

## **District Councillor's Report to Barby & Onley Annual Parish Meeting: 20 May 2014**

I am pleased again to present my report to your Annual Parish Meeting.

First, the Council's finances. While the Council remains debt free, it still has great financial pressures, having to balance the annually reducing Government grant while also protecting its services. The Council's policy for mitigating this problem is to look for "invest to save" opportunities. Examples of these are the housing for rent and sale at Middlemore, and the Rainsbrook Crematorium, the joint Rugby Borough/Daventry DC project, which opened in April. DDC was able to keep the Council tax for 2014-15 just below the Government's cap of 2%.

### **Some headlines from the past year.**

The very long awaited **town centre development** in Daventry took a big step forward, with outline planning permission granted for Site 1, behind the High Street, and Site 5, at the junction of Ashby and Braunston Roads. A supermarket and petrol station are planned for site 5, about which my own view, shared by others, is that it is a mixed blessing, and we have concerns about traffic management, the effect on houses to the rear, and the impact on town centre shops. Site 1, a new shopping area, should improve the retail offer in Daventry, particularly if there is an attractive and popular anchor store. I just hope the design is not simply an anonymous clone of so many other shopping centres. Having served on the Town Centre Improvement group for 10 years, I'd like to see something worthy of Daventry's historic market town setting.

Personal finances have taken a hit during the recession, and the Council is promoting the **Credit Union**. At the same time a motion put forward by the Opposition to introduce the 'Living Wage' at the Council was rejected.

The Council has made a bid to Government to be considered as a trial site for **driverless cars**. The aim is to promote Daventry District as a go-ahead area, ready to embrace innovation.

A new **housing allocation** scheme has been introduced. This is still a District responsibility, although the Council no longer has any houses of its own. The immediate result was a drop in numbers on the housing waiting list from over 2000 to less than 650, as eligibility criteria for local housing was tightened up.

The **Flore/Weedon bypass** took a step closer, as a route has now been agreed and funding is expected.

Extra funding has been made available to allow a review and assessment of **conservation areas** in the District, and, hopefully, to speed up the sometimes very slow Listed Building planning process.

The **Joint Core Strategy**, which will determine planning policy and priorities until 2029, has been re-examined by the Planning Inspector, who expects to make his final judgment in July, with the Strategy in place by October or November. These targets have a habit of slipping, but there is hope of reining in before the end of the year what appears to the public as unbridled attacks on our countryside. The question has revolved around the so-called 5-year land supply. At the moment we are said to have a 5.2 years' supply. The housing requirement for the rural areas in the Core Strategy has increased from just under a thousand houses to slightly over two thousand. I am a member of the Settlements and Countryside working group,

which will be making recommendations later this year about the criteria to be used in deciding what development is suitable in rural areas.

The Government introduced **Neighbourhood Plans in 2011**. So far around 8 or 9 villages have had areas designated by DDC for Neighbourhood Plans, including Kilsby, and Barby and Onley. Neighbourhood Plans could be the biggest con trick perpetrated on rural areas in decades, or they could be a golden opportunity for villages to have a real say in their futures. On balance, I support these plans, because they enable villages to gather robust evidence about what is needed and what is not suitable or sustainable in their communities. It's often said that 'no development is not an option', and that's a truism, because we all know from experience that building will take place. But we can, through adopted Neighbourhood Plans, say what should happen and defend ourselves against inappropriate development.

### **So, what am I doing as your district councillor?**

I began the year as a member of the Scrutiny and Licensing Committees. Scrutiny has looked at a number of areas, among them the clarity of the Council's written communications, Empty Homes policy, the outsourced Waste Collection and Grounds Maintenance Service, and the working of the new Leisure Services contract. I chaired this last investigation. Our Panel welcomed the great improvement in the **Leisure Centre** facilities and the huge increase in usage. Brown's Road Sports Park and the Saxon Suite caused us more concern, but Everyone Active, the contractor's operating title, is turning its attention to these this coming year. Everyone Active has also made a bid for funding to improve the New Street tennis courts, and they will be working to provide more sporting opportunities for the disabled.

As for **Licensing**, the relaxation of regulations has caused problems, but there has been a re-think. Various aspects of licensing, including temporary event notices, taxi licensing, the Gambling Act, have and will be seeing changes, tightening some rules and making others more sensible.

Part way through the year, two Tory councillors defected to UKIP. Bizarrely, because of mathematical and constitutional niceties, I, not being involved in any of this, found myself off both of these committees, and now am a member of the Corporate Governance Committee, which is largely concerned with internal Council matters. I also became Vice-Chairman of the Council last July, with the prospect next month of becoming Chairman of DDC, a great honour.

Within Barby and Onley, I remain dual hatted as a Parish Councillor, so I have attended Parish Council meetings regularly, attended and spoken on your behalf at DDC Planning meetings, and at Junction 18 meetings. I have also taken up a variety of matters on behalf of individual villagers. I attended the Inspector's Hearing into DIRFT3, and, as a member of the A5 Strategy Group, I have raised the issues of safety and maintenance directly with the Highways Agency. Last week, I went to a meeting of the county Road Safety Group, which is about to make an in-depth study of the A361. The Group's primary concern was with Kilsby parish, but we were able to emphasise to the Group our concerns about HGVs using the Ridgeway and Longdown Lane, and the potential impact on the local roads from DIRFT and Rugby expansion. We await the Group's report with interest.

Yet again, for the third time in four elections, the District Council sent out polling cards to some Barby electors with incorrect polling station details. There is simply no excuse for this, and after tomorrow's election, I expect some explanation and assurances that this is the last time.

That concludes my report, but I am happy to answer questions.

**Catherine Lomax**, District Councillor

20.5.2014

## **Footpaths Report to Barby and Onley Parish Council May 2014**

We have covered 90% of the paths and will issue a full report shortly.

We now have Mike Dalton helping Mike Leppard and myself.

Apart from mending and cutting back we have altered six stiles near Barby for dog owners but always check with the farmer concerned first.

On repair work up to now we have used our own wood, but may have approach Townlands Charity for financial help in the future.

If walkers take small cutters with them then this would help as we cut back most of the year.

Sandy Tocher

29th April 2014

## BARBY LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



*Secretary: Ann Luntley, 23 Castle Mound, Barby, Rugby, CV23 8TN, 01788 890760*  
*Chair: Daphne Rourke, 1 Rugby Road, Barby, Rugby, CV23 8UA, 01788 890090*

### CHAIR'S REPORT for BARBY & ONLEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, 21 MAY 2014

We have worked hard this year.

With the costs of speakers rising, we have depended more than usual on our own members for several talks, on The Pittom Family, Barby and its Water Supply in 1890, Barby's Men of WW1 and Our Website (how to access it, what it contains, future use etc). Our outside speakers covered the topics of Local Government History, Squires and Spires, History of Daventry, The Jurassic Way and Dunchurch and the Great War. We also made a visit to Guy's Cliffe on Heritage Day.

Earlier this month we held an exhibition to commemorate the contributions of Barby people to World War I. We were able to highlight, not only the men who are commemorated on the Memorial window in St Mary's Church, but also the many men who returned after the War. We had displays on the wartime work of women, our trademark hand-drawn maps, and there was a talk by Rugby Family History Group on tracing your World War I ancestors. We were very pleased to have displays by Barby Pre-School and Barby School. However, although visitors were complimentary, we had hoped for a larger audience, particularly more of the children who had contributed some lovely work. We are grateful to the Parish Council for their financial support. Much of the material will, eventually, be put on our website, which is continuing to grow, albeit slowly.

Most of our time is being spent on our Education project, focused on the village school which, next year, celebrates 150 years since its founding in this building. After more than three years, we have an expanding draft of a book about the school, with the provisional title *From Blackboard to Whiteboard: 150 years of Barby School*. The book will be launched on Sunday 23 November here in the Village Hall. We hope to see you there.

Our book of Barby photos, *Putting Barby in the Frame*, is still available, as is the DVD version of the video *Barby: A Village History*. Unfortunately, *Putting Barby on the Map* is out of print.

## **Table Tennis Report to Barby and Onley Parish Council May 2014**

We run 4 teams in the Rugby & Daventry League, and hope to do this next season.

We carry on playing in the summer when the league has finished on a Thursday evening at 8.00pm.

In the league we play on Monday and Thursday nights at home.

We are always looking for new players and this season several new players joined us which strengthened some of our teams.

Sandy Tocher

29<sup>th</sup> April 2013

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – BARBY & ONLEY PARISH**  
**Barby Town lands Charity Report 21<sup>st</sup> May 2014**

Barby Town Lands and Educational Charity has 7 trustees who meet about three times per year and distribute grants to village organisations.

This year they will be renegotiating the 21 year lease of the Sports Field, Play Area on Daventry Road and Tennis Court with the Parish Council.

Barby Town Lands and Educational Charity have taken over management of an 8.3 acre arable field which used to be administered by Barby Charity as it seemed sensible for one Charity to hold all the land in the parish. This is now rented out to a local farmer.

The Millennium Orchard behind the Tennis Court is open for anyone to use. There is no need to book, but if you find someone else using the Boule area or BBQ please share.

The Trustees will be holding a Mid-summer BBQ at Millennium Orchard on Saturday 21 June from 5.30pm. A free of charge BBQ will be provided but please bring your own drinks, glasses and chairs.

In the Autumn the Annual Apple Day will take place on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October at 2.30pm. This is also free of charge, and people are encouraged to come and collect apples, have a go at making Apple juice and sample cakes made from apples and try pork and apple burgers. There will be some commercial apple juice on sale so bring some money if you would like to purchase it.

The Town Land Charity trustees currently have 2 allotments vacant. Please contact Sally Robbins 890202 if you are interested in renting one.

The trustees are keen to provide community assets and events that bring the village together, so please come along to the events they arrange and meet your neighbours.

Catherine Camp  
Secretary to Barby Town Lands Charity.  
21.05.14

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

We meet on the second Tuesday of every month and have a regular booking for this with the village hall

Our membership totals 39 and we have an average attendance at meetings of 30.

At most meetings we have a visiting speaker and details of this are displayed on the village hall notice board. We have eight speakers per year and some charge whilst others ask for a donation to charity. On average the cost is £50.00 per meeting.

An educational bursary for Denman College is awarded annually to one of our members funded  $\frac{1}{3}$  by the member,  $\frac{1}{3}$  by W.I. and  $\frac{1}{3}$  by Townland Charity.

We meet up three times a year with other local W.I.'s and this year we hosted a meeting for other W.I.'s and welcomed 70 visitors from other W.I. institutes.

We also support other W.I.'s fund raising events.

We support Daventry food bank and since September 2013 have sent three large boxes.

Once every three years we provide a week's supply of cakes (for patients and visitors) to Cynthia Spencer Hospice in Northampton. We make visits to any of our members who are unwell in hospital or at home.

We provide the catering at the annual produce show in the form of cakes and teas.

Twice a year we have a group meal out and these tend to be in January and August. In addition we have an annual boules competition and BBQ that takes place in the village orchard. This last three years we have added another annual event to our calendar and have enjoyed playing new age kurling in the village hall.

This year we are having a summer trip to Sandringham and stopping off at Hunstanton for lunch. All seats have been taken.

Theatre trips are arranged generally to the Dengate.

We have teams in both the darts and skittles Federation League and last year we reached the darts final.

We attend various county organised events and this year thoroughly enjoyed "An Evening with Michael Portillo".