



# Brickleton News

Issue 240

March 2022

In this edition, we highlight events to look forward to in the coming weeks. After two years of cancelled fetes, we will hold the **annual fete**, and hope that villagers will come forward to help, and then to join in on Sunday 1 May. But before the Fete, there will be the **pre-fete popup party** on the Saturday evening. Then on Sunday 5 June we shall celebrate the 70 years that Elizabeth has been our queen.

Shaun Orpen, our Parish Council Chairman, has contributed an article about our parish clerk, Sarah Youlton. A lot goes on behind the scenes to make our village work and it is good for people to find out.

You can find out more about the village if you come to the Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm at the village hall on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May. This will be followed by the **Annual General Meeting**.

Please note below the advert for the police effort to combat **local crime** at Brightwalton village hall car park on Sunday 27 March, and an appeal for **bell ringers** from Ed-the-Bell on page 3.

## Party in the Park

Sunday 5th June 12:30pm

Brightwalton Playing Field



Bring your Picnic and celebrate together  
Bar Available  
Everyone is Welcome

## BRIGHTWALTON FETE SUNDAY 1ST MAY 2022

*The fete is fast approaching and we are looking for the usual donations of :*

*plants  
bottles  
cakes  
jams & chutneys*

*pre-owned ADULTS clothing in a GOOD condition please.  
Details for these collections will be coming to you soon*

*Thank you*

*Contact Dave Judge for further information*

*dgmsjudge@gmail.com*

**Brightwalton Village Fete**

**Sunday May 1st 2022**  
**1PM to 4PM**

Brightwalton School Stalls

Barbecue & Bar

Farrier Demonstration

Bluebell Wood Tractor Rides

Bottle Stall

Home Made Cakes

Jam Stall

Wantage Brass Band

Dog Show

**Parking and entry free**  
**In Aid of the Brightwalton Village Hall**

## Thames Valley Police – Tool Marking Event

Our Thames Valley Police Rural Crime PCSO team will be running a tool marking event in Brightwalton Village Hall car park on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2022 from 10.30am to 14.00hrs.

This is for people to bring along garden tools, such as power tools, mowers, strimmers, chain saws etc. They put an identifiable mark using CRE Mark security kit – all free of charge. They will also be offering security advice.

**We have also put new contact details on the notice board and website (see contacts tab) for the Hungerford & Downland Neighbourhood Policing Team**

## Your Parish Council and a day in the life of our Parish Clerk

As Chairman of the Parish Council, I am often asked what is the role of the Parish Council and importantly what is the role of the Parish Clerk?

The short answer is that the Parish Council is a team of local volunteers who look after the interests of the village, its upkeep, and its evolution. One of the many things that the Parish Council is responsible for is managing the budget (known as the Precept) provided to us by West Berkshire Council.

We have no power to maintain highways or rights of way. We are consulted on planning applications and whilst we may not have powers on these, we do work closely with the District Council and Parishioners to report issues, look for solutions and implement changes. The production of the 5 year Parish Plan helps steer the Parish Council and helps the Council to respond to planning applications and consultations that affect Brightwalton.



I thought one of the best ways to put some colour on what we do, would be to give you some insight into *"a day in the life of our Parish Clerk"*.

We are incredibly fortunate to have Sarah Youldon in this role for us. She does an incredible job usually behind the scenes working on issues that help the village. She is the glue that makes everything run smoothly. The fact she also does this role for other local Parishes gives her a valuable perspective and enables her to share best practices from other Parishes.

So, in Sarah's words, here is a day in the life of our Parish Council Clerk....

The Parish Council Clerk is paid for 4.5 hours a week, so how have I spent my 18 hours this month? January meeting - this is an important one; at least 5 hours of work goes into preparing for a meeting. Many meetings and conversations have been held with potential suppliers before the meeting to ensure that the budget is as accurate as it can be. The year-to-date spending is looked at in detail and ideas for future projects are included so we can look beyond just the coming financial year.

Preparing and posting the agenda to meet the Transparency Act, preparing background notes for the councillors so they have all the information they need in advance of the meeting to consider their decisions.

Preparation of minutes after the meeting, distributing and posting on notice boards and website, then acting on decisions made. This month has also included lots of research – what can we do about the ongoing issues of dog fouling? Is CCTV viable? How are others dealing with this? How can the dog wardens help as the PC has limited powers? Legalities and processes for setting bylaws. There is so much time that can go into such simple issues.

Grant funding and applications - on the back of the success of the combination goal posts the PC is keen to re-instate the cricket practice nets and having spoken to the school we know it will make a huge difference to them too. Despite reusing the West Ilsley frame, the costs are significant at over £4,500. So, the next step having found someone that can do the job is funding. What grants are available? Are we likely to be successful – is it worth the time to complete that lengthy application! So far, I have spent 3 hours applying for three with one successful notification received to date.

Emails and enquiries- chasing up on what should have been done as many know in similar roles, seem endless. Consistent liaison with the Chair and Councillors on ongoing and arising issues. Checks and inspections – checking the defib and play equipment, writing up reports following inspections.

Broadband – as you will know from the minutes, the Parish Council is keen to get a fibre option for the whole village. There is a lot of work and conversations, going on behind the scenes to find out how we can make this happen.

Accounts - working towards the end of year account preparation; end of year accounts must be prepared promptly at the end of March and handed over to the auditor to ensure they are back for signing at the May meeting and returned to the external auditor straight after this meeting.

Improving communications with WBC - one thing they are currently working hard on is how to work better with the Parish and Town Councils, Clerks across the County have been having regular Zoom calls with the WBC teams on this. It's an interesting one and I'm pleased to be involved. When you get a good officer that is keen to share thoughts and ideas it can really help.

That's just a little roundup, but we hope it helps parishioners a better understanding of the role of the Parish Council and Parish Clerk.

Finally, I strongly believe the Parish Council can make a huge difference to the village we live in. The time Councillors give up to shape the community is often overlooked and should be valued. I see how this works across a number of the local Parishes and in Brightwalton we have a fantastic team of proactive Councillors that are not only willing to attend and share their views but to roll their sleeves up and get involved in making things happen. That doesn't happen everywhere. Brightwalton also benefits from an amazing team of volunteers (and we are always keen to welcome more!) not just at the working parties, there are many that help throughout the year in lots of different ways, saving the Parish a considerable amount of money and shaping the community. So, thank you Parish Councillors, and Parishioners you make it worthwhile and I'm proud to be part of the Parish Council for Brightwalton.





A misty dawn at Woolley

## FARMING - from Evelyn Bracey

Well, in amongst all the bad news there are small happy things happening, and new life as you can see from the photograph of the new calf. We are in the thick of calving which is a lot of work and there is always some sadness when perhaps you lose a calf; but it is also a time of joy. These calves will stay in the barn with their mum until the weather has warmed up and the grass has grown. Then they go out into the park.

The winter from a farmer's point of view hasn't been too bad, a little wet at times but generally alright. Things are beginning to happen on the arable side. We have put fertiliser on the wheat and the grass. There is another subject - fertiliser - oh my goodness what a price, and it could become even more expensive. Unfortunately a lot of our fertiliser comes from Russia. As farmers we will have to find ways of reducing how much fertiliser we use, and there are ways. Cover crops are becoming more popular. These are generally planted in the autumn and is a legume mixture that will put nitrogen into the ground rather than taking it out. Also it will help with the carbon footprint. The new schemes which are being introduced are encouraging farmers to become more mixed farms rather than just arable. They can then use the manure produced by the livestock on the arable fields. Farming in this country during the next few years will be going through some major changes, due to climate change, and the world situation.

I am sure we all feel incredibly sorry for the people of Ukraine but their farmers are trying to do some planting knowing that their country supplies 30% of the world's wheat and if they don't plant the implications on food supply could be massive. How big is your garden could you plant some wheat in it!? So it all could be rather depressing but spring is in the air and we will be out on the fields and cattle will be enjoying the grass.. How lucky are we.



We had some very high winds last month, and this very old tree next to Pudding Lane finally succumbed.

### BELL RINGING AT BRIGHTWALTON

Would you like to try bell ringing? The Brightwalton bell ringers are re-forming at All Saints church and would like to give people a chance to try it.

If you are interested, get in touch with:

Ed Dempster at [ed\\_dempster@yahoo.com](mailto:ed_dempster@yahoo.com)

### PRE-FETE POPUP PARTY

Do join us for the return of the pre-fete party! All welcome on Saturday 30 April at the fete tent on the playing field from 7 pm. There will be a bar, music, food and good company. It would be great see you there.

Clare Mangan

### From David Gardiner, our local weather guru.

The most memorable feature of February 2022 was not the rain, but the wind. Three named storms hit the UK during the month. Dudley and Franklin were further north, and at Lilley were totally insignificant. Only Eunice gave strong gales at Lilley on the 18th, but that only delivered 3mm of rain. The frequent gales during February did nowhere near the amount of damage caused by the unnamed storm on 31st October 2021, when there was still leaf on the trees. This was a cyclone which ran on a narrow line from Weymouth to The Wash, and we were right on that line. Around my 1-acre garden I have a number of 200-year-old beech trees and several large sycamores. No beech trees were blown down, but a number of sycamores were, and several very large branches were broken off the beech trees. The garden looked like a battlefield. To get down the hangers, cut up the fallen timber into 1ft lengths, split it into burnable logs, generally tidy up and burn the rubbish cost over £5,000 + VAT. For one garden, this was a lot.

**BRIGHTWALTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL AT THE MAY EETING**

ISSUE 240

**Meeting Held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022 7.30pm in Brightwalton Village Hall**

*See the Brightwalton website for a full copy of the minutes, plus other news and events – [www.brightwalton.org.uk](http://www.brightwalton.org.uk)*

**Minutes:** The minutes of the January meeting were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

**Declaration of Interests:** S Orpen declared an interest as the applicant on planning application 22/00425/HOUSE

**Open Session:** Request for Parish Council to publish meeting dates on notice board by telephone box. Agreed a simple notice advising of the 2022 meeting dates and details on where Parish Council minutes, agenda and general information can be found will be put in place.

Parishioner asked if precept decision has been made yet; PC advised that these were made at the January meeting and request had been submitted to WBC in advance of the 31<sup>st</sup> January deadline.

**Committee Updates**

**Village Hall Committee:** Committee reported that the AGM had been held in February, spend had been minimised for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year running and they were looking forward to the May fete to help top up funds for regular maintenance. The committee thanks D Judge for taking on the organising of the fete. Committee reported that the structure of the hall hire fees had been simplified and rates increased in line with the increase in running costs.

**ASPIRE:** S Orpen reported that approval for chairs had been received; phase 2 drawings are in the process of being finalised so they can obtain an updated cost proposal to support the current funding proposals. Fundraising is behind schedule – although there are a number of requests still awaiting consideration. Fundraising for the Village Co-ordinator role is currently at £12,400 (vs Budget of £15,000). It was agreed that the steering committee would get together to agree the recruitment process. Clerk to organise. S.Orpen to check on process for accessing funds raised to date.

**Matters Arising**

**Superfast Broadband coverage:** Slow progress reported but confirmation on eligibility for the Government voucher scheme had been received. T Wyatt to draft a note for circulation, Clerk to check next steps.

**Cricket Net Installation:** Quote had been received to rebuild framework from West Ilsley framework, remove and replace matting and supply new netting. Clerk reported successful grant application from The School House Trust of £1,222, but turned down from Sports England. New WBC Parish Plan grant budget available from 1<sup>st</sup> April, Clerk to submit application. Brightwalton school had expressed great interest in the plan and commented that their summer cricket club was one of the most popular so these practice nets would be a great benefit. Concern was raised about hedgehogs getting trapped in the netting, Clerk to research options to avoid this.

**Wildflower Corner:** S Orpen agreed to coordinate groundwork required before turf can be laid. Follow up at May meeting.

**Queens Jubilee:** Confirmed that committee had agreed a Picnic in the Park, open to all and with everyone bringing their own picnic. Games and music to be organised and pop up drinks bar to be set up for the afternoon. Councillors agreed costs to date of £183.67 including, printing flyers, bunting, table cloths and use of the village hall. Addition £20-30 required for bar licence and around £30 for children's activities. C De-lahunty to organise children's activities. Thanks to J Orpen and G Judge busy making bunting and table cloths. Clerk to check insurance requirements and to register event on the jubilee website. Agreed A5 flyer would be sent out with this month's Brickleton News.

**Holt Noticeboard:** Partially rotten notice board had been removed by Clerk prior to the storms as it was seen as unsafe. Replacement pin board agreed at cost of £30-40, S Youldon to put together and install. Remaining £160-170 budget reassigned to jubilee event.

**Playing Field:** Further complaints were received on the dog fouling in January; Clerk had spoken to the Dog Wardens who had provided a link for complaints to be logged on. Clerk had researched CCTV and byelaws, both of which were agreed to be not suitable. Councillors agreed that amount had reduced over the last month. Various ideas were discussed, it was agreed that this would be monitored, S Orpen agreed to write an article which could be used at a later date. It was agreed it was important for all that we had a clean playing field for both the fete and jubilee picnic.

Councillors were disappointed that someone had created a new bonfire pile. This is not for general use and had been cleared recently to stop others adding to this. Councillors thanked S Breadmore who had recently cleared the last pile that the PC had following the working parties. Councillors to monitor, S Orpen to write note for Brickleton News.

**Brickleton News Articles:** Clerk to send note on Thames Valley Police tool marking event. Jubilee flyer to be distributed with March edition.

**Finance Internal Auditor Appointment:** Councillors approved appointment of auditor David Weller, at a cost of £45 plus mileage. Clerk confirmed that audit would be conducted at the beginning of April.

**Balances, invoices and receipts since the January meeting**

Balance of the Current Account as of 14/03 £4,172.80 Deposit Account £9,035.57

19/01 Donation received for tree planting £300; 07/02 BACS Imprint January Brickleton News £67.00; Deposit £1,297.82 – VAT repayment 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2022. Clerk to set up BACS payments for the following: WBC grounds maintenance (bins) £34.47 (inc £5.74 VAT); J Orpen – reimbursement for bunting and table cloths £85.89 (inc VAT and Fete contribution); S Youldon – domain renewal with 123.reg for 2 years £28.78 (inc £4.80 VAT); Hall usage costs – cleaning and services for jubilee event £55.00.

**Clerk Reports & Any Other Business:** Clerk shared correspondence on the following:

Government consultation on Glover landscape review – content noted but agreed no further action. Conversation with Rural policing team – agreed to keep in touch, Clerk to check on sharing details. WBC maintenance contract changes – Noted and incorporated in to 2023 budget, likely to be an increase of 2 or 3 times more than now for litter bin and dog bin emptying. Downland Practice Patient Group – asked if any of the Councillors were interested in joining this feedback group – none at this time. Clerk will continue to review minutes and highlight anything relevant.

Councillor enquired about the Ukraine Refugee scheme – Clerk confirmed that WBC had advised that they were working on this and would be sending out more information shortly. Clerk to send on and agree how we circulate the information.

**Planning:** 22/02425/HOUSE Green Farm, The Green RG20 7BH – construction of a 6x4m oak framed gazebo. S Orpen presented plans and abstained from the vote. Councillors agreed a response of No Objections.

**Meeting closed at 9.25pm**

**The next meeting is the:** Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm followed by Annual General Meeting on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May.

**The remaining 2022 Meetings will be held:** 11<sup>th</sup> July, 12<sup>th</sup> September and 14<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm