



## Winter Newsletter 2017



### ***Welcome to the Winter Newsletter***

While we, your respective Parish Councillors, continue to deliver paper copies of our newsletters and annual reports the Council is to move to phase out the issue of paper, although retaining this option for those residents who opt into having a hard copy delivered. We currently issue information electronically to our growing e mail database. If you would like to join this database please contact our clerk at [belbroughtonpc@live.co.uk](mailto:belbroughtonpc@live.co.uk) The Council has its own website at [www.belbroughtonandfairfield-pc.info](http://www.belbroughtonandfairfield-pc.info) containing comprehensive information on what we do along with general community information.

### ***Parish Room, Belbroughton***

The council has agreed a new lease with Dean and Rachel Knight who aim to open a delicatessen having recently received planning permission to operate a retail business. Apart from providing the Council with a useful rent, we hope this will offer a facility in the village that many will want to use.

### ***Little Bell Hall Pool, Belbroughton***

The Council had to empty Little Bell Hall Pool, located next to Drayton Rd, during the summer because of damage to its dam. We have recently installed a new trash screen to prevent a damaging blockage from occurring. We are considering the longer term future including, a possible sale of the site, or whether full restoration of the dam, which could be expensive, is justifiable. It is likely that we will be consulting on future options.

### ***The Green, Belbroughton***

We are disappointed that the site behind The Green has been such an eyesore for so long. Unfortunately negotiations with the owner of the site have dragged on concerning payments that are due to be made by him to the Council. These include payments for running drainage from his planned housing development under The Green to High Street. Discussions have recently become more active, and we hope for a resolution soon so that the housing for which there is planning permission can actually be built.

### ***Veolia ES Ltd - Planning Application Wildmoor***

As many of you will know, the application for planning permission to use the site on Sandy Lane to recycle "incinerator bottom ash" was turned down in October by the County Council, after strong objections by the Parish Council, County Councillor Sheila Blagg, Wildmoor Residents Association, and Fairfield Community Association. So far as we know there has been no appeal, but Veolia have until April to lodge one if they so choose.

### ***Footpaths, Bridleways and Other Open Spaces***

The Council has decided to increase its spending on public rights of way. These are the responsibility of landowners and the County Council, but we have long supported the efforts of our volunteer footpath wardens, for some time now Lynne and Paul Hardcastle, to ensure that both footpaths and bridleways are kept in good condition for the benefit of their many users. We intend to ensure that paths are kept as clear as possible during the growing season, and initially to improve a section of bridleway near Bradford House. Following the recent Health & Safety survey approved contractors will be felling or trimming a number of trees on land the Council owns.

## **Defibrillators**

Happily, the defibrillator installed during the summer adjacent to The Talbot in Belbroughton has not yet had to be used, but we are still, even now, sorting out whether its storage cabinet should be locked for security. In Fairfield the Council has contributed to the costs of a new defibrillator installation and training courses.

## **Crime**

Although the Parish is not a high crime area there have been incidents in recent months, including robberies at the post office and shop in Belbroughton. Although traces were left there by the robbers, at the time of writing nobody has been arrested. We have a marvellous facility, the Book Exchange in the old telephone box in High Street Belbroughton. Sadly there have been two cases of anti-social behaviour resulting in the loss of many books. Although the Council decided not to pursue the bulk purchase of "Smartwater" marking kits on the grounds that individuals could buy their own, do please play your own part in helping to prevent crime and if you are minded to do so, report incidents to the Police on 101.

## **Finance**

The financial position for the period 2016/17 remains healthy with no unexpected expenditures other than on 'Open Spaces & Footpaths' where the indications are that there may be an overspend due to tree work. The Council has reviewed the position for 2017/18 and has agreed an increase in the 'Lengthsman' type duties of £2,500 to enable more work to be done on improvements across the Parish. Also, £1,000 has been set aside to cover expected work involved with consulting as to whether to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. Finally, it was recommended that the contingency fund should be increased by £1,500 to enable the council to respond more readily to unexpected expenditure. It was therefore agreed to increase the Parish Council Precept by £5,000 (8.33%) to £65,000. This means an increase of approximately £4 per annum for a Band 'D' property. The Precept is therefore returned to the level applicable in the two years 2014/16.

## **Agricultural Holdings Rent Review – Wildmoor and Stoneybridge**

The Council owns 85 acres of agricultural land which is rented to local farmers. The triennial rent review has been concluded and an increase of £5 per acre per annum will be sought from the tenants commencing in September 2017. This will bring the rental to £90 per acre per annum for the following three years.

## **Localism and Neighbourhood Planning**

The idea behind localism is that decision-making be passed to a more local level, from local government to local communities. The Council is assessing in its 'Working Group' whether to commence work on a Neighbourhood Plan and will consult with residents over the coming couple of months.

## **What is a Neighbourhood Plan?**

The plan is a community-led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. It is about the use and development of land and may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development.

It may deal with a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues (such as housing, employment, heritage and transport) or it may focus on one or two issues only. These may be issues that are relevant to the whole or just to part of the neighbourhood. It is for those producing the plan to decide on its scope and content.

A plan will be part of the statutory development plan for the area. This statutory status gives neighbourhood plans far more weight than some other local documents, such as parish plans, community plans and village design statements.

The plan must meet certain 'basic conditions'. These include compliance with European and National legislation, contributes to the achievement of sustainable development, having appropriate regard to national policy and being in general conformity with existing strategic local planning policy. It should not promote less development than that identified in the Bromsgrove Plan (such as new housing allocations). It can allow greater growth levels. Also, it can specify policies and guidance on how new development should be designed, orientated and located. Plans can be a powerful tool in shaping the development of an area. The timeframe for the neighbourhood plan will be for communities to decide, for example whether it is a 5, 10, 15 or 20-year plan.

A robust programme of community engagement and proportionate evidence base would help to make sure that a neighbourhood plan is based on a proper understanding of the area and of the views, aspirations, wants and needs of local people. Once a plan has been completed, it will have to be submitted to the local authority and then be subjected to an independent inspector's examination. This will make sure that the proper legal process has been followed and that the plan meets the basic conditions, including general conformity with strategic local policy. Residents then require to confirm its adoption by a referendum.

## **Suggested Pros and Cons of Developing a Neighbourhood Plan**

### **Pros.**

Greater community engagement and involvement in what the plans for the community are to be.

The opportunity to close the “us and them” situation.

Greater control of the development of your community including where development occurs, the type, style and speed of any changes.

25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts from housing development in the parish goes directly to the parish to spend on supporting growth.

A chance to produce a local vision for the community which once independently examined and through a successful referendum, becomes part of the adopted planning policy framework. This means that very local views carry statutory weight in the planning process.

A chance to not just accept development, but set policies to define design of new buildings and materials used. This is so important in a conservation area in the green belt.

### **Cons.**

Potential cost, but one can apply for a communities and local government grant support (LGGs). Costs are likely to exceed such a grant. There will be a need to budget for these costs. The District Council covers the cost of the consultation and advertising of the area determination, the independent examination and the referendum, but there will be a need to pay for consultation requirements, evidence accumulation and analysis. The total cost maybe £30,000.

There is a significant time commitment. Plans take time to develop, especially if the goal is to achieve genuine community engagement (18-24 months).

The community will need to give time to this process and have the appetite to be involved in planning the future of their area.

The Parish Council is the enabling body, but the community should be kept fully informed, be able to make their views known, have opportunities to be actively involved in shaping the plan, and made aware of how their views are being used or informed the process. The risk of doing this and failing at the examination stage.

The risk of failing at the public referendum stage. This is a real risk if the community is not fully engaged and have a collectively agreed view of what the plan is trying to achieve.

## **Council Activity**

Your council has a number of Committees, ‘Working Groups’ and ‘teams’ looking at various issues:

### **Finance Committee**

James Bradley

Allan Hood

**Alan Mabbett (Chair)**

Paul Margetts

Bob Morgan

Simon Nock

Gemma Parsons

Chris Scurrall

### **Planning Committee**

Janice Boswell

Trevor Jones

Scott MacDonald

Gemma Parsons

Sue Pawley

**Chris Scurrall (Chair)**

Gez Ingram

### **Agricultural Holdings Committee**

**Allan Hood (Chair)**

Trevor Jones

Paul Margetts

Bob Morgan

Ann Ince (Co-option)

Margaret Rees (Co-option)

## **Working Groups**

(Lead / co-ordinator Cllr. in **bold.**)

Footway Lighting

Traffic Calming

Parish Room Belbroughton

Grants

Parish Projects

Little Bell Hall Pool

Fairfield Recreation Ground

Veolia Planning/quarries

Communication

Neighbourhood Planning

Council Budget

**Sue Pawley**, Trevor Jones, Gemma Parsons, Paul Margetts.

**Alan Mabbett**, Bob Morgan, Gemma Parsons.

**Sue Pawley**, Janice Boswell, Paul Margetts, Simon Nock.

**James Bradley**, Alan Mabbett, Bob Morgan, Chris Scurrall.

Janice Boswell, Gemma Parsons, Sue Pawley, James Bradley.

**Paul Margetts**, Allan Hood, Bob Morgan, Simon Nock, Alan Mabbett.

**Trevor Jones** (+ Mr Ian Shorthouse, monthly reports).

**Allan Hood**, Bob Morgan, Trevor Jones, Simon Nock, Chris Scurrall.

**Bob Morgan**, James Bradley, Alan Mabbett, Sue Pawley,

**Bob Morgan**, James Bradley, Gez Ingram, Trevor Jones, Sue Pawley, Chris Scurrall.

**James Bradley**, Bob Morgan, Chris Scurrall, Simon Nock.

## Liaison Group

The Green, Belbroughton: James Bradley, Bob Morgan, Simon Nock.  
with MFG solicitors.

## Mentors/point of contact/monitoring

Belbroughton Defibrillator	James Bradley, Sue Pawley.
Belbroughton Gardener:	Paul Margetts, Sue Pawley.
Fairfield Gardener	Fairfield Cllrs.
Lengthsman	Paul Margetts, Sue Pawley, Gez Ingram.
Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils	Chris Scurrell
Fairfield Village Hall Management Committee	Alan Mabbett
Belbroughton Rec. Committee	Sue Pawley
Belbroughton United Charities	Janice Boswell
Wildmoor Residents Association	Allan Hood
Bromsgrove Local Independent Advisory Group (Police)	Chris Scurrell
Clent Hills Liaison Committee	Paul Margetts

## Your Councillors' contact details

### Belbroughton Ward

**Sharon Boss** Belne Brook Cottage, 11 Drayton Road, Belbroughton, DY9 0DX 01562 731227  
[bossfamily98@gmail.com](mailto:bossfamily98@gmail.com)

**Janice Boswell** 1 Stoneybridge Farm, Stoneybridge, Belbroughton, DY9 9XT 01562 731239  
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**James Bradley** (Chairman of the Council) 26 High Street, Belbroughton, DY9 9SU 01562 731025  
[jmbradley10@btinternet.com](mailto:jmbradley10@btinternet.com)

**Allan Hood** (Chairman of Agricultural Holdings Committee) Fiveways, Quantry Lane,  
Belbroughton, DY9 9UY 01562 710755 [a.t.hood@btinternet.com](mailto:a.t.hood@btinternet.com)

**Scott MacDonald** Sunglo, Broom Hill, Dordale Road, Belbroughton, DY9 0BB 07872 607391  
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**Paul Margetts** Field House Farm, Dark Lane, Belbroughton, DY9 9SS 01562 730003  
[margettssculpture@btinternet.com](mailto:margettssculpture@btinternet.com)

**Dr Bob Morgan** (Vice-Chairman of the Council) Fennbrook Cottage, Chapel Lane, Madeley Heath,  
Belbroughton, DY9 9XJ 01562 710337 [morg1952@gmail.com](mailto:morg1952@gmail.com)

**Sue Pawley** 59 High Street, Belbroughton, DY9 9ST 01562 730996 [sue@cmcschoolfood.co.uk](mailto:sue@cmcschoolfood.co.uk)

### Fairfield Ward

**Gez Ingram** 3 Pepperwood Close, Fairfield, B61 9ND 01527 880788 [gez.ing@sky.com](mailto:gez.ing@sky.com)

**Trevor Jones** 42 Mount Road, Fairfield, B61 9LW 01527 833774 [tpajones@aol.com](mailto:tpajones@aol.com)

**Alan Mabbett** (Chairman of the Finance Committee) 26 Yew Tree Lane, Fairfield, B61 9LT  
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**Simon Nock** Farmhouse Barn, Stourbridge Road, Fairfield, B61 9NG 01384 575684  
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**Gemma Parsons** 87 Stourbridge Road, Fairfield, B61 9LY 01527 835188 [theparsons5@btinternet.com](mailto:theparsons5@btinternet.com)

**Chris Scurrell** (Chairman of the Planning Committee) 16 Yew Tree Lane, Fairfield, B61 9LT  
01527 876485 [chrismeriel@gmail.com](mailto:chrismeriel@gmail.com)

### Parish Council Clerk

**John Farrell** Millers Cottage, Pinkham, Cleobury Mortimer, DY14 8QE 01299 270722  
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## Parish Council Meetings

Council meetings continue on the first (full Council) and third (Committees) Mondays of each month, in either The Jubilee Room, The Rec. Belbroughton or, Fairfield First School. The agendas and minutes are on the Council's website, [www.belbroughtonandfairfield-pc.info](http://www.belbroughtonandfairfield-pc.info) Members of the public are very welcome to attend and we set aside time at the beginning of each full Council meeting for residents to raise their questions or comments.