

the Brandeston

It's Your Village

It's election year for parish and town councils as well as for national government. It is believed that several of our parish councillors will not seek re-election for another term. To preserve local democracy we need candidates to seek nomination to avoid the council from having to fill vacancies through co-option. Peter Thurlow shares his thoughts on local democracy in his Cogitations from Thurlow Towers on the back page.

Information at www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Annual Parish Meeting

Village Hall

Wednesday May 6th at 8pm

This is NOT a meeting of the parish council, it is the forum for you as villagers to raise any matter you wish that concerns Brandeston. Councillors attend as parishioners and the parish council chairman chairs the meeting. Make sure you're there to be heard.

Any items you would like to put on the Agenda for discussion please contact the new Parish Clerk, Mary Mitson - Woods 01728 684026 or mitsonwoods778@btinternet.com or a note in her post box.

Tuesday 12th May 8pm

Annual Parish Council Meeting

First meeting of the new term of office at which officers will be elected and new councillors will be welcomed.

April and May Films 7.30pm at the Village Hall

April 10th Mr Turner

Exploration of JM Turner's life and work. With Timothy Spall, Paul Jesson and Dorothy Atkinson

May 8th A Good Year

British investment broker inherits his uncle's chateau in Provence, where he spent most of his childhood.

With Russell Crowe, Abbe Cornish and Albert Finney.

Sat/Sun May 30th & 31st Flower Festival and Music

Flowers in church, plants and music in the garden at Brandeston Hall, concert in church, teas etc. Ring Janet Weston on 01728 685792 for more details.

Cogitations from Thurlow Towers

He may have retired but he is not gone! Our much loved editor has decided to hang up his Brandeston boots, but all is not lost. Peter has agreed to provide an article for each issue in his own inimitable style.

See back page for his take on Parish Council elections.

What a hat! (Eds)



And in with the new editors



Jane Mitchell and Mary Mitson - Woods are attempting to continue Peter's legacy. They need your news and want to promote village events.



Send articles to mitsonwoods778@btinternet.com in Word format please or put it in Rose Farm Cottage post box, avoiding the great tit's nest in spring. We hope you enjoy our first edition, we will strive to improve upon our performance in the future.

Diary Dates

26th April Brunch in the Village Hall

23rd May Eastern Angles "Oyster" in the village hall.

Contact Mary Baker 01728 685807 for both

Welcome to Brandeston

David & Margaret Myles in The Leas, Mutton Lane
Kevin & Lucy Little and family in Clovers, Mutton Lane

Janet Baxter in Greenlea in the Street

We look forward to meeting up with new residents at village events...

... and thank you to Mark Hounsell for serving the Parish Council as Clerk for many years on a voluntary basis.

Cogitations from Thurlow Towers

Wouldn't it be fun if there were an election in May? No, not that one. I'm talking about the parish council election.

Hands up who knows who's on the parish council and what they do? The present councillors are David Risk, Helen Saxon, Paddy Fielder, Will Elsom, Phil Summers, Kathy Churchill and Sue Thurlow.

Just in case there are Brandies who think otherwise, parish councillors aren't paid. No allowances, no expenses, nothing. They do it for you lot. They go out to a meeting on a wet Tuesday night and they pour (*Eds*) over sewage issues and planning applications and footpath disputes and then they go home to their cocoa while you lot have spent the evening in front of something ghastly on the telly.

Usually, because the job isn't glamorous, there aren't too many candidates when an election comes round. This leads to councillors having to be co-opted and no election occurs. In fact the last time there was an election Ray Bumstead was landlord of the Queen and that must have been 20 years ago. (Halcyon days though, eh?)

But wouldn't it be fun if, rather than having new councillors appointed, we had a dozen candidates or more so we have a proper election. Imagine it! Leaflets stuffed through the letter box, learned discourse at the coffee morning, bands in the street, fighting in the pub. All that excitement just to discuss sewage issues? Well, not necessarily. The parish council has no statutory duties, but it has lots of statutory powers. It could even campaign to do a lot more.

There is no reason why the parish council should simply deal with stuff sent it by the execrable Suffolk Coastal. There is a lot of talk about the 'democratic deficit'. (Well anyway, I talk about it a lot. Whether anybody listens is another matter. I'm the bloke at the pub all alone in the corner, muttering to myself.) Anyway, the democratic deficit refers to a lack of democracy, the lack of power we each suffer through having so little control over our own lives. But really, it's in our own hands to do something about it.

Totnes is a small town in Devon which has had enough of being bugged about and its people have decided they want to take more control of their lives, see: www.transitiontotnes.org for more information.

If our village is important to us, if we feel we could run our own lives better than leaving the job to someone else, why don't we step up and have a go? What about if we started by talking about ideas among ourselves? At the coffee morning for example or the church. What about if we met one evening a week in the pub to discuss what we want for our village, and perhaps how we can join with others to make things happen? And obviously drink to excess and be noisy and sing 'Nelly Dean'. (I was once thrown out of the Queen for that.)

If the country is in a bloody great mess then it's largely because we and others like us haven't cared to do much about it. We've left it to others. (Well obviously I haven't but we've already agreed nobody listens to me.)

Let's begin to take back control of our lives – from government, utility companies, dreadful BT, the cataclysmic incompetence of Suffolk Coastal planners – you name them, we'll add them to the list.

And come May, let's have enough candidates for the parish council to have a proper election; then let's all turn out to vote. **PT**

Good news

Work on the new tennis court started on Monday 23rd March. This reflects a magnificent fund raising effort and will be a great asset to the village. A big thank you to all involved and get your racquets ready for summer! We need volunteers to form a committee to be responsible for the new tennis club. (*Contact Eds*)



RIP

Maurice Scott

The village is saddened to lose a much loved neighbour and friend following the death of Maurice (Scottie). He was a true countryman, farmer and a staunch member of both Brandeston and Kettleburgh communities. He was a beloved husband, father and grandfather and our sympathy and thoughts are with Sue, Kathy and Victor and all the family at this sad time.

Rev Graham Vellacott officiated at Maurice's funeral at Brandeston and referred to him as a faithful farmer, husband, father, grandfather and friend. The church overflowed with all those who had come to honour and remember Maurice.

Victor and Tracey welcomed each mourner personally and Kathy and Martin paid moving tributes to this extraordinary man. Gemma read *'To those I love and those that love me'* a comforting tribute to her beloved Grandfather.

He is another of our number of whom we can say "we shall not see his like again".

Pooch Corner

During dog walks it is sad to find up to 5 poo bags thrown into hedgerows. Please avoid this disgusting mess by taking your dog poo home for disposal.

