

BATHEASTON PARISH COUNCIL

# BATHEASTON VILLAGE WINTER BULLETIN

Bulletin 33 - Winter News and Parish Council Update December 2014

Batheaston Parish Council disclaims responsibility for comments and opinions expressed by others in this Bulletin



## **THIS BULLETIN**

*THINK TANK*

*NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE*

*VILLAGE HALL*

*COLERNE AIRFIELD 101 HOUSES REDEVELOPMENT*

*PUBLIC TOILETS*

*CHRISTMAS SERVICES*



## CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT (Cllr Vito Pecchia)

### In remembrance of David Lavington

In sadness we record that David passed away on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September. He was born in Bathford, was a successful business man, but never forgot his roots nor lost his passion to serve his community. He was a Batheaston Parish Councillor for over 20 years and in 2002 was elected Chairman of the Parish Council, a position he held for 9 years. He inspired many to serve the community and under his stewardship many important initiatives were implemented :-

<b>Communication</b>	Developing a regular Bulletin (This issue is No 33), Welcome Pack and Website;
<b>Safety</b>	20mph limits introduced with speed limitators, with Bannerdown Road the last phase of this programme soon to be completed;
<b>Services</b>	Arranging a service agreement with BANES for maintaining the Gardens and the Toilets block, resulting in considerable savings to council tax payers and financial benefit to Batheaston residents ;
<b>Twinning</b>	The signatory to the formal papers both formalising the twinning of Batheaston with the French village of Oudon.
<b>Park &amp; Ride</b>	Led the local Parish Councils in fighting the proposed development, plus producing an alternative P&R on Charmy Down disused airfield.
<b>Valley Parishes Alliance (VPA)</b>	Founder member of this alliance of 9 Parish Councils (including Wiltshire) to present a united voice to B&NES and Wiltshire Council.
<b>Vision Plan</b>	Initiated the Vision Plan programme, its aspirations published in 2009;
<b>Youth</b>	Always interested in supporting the young people of our village Scouts, School and Youth club. Instrumental in having the youth shelter installed in the Car Park.
<b>"Older" Youth</b>	Regular attendee at the Wednesday Coffee mornings.
<b>Entertainment</b>	A founder member of "Encore", the highly prized and Award winning theatre group. Many residents have featured in their shows.

The memorial service, held on the 10<sup>th</sup> October, was very well attended with tributes from his Family, the Labour Party and the Parish Council. David will be remembered with affection by all who got to know him.

**Our condolences are offered to his family and close friends.**

Parish Council business covers many issues which cannot always be covered in the seasonal bulletins. To improve communications the PC now issues monthly newsletter which can be accessed by subscribers. To register to receive the news letter please visit the council website [www.batheaston.org](http://www.batheaston.org). In addition to conducting committee business the Parish Council (PC) attends participating with other agencies and organisations, to keep abreast of and offer views on matters that affect Batheaston.

**ALCA (Avon Local Council's Association):** The PC is a member of ALCA which is a member of NALC (National Association of Councils). The ALCA AGM was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October and notes of this meeting can be viewed on the PC website. Of note was the statement by

K Browse (NALC chairman) that it is likely that more powers will be devolved to Parish and Town Council. While on the face of it this sounds all very promising and 'democratic', such devolution is of little consequence if commensurate funding and access to expertise is not made available to realise the potential of it.

#### **Parish Council Headline Achievements and Work in Progress 2014 – 2015**

- 1 Luminescent Discs installed on the Bridge Crossing
- 2 Tarmac surface laid down on Footpath connecting West View Road with London Road East.
- 3 Street Lights replaced on Bannerdown road.
- 4 Additional Street Light installed on Muddy Lane – near to Scout Hut.
- 5 Post Office will now be resited in the George & Dragon – so maintaining this essential service.
- 6 Two oak benches installed – at Village Green outside St Johns Church and besides the Bridge in the Car Park
- 7 Firm commitment from B&NES that the Pavement in front of the Shops will be improved by the contractor – Skansa – which is just completing the repairs required at the Kelston land-slip. Batheaston is next in January/February 2015.
- 8 A Parish council Newsletter developed for issue by email and a September and October posted. Separate copies distributed to shops/Medical centre.
- 9 A "Think Tank" has circulated throughout the Village to glean resident's Likes/Dislikes, and seek suggestions for improvements. **Over 2000 suggestions are being reviewed as the initial stages of a Neighbourhood Plan – with several residents participating.**
- 10 On May 7th elections will be held for Parish councillors, district councillors & Parliamentary Members. **The Youth Club is reserved as the Polling station.**

**Valley Parishes Alliance (VPA):** Is an east of Bath cross county alliance of parishes created to address common interests. Recently it has focused on the provision of the 'Bath Transport Strategy' which was advertised in the Chronicle during June (*did anyone see it*), B&NES passing this off as 'consultation' with a closing date of the 25<sup>th</sup> of July. The Transport Strategy, unbeknown to us, 'surreptitiously' included a commissioned 'Halcrow Report' on the East of Bath Park and ride. Of concern in this report was the re-introduction of the east of Mill Lane Bathampton Meadows scheme, much favoured by officers and the previous B&NES administration, as the yardstick of affordability against which other options were measured.

The current B&NES administration is in favour of a Park and Rail scheme, involving the reopening of Bathampton Halt linked to a 3 storey car park, heavily screened by an earth bund and dense landscaping, accessed off the Batheaston by pass via tunnels under the railway line. The PC has never had sight of the design details of such a scheme, its cost and proposed funding, nor wider transport implications to Batheaston or the east of Bath. Until better information is divulged, the PC has made clear to BANES it reserves its position and for the time being remains neutral neither for nor against.

**Improving access into to Bath from the East:** On the 9<sup>th</sup> of October B&NES facilitated a workshop, conducted by its consultants, Mott Macdonald, seemingly seeking the view of communities in Bath and those living east of Bath on the principal access issues and potential solutions that might merit consideration. Interestingly no representative was invited from Kensington, Lambridge or Larkhall. Attendees predominantly argued it was time to now do something about improving access into and out of Bath. While there was general support for this it was also accepted that appropriate weight should also be given to environmental costs and impact. An east of Bath Park and Ride was seen as an essential element in any prospective solution with a Park and Rail, if it could be afforded and done having a measure of support. A traditional Park and ride also appeared to receive support subject to its location and siting being acceptable on environmental and transport feasibility grounds.

The workshop also highlighted the need to resolve the adverse impact of the north/south HGV traffic on the A46/A36 designated strategic route but also, perhaps more importantly, the issue of local east/west Bath traffic and its impact on traffic congestion in general and on Mill Road (Bathampton toll bridge road) referred to as the existing A46/A36 link.

**Wednesday coffee mornings:** The parish Council has agreed to contribute to the cost of a wall-mounted boiler to help these mornings to continue in the Rhymes pavilion

**Standing Orders:** The tedious task has been started to re-examine these Orders in the light of new recommendations from the National Association of Local Councils and our own councillors.

**Public Toilets:** Following the meeting with senior B&NES officers from property and estates, as reported in Bulletin 32, we are still awaiting proposed terms for the potential transfer of the public toilets to the Parish Council. B&NES closed our toilets in July. The cost to the village of taking them over is prohibitive. On the other hand the opening of the footbridge and consequential increase in people visiting the car park site shows both an increased need for toilets in that area and several possible opportunities for developing the B&NES land in the vicinity in the interests of the community. There is no longer a short term need to provide for a post office but the land could provide a farmer's market or other retail premises, an indoor sports hall, a centre for river recreational activities such as fishing or boating. If we cannot find a community use for the land, B&NES has warned, as with other public WC sites that have been closed, arrangements would be sought with third parties, such as builders or the like, for its use as a stock yard or similar.

**New Village Hall:** At the 30<sup>th</sup> of September Council meeting a petition was presented on behalf of Batheaston New Village Hall (BNVH) stating;

*"We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge Batheaston Parish Council to represent the wider community and electorate of our Village in supporting the highly consulted and repeatedly obstructed plans for the Batheaston New Village Hall (BNVH)"*

The petition had 330 signatures of which 156 had Batheaston addresses. For clarity the position of Batheaston Parish Council, as representative of the interests of all 2735 parishioners who live in the village and its electorate, supports a new village hall with dedicated car parking; it does not accept the reported supposed view by BANES planners that a new village hall should not have dedicated parking.

At the same Parish Council meeting a presentation was made by WBP planning consultant acting for the Shared Vision Group representing residents in the School Lane area. The consultant advised that following consultation with the community, Planning, Highways and the Diocese a planning application was due to be submitted during October. No details of the building design were presented. Orally it was stated the scheme would reflect the size of the existing building, have an energy efficient envelope with modern services suitable to cater for traditional village activities, would not endanger protected trees and have dedicated car parking. As and when further information is available this will be publicised through council minutes and our web site [www.batheaston.org](http://www.batheaston.org)

Bulletin 32 noted that the second approved planning application by the BNVH, was subject to a High Court hearing to determine if there was a case to answer on the lawfulness of the planning approval granted by B&NES. As BNVH has made known that the approval is subject to a full judicial review (JR) the conclusion must be the High Court judged there were sufficient grounds to answer. The PC has sought clarification from B&NES on the status of the JR with no great results, other than it being confirmed a JR is/was to occur in the Autumn, there were grounds for B&NES to answer as allegedly it acted beyond its legal powers (*ultra vires*) and was 'irrational' in its consideration and determination of the application. To minimise its costs and embarrassment, B&NES is thought likely to seek an out of court agreement, so it can present the unlawful determination and grant of approval as a mere legal technicality.

### JUDICIAL REVIEW (JR) RESULT

As we go to print our Clerk has learnt B&NES, on the day the JR was to take place, agreed not to defend the challenge to the granting of the second BNVH planning permission, on legal and irrationality grounds. B&NES accepted the approval was wrongly granted by the LPA and consequently the court has ruled it quashed.

All tiers of Local Authorities have a duty to safeguard public interest it is a sad indictment of Bath Planning Services, who are charged with looking after the interest of a UNESCO world heritage city, yet the law has found it wanting on two consecutive occasions on the same application. It is sad also for the planning officer, she has been exposed to harsh scrutiny and should have deserved better guidance from her Divisional Director and B&NES legal advisors.

There is little consolation to be had from such a ruling for us too. With the alternative planning approval being sought by the Shared Vision Group and another application likely by the BNVH, the village will face yet more rancour. Surely the time has come to set aside differences, revise opinions and agree a scheme we can all support, afford and can be delivered sooner rather than later. Trustees and Neighbours seem to agree a new building is needed, there is no rational reason why planners should refuse parking, the Diocese is happy to release land, our District Councillors will robustly present our case now ought to be the time for reconciliation and agreement on a joint proposal the planners can legally approve.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN COMMITTEE (Cllr P. Fear)

**The Think Tank and the Neighbourhood Plan:** During August and September, when the Think Tank was 'open for business', 266 residents contributed over 2200 comments. Since then, a team of volunteers have been typing up the hand written forms and, comment by comment, putting them into categories to make the data easier to review. This exercise is the first step of the project to create a Neighbourhood Plan for Batheaston and along the way, it is hoped that more residents will become involved so that the project will have a firm footing within the community.

On the positive side, many residents have stated that they value the rural setting of Batheaston and the green spaces around us, while also appreciating the proximity to Bath and all that the City has to offer. Our School and Medical Centre receive many positive comments as do many local shops and services. Causing concern are the lack of parking, traffic, the Village Hall, the closure of the toilet block, the pavement in front of the shops and the Parish Council! Many suggestions have been made which underline a strong desire to make improvements wherever possible.

Back in 2009, a 72 x question survey was completed by 60% of Batheaston residents and from the results, the 'Vision Plan' was created, (available from [www.batheaston.org](http://www.batheaston.org)). It is quite probable that opinions expressed in 2009 are similar to those today and to ensure our Neighbourhood Plan has credibility and support, a similar, Village wide, exercise will need to be undertaken. The Vision Plan responses and processes will be an extremely useful aid to this project. Batheaston Parish Council introduced the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan back in the spring of 2013, this was made possible by the introduction of the Localism Bill. Bath and North East Somerset Council are very supportive of Parishes developing their own Neighbourhood Plans and have recently approved the Core Strategy which provides a framework for Neighbourhood Planning.

The Core Strategy is a hefty 187 pages long and the Batheaston Neighbourhood Planning Team will need to be familiar with its contents to ensure that our Neighbourhood Plan is compatible and will be approved by B&NES. According to the 'My Community Rights' website, 1200 communities are progressing Neighbourhood Plans. Support is available, either through advice or funding and we will be seeking that support and hopefully uncovering those in our own Community who can assist the Project Team in producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Batheaston. If you can offer that support or want



to be involved and have not made contact already, please email peterfear@batheaston.org or call 01225 858035.

### **PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (PEC Chair)**

During the past six months, B&NES has received twelve planning applications falling within the boundaries of Batheaston Parish. The PEC of Batheaston Parish Council considers these, and makes recommendations to B&NES in accordance with the provisions of the **Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan 2007**. The B&NES Local Plan 2007 regulates all aspects of planning development including: residential housing, retail and commercial, industrial, agricultural, community facilities, sport facilities etc. The Plan requires consideration of environmental assets such as the Green Belt, trees and woodlands, natural features etc. as well as the impact of proposed development on existing infrastructure such as, for example, transport, the natural environment, the historic environment and local economy, as well as the provisions of the Core Strategy.

All planning recommendations by Batheaston PEC are made in accordance with the Local Plan guidelines and during the period covered by this bulletin, all B&NES decisions received, have been in agreement with Batheaston PEC recommendations. Of the twelve applications received, the majority have been for alteration of residential buildings; two have been for new builds, one for tree works, one for change of use from retail to residential, one for the lifting of a condition of use and one, after personal submissions to the PEC by the applicant and interested neighbours, was withdrawn. The PEC also considered a proposed application for a major development in Colerne, which, although not within our remit, could impact on Batheaston Parish infrastructure. Batheaston Parish Council has made representations to B&NES and Wiltshire in respect of this. Applications considered by PEC in the last six months, the dates on which they were considered and the PEC's recommendation to B&NES planning department are:

#### **Planning Applications – (The Clerk)**

Since January there have been 35 Applications progressed by the Planning & Environment

<b>1<sup>st</sup> July 2014</b>			
14/02337/FUL	5 Avondale Place	2 x New cottages	Support & Approved
<b>29<sup>th</sup> July 2014</b>			
14/02752/FUL	"Fosseway", Fosse Lane	Dormer extension	Withdrawn
14/03209/FUL	"Charmydown House"	Enclose Porch	Support & Approved
14.03074/LBA	"Sunnymead House"	Replace windows	Support & Approved
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> September 2014</b>			
14/03562/FUL	51 Eden Park Drive	Demolish & Replace	Support & Approved
14/03393/FUL	7 Eagle Road	Decking & new roof	Support & Approved
14/038/53/TCA	292 High Street	Tree works	Support & Approved
<b>7<sup>th</sup> October 2014</b>			
14/0385/CL:EU	"Tynings", Fosse Lne	Delete "Farming"	Support/Condition
14/04152/LBA	1 Coronation Cottages	Kitchen improvements	Support
14/04095/FUL	11 Victoria Gardens	Erect rear/side extens	Support
<b>4<sup>th</sup> November 2014</b>			
14/04520/FUL	286 High Street	Shop to be residential	Support subject to Cond

**HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE (Clerk)**

**COLERNE AIRFIELD REDEVELOPMENT** Planning Application 14/09302/OUT: Wiltshire Council (WC) is currently considering a planning application for 101 houses plus business uses on the hangars site of the airfield. It is likely the application will be favourably determined by WC planners supported by its highway officers. The impact of this development will have far reaching impact on surrounding roads, environmental conditions, pollution and not least the well being of property and health of residents that live next to the access roads that will serve the current and potential future proposals. Our Batheaston residents on Bannerdown Road and London Road will be subject to the greatest impact, if this development proceeds. Yet, because of the county boundary, our residents are denied the opportunity to have a say or any weight given to their views. The Parish Council Highway Footpath and Lighting Committee (HFL) with the help and support of Councillors M. Veal and T. Gazzard is actively working to convince B&NES and WC officers that Batheaston residents should be meaningfully consulted. We consider, if approval is to be granted, it should be subject to the provision of funding to implement an adequate offsite road infrastructure to ensure adequate access to a) North to the A420, b) East to the A4 and c) South through Batheaston so that property, amenity and the well being of residents living on those routes is not eroded by the increased traffic and air pollution generated by this proposed and further development.

The redevelopment of Colerne Airfield land is a unique opportunity to make a contribution to housing and economic need, but surely this should be done in a planned and comprehensive manner with a view to ensuring adequate road and service infrastructure is in place, provided by the developer and not at the expense of local communities and the tax payer. The planning process, through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) provides exactly for this. Wiltshire Council should resist this tactical practice by the developer to obtain advance outline permission and evade their responsibilities to provide adequate access and safeguard the interest of third parties. If you have a view the agents for the planning application are:-

**Hunter Page Planning, 18 High St, Cheltenham. Tel 01242 230066; and the planning officer is, Matthew Pearson in Chippenham planning office :- tel. 01249 706444**

**IF YOU HAVE A VIEW THAT WILTSHIRE COUNCIL SHOULD BE AWARE OF THEN WRITE TO THEM AND ALSO WRITE TO OUR COUNCILLORS AND B&NES**

**First Bus introduces new 'Bath Outer' bus zone:** The cost of travel for many People travelling by bus within 12 miles of Bath city centre, will be cut by cheaper bus fares from Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November as First West of England introduces a new range of Bath Outer Zone tickets. A public transport map shows a new Bath outer zone with the Bath City zone being renamed the Bath Inner zone.

The initiative, which is set to benefit people living in Bradford-on-Avon, Chippenham, Frome, Melksham, Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Peasedown St John, Radstock and

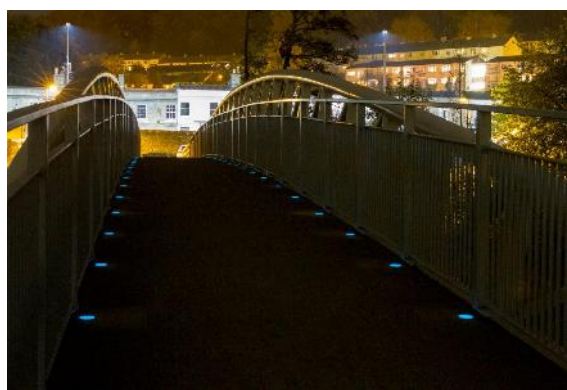


Trowbridge, follows the creation of new Bath Outer zone, covering an area approximately 12 miles in all directions from Bath City centre. It heralds good news for passengers.

Since the changes to the fare structure was made in July, people travelling into and around Bath from the outlying towns and villages have had the option to buy either a Bristol Outer Zone ticket (offering unlimited travel 12 miles from Bristol Bus Station: a ticket most suited for those wishing to travel from the centre of Bristol to Bath Bus station) or a First West of England zone ticket (offering unlimited travel across the West of England, including all of Bath, Bristol, Weston-super-Mare and Wells). The Company has since recognised though that there is scope for a ticket covering travel within a commutable distance from Bath, which would appeal to those people living and travelling within a 12 mile radius of the city.

From 2 November bus users will be able to buy day, week, month, year and 10 journey tickets for travel in the Bath Outer Zone. This has the potential to cut the cost of travel for many. The new tickets will offer unlimited travel in Bath city centre and for travel on First buses within approximately 12 miles of Bath Bus Station. People who travel infrequently will also be able to save money: they will have the option to buy First Day Bath Outer zone tickets, which offer unlimited travel for one day in and around Bath, or with 10 Journeys Bath Outer zone tickets - which will offer 10 single journeys valid for use within three months where people making journeys of between three and 12 miles could save up to £21 compared to the cost of buying 10 individual single tickets. For more information visit [www.firstgroup.com/westofengland](http://www.firstgroup.com/westofengland) . For more information about First West of England, contact Karen Duffett, PR Manager, First on 0117 373 6470. Email: [Karen.duffett@firstgroup.com](mailto:Karen.duffett@firstgroup.com)

**Batheaston Bridge:** Batheaston Parish Council was approached by a small, local business with an offer too good to refuse. Global Resins are based in Corsham and are manufacturers of resin products for various applications. One of their latest innovations within their safety range utilises zero-energy, self illuminating lighting technology. They had manufactured round, luminescent discs which they offered to provide and install



free of charge, at no cost to the B&NES tax payer. By day the discs absorb UV energy then release their light through the hours of darkness. Their purpose is not just aesthetic but to provide a guide to paths and areas where there is little or no light.



## REPORT FROM THE PARISH CLERK

**Batheaston Gardens:** Some 8 years ago the BPC complained, somewhat bitterly, that the B&NES Parks Department were not looking after the Gardens. There were many weeds, no new plantings, hedges overgrown etc. The B&NES Parks Department which had sub-contracted the maintenance, eventually agreed with the BPC and offered to pay a nominal monthly amount if the BPC would take over the care and maintenance. The village is fortunate that Mr Michael Hunt



accepted a monthly contract with the BPC – the monies not quite being covered by B&NES BUT there is no doubt at all that Michael has kept a very professional hands-on and all visitors and residents have been very complimentary. BUT - in another cost-saving exercise – the B&NES Parks Department have cancelled the contract as of the 30<sup>th</sup> June. B&NES have said there will be NO degradation in the look and facilities of the Gardens. The PC will monitor matters closely to ensure this remain so.

**Garden Overgrowths:** This Summer has been good growing weather for brambles, weeds etc. which have particularly thrived. Hedges, bushes and foliage have also flourished and there is now an excess of garden overgrowth, in many cases, onto our pavements. This overgrowth, especially when wet, pushes pedestrians out into the roadway and can be dangerous if thorny plants are involved. Would householders please, please cut back any foliage, which might obstruct the pathways. The Parish Council can arrange to cut it back for you - at a cost - but might cut back more than you wish. We ask - "please be aware of pedestrians outside your home".

### A36 MAJOR ROAD WORKS MARCH TO MAY 2015

The Highway Agency (HA) is due to announce major road improvements on the A36 which will involve closure lasting up to 3 months of the section between Bathampton to Claverton/Dundas geo-stabilisation works consisting of sheet piling to create an underground retaining wall to arrest ground slippage. It is said this will not be a permanent solution to problems but will last 10 to 15 years. Signage arrangements will be put in place by the HA to divert North South HGV traffic via the A350.

Other works covering improvements to drainage and road surface will also form part of this programme. When formal details are made available they will be published on our website and through the council newsletter.



## LOCAL INTEREST, NEWS AND EVENTS

**Batheaston Commons; From the Iron Age to B-Lines! - (Rob Kendall):** Batheaston is extremely fortunate to have not just one but two commons! The commons, Little Solsbury Hill (part owned by The National Trust) and Bannerdown, have been managed by The Batheaston Freeholders Association since 1719... that's nearly 300 years! What's more, our Freeholders Association was one of the first in the UK so thanks to their innovation and continued guardianship the commons are still accessible by the common man... that's you and me! Today, The Freeholders are alive and well (not the originals!) and, in the spirit of our forebears, we are now managing the commons under a Higher Level Stewardship agreement with Natural England. Both commons are "open-access" which means you are allowed to walk freely across them, this is in addition to the public footpaths and a bridleway on Bannerdown. The Freeholders objective is to ensure the commons provide continued access and enjoyment for everyone and for wildlife.



Our commons are very special places and have a long history of utilisation by man. On Bannerdown 50 years ago there were almost **no trees** due to hundreds of years of grazing by livestock and quarrying for stone, much of which was used to build houses in Batheaston. The history of Little Solsbury Hill goes back nearly three thousand years to the Iron Age, those "Iron-Agers" obviously appreciated **fantastic views!** (see photo; view of Bath from Little Solsbury Hill). But despite a history of exploitation by man the commons have never been intensively farmed and there are no traces of herbicides, pesticides or other chemicals which means they are a haven for wildlife and people!



The commons are officially classified as unimproved calcareous (limestone) grassland and have been credited with containing some very special meadow flowers e.g. **four types of orchid**. However, many of the flowers thrive only in nutrient poor alkaline soil which is why you will see cattle grazing the commons for part of the year. The science here is that as plants grow they draw nutrients from the soil, the cattle graze the plants and convert those nutrients into body mass, net result; the nutrients in the soil are reduced... simple! But there's more. Grazing cattle help to reduce the invasive

scrub and they produce “cow-pats” which support a fascinating eco-system all of their own! So, with help from the cattle, we reduce the scrub and get improved flower meadows with lots of bugs supporting an equally special variety of butterflies, moths, mammals, birds and bats. Amazing or what!

During the summer we became involved with a couple of exciting national projects; **Magnificent Meadows** is working to restore and improve wildlife-rich grasslands by ensuring they are managed sympathetically as havens for wild flowers (more info at [www.plantlife.org.uk/wild\\_plants/work](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/wild_plants/work)). **B-lines** is creating a network wildlife corridors linking wildflower-rich meadows (more info at [www.buglife.org.uk/campaigns-and-our-work](http://www.buglife.org.uk/campaigns-and-our-work)). Through our association with these projects we are receiving expert advice and support in our work and we hope that our commons will become “strategic hubs” with wildlife corridors radiating out from both hills. It has also an opportunity for us to help others; Avon Wildlife Trust came to Bannerdown in July to harvest some Yellow Rattle seed (see photo) which were taken to receptor sites at Friary Court near Freshford and Cuckoo Corner near Newton St Loe. This is brilliant stuff. We should be really proud of our commons!

Grazing cattle are great but we can't expect them do all the work! Without some input from us humans the commons will be over-run with impenetrable scrub and we will lose the wild flowers and wildlife they support. For short periods during October and November we have contractors working on both commons to clear some “heavy duty” scrub and improve our wildlife corridors e.g. between the Bannerdown “Butterfly Bank” and top meadow (sorry about the mud – please take care). Throughout the year we also organise small work parties to complete a variety land management tasks. We are supported by some brilliant organisations such as Avon Wildlife Trust, The National Trust, The Cotswold Volunteer Wardens and Community Payback teams. But there is always more to be done! So, if you can spare **2 or 3 hours occasionally** to help with our land management work (no experience necessary) **we would love to hear from you today!** We will then contact you when we are organising future work parties. You can contact us via the web site [www.batheastoncommons.co.uk](http://www.batheastoncommons.co.uk) or you can e-mail me on [rk@batheastoncommons.co.uk](mailto:rk@batheastoncommons.co.uk) or phone me on 07925 786821. The commons are wonderful places to explore, escape the hassle of modern life and enjoy some fabulous views. We hope you can find the time to visit.

**Rob Kendall is Assistant Secretary to Batheaston Freeholders Association**  
*(Guardians of the Batheaston common lands since 1719)*

**A New Memorial Garden for St John's Churchyard – (Rev Rathbone):** We would like to create a reflective space, in effect a garden of remembrance, for families in the village to sit and remember loved ones. The project comprises a carefully-designed memorial wall which will, in due course, have plaques attached to it and will enclose a landscaped open “garden” space in which ashes can be buried. Burial of ashes in the churchyard is open to all residents of Batheaston and is in no way restricted to members of a particular faith community, and it is important to our vision that the facility will be available for those of all faiths and none.

The scheme is best described in our architect's specification: "In this scheme the garden of remembrance is embraced by two "arms" – one being a stone wall which rises from ground to reach for the heavens, the other a low yew hedge which continues a thread of life rising up the hillside. Each limb of the scheme directs a route into and from the garden and would loosely enclose an area of the churchyard where the burial of ashes would take place.

A specimen tree sits as a focal point to the middle of the garden, together with a location for placing flowers. A pair of benches faces the centre offering a suitable dwelling place from which to reflect and enjoy the peaceful garden. Both the hedge and the wall will curve, and together with some soft landscaping features will create a quiet, reflective and sheltered space for people to sit and think. We are hoping that the soft landscaping and planting will be carried out by volunteers who will also provide plants, perhaps in memory of loved ones. The project will provide all-year-round accessible space for people to sit and reflect as they wish.

The project is needed as we try to find an innovative way to address a need which has been identified amongst the population of the village, more specifically among those people who have recently been bereaved of a close relative or friend.

We now recognize this need through speaking with bereaved people throughout the community, and it is important to note that this experience is in no way limited to those who use the church itself. People find comfort in having their loved ones close at hand. It surprises people to learn how much the



churchyard is used, as people visit very regularly to tend graves. The completion of this project will extend our ability to offer space for burial of ashes, and also enable future generations to visit a tranquil space with a plaque recording the name of the person who is in their thoughts.

Further, at the moment, there are tensions within this village community, over several subjects, between families who have lived here for generations and those who have arrived more recently. At the moment, the situation regarding memorials can exacerbate this divide, because long-established families tend to have family graves which are still open for use, while there are very few spaces for burial of ashes or memorials of any kind for more recent arrivals. The sharing of memories of this kind is important for the cohesion of the village community and there is great local interest in the churchyard as a focus for this. In a rapidly-changing age, people want to know that in due course they can join their ancestors here.

We hope the community will value this project, which is generously funded both by the Big Lottery Fund and by Batheaston Parish Council. We have to thank the Parish Council in particular for its help. Without this, we would not be able to proceed, but we do still need to raise a further £11,000 to cover the estimated cost of £25,000, and a fundraising programme is in progress. If you would like to make an individual donation, which can be gift-aided, please contact me on 01225 858677, or email [isobel.rathbone@lmh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:isobel.rathbone@lmh.ox.ac.uk).

**Your contribution will be valued.**

**BLA update November 2014** (*R. Mimmack*): As many readers will know Batheaston Leisure Association (BLA) is a small Charity which works with the Parish Council to look after the sport and

recreation facilities in the village. These include the Rhymes Pavilion, Football Field, Floodlit Multi Sports Court and the Children's Playground.

The Football Field is now back in use as the home of Batheaston FC. It is hoped that next season (2015/16) it will be possible to accommodate at least one youth team (boys or girls) as well as the men's team. If anyone in the village is interested in organising a team please get in touch with Rob Mimmack (859708) to discuss your ideas.

The Multi Sports Court has new goals and is about to have its pitch markings renewed and can be used for 5-a-side Football, Netball or Tennis. Anyone interested in hiring the Court for any of these sports either as a club or for one off games should ring Rob on 859708 or Greg on 859023.

The Rhymes Pavilion has recently been refurbished with a new carpet in the hall and is available for hire for meetings, activities, children's parties etc. To make a reservation ring Greg on 859023

### Batheaston Baby & Toddler Group

Welcome to the Batheaston Baby & Toddler Group. This is a volunteer Organisation run by Mums. A place for local parents, carers, Pre-school children and babies to socialise. All are welcome. Just turn up and help yourselves to tea, coffee and biscuits.

There is a craft table, snack time, story-telling and singing. We just ask For a small donation of £1 per adult and 60p per child to help towards the cost of the Hall, snacks and craft materials.

The Group is open every Tuesday (term-time only)

From 9.30 – 11.30 at the Church Hall, School Lane, Batheaston.

Open: 9.30; Craft Table 9.30 to 10.45; Snack time 10.30; Tidy up 11.00; Sing or story 11.15; Close 11.30

Any help tidying up toys or washing cups is always appreciated.

Please let us know if you would like to get involved with the Group.

**Batheaston Music Festival 2015 (C Bond):** Some Batheaston residents may remember that, back in June 2006, a French style *Fete de la Musique* music festival happened in Batheaston. The festival focussed on delivering music 'for the people, by the people' and was successful in engaging a large number, both as participants and spectators, at musical performances all over the village. In the months running up to the festival, choir and vocal coaching workshops were held for those who were keen to develop their skills and confidence to perform over the weekend. The final festival extravaganza with hog roast on the Sunday afternoon and evening was attended by hundreds of Batheaston residents alongside visitors from our twin village of Oudon in France.

The weekend in 2006 showcased just some of the local talent we are lucky to have in the village and there is now growing enthusiasm for the idea of running another *Fete de la Musique* style music festival next year. Funding is currently being sought from various sources to support a considerably more extensive programme of performing arts activities and events in 2015. A broader series of capacity building music, singing, dancing, performance and vocal workshops and classes, involving residents of all ages, is also envisaged leading up to the festival weekend in July 10-12. As Batheaston also celebrates the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being twinned with Oudon in 2015 it is anticipated that once again the Twinning Association will be closely involved with the festival and a number of our French friends are expected to come across in July to join in with the festivities. If this sounds like something that would be of interest to you, whether you are a musician, singer, performer, teacher, venue owner or business who may be able offer support or sponsorship then please feed your thoughts and ideas to festival organiser Carole Bond on [carolebond191@gmail.com](mailto:carolebond191@gmail.com) or call 858949.

### **Clog Dancing – (Helen Grist)**

Mr Wilkins' Shilling is Bath's only female North West Morris side, promoting the tradition of clog dances originating from the mills of Lancashire and Cheshire. Thursday evenings is where you'll find us practicing at the Batheaston Methodist Church Hall.

Incidentally our name is taken from a certain Mr Charles Wilkins who owned a mill in Twerton and it was said that he would deduct a shilling from his female workers should they be found drinking in the local ale houses.

Ladies interested, or curious, in this form of Morris dancing are very welcome to come along. Practice starts at 8 pm and we aim to be finished by 10 pm. Any musicians (male and female) are also welcome. Incidentally we will holding a New Members Evening on Thursday 15 January 2015



For further information, with our latest blogs and photos, please visit our website [mrwilkinsshilling.org.uk](http://mrwilkinsshilling.org.uk) or contact our secretary Helen Grist on 0117 9862918

### PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS – December 2014

Vito Pecchia	Chairman	104 Northend	BA1 7HA	852226	
Kevin Hawkins		5 Barnfield Way	BA1 7PW	858389	
Judith Beresford-Smith		The Chase, 30 High Bannerdown	BA1 7JZ	859270	
Pam Blanking		'Summerhill', 45 Morris Lane	BA1 7PS	858728	
Lawrence Brass	Chair	PEC	298, High Street	BA1 7RA	852222
Pam Burcombe		"Rodney Farm" Steway Lane	BA1 8EH	858675	
Vicky Drew		197 Catherine way	BA1 7PB	284335	
Kathryn Eardley		106 Northend	BA1 7HA	859055	
Peter Fear	Vice-Chair,	"Thorncombe" Kyrle Gardens	BA1 7RE	858035	
Sydney Fremantle	Chair	GPC	'Hill Lodge' Northend	BA1 8EN	852847
Jeremy Heffer	Chair	HFL	"Court View", Solsbury Court	BA1 7HB	852662
Margaret Johns		3 Catherine Way	BA1 7NY	859515	
George Riley		8 Northend	BA1 7EN	858915	
Michael Tabb		"Wilmslow", Bannerdown Road	BA1 7ND	859102	
Victoria Trenchard		203 London Road East	BA1 7NB	852155	
Michael Corbett	Co-optee		Browhill lodge, Croxham Orchard	BA1 7NQ	850913
Steven Cast	Co-optee		292 High Street	BA1 7RA	852762
David Robins	Co-optee		31 The Empire	BA2 4FD	447921
Mike Townley	Clerk		Bairlrig 35 Albert Rd Trowbridge	BA14 7LP	400041
T Gazzard	District Councillor		2, Miller Walk, Bathampton, Bath,	BA2 6TJ	07583273738
Martin Veal	District Councillor		'Victory Gdns' Bannerdown Drive	BA1 7JW	858285
Geoff Ward	District Councillor		"Elmhurst" Upper Swainswick	BA1 8BR	858651

### COMMITTEES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

<b>GPC General Purposes Committee</b>	Considers all matters of policy legal matters, finance and matters not covered by other Committees.
<b>HFL Highways, Footpaths, &amp; Lighting Committee</b>	Improvements to roads, lanes and footpaths. Identifies Unitary Authority responsibility for defects and repairs. Responsible for cleaning pavements and part-time Handymen.
<b>PEC Planning &amp; Environment Committee</b>	Delegated authority to respond on behalf of the Parish Council, on all planning applications. Matters relating to the environment and conservation and Batheaston Gardens.
<b>NPC Neighbourhood Plan Committee</b>	Progress The Neighbourhood Plan and Placemaking

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN BATHEASTON

### Sunday December 7 (second Sunday in Advent)

3 p m Church of the Good Shepherd Christingle Service  
(Batheaston Churches in Partnership)

### Tuesday 16 December

2 p m Carol Service at Avon Court

### Wednesday December 17

7 p m St Catherine's Carol Service

### Thursday December 18

2 30 p m Carol Service at Heather House

### Sunday December 21 (Fourth Sunday in Advent)

3 p m St John the Baptist Village Carol Service

### Christmas Eve

11 p m St John the Baptist First Eucharist of the Nativity, with carols

### **Christmas Day**

9 a m St Catherine's Family Eucharist for Christmas Day

10.00am Mass in Church of the Good Shepherd

10 30 a m St John the Baptist Family Eucharist for Christmas Day

See also the **Batheaston Churches in Partnership website**

[www.batheastonchurches.org](http://www.batheastonchurches.org)



### **Batheaston Neighbourhood Group (BNG)**

The BNG is a voluntary transport scheme run for the benefit of the residents of the Village. We transport elderly and infirm and some other residents to appointments at the Batheaston Medical Centre, RUH, opticians and other medical appointments.

We take the elderly shopping and for visits to the hairdressers, plus delivering prescriptions. During 2013/ 14 our volunteer drivers responded to 650 requests for transport. On the first Monday of each month a team of cooks provide lunch for 30 elderly residents in the Hall of the Good Shepherd Church in Northend

We are always looking for volunteer drivers. If you feel you might be able to help, please ring Janet Jackson on 01225 859843. If you require transport please ring: - **Ann 858485 Eileen 858433 Evelyn 852227 Imogen 810709**



*WISHING YOU ALL A*

**Merry**  
**Christmas**

FROM ALL PARISH COUNCILLORS AND THE COUNCIL CLERK