

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF
BROCKENHURST PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT BROCKENHURST VILLAGE HALL
ON WEDNESDAY 30TH APRIL 2025**

In attendance: Cllr Russell Horne (Chairman), Cllr Richard Wolstenholme (Vice Chairman), Cllr Alan Bartlett, Cllr Michael Croker, Cllr Michael Harris, Cllr John Korbey, Cllr Paul Pearse, Cllr John Wingham.

Heather Lawrence (Parish Clerk) and 57 members of the public

1. Welcome and Apologies – Cllr Horne welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Bowles, Cllr P Hollins

2. To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held 24th April 2024
The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman

3. Presentation of Young Person of Brockenhurst Award 2025

Ben and Nye Cummin were the joint winners in this category and were presented their award and certificates by Cllr Horne.

4. Report on local policing by PCSO Richard Williams
Apologies were given due to a change in work commitments

5. Chairmans' Report

Cllr Horne gave an overview of the council during the last year. See **Appendix one** for the full report.

6. Report from HCC Councillor – Cllr Keith Mans – Cllr Mans was unable to attend.

7. Reports from NFDC Councillor Cllr Adam Parker

Cllr Parker report included issues last year with the NFDC toilet block in Brookley Road car park. The tour of areas of the parish that suffer with flooding.

The date of the next litter pick on the 14th May, 6.30pm at St Saviours.

Acknowledgement was given that the NFDC car park is remaining opened during the daytime whilst the drainage work in Brookley Road is carried out.

Cllr Parker confirmed that he has a £1000 grant available.

8. Report on the Nalder Trust Charity

Cllr Wolstenholme read out the report, see **Appendix two** for the full report

9. Report from Brockenhurst Village Trust

Kevin Plummer (Chairman) read out the annual report – see **Appendix three** for the full report

10. Report from Friends of Brockenhurst

David Eley read out the report, see **Appendix four** for the full report

11. Report from Greener Brockenhurst

Milla Pearse read out the report, see **Appendix five** for the full report

12. Report from Doctors Surgery Patient Participation Group

Cllr Harris, as chairman of the Patient Participation Group explained what the group does and how it aims to support the local community. There is a possibility of a future public meeting.

13. Report from BVT One Communications

John Stanton gave a presentation on the aims, principles and future plans for this structured communication network for the village.

14. Report from Brockenhurst Resilience working group

Avery Sturgess gave a presentation on the work with the Parish Council to create a Community Resilience Framework for Brockenhurst.

15. Presentation of Contribution to Brockenhurst Life Award 2025

The winner in this category was Mrs Liz Wingham, who was unable to attend and the award and certificate was received by her husband.

Presentation of Brockenhurst Friend of the Year Award 2025

The winner in this category was Julie Wootten who was presented her award and certificate by Cllr Paul Pearse.

16. Questions/comments from Members of the Public

Questions were raised regarding the ongoing situation with Martin's Corner footbridge, the cycle racks for Brookley Road and footpath issues on the Weir.

A question was raised whether a representative from Forestry England could be invited to future Annual Parish Meetings.

17. Chairman's Closing Remarks

The Chairman thanked members of the public for attending, all those who had made presentations and Ann and Keith Nolan for providing refreshments.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm

Appendix one

Parish Council Chairmans Report – Cllr Russell Horne

At last year's Annual Parish Meeting those of you who were here were made aware that because of personal circumstances Pete Wales had to ask me to take over some of the tasks of chairman. As the year progressed, he decided that he needed to step down and I was appointed chairman by the councillors in November. My thanks to Pete for all he did whilst he was still Chairman and his support afterwards.

As a result, we had a vacancy on the council and we welcome Michael Croker back to join us.

We continue to have to spend much of our time going through the bureaucratic process involving local organisations which we have to carry out on projects which can involve residents, businesses and land owners. The bodies include not only HCC and NFNPA but the Environment Agency, Forestry England, Natural England, Network Rail, the Verderers and the Commoners Defense Association.

One of the ongoing issues which we face is the risk of flooding in the village. There have been some serious flooding events during the year, one of which did encroach on properties and it appears that we may have started to see the effects of climate change and this week we have seen this topic in the National headlines. Whilst there are several points in the village which can be affected by flooding, the major issue is the water pouring off the Forest into Brockenhurst. Whilst we have been liaising with all the various authorities, we cannot get their co-operation for a programme of work using cost effective methods to control the flow of water arriving into the village. Whilst this is a matter for several authorities, Natural England and Forestry England are the most difficult to convince of the urgency of the problem.

The Brookley Road work, which I am sure you have all seen has attracted numerous comments from the Businesses and Residents which I fully understand. This started during Covid when Hampshire County Council came to see us to discuss what was needed to satisfy Covid requirements in the shopping area of Brookley Road. Our approach was that the pavements need improving and this could be an opportunity of achieving this. After several discussions Hampshire County Council said that the Active Travel Scheme was the only possibility of funding this but as the discussions went on and with a change of Project Manager, it offered less opportunity for pavement improvement. We did make it clear that Brookley Road should not be fully closed and any work would have to take place outside the Tourist season. This seemed to be accepted last March and all the shopkeepers had a letter indicating this. We were therefore very surprised that there was no communication with us until after the contract had been placed and were advised that Roads and pavements are solely a Hampshire County Council responsibility to decide what is done.

Turning to the better things, the Christmas fun evening and Christmas lights went well despite the inclement weather and we had a good turn out for the pancake races. More recently the ANZAC commemoration service was well attended in the sunshine. Looking forward we hope you will all be able to come to the VE day community picnic, 2pm Saturday 10th May in the grounds of St Saviours' Church. So please pick up a newsletter, which has the details. on your way out.

The new Village sign was put up last week and the final cost will be approximately ten thousand pounds.

For the future we are trying to assess the effect on Parish Councils on the Government Devolution plans for Local Government in the next year. Currently there are no facts of how Parish Councils will be affected but from other areas who have gone through this, there are several instances where tasks previously carried out by County and Local

Councils have been deflected to Parish Councils who have had to pay for them if they needed to be continued. The devolution does mean that local representation will be more remote from the next level up since NFDC will be taken up in a grouping with other councils further away. The other councils in the group could include Southampton and Portsmouth who have a different set of priorities compared with the new Forest. The grouping will not be known until September/November and it will be a Government decision. After this, the new group will need to decide if there are any responsibilities they may wish to pass to parish councils. In this situation, budget setting for us will be more difficult than usual with no certainty of what we need to provide for.

As you can imagine the routine work, together with the additional matters, we have had to cope with, would not be possible without all the support of my fellow councillors, the dedication and the hard work of Heather, our clerk, together with Celia the assistant clerk, Ray and Luke the ground staff. I thank Tiffany our financial officer who left us at Christmas. We were very appreciative of Mina, who used to work for us, who was able to step in whilst we started to recruit a permanent replacement

Appendix two

Nalder Trust report – Cllr Richard Wolstenholme - Chairman

Overall, I'm pleased to report that The Nalder Trust has had a successful and productive year.

All of our tenants are still in place, most having been so now for a good few years.

During the year we have also welcomed three new Trustees:

Aude Holden
Chris Hayward
and the return of Thorold Masefield.

We have also completed the extension to the last of our leases at Homeforde, all four flats now have extended terms, securing our position and asset value for the future.

Something else we have been talking about for some time has also recently come to fruition, our own Nalder Trust website, independent from the main PC website, but with a link across. (www.naldertrust.org) if anyone wishes to look at it directly.

One of my fellow councillors and a trustee of Nalder, Michael Harris, has initiated two fund raising schemes, the first a pack of Notelets, depicting pen and ink drawings of village sites.....the second an Ordnance Survey map of Brockenhurst and surrounding area.....printed on a Tea Towel.

Priced at £3.50 for the notelets and £12.95 for the Tea Towel, both are available from Pot Pourri, with all proceeds going to the Nalder Trust. Both of the initial orders/print runs were paid for, very generously by Michael Harris, many thanks Michael. Already they have raised over £500!

Our long term goal remains unchanged, to construct an Almshouse development within the village, the new website gives details as to legacies and gifts, as the cost - in Brockenhurst, of acquiring land and the subsequent construction will be substantial, but we feel that it is possible and would safeguard the Trust for many years to come.

My thanks to everyone involved in the Trust and for all their efforts during the past year.

Appendix three

Brockenhurst Village Trust – Kevin Plummer – Chairman

Good evening, I am Kevin Plummer, the Chair of the Brockenhurst Village Trust. We own and look after the facilities here, including this hall, car park, MUGA and green space plus rent out the Scout hall and children's play area, as well as run the charity shop in Brookley Rd. We are a non-profit making organisation.

Last year we carried out surveys of our user groups and the residents of Brockenhurst. As a result we are, on your behalf, now implementing a number of exciting projects.

Firstly, we are redeveloping the Oak Room (which was previously used as a nursery) into a small conference room plus a café area and a bar.

Our gas bill has tripled over the last 2 years so besides putting more solar panels on the roof we are looking to reduce our gas usage and investigating installation of air source or ground source heat pumps. Our aim is to be carbon neutral in the foreseeable future.

We have very recently been successful in obtaining funding which will allow us to replace the wooden surround to the MUGA with a high weldmesh fence. This should not only reduce ball impact noise but also alleviate stray balls entering our neighbours gardens.

"Brock shop", our charity shop not only raises much needed funds to enable us to carry out the improvements already mentioned but also offers a friendly meeting place for our volunteers and regular shoppers. We now also offer online sales.

Finally, we needed to get better at keeping you informed of what we are doing. Therefore, I am pleased that we have facilitated the "Our Brockenhurst Communications Hub", John Stanton, one of the BVT trustees will be addressing you separately on this later.

Thank you

Appendix Four

Friends of Brockenhurst – David Eley – Chairman

Friends of Brockenhurst for the past 68 years have been supporting residents of our village in matters relating to planning, environment and the welfare of the community.

We are supportive of the Parish Council, as they are the elected body representing our village, but we do express different views when necessary.

We are often approached by residents, whether they are members or not, as they tend to find us easier to approach as a less formal body.

We continue to hold two public meetings a year and deliver our printed newsletter, twice yearly, to every property in the village. It is very gratifying to receive many compliments from villagers on receiving our newsletter, as it is the only local printed information leaflet that is now delivered in the village. Despite everyone being constantly told that digital is the only way forward, it is obvious that many, including residents of our village, also welcome the actual printed format.

Over the past year we have continued to be supportive of local initiatives and we are pleased that the work of Peter Hebard's Flood Action Group together with the co-operation of some residents of Waters Green have managed to reduce the water level there.

We have followed up complaints from some villagers regarding the noise from the increased planes from Bournemouth Airport flying over the centre of our village. These concerns have been forwarded to the New Forest National Park Authority who represent the forest villages on the Bournemouth Airport Consultative Group.

Over the past year sponsorship donations have been made to Brockstock, Brockenhurst Pantomime, Annual Pancake Race and the Friends of Lymington Hospital Colonoscopy Machine Appeal and we are in the process of funding the name of Charles Godwin, a village resident who was killed in Penang in 1954, being added to the Village War Memorial.

Our society may have been around for some years but the committee remains active and dedicated to aims and purpose of Friends of Brockenhurst.

Appendix Five Greener Brockenhurst - Milla Pearce

5-Minute Talk on Greener Brockenhurst

Good evening, everyone,

I'm delighted to be here to talk to you about **Greener Brockenhurst**—We are a band of committed and enthusiastic locals who are keen to promote sustainable living in and around our village. Like many local community groups, our core active members are relatively few (we have around 13 on our committee), but our subscriber list is close to 250 and we have over 500 followers on facebook. And of course it goes without saying that we are always delighted to welcome new members and volunteers to our merry band!

So what do we actually do?

1. One of our key focus's is on Waste Reduction and Recycling

And we have no less than 6 different projects to support this:

- a) In our recycling shed, located here in the village carpark, we collect 11 different types of waste that would otherwise have to go into landfill. Each waste stream has its own bin in the shed and its own dedicated volunteer that manages it. We collect a really diverse range of items from bras to inert tubes, silver foil to printer cartridges. If you don't already use the shed, please do think about it and look at our website for details
- b) Our regular **Repair Cafés are another way of reducing waste**. Another brilliant team of skilled volunteers offer their time for free to fix peoples broken household items—from toasters to trousers—saving things from landfill and saving people money. It's a lovely way to connect, learn new skills, and keep things out of the bin – all whilst eating cake!
- c) Last year we organised an event called the Great Brockenhurst Clear Out – basically a village wide freecycle -come-garage sale event. We had 27 households taking part spread across the village and loads of people walking round looking for treasure to rehome! It was such a success that we are making it annual event – so put the 26th June in your diaries for the 2025 Great Brockenhurst ClearOut.
- d) Another way that we try and reduce landfill waste is by running a Nappy Library service for the whole of the new forest, offering trial cloth nappy kits to new parents to try out and see how good and different cloth nappies are nowadays – nothing like the old terries of past!

- e) Back in 2022 we joined a network of communities across the UK who are leading the way in tackling single use plastic. Through this campaign, Brockenhurst has been awarded Plastic Free Community status by marine conservation charity, Surfers Against Sewage , in recognition of the work it has done to start reducing the impact of single-use plastic on our environment. We have had great support from the village for this campaign and just this month, another local business is signing up to be a Brockenhurst Plastic free business Champion.
- f) And finally on the waste reduction front, we have a new initiative that we are planning for this year - a community apple pressing day, due to take place in October, when all those surplus apples that people have can be turned into lovely juice rather than left to rot on the ground.

2. Another key focus for Greener Brockenhurst is on bio-diversity and making space for nature

Nature is at the heart of our climate crisis and we have a super-enthusiastic and knowledgeable team working on all things nature, helping educate us all on how make our own gardens more wildlife friendly, organising walks and talks to connect us to the wonder of this amazing part of the world in which we live, championing sustainable farming practices, and looking for opportunities to develop wildlife friendly community spaces in our village – not an easy task with our free-roaming hungry ponies

1. Another of our goals is around ways of reducing personal carbon use

At the moment we have been working on 2 main areas related to this

- Firstly, promoting sustainable travel, encouraging walking and cycling in & around Brockenhurst, acknowledging that for this to happen it needs to be easier and safer to do. We have been working to get more bike racks in Brookley road. We are planning a family cycle event in June and we sit on various cycle working groups for the whole New Forest. – With all the disruption in Brookley road at the moment, we have started a social media campaign of “Be local” encouraging us all shop locally, to walk and cycle into the village & to support our local traders at this difficult time

- Secondly, we recognise that home energy efficiency is a key issue that can make a real difference. We are very fortunate that one of our members is a specialist in retrofitting buildings, and, through the New Forest Heat project, we can offer free advice and thermal imaging of peoples homes to help them save them money on their energy bills.

There's loads of other random things that we do, but I know time is short, so I'll stop - Our vision is one of a thriving village where we all work together to build a strong & sustainable future.

Thank you!