

PLANNING

The period under review saw the normal number of extensions and small changes to homes but little to work up a lather about. However, we did object to an application to change a five-bar gate to a 1.8m close boarded gate. We also objected to an extension to a cob, thatched property in a small village lane which we considered to be out of place. The Parish Council also objected to both applications.

It was pleasing to see the cob, thatched property application withdrawn. It was less pleasing to see that the gate had been approved although the design had been amended so that the upper part of the gate was “permeable”.

We objected to the prospective loss of a “footpath” off North Weirs. This application led to a vociferous reaction village wide. A record number of villagers attended the Parish Council Planning Committee meeting where the PC voted unanimously to object as well.

The Parish Council’s application for a signpost to be erected on Waters Green was finally approved after 17 months of cogitation by the authorities.

On a more general front, new planning enforcement rules will allow stop notices to be issued for 56 days up from 28. Also, and more importantly enforcement action is to be extended to 10 years from the current four. This is pleasing particularly, for example, it stops barns being inhabited then being able to be turned into houses after four years.

The NPA have ruled on temporary campsites. They are banned unless 1) the land was first used as a temporary campsite before 1st March 2020 and 2) is not used as such for more than 28 days per year.

The new Labour government seems intent on increasing new housing and greenbelt sites appear to be fair game. To be fair, many green field sites are not exactly charming countryside. As far as can be told, National Parks escape the concrete.

Finally, the work Hampshire CC had promised in Brookley Road is now not to go ahead through lack of funds. We have mixed views on this. Firstly, to be promised the work and told that financing was in place then reverse that is annoying. However, HCC’s plans did not fit in with the presentation made to residents by FoB nearly two years ago. Hopefully, that idea can be resurrected.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

15th November 2024

Main Hall, Village Hall, Brockenhurst

Drinks & Nibbles from 7.00pm

Meeting starts at 7.30pm

Guest Speaker Peter Hebard of Brockenhurst
and New Forest Flood Action Group

BROCKENHURST WHEEL - THIRTY YEARS ON...

It has been a historic reminder to everyone entering and leaving the Brookley Road Car Park for the past thirty years of the Village Forge that once stood until 1915 on the island site at the junction of Brookley Road and Lyndhurst Road.

The Wheel was originally paid for by the Friends of Brockenhurst and designed and constructed by New Forest District Council.

With permission from New Forest District Council, Friends of Brockenhurst have refurbished the Wheel in readiness for the next thirty years.



FLOODING PROBLEMS IN BROCKENHURST

Logistics require that articles for our Newsletter are written well in advance of your reading them. So, at the time of writing we have mild temperatures and light rain. This past year has been mild and wet. It is the wet on which we concentrate.

As we all know, 2023/24 saw a significant amount of flooding in and around our village and we have already had our first Autumn storm. Brockenhurst Flood Action Group (BFAG) has had a busy year. A lot of time has been spent in trying to coordinate the various authorities responsible for managing the water in and around Brockenhurst. These include Forestry England, Natural England, The Verderers, the National Park Authority and others. Difficult to co-ordinate with such a group let alone get them to agree what is needed and do it.

That is why our AGM will centre on this work. Our speaker is Peter Hebard, leader of BFAG, who will explain what has been done and what more we need to do, not only to keep our roads clear but to reduce the flood risk to the village. The aim is to prompt the necessary action before a climate change induced storm causes more serious flooding, rather than wait to see if it happens.

To learn more you are welcome to FoB’s AGM Meeting on Friday 15th November at the Village Hall in Highwood Road at 7.00 for 7.30pm

EVENTS...

Brockenhurst Christmas Tree Festival, organised by the Mother’s Union, is taking place from 23rd to 30th November with a display of decorated Christmas trees at St Saviours’ Church. Friends of Brockenhurst will be joining in and displaying a tree at the event ahead of the festive season.

Brockenhurst Christmas Fun Evening will be taking place on Friday 6th December, from 6-8pm. The Parish Event Committee are busy planning the evening and it sounds like a great community event with music, stalls, fun fair, Santa’s Grotto and lots more.



Friends of Brockenhurst are manning a stall and will be running a bottle tombola. If you have any bottles to donate (wine, beer, fizz, bubble bath, shampoo, etc.) please get in touch - all donations welcome! Thank you.



WELCOME TO OUR AUTUMN NEWSLETTER,

Over the summer months we have continued to act upon the concerns of the residents of our village and raise these matters with the relevant Authorities. As you’ll read in this Newsletter some matters have been resolved but where others have not, be assured we will continue to pursue them.

Over the past year we are pleased to have been able to support the Brockenhurst Pantomime, Oakhaven Hospice and Lymington Hospital Friends by way of donations.

Details of our Autumn Meeting and AGM to be held on Friday 15th November in the Village Hall, Highwood Road from 7pm are to be found in this Newsletter. We commend this evening to you as the topic is flooding, which is of continuing concern to our village. Everyone is welcome and a small entrance fee is payable by non-members.

We welcome to our Committee David Bennett and Jonathan Doughty and we look forward to the experience they will bring to the Committee. We still urgently need new committee members to ensure the continuation of our work.

We are thankful to our members for their continued support and if you are not a member, please join and help us to continue to preserve the character of Brockenhurst and its surrounding area.

Rachel Smith
President

David Eley
Chair

email: info@friendsofbrockenhurst.org.uk
www.friendsofbrockenhurst.org.uk



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THE WATERSPLASH

As regular readers will know, FoB has banged on about the state of the Watersplash for some time, as we believe this area to be one of the main parts of our Village.

So far the overgrown brambles on the grass side of the Watersplash and the seat on the footbridge have finally been attended to by the Parish Council and this is certainly an improvement.

The SSE electric sub-station box on the bridge, is in a very dilapidated condition and we have sent many epistles to SSE culminating in a letter to his Chairmanship himself. All we wish is to make it visibly better but we received no response from SSE at all.



However, we have recently been advised by the Parish Council that they are in contact with SSE over this matter. So, watch this space!

We investigated the prospect of the addition of another seat to the grass area. Despite having an offer of financial help towards the cost from a resident, we are still trying to jump through the various hoops to allow this to happen.

So, some progress but disappointing in others. However, FoB will not give up. We think that it is important to clean up this area of our Village and one would have thought it straightforward. So, faint heart and all that - we will persevere.

Reminded us of a message sent to Michael Gove on his becoming Secretary of State for Levelling Up: “They said it couldn’t be done/ They said you can never do it/ so he took the job that couldn’t be done/ And he couldn’t do it”

MODERN TOURISM

We have commented before about the effect of staycation on the footfall in the New Forest.

Our friends in the National Park Authority tell us that footfall for 2024 is expected to be 17 million. This is an increase of 13 per cent from the last time we commented.

We have commented on the effect of holiday homes and are still monitoring this situation.

We have commented on the incidents of visitors not observing our by-laws, parking on verges, barbecues on the forest, feeding/ petting the livestock etc.

We have commented on the effect tourism was having in Cornwall, parts of Wales, Whitby, North Norfolk et al. We have observed that these kinds of problems are not restricted to the UK. Venice, for example, has imposed an entrance tax, the Acropolis issues time slots. Many other hot spots are considering action. Yet still they swarm.

Many parts of Spain are expressing concern about tourism. Mallorca appears to be quite active. Palma has experienced demonstrations

complaining about holiday homes, scarce water being used for swimming pools and roads congested with visitor’s cars. However, the best was a cry for residents to take back the beaches in protest.

It is becoming more obvious that mass tourism is a growing problem in many parts of the world. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation forecasts 1.8 billion tourists by 2030. Thank goodness they won’t all be on Wilverley Plain but it is a sobering global thought.

What should we do? Perhaps form a FoB vigilante group, muster in Krap Wen, storm the campsites and give Airbnb the bums rush. Home rule, elect a leader in the Pig Beer tap room and give holiday homes to deserving locals.

Well, one can dream!

TO BIN OR NOT TO BIN

Litter and fly tipping is a problem in our world The authorities have a difficult job managing the problem although sometimes not always helping themselves.

Some years ago, NFDC stopped its’ operatives from collecting waste from outside houses. Waste had to be left at the garden gate. My gate abuts the open forest and the livestock often left my waste scattered. So, I decided to recycle my own waste and have been doing so in the recycle bins provided by NFDC.

I received a letter recently from the environmental chappies at NFDC. It told me that finding my household waste at a recycle centre is considered a breach of my duty of care. The offending item was shredded paper in the paper bin. It said to cough up £200.

Not one for taking these things lying down, an exchange of emails took place leading to Big Brother reviewing my case and letting me off with a warning.

However, there is a more serious aspect to this. The council bins are often full of non-recyclable waste. I have seen items such as mattresses, armchairs, toasters and other electrical items. The recycling depot at Efford requires you to book an appointment. This started with Covid and hasn’t been rescinded. Therefore, it is sometimes easier to chuck your waste in council bins rather than make the short trip to Efford.

NFDC please consider. Should Efford become a non-appointment drive-in depot again? Although staggered appointments save the queuing of pre Covid days and offer a more relaxed experience.

NFDC have to follow government guidelines. These include “...requiring all local authorities... to collect the same recyclable waste streams, including food waste, by March 2026” Translation please! We believe this will see the introduction of wheeled bins in the New Forest and the resultant ugly sight of bins in streets.

A bigger issue is fly tipping. The same enforcement chappies have been active issuing fixed penalties for waste related offences and many fly tipping cases investigated for possible court action. Obviously, it is not always easy for them to identify the culprits and they sometimes have to get their hands dirty. Fly tipping is a menace to the flora and fauna of our area. If you see any fly tipping, or any other dropping of rubbish, please report to 02380 285000 or 07771 259098.



COMMITTEE

President: Rachel Smith | Chair: David Eley
Hon Secretary / Planning Secretary: Philip Butt
Treasurer: Tim Angel

Additional Committee Members:
Gerald Parker, Bronya Szatkowska, Paul Ledger,
David Bennett & Jonathan Doughty
Contact number: 01590 623197

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The Society exists to protect, improve and develop the character and amenities of Brockenhurst and the surrounding forest area for the benefit of the residents of the village and of the wider community.

It shall concentrate especially, but not exclusively, on matters relating to planning, environment and the welfare of the community and will seek to influence local and other government bodies to advance its objectives.

In particular, it shall carry out regular and detailed reviews of all regional, structure and local plans, together with significant local planning applications, making representations as appropriate.

The Society also aims to invite speakers on matters of interest to its Autumn AGM and Spring meetings.



email: info@friendsofbrockenhurst.org.uk
www.friendsofbrockenhurst.org.uk

BECOME A MEMBER...

Membership of the Friends of Brockenhurst is open to all residents of Brockenhurst and the surrounding forest area. Our annual subscription is currently a minimum of just;

£7.50 per single person OR £10.00 per family

Subscriptions in excess of the minimum are always very welcome, and we thank those that continue to do so.

Membership forms and Standing Order forms are available to download from our website and can be returned to us or taken to Pot Pourri Gift Shop in Brookley Road:

www.friendsofbrockenhurst.org.uk/membership

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