

Chairman's Report - May 2020.

- Councillors:** During the year the Council maintained a full quota of 7 Parish Councillors. In September 2019 Leslie Hirons was co-opted on to the Council to fill the vacancy left by Jane Crowther.
- District/County Councillors:** Tom Wells and Bronwen Behan are the County and District Councillors, respectively, their efforts on our behalf are appreciated.
- Officers:** The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (since July 2013) has been Vicky Fowkes. The Chairman is grateful to Vicky for her hard work in dealing with the administration and finance of the Parish Council and guiding the Councillors through the ever evolving and increasing statutory requirements.
The (WCC) voluntary Parish Footpaths Officer is Ted Elwes, who is retiring from his post in March 2021. The Council is grateful to Ted for his long service in this role. The voluntary Parish Tree Warden is Penny Tubbs.
Also, thanks are due to Ben Perry for his continuing work as the Parish Lengthsman (appointed in November 2016).
- Outstanding Issues:** In order to monitor progress of remedial actions by the appropriate authorities, the council maintains a schedule of current 'incidents' which have been reported to them. Ongoing issues include:
i) Speeding along the village roads. ii) Damage to verges and footways (by farming contractors). iii) Litter, especially on and adjacent to the Ledbury Road. The PC currently co-ordinates litter picking measures with MHDC, litter clearance is only going to be dealt with by the residents, but disposal is being implemented by the Council. The Parish Council endeavours to organise two litter picks per year along the A438. Fly tipping is an ever present problem, but is usually dealt with promptly once reported to the District Council.
The white 'gates' for traffic control at the entry/exit points of the village are on order. It is hoped that they will be installed this year.
- Planning:** The Council has procured agreement from WCC that that the trees (subject to TPOs) on Bushley Bank are their responsibility and will be subject to maintenance work shortly.
The Planning permission for the new dwelling to replace Mythe Bridge House has been approved by MHDC.
The Parish is subject to the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) in force until 2030, (covering Malvern Hills and Wychavon DCs and Worcester City) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). These documents are generally under constant review. The status of Bushley and Bushley Green within the SWDP is that of a Category Four village (basically no new development).
- Drainage:** There was serious flooding of farmland during the Winter of 2020, Bonnetts End was the only premises that was subject to flooding. But, it is likely that there are still ongoing issues with surface water run off from fields flooding roads at 'Mernian' and Hither Ham. At present, the authorities deem these problems to be private landowner issues. There are outstanding works to be implemented on the road drainage between Broxford Farm and Stokes Lane.
- Village Activities**
Due to the Covid19 pandemic and the resulting lockdown and restrictions all village social activities since March 2020 have ceased. Until the lockdown the following activities took place:
During 2019 the Cricket Club continues to flourish, fielding men and ladies' teams, and hosting a wide variety of social events for the village. Cricket matches have recommenced from August 2020. Social activities have been substantially reduced since March 2020. The PC is grateful to Tim Perry and Dan Townsend (President and Chairman) and their committee for maintaining such a valuable village asset.
The Village Hall Committee (Chairman: Sam McDonagh) continues to work on further improvements to the Village Hall and host a variety of events. Currently, these are mainly for outside organisations and keeping the Hall in sufficient use to maintain income is proving more and more difficult. Jason Kinghorn is the Hall manager. Thanks are due to them all for their hard work.
The Therapeutic Garden, which was adjacent to the Village Hall, has now been relocated out of the village.
The Vicar holds 3 services every month in St.Peter's Church and the PCC continues to support the general day to day running of the church and arranges fund raising activities, including concerts. These contribute to the general upkeep needed to the interior and exterior of the church as well as some of the work necessary following the Quinquennial inspection. In September 2019 the lead roof to the Vestry was removed by thieves.
The Bushley News continues to be published monthly and is delivered to all residents as well as published on the Parish Council website. The PC is grateful to the Editor, Phil Hopgood, and his contributors. Thanks are due to Andrew Crowther who edited the News for many years.
- PC Activities:** **Since March 2020 the Parish Council Clerk has been keeping all residents up to date with the Covid-19 situation and resulting restrictions. Vulnerable residents have been monitored as necessary.**
A data base (in accordance with The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) of all residents and their e-mail addresses (when agreed) is maintained by the Clerk.
The Youth Fund is still in place to deliver funding to village secondary school students to help with educational trips. The guidance document has been updated this year. During the 2019/20 academic year, 1 Secondary school student received a grant towards the cost of foreign trips.
The Parish Council continues to organise and fund the mowing and upkeep of the Churchyard. Thanks are due Kevin Blundel who still volunteers to mow the 'new' Churchyard.
Litter picking along the Ledbury Road (A438) was carried out in the Autumn. The Spring clean up by residents and friends had to be cancelled due to bad weather.
The VAS (vehicle activated speed sign) (shared with Longdon PC) is located in various positions in the village for during the Bredon School term times. The old VAS (which has been refurbished) is also utilised in the village
The 'Bushley Information Sheet' is made available to new residents and issued once a year after the AGM.
The Bushley Parish website, showing PC and village information, is maintained on the WCC 'My Parish' site.
The Bushley History website is up and running (bushleyparisharchive.co.uk) and additional items will be uploaded to it when available. The PC would be grateful to receive any appropriate information that could be uploaded to the site.
Digital mapping of the Parish is ongoing.
The Council has planted a row of trees (funded by various residents) at Bushley Green. Thanks are due to Martin Roberts and the Forthampton Estate for their assistance with this project.
The installation of Ultrafast Broadband within the Parish, by the WCC/Open Reach is in progress. The first tranche of houses (at Bushley Green) are on line, the remaining premises are due for connection by the end of September.
- Future Projects:** The PC is keen to protect and enhance the ecology of the Parish. Additional tree planting in the Parish is under consideration. Foul drainage within the Parish needs to be monitored to avoid local pollution of watercourse. Also, measures to mitigate the Community's Carbon Footprint will need to be investigated.