



Annual Report and Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2014

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*The offices are open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
From 9:00am to 2:00pm*

Sue Coulson, Clerk to the Council

The Chairman's' Annual Report 2013/14



The aim of this new look report is to provide Birstall residents with clearer information about the Parish Council's responsibilities and how these are discharged.

The end of the financial year gives the opportunity to reflect on the council's activities and achievements and to look forward to new challenges in 2014/15.

Since I was elected Chair of Birstall Parish Council in May 2013 it has been a busy and fulfilling year. I have represented the Council at a number of events, these have included:

- ◆ The Mayor of Charnwood's Civic Service
- ◆ The Chief Constables Cultural Evening
- ◆ The opening of the new cycle way at Watermead Park
- ◆ The Fire & Rescue Carol Service
- ◆ The annual Remembrance Service at St James the Great Church, when it was a particular privilege to lay a wreath in memory of those from Birstall & Wanlip who lost their lives in two World Wars.

The Staff team and Councillors have organised three popular and well attended events during the year:

- ◆ The Birstall Gala, a major two day event in June



- ◆ The Christmas Lights switch on and Christmas market



- ◆ The Civic Service and Lunch in October (to thank people who contribute to the Community of Birstall).

Birstall Parish Council is responsible for:

- ◆ Setting the Precept
- ◆ Collecting money from the hiring & letting of Council owned premises & sports facilities
- ◆ Employing the staff team
- ◆ Managing and overseeing the spending of public money
- ◆ Maintaining the Council's assets in good order. These are as follows:
 - ⇒ The Cemetery at Greengate Lane
 - ⇒ The Village Hall, Offices and Estates Yard and buildings
 - ⇒ Sibson Road Building
 - ⇒ School Lane Playing Fields Changing Rooms
 - ⇒ The Pavilion
 - ⇒ Stonehill Avenue public toilets
 - ⇒ The Old Forge

Achievements during the year have been:

- ◆ Completing the renewing of the tarmac paths in School Lane Playing Fields
- ◆ Upgrading the cricket squares
- ◆ Installing an extra light on School Lane Playing Fields
- ◆ Creating a new area in the cemetery (by request) for the interment of ash caskets
- ◆ Introducing a Tree Policy for the care of trees on Birstall Parish Council land
- ◆ Installing a BMX track for young people on Meadow Lane playing fields
- ◆ Taking the first steps in the process of building a Community Hall on Hallam Fields
- ◆ Adopting the first play area on Hallam Fields
- ◆ Installing a new track for access to Worcester Avenue allotments

Birstall Parish Council has continued to provide financial support to the Youth Café, which goes from strength to strength and to the Birstall & Wanlip Neighbourhood Watch, which contributes to the reduction of crime in our Community.

The Council already has some projects in mind which it is looking to complete during 2014/15, these are:

- ◆ Completion of the building of Hallam Fields Community Hall
- ◆ Extend the metal fencing around the School Lane playing fields
- ◆ Upgrade the village notice boards
- ◆ Progress the provision of defibrillators for Birstall
- ◆ Employ a person to enforce the byelaws regarding dogs on the playing fields
- ◆ Renew the tarmac surface outside the village hall

Councillor Ann Marshall
Chair of Birstall Parish Council

Report from the Estates Team Manager—2013/2014

Despite the continued absence through serious illness of one of our long-standing Team Members BPC's Estates Team has enjoyed a very successful and extremely busy past twelve months.

All the Council's public open spaces have been maintained to a rigorously high standard throughout the year and a record number of projects have been completed on time and within budget.

SPORTS PITCHES:

Birstall Parish Council is renowned for the quality of the sporting facilities provided for local sports teams and this year has seen improvements in all areas on what were already exacting standards.

BOWLS: In autumn 2012 Birstall Bowling Club invested in a complete renovation of the bowling green. The work, carried out by outside contractors (Fineturf Ltd) involved the complete removal of the existing turf, laying and laser-levelling of new rootzone and laying of all new purpose grown fine turf. The Estates team then took over responsibility for transforming this newly-laid turf into a durable playing surface for the start of the 2013 season. Not only was this completed in time for the start of the season in April 2013 but the quality of the playing surface throughout the season was widely acclaimed.

CRICKET: The structure of league cricket in Leicester was completely overhauled at the end of 2013 season with a multi-divisional format introduced. The placement of teams within this new league structure for the upcoming 2014 season was decided not on ability but on the quality of the ground and facilities. Despite their location on a free-access public playing field, league inspectors were impressed with the quality of the wickets, squares and outfield produced by the Estates Team.

FOOTBALL: At the time of writing this report we are coming to the end of the 2013-14 football season with all four football pitches on School Lane Playing Field in excellent condition despite the wettest winter on record and only 3 weekend's matches having to be called off.

DISPLAYS: Both the floral displays in the summer and the festive lighting in the winter were well received. Despite having to source plants from a new supplier this year the results were up to the usual standard as 75 large hanging baskets were once again erected and maintained throughout the summer around the village.

PROJECTS:

Renewal of footpaths – School Lane Playing Field.

Following on from last year's successful project to renew the footpath running adjacent to Beechfield Avenue, phase 2 of this project (the paths adjacent to School Lane and the central path) was completed in the autumn. Project managing this contract to ensure that the works were safely completed on time and within budget was not an easy task. Working alongside the same contractor (Brookside Construction) as phase 1 of the project proved to be the deciding factor. Their work in reshaping the path to fit in with all the existing play equipment and furniture was exemplary and their attention to detail admirable. We were able to landscape the grassed areas to blend in to the new construction as they completed each section of path allowing the footpath to be reopened in stages reducing the disruption to users of the playing fields.



School Lane footpath under construction.



Completed central path during landscaping.

Tree policy, survey & works

On request from the Estates & Recreation Committee I drafted the Council's first tree policy whilst carrying out a survey of trees on Council run land. This policy details the mapping and register of all trees, the frequency of surveys and the zoning of areas for risk assessment purposes, the maintenance of trees through pruning etc and the methodology of maintenance tasks including health & safety.

The Estates Team also carried out major tree work schemes across a number of sites this past winter. These included:

The removal of all extraneous growth to the mature tree line at Greengate Allotment site. This extraneous growth consisted of suckering and self-set trees plus the removal of ivy from the mature trees.

Similar works were carried out to the northern boundary of Meadow Lane Allotments and to the south of Worcester Avenue.

Scheduled work to periodically reduce the size of the beech hedges at Greengate Cemetery was also completed.

Further major tree works carried out at Greengate Cemetery included the removal of the laurel bushes to the south of the Woodland Walk. These evergreen trees prevented light from reaching the woodland floor, shading out the spring bulbs and forming a disconnecting barrier between the Cemetery and the Woodland Walk and have been replaced by a native beech hedge.

Meadow Lane

At the time of writing two projects at Meadow Lane Playing Field are nearing completion. A newly constructed BMX track has been installed linking from the existing half-pipe. The works have been completed by Ben Rafferty utilising materials supplied by Severn Trent Ltd.

A completely new access track to Worcester Avenue Allotments has also been constructed. The current access track routed around Birstall United's ground is to be closed off so an alternative was needed. The works have been completed by Brookside Construction.

Andy Garland
Estates Team Manager

Report from the Senior Youth Worker—Birstall Youth Café 2013/14

Since the change of age on a Wednesday to 8 – 11 year olds the numbers have increased drastically. During the summer months the average attendance on a Wednesday evening was 65 young people. During the winter months this has fallen to around 30 per session. We anticipate with the lighter evenings that the numbers will once again increase.

During the sessions the young people have participated in sports, play, outdoor cooking, learning double ball and skipping. Most importantly there was continual team work that was on going with the young people who attended.

One issue that occurred due to the large numbers was bullying between the young people. This was not verbal bullying but through BBM/Facebook and Twitter. It caused the team some issues because it was neither visible nor audible. In order to deal with this problem, with the full support and agreement of parents, mobile phones have been banned on a Wednesday evening. The reports that came back from parents was "it was great to see kids playing rather than sitting in the corner on mobile phones".

During the past 12 months we have also been supporting some of the parents regarding behaviour issues that have been ongoing at home. To date we have made 3 referrals to other agencies that will offer extra support to these families. We have also seen an increase in parents asking for our help and this appears to be due to the trust being built between staff and parents.

The whole purpose of changing the Wednesday evenings to a lower age was to increase the numbers on a Friday. This has been a slow process, mainly due to the young people becoming 11, but now we are averaging 20 young people on a Friday evening. We anticipate that during the next 12 months this number will be reaching over 40.

We have been successful in obtaining funding to run a healthy eating programme but we have also incorporated the County Council's 'Love Food, Hate Waste' programme. The young people are producing meals that will feed a family of 4 for under £5. They have also written all of the recipes up so that these can be reproduced as a recipe book and sold at the Christmas fete to self-fund for future activities.

During the Friday sessions we have also been encouraging the young people to produce items (peg bags, draw string bags, cushion covers) so that these can be sold to generate income. We are currently making glitter phone cases and wine glasses.

Due to the increase of numbers on a Friday evening we have applied for funding for 2 further youth workers and have again been successful in obtaining this. Having the extra youth workers on a Friday evening will ensure that we are able to run a full sports programme along with the enterprise workshops. We have also been advised that there are large groups of young people on the Hallam Field estate (however this has not been confirmed by Police reports), so we will also be utilising the 2 extra staff on a Friday to undertake some detached work to try and encourage these young people to use the Youth Café. Also there have been reports of groups of young people using the new BMX track and intimidating younger children. Again with these 2 extra staff we are able to undertake detached work there.

Looking forward:

- ◆ We are hoping to take a group of young people on a camping trip this year but I am keen for the group to be responsible for raising the funds for this event. However, the Baptist Church have chosen for us to be their Charity this year and have requested that the money be used for a camping trip, as they have grandchildren that came on the previous one and heard how much they enjoyed it.

- ◆ We are also to be the main benefactor of the Birstall Duck Race. To date we have a book stall, all the items that we have made, teddy tombola, cake stall, Old Sweet Van, bouncy castle, and penalty shoot-out. Any support any one can give manning the stalls would be much appreciated along with baking/donation of cakes.
As always the police have been extremely supportive of the youth café and make regular visits (maybe due to the size cup we have for Mark).
- ◆ We will be looking at having a BBQ evening again this year and we hope that this is something that we can run in conjunction with Birstall Running Club as we did last summer. We are also hoping that we can start working with the Running Club to help develop a club specifically for the young people who attend the youth café, both on Wednesday and Friday evenings.
- ◆ We have also been working with the Police and Youth offending team regarding a delivery of internet safety training. This should be happening within the next 2 months and this will be for both the young people and their parents/carers. Due to the big cases recently regarding sexual exploitation and also the number of young people that have been targeted through the internet, it is important that we support all concerned to help reduce the risks.

Targets for the following 12 months:

- ◆ Undertake more detached work
- ◆ Increase the numbers that attend
- ◆ To build back the sexual health programme on a Friday evening
- ◆ To potentially go on some trips, even a camping one!!

Helen McNulty
Senior Youth Worker – Birstall Youth Café



The Parish Council Team

Both Councillors and staff are essential to the running of the Parish Council. The Councillors made decisions, the staff team implements the decisions and runs the services.

The Councillors:

Birstall Parish Council should have 20 Councillors in total when all posts are full. At the end of the 2013/14 year, there are 17 Councillors with 3 vacancies.

In this year, sadly, 1 serving Councillor passed away. There were 5 resignations, however, 5 new Councillors were co-opted

Full Council meetings are held 11 times a year at 7:00pm on the first Monday of the month, with the AGM in May.

There are 4 sub-committees:

- ◆ Management & Policy
- ◆ Planning
- ◆ Estates & Recreation
- ◆ Gala & Civic Functions

The Staff Team:

The Council employs 17 members of staff.

To run the office:

- ◆ Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer
- ◆ Deputy Clerk
- ◆ Administration Assistant

Estates Team—to undertake care & maintenance of Estate & Premises:

- ◆ Estates Team Manager
- ◆ Senior Groundsman
- ◆ Sexton/Groundsman
- ◆ 3 x Groundsmen
- ◆ Cleaner
- ◆ Caretaker/Cleaner

Youth Team:

- ◆ Senior Youth Worker
- ◆ 1 x Sports Coach/Youth Worker and 4 x Youth Workers

Financial Report and Accounts for the year ended

Birstall Parish Council takes the management of public money very seriously. Throughout the year the office staff manage the Council's Income and Expenditure. All transactions were signed off by two Councillors and the performance against the budget is presented to the Council at its monthly meetings.

At the financial year end the Council's accounts were audited by both Internal and External independent auditors. This resulted in a satisfactory audit report with no major recommendations at the end of the 2012/2013.

Income is received in various ways and some of the major sources are listed below:

Precept: this is an amount that is demanded from Charnwood Borough Council to discharge the duties of the Parish Council for the year. The income is collected via the Council Tax from the residents of Birstall. For 2013/14 the precept demand amounted to **£356,800**, which included **£18,710** as a grant from the government passed on by Charnwood Borough Council

		<u>Premises Hire - 2013/14:</u>
Village Hall Lettings	£22,409	
Day Centre Lettings	£8,998	
Sibson Road Lettings	£6,267	
Sports Pavilion Lettings	£1,980	
TOTAL	£39,654	

Allotment Rents—2013/14:

We have three allotment sites in Birstall:

Greengate Lane	41 Plots
Meadow Lane	74 Plots
Worcester Avenue	27 Plots
TOTAL	142 Plots

The income generated in allotment rents amounted to **£1,970**. At this moment in time we do not have any vacant plots and we have a waiting list of = 3.

Cemetery Income—2013/14:

At Greengate Lane Cemetery we offer various services, they are:

Grave Burials	Interment of Coffin burials for Birstall Residents only	£18,660
Woodland Walk	Interment of cremated remains directly into the earth, no casket interments	£1,860
The Glade	This is an area for the scattering of ashes.	£610
The Haven	Ash Casket Interments only. This is a new service introduced by request from members of the public.	£2,905
TOTAL		£24,035

Pitch Hire—2013/14:

We Hire the School Lane Playing fields for the use of Football, Rounder's and Cricket, the pitches are maintained and marked out by our Estates Team.

The income generated from the hiring of the pitches and changing room facilities amounted to **£5,421**.

Other sources of income are from:

♦ Grants		£9,000
♦ Recycling Credits		£1,471
♦ Stonehill Avenue Toilets		£2,571

Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2014

Income and Expenditure Account

31/03/13		31/03/14
£		£
	INCOME	
376,953.00	Precept	356,800.00
60,783.87	Fees Receivable	73,631.84
2,159.79	Gala & Civic Functions Income	11,183.17
7,259.67	Interest Received	2710.66
8,551.01	Rents Receivable	8,615.81
10,100.00	Refundable Deposits	13,650.00
21,132.58	Other Income	14,656.60
486,939.92	TOTAL INCOME	481248.08
	EXPENDITURE	
231,947.78	Staff Costs	230,959.42
2,860.00	Cemetery Expenditure	4,800.00
6,956.54	S. 137 Payments	6,826.05
10,125.62	Gala and Civic Functions Expenditure	13,951.25
46,474.07	Other Expenditure	65,419.56
10,499.50	Refunded Deposits	12,800.00
35,538.53	Estates Expenditure	50,724.69
14,320.38	Youth Initiatives	17,895.89
36,811.28	Utilities	37,238.10
66,732.56	Capital Expenditure	35,273.54
128.82	Fees Refunded	226.50
462,395.08	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	476,115.00
259,964.15	Balance as at 01/04/13	284,508.99
486,939.92	Add Total Income	481,248.08
746,904.07		765,757.07
462,395.08	Deduct Total Expenditure	476,115.00
0.00	Stock Adjustment	0.00
0.00	Transfer to/ from reserves	0.00
284,508.99	Balance as at 31/03/14	289,642.07

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2014

Consolidated Balance Sheet

31/03/13		31/03/14
£		£
Current assets		
0.00	Investments	50,000.00
0.00	Loans Made	0.00
0.00	Investments	0.00
0.00	Stocks	0.00
3,228.00	VAT Recoverable	3,104.00
5,896.00	Debtors	8,552.00
0.00	Payment in Advance	0.00
292,327.59	Cash in Hand & at Bank	248,958.00
301,451.59	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	310,614.00
301,451.59	TOTAL ASSETS	310,614.00
Current liabilities		
0.00	Loans Received	0.00
0.00	Temporary Borrowing	0.00
0.00	VAT Payable	0.00
16,943.00	Creditors	20,972.00
0.00	Receipts in Advance	0.00
16,943.00	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	20,972.00
284,508.59	TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	289,642.00
0.00	Long Term Borrowing	0.00
0.00	Deferred Liabilities	0.00
0.00	Deferred Credits	0.00
0.00		0.00
284,508.59	NET ASSETS	289,642.00
Represented by		
284,508.99	General Fund	289,642.00
0.00	Earmarked Reserve	0.00
0.00	Refundable Deposits	0.00
284,508.99		289,642.00

Parish Councillors representing Birstall

Parish Councillors were elected in May 2011 for a period of four years.

Goscote Ward: West of Loughborough Road between Station Road and Greengate Lane

Mrs Lorraine Harrison
 Mrs Ann Marshall
 Mr Dennis Marshall
 Vacancy

Greengate Ward: West of Loughborough Road north of Greengate Lane, including Hallam Fields

Mr Tony Abbey
 Mr Peter Barnsby
 Mr Tony Fowler
 Mrs Christine Geschke
 Mr Ed Marshall
 Mrs Serinda Shergill

Netherhall Ward: East of Loughborough Road including Sibson Road (evens), Church Hill and Front Street

Mrs Melanie Coley
 Mr Neville Mays
 Mr Les Ashton

Riverside Ward: Whiles Lane and the all roads on the east side of Wanlip Lane

Mrs Mary Allen
 Mrs Gail Evans-Hay
 Mr Julian Howe

Stonehill Ward: Between Loughborough Road and Wanlip Lane including the shops' side of Sibson Road

Mrs Sheila Alcock
 Mr Robert Dickinson
 Mr Roy Rollings
 Vacancy

Charnwood Borough Councillors for the Birstall Area

Mr Iain Bentley (Conservative) cllr.iain.bentley@charnwood.gov.uk	Watermead Ward
Mr David Gaskell (Conservative) cllr.david.gaskell@charnwood.gov.uk	Watermead Ward
Mr Simon Sansome (Liberal Democrat) cllr.simon.sansome@charnwood.gov.uk	Wanlip Ward
Mrs Serinda Shergill (Conservative) cllr.serinder.shergill@charnwood.gov.uk	Wanlip Ward

Leicestershire County Councillors for Birstall Division

Mr Iain Bentley (Conservative)
iain.bentley@leics.gov.uk

Member of Parliament

Mr Stephen Dorrell, MP House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
020 7219 4472
info@stephendorrell.org.uk