

CHAIRMANS REPORT 2009/2010

Members of the Council and Parishioners I have pleasure in submitting my report to you regarding the activities carried out by the Blackwell Parish Council during the year 2009/2010.

It is also my responsibility to give you an overview of the Councils plans for the year 2010/2011.

With your approval I propose to review each village in turn and I shall start with Blackwell.

BLACKWELL

a. Blackwell Community Centre

Residents of Blackwell will have noted that, with effect from 2 February last, Blackwell Post Office now operates from the Community Centre on Tuesday/Thursday 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

The Council are grateful for the “behind the scenes” efforts to secure the re-opening of the Post Office by Councillor Alan Tomlinson and our Local Member of Parliament Dennis Skinner.

Council Members hope that Parishioners will ensure maximum usage of the Post Office.

b. Blackwell Youth Club

The Council are pleased to note that the Youth Club continues to be very successful. The first session of the Youth Club is for 5/11 year olds and the average attendance is 50. The second session for 12/16 year olds, the average attendance is 20.

35 Youngsters and 6 volunteers will be attending the Kingswood Education and Activity Centre, Staffordshire 30 May/2 June 2010 and has been part funded by Derbyshire County Council - £3,000.00 secured by County Councillor Clive Moesby, the

remaining £3,000.00 required was raised by the Youth Clubs various fund raising activities.

The Youth Club has now been established 4 years and the Organisers hope to arrange a Celebratory Disco sometime during May 2010.

c. Blackwell Residents Action Group

The group is energetically led by their Chairman Katherine Childs who has a dedicated team of helpers who in turn during the last 12 months carried out Litter Picks, Local History Weekend, Big Draw, (this was a Family Art Activity) and 4 Planters are now in situ.

The Group have also been responsible for arranging Snack Bar facilities during the opening hours of the Post Office.

d. Blackwell Children's Centre

The Children's Centre continues to operate successfully at Blackwell Primary School.

The Centre has 2 full time Children's Centre workers and 2 part time Child Care Workers. Interviews are currently taking place for additional workers.

The Centre caters for a variety of activities Parents Group/Baby Clinic/Peep Group 0/1 year olds/Fruit and Vegetable Club/Toddling 2's/Breastfeeding Group/Little One's Group 0-1 year olds.

In addition to this additional outdoor activities are organised at Bank Holidays.

e. Blackwell Mother And Toddler Group

This Group thrives under the leadership of Karen Dover, there are approximately 15 children 0/3 year olds who attend the Play Group on a Wednesday morning at the Community Centre.

Additionally in the late Spring/early Summer Trips are arranged to local Farm Parks etc.

HILCOTE

a. Councillor Brian Stocks

Brian was elected to the Council on 30 April 2009 and has shown a genuine interest in not only the well being of the residents of Hilcote but of the Parish as a whole.

As I mentioned in my Report last year the likely cost of this Election is £1,400.00 and there was no budget for it, this means that another Proposed Council Project will have to be delayed.

b. Hilcote Environmental and Leisure Group

The Group led by Malcolm Greenwood and Molly Helm have had a very successful 12 months.

The Hilcote "Duck Day" raised £500.00 towards the Groups funds, but most significantly the Group secured Lottery Funding of £26,000.00 towards Phase 2 of the Woodland Project – I am pleased to say that work commenced on 14 September 2009 and was completed on 2 October 2009.

The Group have also completed the raised Flower beds within the village and the bridge across the Normanton Brook is now in place.

c. Hilcote Mining Memorial

The Mining Memorial was officially unveiled by the Chairman of Bolsover District Council on 9 May 2009 and a very successful Community Evening was held later.

d. Hilcote Miners Welfare and Community Centre

Because of the down turn in the economy the Centre has been hard hit by the lack of bookings in the past 12 months and the Council

have agreed, subject to a number of conditions, a “one off” Grant towards heating and lighting costs.

Councillor Clive Moesby and myself have looked at various ways of obtaining grants etc. to help alleviate some of the financial problems the Centre is currently facing.

It would, without doubt, be a shame if the village were to lose such an excellent facility. It is hoped that local residents will ensure that this does not happen.

NEWTON

a. Newton Community Centre

The Centre continues to see frequent use by local Groups i.e. – St Werburghs Parochial Church Council/Mothers Union/Newton Women’s Institute/Newton and District Old Peoples Club/Newton Luncheon Club.

A Dance Class is held on a Friday evening and a regular dance is held on the first Saturday each month.

b. Newton Community Association

The Association continues to be energetically led by Phil Wass and has achieved 2 notable successes in the past 12 months – the Multi-User Sports Unit on the Councils Charnwood Crescent Playing Field was completed and officially declared open by the Chairman of Bolsover District Council on 9 May 2009.

Lottery Funding was secured by the Association for state of the art equipment which consisted of Film Projector, Retractable Screen new Speakers etc. and would be installed in the Councils Newton Community Centre – the Grand Opening was held on 25 March 2010.

In addition the Association has had a number of successful Litter Picks and the Planters within the village are to be upgraded.

c. Newton Allotments

The Council have been advised by the Secretary Newton/Blackwell Allotments and Leisure Gardeners Association that there is now a waiting list of persons requiring an Allotment at Littlemoor Lane. This is very encouraging and the Council would like to see more of the Allotments in use at North Street, Newton and The Ridge at Blackwell.

d. Newton Carnival Team

Despite indifferent weather in 2009/10 it has, again, been a successful year for the Team. As in previous years to supplement their funds they had organised:

1. Carnival Queen Disco.
2. Plant Fair
3. Newton Carnival
4. Halloween Disco
5. Victorian Street Fair
6. Light of Life Service

e. Newton Mother and Toddler Group

This Group is led by Kath Mann and meets on Thursday afternoons at Newton Community Centre – it provides play activities for 0/5 year olds and during the Summer a number of outings for the Group are arranged.

OLD BLACKWELL

There have been a number of Consultation Meetings organised by Bolsover District Council with regard to the Old Blackwell and Newton Conservation Areas.

These have been well attended and constructive comments have been made by the residents to the Conservation Officer.

WESTHOUSES

a. Tibshelf Road Playing Field

During the Summer a new Footpath connecting Sidings Way and Westhouses Primary School was constructed across the Playing Field. The Head Teacher of the School welcomed the Councils action and said that no longer, during periods of rain, were children trailing mud in to the School.

b. Engine Reclamation Site (Westhouses Locomotive Depot)

As I mentioned in my Report last year a liaison was set up by the Contractors and the Councils Representative, on that Committee is Councillor Paula Wilkinson – as and when Liaison Meetings are held she reports back to the Council.

c. Westhouses Resident Action Group

The Group continues to be energetically led by its Chairman, Dudley Fowkes and during the past 12 months secured Grass Roots Funding for the running expenses of the Group, provided Planters at various locations within the village, established its own website and organised the Annual Carol Service at Westhouses Methodist Chapel on 10 December 2009.

Currently the Groups main focus is on the former Railway Institute Project but no success has been achieved in a possible partnership arrangement with various commercial concerns.

d. Alfreton Road, Westhouses

Following the provision of funding by the Council, in the near future residents of the village will see a Speed Activated Sign erected adjacent to the Station Hotel – this, it is hoped, will discourage motorists etc. from speeding through the village.

In addition to this Scheme, Derbyshire County Council will be installing double yellow lines at the junction of Alfreton Road/Tibshelf Road.

GENERAL MATTERS

Precept

Council Members are acutely aware of the current economic climate when setting the Precept and for the financial year 2010/2011 it will be £106,500.00 an increase of £1,500.00 on the year 2009/2010.

When the Council reviewed its budget in January the running costs of the Council is approximately £70,000.00 when the Precept was set it was agreed to prioritise the following items:-

1. Steel Palisade Type Fencing – Blackwell Allotments.
2. Layer part of the hedgerow – Blackwell Allotments.
3. Renew lounge carpet – Blackwell Community Centre (this was deferred from the financial year 2009/2010).
4. New UPVC windows/doors plus roller door – Sports Pavilion, Charnwood Crescent Playing Field, Newton.
5. Two additional hanging baskets in Blackwell, Hilcote, Newton and Westhouses.
6. Two additional Grit Bins for each village.
7. Speed Activated Sign – Alfreton Road, Westhouses.
8. Additional Litter Bins at Scanderlands Playing Field, Blackwell and Charnwood Crescent Playing Field, Newton.
9. Village signs (entrance/exit)
10. Hedge cutting and path clearing – Alfreton Road, Westhouses and Cragg Lane, Newton.

11. Section 137 Payments:

- a. St Werburghs Parochial Church Council for Churchyard maintenance - £800.00.
- b. 9th Wicket Centenary Festival, Blackwell - £500.00.
- c. Sports Outreach Development Programme, Bolsover District Council - £630.00.

Parish Caretaker

Richard Walker, the Councils part-time Parish Caretaker continues to provide the Council with a first class service.

An increasing number of local residents, including the Head Teacher of Westhouses Primary School have commented on his commitment and dedication to the Parish.

Richard, during 2009, successfully completed a Training Course on the use of certain pesticides and this has been particularly beneficial in various parts of the Councils Play Areas.

Police

The Council have in its area a regular Beat Officer, PC Lorna Evans, who is ably supported by PCSO Paul Brownlee. They regularly attend Meetings of the Council and have dealt promptly with any complaints which have made by either the Council or local residents.

The Council have to maintain the strong working relationship with the two Officers.

Dog Waste Bins

I did mention in my report last year that the Council had provided Dog Waste Bins at:-

- a. Gloves Lane, Blackwell
- b. New Street, Hilcote (pathway adjacent to Hilcote Community Centre).

- c. Town Lane, Newton.
- d. Junction of Park Mill Drive/Alfreton ~Road, Westhouses.

Due to the actions of a minority of irresponsible dog owners, particularly at Westhouses, the Council requested Bolsover District Council to carry out a “Deep Clean” at the Tibshelf Road Playing Field.

Any resident reading the latest Council Newsletter will note that I referred to dangers associated with dog faeces, namely Toxocara which can lead to reduced vision and in extreme cases eventual blindness.

The Council expect dog owners to act responsibly. “Poop Scoop” bags are available free of charge from the Councils Parish Caretaker.

Annual Pantomime

The Council continues to fund the annual Pantomime at Blackwell/Newton Community Centres for the children from Blackwell/Newton/Westhouses Primary Schools and also the local Mother and Toddler Groups.

Floral Displays

The Council will again, this year, be funding the Floral Displays within the Parish area – along with the various Residents Groups who have provided Planters in their respective Villages. A first class horticultural display is anticipated.

Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme

Due to a minor problem with the Councils Website last year it was not possible to proceed with its application to Derbyshire Association of Local Councils for “Quality Status” – this has now been rectified and I am confident that later this year the goal of “Quality Status” will have been achieved.

Councillors Alan Tomlinson and Sally Gray

Alan, who has been a Member of the Parish Council since 1975 and Bolsover District Council since 1979, in his capacity as Deputy Leader, Bolsover District Council, he has ensured that there has been good working relationships with all Departments of the District Authority.

Council Members are particularly pleased with all the “behind the scenes” work that Alan did to ensure the re-opening of Blackwell Post Office.

Sally has sought to ensure a good working relationship with all local residents.

County Councillor Clive Moesby

Clive has, on behalf of the Council, worked extremely hard at County level to improve the Parish as a whole – I am aware that through Clive a significant number of local residents/voluntary Groups have benefited from the Derbyshire County Council Leadership Scheme.

Conclusion

The Council will contrive to move forward and as our slogan says “Caring for the Community”.

I am grateful for the support given to me by my fellow Councillors, the Clerk and staff.

Thank you.

