

## **Annual Report Burton Overy Parish Council 2016/2017**

The annual report is an opportunity to look at the work of the Parish Council over the past year, to mark our achievements and to outline plans for the coming year.

**Financial:** The precept is a grant to the Parish to enable it to carry on its work and is raised through the council tax levied by Harborough District Council. The precept has been raised again for the current financial year by £2,000 so that it now stands at £7,000.00. The increase is needed to enable the Council to keep pace with increasing statutory demands, employing a clerk and meeting rising costs relating in particular to street lighting and the setting up and maintaining of the Parish Council and village website. Government grants have been obtained to help towards the cost of setting up the new website and the Broadband provision in the village hall.

**The clerk's role** is becoming increasingly important in Parish Council work and parish clerks are expected to keep up to date with changes in regulation and procedure and when appropriate attend training courses. It is a statutory office and the role includes giving legal and financial advice to the Parish Council. The clerk's job is to ensure the Council as a whole conducts its business properly and to provide independent, objective and professional advice. Our clerk Kate Barker fulfills this role admirably. This last year has seen Kate achieve much for the Council including setting up the Parish Council and village website and establishing Broadband Provision in the Village Hall. I would like to thank Kate for her hard work this year often over and above the call of duty. In view of the work involved the clerk's hours have been increased to five per week.

**Street Lighting:** This has exercised much of the Parish Council's agenda this year owing to the financial cost of running them and the expense of replacing an outdated and failing system. The village has been consulted on the way forward and further consultation will take place. After taking advice and costings from different sources, the Parish Council is liaising with Leicestershire County Council on the best way forward. At this stage three column lights have had modern LEDS fitted. Hopefully further lights will be replaced with LEDS over the next three to four years and consultation will continue as to which lights could be permanently disconnected. There will be a cost to modernizing which will need to be accommodated in the precept.

**Parish Council and Village Website:** This year saw the County Council withdraw its support and hosting of the Parish Council and village website. Kate Barker has worked hard together with Sue Tuxford to set up the new site which is hosted through 2Commune a company which specializes in supplying web technology for local councils. The website is a statutory requirement for the Parish Council and a valuable tool for the village and its organizations. Many thanks to Kate and Sue for their hard work on this.

**Planning:** The Parish Council takes seriously its duties as a consultee on planning applications which affect the Parish. As usual we have been kept busy with our consideration of and response to planning applications in this parish and applications and consultations on some major applications in Kibworth and Great Glen. We have continued to respond to consultations relating to the new Local Plan for Harborough District. We have responded to the consultations on the Neighbourhood Plans for Great Glen and Kibworth.

**Neighbourhood Plan:** Much hard work has been done in the last twelve months by the theme groups set up to work on the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan. As a result the plan is now in draft form and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group will soon be in a position to set a date for the next consultation event. The findings of the groups and the direction of the plan are already beginning to feed into the Parish Council's consideration of planning applications. Thanks are due to all members of the theme groups for their work and to Councillor Mark Firth for his leadership and work as Chairman of the steering group.

### **Community Projects:**

An open access community defibrillator has been installed at the village hall thanks to a joint effort by the Parish Council and village residents. This was funded partly by a grant from the British Heart Foundation and partly by fund raising in the village. A number of volunteers have been trained in CPR and use of the defibrillator.

A village barbeque was held in June to celebrate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. This was a well-attended and very happy occasion. A big thank you to Councillor Carolyn Carson and her team for organizing and Councillor Tim Ramsey for hosting this event.

**Councillors:** Following the casual vacancy, which arose in April 2016, Tim Ramsey was co-opted onto the council on 18 May 2016. Tim immediately became involved with the work on the Neighbourhood plan together with Councillor David Fletcher. Councillor Mark Firth continues to take overall responsibility for steering the Neighbourhood Plan process. Councillor Carolyn Carson continues to direct her considerable energy and enthusiasm into community projects.

I would like to thank all the councillors for their hard work on the Parish Council. They all have very busy working lives and other responsibilities and therefore the time, commitment, skills and insights they bring to the Parish Council are much appreciated.

**Miscellaneous:** We continue to liaise with the appropriate authorities in respect of damage to roads, signs and fly tipping. Fly tipping is becoming more of a nuisance.

A certain amount of voluntary work goes on for the Parish Council which has included this year small repairs, strimming around the Jubilee Oak, and fund

raising and organizing training for the defibrillator. I would like to express our grateful thanks to these volunteers.

**Plans for the coming year:**

Work will continue on the Neighbourhood Plan as it proceeds through the consultation stages.

We will continue to keep up to date with developments and consultations surrounding the new local plan and respond where necessary.

We will continue to monitor major developments in the Kibworths and Great Glen and will keep up to date with the progress of the Neighbourhood Plans for those parishes.

The position with regard to the streetlights will be kept under review as we continue to work our way through to a solution.

The development of a Good Neighbour Scheme will be kept under review.

Fran Brown  
Chairman  
15 May 2017