



# **Broxton & District Parish Council Annual Report 2022–2023**

## **Chairman's Report 2022-2023 Cllr. David Williams**

It only seems like yesterday that I was writing the last chairman's report and commenting on how the previous two years seemed so surreal. It was a time for us to come back together following an unexpected social break and, as a council, a time for us to go back to all that we had put on hold and assess how we move forward.

Having now had a full year since the last report, I am pleased to take this opportunity to report on the progress that we have made. Rather than reflect on the past, I would like to build on the momentum we have to further develop our projects and look to the future with positivity.

Many of you would have voted in the recent local elections for your ward councillor as well as the local parish of Broxton. It is the first time in memory that seats within the parish council have been contested, which I hope shows the growing interest in how the future of our area is shaped.

The parishes of Broxton, Harthill and Duckington together form the Broxton and District Parish Council. The Harthill and Duckington parishes were uncontested with each area having one representative appointed to the council. The further 8 seats represent the Broxton Parish which was contested by 9 candidates.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all councillors new and old and very much look forward to us all working together for the betterment of the local community. New people bring new ideas and renewed energy, something that I hope not only pushes our current projects further forward but also introduces new ones.

For those who no longer hold a seat on the council, I would like to thank you for your contributions during your time in office. You all gave your time freely to help the council and for that we are grateful.

Of course, you do not have to be a parish councillor to be involved with local projects and events. Past councillors and residents are all welcome to get involved with all that we do, and it is always a pleasure to see a good number of you attending our meetings.

Last year, we organised our parish meeting where residents and councillors got together not only for our council meeting but also to share ideas in a nonformal setting. We hope to arrange another parish meeting this year which is the perfect opportunity for you to meet your new councillors and communicate any of your concerns and/or ideas of how you would like us to move forward. Without your input, we cannot act on the issues that you consider to be most important. Please do consider attending when we advertise the event – there may even be promise of wine and nibbles! You are welcome to attend the meeting that follows but it is not obligatory.

Below you will find a short review of our current projects which are ongoing or have been recently completed. We hope that these are just the beginning and look forward to new ideas in the future.

I would like to reiterate from my last report how lucky we all are to live in such a beautiful location, and I don't think that it can ever be taken for granted. The landscape changes very little but the

residents are the ones that truly shape the community. We have always had a close-knit community and hope that this continues for years to come.

With that in mind, I am always happy to personally receive emails, texts or phone calls from any resident if they have any concerns or would like to discuss ideas. Even if you just want a chat, you are always welcome to get in touch.

Here's looking forward to an eventful year and hopefully a glorious summer!

## **Brown Knowl planting scheme**

Another project which was sadly put on hold due to the pandemic was the village "tidy up" planned for Brown Knowl to improve the general appearance of the area. This has now evolved into a full planting scheme provisionally focusing on two areas of the village which we then hope to expand.

The council authorised funding to improve the appearance of the two village green areas by building planters for planting herbs and fruit trees that the residents can utilise, as well as more ornamental flowers.

The first stage of the planting scheme is set to get underway in the coming months. We are currently seeking the various licences required after having a meeting with highways to discuss certain aspects of this project. Once permission, has been granted, we will get started, in the meantime if anyone would like to get involved in the planting scheme project please do contact Councillor Si Poole, via his email: [intmintmint@gmail.com](mailto:intmintmint@gmail.com) so that he can compile a list of people interested in getting involved.

We hope to expand this project in the future to improve the appearance on the roadsides and hedgerows and welcome any ideas residents may have. There are wildflower initiatives that many local parish councils have engaged with, for example, that not only make the verges look fantastic but also improve the biodiversity of the planted areas.

## **Larkton Hill Football Pitch**

The site was cleared last year in order for us to develop a community space. Works are still required to tidy the area and we hope to replace the existing goal posts and install picnic benches for visitors to utilise.

The land itself does not belong to the parish and so permission must be given by the National Trust for any plans we have for the site.

Arrangements are in place for a working group to further clear the area in order to complete the project. We hope that the improvements will provide an outdoor space for the whole community to enjoy.



## **Brown Knowl bus shelter**

The primary use of the shelter is for the school children when waiting to board the coach for high school and over the last few years it has certainly become used more and more for this reason.

There was a time where all parishes within Broxton and District had a regular bus service running between Whitchurch and Chester (as well as many other stops along an extensively winding route). The shelter I believe was built at a time when this service was still in place, although my memory can't recall exactly when, but it was a welcome change from standing in the rain.



Residents would have noticed that many books were donated and placed within the shelter forming a small book swap/library. New shelving has now been provided within the shelter to house the books. You are welcome to borrow or swap these books at any time and it would be a pleasure to see this used more.

## Defibrillator

The council continue to monitor the defibrillator and ensure that it is kept operational. Although funding was provided for its original installation, we continue to allocate funds towards its upkeep

and order new parts as and when required.

Not only is this a valuable tool to have in the heart of any community, but it also maintains the iconic red phone box which is sadly disappearing from many other areas.

## Community Facebook page

Our social media presence is something that we have hoped to improve without much success over the recent years. In order for this to grow, content and interaction must increase but this is not possible without a little kickstart from the administrators.

It is my hope that content regarding the parish including pictures new and old will be added to the existing page in order to increase followers and develop a more active social media page.

When new content begins to be posted, if you would like to contribute any articles, old images of the parish or new images you take, please do let us know and we will be happy to include it.

## Further community projects

We would like to hear from the residents regarding any further community projects they would like to see within the parish. If you have any ideas on how we can further improve the area or would like to see certain events, please do feel free to contact us.

If you have your own projects or events that contribute locally, we can also provide grants to assist. We will consider each application on an individual basis but do request that they are within the Broxton and District parish and contribute to the local community.

All of our existing projects are only possible due to the councillors and other volunteers who give their own free time. If you would like to get involved with any of the above, your help would be very much appreciated and will hopefully assist in moving the works forward so that new projects can begin. You can contact us using the details on this report, via our website or our Facebook page.



### Broxton & District Parish Council

204 followers • 2 following



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## Summary of Accounts 2022-2023



<b>Opening Balance 2022-2023</b>	10,716.00	<b>Payments</b>	
<b>Receipts</b>		Salaries	1526.00
Precept	5,921.00	Admin, Postage & Room Hire	992.00
Rental	240.00	Insurance	507.00
Vat Rebate	201.00	Defibrillator Phone line & Pads	156.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,362.00</b>	VAT Refund	110.00
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>The Council's full accounts and audit information can be found at Finance &amp; Audit – Broxton and District Parish Council (broxtonparishcouncil.org.uk)</p> </div>		Poppy Wreath	100.00
		Grant—Bickerton Warm Space	100.00
		Maintenance	90.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,581.00</b>
		<b>Opening Balance 2023-2024</b>	<b>£13,497.00</b>

## Precept 2023-2024

The Council set its Precept in January 2023, for the 2023-2024 financial year at £6318.00. Although this will show on your council tax bills as an increase of 10% it is an increase of just £1.83 for the year per Band D property bringing the Precept on a Band D property to £24.49.

This increase will allow the Parish Council to undertake a number of projects including planting schemes around the Council area and move forward on project to create a signed walking route to mark the Jubilee and Coronation.

## Planning

The Parish Council has been notified of 9 applications over the last council year (from May 2022) compared to 13 the previous year.

3 applications were for extensions, 1 for a replacement garage and 1 to change the exterior of a property including cladding, windows and doors.

Applications have been submitted for new agricultural buildings and conversion of an agricultural building into a dwelling. More unusually there has also been an application to retain a tree house and outbuilding. A another application was received to vary the conditions of the approved application 21/00187/FUL, at Phillips Park, Salters Lane, Broxton, following representations from residents the Parish Council objected to this application and at the time of writing a decision is still awaited.

All planning applications received are listed on our Planning Register which is published with our meeting agendas, we also post information relating to all applications we are notified on our Facebook page.

The Parish Council does not decide planning applications and encourages residents and interested parties to submit their own comments to Cheshire West & Chester Council.





## Parish Council Footpath Report—May 2023

The past few years have shown us how important access to the natural environment is in helping to raise our spirits and well-being. The Council has recognised this in highlighting the importance of the 40 or so Public Rights of Way (PROW) that criss-cross the 3 parishes of Broxton, Duckington and Harthill. These parish paths are for everyone to enjoy, offering a precious resource allowing us to experience and appreciate the beautiful landscape we have on our doorstep.



Despite the challenges of the last few years, the Council remains committed to improving access to the walks and has been considering the feasibility of highlighting a number of designated routes linked to the parish for all to enjoy. In particular, following a suggestion put forward at a Council open evening, work has been ongoing to identify potential routes. To date, having completed preliminary surveys, further investigations are being undertaken to establish necessary permissions and remedial work along the routes in order to ensure they can be enjoyed safely. There is much still to do but it is work in progress. As we know we can only take things a step at a time and occasionally have to take a step backwards in order to make progress. This is literally true of this project.

## Fire Engine House

Have you ever spotted this building on Old Coach Road on the right when driving towards the Nantwich Road (A534)? You would be forgiven for thinking it was an old garage or something similar. In fact this building has an interesting history and it owned by Broxton & District Parish Council. It is the **Old Broxton Fire Engine House** which was built in 1895 by the then newly formed Broxton Parish Council.



It was a used to house a horse drawn fire engine. The Fire Engine was ordered from Tilley & Company in

1831 and had previously been stored at the Broxton Inn (now the Edgerton Arms) and would have been similar to that pictured.



The fire engine was only use occasionally mainly for farm fires. There does not seem to have been any regular firemen and it might have been that those who spotted a fire had to fetch the engine and operate it themselves as well as making payment for its use.

In 1932 Broxton Parish Council decided to dispose of the Fire Engine and it is understood it was sold to the Bolesworth Estate and the Fire Engine House rented out for use, but later came back into the Parish Council's ownership.

## <sup>6</sup> CW&C Ward Councillor Mike Jones Report



The main item of interest for the Parish is the proposal that the Sandstone Ridge becomes an official Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (ANOB). The Sandstone Ridge Trust has a leading role alongside CW&C, Cheshire East and Natural England in the process which could take three years. Importantly there will be a consultation process to enable residents to understand what this means to them and ask questions. It is subject to Minister agreement at the end of the process.

I have worked with the community group to implement initiatives to reduce speeds along the roads and improve safety of the junctions especially on the A41 and A534. This has had some successes but the main items remain outstanding due to the resistance of the Highways Dept of CWaC. This is work in progress and I hope we will see more improvements implemented in the future.

The Tattenhall Ward is a very large area from Hatton Heath (near the Black Dog pub on the A41) to Duckington and across to Tilstone Fearnall on the A51 and includes Beeston, Tiverton, Hargrave, Huxley, Milton Green, Handley and Broxton, in addition to Tattenhall itself. If you need to contact me to raise an issue or discuss a concern, please give me a call on 07817-683285 or an email to [mike.jones@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:mike.jones@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

### Meeting Dates 2023-2024

Monday 31st July 2023

Monday 29th January 2024

Monday 25th September 2023

Monday 25th March 2024

Monday 27th November 2023

Monday 20th May 2024

Meetings are normally held from 7.30pm at Brown Knowl Methodist Church, agendas are published a minimum of 3 clear days before the meetings on notice board at Brown Knowl, Duckington and Harthill, on our website, and Facebook page.

## Meet your NEW Parish Council....

### Representing Broxton Parish

**Derek Bell**

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**Simon Poole**

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**Carol Shadbolt**

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Broxton, Chester CH3 9LB

**Steve Wild**

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### Representing Duckington Parish

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**Kathryn Borman**

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**David Williams**

**Phone:** 07846 504 951

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### Representing Harthill Parish

**Mark Henshall**

**Phone:** 0771112992

**Email:** [markhenshall@iteluk.com](mailto:markhenshall@iteluk.com)

For more information contact the Acting Clerk:

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