

## **Chairman's Report 2010 – 2011**

This has been a busy year for the Parish Council. A lot of projects that we have been working on for a long time have finally seen some progress.

During the year we welcomed 2 new councillors – in June Colin Meeks joined us and in September Paul Prince. In December our Clerk Lianne Abram gave notice but agreed to stay on as our Financial Officer and look after the accounts and finances. Steve Watson was then appointed Clerk.

We were disappointed to lose our Police Community Beat Manager Sarah Whittaker in October after the excellent job she had been doing. A new police officer Liz Bedford was assigned to us and we continue to work closely with her. Our PCSO Rachel Lonsdale has been on maternity leave for the last year but has now returned to us. Our PACT priorities for the year have included Anti Social behaviour, parking round the school and on junctions round the village, noisy motor bikes in the field behind Lydgate, speeding traffic especially on Halifax Rd and dog fouling as a result of public concerns voiced at meetings.

The Parish Council again precepted and the income has been used to pay for a Lengthman. Their jobs have included clearing footpaths, planting bulbs, grass cutting on Duke St and at Haggate, cutting back overhanging branches and gritting the streets during the bad winter using the gritting machine bought for the Parish Council. The Council also now has a chipper which they have used to chip foliage they have cut down.

The Planning Committee with Dave Thomas as Chair have met regularly to comment on applications which affect Briercliffe.

The Allotments committee under its Chair, Cllr Liishman, has met monthly and done regular inspections of the garage sites and allotments. Letters were sent asking that untidy allotments were cleaned and used properly and there has been a big improvement. They have agreed an improvement programme for the year which includes path clearing, fencing improvements, drainage work and tree and bush trimming. The lengthman will work for 10 full days on allotment improvements. Work has begun on the garage site on the bus turning circle. The garage bases are down and the garages should be

completed early in this next year. Some of the houses on Douglas Rd have taken advantage of our offer of allotments behind their houses.

The Recreation and Leisure Committee have met and done regular checks on the 3 play areas – Queen St, the Bowling Green and Lane Bottom play area. They have applied for the Lane Bottom play area to become a designated Queen Elizabeth 2<sup>nd</sup> playing field as part of a campaign next year during the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year to protect play areas.

Our finance Committee meets regularly and I am happy to report that our finances are in excellent order. We fully spend the Precept money on doing jobs round Briercliffe and keep a list of jobs reported to us. This year we finally received our compensation money from United Utilities for the damage and loss to Queen St recreation fields. We gave a donation of £100 to Briercliffe Rovers to help them fund an Under 11s team and gave £500 to the Bowling Club for improvements to their pavilion. We also had to buy a lot of grit for the Lengthman during the bad weather.

County Councillor Margaret Brindle attends every meeting and has kept us up to date with County Council matters that affect Briercliffe. This year they have included parking around Briercliffe School – double yellow lines were painted last summer, speeding traffic on Halifax Rd, the Library refurbishment, the barrier at Catlow Bottoms, road and footpath improvements and all matters dealt with by the County. Halifax Rd from the Police house to Holt Hill is being re surfaced soon and we hope there will be some signage to remind drivers to slow down.

Thanks to the skill of our new Councillor Paul Prince, we now have a Parish Council website. Since the website was launched it is being viewed regularly and residents are using it to find information, contact us and tell us their concerns. A special thank you to Paul who also regularly checks and updates the site.

Something that the Parish Council has wanted to do for a long time is finally happening. We have wanted to provide boundary signs on the main roads and village signs. We were hoping to finance one or two a year but Aircelle generously made the 22 signs for us in memory of Mike Holsgrove who was our Parish Councillor who died 2 years ago. Mike worked for Aircelle for 30

years and had asked for their advice on the signs and when he died they agreed to make them. Each sign has been individually made and has 'In memory of Mike Holsgrove' written on. I would especially like to thank them and the 2 councillors who have worked with Aircelle. Joan has arranged where each sign is going to be and got permissions, she oversaw the placing of the rocks and is arranging a special unveiling ceremony for the first signs with Aircelle and Mike's family. Dave Thomas works at Aircelle and has liaised with their staff. The stone for the signs was given to us by Paul and Liz Atkinson of Sweetwell Farm and Simon Dack kindly transported them for us over the Easter weekend. A big Thank you to all who have helped us.

We have had a big problem with a huge land slip into the river at the bottom of Queen St. Councillor Frost has been working with the Borough Council, County Council, the Flood Agency and the Environmental Agency to see what can be done. Fences have been erected to keep people away from the area and the public are warned to stay away.

The Woodland Walk footpath opened last Spring and the children at Briercliffe School were invited to design a sign. The winner was chosen and all the older children invited to the unveiling in April.

During the year the Parish Council has done its usual work. The Councillors all attended the Remembrance Day Service at Haggate Baptist Chapel and laid a wreath on the Cenotaph. We gave out 40 presents to the elderly of the village and received a donation towards the cost from the Briercliffe Society. We have bought nearly 200 hanging baskets and sold them on to residents as part of our efforts to brighten up the village. The Newsletter has been produced and delivered regularly thanks particularly to Councillors Meeks and Bailey who are the editors. The severe winter brought us 2 problems – gritting and potholes in the roads. We got a new grit bin on Talbot St and have asked for another on Netherwood St and asked that they be checked and refilled regularly. Potholes in the roads have been reported and patched..

I want to specially thank John Greenwood for everything he does for Briercliffe. Apart from being our Lengsthman and Allotment Manager he does loads of other voluntary jobs for us. When chickens got out and were running round the school playground we rang him at 8.30 in the morning and he sorted out

the broken fence and caught the chickens! He has met with the Environment Agency to look at the landslip, he checks the Queen St play area almost every morning, he helped us find the drains on the football field and met with us and United Utilities at least 10 times, he has called the Police on numerous occasions when there has been trouble on the rec, put out fires in the woods, he came immediately to put up a safety fence round the landslip, ordered the hanging baskets and helped to deliver them. His knowledge of Briercliffe is invaluable.

I thank all the Councillors for their work and commitment this year. I really think we have had a good year and are making progress with some of the projects that have been in the pipeline for a long time. Thank you to Lianne and Steve for the work and the good advice they give us.