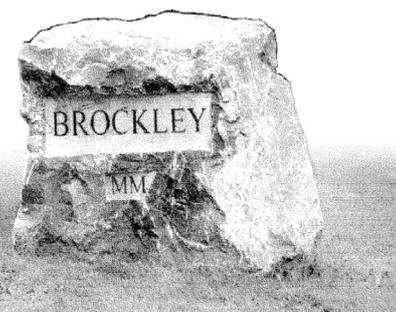


Your council

Julian Ridge Chair 01275 462313
Antony Ridge Vice Chair 01275 462179
Mike Fishwick 01275 462995
Martin Jarvis 01275 462456
Sian Gissing-McMeel
Bryan Smith 01275 462434
Clerk: Ms Joanna van Tonder / Marita Gonzga
07586 437769

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Brock's News



The annual newsletter of Brockley Parish Council

April 2019

Issue 18

Parish Council news

With local election nominations in, we know Brockley will not be facing a contested election this year. We shall be saying goodbye to Councillor **Liz Lunn** and welcoming **Sian Gissing-McMeel** from May.

Liz served on the PC for eight years and represented us on the Parish Councils Airport Association. Her contribution will be sorely missed!

Sian, business owner and mum of two, lives with her husband at Brockley Hall and takes up her new role as a Parish Councillor at the next meeting.

May also marks **Dr Bryan Smith's FIFTY** years on the Parish Council; fourteen of those served as its Chair. This is an incredible achievement and shows his great dedication to the community. Finally, after four years as Clerk, Joanna van Tonder will be moving to Wales in June and **Marita Gonzga** takes up the post.

Meet the Clerk

Having grown up locally and attending Backwell School, Marita Gonzga spent much of her youth running and cycling along the lanes of Brockley and Chelvey. She comes to us with a strong background in Social Work that she is hoping to put to use in addressing the growing problems of social isolation and loneliness within rural communities. Marita now lives in Clevedon with her young family and enjoys staying active by swimming, running and playing rugby for both Clevedon and Cheddar Women RFC.

Annual Parish Meeting 2019

The 126th APM was held at St Bridget's Church on 26 March and was attended by 25 residents and guests.

Chairman's Report: There has been a parish meeting every year since 1894, the first of which attracted a turnout of ten and was held in the vestry of St Nicholas Church.

* **Parish Council:** All current councillors, with the exception of Liz Lunn, intend to stand for re-election. Liz was thanked for her service and special mention was made of Bryan Smith's fifty years on the PC.

* **Planning:** Government pressure to address the shortage in housing means North Somerset Council (NSC) is expected to find sites for in excess of 15,000 new homes by 2036. A number of locations have been identified with Grove Farm most relevant to Brockley. The proposed development would include 700 houses, a new primary school and upgrading of the local road network.

Together with proposals for additional housing at Youngwood Lane, a link road connecting the M5 to the South Bristol Link Road, a multi-storey car park and MetroBus stop at Nailsea & Backwell Station, these developments will undoubtedly have a most severe and irreversible impact on the parish.

* **Bristol Airport:** The PC had responded critically to the proposed expansion of the airport from 10 to 12 million passengers per annum during the planning application consultation.

* **Footpaths:** Thanks to the efforts of the Woodspring Ramblers, organised by NSC's Footpath Officer, the last of the gates had been installed along footpath LA4/11.

(A full map of the parish's footpaths is available on the PC's website)

* **St Nicholas Church water project:** Long-awaited progress is being made! (See A.Ridge's report overleaf)

* **Speed along A370:** A working group has been set up to advance the aim of reducing speed along the A370 as it passes through the parish.

* **High-speed Broadband:** While Gigaclear has been busy installing the underground fibre network, the lack of communication from the government-funded contractor leaves doubt as to when the connecting up of parish properties will commence. Competitors, Truespeed, are making progress towards achieving the required 30% sign-up that would secure their investor funding, allowing roll-out using existing poles to carry overhead cables.

* **Noticeboard:** A grant of £1,060 was received from Bristol Airport Community Fund for the purchase of noticeboard to replace the dilapidated board at Chelvey Batch.

* **Budget 2018/20:** Copies of the budget were made available. The precept of

£4,500 would provide a small surplus to reinforce reserves.

Other reports: Deborah Yamanaka reported the Airport application would only be decided after the elections and that there had been calls on the region's MPs to have the application called in by the Secretary of State.

The publishing of a green paper by the government on funding social care had been delayed but was expected later in the year.

Guest speaker: Chris Barrington of Avon Bat Group, and his colleague Sarah Dale delighted the audience with a passionate and engaging talk on, not only the *Greater Horseshoe* bat, but a number of other species to be found in the area such as the *Daubenton's* bat found around the local waterways and the declining *Serotine*. We were joined by a *Pipistrelle* during the meeting, flying about in the eaves of the church.

THE FULL SET OF DRAFT MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE TO VIEW ON THE WEBSITE.

Following the trail of the Smyth-Pigotts

Readers of Brock's News will know the research by Carol Parfrey and myself on the lives and activities of the Smyth-Pigotts in Brockley resulted in the publication of "Brockley and the Smyth-Pigotts", last revised and reprinted in 2014. Since then, we have acquired more information about family relationships and their involvement in the "slave trade".

The most recent development has been a meeting with Professor Robert Home of Anglia Ruskin University, who is preparing an article on the development of Weston-super-Mare which includes the role of the Smyth-Pigotts. We were able to give him some illustrations and, in return, he gave us a draft copy of what will appear in the Journal, "Planning Perspectives". From this, we learnt about tensions between the Smyth-Pigotts and the Town Commissioners against the backdrop, in the 19th century, when Parliament passed many Private Acts and created new agencies for urban governance. For example, the 1896 Act empowered a new Weston Urban District Council with specific

powers to provide parks, gardens and recreation grounds.

Losing battles with the Town Commissioners resulted in John Hugh Smyth-Piggott writing acrimonious letters in the press about them and complaining about being snubbed by "a set of nobodies" who he thought should rally round him – their Squire!

We were aware of some murky family history and Prof. Home suggests the family was dysfunctional, perhaps even deranged, with fluctuating fortunes worthy of the novels of Dickens!

Most Smyth-Piggotts were poor at managing their finances and relied on their stewards, bailiffs and land agents. Eventually, these agents became developers themselves forming the Master Builders Association in the 1880's. Some of these stewards / agents became very wealthy and left estates worth more than the Smyth-Piggotts' they served.

We have found references in Prof. Home's article that are new to us which we are following up and we look forward to the publication of this piece of research.
B.Smith

Elections: District Council

Local elections take place across the District on Thursday, 2 May with polling stations open from 7am to 10pm. Brockley residents will be able to cast votes for:

North Somerset District Councillor - Wrington Ward at a mobile unit on the forecourt of Brockley Stores, Main Road.

Are you thinking of submitting a planning application?

If 2019 is your year for expansion or you are considering works and are unsure if you will require planning consent, take a look at NSC's planning website for advice: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planning/>

As a statutory consultee, the PC has an opportunity to comment on all applications so please get in touch with us to discuss your application especially if it is likely to be contentious.

2019 litter pick

Like many other parish councils, we organise an annual litter pick that took place this year on 30th of March. It was a smaller group than usual since many of the regulars had prior commitments. Thank you to the four parishioners who congregated at the crossroads and to the lady and two children who kindly joined the litter pick along the A370. Thank you also to those who could not attend but who still join in by collecting litter on alternative days and to those who collect throughout the year whilst out walking. If people see litter, they are more likely to think it is ok to drop more and so keeping on top of it means the annual litter pick is easier, but more importantly, our environment and wildlife benefit. Please

note that fly-tipping can be reported on NSC's website:

[n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/parking-travel-roads/street-cleaning/fly-tipping/](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/parking-travel-roads/street-cleaning/fly-tipping/)
M.Fishwick

Look out for the Daffs

Thanks to a small amount of funding from NSC earmarked for parish beautification, we have been able to purchase 450 daffodil bulbs for planting in the Autumn. Next Spring should see a riot of the yellow and white *Holland Sensation* on the Chelvey Batch triangle, and a second flush of colour at the crossroads after the February Golds have finished, thanks to 300 peach and white *Salome* bulbs. Please get in touch if you would like to help with the planting.

A370 Speed Working Group WE NEED YOUR HELP

Do you have any experiences of near-misses or speed-related traffic incidents along Main Road? The working group set up to address these concerns are interested in hearing from you. Evidence is being collected and speeds recorded with a view to presenting this to NSC in order to justify a speed limit review. Please e-mail the Clerk with your reports.

St Nicholas Water Project

The project to supply water to St Nicholas Church, Brockley has recently and visibly advanced. The trench has been dug and the pipe laid from near the Bristol Water connection point to their mains pipe (by the White House hedge) and to just inside the church, and the trench arch drain has been installed in the churchyard. The route followed is across the track and the triangular grassed area, along the north edge of the field, across the track again, and up Lyall and Fiona Kennedy's field, across their drive, under the churchyard wall and to the west door of the church organ room, where the pipe enters the church beneath the doorstep. The Bristol Water connection charge has been paid for from funds held by The Friends of Brockley Church, and the cost of digging and the pipe will be met by these funds too. The connection will be made by Bristol Water soon, we hope. Listed Buildings permission has been applied for from NSC to allow the building works in the church to start. Only then can we obtain the detailed estimates for these works and for a path and lighting between the main church path and organ room door. This path is a legal requirement to provide disabled access to the toilet that will be constructed in the organ room (such access is not possible from inside the church). With these estimates, we can apply to the Bristol Airport Community Fund for a grant. So, progress has been made but there is still much to do. Brockley Church has occupied its site for about 800 years and occasionally, it feels as if the water project will have taken almost as long! **A.Ridge**

What's On

- There will be three opportunities this year to enjoy a **service** in the otherwise closed **St Nicholas Church**, Brockley:
* Sunday, 23rd June – Summer Evensong
* Sun, 27th October – Harvest Communion
* Sunday, 8th December – Patronal Festival
- A **fundraising coffee morning** is being held on **Saturday, 22nd June** at Brockley Chase, 187 Main Road, Cleeve, BS49 4PP.
P.Lambert

Parish Church of St Bridget's

Uppermost in our minds at St Bridget's has been the loss of both our Rector and our organist during 2018. Thanks to our many friends, we have coped well with the vacancy and with the loss of Michael Dorey, known to many of you from his and Wendy's years living almost next to the church at Brockley. Jean Routley has kindly taken us under her wing and found organists for all services. We are most fortunate to have such help available.

On the communal side, we had a most successful Summer enjoying the marvellous weather during our Coffee Morning and Strawberry Tea then, later in the year, our Autumn Lunch with entertainment. Much of this we shall repeat again in the year ahead with **Coffee at Brockley Hall on 1st June** and the **Strawberry Tea on 27th July**. We aim to hold an **Antiques Evening** in the church on **12th October**. All events will be publicised on the church noticeboards.

Your Parish Church still struggles to fund the high charges of the Diocesan "Parish Share" which, together with our regular expenses, means we have to find over £40 a day from a congregation of just over twenty people. We ask members of the parish to please remember St Bridget's and help us to keep this beautiful **900 year old church** open. It would be very sad if St Bridget's followed St Nicholas and was forced to close through lack of support.

If you could help in any way, would like to book the church or discuss what we can offer, please call Tony on 01275 853138 or Kathy on 01275 463702. **T.Stirratt**

Parish Council meeting dates

Parish Council meetings take place on the second Tuesday of January and first Tuesday of March, May, July, September and November and are held at 7pm.

2019/20 dates:

07 May 2019	St Nicholas'
02 July 2019	St Nicholas'
03 September 2019	St Nicholas'
05 November 2019	St Bridget's
14 January 2020	St Bridget's
03 March 2020	St Bridget's

Agendas and minutes are available to view on the website.

ALL WELCOME