

Brixworth Parish Council Annual Report

2008-2009



Chairman's Overview – by Cllr Ian Barratt

Once again a hectic and successful year for your Parish Council – a new Parish Council after the elections, but with many familiar faces continuing.

In this Credit Crunch we are proud to be maintaining all our services to you and actually making a small reduction in what we ask from you to run the Parish Council – a remarkable achievement, I think!

Facilities for youth are high on our agenda and these are exciting times indeed with the planned BMX/skate facility-moving forward for which the young people have waited for so long.

Road safety is vital in our increasingly congested village and we hope the Northampton Road and Spratton Road improvements including a new pedestrian crossing near the school will make it a safer place to live.

We are active in Planning issues – the several proposed wind turbine developments close to the village we know are controversial. Your Parish Council will continue to carefully balance the issues and judge each scheme on its merits.

Our sports fields look set to be used by a record number of clubs, and the Ashway changing rooms are proving a valuable asset.

But none of this would happen without our totally dedicated, professional and loyal staff. So many ideas we have need our staff to implement them and they never fail to rise to the challenge. We are actively seeking Quality Council status at present and special mention must go to Jane Macken, our Clerk, for her clear guidance and hard work towards this end.

And finally, the Parish Councillors themselves. I thank each and every one of them for turning out sometimes three times a week for Parish Council meetings, completely without pay, and let's not forget, two of them manage to find the time to be District Councillors as well! I am proud to have been Chairman of the Council again this busy year and I am confident we have even more exciting times ahead.

Recreation and Amenities Development Committee Report – by Cllr Colin Bament

The BMX track is scheduled to open on land to the north of the village as soon as planning permission and funding is in place, the Council will be considering quotes received at its next meetings.

The Ashway playing field football pitches are being well used and teams are already signed up to play next season including new ones. The St David's playing field is well used, although we do receive complaints with regards to youths meeting late into the evening causing a nuisance with noise.

I am sure that you have all heard the play equipment on Spratton Road Recreation Ground was damaged by fire at 2.15am one morning. This will be repaired in the coming weeks.

Highways & Environment Committee Report – by Cllr Colin Bament Chair

I am glad to report that the drains in Holcot Road have now been re-laid and the flooding on Holcot Road Green has been addressed. At last the work on the Pedestrian Crossing has started and the yellow lines should be in place by the time you read this.

MGWPS the company who took over the contract from Atkins seem to be approachable and react as quick as possible to any complaints the committee put forward, in the next financial year they hope to reinstate the footpath from near the church down Station Road to the Houses at the old timber yard.

Speeding is still a problem in the village but the Parish Council are in talks with the Speed Reduction Team to try to solve or ease the problem. We may be able to get our own Speed Cameras and carry out checks, although we cannot do anything like issue tickets. We can report repeat offenders to the police who will then carry out their own checks and prosecute any offenders.

There is a new group formed in the village called Village Green, they are tackling energy saving ideas and hope to hold a exhibition soon, any one who would like to get further information can contact the Parish Clerk.

One problem, which has still to be resolved, is Dog Fouling on the playing fields. Why people cannot clean up after their own dogs is beyond belief, we are working with the DDC Dog warden on this matter

If any one has any ideas they would like the committee to consider they can pass them on through the Parish Clerk or attend committee meetings, the date and times can be found on the notice boards around the village or in the Library/Community Centre.

Finance and Administration Committee Report – by Cllr Richard Monk, Chair

Yet another good year for the managing of the finances of the Parish Council. The Committees delivered what they planned to do and all managed their expenditure within the agreed budgets. This emphasis on value for money has enabled the Parish Council to set a below average increase in precept for the coming year. Another unqualified audit of our accounts is a tribute to the professionalism and hard work of our Clerk.

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| Opening Balance as at 1.04.08 | £75,928.31 |
| Plus Income for year | £143,772.61 |
| Less Expenditure for year | £95,181.36 |
| Surplus Income over Expenditure | £48,591.25 |
| Closing Balance as at 31.03.09 | £124,519.56 |

As important as the control of the Council's financial affairs is our control of health and safety. As both employer and provider of facilities, there have been no reportable accidents during the year.

Last but by no means least, it is the staff that enable the Parish Council to deliver its services to the village. Our staff has shown great commitment to the village again this year and, every day and in all weathers, they have worked hard to ensure that the village services are as good as they are.

Planning Committee Report - by Cllr Bob Chattaway, Chair

Over the last twelve months applications for wind turbines have dominated the agenda at many Planning Committee meetings. It is not so much that Councillors have been obliged to try to strike a balance between the need for new sources renewable energy against the need to preserve our heritage and to protect the countryside that surrounds the village but more a question of is the proposed site a suitable one.

Structures as high as the Northampton Express Lift Tower which would loom over Brixworth or dominate the Saxon Church and beautiful countryside close by, which is designated as a Special Landscape Area, must be more appropriate to more isolated areas, further away from large numbers of dwellings than the two sites proposed on the edge of Brixworth.

The Committee continues to meet every three weeks on Mondays at the Library/Community Centre at 7.30pm to examine applications and to formulate the Parish Councils response to the Local Planning Authority. Applicants are invited to present their case and to answer any questions. Members of the public are always welcome to express their own opinions.

Parish Councillors

Chairman - Cllr Ian Barratt
Bob Chattaway
Richard Monk
Ron Low
Tony Everard
Mike Lacey
Liz Wiig
Frank Wiig
Colin Bament
Simon Gilkes
Steve Whiffen
Steve Pointer
Elaine Nunn
Angie Gunnett

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Clerk to the Council

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