

BRACEBRIDGE HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Bracebridge Heath Community Library, London Road, Bracebridge Heath, Lincoln, LN4 2LA
07899 888530 – clerk@bracebridge-heath.co.uk

Annual reports from Bracebridge Heath Parish Council

Contents

Parish Council Chairman’s report	2
Parish Council Vice-Chairman’s report	4
Finance & General Purposes standing committee report	5
Planning, Lighting and Roads standing committee report	6
Playing Fields, Allotments and Open Spaces standing committee report	7
Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee report	8
Woodland & Cemetery Development sub-committee report	10
Appendices:	
Appendix A – Councillor attendance data	11
Appendix B - Election data since 2015	12
Appendix C - Budget summary	13

Thank you to everyone who has assisted council in any way over the last twelve months. In particular, thanks must go to our staff who continue to work hard on behalf of our community. My first task must be give public thanks to James Stanley, our former clerk for many years. Not least of this must be to acknowledge his patience in assisting with what seemed to become a prolonged appointment and handover process. His successor, Stacey Knowles, has been with us over six months now and has settled into the position well.

Membership of council

Cllr Parr resigned April 2017. An election was requested which was held to coincide with the General Election of June 2017. Cllr Donaldson was elected on a turnout of 67.62%, gaining 59.6% of the votes cast. We thank Cllr Parr for his service and welcome Cllr Donaldson to the council.

Election costs have added considerably to expenditure over the last three years. The contested election of May 2015 cost £3198.14. Bye-elections in February and June 2017 cost £5542.36 and £3574.02 respectively. This brings the total spending on recent elections for the residents of Bracebridge Heath to £12314.52. Full details of these elections are included in the published reports from this meeting.

Bracebridge Heath Parish Council is fully committed to supporting democracy within this community. It is up to the residents of this village to call for an election when a vacancy occurs. However, it is important for residents to know the costs associated with elections.

Councillor attendance

Attendance data for councillors is now available from the parish council website, updated monthly. A breakdown of attendances is attached to this report.

Representatives to outside organisations

Thanks go to the council representatives who attend meetings of organisations to keep the organisation and council informed of activities. Currently 8 members of council take this responsibility for 8 organisations. Any organisation which would like to have a council representative should contact the Parish Clerk. These appointments are reviewed in May each year.

Best Kept Village

We are delighted to be runner-up to Heckington in the Class 3 category, following our similar success in 2014. This is an ongoing tribute to the effort of many people taking care of some or all of our village throughout the last few years, and especially to the continual hard work of our handyman, Colin.

Defibrillators

One defibrillator was replaced at a cost of £954 following damage. It was decided to continue with the policy of keeping cabinets unlocked.

Christmas tree

As in recent years, the tree was lit on the corner of Grantham Road and Bentley Drive.

Remembrance Day

The 2017 service started earlier which allowed gathering at the war memorial on time. Thanks go to Reverend Jacqueline Bell and her colleagues at the Church of St John the Evangelist, and to Bracebridge Heath Women's Institute for arranging refreshments.

Communication with the village

Heathcliff View continues to include news from Bracebridge Heath Parish Council every month to every household in the village. Parish News includes council information to subscribers each month and to every house in December, which is combined with the annual parish information sheet. Parish Council

maintains 10 noticeboards across the village. The Bracebridge Heath Parish Council Facebook Group now has 1009 members.

Village Hall

It is recognised that Bracebridge Heath Village Hall Management Committee has faced some difficulties in recent years. Parish Council has worked alongside the management committee to monitor the situation for some time now. A more detailed report will be made later in this meeting.

Precept

Bracebridge Heath Parish Council has requested an increase in the precept for 2018-2019 of 11.21%. This works out at an extra £5.76 per Band D household per year, or 11p per week. A Band D household will pay £57.12 across the year.

A number of staffing changes have taken place in the last year. After the resignation of the former Clerk, James Stanley, the Parish Council sought a replacement. It was acknowledged by the Council that the Clerk's workload had increased and Mr Stanley had been working far in excess of his contracted 10 hours per week.

The Parish Council advertised for a Clerk to be contracted for 20 hours per week and after interviews conducted in March 2017, the Parish Council appointed Mrs Knowles to the position. Interviews were also held for the position of Assistant Clerk during March 2017. Despite an appointment being made at this time the preferred candidate later withdrew. In September 2017, Council employed Mrs Rachel Fraser as an Assistant Clerk for 10 hours per week. Due to increasing workloads the Clerk and Assistant Clerk's contracted hours has since been increased to a combined total of 35 hours per week.

During 2017-2018, the Parish Council subscribed to the Lincolnshire Association Local Council's training programme, which offers training for Council employees and Councillors. A number of training events have been attended by the Clerk, Assistant Clerk and Councillors.

I would like to thank the Parish Council staff including former Clerk Mr Stanley, Mrs Knowles, Mrs Fraser, Mr Wordley and Mrs Lowery for their continuing efforts in looking after the parish.

I would also like to extend thanks to the library volunteers who open and run the library for a total of 14 hours per week. Without this voluntary contribution this valuable community asset would not be open.

Bracebridge Heath Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its activities are conducted in accordance with the law.

The finance and general purposes committee is responsible for seeing that public money is safeguarded and the council can discharge its duties efficiently. The committee oversees all expenses the council has and has to make sure that the budget is not overspent. The committee is responsible for ensuring that sufficient insurance is in place for all the councils activities. The committee is responsible for setting the annual precept to ensure that the council has sufficient funds to conduct its business. The committee meet monthly to discuss income and expenditure and to make payments as required, any transfer of funds to or from reserves is discussed and recommendations are made to the full council.

This committee receives applications for grants from various village organisations and they are all discussed and approved or not and again recommendation is made to full council.

Staffing structure is also the responsibility of this committee and a sub-committee has been set up to ensure that the correct policies are in place regarding council's employees.

The finance and reserves are available on the Council's web site and I do not propose to give a list of figures, except to assure members and the public that the finances of this council are in a good and robust condition, and looking forward as far as possible the Council should be in an excellent position to carry out its duties.

Eleven committee meetings have been held this year. The work of this committee is split into four sections the main part being to consider planning applications. Nine Councillors are members of this committee. This committee has a budget of just over £9000.

Planning

The Parish Council does not have the power to grant/refuse planning permission. It acts as one of the consultees to NKDC Planning Committee. All the comments we make have to be in line with recognised national planning conditions and objections.

This year we have looked at a total of 30 planning applications:

	Domestic property e.g. house extensions, walls, garden extensions	Industrial e.g. change of use, new industrial building.	New build domestic property	St John's Hospital site e.g. alterations, amendments to planning permission.
Applications	20	6	1	3
Applications where comments, objections submitted to NKDC	10	5	1	3

Each planning application is looked at in detail from the plans and information submitted to NKDC by the applicant, to using Google Maps and public comments made on line. Every application is thoroughly discussed before any decision is taken with regards whether to make comments, objections or say that we have no comment to make.

Lighting

Many years ago, the Parish Council had the chance to be responsible for the street lighting in the village as it was at that time. This did not include lighting alongside the main roads which belong to Lincolnshire County Council. The Parish Council is not responsible for the lighting in any estates built since that date (i.e. St John's estate, Sycamore Grove estate) The Committee is responsible for authorising repairs to/replacement of standards; scrutinising and recommending the payment of the electricity bill; and deciding if any extra lighting is needed such as along footpaths. At the time of speaking approximately £2000 has been spent on new standards and £5000 on electricity since last year.

Roads

The Parish Council is not responsible for the maintenance of the vast majority of roads in the village, these are the responsibility of Lincolnshire county Council. However there are a few un-adopted private roads which are the responsibility of their residents. The Parish Council owns and maintains one road Red Hall Farm Lane.

The Committee does liaise with our County Councillor and Highways to push for repairs and improvements to our roads and their safety. Including St John's Road rebuild, extending 30mph speed limits to edge of our village and looking to the future to identify potential rat runs etc. Highways no longer has the resources to have meetings with individual parish councils so they have recently instigated cluster meetings. Our Clerk and Cllr Mrs Manders attended the first cluster meeting.

Road calming measures - Gates to the village

We are in the process of getting some white gates (similar to Wellingore) to mark the entrances to the village in the attempt to make car drivers aware they are entering a village and slow down. These gates will be on the Grantham, Sleaford and Canwick Road. London Road is a problem as the regulations relating to their distance from the road edge is proving to be a problem.

Notice boards and bus shelters

This committee is responsible for the upkeep and provision of notice boards and bus shelters in the village. This year no money has been spent on this and the monies will be carried forward to next year.

The Neighbourhood Plan sub- committee has been meeting regularly and working hard on laying all the groundwork for this very important task.

Pupils from St John's Academy took part in the design a logo/mascot competition and on Monday 2nd October at the full school assembly, Cllr Ian Donaldson and Cllr Kate Trought had the great privilege of announcing the winners and handing out the prizes. In addition to that, Cllr Ann Walker had made the winning mascot into a 'real life' stuffed toy and the winner was given this as an extra prize for his design of the Community Bear.

Also, as a fun way of raising awareness, seven painted stone bees were hidden around the village with prizes for finding the special golden Queen Bee. Lots of children – and adults – got great pleasure from searching for them. This campaign even featured on Radio Lincolnshire with a member of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee being interviewed live on air.

Many people stopped at our table at St John's Primary Academy Christmas Fayre for a chat and to take part in our competition. They had the opportunity to take part in this public consultation exercise and make comments on Post-it notes for inclusion into the finished plan.

There have been two public consultations at the monthly St John the Evangelist church coffee morning, where members of the Neighbourhood Planning Group had a display and were available to discuss and chat with residents

All the written comments made, including those taken from our Facebook page are a very important part of the village consultation. These have been transcribed and will be attached to the completed Neighbourhood Plan.

The two headings for comments were:

1. What do you like about Bracebridge Heath?
2. What would you improve in Bracebridge Heath?

Many congratulations went to Matthew Tozer, who won the photography competition and to Johnny Martin, who was the runner up. The winning entry is now proudly displayed at the top of our Facebook page and in the Community Library and both featured strongly in Heathcliff View. All the entries showed what a diverse and wonderful village we live in and how it means different things to different people. It is hoped that all the photographs will be used in the final plan.

We have now received a grant of £4021 from the Community Rights Programme, funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government, some of which will be used to employ a specialist consultant to help formulate and analyse the questionnaire and to give advice on the writing of the plan.

At the moment we are deep in negotiations to formulate a survey for all residents within Bracebridge Heath. This will be in the April edition of Heathcliff View and available online through the Parish Council website and the Neighbourhood Plan Facebook page. There will be numerous boxes around the village for collection of the completed surveys. If residents have any problems with being able to get to one of these, they are urged get in touch with any member of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee and arrangements will be made for collection. Equally, if they wish to discuss any issues to do with the plan, again they are asked to contact the Parish Council or any member of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee and someone will come to talk to them.

If residents do not like filling in formal questionnaires there are still plenty of opportunities to comment online on our Facebook page or by getting in touch with the Parish Clerk. We can then make alternative arrangements such as visiting the residents or via telephone.

Please take time to complete this important survey to make your views known. There will be a residents' questionnaire, a business version and also some questions for the younger people who live in the village

Commenting on our Facebook page will also be recorded and taken into consideration when writing the plan. You can also get in touch by writing to or emailing the Parish Clerk.

Residents' views are very important to us. What is decided now will affect our village for years to come. Our future and the future of our families is in our own hands.

We meet regularly in the library. The dates and times of meetings can be found on either the Parish Council FB page or the Neighbourhood Planning Group Facebook page. Come along and have a chat or ask questions. You will be made very welcome.

The sub-committee has five members: 3 councillors and 2 parish members. Six meetings have been held this year. This committee does not have its own budget but some funding for tree work was given to the council as part of the St John's Hospital planning permission.

The committee was set up to look after the development of the woodland and cemetery area. There are four distinct zones:

- Zone 1 Burial Ground (St John's Hospital Cemetery)
- Zone 2 Burial Ground to Minster Court (Woodland Walk)
- Zone 3 Minster Court to Hospital Cottages (area behind the War Memorial)
- Zone 4 Hospital Cottages to Homestead

Three of these zones are now owned by the Parish Council. The fourth, Zone 3, belongs to Mabec and will not be handed over to the Parish Council until the St John's Hospital development is complete.

This year the committee has overseen the following activities:

1. Gained approval for work to be done on the TPO trees from NKDC. Other tree work was also completed including removal of trees identified as unsafe due to disease etc. (shredding still to be done of branches)
2. Cleared the undergrowth and planting of bulbs and wildflower seeds. Although the cow parsley still remains a problem.
3. Costs for the repair of the cemetery stone walls have been sourced by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The estimate is £40,000. Ways to afford this are still ongoing. However, the fallen stones are still there and ways to protect them have been put in place. Also, to prevent 4 wheeled vehicles from entering the cemetery from Worcester Close.
4. A report on the history and burials within the cemetery has been researched and produced by Cllr Mrs Manders. (It will be made available to parishioners in due course.) Purchase of the maps showing the layout of burials within the cemetery has been agreed by full council and will be available in the library.
5. Discussed with artsNK (Marian Saunders) regarding use of the fallen trees for sculpture work. This is likely to be a summer project.
6. Discussed and obtained prices for putting informative noticeboards and signage in the cemetery and in the other zones which show the history of the area. This is still in its early stages. It is hoped that grants may be available to help with the cost of this work.
7. University of Lincoln: A meeting between Cllr Mrs Manders, Cllr Kilcoyne and Dr Katherine Fennelly has taken place into the possibility of a small scale archaeological research project taking place in the cemetery. This project will be to identify features within the cemetery and is dependent on Dr Katherine obtaining grants to do the work. Hopefully this will lead us to be able to put a memorial on the site to the 3694 plus people buried there.
8. Iron railings along Sleaford Road. Although this has been looked in general, it is clear that opinion is divided in the village on what to do with them or if removed what to replace them with. We are mindful that if we want the area to be walked along/used by young families there needs to be some sort of barrier between that area and the very busy A15. It may be that each zone will be looked at separately to see what is best for that area. Consultation will be needed with our parishioners over what they think.

Finally, our thanks go to Colin for the vast amount of work he has done in this area to keep it neat, tidy and as far as possible free of litter.

Appendix A – Councillor attendance data

Councillor attendance data								
Member	Roles within council 2017-2018	Additional role: Representative to	Summonses to meetings	Meetings attended	Meetings for which apologies were received & accepted	Meetings for which apologies were not received or accepted	Meetings attended as an observer	% attendance
<i>Cllr P Burley</i>	F&GP (C)		19	15	4			78.95%
<i>Cllr R Clements</i>	PLR		19	18		1		94.74%
<i>Cllr I Donaldson</i>	NP PLR WCD		28	21	7			75%
<i>Cllr G Fletcher</i>	Council (VC) F&GP PFAOS PLR WCD (Sub)	Bracebridge Heath Village Hall Management Committee	34	34			1	100%
<i>Cllr Mrs P Humphrey</i>	PFAOS PLR	Bracebridge Heath Community Library	27	22	3	2		81.48%
<i>Cllr J Kilcoyne</i>	Council (C) F&GP PFAOS PLR WCD	Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (elected member)	39	39				100%
<i>Cllr C Lowery</i>	F&GP PFAOS (C)		24	21	3			87.5%
<i>Cllr Mrs S Manders</i>	F&GP (VC) NP (Sub) PLR (C) WCD (C)	Cliff Cluster Bracebridge Heath- Leadenham	44	40	4		5	90.91%
<i>Cllr Mrs S Stamp</i>	PLR		15	5	3	7		33.33%
<i>Cllr Mrs K Trought</i>	NP PLR (VC) WCD	Cliff Cluster Bracebridge Heath- Leadenham	39	34	4	1		87.18%
<i>Cllr Mrs A Walker</i>	NP (C) PFAOS PLR WCD (VC)	Bracebridge Heath Bowls Club	44	32	8	4		72.73%
<i>Cllr J Ward</i>	PFAOS (VC)	Bracebridge Heath Allotment Holders' Association	14	11	2	1		78.57%
<i>Cllr S Williams</i>	F&GP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bracebridge Heath Cricket Club • Bracebridge Heath Neighbourhood Watch 	15	14	1			93.33%
Key	F&GP Finance & General Purposes standing committee PFAOS Playing Fields, Allotments & Open Spaces standing committee PLR Planning, Lighting & Roads standing committee NP Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee WCD Woodland & Cemetery Development sub-committee (C) Chairman (VC) Vice-Chairman (Sub) Substitute member							
<i>This Information relates to the Civic Year 2nd May 2017- 30th April 2018. Data correct up to and including 22nd February 2018</i>								

Appendix B – Election data since 2015

Contested elections in Bracebridge Heath since 2015													
	Vacancies	Candidates	Electorate	Ballot papers issued	Turnout	Papers rejected	Administered by	Note	Councillors elected	Reason for election	Cost to residents of Bracebridge Heath	Cost per registered elector	Cost per ballot paper issued
May 2015	13	17	4210	2369	56.27%	168	NKDC	Combined with general and district council elections	Cllrs Burley, Clements, Fletcher, Mrs Humphrey, Kilcoyne, Lowery, Macdonald, Mrs Manders, Parr, Mrs Stamp, Swinton, Mrs Trought, Ward	All seats elected as part of 4-yearly cycle	£3198.14	£0.76	£1.35
Feb 2017	1	4	4373	536	12.26%	4	NKDC	Stand-alone election	Cllr Williams	Resignation of Cllr Macdonald, December 2016	£5542.36	£1.27	£10.34
June 2017	1	2	4465	3015	67.62%	181	City of Lincoln Council	Combined with general election	Cllr Donaldson	Resignation of Cllr Parr, April 2017	£3574.02	£0.80	£1.19

Seats filled by co-option in Bracebridge Heath					
	Vacancies	Candidates	Councillor elected	Reason for election	Cost of election to residents of Bracebridge Heath
Nov 2015	1	1	Cllr Mrs Walker	Resignation of Cllr Swinton, July 2015	£0

Appendix C - Budget summary

Bracebridge Heath Parish Council budget summary			
	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Planning, Lighting and Roads Committee	Budget	Budget	Budget
Electricity	£7,200.00	£5,582.09	£5,582.09
New Standards	£2,580.00	£2,580.00	£2,580.00
Bus Shelters	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Notice Boards	-	£0.00	£0.00
Committee Total	£10,780.00	£9,162.09	£9,162.09
Playing Fields, Allotments & Open Spaces Committee	Budget	Budget	Budget
Repairs/New Equipment	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00
Grass Cutting / Grounds	£7,080.00	£10,962.50	£10,962.50
Allotments	£1,151.00	£1,151.00	£1,151.00
Dog Bins	£500.00	£500.00	£0.00
Litter Bins	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00
Recreation Ground	£4,054.00	£3,512.00	£5,000.00
Bowling Green	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Committee Total	£18,285.00	£21,625.50	£22,613.50
Finance & General Purposes Committee	Budget	Budget	Budget
Salary & Fees	£40,480.39	£44,612.05	£53,971.47
Telephone	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00
Postage & Copying	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00
Stationery / Computers	£1,250.00	£1,250.00	£1,250.00
Room Hire	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00
Insurance	£2,500.00	£2,700.00	£2,700.00
Audit	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00
Travel	£750.00	£750.00	£750.00
Subscriptions	£1,100.00	£1,200.00	£1,200.00
Elections	£2,000.00	£4,000.00	£8,000.00
Grants - Section 137	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00
Village Hall Repairs	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Newsletter	£350.00	£350.00	£350.00
War Memorial		£0.00	£0.00
Christmas	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00
Environmental Matters	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00
Dog Waste Clearing	£3,200.00	£3,300.00	£0.00
Chairman's Allowance	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00
Professional Fees	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00
Training and Development	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00
Community Library	£5,287.00	£5,192.00	£5,167.00
Neighbourhood Plan	-	-	-
Contingency	£655.16	£0.00	£0.00
Committee Total	£72,672.55	£78,454.05	£88,488.47
Total Expenses	£101,737.55	£109,241.64	£120,264.06
Income			
Forecast Income	Budget	Budget	Budget
Allotment Rental	£828.00	£828.00	£828.00
NKDC Grant - Litter	£1,204.77	£1,204.77	£1,204.77
NKDC Grant - Dog Warden	£631.07	-	-
Recreation Ground	£5,150.00	£5,560.50	£5,560.50
Library	£5,287.00	£5,192.00	£5,167.00
Neighbourhood Plan Grant	-	-	-
Other Income	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00
Total Income	£13,220.84	£12,905.27	£12,880.27
	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Precept Requirement	£88,516.71	£96,336.37	£107,383.79
Redistributed Grant	£1,968.49	£1,968.49	£499.60
PRECEPT (Net Budget Requirement)	£86,548.22	£95,273.00	£106,884.19
Taxbase	£1806.21	£1855.10	£1,871.36
Band 'D' equivalent	£47.92	£51.36	£57.12