

BELPER TOWN COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18



St John's Chapel

The Butts

Belper

DE56 1HX

01773 822116

www.belpertowncouncil.gov.uk

admin@belpertowncouncil.gov.uk

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INTRODUCTION

By the Mayor, Councillor Peter Hurst

Having moved to Belper in 1990 I now feel that I am a true East Midlander. Since moving here I have been involved with The Army Cadets, Royal British Legion and SSAFA. Elected to the Town Council in May 2015, I feel very privileged to be chosen as Mayor for 2017/2018.

I wish to express my thanks to Liz Page our Town Clerk for her support and guidance through my term also to Rosemary Bridges, Assistant Town Clerk who has kept me informed and run my diary. Glynn Haynes has done a wonderful job as the Town Council RFO and to Rose for all her hard work in taking care of St John's Chapel. A mention must be included for the outside staff Stewart, Andrew and Jake without whose input our successes in The Bloom competition would not have been achieved. The marvellous floral displays certainly aid the marketing of Belper as a tourist attraction as do our many and diverse independent traders, we must mention our excellent eating establishments as well.

Belper is becoming well known as a centre for festivals including the Food Festivals, Larks in the Park, Open Gardens, Arts Trail, Music Festival, Belper Games, Belper Goes Green and our twice yearly Fun Fair, I apologise if I have overlooked any other events. In 2018 there will be an extra funfair in September, so let's hope for some sunshine.

My duties for the year have been so diverse and far too many to list, however the visits to our local care homes have shown me the very high standards that are given to our aging population, something which is rapidly approaching for myself. I have also had a close working relationship with our local churches whose work within the community carries on tirelessly. Local organisations and voluntary groups have supported the town throughout the year

Our local emergency services both full time and volunteer continue to do sterling work for the community, The Fire and Rescue Service, Police, First Responders, Street Angels, St John Ambulance and Red Cross to name a few. My thanks go to any I have not named here and can assure you your efforts are appreciated by the whole community.

Sports opportunities in the town continue to thrive and the new building at Belper Meadows is nearing completion. Rugby, Football, Hockey and Cricket continue to grow for both adults and youngsters. Our very own Nailers, Belper Town Football Club, are sitting about midway in their league so let's wish them all the best for next season.

A great benefit to the community is the installation of defibrillators throughout Belper and Milford. This has been done by Belper Town Council, Rotary Club and the Co-op. Most of us now have a defibrillator within five minutes of any location in the Parish, a great achievement. Some have already saved lives.

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group is progressing well and it is hoped for the plan to go to referendum in November or December 2018. My thanks to all concerned for the impressive effort they have put into its development.

Two youth projects are worthy of a mention, The Blue Box and The Drop Inn, their endless work with the youngsters of the town is superb. Both organisations assist in the integration of our youth into the community.

The Tearooms in the River Gardens is slowly moving forward with money pledged from both Belper Town Council and Amber Valley Borough Council.

Entertainment in our town is blessed with Derwent Brass, Belper Musical Theatre, Belper Players, Rough Truffles, Chevin Singers, The Dalesmen and Belcanto amongst others. Having attended performances by all I can only praise them for their efforts and professionalism.

It remains for me to thank my fellow Councillors for all their support and advice during my term of office with a special thank you to Tim Sutton, Deputy Mayor for his support. Thanks also to Pauline Latham our local MP for all her work for our town and community.

Most importantly I have been accompanied on my official duties by my Consort, Victoria Clarke, who I thank sincerely. It has been a very busy and enjoyable year for both of us.

Mayor's Cadet

Sadly, due to the Army Cadet Force's internal safeguarding regulations there can no longer be a Mayors Cadet. However they do support the community within their remit

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Members of the public are welcome to attend Council meetings which are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month (apart from August) at 7pm when time is set aside for the public to raise any matters of concern or to make their views known on any items on the agenda.

In addition there are the following Committees:

Finance, Governance & Staff Working Party
Facilities
Leisure, Tourism & Green Spaces

THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS:

Belper in Bloom

Belper Town Council has entered the East Midlands competition for many years and thanks to the consistent drive and passion of the In Bloom volunteers they have received a Gold Award for the ninth consecutive year. In addition Belper was awarded a Gold for the second time in the Britain in Bloom competition. We will be pulling out all the stops this year to beat our rivals and bring the winning trophy back home to Belper for another year.

June 2017 - Open Gardens

An event which started in 2012 as a contribution to the town's 'In Bloom' campaign has now become an annual event. The two day event attracts hundreds of visitors to the town and raises money for local community groups.

Summer and Christmas Food and Real Ale Festivals:

Our prestigious food and drink festivals help Derbyshire and East Midland suppliers showcase their products. The event attracts thousands of visitors to the town and gives local producers a unique opportunity to promote their wares directly to the public. Visitors are able to taste a huge range of products on sale, ranging from real ale, cheeses, meats and cakes. It is a perfect day out for food lovers and a showcase for our local producers.

Sponsorship:

Despite the poor economic climate local businesses have continued to support the town by way of sponsorship thus helping to provide attractive flower displays, Christmas trees and supporting St Georges Day celebrations – all of which help make Belper a lovely place to live, work and visit.

Providing Grant Aid to Community Groups:

By providing grant aid to many community groups, the Council is making an effective use of its resources. This support provides a lifeline for some groups enabling them to continue functioning, or it can provide “seed corn” money for new ventures and initiatives by existing organisations.

During the year, the following organisations have received grant funding:

Accessible Belper
Belper Meadows Community Sports Club
Belper School
Chesterfield Tinnitus Support Group
Citizens Advice Centre
Co-Creators
Community Transport
Derbyshire Children’s Seaside Home
Drop Inn
Fleet Arts
North Mill
Sharing Not Wasting
St Peter’s Church
The Great Get Together

HOW THE COUNCIL SERVES THE COMMUNITY

Looking after the town:

The Town Council works in partnership with Amber Valley Borough Council undertaking many of the functions associated with much larger Town Councils. Belper and Milford areas are maintained to a very high standard as can be evidenced by the parks, gardens and floral displays. Every effort continues to be made to combat the problems of litter, fly-tipping and graffiti.

As well as contributing to the environment, the Council plays an important role in the monitoring and consideration of all planning applications. Members are fully committed to supporting the economic regeneration of Belper through such initiatives as the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site which is having a major impact on the local tourism industry.

Communicating with the Public:

As well as the Council's notice boards situated around the town, the Council has its own website and a profile on Face Book to keep Belper residents in touch with Council news and events. There is also a quarterly Newsletter delivered to every household to keep people informed and it has a handy quick reference guide of contact information for local services.

Liaising with the Police:

The Police are invited to the Town Council meetings and are given the opportunity to report on crime figures and to raise any relevant matter.

Providing Community Facilities:

All Council meetings are held in St John's Chapel which also serves as the Heritage Centre. The Heritage Centre is generally open to the public each weekday morning. The Heritage Centre in the Chapel is available for hire by the community for day time meetings and events. In the past year the Chapel has been used as a venue for private bookings by the following groups and organisations:

Amber Valley Borough Council	Transition Belper
Belper Community Enterprise	Belper in Wartime Group
Belper & District Keyboard & Organ Club	World Heritage Conservation and Planning Panel
Belper & District Scouts Association	
Belper Historical Society	
Belper Well Dressing Committee	
Derwent Valley Mills	
Derwent Valley Line Partnership	
Friends of Belper River Gardens	
Matthew Smith Almshouses Trust	
North Mill Trust	

Providing Allotments:

The Council provides a number of allotments sited at Hunter Road. They are managed by the Allotment Association in partnership with the Town Council. All the plots are in use and there is currently a waiting list.

Provision of Car Parking:

The Council provides valuable free parking facilities at the Coppice Car Park at the rear of the Market Place and Gibfield Lane

Monthly Farmers' Market:

Belper's Farmers' Market has gone from strength to strength since it first began in 2001. The Market is a highly respected and is very well attended with visitors from all over the area enjoying the vibrant atmosphere and vast selection of quality produce which is always on offer.

Organising Events and Entertainment:

The Council has organised the following events this year:

- **Larks in the Park** – A series of musical and other entertainment held on Summer Sunday afternoons in Belper's River Gardens.
- **Summer Food Festival** – King Street was alive on a Sunday in July with a wide range of foods to suit all tastes
- **Christmas Food Festival** – Following on from the success of the Summer Food Festival a Christmas Festival has now become an annual event in the town centre.
- **Proctor's Spring and Autumn Fairs** – A long standing traditional fair visiting the Coppice car park and the Market Place twice a year
- **Remembrance Day Service and Parade** - (with the co-operation of the Royal British Legion) held at St Peter's Church.
- **The Christmas Light Switch On** – "Christmas light Switch Ons" take place both at Milford and Belper on the last Friday in November.
- **The Christmas Eve Carol Service** – Over a thousand people attend this open air service on the Market Place.

- **WW1** – The Council has been involved with the Belper in Wartime Group and assisted with a number of commemorative events to mark the centenary of the First World War. On the 100th anniversary of a fallen soldier the flag in the Memorial Gardens is lowered and a biography about the soldier is available to view in the notice board on site

STAFF

The Council employs three office based staff: Town Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer and Assistant Town Clerk who work between 60 hours per week. The Council employs three outdoor staff members and one cleaner/caretaker.

Courses attended:

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk have attended several courses throughout the year.

FINANCE

The Council's finances are regularly monitored by a Finance Working Party. Set out below is a summary of the Council's income and expenditure for the year 2016/17.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE YEAR 2016/17

INCOME

PRECEPT	233037
GRANT	5397
SPONSORSHIP – Xmas, Flowers, Food Fest	24855
MARKET RENTS	5878
LETTING FEES	1242
MISC	7812
TOTAL	278221

EXPENDITURE

STAFF	135683
GEN ADMIN	29449
ELECTION EXP	6000
OUTDOOR MAINT	7112
VEHICLES/EQUIPM	2804
ARTS	11462
MISC GRANTS	4994
COMM SERVICES	24661
TOURISM	18436
CHRISTMAS	15341
MARKET PLACE	4451
FLORAL	14069
MAYOR	3586
COPPICE MISC	691

TOTAL **279639**

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