

Jubilees of our current queen. Our largest girthed tree is the cedar on the A370 close to the Crossroads. With a circumference in excess of 19', it is believed to be at least 250 years old and possibly planted by John Pigott. Up in the woods, and a few meters over the boundary in Cleeve, an oak boasts a circumference of nearly 27' and is most likely more than 500 years old. In 2012, Tim Hills of the Ancient Yew Group wrote a paper\* about the yews of Brockley which mentions the 35 that surround the old bowling green. He notes that these are probably 250-300 years old and 'no doubt planted to act both as a windbreak and to afford its "fashionable" visitors greater privacy'. A 1788 drawing shows this 'windbreak' sat on what was then an almost treeless plateau. A few larger and much older yews still grow in the rocky outcrops of the Combe.

Unfortunately, our oldest trees were lost as recently as the 1970s by logging activities. Two of these yews were recorded in 1838 (Loudon) as being 17' and 18' in girth, which means they could have been living in Brockley since before the Battle of Hastings. We should now ensure the tree heritage of Brockley no longer succumbs to the axe and can be enjoyed by future generations. Tree wardens can play a key part in protecting and promoting local trees, orchards, hedgerows and woodlands. If this appeals to you, email [ian.monger@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:ian.monger@n-somerset.gov.uk), or ring 01934 42698. **Mike Fishwick**

\*<http://www.ancient-yew.org/userfiles/file/brockley.pdf>

### **Snow warden(s) wanted**

Volunteer snow wardens monitor local weather conditions and local supplies, spreading grit and salt where needed. If you could help, ring Council Connect on 01934 888802.

### **Chelvey Church news**

The makeover at St Bridget's over the last six years has included saving the tower, re-leading windows, banishing draughts, replacing the organ, installing a sound system, and fitting under-pew and glass-fronted radiators to give the church untold warmth. All while retaining the simple beauty of this 900 year old church. The icing on the cake was a

bank of photovoltaic panels installed in the hidden central valley of the roof, producing green energy and a continuing income for the future. Suppliers Solarsense say it's the third oldest roof in the country to have been used this way. But we still lack the basics of mains water, toilet and kitchen. Now work just beginning and to be completed by the end of the summer will bring these together in a special unit on the north side of the churchyard. We hope to replace the adjacent lawn for the community's use. However, despite raising around £220,000 to cover all the costs so far, there is a shortfall for the current work. We aim to raise this from our programme of events and complete all the work this year. So come along to our **Spring Coffee Morning on Saturday 11 May** (1030-12 at The Spinney, Brockley Lane). If you come to the **Open Afternoon on Saturday 8 June** (2-5 at St Bridget's) you can inspect the improvements and progress on the new building. St Bridget's holds regular services - usually the first three Sundays of the month at 9.15 am. **Tony Stirratt**

### **Hospital transport offer**

Could you qualify for free transport to hospital and other medical appointments? 'Travel Guardian' has been designed especially for people who need help with mobility. Check [www.ptsdirect.org.uk](http://www.ptsdirect.org.uk), 0845 0039107.

### **Brockley Church news**

The FRIENDS OF BROCKLEY CHURCH are volunteers who raise funds to support the work of The Churches Conservation Trust, owners of St Nicholas' Church. We also help to look after and clean the church, especially before services - usually three a year. This year there will also be a wedding and a christening, and a **Flower Festival on 22-23 June** with a special service on the Sunday evening. Please tell your friends and come along to support the work done to preserve this old and beautiful church. We would also welcome more help on an occasional basis: ring 463738. **Wendy Dorey**

The ANNUAL BROCKLEY LECTURE was given in September by Rupert Ridge, who spoke on 'The Making of the British Empire as Seen Through the Eyes of a Family'. Rupert

combined his interests in military and family history in an absorbing account of 18C and 19C family members serving as imperial soldiers and administrators, particularly in India (starting in the East India Company). Their life stories took us also to China, Ireland and South Africa, conveying a remarkable period in British history. St Nicholas' Church was full and the buffet supper an enjoyable occasion. Ticket sales enabled donations to the CCT and Friends of Brockley Church. At the **7<sup>th</sup> Lecture on 14 September**, Prof. Tim Bliss will talk on 'The Mechanics of Memory'. **Antony Ridge**

### **How different are we?**

New data\* show how our population of 277 differs from North Somerset's as a whole. (B=Brockley and NS=North Somerset below.) We have proportionately more people over 64 (B 26%, NS 21%) but fewer under-5s (B 2.5%, NS 6%). Three quarters of our 16-74 year olds are economically active, 22% being self-employed (twice the proportion for NS). Our people are better qualified, with 40% at Level 4 and above (NS 28%) and 45% working in managerial and professional roles (NS 35%). In terms of industry sectors, 14% of employed residents work in construction, with 12.5% each in 'professional, scientific and technical activities' and 'health and social care' - all twice the proportion for NS; another 5% work in agriculture and forestry (NS 1%). Twice as many (12.5%) work mainly at home. Fewer households are without a car (B 3%, NS 17%) and twice the proportion (81%) have two cars or more. In our 95 occupied dwellings, there are fewer one-person households (B 14%, NS 31%). There are 239 names on our electoral register. **Gill Rowley**

\*Bristol City Council (04.02.13) 2011 Census Profile; via <http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk>.

### **Your council**

Cllrs: Julian Ridge (Chair) 462313, Antony Ridge (Vice Chair) 462179, Bryan Smith 462434, David Pike 463261, Mike Fishwick 462995, Liz Lunn 462989. Clerk: Gill Rowley 01934 876156. District Cllrs: Geoff Coombs, Karen Barclay. Main notice board: Brockley Stores. **If you would prefer Brock's News emailed to you, tell us at [brockleypc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:brockleypc@hotmail.co.uk).**