

BELPER TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2010/2011

INTRODUCTION

By the Chairman, Councillor John Nelson

I have been extremely proud to represent Belper in my year as Mayor and along with my wife Maureen I have thoroughly enjoyed attending the many local events and activities to which we have been invited. I have been delighted to take advantage of my role as Mayor to raise funds for my charity, the Herbert Strutt Charity which provides support for Belper and Milford residents.

The aim of the Council was to keep the rates down without it affecting any of the services that we provide which we managed to do.

The town commemorated St. Georges Day by painting the town red and white, the scouts and guides paraded through town and attended special church services. Belper was awarded a coveted 'Gold Award' in the East Midlands in Bloom competition a fantastic achievement for the town. Without the help and support of the businesses and volunteers something we could not have done. I would like to offer a big thank you to all the businesses for sponsoring a large proportion of the floral displays and the hanging baskets.

The Food Festival, Larks in Park events and Christmas Festivities that we provide are the envy of our neighbours, long may these events continue to be a success, with your help and support they will be.

I am confident that Belper Town Council will continue to provide an excellent value for money service for the residents of the town.

It has been an honour and a privilege to represent you all as Mayor of the Parish of Belper.

Councillor John Nelson
Mayor of Belper Town Council

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Members of the public are welcome to attend Council meetings which are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month (apart from August) at 7pm when time is set aside for the public to raise any matters of concern or to make their views known on any issues that affect the Belper area.

In addition there are various committees and working parties formed for specific purposes eg organising events - some of which involve members of the public.

THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS:

East Midlands in Bloom Competition:

Belper Town Council finally achieved the ultimate and was awarded a prestigious Gold Award in the 'East Midlands in Bloom' competition and the overall winners of the large town category.

The Town Council, in partnership with Amber Valley Borough Council, replaced the litter bins and restored all the street furniture in the town centre in a new colour scheme of traditional green with a decorative gold trim. These improvements transformed the town centre and demonstrated how Belper cares about our local environment.

The dedicated team of staff and volunteers working together won us the Gold Award.

Food and Real Ale Festival:

Now in its fourth year the Festival is growing from strength to strength. The atmosphere was alive with buskers and entertainment throughout the day. Although there were a few showers in the morning it did not keep people away, the crowds kept coming proving the event was even more popular than previous years.

This year craft stalls were introduced in the Memorial Gardens on King Street which brought a welcome addition to the event. An exciting entertainment programme is to be included in next year's event.

Sponsorship:

Despite the poor economic climate the local businesses have continued to support the town by way of sponsorship thus helping to provide attractive flower displays and Christmas trees – all of which help make Belper a lovely place to live, work and visit.

HOW THE COUNCIL SERVES THE COMMUNITY

Looking after the town:

The Town Council works in partnership with Amber Valley Borough Council undertaking many of the functions associated with much larger Town Councils. The Belper and Milford area is maintained to a very high standard as can be evidenced by its parks, gardens and floral displays. Every effort continues to be made to combat the problems of litter, fly-tipping and graffiti.

As well as contributing to the built environment, the Council plays an important role in the monitoring and consideration of all planning applications. Members are fully committed to supporting the economic regeneration of Belper through such initiatives as the Belper and Milford Townscape Heritage Initiative and the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site - all of which is having a major impact on the local tourism industry.

Providing Grant Aid to Community Groups:

By providing grant aid to many community groups, the Council is making an effective use of its resources. This support provides a lifeline for some groups enabling them to continue functioning, or it can provide “seed corn” money for new ventures and initiatives by existing organisations.

During the year, the following organisations have received grant funding:

Amber Valley Community Transport
Belper & District Road Safety Committee
Belper Marlins Swimming Club
Belper North Mill Trust
Citizens Advice Bureau
Fleet Arts
Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme
Maurice Heely Award – (1st Alton Manor Scout Group)
The Drop Inn
Vitalise
Tuesday Club
Thursday Club
Chevin Road Baptist Church

Communicating with the Public:

As well as the Council’s notice boards situated around the town, the Council has its own website, a profile on Face Book and also issues a quarterly Newsletter to keep Belper residents in touch with Council news and events and is also a handy quick reference guide to contact information for local services.

Liaising with the Police:

Report from Inspector Richard Smith, Section Inspector for the Amber Valley policing Section.

Belper section over the last twelve months has been part of the new C Division with the Command structure based at Chesterfield. The merger of A Division to C Division has been smooth and as promised the Policing of Belper Amber Valley has not suffered as a result.

Sgt Richard Booth has embedded himself as a vital link with the local community and his team work hard to resolve issues we both set. Over the last twelve months criminal damage has further been reduced along with Anti social behaviour, all crime on Belper section has been again reduced for the third consecutive year.

Belper town has a busy night life economy especially on Friday nights and I will continue to provide a high visible presence on Friday nights with officers from all over Amber Valley and the Special Constabulary on foot in the town. The work of these officers has made Belper a safe place on Friday nights and a place not affected by the drunken exploits you see in other towns.

Over the next twelve months the local Policing team will see little change, I can state it will not be reduced. Sgt Booth and I will remain as SNT Sgt and Section Inspector and continue efforts to improve the local Policing of the area. The cut backs the force face will be a challenge but we have ideas and plans in place to assist in making 2011/12 another good year for Belper town.

Providing Community Facilities:

All Council meetings are held in St John's Chapel which also serves as the Heritage Centre. The Heritage Centre is generally open to the public each weekday morning and the last Saturday in each month (when Belper Historical Society is in attendance). Both the Council Chamber and Heritage Centre in the Chapel are available for hire by the local community for meetings and events and in the past year have been used as a venue for private bookings and by the following groups and organisations:

Belper & District Keyboard & Organ Club	Derwent Valley Line
Belper & District Road Safety Committee	Friends of Belper Parks
Belper Historical Society	Friends of Belper River Gardens
Belper United Charities	Heart Jewel Kadama Buddhist
Belper Well Dressing Committee	Herbert Strutt Charity
Derby & District Keyboard & Organ Club	Matthew Smith Almshouses Trust
Derbyshire Primary Care Trust	North Mill Trust
Derbyshire Citizens Advice Bureau	The Scout Association
	Workers Education Association

Providing Allotments:

The Council provides a number of allotments at Hunter Road which is managed by an Association in co-operation with the Town Council, all the allotments have been taken and names are being added to the waiting list. The Town Council is currently looking for addition land to create more allotments to accommodate the shortage.

Provision of Car Parking:

The Council provides valuable free parking facilities on the Coppice Car Park at the rear of the Market Place and on the right hand side at the bottom of Derwent Street.

Monthly Farmers Market:

Belper's Farmers' Market has gone from strength to strength since it first began in 2001. The Market is highly respected as a certified market and is very well attended with visitors from all over the area enjoying the vibrant atmosphere and vast selection of quality produce which is always on offer.

Organising Events and Entertainment:

The Council has organised the following events this year:

- **Larks in the Park** – A series of musical and other entertainment held on Summer Sunday afternoons in Belper's River Gardens organised in partnership with the Friends of Belper River Gardens.
- **Food Fair** – King Street was alive on a Sunday in July with a wide range of foods to suit all tastes
- **John Proctor's Autumn Fair** - Held during the October half term, this is a long-standing popular tradition.
- **The Remembrance Day Service and Parade** (with the co-operation of the Royal British Legion) held at St Peter's Church.
- **The Christmas Festival** (including the Switching on of the lights and the Christmas Eve Carol Service). Milford has its very own Switching on of the lights which is very popular.
- **The Mayor's Civic Service**

STAFF

There are three office based staff: Town Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer and Assistant Town Clerk who work between 60 hours per week. There is three outdoor staff working full time and two part time caretakers.

Courses attended:

The Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk attended several Clerks Training courses throughout the year.

FINANCE

The Council's finances are regularly monitored by a Finance Working Party. Set out over is a summary of the Council's income and expenditure for the year 2010/2011.

BELPER TOWN COUNCIL

INCOME & EXPENDITURE YEAR 2010/11

	2010/11
<u>INCOME</u>	
PRECEPT	241500
SPONSORSHIP --	
Xmas, Flowers, Food Fest	10462
MARKET RENTS	5550
LETTING FEES	1050
MISC	8358
TOTAL	266920
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
STAFF	115594
GEN ADMIN	24310
ELECTION EXP	0
OUTDOOR MAINT	8399
VEHICLES/EQUIPM	4055
ARTS & SPORT	9891
SPORT	0
MISC GRANTS	1481
COMM SERVICES	17343
TOURISM	10609
CHRISTMAS	13714
MARKET PLACE	2251
FLORAL	15326
MISCELLANEOUS	1697
COPPICE CAR PARK	510
	Mayor
	Misc exp
TOTAL	225180