

Bathampton Parish Council Newsletter November 2020

Chairman's notes

Moira Brennan

Do you need support during lockdown (or beyond) ? You can contact the Community Wellbeing Hub on 0300 247 0050 Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

As we find ourselves back in lockdown but with some optimism about the potential for a vaccine to provide a way out of the Covid 19 nightmare it is probably time to think about what we have all learned in the last few months. I doubt if there are many of us who haven't discovered how important the green spaces around us are or resolved to make some changes in our lives to help protect our planet for future generations. Whilst we can look to national and local government to take action the reality is that real change comes about by individual action. As a parish council we have asked ourselves what we have done and can do in response to the climate emergency. That is the key theme of this newsletter.

If your garden borders onto a road/footpath can you just check that is not narrowing areas where people need to walk. It is important that people can safely pass with social distancing on all of our paths. A massive thanks to those of you who have already taken action – particularly along the Warminster Road.

As a result of reduced passenger numbers we have seen a reduction in our bus service. The number 11 is not operating on a Saturday and with no arrangements to divert the D1 via the village. BANES have now handed over responsibility for public transport to WECA (West of England Combined Authority). WECA are looking into how a Saturday service can be restored but at present the restrictions on use have made the cost of supporting unprofitable services even more difficult. At the same time First have reduced the running of the D1 by making alternative services an express service to Trowbridge via the A4 rather than the A36. First have explained that this is to allow them to use double decker buses to increase capacity which is not possible on a service through Limpley Stoke. We have expressed the concern of all the villages between Bath and Bradford to the CEO of First. Our focus will be to apply pressure to WECA and First to ensure that when bus services return to normal Bathampton's service is also restored.

Over the summer the bin compound by the canal bridge deteriorated into a public health problem, with unemptied bins left outside the compound which attracted rats. There seems to have been confusion between BANES and the Canal and River Trust (CRT) as to who was responsible for the compound. After much persuasion CRT have cleaned up. They have also agreed to talk about the suitability of having the bins just by the canal bridge as they seem to attract fly tipping.

The parish council continue to meet online rather than in person. In many ways this makes it easier for members of the public to attend meetings without having to go out on cold dark nights. Details of meetings are available on our website and on noticeboards.

Having got to a full complement of nine councillors for the first time in a very long time I am sorry to say that we once again have a space on the council. Stuart Andrews served as a parish councillor for five years, looking after matters affecting roads and the canal. Sadly Stuart has stepped down. We thank him for all he has done for the village. If you are interested in becoming a parish councillor please speak to any of the councillors.

Stay safe.

Climate and Ecology Emergency

Jan Helps & David Beard

We recently attended a conference on climate change for parish councils. We have completed an audit of assets, activities and groups within the village which make or have made a positive contribution to addressing the climate and ecological emergency. They include the following

1. Working with BANES to create a publicly accessible green space on the Meadows which could be managed in accordance with low carbon principles.
2. Development of safer routes to schools and continued aim for a conker crossing to encourage walking and cycling to school for Bathampton primary school pupils

3. Maintenance of footpaths with hand tools and scythes. Working with Cotswold Wardens to ensure safe public access to the green spaces around the village.
4. Contribution to the maintenance of the cycle and walking track between Batheaston and Bathampton
5. There are 44 allotments belonging to the village. In addition Dry Arch Growers was a market garden and is now home to a community allotment, Orchard Share who manage the trees and produce apple juice and cider and Middle Ground growers, an organisation setting up permaculture methods to produce vegetables and fruit for sale to the local community
6. Conversion of BANES and Parish Council owned street lights to LED
7. Held Give and Take event held in Village Hall to highlight need to reduce and reuse in preference to recycling. We hope to do more along with share and repair activities when circumstances allow.
8. Worked with BANES to improve local road drainage and to clear the ditches around Bathampton Down in an attempt to reduce risks of local flooding.

While this is a good start much more is needed, The parish council invites individuals and groups who have relevant experience, skills, interest or suggestions of how the village might address the climate and ecological emergency to contact us by emailing bathamptonparishclerk@gmail.com

Village Hall energy efficiency review

The Village Hall has been using a green electricity provider for many years but we decided to look into how we could reduce our energy usage. Solar panels are probably not an option due to the orientation of the roof and the fact that our energy usage is lowest in the summer. Thanks to Stephen Dalley Smith we have access to details about the current levels of insulation in the hall. Although the main roof was replaced in the 1990's with what would have then been the normal levels of insulation we now know that this is roughly half the current standards. We are looking at how feasible it would be to increase our insulation and to understand what impact that would have on our gas usage. We also want to look into replacing the tube lights in the main hall with LED lights. If you have any expertise in this area and would like to get involved with the project please contact us at bathamptonvillagehall@outlook.com

How to make your home greener and save money

There is lots of information on the BANES sponsored www.energyathome.org.uk or you can phone them for advice on 0800 038 5680.

Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE) have a great summary called Cut Costs, Cut Cold, Cut Carbon at www.bwce.coop/bwce-briefings

BWCE are running a free webinar on 26 November described as An introduction to the top retrofitting priorities for a warm, eco-friendly home, plus information on costs, grants and other support. There will be a particular focus on the Government's Green Home Grants scheme.

Drainage and flood prevention

Heavy rainfall in October caused further flooding along the A36 Warminster Road between junctions with Devonshire Road and Bathampton Lane, highlighting inadequacies in street drainage in this section. The road is maintained by Highways England and extensive engineering work may be needed to solve the problem, requiring significant capital expenditure. The Parish Council will continue pressing Highways England for action to address the problem and prevent flood-related safety risks to motorists and pedestrians. Meanwhile, BANES Highways cleared ditches around the sides of Bathampton Down to reduce risks of debris washing onto the A36 at this point. Further Bathampton flood prevention work is planned by BANES during 2021, including maintenance of road drainage in Bathampton Lane. The work may require temporary road closure and this newsletter will provide further updates when plans are confirmed in the new year.

David Beard

Around the village

Village Hall

The management committee were delighted that we were able to reopen the Village Hall to many of our users in September and the feedback on our Covid safety has been very good. Some groups didn't feel confident to return but more are hoping to restart sessions in January. We also saw some new users and some new class offerings including yoga for teenagers (Georgina Healy) and mum's and babies yoga (Suzy Lovegrove). Obviously most things are now off until at least 2 December and many classes have reduced numbers due to

spacing. If you are interested in attending any classes it is best to contact organisers in advance to see if they have space. The Whats On for February 2020 is on the Parish Council website and has contact details. If you want to take a class but still feel uncomfortable about attending in person Lesley Batten is offering recorded video pilates classes. You can email Lesley at lesleyeileen.batten@btopenworld.com.

The Meadows

Lin King

Discussions with the National Trust are hopefully nearing conclusion, and when completed will be announced to the public.

Work is progressing to extend the BANES 'Bath River Line' concept from the east of Bath to Batheaston, including Bathampton Meadows. The Bath River Line is a green infrastructure project to enhance the River Avon corridor. The project involves improving the cycling and walking network along the river, and enhancing the adjacent green spaces for the benefit of both wildlife and people. A Cabinet report detailing this is expected shortly.

Bathampton Primary School update

The school buildings have been remodelled to create an entrance lobby, as well as a bright new school library to support the children in their reading. After planning the project for two years, we are delighted that the renovation work has now finished.

Regarding the Climate Emergency, we held a really successful bike-to-school fortnight in October when up to 1/3rd of the school cycled in each day, in spite of the rain. We are very proud that three quarters of our journeys to school are made actively. We continue to try to decrease car usage.

This year, we are focused on finding ways to use our beautiful grounds for more outdoor play and learning. Should you be in any position to donate to the school financially to help us with this aim, we now have a donation box at the Spar. Or please visit our school website bathamptonprimary.org

Bathampton Primary School is looking for School Governors from the local community

We are a small dedicated governing body that needs a breadth of skills to help support and challenge the school in providing the very best education possible.

If you are looking for a way to give back to your local community and have either an education or school management background or more general management, finance or fundraising skills, we would love to hear from you.

Governors meet each term as a full group, currently remotely in the evening, and then join one of two sub-groups that focus on progress in either resources or pupils/learning. Full training is given.

If you are interested, please contact the school for an informal conversation with the Headteacher, Mr Brewer or the Chairs of Governors, Mrs Cheryl Cook on 01225 465229 or email enquiries@bathampton.bwmat.com

Playground and Playing fields

Katie Lutteroth

We are glad to be able to keep the playground open during this second lockdown, a great relief to parents and children alike! However, we do need to abide by the government restrictions and practise social distancing measures to keep everyone safe. These include parents/ carers keeping socially distant from each other and limiting the number of children from different households mixing together on play equipment.

A gentle reminder that dogs (and horses!) are not allowed on either the playing field or in the playground, to keep these areas foul-free for children to play in. Litter should, preferably, be taken home or disposed of in the litter bins near the road. Please help keep these areas clean for our children to play in.

On a happier note, the Parish Council have approved essential repairs to the playground surfaces, basket swing and the aerial run (the flying fox). These works will be done in the coming weeks, so the playground will need to be shut for a short time. Details of dates when the playground will be shut will be posted on the Bathampton Community Facebook page and a notice will also be displayed in the playground.

Many thanks to all the parents and carers who filled in our community survey about what you'd like to see in the playground redesign. We were delighted to have received feedback from 80 playground users. This feedback has helped us to set the priorities for the playground redesign, which include a new toddler/slide unit, more challenging play equipment for children 5+, an increase in seating, a new roundabout and seesaw and an improved play surface. We are now in the process of applying for grants and will start fundraising soon to finance the new playground.

Bathampton Playgroup

Places are available now for children ages 2.5 to 5 years old. Our friendly staff are all mums themselves and create a calm and nurturing environment for young children. We facilitate children's development through play, with lots of individual care and attention to build independence, resilience and school readiness. Playgroup takes place in the village hall during term time and runs the following sessions; Monday 8.30-1, Tuesday 8.30-3, Wednesday 8.30-1 and Friday 8.30-12. We accept the Early Years government funding for 3 year olds and charge £6 per hour for non funded sessions. We are open as normal throughout the lockdown and have comprehensive safety measures in place to ensure that we meet all the Covid guidelines for educational settings. To find out more about Playgroup please call us on 07716 600269 or you can email bathamptonplaygroup@yahoo.co.uk

Cotswold Wardens

Bob Ford

This is to introduce myself as your new parish Cotswold Warden. The Cotswold Wardens look after the Cotswolds National Landscape (was "The Cotswold AONB"). I look after another parish in Wick & Abson – but I have to say Bathampton is an amazing place! Bathampton Down, the Skyline, the Woods, the Kennet & Avon, Bathampton Meadows, and the River Avon. A real pleasure and privilege.

My main task is to look out for anything adverse from a conservation viewpoint with particular emphasis on the public rights of way. Despite the dreaded Covid-19, we have managed to install 6 way-marker posts, remove various fallen trees and limbs, repaired various fences, steps and handrails, dealt with one dangerous tree, and cleared a few paths, and one partially hidden lamppost. I also enjoyed myself clearing back foliage on the towpath, using my bike, from the George Inn all the way to the Dundas viaduct (I somewhat strayed beyond Bathampton!)

A project challenge for next year is to open up a rather good long footpath (a suggestion from your parish council) – more on that in 2021 if I am successful. And possibly plant a few trees!

For me, having Bathampton under my wing, during the various stages of Covid-19 has been massive relief, as has living next to the Cotswold Way as a warden (Lansdown). Thoroughly makes up for the freeze on volunteering as NT ranger at Dyrham and the loss of the Cotswolds guided walks. If you would like to find out more about the Cotswold National Landscape opportunities, please visit www.cotswoldsaoanb.org.uk/looking-after/volunteering/

George Ardrey	424270	Parish Clerk (Liz Daly): 07980 627391 <u>bathamptonparishclerk@gmail.com</u> Newsletter Editor and What's On Jan Helps can be contacted on Telephone: 01225 336656 E.mail: j.s.helps@btinternet.com
David Beard	336722	
Moira Brennan	313503	
Jan Helps	336656	
Lin King	460998	
Katie Lutteroth	07460069307	
David Mayo	466875	
Tony Purpuri	335978	

Website bathamptonparishcouncil.org.uk You can also find us on Facebook (Bathampton Community) and Twitter (Bathamptonpc)