

BARNOLDSWICK TOWN COUNCIL TOWN MEETING

6th March 2024

Chairman: Cllr Chris Church

Electors present: 152

01/24 The town council has continued to make Barnoldswick as busy, bustling and eventful as it could during the past year.

After last year's Pride of the town Awards, the council concluded its winter programme of events with Barnoldswick in Wonderland, which, together with the events held in January and February this year, was supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

This was followed up with the most successful Bands On The Square event we've ever held, with a fantastic line-up of mostly local talent and an appreciative audience praised by the police for their good nature. The event covered its costs and has helped finance further events during the year.

Unfortunately after BOTS, there was a downturn in the weather. Some eventful storms enlivened outdoor activities throughout the rest of the year, with the notable exception of the Picnic In The Park, jointly organised with Hope Barnoldswick at Letcliffe, which enjoyed the best sunshine of the year.

July's Kite Festival was distinctly damp, but was well attended and appreciated by hundreds of families taking part in the activities at Victory Park.

Together with Valley Gardens, Victory and Letcliffe Parks are now the responsibility of the town council. Repair and improvement work in the parks is a regular activity. Potholes, lighting, new seats and litter bins have been provided this year, with more extensive work in the pipeline for coming months.

Back in the town centre, during what should have been the warmer months of the year, the town council provided tables and chairs on the Town Square. Town council handyman, Eugene O'Callaghan carrying out this task.

August saw the ever-popular Barnoldswick Beach return to the Town Square with a format that accommodated the 'open-access' seating arrangements. New features on the beach included a boat, mud kitchen and children's shop.

The summer's wet weather meant that there wasn't quite as much work for the council's watering contractor to maintain the 200 or so hanging baskets and containers around the town. The town council would like to record its appreciation of the care in which watering was carried out and the resulting magnificent floral display.

Councillors are also grateful to the volunteers of Barnoldswick in Bloom, who continue to tend a considerable number of landscaped areas, together with implementing new schemes and tree planting.

The Bloom team, together with other volunteers, were also instrumental in installing and taking down 175 shop front trees, with lights being put on and taken off in the Town Square marquee.

The marquee was also in action for Remembrance Sunday, which is organised by the town council in Barnoldswick with the support of the Royal British Legion, local clergy and the town's brass band.

Mid-November saw the busiest Switch-On Saturday that the town has ever had, despite the continuing poor weather. The dynamic 6m Christmas Cone decorations on the Town Square provided a lively display throughout the festive season.

A named storm failed to stop Barnoldswick's two-day Christmas Market in December, which was held in tandem with the Rotary's Santa Fun Run. Both events were affected by the weather and some of the town council organisers remain traumatised from the conditions.

In January, the council began the second year of events supported from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The first of these was the Festival of Ice and Fire with a Wizarding World theme. The apprentice sorcerer's element was so successful that the town council are planning to make this an event in its own right next year. The town council thank Silentnight and Filtrox for sponsoring sculptures, Hope Technology for their assistance and lots of volunteers who used their crafting skills to create wizard outfits. We also thank the weather for being good, may this continue throughout 2024.

In February half-term the free Arts and Crafts Festival was well attended and popular with hundreds of families. Both last year and this year saw new sculptures being created for the trail at Letcliffe Park. Shee, a Celtic hill fairy will soon be joining Otto the Owl and the original sculptures at Letcliffe Park.

The town council is grateful to all the volunteers and casual workers who make events possible throughout the year and the staff in the office, Rebecca Lewis and Ali Greer led by Joanne Geldard who organised such a full calendar of activities. Two new members of staff will soon be joining the team and taking over from Rebecca and Ali.

Most of the events wouldn't be possible without the Town Square, and the town council has put considerable effort into concluding work on the original contract. A further phase of work is now in the pipeline, with improvements for pedestrians at the back of the square and the possibility of a small permanent performance area being built. This work has yet to be confirmed.

One prominent feature in the public realm is the new location of Old Gormless. Heritage style lighting has been installed together with a new up-the-pole hanging basket planter. New benches have been fitted and an interpretation board about the Queen Victoria Jubilee Fountain is set to complete the project.

As part of this scheme, the bus shelter clock tower has been reinstalled with new clock mechanism in place. After taking his time, the clock repairer finally came through with this!

The town council was pleased to support the relocation of the Johnny Pickles Clock which was formerly housed at the offices of Gissing and Lonsdale. The town council funded the relocation of the clock to Bancroft Mill Engine Museum where this important artefact is displayed to the public.

The Avon Drive play area has been refurbished with the support of Lottery and Pendle Council funding. Play areas are now inspected weekly by town council staff, with day-to-day repairs carried out as needed. The council's budget includes money to renew another play area this year, and it's hoped that funding can be found for a rolling programme of play space updates.

A rolling programme already underway is the renewal of park and roadside seats. Six refurbished seats from the Town Square have been installed at locations across the town. Work to install six more will be carried out in the coming months.

As well as annual civic pride activities, events and projects, the town council is very active campaigning to improve services and facilities in the town. Issues taken up during the past year include: road safety; sports' facilities; bus services; policing; access to health services (doctors and clinics); pharmacies; water supplies; town centre improvements; and cycle routes.

Since the closure of the last high street banks in Barnoldswick, the town council has been at the forefront of the fight to get a Banking Hub in the town. I'm delighted that the new hub opened its doors this week. May it go from strength to strength.

Provision for youth services has been high on the council's agenda, with pressure on the county council to make full use of the Civic Hall basement. We are pleased to announce that LCC has now agreed to retain the facility and extend sessions through the new voluntary group set up to provide activities for teenagers. This is a big win for Barnoldswick!

Funding for primary-age children's free swimming during school holidays is provided by the town council. The damaged skate ramp at Victory Park is undergoing repair.

As well as the grant for school holiday swimming, the town council has helped Barnoldswick Brass Band buy a Fugle Horn and the Football Club refurbish its toilets.

The town council is pleased that Citizen's Advice sessions have returned to Barnoldswick, with regular sessions on a Tuesday at the Civic Hall.

The Civic Hall is operated by the town council. The building is increasingly busy. A handful of new groups are using the building in addition to the established organisations. Hundreds of people now use the facility weekly.

Other assets maintained by the town council are: three sets of public toilets; the three parks; four play areas (plus those in parks), two multi-use games areas, 122 allotments (up five from last year); and several miscellaneous plots of land.

Tree maintenance work is a growing part of the town council's work, with ash die-back leading to a significant increase in tree management costs. The council now has a specific budget line for this work.

The town council operates markets at events throughout the year and facilitates the Artisan Market, which will now be coming on the fourth Sunday of the month from 24th March.

Before concluding, I want to welcome residents of Bracewell and Brogden to the Township of Barnoldswick. Although people haven't moved anywhere at all, Pendle Council extended the parish boundary and residents in that rural area are now under the town council's wing.

I'd like to thank all the people who contribute towards all the activities of the town council, staff, occasional workers, volunteers, other organisations and funding bodies. The activities of our local council would not be possible without the participation of so many people. It's an honour to recognise some of them with Pride of Barnoldswick Awards this evening.

02/24 Pride of Barnoldswick Awards

Pride of Barnoldswick Awards were presented to some of "Barlick's best" last week.

Liam Harvey for his dedication to the town

Astrid & Shaun Middleton for setting up the community choir

Gemma Allen – for setting up Pendle Stitches

Paul & Ann Miller – St Andrews – have recently retired but ran St Andrews since 1987

Ghyll Gardeners – for their work at Ghyll Church

Jane & Grant Bardwell – Following their recent retirement for long service to the town

Allister Brown & Mike Heald – coaching the Under 8's at Barlick Town

Ghyll Church Volunteers – Running the coach house

Hope Barnoldswick – for running the community picnic

Rob Carlos – for his work in getting supplies to the Ukraine

Jake McCusker – for getting help when his mum collapsed

Judith Jamieson – for her 30 years work with the children of Barnoldswick

Oliver Stevens – for fund raising for trauma support charity after having an accident

Josh Mansfield – for helping a neighbour when she fell despite having difficulties in communicating

Josh Newman – for clearing icy paths over a vast area during the recent cold spell

Mandy Barker – for making the pensioners a hub again in the town

Will Jacque and BC Junior Coaches – for their commitment to improving junior cricket

Sara Alexander – for performing the Heimlich manouvre when her friend was choking at the cinema

Bosom Friends Shop Volunteers – for their hardwork and dedication to fundraising

Rachel McLean – for being a founding member of the Bosom Friends Bereavement group and for her empathy and support

Bryony Higgs – For her dedication and empathy that she has shown to members of the bereavement group

Sally Lambert, Carolyn Wright, Jenny Arnold, Mandy Spencer, Annette Jackson, Nina Sedgwick, Hilary Kancidrowski, Terry Beadman, Christine Thomson & Team at Silentnight, Heather Watson

For their amazing work during the Wizards Event in January – sewing, painting and just being amazing

Wes Perriman – for his work cleaning the cenotaph

Bracewell Parish Church – for their years of work at the church

Pendle Nursery – for 50 years of running the nurseary

Noor Udin & Usmanijah – for organising the Community Iftar.

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03/24 Approval of minutes of the 2023 Annual Town Meeting held on the 1st March 2023

Resolved: To approve the minutes

04/24 Audited Statement of Accounts (2022/2023) and Town Council budget (2024/2025)

Resolved: To note this information

05/24 Matters from Electors

To consider any action/decision matters which have been submitted from local electors (24 hours prior to the meeting) and related issues

Resolved: There were no matters from electors received

06/24 Further information items

Resolved: There were no further information items

07/24 To consider information items from local electors

Resolved: To note the issues of a lack of pharmacy provision in town, the issues with the water supplies from the pumping station on Calf Hall Road, problems with Royal Mail services in town and concerns over sports provision.

The Civic Hall, Station Road, Barnoldswick, BB18 5NA

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