

Chris Welch. Chris can't influence the vote but his advice on what is required to win is invaluable.



Cllr. Chris Welch discusses the BKV entry with fellow Councillor Sue Grimes.

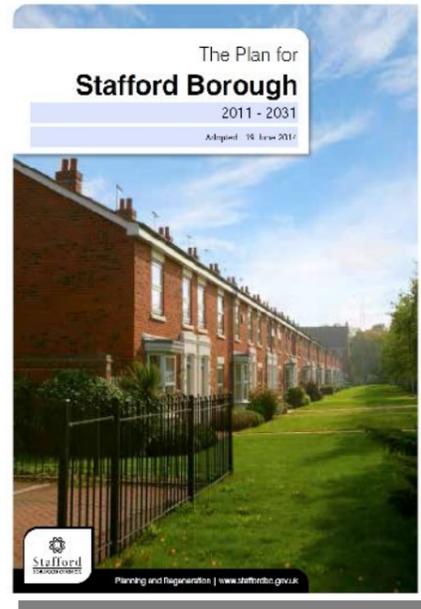
Chris says that publicity impresses the judges so those of you within the village will find a BKV flyer inside this Newsletter to display during May and June. Display the poster, keep your front gardens tidy and clear up litter and dog mess and we will have £200 to reduce your Council Tax next year.

This year the Council have opted to take part in "The Spirit of Best Kept Village" Competition. This competition is sponsored by David and Jim Owen of Rubery Owen Holdings Ltd who will do the judging. It is open to any resident of the Parish. Submissions can be paintings or sketches, photographs, poetry or prose or a combination of these on the theme of The Spirit of Best Kept Village. Please send your entries to the clerk by noon on St. George's Day (23rd April)

Plan for Stafford Borough.

Development is controlled by a plan led system. When you apply for planning permission what you propose is compared with the current development plan for the area. In our case the Plan is the 2014 Plan for Stafford Borough. Provided that your proposals do not conflict with the Plan then you should get planning permission. Development Plans are very complicated documents and take years to get to the stage when they are adopted. As the government says that Local Development Plans should be revised every 5 years

it means that no sooner is a Plan adopted than the forward planning department at Stafford Borough has to start on the review. As any development involves land use an early task is to identify what land is available so the Borough Council do a 'call for sites' exercise. Last time this was done there was considerable alarm because lots of development sites were put forward by landowners and residents thought that they would all be developed. In fact the Council had done a careful calculation of the number of housing and industrial sites needed and never intended to plan for buildings on every possible site.



The Borough Council decided that 10,000 houses were needed between 2011 and 2031. The distribution would be Stafford 70%, Stone 10%, Key Service Villages 12% and Rest of Borough Area 8%.

The eleven Key Service Villages were places like Hixon that had such things as shops, post office, good bus services etc. Stowe by Chartley is one of the remaining 25 parishes where it is planned to add a total of 800 houses over the next 20 years but because of barn conversions and odd bits of infill many of these were already in the pipeline and only 216 of the 800 allocation remain. As part of its review Stafford Borough Council are revising the numbers of houses needed. Your Parish Council are active in shaping the Plan so please don't be panicked by wild rumours about extensive development.

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*Stowe by Chartley
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Mr. Dennis Baskerville

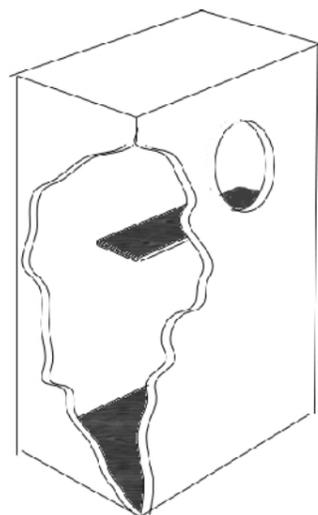
The Grade II listed Chartley Manor Farm was built about 1530 and was the home farm of Chartley estate. The main house, Chartley Hall, was built in 1475 on the other side of Chartley Castle. The Hall was the home of Walter Devereux and his wife Lettice Knollys¹. For much of it's later life Chartley Hall was owned by the de Ferrers family but the estate was sold off in 1904. The

estate included 35 farms, including Chartley Manor Farm, and 8 pubs. The 400 acre Manor Farm, then owned by Sir William Congreave, was broken up just before the last world war. The Manor Farm house was lived in by Graham Allen and then his son Jeremy until 2010? Originally just two rooms and a cellar the house was expanded in Georgian times making the house three times as big. The current owner, Dennis Baskerville has done considerable renovation and added an orangerie enclosure and a fish pond. The fish pond would have probably been a feature of the original house and an orangerie was a popular feature of houses in the Georgian era. Renovating a listed building is not easy and Mr. Baskerville, has used his extensive knowledge of timber and construction to considerable effect. The building has been much altered over the years

¹ Lettice later married Sir Christopher Blount which is perhaps why your clerk feels so at home in the Parish! Sadly Sir Christopher was a secret agent and rebel and was beheaded in 1510.



and every beam, rafter and spar has a tale to tell. As part of the refurbishment many of the floor timbers have been replaced with random sized elm boards. Doors and door fittings have been rescued and add considerably to the charm of the place. The original bread oven sits in the large kitchen although an Aga now replaces its function. The paneled master bedroom is very impressive. Like most of the glazing on the frontage its large window is leaded with the original small panes. Visitors would not realise how extensive the reconstruction has been because of the care that has been taken to preserve the integrity of the house. The Georgian Lounge is wonderfully elegant. To the rear a delightful cottage is the next building to receive the Baskeville treatment.



A keen ornithologist Mr. Baskerville has designed Barn Owl bird boxes. In the past the Parish Council had a hand in providing a large triangular owl box at a site in Grindley but Mr. Baskerville believes that he has come up with a better design. The Baskerville Box has an internal shelf

that discourages predators like magpies and starlings from entering. The owls, their eggs and chicks nestle safely in the bottom of the box. Local carpenter Stacy Scott has agreed to make boxes for residents. Call 07790 175365. They are about 2ft high and quite heavy. The best place to site a Barn Owl nestbox is inside a building. If there's a large building that a Barn Owl can enter at 3+ metres above the ground then this is almost certainly the best place to put a new Barn Owl nestbox. An owl box in a building is easier to erect, lasts much longer and affords extra shelter (that'll be great for the owls). If you have a building with no high-up entrance hole, can a small owl-hole be made? Mounting an owl box on the outside of a building has many disadvantages and is not recommended unless there is no alternative. Buildings that are in human or

agricultural use can be very suitable; Barn Owls can get used to almost any kind of activity as long as they can stay out of sight. If no building is available then choose a large isolated tree at least 1km away from a main road. When you position the owl-box make sure that the entrance hole is in full view.

Parish Council budget.

The Council has kept the Council Tax collected for the Parish Council at a similar amount for a number of years but this year it will have to rise by £15.55 a year for a Band D property. Even if the total had been kept the same resident's contributions would have risen due to a reduction in the tax base.

Town and Parish Councils throughout the land are being affected by the squeeze on local government. This will probably not affect the Parish Council directly for the next 3 years but the squeeze on County Council funding in particular is severe and due to get worse. This is leading to County Councils asking Town & Parish Councils to pick up services. There will no longer pay for such agency services as clearing drain grids and road signs but the Parish Council will continue anyway in the interests of the Parish.

As you will see on the opposite page we have two new Councillors who will need some training and who will have new ideas on how to improve the Parish. For that reason we have included a contingency sum in this year's budget. New European Regulations on data protection will also hit us. Brexit or no Brexit the Council will still have to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations. This requires a Data Protection Officer and this service will have to be paid for. We now

	Budget 2018/19
Receipts	
Precept	10760
Other	698
Total	11458
Payments	
Administration	6475
Members' costs (Training)	190
Agency work	862
Environmental work	2304
Playing field	135
Donations & grants	100
Provision of information	570
Contingency	285
Total	10921

have a fully qualified (and slightly more expensive!) Clerk but it is unlikely that the Clerk will be able to act as the GDPR Officer.

The Council are conscious that small local organisations struggle to find funds so has set aside £100 to provide help. If you are one such organisation in the Parish then please ask the clerk for a grant request form.

Most years we spend very little on the equipment on the playing field but occasionally something breaks so we have increased the provision a bit this year. Replacements will be a problem when, as we expect, the government caps our Council Tax. When we need to buy a new field gate, for instance, it could be expensive. If the current Principal Council capping arrangements were to be applied to the Parish Council a rise in the Parish Council Tax of anything over £214 would mean that we would have to hold a referendum and that would cost a few thousand pounds.

For this reason the Council is increasing its reserves so that it can still provide services whatever happens.

The administration of small Parish Councils is similar to that of larger Parish Councils so cost per head tends to be greater. In spite of being one of the smallest parishes in Stafford Borough we have only the 4th largest Band D Council Parish Council tax. The Council is investigating a merger with an adjacent Parish as a way of saving administration costs

Rural Exception Site.

Stafford and Rural Homes, a Housing Association born out of Stafford Borough Council's Housing Department, has approached the Council about a small Rural Exception Site.

Normally housing would not be considered in Stowe by Chartley Village because it would be outside of the settlement boundaries laid down in the Plan for Stafford Borough.

Subject to there being an identified need and a low cost site being available it is possible to build on a Rural Exception Site. The Council will consider its response at the April meeting.

New Parish Councillors.

Sadly the Council have lost two key members. Mr. Jeff Harnett gave a lot of support to the Council and

the Clerk in sorting out its web site and IT equipment.

Mr. Tom Lyons was Chairman of the Council from when it split away from Hixon in 2000 until 2011 and was a keen champion of local residents.

Speedwatch and Neighbourhood Watch benefited from his energy and commitment. They will both be missed.

The Council has the services of two new Members.



Cllr. Mrs. Hurdle lives at Drointon, she knows the area well and has the benefit of having been a Councillor once before in another parish.

Cllr. Chris Welch (See picture overleaf) lives in Drointon Lane in Stowe by Chartley village. As the CEO of the Community Council Chris has a wealth of knowledge and experience of community issues and will be a great asset to our BKV effort.

Best Kept Village.

In the past Stowe by Chartley village was very successful in the Best Kept Village competition. Look at the certificates on the walls of the village hall if you want proof of that.

Last year we entered at the last minute but still managed to be Highly Commended. This year we have a tremendous opportunity to do really well. The Best Kept Village is run by the Community Council whose Chief Executive is Stowe resident,