

BELPER TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2009/2010

INTRODUCTION

By the Chairman, Councillor Norman Bull

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

At the time of compiling this report, my wife Diane and I are scheduled to have attended at least sixty eight engagements during the past twelve months. The events have ranged from the grace and splendour of Derby Cathedral through to the razzmatazz of the Belper Annual Fair, from the tranquility of our residential homes to football at Pride Park, from visiting Schools to Civic Services and finally attending the licensing of the two new vicars, Reverend Jonathan Page, Christ Church and Reverend Anne Stratton, St Peter's Church. I wish them well in their new positions.

Belper once again entered the East Midlands in Bloom competition and won a Silver Award. Our small but dedicated team of outdoor staff, Paul Hicking, Peter Hunt and Andrew Sanders deserve much of the praise for this award. Thanks Boys!!

Our Christmas Carol Service and the 'Switch On' of the Christmas lights are the envy of our neighbours, long may these events continue to be a success, with your help and support they will be.

Finally thanks to our administration staff, Roz Bullimore, Town Clerk, Rosemary Bridges, Assistant Town Clerk and Glyn Haynes, Responsible Finance Officer. All too often their efforts go unnoticed, but not by me.

Councillor Norman Bull
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:

East Midlands in Bloom is the regional competition of 'Britain in Bloom' and has been running for over 30 years. Belper Town Council has entered the competition for a number of years and last year the Town Council was the proud winners of a Silver Award. The Meadow Court complex received a special Judges' Award for their community spirit and for the quality of their plants and landscaping.

Food and Real Ale Festival:

The Food and Real Ale Festival was a record success with thousands flocking to the town to view more than 40 stalls and to enjoy the special entertainment that had been laid on. It is now a very important item in the Council's calendar and to bring added interest a Craft Fair is to be added to the 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. In addition, the Council provides and maintains litter and grit bins and bus shelters.

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
Belper Town Wind Band
Citizens Advice Bureau
Derwent Valley Mills
Fleet Arts
Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme
Maurice Heely Award – (First Alton Manor Scout Group)
The Drop Inn
Vitalise

Communicating with the Public:

As well as the Council's notice boards situated around the town, the Council has its own website 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 has continued to see changes throughout 2009/10 with a new Safer Neighbourhood Sergeant, Richard Booth and two new Police Community Support Officers in John Hardy and Eve Shaw.

The five safer neighbourhood teams have been working hard to liaise with their communities and local councillors to establish policing priorities for their respective areas. These continue to be reviewed every 3 months and the teams have been working with local partners to find long term sustainable solutions to these problems. Anti-social Behaviour and Criminal Damage will continue to be a priority for all of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams throughout the next 12 months.

2009/10 has been a busy year for Belper Town Centre with the number of people visiting the town on a Friday night rising significantly. This obviously creates a greater opportunity for incidents of public disorder. However, throughout the year we have established a strong and effective team of Special constables who have given up their time week in week out to increase the police presence in the town centre and surrounding areas over the weekends. This has added to regular Police staff and helped to ensure that public order incidents have been kept to a minimum.

As you are aware 2010/11 will see Belper Section fall under the command structure of Chesterfield Division. I would like to reassure you that this will not impact upon the day to day, operational policing of the town. I would also like to confirm that there are no immediate plans to sell, or otherwise relocate, Belper Police Station.

We have seen some significant reductions in crime and disorder over the past 12 months and in particular with offences of Assault; Serious Acquisitive Crime; and Vehicle Crime. We shall strive to further reduce all areas of crime throughout 2010/11, and use this as a basis to drive down the fear of crime in the community.

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 are 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 provide 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 at 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). For the second year Milford had its very own Switching on of the lights which proved 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 are three outdoor staff working full time and two part time caretakers.

Courses attended:

CiLCA Power of Wellbeing: Rosalind Bullimore and Rosemary Bridges.

Qualifications Achieved:

Rosalind Bullimore, the Clerk and Rosemary Bridges, the Assistant Town Clerk, passed section 7 the Power of Wellbeing of the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)

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 2009/2010.

BELPER TOWN COUNCIL
INCOME & EXPENDITURE YEAR 2009/10

2009/10

INCOME

PRECEPT	241500
PARISH WARDEN	0
SPONSORSHIP --	
Xmas, Flowers, Food Fest	9564
MARKET RENTS	5789
LETTING FEES	2249
MISC	4510
TOTAL	263612

EXPENDITURE

STAFF	112982
GEN ADMIN	26881
ELECTION EXP	0
OUTDOOR MAINT	8642
VEHICLES/EQUIPM	2149
ARTS & SPORT	9074
SPORT	0
MISC GRANTS	4220
COMM SERVICES	15925
TOURISM	11128
CHRISTMAS	12676
MARKET PLACE	2874
FLORAL	10434
MISCELLANEOUS	1812
COPPICE CAR PARK	1574
TOTAL	220371