

# Burton in Kendal Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report 2017/18

Delivered by Alan Wren

During my research for this report, I looked back over the last year's minutes and agendas and this year's meetings seem to be getting shorter and shorter. I have no idea whether we are getting more efficient or there are less items to deliberate over, I believe it to be the latter.

The last year, however, has seen some interesting developments which Graham Darlington, Conservation Officer for SLDC, outlined in a presentation to the Parish Council, he explained that Heritage England has marked the Burton-in-Kendal Conservation Area as 'At Risk'. This is due to deterioration of some areas, including some vacant properties, along with development threats in the local area. SLDC are now developing a strategy to improve the area and would like the Parish Council's support. A working party has now been put together and is now seeking funding to help improve some of the public areas within the conservation area.

In planning, another single-story extension for Burton Morewood school was received to house Burton Pre-School. I'm sure this much needed, purpose-built facility, which will add to the sustainability of the school will be a huge success on its new site. My only hope is that the Memorial Hall can fill its funding gap left by its move.

In November's meeting, the Royal Hotel was again on the agenda for a new planning application as its new owner has decided to reopen it as a public house with only six dwellings at the rear, the council had reservations about the parking provisions for such a large hotel and eatery but welcomed its development as this is certainly one of the property's that is having a negative impact on the conservation area. On a similar vein, I noticed recently that Lee House has been sold which has also been left vacant and in a poor state of repair for many years.

Sticking with the planning theme, this year even saw a slight dip in the number of planning applications that we received with only eleven. Ranging in size from Home Park Quarry Time Extension to the replacement of guttering on a

listed building. One of last year's controversial planning applications Holly Green (formally The Cottage), now a residential care home for young people, opened its doors to residents' over the summer and I'm sure the people of Burton will make them all feel at home.

In September, flooding again has been an issue in the village with properties on Chester Terrace and surrounding area having once again been affected. This is something which I believe has come to a head, with a meeting held in the Memorial Hall in October with Cumbria County Council's flooding expert Mr Doug Coyle – the "Flood Resilience Manager". The meeting turned out to be more of a workshop where residents marked areas of concern on maps to assist Mr Coyle's team get a greater understanding of our issues. During the meeting, it was revealed that Mr Coyle had no record of the previous floods some dating back as far as 2015. Mr Coyle said he apologised to residents and agreed that the County Council had let them down over their lack of action over the repeated flooding. Since the meeting, one of the offending drains in the square has been repaired, it would appear that an electrical cable had caused the culvert to collapse. Also, a comprehensive survey of the drainage system has been undertaken. We now await further actions improvements.

One of the lighter moments this year came from Mr Bryan Yorke, who enthralled the council and several residents with a thirty-minute talk on Burton's feathered visitors – the swifts. Bryan spoke enthusiastically about the work that his study group carries out and how we can help this amazing bird by protecting existing nest sites and recommending swift holes be created on buildings when we consider planning applications.

Other items of note which will enhance the lives of Burtonians are Burton's Village Store and Post Office, which underwent a major refurbishment, which happened seamlessly throughout the building work. This new look, updated facility is a superb addition to the village, and I wish Gill and Akis every success for the future. The newly invigorated Recreation Trusts Committee have been busy fundraising and have now raised enough money for the MUGA to be resurfaced, and a B4RN community project group has been formed to bring superfast broad band into the village.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Chris Nolan to the council who fills the seat left by Moira Rowley who resigned in November. Moira had sat on the parish council and other committees for many years and she will be greatly missed by all on the council.

It only needs me to thank my fellow councillors, who give their valuable time to represent the parish's interests on many organisations, too numerous to name, but as I need to pad this out here goes. Burton Educational Foundation, Burton Recreation Trust, Local Area Partnership, Memorial Hall Management Committee, Quarry Liaison Committee, Burton School Governors, Fireworks Working Party, Lengthsman Coordinator, Plane Quarry Working Group, Playground Maintenance and the newly formed Conservation Area Working Party.

I would also like to thank our local press representatives who this year have had to sit through our mercifully short meetings trying to find content for their own reports, our Lengthsman David Holmes for his tireless work keeping the parish in good order, District Councillor Cooper, District and County Councillor Bingham for their regular attendances and taking our views forward at a higher level. I would also like to thank Lesley Bailey for auditing our accounts. Last but by not least our Parish Clerk who works tirelessly chasing up various County and District departments by phone and email, looking after the finances and making these meetings run as smoothly as they do.

Alan Wren.