



Barnard Castle Town Council

Annual Report 2018/19

Forward

Being elected to continue my role as Mayor for a continuous second term of office was an honour and a privilege and I hope both colleagues and residents feel I have represented them well, both locally and further afield. The year has had commemorations, celebrations and new and exciting ways, working in partnership in the showcasing of "Barney." The year has seen a great deal of collaborative working and discussions continue on the way forward to reduce the use of plastic, particularly water bottles with an idea of free water refills becoming available, as part of that a public recycling bin is also now in place in Woodleigh grounds.

A committed team supported Barnard Castle Schools Interact Group and together a *Fashion Through the Ages* show was produced on a catwalk to the great delight of many guests and a large Civic Group. The challenge of young and old working together was a learning

curve for both sides and very rewarding especially as the Mayor's Charity passed on the funds raised at the event, £1,500 to Barnardo's.

2018 was a very special year for our Remembrance of the end of WW1 and the town's events to mark this were significant. A completely full church listed to an emotive service in St. Mary's, followed by a parade and laying of wreaths at the Cenotaph. Stories of the "Smith family of Barnard Castle" hit the national press headlines, telling the story of the loss of three brothers in the war and how a fourth was removed from action through the intervention of the Queen. It was heart-warming to see that protocol can sometimes be bent and that the last surviving Smith grandchild and her family laid the first wreath.

I was able to tell that story at a Commemoration Dinner at Barnard Castle School, but other stories had been researched by both the Bowes Museum and our own Partnership Committee

and these were part of very emotional presentations at The Bowes, The Witham and The Methodist Church. The latter also including local choirs performing individually and together prior to a video being shown on the castle walls and then the national lighting of the beacon.

Prior to the 11th of November, needles and crochet hooks had been flashing red with lots of volunteers creating beautiful poppies which became a wall of flanking the west of Woodleigh. It was a wonderful piece of commemorative art and it gave many people great pleasure to see it and it gave me person pleasure to say thank you to the volunteers over tea and cake.

Flags were raised for Armed Forces day and the well-established Aviation day service and wreath laying ceremony was held in Galgate and in true Barney style we also commemorated Red Ensign Day. This year we welcomed past and present members of the Merchant Navy, sea scouts and Civic guests from around the County and 13 Rotarians from Pennsylvania who join me for a buffet lunch at the Witham. The Council has continued to develop its offer to residents and visitors to join them at the lighting of the Christmas Tree and the

“Oh! no it isn't panto” produced by Councillors, litter picks, the 1940's weekend and a rare opportunity to learn juggling skills. I hope through my initiative Making Barney Brighter Together we can continue to promote and support the town and work with the Council on new and exciting ideas to keep the town vibrant. So far the group has made a difference and I thank them all for their commitment.

Although the Council is unable to support the Witham financially, members have endeavoured to do so in different ways and I hope that continued partnership working will bring them a successful and stable future, also a wish for other partners including the Bowes, the Hub and the YMCA.

Whilst it has been a successful, active and enjoyable year and we at long last now have leases on the Demesnes and Woodleigh Grounds it was tinged with sadness. The unexpected loss of our Freeman 'Marie' Yarker, her contribution to town life was incredible and she will be sorely missed.

As the Mayor, seen gracefully gliding along, swanlike in chains there is of course a great deal of paddling going on below the surface and I must give thanks to my colleagues who have worked as a strong team in their commitment to the town. Very

personal thanks must also go to my Consort and to the staff who continue to make it all happen and keep us afloat, they continued to show expertise and loyalty and somehow managed to keep the Mayor, on track, on time and to dilute some of her wilder ideas whilst efficiently carrying out the duties of the Council. So many people have given me so much support and kindness during the year, thank you and hope that we can continue to work together for the benefit of "Barney."

Cllr Mrs Sandra Moorhouse

Town Mayor 2018/19

13 May 2018

Services

Allotments

During the season, ten gardens were re-tenanted and ten new applications received.

The allotment rental increased from £45.00 to £47.00 due to the rising costs of utilities and ground maintenance. Rental however will remain at £47.00 for 2019/2020. The allotment service is self-funding and does not form part of the precept.

During the year, further path improvements were undertaken on the Raby Avenue site along with tree works carried out on The Demesnes site.

Wednesday Market

The town council continues to manage the town's weekly Wednesday Market. The Market is being actively promoted to create a vibrant, thriving town for locals and visitors.

Floral Displays

The town's floral displays continue to be enhanced with colourful summer and winter displays. A hanging basket sponsorship scheme provided additional colour outside the town post office in 2018. Volunteers actively weed, plant and tidy floral beds to keep the town looking colourful and attractive.

Open Spaces

Management of the Upper Demesnes continues with traditional scything of the wild flower hay meadow. Trees were planted on the Upper Demesnes by Trees for Teesdale.

We have worked with Durham Wildlife Trust on a project to enhance natural habitats.

Lease transfers from Durham County Council continue. Woodleigh Grounds and Demesnes leases have been signed.

The town council manages use of the banner frame on Scar Top, with priority given to voluntary and community groups to advertise events.

Abbreviated Accounts 2018/19 (unaudited figures)

EXPENDITURE	2018/19 Budget (£)	Outturn 31 Mar 19 (£)	INCOME	2018/19 Budget (£)	Outturn 31 Mar 19 (£)
Council Administration	11,724	10,954	Fees & Charges (recreation)	14,317	14,807
Central Support Services	124,120	125,289	Fees & Charges (other)	9,500	12,994
GDPR Compliance	1,500	1,182	Woodleigh Rental Income	12,750	12,750
Elections	5,000	-	Bank Interest	800	780
Chains of Office	50	5	Precept	182,779	182,779
Woodleigh	23,377	18,479	LCTSG	5,416	5,416
Civic Fund	500	500			
Allotments	4,217	2,514	TOTAL INCOME	225,562	229,526
Mini Golf	10,000	7,412			
Christmas Lights	6,500	6,224			
Play Areas	11,500	14,677			
Bartlemere/Kalafat Lighting	-	-			
Dog Fouling	300	-			
Wednesday Market	3,000	2,711			
Youth Project	-	190			
Floral & Open Spaces	9,500	5,426			

Floodlighting	700	400
War Memorials	500	890
DWT Project	1,000	837
Public Seats	-	55
Bede Road Bus Shelter	50	15
Events	7,000	8,395
Wayfinding Units	100	-
Market Place Public Toilets	4,924	4,997
Neighbourhood Plan	-	-
Capital Project Expenditure	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	225,562	210.352

RESERVES EXPENDITURE

During the year £12,107 of the council's reserves has been spent on the following projects:

- Public Seats
- Play Area
- Floral & Open Spaces
- Allotments
- Youth Project
- War Memorials
- Christmas Event
- 1940s Event

Over the same period, £1,100 has been transferred to Earmarked Reserves, resulting in a net decrease in Earmarked Reserves of £11,007, bringing the earmarked reserves total to £59,773.

The council's overall balances and reserves figure (including the above) at the end of 2018/19 stands at £154,998 as of 31 March 2019.

Play Areas

The council manages six play areas across the town. A football goal for younger children was installed at Green Lane during the year.

Public Seats

The memorial bench sponsorship scheme continues. Due to the success of the project, there remain only a few benches in need of refurbishment, however, ongoing maintenance and repairs are still necessary to keep the town's benches in good condition.

Environmental Matters

Anti-dog fouling initiatives continue alongside Durham County Council. Free poop bags are available at Woodleigh and the police station.

The town council supported the town weeding project in June, alongside the Influence Church, and the Big Spring Clean in March, together with numerous volunteers.

War Memorials

Four war memorials are inspected and maintained; two in the grounds of The Bowes Museum and two on the Galgate Greens. Repair works to the Town War Memorial were completed in advance of the Centenary of

the Armistice in November 2018.

Market Place Public Toilets

The Market Place Public Toilets continue to be operated by Durham County Council, with half of the annual running costs funded by the town council.

Mini Golf

The service continues to be a popular attraction. The 2018 season saw 4,787 rounds played over the 119 operating days.

Partnership

Community Events

The town council held its third **1940s Weekend** in June, working with the local community. Vintage vehicles, re-enactment groups, music, traditional games, vintage stalls, displays, *Dig for Victory* all attracted locals and visitors. The crowds turned-out in their hundreds for the fly-past from a Spitfire of the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

A festive pantomime, written, narrated and starring councillors, provided much amusement and entertained crowds at the annual **Christmas Tree Lights Switch-on** event with the added attraction of *Aladdin's Cave*, as well as the arrival of Santa,

traditional grotto and family workshops.

The town council has developed a working relationship with **English Heritage**, supporting the redevelopment of the garden in the Castle into a community orchard and wildflower meadow.

Christmas Lighting

The council extended Christmas lighting further along Galgate, working in partnership with Barnard Castle Christmas Lights. For the three seasons, 2018 to 2021, the town's Christmas lighting displays are provided via a service level agreement between the town council and Barnard Castle Christmas Lights.

Floodlights

The town council manages the coloured floodlights illuminating the castle and the external floodlighting to the Market Cross.

Poppy Appeal

The end of September saw the close of the 2017 Poppy Appeal, followed by the launch of the 2018 Appeal at the end of October.

The local 2017 appeal raised a total of £17,326.23 generated by activities over the two-week period of Remembrancetide along with

a number of generous donations, church collections and proceeds from activities, which took place during the council's 1940s weekend in June.

So far, the 2018 appeal has raised £16,650.71 and there is still a chance that this total may increase by the close of the appeal at the end of September 2019.

Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday and the centenary of the declaration of the Armistice took place on 11 November 2018, organised with St Mary's Parish Church with assistance from Barnard Castle School staff and cadets from the school's Combined Cadet Force.

The church service was well attended across the community, including the presence of the Town Mayor and Deputy Lord Lieutenant.

Organisations within the town provided free and subsidised refreshments. A WW1 exhibition along with bespoke monologues were written and performed by local people. Battle's Over: A Nation's Tribute was commemorated through a choir concert and the lighting of a beacon on Scar Top.

Planning

The Planning Committee (acting under delegated powers) considered 68 planning applications and two licensing applications; broadly equivalent to the number of planning applications considered in 2017/18.

The town council was successful in its application to register Bede Kirk as a village green. Following this decision, the Police Crime and Victims' Commissioner pledged to pass the freehold of the site to the town council, which has maintained the area under licence since the summer.

Resources

Budget and Finance

Resources Committee prepared the budget, prior to Full Council approval. The annual budgetary cycle takes around three months when all aspects of the council's financial requirements are considered.

The Gross Revenue Expenditure for 2018/19 was £210,352 and details of how this was apportioned are in the centre of this report. Information is also available on the use of the council's reserves.

The council's finances are internally audited every six months and externally audited annually.

More information and contact details

Further details of all the Services mentioned in this annual report can be obtained by visiting the town council's website

www.barnardcastletowncouncil.gov.uk or from our

Facebook -**BarneyCouncil** and Twitter **@BarneyCouncil** profiles.

Our office: **Woodleigh, Flatts Road, Barnard Castle, DL12 8AA**

Open 10:00 to 4:00, Monday to Friday.

Our telephone number is **01833 690970**

Our email address is

clerk@barnardcastletowncouncil.gov.uk