and continuing support for the parish council and the village.

Unusually for local parish councils, we were in the fortunate position this year of having more volunteers for the role of parish councillor than we had vacancies. For the first time in many, many years we undertook an election and over 45% of residents took part in the voting. Unfortunately, we lost Chris Miners as a councillor and we thank him for his expertise and support. We have gained two new councillors, Pearl Keen and Chris Hadfield, and their skills will be invaluable. Continuing as councillors are Kim Fikry, Vaughan Latter, Jenny McDonagh, Jason Kinghorn and myself. We also welcomed Jane Rolfe as our new clerk and she has already been exceptionally supportive.

District/County Councillors

In the recent local elections, Tom Wells retained his position as County Councillor and Jennie Watkins became District Councillor, and we look forwards to working closely with them.

Other Officers

Our voluntary Parish Tree Warden is Penny Tubbs and Ben Perry continues to maintain verges and ditches as the Parish Lengthsman (funded by WCC). Their efforts are much appreciated by the Parish Council. The position of voluntary footpaths officer remains vacant.

Other Village Organisations

- The Village Hall Committee continues to maintain the Village Hall which is an excellent resource.
- The Community Garden next to the village hall, has undergone a wonderful transformation and is a beautiful asset to the village.
- The Church has uncertain times ahead, but we hope that it can continue to be a spiritual centre for our community.
- The Cricket Club is still planning for a replacement pavilion and hosts enjoyable quizzes and other events.
- Bushley Village News is edited by Phil Hopgood and is produced monthly and delivered by a dedicated team. It is an amusing and informative read.
- The Bushley WhatsApp Support group is also useful for short-notice information. To join, contact the administrator Julie Jarman.
- Residents of Tewkesbury Fields residential home are very keen to take part in village events and some residents have enthusiastically attended craft workshops held here.

Village Issues

- Dog waste and litter are a continual concern to many villagers. The PC has recently invested in a dual purpose bin and has arranged for it, and the bin at the cricket club, to be regularly emptied by the council. We are sourcing signs reminding all dog walkers in particular to clear up after their pets.
- Traffic through the village is also of concern and the PC has set aside funding for a vehicle activated speed sign (which indicates individual vehicle speed). We are regularly in contact with Brecon School reminding parents that access via Green Street is preferred. A growing traffic issue appears to be self-contracted parcel delivery vans whose drivers are working under immense time pressure.
- We live in a rural area where farmers are trying to earn a living in difficult times. However, concern over long term manure heaps has been raised by some residents and landowners are being approached.

- Planning applications within the village are noted in the BVN and can be accessed via the MHDC site. All residents are able to make comments on individual applications. Bushley and Bushley Green within the SWDP remain that of a Category Four village (basically no new development).

Village Events

The PC aims to further develop the amazing community spirit in our village and has organised and coordinated several initiatives over the past twelve months:

- The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations were a great community success, with a lovely posh afternoon tea enjoyed by many residents
- The more recent Coronation Celebrations were even more lavish and the PC coordinated the planting of heritage fruit trees, a communal lunch and fun games on the green. Thanks to all who were involved in organising and decorating the village for this event.
- The PC has been instrumental in starting the handbell group, with essential support from many people. This group will continue, practising alternate Thursday evenings in the church.
- An archive group will meet soon with the aim of adding to the work already carried out by Nigel in collating and documenting information on the history of Bushley (bushleyparisharchive.co.uk). It is hoped that some of the intriguing and fascinating information will be exhibited during a day or weekend towards the end of the year.
- A major fundraiser for the village will be a performance by Rain Or Shine theatre company on 1st July: on the field if it is dry or in the hall if wet. 30% of all tickets sales return to the village, so please encourage friends and relatives to join us in an evening of fun.

The Parish Council is here to serve the community. Do feel free to raise any issues of concern or suggest events which could further enhance this wonderful community.

APPENDIX 2

County Councillor Tom Wells discussed the following issues with relevance to Bushley :-

Neighbourhood Development Plan

Road Safety issues – 20 is Plenty, speed of traffic through the village and the Oxhey Crossroads

Footpaths Warden

District Councillor Jennie Watkins introduced herself and outlined a commitment to represent the community on issues of importance to Bushley and to attend Parish Council Meetings when possible.

The following issues were discussed with relevance to Bushley :-

Bonfires

Traffic/Highway issues

APPENDIX 3

Bushley Village Hall (BVH) Report for Bushley Annual Parish Meeting – 30 May 2023

Good evening all,

Please accept my apologies for not delivering this report in person but I am at Chester conducting the last elements of my hand over to my replacement.

This has been a good year for BVH with a gradual increase in bookings and refreshingly, more from within the Bushley community. This has resulted in a steady income thus maintaining our accounts at a healthy level despite some large outgoings throughout the year.

The BVH Committee has benefited from two new members but sadly we will see the departure of Rev Chris Moss later this year.

The Community Garden group continue to make impressive improvements to the whole area and BVH Committee will continue to provide financial support this superb community asset.

The bar area has been fully refurbished with new lighting, repainted, new work surfaces at the rear and cooler fridges for wine, beer, soft drinks.

The Committee are currently evaluating an option to install an audio/visual system that will see the installation of a three metre drop down screen in the stage area that will be linked to an audio system that includes Bluetooth. This will enable users to utilise the whole system or just the audio as a standalone, i.e., a children's party where the parents can select a playlist via the Bluetooth connection.

We are also exploring the opportunity of updating the kitchen area, this is WIP.

In addition, we are starting to consider the installation of solar panels on the roof of the hall to offset our electricity consumption, we have only just started to explore this opportunity.

The village hall is in a healthy state in terms of usage, finances and infrastructure. The committee has benefitted from two new members but we would welcome more or people willing to produce innovative ideas for activities or use of the hall and be willing to try them out.

Sam McDonagh

Bushley Village Hall Chairman

APPENDIX 4

- Bushley Cricket Club became a charitable organisation two years ago
- Last year there was a lack of players, but there are more positive signs of having sufficient players this year
- Thanks to community support from the village the club is in profit
- In regard to the new Cricket Pavilion, the club is still in negotiations with the Forthampton Estate to secure a new lease. Once this is finalised plans can be submitted to the Planning Authority. It is estimated that the shell will cost approximately £150,000 and Severn Trent are to be approached for funding, but other areas will need to be explored if this is not forthcoming.
- The club hosts a number of social events eg. First Friday when the bar is open, 6 a-side tournament and Beer Festivals

Chairman Owen Evans

APPENDIX 5

St Peter's Church Report to Bushley Parish Council Annual Meeting 2023

As is now widely known, I am retiring as Freehold Incumbent of the United Benefice of Longdon, Castlemorton, Bushley, Queenhill with Holdfast on 20 January 2024. I was instituted as Vicar of these parishes on 14 March 1996.

The succession procedure in the Church of England is not what many people imagine. In normal circumstances, there would be a vacancy of up to a year (or more) before any new incumbent was appointed. This allows the parishes to prepare profiles of what has been accomplished hitherto and consider what their

priorities would be for the future. During this period of vacancy (or interregnum), the Area Dean would be responsible for the oversight of the ministry, a retired priest might be asked to serve on a temporary basis and much would be expected of the Churchwardens and PCCs in maintaining day-to-day worship and pastoral care. During this time, the post would be advertised and eventually someone appointed, (assuming anyone applies), and this process can be an extended one if applicants are considered unsuitable.

Now we find ourselves in anything but normal circumstances. There is an extended consultation process underway with regard to the future of rural ministry in south Worcestershire, initiated by the Diocese of Worcester and conducted by the Deanery of Malvern and Upton, and I am not in a position to give any clear idea about what the outcome will be. When I came here in 1996, there were six stipendiary priests serving the benefices of Kempsey, the Hanleys, Ripple, Upton, Longdon and Berrow. From now on, the maximum that anyone can possibly hope for is three, driven largely by financial imperatives. Even that may not be achievable in the long run. Since 21 January 2022, I have no longer been in receipt of a stipend but have continued to work on a 'voluntary' basis since the Diocese of Worcester could no longer afford to pay me and, as a freehold incumbent, I have never had any legal right to an income.

All I can say with any certainty is that I shall be the last incumbent of this benefice as it is currently constituted. Longdon Vicarage will be sold and these four parishes amalgamated with others in a much bigger grouping. It is likely that the Vicar of the neighbouring benefice of Berrow, Birtsmorton, Hollybush, Pendock and Eldersfield will be asked to oversee my four parishes until she herself retires in early 2025. This interim stage will then be followed by a further development, the shape of which is yet to be determined.

Rev Chris Moss

APPENDIX 6



Report for Bushley Parish AGM

- Bredon School have embarked on a whole school regeneration project within the grounds - we have planted a total of 140 Hawthorn, Rowan, Blackthorn, Silver Birch, Whitebeam, Goat Willow and Wild Cherry trees throughout the grounds in celebration of the King's Coronation.
- We have also sown 250mSq (half a basketball court) of wild meadow seeds outside Pull Court to create a nature meadow for generations to come. All of this is on top of the 600 Tulip, 400 Daffodil and 1000 Crocus bulbs planted within the gardens.
- Local Primary Schools continuing to access Bredon School (Ashleworth, Eldersfield).

- The CCF have been selected to represent the South West Independent Schools at the Cambrian Patrol (a military exercise involving the Army/commissioned soldiers).
- Building works have begun at the Lodges on the top of the drive. Both Lodge 1 and Lodge 2 will be occupied towards the end of the Summer Term.

Nick Oldham
Headmaster

APPENDIX 7

Tree health in Bushley 2023

The increase in Ash dieback is a concern as many of the trees in Bushley and the area are Ash, many of which overhang roads and trackways. The Woodland Trust at the moment recommends that Ash trees well away from the public can safely be left, in the hope that some may prove resistant, but obviously those that threaten safety need urgent care.

There has been recent tree-planting and most of those trees are in good health, despite the drought of last year and the very wet winter that we have experienced.

As a Parish we look forward to more tree planting in various areas; but all these need management with the need for watering as they establish, and suitable tree guards against the increasing deer population.

Having ancient trees, as well as young and middle-aged trees in the vicinity leads to increased populations of insects, bats, birds and small mammals. We are indeed fortunate in Bushley to have a diverse range of trees.

It is noted that a Horse Chestnut on Bushley Bank, (subject to a TPO) has had some lopping work done. I have not followed up whether the necessary permissions to carry out this work were applied for.

Penelope Tubbs

APPENDIX 8

Rerport from Upton Safer Neighbourhood Team

Looking back over our incident logs for the last 3 months I am pleased to say we have had no reports of any incidents in the area of Bushley.

In the wider area we have had a few incidents of break in's at farms, and trailers being stolen. But even this is very low in number. I would always urge people to ensure their property is securely locked, in a perfect world we wouldn't have to do this of course.

Both myself and PC Kev Johns have been pro-actively patrolling and will continue to do so where commitments allow. This will be at all times of day and night, both in marked and unmarked cars.

Following reports of speeding vehicles through the village in the mornings/afternoons relating to the school I have patrolled when able, and shown a Police presence. Unfortunately due to the road layout it will be difficult at the present time to enforce with a speed gun, but we are hoping

soon to have a new type of gun that does away with the need to pull cars over to issue tickets. I am hoping to have news on this within the next few weeks.

We are using our messaging service 'neighbourhood matters' to great effect, and always looking to sign more people up, so if you could spread the word to anyone not yet signed up I would appreciate it – Ask them to drop us an email and I will make contact with them.

I will be looking to do a drop in surgery soon, hopefully at the village hall, about which I will email you soon.

Nick Elwell

APPENDIX 9

Bushley News - Review 2023

Introduction

Much has been written about the future of "The Magazine", will printed media survive as the almighty digital revolution gathers pace and ChatGPT tells us what the "truth" is and DeepFake does it's best to discombobulate us.

Well, yes, as Editor of the Bushley News (BN) I can feel my Luddite feathers being ruffled but still I think there will always be a place for a Village "Mag". A physical magazine seems to satisfy some inherent need to see news, in print, in my hand; whereas when my phone goes blank because the battery is flat I've just got a blank screen.

Brief History

"Bushley News" started life as the "Bushley News-Sheet" in September 1967 during the early days of fundraising for the New Village Hall (NVH). It was the brain child of Ken Hall, who lived at Sarn Hill Lodge and was on the NVH committee. Ken thought a "village news-sheet" would be a great way to get the village youngsters involved.

Consequently Tim Perry and his cohort of about 6 or 7, aged 14 - 17 featured on the front page of the "Tewkesbury Register" (<https://tewkesburyhistory.org/Tewkesbury-Register>) newspaper soon afterward.

The "News-Sheet's" intention was to inform the people of Bushley of the total funds raised for the NVH to date and of future events, and winners of Bingo, whist drives, the 200 Club etc. from the previous month.

The "News-Sheet" continued after the Village Hall was built, printed on a duplicator, with a circulation of around 100 copies and sold for 6d but increased to 1 shilling as the news-sheet grew from 2 pages to 6 pages. It covered a geographic area from Longdon to Tewkesbury.

There was a break in publication of a couple of years but then came back with a new look as the "Bushley News" under the Editorship of Andrew Crowther. After many years he passed the baton to me and I've been trying to live up to the "news-sheet's" illustrious past ever since.

Where Are We Today

Today, since the Parish News ceased to exist, the Bushley News (BN) is the only monthly publication that exclusively covers news appertaining to Bushley.

We have a circulation of around 145 copies. Principally the BN is delivered to households in Bushley Church End and Bushley Green but not only that, copies also find their way as far afield as The Rampings, Longdon, Forhampton, Tirley and for the price of a book of postage stamps postal copies are sent to Malvern, Long Green and at one time we used to send copies to York.

The Hunter's Inn are always keen to have a stock of copies which seem to quickly get disseminated to passing customers.

Additionally thanks to the Parish Clerk we also publish a digital copy online via the Parish website and I know that this is read as far away as Germany at least... I wonder where else it reaches?

Our Editorial policy is such that the BN is not a vehicle for classified advertisements. It's raison d'être is summed up in the header on front page, it is "The Voice of the Village", it is about Bushley and it's villagers and what interests them. I know that some village magazines sell advertising space as a way of financing their publication but a publication dominated by pages of adverts, which is unfortunately what can result from such an approach, is not my vision for the BN.

Apart from postal copies the BN is distributed free of charge. We are only able to do this because of the kind support of voluntary contributions to cover our running costs. Our parishioners are very generous in that respect However not publishing adverts is a thin line to walk!

Yes, there are some notices that could be classed as adverts, like the notices about the upcoming "Rain or Shine" performance of "A Comedy of Errors" or the notices for rural films shown at the "Morton Majestic" but these are events that hopefully are of interest to Bushley-ites.

Behind the scenes we have a very dedicated Distribution Manager who has a team of distributors and an extremely supportive Proof Reader who refuses to take any credit at all.

Lastly but crucially the BN would not exist at all were it not for our dedicated and massively talented contributors. Without them we would have nothing.

The Future

So where to next?

This is a hard question to answer and one which I and a number of other interested parties believe the residents of Bushley should be involved in deciding. However if I am to remain as editor then I need to agree with the direction we go in and I feel I must point out what is stated on the back page:

In accordance with editorial policy the
editor's decision is final.

One thing that is clear to me is that we need to take on board the impact of digital data and the use of mobile devices and that has a direct impact on how the BN is composed.

You could be forgiven for thinking that the answer is to only publish an on-line version but this can become exclusive to a certain demographic. Oddly on at least one occasion we were asked to not deliver a paper version and that the recipient would access the on-line version. However after quite a short period of time the recipient reverted to a paper copy. I don't know the reason why.

From my perspective, having worked in the past in this scenario, I want to research this thoroughly and maybe put forward a BN Report detailing various options as a discussion point.

The thoughts contained above are my personal opinion and may not be widely held by others.

Phil Hopgood. or Ed.
Editor of the Bushley News.

APPENDIX 10

Report from the Home Services Advisor, Tewkesbury Fields

Tewkesbury Fields was closed for refurbishment in 2021 in order to meet today's standards.

Currently there are 16 residents although it has capacity for 60.

Whilst there is reduced capacity the Meeting Room is currently available for external use.

The 'Dine Alone Campaign' operates on the last Friday of the month, attendance is free but places need to be booked.

There is a collection point in the Reception Area for Food Bank Donations which are delivered monthly.