

# **BAWTRY TOWN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER – MAY 2011**

## **Town Mayor's Report for the year 2010 / 2011**

April marks the end of another busy year for Bawtry Town Council and the end of our 4 year term as councillors. A very special thank you to all councillors for their continued hard work and enthusiasm. Throughout the year Councillors attend not only the regular monthly Council and Finance meetings but also other committees of Bawtry Council and an ever increasing list of meetings and courses organised by other bodies. Our Council has 13 members. As only 11 people have put their names forward to serve for the next 4 year term, there will not be an election in May and the new Council will co-opt 2 other members to bring it up to full complement.

It is noticeable that even in these days of financial turmoil Bawtry more than holds its own. The Council installed Christmas lights along the High Street and in the centre of town bringing much needed cheer to the long, cold winter. The members of the refreshed business group are keen to develop the Christmas festivities in the town alongside the ever popular carol singing and Christmas window competition organised by Bawtry Council. They are also working with the Council to introduce a variety of events throughout the year which is hoped will add to the town's traditions. Our thanks go to all of them.

At long last the toilets on Gainsborough Road are about to reopen. Internal refurbishment and painting inside and out is underway and the disabled toilet has been given a new roof. New litter bins are to be installed on the banking and the whole area will be given a new lease of life with a planting scheme and a general tidy up. The toilets will be open from 9a.m. until 6p.m. in the summer months and until 5.30 in the winter months. The system will be reviewed after a trial period. EPS will supervise the cleaning of the toilets which will be cleaned on a daily, weekly and monthly basis at various intensities.

Despite another year of continued argument and debate, Bawtry still suffers periodically from the obnoxious smells emanating from Tunnel Tech North at Misson. Bassetlaw District Council Environmental Health and Environmental Protection teams were meeting with Misson Parish Council on April 6<sup>th</sup> to provide them with an update on the independent consultants work at Tunnel Tech and what the next steps are. Bassetlaw say that Tunnel Tech are on track to complete the consultants reports and recommendations by the end of May as per their permit conditions. And so we go on!

Following concerns about the increase in vehicles driving around illegally on Wharf Street play area, the Council reconfigured the access points. New gates have been installed to prevent these vehicles getting on to the area, with Wharf Street being the only point of entry for authorised traffic. The 'A' frame gates at School Walk and Queens Crescent allow for easy passage for pedestrians, buggies and motorised scooters.

We are kept updated on crime figures and are pleased to hear that Bawtry remains relatively trouble free. Councillors attend the PACT meetings organised by the police and routinely report concerns of Bawtry residents. Vehicles speeding along all approaches to the town is still a major problem. The police have used on several occasions the speed gun purchased last year by the Ward Councillors. This has led to a number of official warnings and prosecutions. We remain concerned about the absence of a school crossing patrol on Station Road. DMBC informed us that following a traffic survey of the area, the count showed that the criteria for provision of a patrol were not met. Their results were clearly a nonsense and pressure from the school, parents and ourselves persuaded DMBC to repeat the exercise. We await the results.

The car park on Market Hill continues to generate income which has enabled the Council, yet again to maintain the precept level of £26K. Bawtry is indeed fortunate in its ownership. The allotments continue to be much appreciated and well used. In this time, when the number of people turning to growing their own vegetables is forever on the increase, it is hardly surprising that we have a waiting list of gardening enthusiasts.

A new area for cremated remains has been established in the cemetery. It is intended to augment the planting at this eastern end of the cemetery. The Council continues to appreciate its role in the maintenance of a high standard of presentation and tidiness here.

The Memorial Sports Field is well used by a large number of teams within our Sports Clubs. Until such decisions are made as to the longer term development of the field Bawtry Town Council has throughout the year worked to maintain the smooth running of all facilities.

The issue which has created the greatest impact this year by far has been the decision of DMBC to close Bawtry library. Despite the best efforts of Bawtry Town Council, our MP Rt Hon Caroline Flint, our Ward Councillors and a large number of Bawtry residents, DMBC could not be persuaded to alter this decision. This came as no particular surprise to anyone involved in fighting its closure. The Council has approached DMBC with a view to running the library on a charitable basis. Much work remains to be done but the process of takeover hopefully begins with an initial meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>. It is felt that this way forward will not only keep the library open but will open the door to a much greater involvement of the library and the library building in the community life of Bawtry.

Of particular help to Bawtry has been the Neighbourhood Management Team. We have been extremely fortunate to have Debbie John-Lewis as our neighbourhood manager. Her efforts on behalf of Bawtry and its residents and her clear fondness for and interest in our town has been invaluable. We are sad to learn that in the midst of the upheavals within DMBC, Debbie will be leaving the management team and a new manager will be appointed. We wish her well in her new department and thank her for her years of help, input and sound advice.

Thanks too are due to our 3 Ward Councillors who support us unstintingly and act as intermediaries between ourselves and DMBC in not always the most comfortable of circumstances.

And thanks to our 3 handymen whose work is so much appreciated by all residents. This year they have a new motorised sweeper to introduce to the streets which will double up as a much needed path snow plough if we have a repeat of last winter.

It is a disappointment that the local press is still not represented at our monthly meetings but reports on our deliberations find their way into the newspapers and the regular publication of our newsletter in Bawtry Today ensures that residents are kept up to date with what is going on. Of course the best way to find out what the Council does is to come to meetings which are held on the second Tuesday of every month in the New Hall at 7pm. All councillors wish me to thank Mr. Vallow who attends regularly. We much appreciate your input and your local knowledge is so often invaluable.

In conclusion, a huge thank you to the deputy Town Mayor, George Spencer for his total commitment to the town and his unfailing sense of humour in all situations. And to our Clerk, Jennifer Worthington for all her hard work. It's not easy to negotiate the maze of current local Council regulations, but Jennifer strives at all times to keep us moving in the right direction.

And so another busy year ends. There will be much to do in the next one as, apart from new issues, so many of the old ones still need resolution. May I wish the incoming Council every success in their deliberations.

Vivienne Wilcox  
Town Mayor  
April 2011