

Bathampton Parish Council

Newsletter February 2023

Chairman's Notes

In the November newsletter the big issue facing the village was the lack of a bus service. We were all delighted when we heard that BANES / WECA had contracted with The Big Lemon to provide us with a local bus. Even better the bright yellow electric bus was a joy to travel on (made only better by the journeys being free because they were not linked in to the local fare collection systems). Even when the electric bus had to go back to its normal route in Brighton and we got a traditional fossil fuel bus at least we had a bus service. We were also delighted to see that the number 11 was on the list of buses that BANES had provided extra funds to protect. We have now heard that from April the contract to run the number 11 bus has been awarded but WECA cannot tell us who will run the bus until they finalise the contract. The Big Lemon bus drivers have told people they didn't win the contract. We did have a recent period when a company other than First ran our bus and the lack of a joined up pricing structure meant that people who had to transfer from the number 11 to another operator, e.g. to get to school or the hospital, saw their travel costs rise. I have asked WECA to provide assurance that this will not be the case this time. In addition we had asked WECA to look at the timetable for the number 11 so that it doesn't run along the Warminster Road a few minutes before or after the D1. They tell me they have built this in to the new contract but as they did not consult us on the proposal we can only hope that this will be an improvement on the previous timetable.

Once again I would encourage you to use our buses to try to make them as commercial as possible as this is what is needed to help ensure we don't see further reductions in the service. Now that the fares have reduced to £2 for an adult single the bus is an attractive option to get into or home from Bath.

We are due for local elections in May 2023. Our BANES ward (Bathavon North) and Bathampton will be subject to elections. Bathampton has not had contested elections for many years. This happens because fewer than 9 people put themselves forward as nominees to become a Bathampton Parish Councillor. Currently there are only 7 members of the Council out of 9 posts. We need some help, particularly around road safety and liveable neighbourhood applications. If this is something you would like to get involved with then you can fill in a nomination form and deliver it to the Guildhall between 21 March and 4 April. Liz, our Parish Clerk, can offer help on finding and filling in the form. Alternatively, if you don't want to wait to May to get involved, speak to one of our Councillors or come along to a Council meeting in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on the third Thursday of the month.

Well done to the Village Show Committee for running a superb Burn's Night supper and dance. It was great to see people of all ages getting together and having a lot of fun.

Moira Brennan

Village Hall

bathamptonvillagehall@outlook.com

The hall is available for private events. If you want to book an event, contact Katie by email. Prices for parties are from £36 for a 3 hour booking (including time for you to set up and clear up). There are also lots of regular events like Bridge, Scottish Dancing, Art groups and exercise classes. Check out the What's On notice in this newsletter.

Photo id needed to vote in May 2023

Changes in national legislation mean that for the first time voters will need to show photographic ID when they go to the polling station to vote in the local elections. A passport, photocard driving licence, Blue Badge, Older Person's Bus Pass or a Disabled Person's Bus Pass are some of the documents that will be accepted before you will be issued with a ballot paper. Voters will also need to be on the electoral register. Photo ID that is out of date can still be used if the name is the same as on the electoral register and the photo is recognisably you. If you don't have an acceptable form of photo ID you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate online at the gov.uk website or by completing a paper form. You can also apply for the certificate in person at the Guildhall in Bath.

VOI Scooters

The parish council has been involved in discussions with BANES and VOI regarding the position of the scooters outside the surgery. BANES have asked for changes and have also asked for the scooter parking at the top of Bathampton Lane to be removed. We are waiting for action but as the scheme is

currently a trial and decisions about the arrangements beyond April are yet to be made we suspect changes are unlikely before April.

Planning

Lin King

Amongst the usual planning applications we have received for comment is one for Bath University, who want another all-weather multi-purpose sports pitch with fencing and lighting. Whilst we have no objection to this in principle, the University is in an AONB and should try to blend in with its surroundings. We objected to the proposed fence which would be 8m high and we particularly object to the lighting. Currently, even before any new lighting is added, the glow from the University can be seen from many miles away and causes problems for local wildlife. We have supported the National Trust and Bath Preservation Trust in asking for a complete review of lighting on the site.

Canal Bridge Consultation / Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme

Lin King Fiona Powell Tony Purpuri

highways.bathamptonPC@gmail.com

Late last year the Parish Council consulted with local people about a study commissioned by BANES on canal bridge safety. Thank you to all who responded. In total we received about 50 responses. These are being analysed and the results will be published on our website in the coming months. Overall it was clear that there is a huge interest in doing whatever we can to improve the safety for everyone using the bridge and its approaches.

Our local BANES councillors support us in this and advise that the best way to get funding for a solution to these issues is through a Liveable Neighbourhoods (LN) application. This needs to be a Community application (i.e. not by the Parish Council, though of course we will contribute and support it).

An outline application was made last year by the Safe Routes to School team, covering the canal bridge and also Down Lane, and this will now be reviewed in light of the consultation.

The next step is to form working parties to identify any other areas of concern in the village and to write supporting documentation for the Liveable Neighbourhoods application. The canal bridge is just one element of concern in the village. We will use the LN process to try to resolve safety issues throughout the village. As funding will no doubt be a constraint, we will have to prioritise areas for resolution within the application.

We need people from all areas of the village to help with this - if you are interested in participating we would love to hear from you. Please contact us (ideally before 12th Feb) to volunteer. Thank you.

Footpaths, Flooding and Litter

David Beard

footpaths.bathamptonPC@gmail.com

There has been limited activity during the winter. The Cotswold Volunteers have kindly agreed to trim vegetation on Bathampton parish footpaths, with work planned for the end of January on the path linking Bathampton Lane with Warminster Road (footpath BA1/08). Recent wet and freezing weather has made local footpaths muddy and slippery, so walkers are requested to take extra care and to report any paths that require maintenance. The Parish Council is still awaiting news from BANES regarding applications for registering 6 new local footpaths under a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO). We are looking forward to news in 2023.

National Highways recently completed drainage improvements along the A36; this seems to have alleviated flooding along the road to the east of St George's Hill, as demonstrated during heavy rainfall in December. BANES now provides monthly cleaning of street gullies in the High Street and Chapel Row, also designated high-risk flood areas. To reduce surface water run-off from the bridleway opposite Down Lane, which causes flooding on the Warminster Road, the Parish handyman completed ditch clearance along the bridleway. Finally, the local volunteer litter-picking team have done a great job in keeping Bathampton clean and tidy over the autumn and winter months. If you would like to become a volunteer, please contact us.

Playground

Liz Daly

bathamptonparishclerk@gmail.com

During November 2022, we had new tyres installed onto the Zipwire to replace the ones that had become worn. This brings the total spend up to £4,783 for this piece of equipment over the last 18 months.

The Playground Project is still on-going, and we are working with suppliers to help deliver the project as a two phased approach. To date, £37,649 has been allocated towards the project and a National Lottery application will be submitted over the next couple of months to help acquire further funds needed to enable us to complete phase 1 of the project. We will keep you updated on any progress made but it's really exciting to see us getting closer to being able to make much needed improvements to a space that is loved and enjoyed by so many people within the community.

We are extremely grateful for any donations received which can be made via the GoFundMe Page <https://gofund.me/6ebf4603> or by contacting the Clerk directly on bathamtonparishclerk@gmail.com or on 07980627391. We would also like to express our thanks to the winners of the last Brains of Bathampton Quiz who kindly donated their win towards the project.

Climate and Ecology Emergency

Jan Helps and Lin King

Repair Café

The Repair Café held in the Village Hall on Saturday November 26th was a success; not too many customers but all went away happy. Thanks to villagers who helped with the repairs and to the Village Show Café Team for providing refreshments. This all helps to create a circular economy and reduce waste but is also an opportunity to pop into the Hall for a cake and a chat.

To encourage more customers we think it would be a good idea to share the next Repair Café with another event, so as yet, we have not arranged a date but please save any items that you have which need repairing for the Share & Repair volunteers to have a look at. We will advertise the date as widely as possible so keep a look out in future newsletters and on Notice boards and social media.

If you are looking to get items repaired more urgently, don't forget that the Share and Repair shop is on George Street in Bath. There are repair sessions as well as many items for hire...including a scaffolding tower which was organised by the team for one of our residents who attended the repair café. If you want to try before you buy, you can also borrow things like air fryers to see if they work for you.

Tree planting at Holcombe Vale

Curo have now sent instructions to the tree planting team so this should be happening in the coming weeks. The trees will be of an optimum size to grow strongly but not suffer from transplant shock. They will be planted to expand areas which already have trees but will maintain open areas to walk through, sit and play. The trees discussed will be of a suitable size for the area and include early blossom for bees, fruits for birds and autumn colour. We hope that this time next year, we can form a volunteer group to underplant with daffodils. Curo will monitor and care for the trees for the next two years in order for the trees to be well established. Please do help us keep an eye on them so they can become a joy for all.

Volunteer with the National Trust in Bathampton Meadows

The National Trust are creating a team of volunteers to help maintain Bathampton Meadows so that everyone can enjoy nature. There are two types of roles. One is practical conservation and maintenance tasks such as hedge laying, managing wildflower meadows, fixing gates and paths. The other involves regularly walking and monitoring the Meadows and talking to visitors. Details of both roles can be found on the National Trust volunteering website www.nationaltrust.org.uk/volunteering; search for Bath.

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