

WHALEY BRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Mechanics Institute, Market Street, Whaley Bridge, High Peak, SK23 7AA
Town Clerk: Mrs S Raybould Tel: 01663 733068 Website: www.whaleybridge.com
e-mail: towncouncil@whaleybridge.com

ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

THE PARISH of WHALEY BRIDGE covers four wards: Fernilee, Taxal, Yeardsley and Furness Vale. There are three councillors representing each ward and the council meets in the Mechanics Institute on the second Thursday of each month (except August) at 7.30pm. Meetings are open to the press and public and local people are invited to address councillors during the agenda item "Open Forum" about any issues of concern.

Your council is officially recognised as a "Quality Town Council" and has achieved the General Power of Competence, (October 2012,) which means that it has the power to do anything that it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of its Parish.

TOWN CLERK

The Town Clerk is Mrs Stephanie Raybould. The Clerk's Office is within the Mechanics Institute and is open to the public between 9.00am and 12.30pm each weekday morning to provide information, advice and to deal with queries. Tel: 01663 733068.

CHAIR and VICE CHAIR

On 10th May 2012, Cllr Mrs Anne Winter was elected as Chair and Cllr Martin Thomas was elected as Vice-Chair of Whaley Bridge Town Council for 2012/2013.

COUNCILLORS' EXPENSES

Members of Whaley Bridge Town Council do not claim any expenses although they are permitted to claim "out-of-pocket" expenses in accordance with statutory regulations. They carry out their roles as town councillors voluntarily giving up time and effort for the benefit of the community. Councillors must also declare a Disclosable Pecuniary or Other interest in items on the agenda, in which they could influence decisions directly affecting themselves.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

All planning applications for the parish are considered by the councillors at their monthly meetings and relevant comments and recommendations are made to the Planning Department at High Peak Borough Council. Members of the public are also able to view all applications in the Clerk's Office, on weekday mornings, and can come to council meetings and make comments.

PRECEPT, INCOME and EXPENDITURE

The precept for 2012/13 was £73,849 and there will be no increase for 2013/14.

A copy of the receipts and payments account for the year ending 31st March 2013 is attached.

WHALEY BRIDGE COMMUNITY WEBSITE

The Whaley Bridge website www.whaleybridge.com is a regular source of interesting local stories and information, including all the Council and W4W minutes.

GRANTS and DONATIONS

WBTC distributed £1600 in grants and donations to local organisations during 2012/13. Grant applications are considered in February and September. Requests must be received prior to those dates.

BINGSWOOD ACCESS and CANAL BASIN REGENERATION PANEL

This group was set up in May 2011, specifically to tackle the two much larger long term, interdependent regeneration projects in Whaley Bridge. This year, the panel has done its best to keep the importance of an alternative access into the Bingswood Industrial Estate 'alive' and has met with Senior HPBC Officers and the Councillor for Regeneration, to emphasise to them the vital need of finding a way to progress, first an alternative access into the Bingswood Industrial Estate and subsequently the Regeneration of the Canal Basin.

ANNUAL FIREWORK DISPLAY

Thanks to a group of public spirited people and some funding from WBTC, a successful Firework Display was held in the grounds of the Bowling Club and Whaley Bridge Primary School, and it is planned for in the council's budget for the new financial year.

CHRISTMAS TREES

The Christmas trees for Whaley Bridge and Furness Vale were again kindly donated by United Utilities. WBTC paid £666 for lighting connection, checks, erection and dismantling. The switch on events at Furness Vale and Whaley Bridge were both happy and well attended.

HANGING BASKETS and TUBS

Seventy five hanging baskets and twenty five tubs are provided in Whaley Bridge and Furness Vale by WBTC to enhance the town centres. The cost of providing grounds maintenance during this financial year was £6046.

BROOKFIELD POND NATURE RESERVE

The Nature Reserve is owned and managed by the Town Council. It is open to the public at all times for enjoyment and relaxation. Fishing at the pond is managed by Moss Side Social Angling Society, (MSSAS), the local fishing society, which also manages fishing on Toddbrook Reservoir.

THE SPORTS PAVILION and MULTI USE GAMES AREA

The Sports Pavilion has been redecorated by painting and decorating students from Stockport College, as part of their training, and WBTC paid for the materials.

The new artificial grass pitch which covers the MUGA has proved very popular in the year since it was installed and has generated just less than £23000 income by use

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

The council produces a quarterly newsletter which is distributed to each household in the parish, free of charge, to keep the community informed about Whaley Bridge Town Council activities, news, local events and contact information. This has cost WBTC £878 to print and distribute this year.

SUNNYBANK ALLOTMENT SITE

There are 18 allotments at the Sunny bank Allotment site, but these do not meet the community's needs. This year, a Town Council initiative to harness the natural water, which flows through this site, to provide a fresh water supply for tenants, has been progressed. A hard working group of volunteers, led by Cllr Jon Swift, has begun to clear and reclaim some of the unused boggy ground at this site. The Town Council has spent £1100 to pay for the hire of equipment. There is a plan to drain and landscape the area, then create some allotments and raised beds, which will then be available for rent by those who have been waiting for such an opportunity.

PARISH PATHS MAP

The Parish Paths Map is widely available, costs £1.50 and is on sale at the back of this room. It gives details of all the public rights of way in the parish and three detailed local walks to enjoy.

WHALEY BRIDGE TOWN GUIDE

Currently, the information in the Whaley Bridge Town Guide is being updated, by a small group of volunteers, so that a new edition can be printed and distributed to every household in the four wards of our town. The last few remaining copies are at the back of this room.

SHALLCROSS INCLINE GREENWAY

Since its opening in April 2012, the Shallcross Incline Greenway is being well used by residents and is valued as a safe walking route to school for children. Benches and an Interpretation Board have been installed and three trees, commemorating the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, have been planted, near the entrance to the Greenway, by pupils representing Furness Vale, Taxal and Fernilee, and Whaley Bridge Primary Schools.

MECHANICS INSTITUTE (Registered Charity Number 520533)

Whaley Bridge Town Council is the trustee of the Mechanics Institute, which is run as a registered charity for the benefit of the local community. Rooms can be hired, seven days a week, for local events, meetings, dance and exercise classes, parties, etc. It incorporates the Town Clerk's office, CAB sessions, WB Volunteer Bureau and many other interesting activities for local people to enjoy. The Reading Room is open to the public on five mornings a week, so that people can read the daily newspapers provided and obtain public information leaflets.

GRIT BINS

Twenty six grit bins were filled twice this year, by the Council, at a cost of £950.

ANNUAL COMMUNITY AWARD

The Town Council gives an award each year to a person or organization, nominated by local residents, for their outstanding voluntary work within the local community for the benefit of local people. This year, due to exceptional circumstances, the council has decided to give awards to all six nominees, who are Mrs Joyce Shacklock – for Daniel's Light, Mrs Loraine Coverley – Work in the community, Mr Brian Jackson – Chair of WB Volunteer Bureau, Mrs Frances Footitt – Furness Vale Community Centre, Mr Tony Mackey – WB Rose Queen Festival, Mr George Tomlinson – Work in the community.

WHALEY BRIDGE MEMORIAL PARK

Work has been done on the restoration of the war memorial, but the Town Council is really disappointed that the major work on the park has not yet been started. The Town Council has already donated a total of £4000 towards this project and £2000 is allocated in this year's budget. A plan of all the proposed work is held in the Town Clerk's Office.

WHALEY4WARDS

Whaley4Wards was set up by WBTC in June 2011 to propose, define and implement small to medium size regeneration projects across the 4 wards of Whaley Bridge – Furness Vale, Taxal, Yeadsley and Fernilee. Once defined, projects are brought to WBTC and funding is then agreed from the WBTC regeneration budget. The main aim of the projects is to directly benefit the residents and businesses in the four wards of Whaley Bridge, through projects which improve the Town Centre and other areas, and which help to revitalize and attract visitors into the area, whilst maintaining and capitalizing on the historic character of the town. The idea is to choose projects which are truly achievable in the short term, so that the group gathers momentum and maintains enthusiasm through success.

Completed projects:

Shallcross Incline interpretation board and seating.

Shallcross Incline route signage and way markers.

Using Stockport College students for decorating the Sports Pavilion.

Planting of commemorative trees by the three local Primary Schools.

Three hundred pounds was given in grants to help residents fill in pot holes in unadopted roads.

On-going projects:

Creation of a tourist information point using the former Bings Road red telephone kiosk.

Street furniture upgrade and maintenance.

Litter-picking in the four wards of the town.

FURNESS VALE COGS

Furness Vale COGS Group continues to work hard to ensure that the local community, and especially Pre-School and Furness Vale Primary School pupils of today and in the future, have improved recreational and sporting facilities that can be used all year round. Whaley Bridge Town Council allocated £1000 to support this project.

The Furness Vale Field Day, which is a Fun Day for the community as well as a fundraising exercise, will take place on Saturday 18th May 2013 from 12noon.

WHALEY WATER WEEKEND (W3)

WBTC supported W3 with a grant of £2000 in 2012 and will do so again this year because the event is not only popular with the local community but it has generated interest further afield, raised our town's profile and brought in visitors. W3 will take place on 7th, 8th and 9th June this year.

WHALEY BRIDGE WELLDRESSING

Whaley Bridge Welldressing Group receives a grant from WBTC, each year, to fund the provision of a marquee with flooring and security fencing, thus ensuring that this ancient craft, unique to Derbyshire, can continue to be demonstrated, in suitable conditions, to the numerous visitors who come from far and wide, to learn about and marvel at the process and its end result. Last year the cost was £1200 and a similar amount is allowed for in this year's budget.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

The Safer Neighbourhood Team holds quarterly meetings, usually on Wednesdays at 7pm, in the Mechanics Institute. A number of councillors attend and residents have the opportunity to talk to the police and help decide on three targets, which will be the main priorities, for the next three months, for the police working in the local area.

DIAMOND JUBILEE BEACON

Monday 4th June, was the day on which the community of Whaley Bridge celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. A barbecue at the Whaley Bridge Cricket Club was organised by WBTC, at a cost of £400, and people were encouraged to walk up to the Club to minimize traffic. Drinks were sold from the bar by members of the Cricket Club and members of the Town Council manned the barbecue. Earlier in the week a huge beacon had been built and protected from the rain. Soon after 10pm, the Chairman of the Town Council, with three children and their fathers, lit torches. They and the waiting crowd began the count down from ten to 'blast off', the torches were thrust into different parts of the beacon and within seconds the wood began to burn, creating a spectacular wall of fire. The successful collaboration between the Cricket Club Committee and WBTC made this memorable occasion possible.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

During the last year a group of councillors has discussed the possibility of encouraging interested members of the local community to begin the process of creating a Neighbourhood Plan for Whaley Bridge. A few members of the community have declared an interest in the project and WBTC has resolved to progress the matter. Money has been set aside for this in the Council's 2013/2014 budget.

Cllr Mrs Anne Winter
Chairman, Whaley Bridge Town Council
19th April 2013