

Bathampton Parish Council

Newsletter May 2024

Chairman's Notes

Moira Brennan

The Annual Parish Assembly will take place on Wednesday 8 May 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. There is a lot going on so rather than invite a speaker we thought we would have an open forum where we can discuss how people are feeling about things that are happening in the village. This then allows us, as a Parish Council, to better understand the variety of view points that exist on subjects and helps us to represent them when needed. Subjects we thought might be of interest are, early views on the closure of Sydney Road and New Sydney Place, pedestrian safety and safer routes to school, dare I say bins, the work done by volunteers to maintain village amenities, playground improvements and climate change and local action. If there are other topics you would like to cover please email Liz in advance of the meeting. After the discussion there will be a chance to chat informally over a small refreshment and to meet our team of Councillors. We do have 2 spaces for new Councillors so if you are interested speak to one of us at the meeting or give us a call.

Few of you will have failed to notice that BANES have made significant changes to the road layout at Sydney Gardens. It was also great to have members of the public attend our March meeting and to share their concerns with Cllr Kevin Guy. The closure of Sydney Road to through traffic as part of a Low Traffic Neighbourhood was not widely consulted on before it was implemented. The closure is a trial which will last for at least 6 months and then be assessed to decide whether it will become permanent. BANES are now seeking feedback from affected users via a form on their website <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/form/sydney-road-etno-consultation>.

The form is multiple choice on a fixed list of questions but there is a free form text box at the end where you can add your own views or any particular issues you have identified. If you have trouble finding it, a notice with a QR code will appear in noticeboards over the next few weeks.

Introducing our temporary village handyman

A warm welcome to Douglas Hunter (Dougie) who has taken on the handyman role while Alan is recovering. You will see him around the village in the coming weeks. Many of you will have already met him as he has had roles with Playgroup and Cafe 25.

Highways

Tony Purpuri highways.bathamptonPC@gmail.com

Speedwatch

I normally use the newsletter to give an update on Speedwatch activities and make a call for additional volunteers. Unfortunately David Marsh, the current Bathampton Speedwatch coordinator, is moving away from the village and will be unable to continue as lead. As we are very short on volunteers and none of the existing team are able to pick up the role from David, we will be forced to close down Bathampton Speedwatch unless someone volunteers to take on the coordinator role. I'd like to thank David for his valuable work with Speedwatch and to all the volunteers who have given up their time to help improve road safety in the village. If you are able to support Speedwatch please get in touch with me.

Road Safety

We continue to hold discussions with BANES on what can be done to improve road safety in the village, particularly on the Canal bridge and at the narrowing by Mulberry Kidz. We have been advised by BANES and our ward councillors that money has been allocated to improve road safety in the village. Our thanks to Councillors Sarah Warren and Kevin Guy on helping to secure this funding. BANES will begin assessment on potential solutions and come up with a design which will then go out to full public consultation. I am in regular discussions with BANES to ensure that the design meets the safety needs of the village.

Thank you to everyone who completed the road safety survey back in the autumn. The responses highlight residents' concerns about the safety and environmental impact of passing traffic. There is a widespread perception that traffic volumes and speeds have increased to the detriment of people who live in Bathampton. We will use the information from this and the other surveys done over the last couple of years to help inform the discussions with BANES.

Leisure and Amenities

Jan Helps and David Beard

Hedges and junctions

As trees come into leaf and hedgerows start to grow it's that time of year when we ask everyone living next to junctions or who have hedges next to walkways to keep these areas clear. Please can you make sure that your shrubs and trees do not restrict visibility for cyclists and vehicles at junctions or for pedestrians crossing roads. We have many difficult junctions so your help in this matter is greatly appreciated. Likewise, please make sure your hedges are not blocking pavements for anyone but particularly for pushchairs, children on bikes and wheelchair and walker users who need a bit more space. This is particularly important if the pavement outside your home is narrow as any overgrowing hedge can force pedestrians into the road.

Allotments

If you have an allotment or live in the area, please look after your belongings and keep an eye out for any unusual activity. We have received one or two reports of items being taken or going missing as well as of garden waste being "dumped" onto the allotments. Please get in touch if you want to report any issues.

Drainage

We are grateful that BANES Highways Drainage allocated some of their remaining 2023-24 budget to clear ditches and gullies on the bridleway leading from the Down Lane junction and the track from St George's Hill to Bathampton Down. It is hoped that this work will reduce surface water flowing onto the Warminster Road which often causes flooding in wet weather as well as bringing substantial amounts of stones etc onto the road.

Footpath maintenance volunteers needed

footpaths.bathamptonPC@gmail.com

The Parish Council recently received a grant from BANES to purchase an electric strimmer to help our volunteers maintain local public footpaths. Currently only two volunteers are involved in looking after 11 miles of footpaths around the village. If you would like some gentle exercise and to get to know the local footpaths, the team would love to welcome you. If you would like to find out more or get involved, please contact David Beard or email the address above.

Bathampton litter-picking volunteers participated in the March 2024 Great Avon Litter Pick. An amazing 60 bags of rubbish were cleared from our local area. Much of the litter collected by the volunteers on normal litter picks in Bathampton results from recycling. Please clear items spilled from your bins following Tuesday collections. Dog walkers are also requested to remove dog poo which has become a problem, particularly in Dark Lane and Bathampton Lane.

Repair Café and Plant Sale Saturday June 8th 10 – 12 noon

Lin King

We will be hosting another Repair Café in June and this time it will be held in the small hall of the Village Hall at the same time as the annual Plant Sale run by the Village Show team in the Main Hall. You will be able to buy some plants and have a cup of tea or coffee and lovely refreshments while waiting your turn for your item to be fixed.

If there is anyone else out there who has the relevant skills to work alongside the Share & Repair team (we especially need sewing skills) please get in touch with Lin King to offer your help.

Make a note of the date and remember to save any items which need repairing for the Share & Repair volunteers to have a look at. If you are able to, a donation is always appreciated (but not required) to

help them to do more of what they do so well. We will advertise the date as widely as possible nearer the time. So keep a look out on the village noticeboards and social media.

Climate and Ecology Emergency

Jan Helps and Lin King

Are you worried about climate change and wonder what you can do?

Sarah Warren (one of our BANES ward Councillors) is working with BANES officers to set up a drop in event locally to allow people to explore these issues. The purpose of the meeting is to give people living in Bathampton, Batheaston and Bathford, many of whom are concerned about climate and ecological collapse, the opportunity to explore the subjects further and to find ways in which they can contribute more actively to a community response. It's quite common for people to feel helpless faced with the enormity of the environmental challenge and feeling part of a wider community taking action can be very helpful. It will also be an opportunity for people to shape BANES council's climate and ecological policies when they are reviewed next year. The date and location are yet to be agreed so look out for posters and social media for more information.

Have your say on nature recovery in the WECA area

The Local Nature Recovery Toolkit is a collaborative effort to empower residents and communities within the West of England Combined Authority to take action for nature. Add your comments to the interactive map and fill out a survey to help shape the Local Nature Recovery Toolkit. The Toolkit will set local priorities and map 'focus areas' where action to help nature will have the biggest impact. The toolkit will act as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the West of England Combined Authority. You have until 10 May to take part at <https://naturerecoverywest.co.uk>.

Local Plan Options Consultation 2024

Lin King

BANES have been consulting on the production of a new Local Plan and have identified Bathampton as somewhere suitable for more new housing as it has amenities and is connected by "sustainable" transport. It is suggested that Bathampton should add 40 more dwellings over the next 20 years. The closing date for submissions was 16th April.

The Parish Council has submitted a response saying that as Bathampton does NOT have a neighbourhood plan it is not prepared to recommend any specific sites for housing development. Any sites offered by owners/developers or identified by BANES will need full local consultation and will need to be investigated in detail. We stated that we are always happy to consider infill where appropriate; and as Bathampton is surrounded by the Green Belt there may be small areas of Green Belt which might be considered for use as housing.

We also pointed out that –

- a) The two Local Green Spaces in Bathampton which were registered as part of the Placemaking Plan must not be used for housing and must retain their designation as Local Green Spaces.
- b) Bathampton is only 'connected by sustainable transport' as long as the number 11 bus is running and better timetabling for the D1 would improve connectivity.

Playground Project

Liz Daly

Excellent progress is being made towards raising the funds needed for the Playground Project with funds currently standing at £46,356.

We would like to thank several members of the community who recently donated generously towards the Project and which has helped us get closer to our project target.

An application for funding from the National Lottery was submitted in February. We will find out in the next few weeks whether we have been successful at stage one of their application process. We have everything crossed and we will share any updates as soon as we have them.

If you are interested in holding your own fundraising events to raise money for the project or wish to donate directly, please contact the Clerk on bathamtonparishclerk@gmail.com or on 07980627391. Once again, we wish to express thanks to everyone who has supported the project so far.

Canal Update

Rob Bash

The situation at the canal-side refuse compound has deteriorated over the last 6 weeks, resulting in the Canal & Riverside Trust's (CRT) decision to withdraw maintenance of the site. The situation is complicated by the fact that BANES own the land on which the CRT-run compound is situated. The primary option that had been pursued prior to the breakdown of relations was to re-develop the compound to provide security against illegal fly-tipping and to eliminate the vermin that had become established in the adjacent earth embankment. Following a notice of intent, and attempt by CRT, to remove the compound, complaints have been lodged with both authorities by the boating community. Right now, there is still an impasse but it is understood that senior figures in BANES and CRT are meeting to discuss the matter further at the end of the month. We believe that CRT have stated that they will continue to collect rubbish from the compound until that meeting takes place.

Bathamton Cubs need a new leader

Bathamton Cubs are unable to run and are in urgent need of a new leader. As a result, many children within and outside of the village are missing out on exciting adventures and the children who attend Beavers are unable to continue their journey.

If you have a passion for getting outside and trying new things and could encourage and lead young people aged 8-11 years old, this may be the role for you. Bath 28th Cubs pack are looking for someone who enjoys working with young people, who can help the members grow in confidence and ability.

This is a fun and rewarding role and no previous experience is necessary.

If you are interested or wish to apply, please contact Guy Davies on guy@bathamtonscouts.org

Village Hall

bathamtonvillagehall@outlook.com

The hall is available for private events. If you want to book an event, contact Katie at bathamtonvillagehall@outlook.com. Prices for parties are from £36 for a 3 hour booking (including time for you to set up and clear up).

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Website bathamtonparishcouncil.org.uk You can also find us on Facebook (Bathamton Community) and Twitter (Bathamtonpc). The What's On in Bathampton guide is available on the Parish Council website.