

Barwick in Elmet & Scholes Parish Council

Report from the Chairman for the Year 2010/11

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Parish and fellow Councillors, I am pleased to present my report for Parish Council activities over the past year.

Once again it has been a very busy year with so many changes and events but we have coped well. It helps when I can rely on a good quality team and also to have stability in the ranks. This was achieved with only one change taking place through the year. John Hayton found the commitment on his time too much, due to extra personal and business commitments, and was unable to carry out Council work to the level he would have liked and therefore, felt he should make way for someone with more time available. John will be greatly missed but has agreed to continue to maintain the Parish Web Site and we thank him for this and also for his three years on the Council. John was replaced through co-option by Neil Beaumont who brings an even younger look to the Council and I feel sure he will add fresh ideas and views to our deliberations and discussions. There is an introduction to Neil on page 3 and we look forward to working with him. Paul Birdsall has sustained a most unfortunate illness and missed a number of meetings but we hear the news of his recovery is good and have extended leave of absence for him meantime. His expertise on financial issues is very helpful and is missed.

This year marks the 4 year cycle for Parish Council elections and regrettably John Tinker has decided not to stand for re-election to the Council after more than fifteen years service. Fortunately we will continue to be able to call upon his wise counsel whenever required. A full tribute of John's contribution to the Parish is included elsewhere. This created a vacancy and Andrew Glyn-Mills (see page 3) having already expressed an interest in joining the Council completed his nomination papers and filled the position vacated by John with the other 11 Councillors also being returned unopposed.

On the planning front it has been a very eventful year with 47 applications evenly split between our two villages, a further reduction year on year (58-2010, 78-2009, 91-2008). Many of the applications were reasonably straight forward and merely warranted our support whilst others demanded more careful consideration for which we are able to call on the expertise of our dedicated planning committee of Councillors George Hall, Norma Fletcher, Geoff Yapp and Helen Elsworth who applied fairness, skill and consistency in formulating our responses to Leeds City Council. As well as local planning issues, we took a keen interest in two significantly large housing developments in neighbouring Parishes, at Churchfields (Boston Spa) involving 170 units and Grimes Dyke (Whinmoor) for 500 units, resulting in appeals by the developers to The Planning Inspectorate in both cases. Councillor Hall made strong representations at the Grimes Dyke appeal and gave considerable assistance to Boston Spa Parish Council and their advisers. Unfortunately, the Churchfields appeal went in favour of the developer whilst the Grimes Dyke decision is expected at the end of May. Leeds City Council has incurred considerable costs in fighting these issues and we know our Parish Council will be facing some challenging situations in the near future regarding the possibility of house building in both villages whereby our

Our Parish is in good hands and we look forward to a challenging future ahead. We cannot afford to be complacent and I thank all our Parishioners for their support.

And finally I extend thanks to my Council colleagues for their hard work, commitment and loyalty - it has been an honour and pleasure to work with them as Chairman during the past year.

Ben Hogan Chairman of the Parish Council

BARWICK in ELMET & SCHOLES PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011		subject to audit
2009-10	RECEIPTS	£
69,197	Bank balances brought forward	35,338.31
38,000	Precept for 2010-11	39,000.00
425	Allotment rents	485.00
100	Bank interest	28.91
14,234	Grant income	0.00
2,096	Vat refund received	8,524.30
1,420	Sports rents & other income	1,961.20
2,000	Leeds Festival tickets	2,240.00
0	Loan repayment	2,500.00
127,472		90,077.72
	PAYMENTS	
12,640	Administration	12,985.45
1,019	Insurances	1,117.70
775	Newsletter & website	922.07
256	Footpath	256.54
499	Allotments	464.55
42	Planning and legal	753.99
5,439	Conservation & environment	5,240.38
9,830	Heritage Lighting	0.00
6,411	Christmas Lights	1,375.00
857	Sports & recreation	871.72
38,442	Scholes Playground	2,400.00
7,400	Grants/Loans	2,300.00
8,524	Vat paid (for reclaim in 2011-12)	926.93
19,428	Budget reserves carried forward	41,890.39
15,910	Contingency reserves carried forward	18,573.00
127,472	TOTAL	£ 90,077.72

population could quite easily double over the next ten years.

Our Finance and General Purposes Committee is another busy group and is made up of Councillors **Paul Birdsall, Gerry McDonough, Norma Fletcher Geoff Yapp, Claire Hassell** and in-house auditor **David Leeming**. Our support of community groups within the Parish has included repairs to the nissen storage hut behind Scholes Village Hall for **Scholes Village Players** in order to help them continue with their popular productions, internal repairs to **Barwick Miners Welfare**, improvements to pathways and disabled access at **All Saints churchyard**, dry rot repairs at **Scholes Methodist Hall** and a grant to enable **Barwick Guides** to continue and not forgetting our regular support of the **Royal British Legion** and Poppy Day. The considerable expenditure incurred in renovating the **children's playground** at Station Road has proved a very worthwhile project judging by the popularity of the new equipment and it is great to see so many young people enjoying themselves. Plans are now in hand for the refurbishment of the Barwick children's playground.

Whilst the **heritage lighting** is complete in Barwick there are one or two areas in the Belle Vue Estate at Scholes which remain outstanding. The embellishments adorned with summer hanging baskets provide a welcome complement to the many flower beds around both villages and help to make the parish such a pleasant place in which to live. The **Christmas lights** in both villages have again brightened up the festive season and been well received by residents and visitors alike. They certainly gave us all that feeling of "well being" during the atrocious winter weather.

The legalities of the transfer of **Scholes Lodge Farm** into Parish ownership have now been concluded and work will soon commence on the new vehicular access for maintenance as well as fencing along the drainage ditch within the field. The funding for this work has been secured via a s106 green space planning contribution arising from the development of 10 houses on Station Road to be known as "*Station Gardens*". Grass cutting is an obvious and immediate responsibility and the use of sheep for grazing may well be considered as a practical and cost effective solution. Details of the public meeting on 28 April and consultation have been recently circulated where residents can have their say on how the site is to be used.

Having completed the extension to the Barwick Conservation Area we will now be pressing forward with the establishment of a **Scholes Conservation Area** and we hope to complete this with the assistance of Ward Councillors during the next twelve months.

The **Open Forums** which are held prior to Parish Council Meetings have proved very helpful and give Parishioners the opportunity of voicing various issues of concern including parking and the free flow of traffic particularly in Scholes and at school times, bus services and damage to verges, youth facilities, speeding, crime, demolition of trees and a host of other items.

We continue to work closely with our **Police Team** led by Inspector Marcus Griffiths and thank them for their support and co-operation. We receive a written report for each of our meetings with an officer in attendance on a quarterly basis only in order for them to concentrate more of their time on

detecting and preventing crime. PC Andy Katkowski with PCSO's Dan Sillers and Geoff Nottingham make up our local team. We have recently nominated **Claire Hassell** to serve on the Wetherby & District Crime Prevention Panel and we look forward to an even closer relationship with the police in our fight against crime. The recurring message to all residents is to **keep windows and doors LOCKED and keys out of sight** in order to reduce the opportunities for criminal activity.

The news from both of our **Bloom groups** is very good, with each village achieving Gold Rose standard. This is down to dedicated groups of volunteers along with grant monies from the Parish Council and others which is, in our opinion, money very well spent. Well done to everyone who contributes and supports the overall picture of colour throughout the Parish.

It has been a quiet year for our **Parish Paths Volunteers** as they continue to work away in the background to keep our footpaths in good order. Our thanks go to the whole group, particularly their leader **Peter Taylor**.

It's good to see **Barwick Village Hall** back to normal following extensive internal roofing repairs. They have repaid a large part of the loan granted to them and this is due to the hard work of their small committee and we thank all those who have been involved for their sterling efforts not forgetting those who so kindly donated to their urgent appeal for funds.

Our **Parish Clerk** continues to give us excellent support and guidance. He has recently gained the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) which is the qualification set by the National Association of Local Councils. I am delighted to congratulate Chris on his efforts and this will help him and the Council in keeping on the right side of the law through the myriad of government legislation.

We receive wide press coverage from **Wetherby News reporter Ron Miller** who attends nearly all of our Parish Council meetings and gives a very balanced report on events and we thank him for this.

Festival Republic have granted us 56 tickets again this year for the **Leeds Festival at Bramham Park** and we really appreciate this concession the proceeds of which enable us to support additional local good causes. Application forms are now available and we wish you luck when the draw takes place at our June meeting.

In respect of the many pot holes and other referrals to Leeds City Council we must thank **Desma Thompson** who gives us a monthly update on the state of our roads and pathways especially following the freezing conditions during so many weeks over the winter period.

The Parish is also well served by our Ward Councillors. **Ann Castle** has given us great support over the years and still keeps a watching brief over our welfare. **Matthew Robinson** replaced **Alec Shelbrooke** who has moved on to a new parliamentary career as our local MP. Matthew with youth and energy on his side, works very hard and effectively on our Parish affairs. **Rachael Procter** is the third Harewood member of the North East (Outer) Area Committee and we thank them all for providing us with such marvellous back up and support.