



# **Annual Report and Accounts** **For the year ended 31 March 2015**

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## **Birstall Parish Council**

**Birstall Road, Birstall, Leicester, LE4 4DH**

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

## The Chairman's' Remarks—Annual Report 2014/15

The aim of this Annual report is to provide Birstall residents with information about the activities and achievements of the Parish Council during the financial year 2014/15 and to look forward to new challenges in 2015/16.

Birstall Parish Council is the first layer of Local Government. It is not a politically based organisation and is there to provide services for the residents of the Parish of Birstall and to manage the Councils' assets. In order to fulfil these responsibilities the Council employs a team of staff and has 20 Parish Councillors who are volunteers from our community.

The Parish Council also supports and works with other partners and organisations to enhance and encourage a range of services for the benefit of local residents.

### Birstall Parish Council is responsible for:

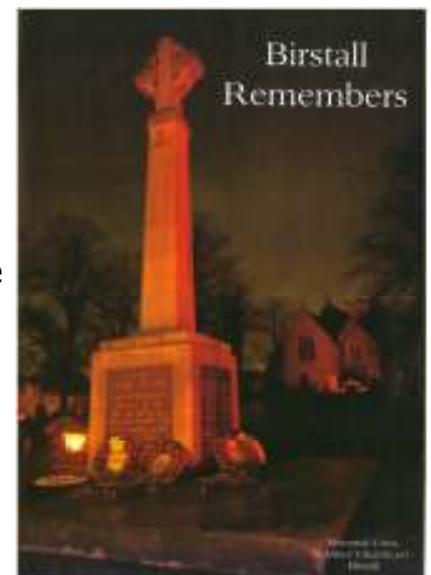
- ◇ Setting the Precept
- ◇ Publishing the Annual audited accounts
- ◇ Organising the Annual Parish Meeting
- ◇ Collecting monies from the hiring & letting of Council owned premises and sports facilities
- ◇ Managing & overseeing the spending of public money
- ◇ Managing interments at Greengate Lane cemetery
- ◇ Employing the Staff team
- ◇ Maintaining the Councils' assets in good order

### Birstall Parish Councils' Assets are as follows:

- ◇ The Village Hall, Council Offices, Day Centre, Estates Yard & Buildings
- ◇ The Sibson Road building
- ◇ School Lane playing fields & play equipment, Pavilion & changing rooms
- ◇ Meadow Lane & Harrowgate Drive playing fields & play equipment
- ◇ Hallam Fields play area 1
- ◇ Stonehill Avenue public toilets
- ◇ 3 allotment sites on Greengate Lane, Meadow Lane & Worcester Avenue
- ◇ The Old Forge
- ◇ The Cemetery on Greengate Lane

As the elected Chair of the Parish Council my role is to chair Council meetings and to represent the Council at Civic and local events. This is a great privilege and has certainly kept me busy. During 2014/15 I have attended:

- ◇ The Mayor of Charnwood's Civic Service
- ◇ The opening of the new cycle way at Watermead Park
- ◇ The Duck Race
- ◇ The service held at St James the Great Church to commemorate the centenary of WW1
- ◇ The annual remembrance service at St James the Great Church and laid a wreath in memory of those from Birstall & Wanlip who lost their lives in two World Wars
- ◇ The Fire & Rescue Carol Service at the Methodist Church
- ◇ A meeting with Leicestershire County Council Officers to agree the siting of the 3 new bus shelters on the A6



The Staff team, Councillors and volunteers organised three popular and very well attended events during the year, namely, the Birstall Gala, the Christmas Lights Switch On & Market, the Civic Service & Lunch in October, which is held to thank people who contribute their time to provide services for the community.



Achievements during the year have been:

- ◇ The installation of 2 defibrillators in the village, one on School Lane playing fields car park and one at the Methodist Church on Wanlip Lane. Free training sessions were provided for the residents.
- ◇ Commenced work to progress the building of the Community Hall on Hallam Fields
- ◇ Extended the fencing on the School Lane playing fields
- ◇ Renewed the tarmac on the car park area outside the Village Hall
- ◇ Introduced & adopted a Grant Aid Policy to allow Birstall groups/ organisations to apply for funding that has been set aside in the Councils budget. During this financial year Grant Aid was approved for three Birstall groups amounting to £725
- ◇ Provided red filters to light up the Church & Council offices to Commemorate the Centenary of WW1



Birstall Parish Council has continued to provide financial support to:

- ◇ The Youth Café, which goes from strength to strength
- ◇ The Birstall & Wanlip Neighbourhood Watch, which contributes to the prevention of crime in our community
- ◇ Age UK Ltd, to fund the Bath Nurse service for vulnerable elderly residents
- ◇ Our Local Beat Team, by providing a room for their exclusive use in the Sibson Road building.

The Parish Council already has some projects in mind which it is looking to complete in 2015/16, these are:

- ◇ Continue to progress the building of Hallam Fields Community Hall
- ◇ Install a 3rd defibrillator on the Greengate Lane side of the A6
- ◇ Install a World War Commemorative Clock on the front of the Council Offices
- ◇ Employ a person to enforce the Byelaws regarding dogs on the playing fields
- ◇ Re-furbish the room at the Sibson Road building used by the Local Beat Team.
- ◇ Look into providing outdoor gym equipment on the playing fields
- ◇ Replace a window in the Day Centre
- ◇ Look into replacing the Estates team vehicle and any necessary machinery

Councillor Ann Marshall  
Chair of Birstall Parish Council

## Report from the Estates Team Manager—2014/2015

Birstall Parish Council's Estates Team have enjoyed another successful year maintaining and improving the Council's sports facilities and amenity areas for the people of Birstall.

### **SPORTS PITCHES:**

**BOWLS:** In the second season of maintaining the newly laid bowling green we suffered an extremely persistent attack of fungal disease on the green which affected the quality of the playing surface. With the implementation of a new maintenance regime tailored specifically to prevent further attacks coupled with a change in irrigation protocol we are hopeful that the coming season will see a significant improvement to the green.

**CRICKET:** Both cricket pitches were maintained to the usual standard last year and both clubs enjoyed decent seasons in the newly formed Leicestershire & Rutland Cricket League. Good weather throughout the summer meant that very few fixtures were rained off.

**FOOTBALL:** All four football pitches on School Lane Playing Fields played well throughout the whole season and a dry second half of the winter meant that we were able to complete the whole season without having to call off any fixtures at all.

### **ALLOTMENTS:**

A lot of work was carried out at the Meadow Lane Allotment site this year. Large overhanging willow trees were removed from the northern boundary and trees around the perimeter were cut back to allow more light into the site. This allowed us to replace large sections of the boundary fence and also to renovate two plots that were previously deemed unworkable.

All nine taps at this site were also replaced with new mounting posts installed:



## **CEMETERY:**

The continuing popularity of 'The Haven' section of the Cemetery which allows ash casket interments and the increasing demand for these plots has meant that we have created an extra 38 plots this year with many more planned for the coming year. We also made new signs for The Haven and The Glade from the trunk of a Sycamore tree that had to be felled:



We also undertook a comprehensive programme of tree pruning throughout all sites which has further benefitted areas such as the Woodland Walk which had an excellent display of Snowdrops:



## **PLAYING FIELDS**

We have started a programme of refurbishing the steel benches on School Lane Playing Fields. A number of these benches have corrosion of the support legs which have to be removed and new legs welded on. New trees were planted at School Lane and at Harrowgate Drive. We also took over the maintenance of the first Play Area at Hallam Fields.

Andy Garland  
Estates Team Manager

## Report from the Youth Workers—Birstall Youth Café 2014/15

This year has seen many changes, the lowering of the age range for the Wednesday evenings has proven to be extremely successful in raising the attendance numbers. During the summer months as many as 60 young people were attending, thankfully, we were able to take the opportunity of utilising the fantastic outdoor space on School Lane Playing Fields to do sporting activities, picnics, skipping, and football.

### **Birstall Methodist Church—Giant Puppets:**

We worked with Birstall Methodist Church to create the beads that would go onto the costumes for the Giant Puppets for the Christmas Switch On, all of the young people enjoyed this and looked forward to seeing their hard work come to fruition in December.



### **Fundraising Onesie Night:**

We Held a 'Onesie' / Beauty night to fund raise for the Youth Café, a large number of the usual attendees thought this a fantastic idea and we managed to raise £25.00 on the night.



### **Duck Race:**

In May 2014, we were fortunate enough to be nominated as the main beneficiary for the 'Duck Race' the young people got busy making cakes to sell on their stall to raise extra funds for the Youth Café.

The proceeds from the 'Duck Race' amounted to **£1,745.34**, for which the young people are eternally grateful. This enabled them to purchase much needed equipment, an electric cooker to enable them to be more adventurous with their cooking lessons, an electric sewing machine for making craft goods, other recreational equipment to replace broken items, and Hair & Beauty equipment.



## Partnerships:

Police: The Youth Café has a very good working relationship with the Local Beat Officers:

PC Dave Jaeckels, PCSO Mark Butler and PCSO Fiona Lacey, all of them are regular visitors to the Youth Café on both the Wednesday and Friday evenings.

As you can see from the photographs, the relationship is a good one, the young people love nothing more than challenging them to a table tennis tournament.

Birstall Methodist Church: the young people put some considerable time into helping with the creation of the Giant Puppets.

High Impact: this is an organisation that uses the Youth Café facilities during the day, dealing with challenging young people throughout the County who are being threatened with exclusion from school. It offers an alternative curriculum which better suits the needs of their clients. High Impact work in partnership with the Parish Council and as a gesture of thanks for the free use of the facilities during the day, they host and staff 'Out of School Clubs' during the school holidays for the young people of Birstall and are currently donating a £200 pool table to the Youth Café to replace the one that has recently broken beyond repair.

## Indoor Car Boot:

The Young people arranged and worked extremely hard to ensure that the Indoor Car Boot was a success, this again helped them to raise over £150 for trips and treats.



The Youth Workers work with the young people (and the parents to some extent) to ascertain what it is they want to get from the Youth Café, a joint decision is then made and they all then get together to come up with a plan to make their choices work. The fundraising challenges is good for them, they feel very proud of themselves when it's all over and they have managed to get that piece of equipment or activity that they jointly decided upon, it teaches them that if you want things out of life you have to put the effort in to achieve your goals. This is not a bad lesson to take into the future with them.

## Future Plans:

The Youth Workers aim to continue with the good work, to discuss and implement ways of raising the numbers on Friday evenings and work hard to promote the Youth Café to all young people in Birstall.



## The Parish Council Team

Both Councillors and staff are essential to the running of the Parish Council. The Councillors make the 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 2014/15 year, there are 16 Councillors with 4 vacancies.

Full Council meetings are held 11 times a year, on the first Monday of the month (where applicable due to bank holidays) at 7:00pm in the Village Hall, members of the public are invited to attend. The Annual Parish Council meeting is held in May of each year.

There are 4 sub-committees:

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

### The Staff Team:

The Council employs 15 members of staff.

#### Office Staff:

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

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

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

#### Youth Team:

- ◆ 1 x Senior Youth Worker
- ◆ 1 x Sports Coach/Youth Worker and 2 x Youth Workers

## Financial Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015

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, and a six month review of the accounts is presented at the October Parish Council meeting.

At the financial year end the Council's accounts were audited by an independent Internal Auditor and External independent auditors. This resulted in a satisfactory audit report with no major recommendations at the end of the 2013/2014.

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 precept is collected via the Council Tax from the residents of Birstall. For 2014/15 the precept demand amounted to **£362,291**, which included **£13,540** as a grant from the government, and passed on to the Parish Council by Charnwood Borough Council.

### **Premises Hire - 2014/15:**

Village Hall Lettings	£22,470
Day Centre Lettings	£9,810
Sibson Road Lettings	£8,566
Sports Pavilion Lettings	£2,042
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£42,888</b>

### **Allotment Rents—2014/15:**

We have three allotment sites in Birstall:

Greengate Lane	37 Plots
Meadow Lane	74 Plots
Worcester Avenue	27 Plots
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>138 Plots</b>

The income generated in allotment rents amounted to **£2,464**. At this moment in time we have six vacant half plots, 2 on each site

### **Cemetery Income—2014/15:**

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

Grave Burials	Interment of Coffin burials for Birstall Residents only	£23,270
Woodland Walk	Interment of cremated remains directly into the earth, no casket interments	£1,500
The Glade	This is an area for the scattering of ashes.	£1,465
The Haven	Ash Casket Interments only. This is a new service introduced by request from members of the public.	£2,508
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£28,743</b>

### **Pitch Hire—2014/15:**

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 **£5,520**.

### **Other sources of income are from:**

♦ Grants	<b>£7,015</b>
♦ Recycling Credits	<b>£975</b>
♦ Stonehill Avenue Toilets	<b>£2,601</b>

## Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2015

### Income and Expenditure Account

31/03/14		31/03/15
£		£
	<b>INCOME</b>	
356,800	Precept	370,289
73,632	Fees Receivable	77,365
11,183	Gala & Civic Functions Income	21,538
2,711	Interest Received	3,087
8,616	Rents Receivable	8,026
13,650	Refundable Deposits	12,395
14,657	Other Income	11,657
481,248	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	504,356
	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
230,959	Staff Costs	214,810
4,800	Cemetery Expenditure	5,894
6,826	S. 137 Payments	0
13,951	Gala and Civic Functions Expenditure	16,481
65,420	Other Expenditure	47,293
12,800	Refunded Deposits	12,505
50,725	Estates Expenditure	98,968
17,896	Youth Initiatives	11,918
37,238.10	Utilities	44,098
35,274	Capital Expenditure	0
227	Fees Refunded	70
476,115	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	452,038
284,509	Balance as at 01/04/14	289,642
481,248	Add Total Income	504,356
765,757		793,998
476,115	Deduct Total Expenditure	452,038
0.00	Stock Adjustment	0.00
0.00	Transfer to/ from reserves	0.00
289,642	Balance as at 31/03/15	341,960

## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2014

### Consolidated Balance Sheet

31/03/14		31/03/15
£		£
<b>Current assets</b>		
50,000	Investments	0
0.00	Loans Made	0
0.00	Investments	0
0.00	Stocks	0
3,104	VAT Recoverable	3,042
8,552	Debtors	6,171
0.00	Payment in Advance	0
248,958	Cash in Hand & at Bank	348,658
310,614	<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>357,870</b>
<b>310,614</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>357,870</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
0.00	Loans Received	0.00
0.00	Temporary Borrowing	0.00
0.00	VAT Payable	0.00
20,972	Creditors	15,910
0.00	Receipts in Advance	0.00
20,972	<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>15,910</b>
<b>289,642</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>341,960</b>
0.00	Long Term Borrowing	0.00
0.00	Deferred Liabilities	0.00
0.00	Deferred Credits	0.00
0.00		0.00
<b>289,642</b>	<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>341,960</b>
Represented by		
<b>289,642</b>	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>341,960</b>
0.00	Earmarked Reserve	0.00
0.00	Refundable Deposits	0.00
<b>289,642</b>		<b>341,960</b>

## Parish Councillors representing Birstall

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

**Before the elections in May  
2015**

Mrs Lorraine Harrison  
Mr Connor McNicholl  
Mr Dennis Marshall  
Mrs Ann Marshall  
Mr Roy Rollings

**After the Un-contested  
elections in May 2015**

Mr Robert Dickinson  
Mr John Jenkins  
Mr Roy Rollings  
VACANCY  
VACANCY

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

**Before the elections in May  
2015**

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

**After the Un-contested  
elections in May 2015**

Mr Pete Barnsby  
Mr Tony Fowler  
Mr Ed Marshall  
Mrs Serinda Shergill  
VACANCY  
VACANCY

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

**Before the elections in May  
2015**

Mrs Melanie Coley  
Mr Neville Mays  
VACANCY

**After the Un-contested  
elections in May 2015**

Mr Tony Abbey  
Mrs Christine Geschke  
Mrs Ann Marshall

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

**Before the elections in May  
2015**

Mrs Mary Allen  
Mrs Gail Evans-Hay  
Mr Julian Howe

**After the Un-contested  
elections in May 2015**

Mrs Mary Allen  
Mr Geoff Green  
Mr Julian Howe

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

**Before the elections in May  
2015**

Mrs Sheila Alcock  
Mr Robert Dickinson  
Mr Geoff Green

**After the Un-contested  
elections in May 2015**

Mrs S Alcock  
Mrs L Harrison  
VACANCY

## Charnwood Borough Councillors for the Birstall Area as at 31 March 2015

Mr Iain Bentley (Conservative) <a href="mailto:cllr.iain.bentley@charnwood.gov.uk">cllr.iain.bentley@charnwood.gov.uk</a>	Watermead Ward
Mr David Gaskell (Conservative) <a href="mailto:cllr.david.gaskell@charnwood.gov.uk">cllr.david.gaskell@charnwood.gov.uk</a>	Watermead Ward
Mr Simon Sansome (Liberal Democrat) <a href="mailto:cllr.simon.sansome@charnwood.gov.uk">cllr.simon.sansome@charnwood.gov.uk</a>	Wanlip Ward
Mrs Serinda Shergill (Conservative) <a href="mailto:cllr.serinder.shergill@charnwood.gov.uk">cllr.serinder.shergill@charnwood.gov.uk</a>	Wanlip Ward

## Leicestershire County Councillors for Birstall Division

Mr Iain Bentley (Conservative)  
[iain.bentley@leics.gov.uk](mailto: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](mailto:info@stephendorrell.org.uk)

During 2015 two of our long standing Councillors retired, Mr Neville Mays (18 year's) and Mr Dennis Marshall (23 year's). The Parish Council gave them both a warm send off at their last Parish Council meetings, but would like to thank them both, once again for their valuable contributions and their impressive length of service as Parish Councillors.

Three other Councillors decided not to stand for re-election this year, and this has created a number of vacancies that the Council will be actively seeking to fill as soon as possible, the tables on the previous page show where the vacancies currently lie.

If you or anyone you know is interested in becoming a Parish Councillor, please contact the Clerk at the Parish Council Offices or download the Application form from the Parish Council's website.