

Barby & Onley Parish Council Annual Report April 2014 – March 2015

This Annual Meeting brings to an end the five year term served by our present Parish Council and I would like to thank all of our councillors and the clerk for their hard work throughout this year.

The normal term of office for Parish Councillors is 4 years, but a boundary change in 2012 meant that the current Council has been in place for an extra year. I am pleased to be able to tell you that 12 people have submitted nomination papers for the 11 seats on the Parish Council, so you will be able to elect your new Parish Council on 7th May and their first meeting will be on Thurs 14th May. Please note the change of day.

At the start of the year we welcomed Councillors Simi Pandhal and Sally Robbins to the council. Andy Sabine was re-elected as Chairman but in November, due to a change of job, he had to resign as a Councillor. The Vice-Chairman Peter Owen was then appointed as Chairman. Andy Sabines' seat was filled by Councillor Nigel Gove.

Following a by-election in July, Malcolm Longley was elected as our County Councillor. Councillor Longley has attended our meetings on a quarterly basis, and supported the parish with grant funding of £1000 towards Onley Youth Club, £400 towards a Defibrillator and a further £1000 towards connecting power for a permanent power point on the village Green opposite Barby Village Stores, and installing the defibrillator.

On 7th May, you will also be voting for a new District Councillor. The Parish Council would like to thank Councillor Richard Atterbury for the help and support he has given us as one of our 2 District Councillors..... the other District Councillor is Councillor Catherine Lomax, who has represented the whole District this year as Chairman of Daventry District Council.

I would also like to thank Ian Webb who has done an outstanding job with his hard work on the parish newsletter and digital media forms the council use. The Parish now has a Facebook page and a twitter account, and personalised emails can be sent out to people when necessary.

Dom Fisher has acted as Highway Warden on behalf of the Parish. He is not a Parish Councillor but has been of great help chasing up Highway issues and keeping the Parish Council informed.

Mike Dalton also deserves a vote of thanks for keeping the Vehicle Activated Sign charged up and working. He is also keeps the village verges tidy picking up litter.

Planning:

Both locally and nationally, this year has seen unprecedented pressure by developers to try and obtain planning consent for large developments on the outskirts of villages. Barby has got off lightly with planning applications granted for 6 houses to the rear of Balding Close, and 4 houses off Elkington Lane.

We are awaiting decisions on 5 houses off Kilsby Road, and 12 houses opposite the School, and 20 houses plus 7 offices on the Same Tractor factory site.

In December the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy was approved by Inspectors and adopted. This document sets out the housing requirements for West Northamptonshire and will go some way towards protecting rural villages from large housing developments. Daventry District Council has also recently announced that it has a 5 year land supply which means that there are sufficient sites available in the district to meet demand. The supply figures can vary, but without sufficient sites, Planning Inspectors are much more likely to grant planning consent for large developments.

We have acted as consultee for 23 planning applications over the year; the crematorium along Ashlawn Road is now operational. Consent for 450 houses to be built between Welton and Middlemore on the A361 has been granted. Barby objected to this, as we are concerned that it will increase the traffic using the village as a rat run.

We have spent all year trying to get something done about the number of temporary structures in fields in the open countryside. Daventry Planning Policy is unable to take action unless we provide proof that they are permanent. We will be campaigning to ensure that the new Settlements and Countryside Policy can address this problem.

Rugby will build an Urban Extension of 6200 houses on the BT Radio Mast site adjacent to the A5, and we understand that building will start in the Autumn.

The large Sainsburys Warehouse at DIRFT 2 will open in June, and is recruiting staff now.

DIRFT 3 has been approved between the A5 and the M1 and will stretch from Junction 18 of M1 up to Lilborne, with 3/4km of railway sidings for loading and unloading.

Under the Localism Act we have an opportunity to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and have some say in how the parish develops in the future. Councillor Blezard will give an update shortly.

Highways

Barby has benefitted from recent resurfacing and white lining work.

Despite concerns over speeding traffic in the village, it was not possible to take part in Speed-watch this year, as insufficient people were prepared to be trained to use a speed-gun. We have attended meetings which have resulted in the A361 being downgraded to 50mph, but are still campaigning to get a Weight Limit restriction on the Ridgeway and Longdown Lane.

PCSO Kev Thompson remains our local PCSO and hopefully the fact that we rarely see him reflects the low crime rates we have.

(Unfortunately PCSO Kev is unable to attend tonight, but his colleague PCSO Les Conopo has kindly come along to explain the local policing structure and changes that have taken place.)

What else.....

In Barby we planted poppies around the village Flag pole, and Barby Townlands Charity has just installed a WW1 commemorative seat next to the War Memorial on Rectory Lane. In December the village had a series of Advent Windows around the village, and a Christmas tree on the green. We hope that this will become an annual event and will be using the grant from the County Councillor to install a power supply for Christmas lights.

Goal Posts are currently being refurbished and will be re-sited in the Play Area on Daventry Road very soon.

Trees have been planted on The Ware, along the footpath from Brackendale Drive and to fill the gaps in the Play Area hedge.

The toddler swings in Barby Park have been cleaned and Pigeon deterrents installed.

Church Walk has had its "Private Road" sign replaced.

The Cricket Club has now taken over responsibility for mowing at the Sports Field, and the Parish Council is providing them with a grant towards the cost.

We have agreed to purchase a Defibrillator which will probably be located on the outside of the village hall or shop.

We will also provide a grant to the Village Hall to help install Broadband.

In Onley

The Sewers at Onley have been adopted by Severn Trent Water, but there has recently been major flood problems caused by Water leaks which the Prison are still responsible for. Once repairs have taken place it is hoped that the Water will also be adopted by Severn Trent.

The Parish Council is very pleased that Onley Park Youth Club is thriving and is attended well on Friday nights. Sue Galloway the Youth Leader will give us more information in her report.

The Fence around Onley Play Area has been repaired and the signage replaced. Concrete street lighting columns which were no longer in use have been removed.

Following comments received via the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire more seating will be provided at Onley.

Budget

We have used some reserves to balance the books and keep the precept as low as possible and this year we have requested a precept of £41837 which represents 1.17% increase on the precept requested for the previous year.

And Finally - Parish Council meetings are open to the public and notices are published in advance and put on the notice boards in both villages, and on the website. We would encourage you to come along to these meetings and play your part in the community.

P Owen– Chairman

22 April 2015