

Barby & Onley Parish Council Annual Report

April 2017 – March 2018

Dave Blezard was elected as Chairman in May 2016 with Dawn Cotton as Vice-Chairman. Councillor Betty Ritchie resigned as a Councillor in May 17 and Paul Reynolds has joined the Council.

Councillor Howard Vale has recently resigned, so we currently have a vacant seat to fill, so please get in touch with the Clerk if you are interested in becoming a Councillor or want to know what the role involves.

Councillor Nigel Gove acts as Internal Financial Controller and has kept a close eye on the parish finances checking all payments against invoices each month and providing a lot of help with production of the budget, and a 3 year Business Plan.

The estimated spend for 2018/19 is £50,819 which includes £2000 into the reserve fund to replace the money allocated to “Stand Against Lodge Farm Village” legal costs.

During the year the Council has depleted the reserve fund significantly as it has replaced all the street lighting in the village with energy efficient LED lighting, installed new Play Equipment in Barby Play Area, commissioned a Tree Survey of all the trees in the Parish and had the Tennis Court resurfaced. We have been accumulating funds to cover a number of these projects over a period of years and have taken out a £40K loan to replace the street lighting. LED lighting is so much cheaper to run that it will pay for itself within 8 years.

We are hoping to carry out further upgrades to the Play Areas, and currently Tesco's in Rugby are collecting tokens which will provide a share of £10K towards Adult Outdoor Fitness Equipment. Please put your tokens in Barbys box when you shop at Tesco's.

Precept was £ 45,565 for 2017/18 and will be £ 50,819 for 2018/19 .This is an increase of 10.9% which may seem a lot in percentage terms but actually means an additional £5253 coming into the Parish. Since Northamptonshire County Council are bankrupt, and the Parish may have to pay for services which we used to get from the County or the District, it was felt that this was a prudent move.

There are changes to the Audit regime this year, with the accounts having to be sent to a different set of Auditors. We are also going to have to catalogue the data we hold to ensure that we comply with the General Data Protection Regulations that come into effect on 28th May.

Thanks to Ian Webb for his work as Newsletter and Website Editor and for upgrading to a more user-friendly layout. The website has been further improved this year and now uses Google Calendar.

Thanks also to Dom Fisher who acts as Highway Warden on behalf of the village. Mike Dalton who keeps the Vehicle Activated Sign charged up, Baggy who picks up lots of litter, and the footpath wardens who walk our village paths and report problem areas, and the young people who deliver the newsletter.

PLANNING

The Parish Council has acted as a Consultee on 27 Applications in Barby& Onley and 2 Appeals and lodged objections to Rugby Borough Local Plan and its inclusion of a site for a “Garden Village” of 1500 houses off A45 opposite Onley. Final decisions on planning lie with the District Council.

They have also responded to DDC consultation on their Local Plan. Barby is to be included in the plan as a Primary village, and Onley is classed under “Other Villages” category.

ENVIRONMENT ENHANCEMENT

Last year a Yellow berried Mountain Ash planted on Rectory Lane in memory of Councillor Brian Lomax. It unfortunately did not grow very well and has been replaced.

The village mowing in Barby was carried out by Steve Hartwell from Kilsby last year, and he did an excellent job, so he has been awarded the contract for the next two years.

Once again Councillor Cliff Jones organised a Village Litter Pick. Thanks to those who came out in the rain and collected 40 bags of rubbish.

The Parish Council is going to take over responsibility for Litter Collection within 30mph limit from Daventry District Council and will receive a grant from DDC towards the cost.

We took part in an initiative arranged by Daventry District Council Environmental Health Department to reduce the amount of Dog Poo on the pavements. Any dog waste found was sprayed with fluorescent paint to make it more obvious. This does seem to remind people to pick up after their dog and Brian Thompson has agreed to continue spraying.

This year poppy seeds will be planted in the wildflower garden around the Flag pole to commemorate the finish of WW1.

The Council also provided a Christmas tree on the Green opposite the shop and arranged ad hoc Carol singing and Mulled wine and Mince pies which about 60 people enjoyed before Christmas.

In fact www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk voted Barby as the UK Capital of Christmas, so we plan to make the carol singing an annual event. Thanks to David and Liz who organise the village Advent windows which definitely makes the village feel Christmassy.

Onley Youth Club is still running on a Thursday evening in Onley Village Hall and about 15 children attend each week.

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HIGHWAY

HGV weight limit signage is now in place along the Ridgeway/Longdown lane. If you see HGVs using this route as a cut through, please take their registration number and inform the police.

The Parish has taken part in Speedwatch in an attempt to slow the traffic through the village. The fastest car recorded was travelling at 55mph down Daventry Road and 94 vehicles were recorded travelling over 35mph of which 20% were driving at over 40mph.

Carrying out Speedwatch does seem to slow traffic for a limited time, so it has been good to be able to repeat the initiative this month. We still need more people prepared to train to use the speed gun.

Since we have taken part twice, the Police have now agreed that Barby will be put on the list for a visit from the mobile speed van later in the year.

The 30mph signs over M45 bridges are still there, and we still cannot remove them. Eventually NCC and Highways England will agree whose responsibility it is to strengthen the barriers next to the bridges over the Motorway, and the work will be carried out.

We also - Obtained £500 grant towards upgrading the Parish Computer and £500 towards Play Equipment at Onley Park.

Arrangement of a loan for £40000 towards the upgrade of street lighting to LED bulbs

Ensured Annual Return and annual VAT reclaim was submitted

Adopted Onleys red phone box from BT – there is an opportunity for someone to come up with a good idea how to use it!...

We have tried to intervene and get our MP to speed up the bringing of high speed Broadband to Onley Park, but it is being held up over a legal stumbling block about where the box can be situated.

PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

The Parish Council financial year ends on 31st March. Barby & Onley accounts are particularly complicated as when the village of Onley Park was transferred to the Parish by the Home Office in 2005, a lump sum of £165,185 was also provided to cover maintenance of the Open Space land. This had to be ring-fenced for that purpose and can be used to cover mowing costs at Onley and various other costs associated with the Open Space.

At 31 March 2018 we had £114,035 of the Ring-fenced money left.

For year 1 April 17 to 31 March 2018

INCOME

Precept £ 45565 (this is the “Precept” amount collected through the rates by Daventry District Council for the parish)

Other £ 53652 (Loan of £40000, grants, bank interest, advertising income, and reimbursements from other Councils)

EXPENDITURE

Maintenance of Onley Open Space £ 6912 paid out of the ring fenced money.

All other expenditure is paid for from money raised through the rates, or from grants and referred to as General Spend on the Bank Reconciliation sheet. During the last financial year the areas where money was spent can be broken down as follows:-

	£	%
Staff Salaries including tax, NI and pension contributions	14580	17.4
Expenses	2050	2.4
Training	500	0.6
Street Lighting Upgrade	26750	31.9
Street Lighting	5505	6.6
Mowing (excluding Mowing at Onley -paid out of ring fenced funds)	4540	5.4
Sports Field Grant towards Mowing	2500	3.0
Newsletter Printing and Distribution (cost off-sett by Adverts of £ 716)	2598	3.1
Insurance Premium	1667	2.0
Rent of Play Area, Sports Field & Tennis Court (paid to Townlands Charity)	1486	1.8
New Play Equipment	5826	6.9
Resurfacing of Tennis Court	7310	8.7
Onley Park Youth Club	1665	2.0
Environment including Tree Survey	1793	2.1
Stand Against Lodge Farm Village – Contribution to legal fees	2000	2.4
Loan Repayment	1335	1.6
Other (being balance)	1872	2.1
Total General Expenditure	83977	

Parish Council accounts are scrutinised annually by an independent verifier who checks the figures, and also ensure that the Council is operating correctly and has the necessary policies, insurance and risk assessments in place. To ensure we comply with Governance and Accountability legislation the accounts are also reviewed annually external auditors.

Anyone wishing to see the books is welcome to do so by appointment with the Parish Clerk.