
PRIDE IN PORTBURY

PARISH NEWSLETTER NO.8 – JULY 2017

INCORPORATING NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



Here we are again with an update on things that have been happening around the patch. Our last bulletins, April and May have been mainly neighbourhood watch updates. It's time now for a fuller news round.



Diary Dates – Community Cafe is on a break for August and September. The Parish Council has agreed to sponsor this event, which is much appreciated in the community. Over the Autumn and Winter period the Cafe will be held in the Village Hall, commencing on the 7th of October. From April up to the summer break it will be held in the Church. Any Resident who would like to have a stall at the Cafe can now arrange this for free; simply contact Jo Chilcott to reserve a space. All surpluses made at the Cafe will continue to be donated to charity.

The Church will be open from the 7th to the 10th of September as part of Gordano Open Days; there will be guided historic tours, a chance to see the new Heritage Centre and displays of local artists' work.



The Pop up Pizza man is here regularly now and seems to be very popular indeed – they look luscious!! Every other Thursday, at the Village Hall and the bar is open if you need some liquid to help it all go down!



Neighbourhood Watch – it has been quiet in terms of any intrusions into houses or cars recently, I'm happy to say. However just lately I've had reports of unwanted guests in people's back gardens. On one occasion an "Irish" accent was detected. One house also had a strange X appear near their gate, as if someone had made a "mark" for possible intrusion. This is a good reminder not to make it easy for anyone looking to steal or do general mischief. We are a quiet village and it's easy to forget that things must still be secured from "prying" eyes. National data shows that the incidence of crime has risen by 10%, let's not be part of that statistic.

Flooding – it's flooding season again but this is only likely to happen if we get an extreme condition like was seen in Coverack recently. Gullies have been dug out and drains are being monitored, so hopefully we'll get through any flash flooding that might occur. We've been getting as much information as we can on the routes of all the drains and gullies in case we need any extra cleaning – but in the winter, if we get day after day of rain, we are still at risk.



Neighbourhood Plan – the main update for you all this time are the results emerging from our questionnaire relating to potential housing development in the Parish. Many of you will already be aware of the increasing pressure from Central Government on the number of houses each local authority is planning to build. In general the targets for building are continuing to go upwards. All the local councils in the old "Avon" are now looking as far ahead as 2036 and will be producing a new local plan. This is very likely to include sites that are currently in the green belt.

Our questionnaire explained that it's not a matter of taking a stance for or against housing in a plan for Portbury, it's a matter of keeping control of any plans that emerge so that we are in the best position possible to influence how any development happens. The results from the questionnaire

show that most people understand this, whilst a small number, who perhaps didn't attend the Annual Residents' Meeting where this was explained, recorded that they were against any development. It is important to understand that there is no case yet for a green belt review nationally, or even locally, but this may come eventually. If it does come we need to be prepared for it.

The main headlines from the questionnaire are as follows –

The likes about living in Portbury are mostly to do with being in a rural community, 92% of responses. People also like the fact that we live in a village, 52% with countryside feel about it, 52%. It is also recognised that we are well connected being close to the M5 and A369, 60%.

Predictably the main dislike is traffic congestion, 71%. Surprisingly perhaps the lack of a shop features again in residents' minds, 40%.

When it comes to considering development therefore, the main fear is worse traffic, 69%. There is also a flag about the pressure that might be caused on parking in the village.

On the difficult question about what might happen if any development came forward, 80% agreed that this would have to be low density, at least half the amount that current landowners have suggested in some cases. There is also a view, 89%, that we cannot support any new commercial development apart from on existing commercial sites.

Some residents saw the benefit of a green belt review before 2036, 37%. Conversely 54% of people did not wish to see a green belt review.

Should any development be proposed -

The key "wants" were–

A car park for the village hall
Securing the playing field
A local shop
A safer footpath to the school
Speed control for traffic

And the "avoids" were

Excessive street parking
Traffic congestion
High density development

There are other questions that remain to be analysed, but so far we have at least got a "snapshot" of residents' views on this matter and we can now begin to write the plan taking these views into account. It won't be an easy task writing this up, given the sensitivity of the subject, but we will try.

We are aware that some people haven't received previous questionnaires by e-mail; this can only be because you haven't registered with us. Please sign up to receive Newsletters and other relevant and important information from us by giving us your e-mail and home address. Please mail to Portbury_Parish_Council@Hotmail.co.uk . E-mail is now our principal means of getting information out to you.

Traffic matters – we've had a few lorries through the village again, so the plague continues. We now know that if a driver uses a car satnav when looking for Nailsea it will route the user via junction 19. If you set the satnav to lorry mode then it directs to junction 20. We are therefore now asking for signage to deter HGV lorries from using junction 19 for Nailsea, as well as getting some clearer signage for the docks. It's a real hard slog as you might imagine as we are dealing with government Departments who don't want to be too helpful in case it costs money!!



Tidiness in and around the Village – it's the time of year when everything seems to be growing like mad, I'm sure you find that in your own gardens. We've been trying to keep on top of growth as much as we can, the extra funds from our precept is helping. We've also managed to get junction 19 tidied up a little; much of the litter has disappeared near the services. It's a constant battle however.



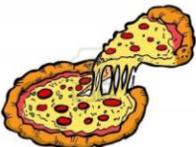
The bus stop for Bristol on the A369 has become a bit of a dumping ground, we suspect due to docks employees buying takeaways on their way home. There is no bin at that stop. Happily we have managed to get Welcome Break to buy a bin for us so that hopefully we can keep on top of this. Hats off by the way to the resident who challenged some young men who were emptying their car near the footbridge; they disregarded her warning and so will now have had a visit from the Police!!



Mike Phipps – Chairman Portbury Parish Council

And read on for Village Hall News from Sharon

The Village Hall – As ever thanks to you to the community for your support for the Village Hall. Our Beer and Cider festival was a great success again, with a bumper turnout and a significant boost to the Hall finances as usual.



You'll have noted above that the Pop up Pizza man now comes regularly to the Hall and we are trying to open the bar for these occasions, volunteers permitting.

Just a reminder that to use our facilities you need to be a member, at very modest cost. It's worth me saying that any income we get from member activity is exempt from corporation Tax of 20%, so not only do you give us a little bit more income from your membership fee, you also enable us to avoid paying tax that we don't have to. As ever membership forms are always available at the Club and the New Year starts on 1st of October.

On the subject of funds I am delighted to be able to tell you that we have been able to secure a grant of £10,500 for the Hall to tackle a number of things, the Hall floor, lighting, fire safety improvements and one remaining rotten window. This has been possible through the Landfill Tax award scheme run by Biffa.

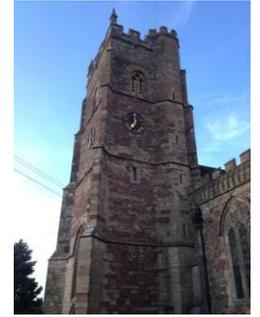


Letters of support from various people were key to this; thank you to those who provided these. Work will start later in the year we hope, the Hall will look stunning once we've sanded and sealed the floor to bring it back to life.

Sharon Worthy – Chair of the Village Hall and Social Club

And Church news from Ann

St Mary's Church – we are very pleased to welcome our new Rector to the Church, Reverend Astrid Tiesema-Samson. You can meet her at our next family service at 10am on Sunday the 6th of August. She is delighted to have been awarded this position and hopefully you will see her around the Village in the days and months to come. All good wishes and thanks to our outgoing Vicar, Ruth Legge, who retired earlier this year.



I hope you've noticed that we are now officially a tourist destination; our brown sign can be seen at the end of Church Lane near the school. We are "on the map".



The toddler group continues to meet on Wednesdays at 9.15 to 11am. Everybody is welcome.

Those of you who came to our wall pointing lesson seemed to have a good time, and thank you for helping us with the monumental task of keeping our boundary wall up together.



Ann Longstaff – ChurchWarden

MAP –20th July 2017