

Brixworth Parish Council Annual Report 2010-2011

Chairman's Overview – by Cllr Ian Barratt

Another busy and successful year for Brixworth Parish Council! It's been a year of achievement in many directions. Top of the pile must be achieving Quality Parish Council status. We were one of only 14 Parish Councils in Northamptonshire to gain this award – and there are 208 in total. For Quality status we needed to demonstrate we attain extremely high standards in all areas of the Council from Policies to Performance, from Management to Minutes – the whole business of running a Parish Council. And a business it is fast becoming. We are extremely proud of attaining this coveted award. We are especially appreciative of our Clerk, Jane Macken, whose knowledge and work on our portfolio made this possible. We have also added the Power of Well Being, allowing us more flexibility in how we do things.

Amongst all this, our normal work has continued, and continued efficiently. We are determined to squeeze full value out of every penny we spend. Without any cut in services, we have actually made a small reduction in our total planned spending for 2011-12. This is prudent housekeeping and quite an achievement in this financial climate.

On the subject of saving, we have legally turned the Community Centre adjoining the library into a charity. Users won't notice a difference, but it does save us quite a bit of money.

We have continued to give some financial grants or support to deserving local organisations. Some are small such as some sacks of daffodil bulbs for Mike Nice and his team to plant and brighten the village. Larger support went to our friends at the Youth Club and we continue to invest a sum of money each year to assist in keeping our local police office in Brixworth. On that subject, we must congratulate Sgt Grady and his team on the falling crime figures he has reported this year.

And as for dog-fouling.....! A group of young people from our Youth Club gave the Parish Council a superbly informative presentation about this problem. We are supporting the District Council in their quest for the power to introduce Dog Control Orders, this will give the District Council additional powers to address the issue.

So what have we got in the pipeline for the future? There's the Village Questionnaire - a chance for your input. We are actively looking at improvement plans for the recreation areas – we started with Spratton Road Recreation Ground a while ago and now need to improve the Ashway and St David's. And the Localism Bill! The role of your Parish Council may well be very different in the not too distant future, with wider responsibilities. We feel we are well placed for the challenge.

Finally there's thanks – thanks to our employees whose commitment and pride in their job is immense; there's our Clerk, Jane Macken – thanks for the second time, Jane! And our District and County Councillors whose support for our community is immense, and your Parish Councillors. Often unpraised and always unpaid they turn out sometimes three times a week to meetings for the sole purpose of trying to make Brixworth a better place. I warmly thank them all.

Recreation and Amenities Development Committee Report – Cllr Steve Pointer, Chair

The Council's sports facilities continue to be well used. Brixworth All Saints Football Teams, Junior Football teams, Brixworth Junior and Senior cricket teams all played on St David's Recreation Ground. Again this year we had three senior football teams (AFC Crown's two teams and Moulton Ladies) as well as the Junior Football teams using the Ashway Playing Fields.

St David's Recreation Ground and the Ashway Playing Field have also been used for various other activities. During the school holidays the District Council Play Rangers have held various activities free of charge and Free-style Soccer Academy has provided football coaching.

In July St David's Rec. hosted the Party in the Park, which followed on from the hugely successful Brixworth Car-

Recreation and Amenities Development Committee Report (continued)

More recently has been the introduction of street football, which is ran in partnership including the District Council, Community Safety Partnership, Daventry & District Housing and Brixworth Junior FC. The street football is held at St David's Rec. on Thursday evenings 6 –8pm. It is aimed at 13 –19 year olds. Approximately 30 young people attend the sessions each week, which will continue for the rest of the year.

Highways & Environment Committee Report – by Cllr Colin Bament, Chair

This year we have seen the effect the Yellow lines have made in exiting Kennel Terrace on to Northampton Road, it is a lot easier. A speed limit of 40mph has been placed on the Holcot Road over the Causeway, this was done at the request of Holcot Parish Council even though some of it is in our Parish.

Over the next few months it is hoped that a warning system will be in place on the crossing over the A508 by-pass. This will be by the use of pedestrian activated flashing lights similar to the ones in use at the Pitsford turns. These signs will not cause the traffic to stop, but will advise drivers of pedestrians waiting to cross the road.

Daventry District Council has offered us a lorry load of approximately 8 tons of compost. The Council is hoping that the Northampton Road allotments will be able to receive the delivery, which will be made available to all Brixworth residents.

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

The past year has been a difficult for many resident's with inflation, increasing unemployment and concerns about whether services provided by local authorities will continue. Against this background the Parish Council has maintained its services to Brixworth and managed its finances within its budgets. This maintenance of our services and delivery of value for money is due to the diligence of the Parish Council's hard working staff and the work of your Parish Councillors. Yet again we received another unqualified audit of our accounts - a tribute to the professionalism and hard work of our Clerk. The Council's income was £112,375.40 for the year, less expenditure for year of £116,404.27 gave us a Closing Balance of £131,032.43.

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.

We are not resting on our laurels. We have agreed to do more to find out the views of the resident of Brixworth – you – by planning a village questionnaire and having Parish Councillor Surgeries, starting in June, where residents can meet their Parish Councillors.

Planning Committee Report - by Cllr Bob Chattaway, Chair

Recently surveying has been taking place to the south of the village despite the development of such sites being contrary to Daventry District Council's planning policy. This has caused a great deal of concern to residents, which the Parish Council is seeking to address at the time of writing.

The proposal to redevelop the old woodyard off Station Road was refused by the District Council. The amount of infilling should be reduced now that gardens are no longer considered previously developed land. Next year could be the start of exciting times for us all with the introduction of Localism. This should lead to more community involvement and an enhanced role for the Parish Council in the Planning process.

The Committee continues to meet every three weeks on Mondays at the Library/Community Centre at 7.30pm. Applicants are invited to attend and members of the public are always welcome.

Names and contact details of Parish Councillors are on our web site: www.brixworthpc.org.uk and available in Brixworth Library.