**Your Parish Council- May 2020**

**April Parish Council Meeting**: In these extraordinary times the decision was taken, in line with Government requirements, to cancel the April meeting. Business was transacted by email with one planning application considered with no objection.

With no meeting, it was not possible to formally recognise the work of one of our village stalwarts whom has decided to ‘hang up his working boots’ and retire from service as the Village handyman. Ron Chalk has provided many years of service to the village keeping facilities like the children’s playground tidy and the war memorial area grass mown and trees pruned as well as many other tasks and maintenance jobs that come up from time to time. The Parish Council would like to formally recognise Ron’s work and thank him on behalf of Broad Chalke residents for his unstinting efforts on behalf of us all. Hopefully it will not be too long before a more public acknowledgement can be made to Ron.

Until the Parish Council can formally meet and consider how Ron’s shoes can be filled, the Clerk will undertake a role in maintaining these areas.

**Annual Parish Meeting and publication of Annual Accounts:** On the 4 April 2020the Government passed The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. This has put in place legislation that enables preparation of the annual accounts and auditing process to be extended and new extended dates for the Public Rights periods when these must be published and made available for public scrutiny. At the time of writing (mid-April) the Clerk and Chairman are preparing the end of year returns for Internal Audit so hope to keep pretty much on the timing of previous years, dependant on any extended time required by auditors.

Legislation has also relaxed the requirements around the holding of Annual Parish Meetings and, whilst the Council has not taken any decisions about a date for the APM, it will not take place in May as programmed, nor will there be the normal monthly parish council meeting in the village hall, although at the time of writing the Council is looking into the holding of an on-line meeting.

**Broad Chalke and Bower Chalke Covid-19 Support Network**: This opportunity could not be allowed to pass without recognising the immense work of all our volunteers in the village and valley and particularly to Nicki and Nigel Tinkler whom, from an absolute standing start, have set up an efficient and effective network and recruited area co-ordinators and volunteers to undertake all manner of tasks to help vulnerable and isolated people. All this has been supported by the marvellous work of the village shop and all the shop volunteers that Tony and his Team have pulled together, as well as our fantastic Queens Head pub and the work that Candy and Ronnie have put in at this extremely difficult time, to maintain a food service, that if you haven’t tried you really should. It is critical now more than ever that our local facilities are supported. Many thanks also to the Link volunteers for their work up and down the valley.

**Stay Home; Protect the NHS; Save Lives:** This is something we have seen constantly now for many weeks. The message is no different now then it was at the start. It applies to us all. We have been fortunate thus far in our beautiful Valley, that we have not been exposed to the full and awful spectre of this virus so now, more then ever before, it is down to us all to stop its spread. There is plenty of help and support in our community so, if you are in need of something, just ask. Stay Home; Protect the NHS; Save Lives.

**75th Anniversary of VE Day- 8 May 2020:** Unfortunately, with the need for everyone to Stay at home and Stay Safe, VE Day Celebrations are not able to progress in the way hoped. In Broad Chalke we are marking the anniversary by:

* The solo playing of The Last Post by Ed Gairdner from his garden at 2.55pm on the 8 May.
* At 3.00pm on 8 May we would like to encourage all in the village to raise a glass of something appropriate, and making the toast with the words: ‘For those whom gave so much, we thank you’.
* Throughout the weekend (8-10 May 2020) we would like to encourage all households as part of their daily exercise, and maintaining social distancing, to have a walk to the War Memorial and place a small bouquet of flowers from their own garden as a mark of respect to those whom gave their lives.

**The Giant Sunflower Challenge:** Whilst the closing date for seeds has now closed, there is one last opportunity to enter the challenge. Dependent on the horticultural prowess of those in both Broad Chalke and Bower Chalke we will hopefully see nearly 150 sunflowers brightening up our valley later in the year. If you would still like to take part, a few seeds have been potted up and grown on and, for a donation of £5, these are still available on a first come first served basis, but will need to be collected from Broad Chalke. Contact the Clerk for more information.

**Scarecrow Competition:** By the time of reading, all manner of strangely dressed scarecrows should be starting to appear around the village. Final day for judging is 8 May so still perhaps an opportunity to take part.

**Changes to Green Waste bin renewal process:** Please see information in the parish council website under Wiltshire Council information.

**Fly Tipping:** There have been some reports on increase in this due to closure of the Wiltshire Recycling Centres. Should you see such activity please report to Wiltshire Council, preferably using the MyWiltshire App. If you are having work done to your property, please ensure your contractors have a legal way to dispose of the rubble. Skip hire companies are still operating.

**Parish Council Meetings** The dates of future meetings are having to be kept under review.

**Contact Details:** The Chairman of the Council, Tom Hitchings can be contacted at: Tomhitchingsbroadchalke@gmail.com

The Parish Clerk is Chris Rothwell and can be contacted at: **Clerkbroadchalke@gmail.com**

The Parish Council Website is: **www.broadchalkeparishcouncil.com**