

## Broadhembury Parish Council

### Annual Report

Dear Subscriber,

On the 17<sup>th</sup> May, your Parish Council will hold its annual Parish meeting. Every year we are required to hold an annual meeting which reviews what has happened over the last year. You are welcome to attend but if you cannot then this is the text of what I propose to say.

### **Council Tax**

For 2016/17 Broadhembury Parish council has asked for £7731. This is called a 'precept'. For most Council Tax/ Community Charge payers in this parish this is a reduction on the previous year.

Approximately 710 people live in the Parish so this works out at just over £10 per person per year or £26 per household on average. We have managed to do more with less because of the way in which we have sought funding for particular projects as described below. This funding comes from sources other than the precept so it is not a charge on local people. In the year just finished ( 2015/16) our total expenditure was £23000 because we were able to supplement the precept with grant funding..

### **Keeping in Touch**

During the year just ended we have made a big effort to keep in touch with people throughout the whole Parish. Traditionally the PC communicated by posting notices on the five notice boards in the Parish. Last year we continued this tradition but we also used the Parish magazine, our web site, ([www.broadhemburyparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.broadhemburyparishcouncil.org.uk))twitter([www.twitter.com/broadhemburypc](https://twitter.com/broadhemburypc)) and Facebook.([www.facebook.com/groups](https://www.facebook.com/groups)) . Last year there were 10753 'views' of our web site, some from as far away as Mexico!

From time to time we also held public meetings on particular issues and we drop leaflets to every household. We also use this subscriber newsletter. Please urge your friends to subscribe to this newsletter

and of course come along to PC meetings. They are held every third Tuesday of the month every other month , starting in January.

## **Winter Resilience**

For many years people have been concerned about flooding. We have been able to do something about this by combining our own efforts with funding from other sources. We have diverted water from Wilderness lane ( which joins the A373 at Upton bend), and created trenches to the NE of Luton in the fields. We have persuaded DCC Highways to tackle flooding on the road from Colliton Cross to Broadhembury and at the turn-off to Causeway End. We carried out work ourselves to supplement this work, on the land opposite the Grange.

We have secured a consulting study of water flow in Kerswell, which will eventually produce recommendations on how to alleviate the flow of water, and we are investigating how to tackle flooding at Danes Mill.

In all of these cases we have had co-operation from local landowners and demonstrated to DCC and EDDC that we are willing to do some of the 'heavy lifting' ourselves. This has made them more willing to invest their own resources.

For some time we have urged SW Power to remove branches from power lines which could endanger them in strong winds. You may have seen contractors around the Parish removing branches over the year and we are encouraging them to do more.

## **Neighbourhood Planning**

Neighbourhood plans are ways in which local communities can have more say in what happens in their neighbourhoods. This has been an ambitious project for us and I am grateful to those who have taken part and given their time. We have already benefitted from the process because we have been able to show that the 'neighbourhood' is concerned about things when we seek funding to tackle them.

Our first draft plan, which proposed 'affordable' housing on a particular site was challenged by a group of people in the village of Broadhembury , where the housing would have been located. After surveying those closest to the proposed site we have decided to

redraft this section of the plan and will conduct more public consultation later in the year.

In addition we are encouraging our adjoining Parishes ( Awliscombe, Payhembury and Plymtree) who have not started the process to get involved. There is not much point safeguarding our environment if on our boundary another Parish does not.

Of course the Neighbourhood Plan is about a lot more than 'affordable' housing. Go to [www.broadhemburyparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.broadhemburyparishcouncil.org.uk) to see the evidence reports, an earlier draft of the plan and the sustainability appraisal. Please send us your comments.

### **High Speed Broadband**

We are represented on the committee ( B4RDS for short) which monitors the publically-funded body ( Connecting Devon and Somerset) which has the job of implementing super-fast fibre in the two counties. We have lobbied local MP's, the parliamentary Select Cttee, EDDC , DCC and national Press. B4RDS continue to push for fibre direct to premises which is the only future-proof solution. We are working with adjoining Parishes to press for this.

Since the upgrade to the Broadhembury exchange some properties are now able to receive a superfast connection. However this depends on a direct connection to the exchange and the distance from it. You can find out more at

[www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk](http://www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk)

### **Local Infrastructure**

The parish is a good example of rural Devon at its best. To keep it attractive to visitors we have worked to tidy up some local features. The memorial garden has had a make-over with help from lots of volunteers, the church lych gates have been repaired and the playground committee has carried out repairs to broken play structures. Periodically we clear litter and we are investigating the installation of dog bins in some areas. Despite advice to the contrary Japanese knotweed has been successfully cleared from a patch of common land over a two year period. This has all been done with help from many people.

## **Broadhembury Community Centre**

The new Memorial Hall is the envy of other Parishes and it is a credit to the Trustees of the Broadhembury Community Centre CIO that they pulled it off. The PC supports the Trustees in any way we can and we are trying to secure land to increase the car park which will make a big difference to the Hall's viability. Last year we made a once-off payment to the Hall to get broadband up and running and to provide operational 'seed' funding.

## **Community**

In this Parish many people give their time and experience to support the community. I am grateful to my colleagues on the Parish Council for their commitment and resilience, the editors of the Parish magazine for their dedication to journalistic integrity, the members of the PCC for their work to maintain St Andrew's church and the trustees of the Memorial Hall for their stewardship of a critical community facility.

Many others provide services without which the parish of Broadhembury would not be the same. The Over-60's Club, the Gardening Club, the Playground Committee, the WI, the organisers of Remembrance Day and the people who distribute the Parish magazine. Unrecognised, some in the parish provide transport and visits for elderly parishioners, people turn out to collect rubbish, clear drains and weed public areas. Those who run commercial facilities like the pub and the shop make a big contribution to the community too.

The parish has 155 people over the age of 65 which is 23% of our population. The average for England as a whole is 16%. We shall need more people to support those of us who are getting older as the years progress.

## **Conclusion**

It has been my privilege to serve as Chairman of the PC for the last year with the support of my colleagues. The PC cannot please everyone all the time but I am confident that we try to accommodate the views of the majority and do our best to serve the interests of the whole parish with the resources we have available.

A community needs lots of people of all ages to give their time for the benefit of others if it is to survive and I am grateful that so many people do so in this parish.

Please continue to tell us when you think we have got it wrong!

Bob Nelson,

Chairman Broadhembury Parish Council  
[www.broadhemburyparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.broadhemburyparishcouncil.org.uk)