

Burton Latimer *sounding board*

The newsletter for Latimer and Plessy Wards



Welcome to the first Town and Borough Councillors newsletter of the year. We have tried to include in this newsletter a few of the things we are all involved in and things we would very much like you all to be involved in! This is a very busy time for us - as you will see from the articles below we are involved in many projects that we hope will make Burton Latimer the best!! However we can't do it without your help and feedback. So if any (or all!) of the projects below appeal to you please let any of us know. We will welcome you with open arms!

Burton Shops: Use them or loose them

The news that Budgens and Countdown were closing came as a nasty shock to many of us. Fortunately Sainsbury's have taken over the Budgens store, but the closure of Countdown will leave a gap in the community.

Pat and Julie offered so much more than a shop where personal service and good value still featured. In many ways Countdown was the focal point of Burton Latimer life and we owe a great deal to Pat and Julie for their support of local causes and the dissemination of information about community activities.

We are all tempted to go to the superstores where everything can be bought on one trip. Yet several of the shops in Burton offer quality, variety and value 'round the corner'.

Let the closures be a wake up call! In 2008 make it a resolution to give our local shops a chance.

Sports and leisure

Burton Latimer Town Council very much want to improve sports and leisure facilities for the town. You may have already received (or will do shortly) a survey which we are doing to find out exactly what the people of Burton Latimer want by way of sports and leisure.

If this survey proves there is a need and many of you would use such facilities then we will go on to the next stage which is doing a business plan.

This will tell us if such a facility is viable or not and we can then start to apply for funding and look at possible sites.

It is very important that you fill in these forms and return them to us in the prepaid envelope. This is a real opportunity for you to influence the best way forward.

Burton Latimer

Twinning Association

Burton Latimer is twinned with Altendiez in Germany and Castelnuovo Magra in Italy. We are celebrating 20 years of twinning with Altendiez, this is culminating with a week long visit to the town in October from our German friends. They will be bringing over their Mandolin Orchestra and we will be arranging a concert during their stay. We are looking for homes for some of our visitors so if there is anyone who can help please contact our secretary on 01536 761449.

No Alcohol Area

There is now an alcohol free area around the town centre and King George V recreation area. Basically this means that no alcohol is allowed to be consumed outside in any of these areas. The town council applied for this ban in answer to the numerous complaints from residents about the number of young people consuming alcohol on the streets.

Meet Your Community Police

The Community police team would be pleased to meet you and hear any of your concerns. They will be at the Farmers Market on the first Saturday of each month. They will also be in the town library on the first Thursday of each month 11am to 1pm.

Local Grants Scheme

Burton Latimer Town Council set aside a small sum of money each year for local organisations that benefit the people of Burton. Grants can be made up to £200. If you feel this money could help your organisation please ask any town councillor for an application form.

Roads and pavements

Since May we have established closer co-operation with the relevant personnel in Northamptonshire County Council.

One of the key elements agreed is that quarterly inspections will take place of road and pavement conditions and a rectification programme agreed.

Unfortunately some of the repairs are such that they will need to be considered in the next financial year, most notably Hillcrest and Queensway and also the middle section of the High Street. We have, however, been successful in getting the go ahead for safety measures in Church Street and the extension of the footpath in Cranford Road to 'Seasons', also the resurfacing of the existing Cranford Road pavement together with the bus stop areas.

We were the only urban area in the county to meet the 'Speedwatch' criteria and had the equipment for four weeks which resulted in nearly 200 letters being sent by the police to motorists breaking the speed limits by more than 5 m.p.h. We have had special signs around the town for two months. We hope to have the equipment back for a further four weeks in June. In addition a new 30 m.p.h. flashing sign has been erected in Finedon Road.

In liaison with Kettering Borough Council many repairs have been attended to such as new litter bins in the High Street, the removal of graffiti in several locations, the repair of pot holes in the car park and the railings in Churchill Way. A new flag pole has been erected in the town square and the Town Council Chamber has been moved to downstairs thus overcoming the problem of disabled access.

The question of the adoption of the play area in Harvest Close by Kettering Borough Council is being actively pursued with Taylor Wimpey together with the adoption of the associated roads by Northamptonshire County Council.

We have requested the extension of the 30 m.p.h. limit to the A14 side of 'Morrisons Roundabout' and this will be pursued with the county council. If any members of the public have questions they wish to raise in respect of roads, pavements or associated matters please contact any town councillor.

Quality Parish Council

The Town Council is working towards becoming a Quality Parish Council. We have secured a £5,000 grant to do a Parish Plan.

This will contain an action plan with timescales of things people would like to see being done in Burton.

If we acquire 'Quality' status it will mean we can employ people to do our grass cutting, keeping the area free of litter, dog fouling and employ a handy man to do all the numerous jobs around Burton.

This is a very ambitious and exciting adventure, BUT we need your help!

We will shortly be setting up groups of residents to 'spearhead' the many aspects of this. So if you have a real interest in Burton Latimer and want to make a huge difference please let any town councillor know.

Planning Matters

The planning group for Burton Latimer Town Council is made up of five council members. The group meets every third Monday of the month at the council offices to discuss the latest planning applications. These will range from extensions, conservatories, loft or garage conversions, demolition of an old building for the erection of a new one in its place etc. There are also other planning topics such as the Wind Farm, or a change of usage for a building. This also involves talking with Kettering Planning, Environmental Agencies and Highways to make sure that all avenues have been taken into consideration before making our decisions.

The meeting is open to the general public to attend and listen to how these subjects are deliberated on, or if they feel the need to express their views on why they feel they have objections to certain plans that will affect them, like a neighbour building an extension that they feel will affect them adversely.

We also feel that it is our duty to uphold the standard of design within Burton so that unsightly or non conforming building projects are strongly objected to. We are also there if residents need to get advice before submitting plans or just general queries.

Burton Latimer Farmers Market

The monthly Farmers Market was started early in 2006 for a trial period of six months. This would prove that there was a need and sufficient support from the residents for the traders.

Over the trial period the number of stalls increased to ten and, although trade was down in August and September (possibly due to holidays etc) the traders seemed reasonably happy and agreed to continue. Since then the market seems to have increased in popularity and hopefully will continue to do so. The market is mentioned weekly on Radio Northampton and many Burton residents feel it's a really good community event.

There are always town and borough councillors in attendance along with your local police officers who are always willing to deal with your concerns.

We also encourage local organisations to attend. If you have any ideas that you think would appeal please do not hesitate to contact one of your local councillors.



Burton Latimer Community Centre



The Community Centre is situated on King George V recreation ground off Pioneer Avenue. We have a full calendar of activities and events for all the family. Our large fully air conditioned and licensed hall is available for hire and can cater for up to 200 people. There is also a very pleasant members' lounge, for those who just want to enjoy a quiet drink, which is open every evening and weekend.

Weekly Activities

Monday:

Tea Dance	2pm to 4.15pm
Youth Group	7pm to 9pm

Tuesday:

Dog training	7pm to 9.30pm
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Wednesday:

Line dancing	1.30pm to 3pm
Chevron Majorettes	5.30pm to 8.30pm

Thursday:

Indoor carpet bowls	2pm to 4pm
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Friday:

Tai Chi	2.30pm to 3.30pm
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Sunday:

Lunchtime	Meat raffle
Bingo	8pm to 10pm
Playgroup	Every morning during term time
Junior disco	1st Friday of every month

Burton Latimer Library opening times are as follows:-

Monday: 2pm to 5pm
Tuesday: 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 6pm
Wednesday: - Closed
Thursday: 10am to 1pm & 2pm to 5pm
Friday: 10am to 1pm & 2pm to 5pm
Saturday: 10am to 1pm

Tel: 01536 723357 - burtlib@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Town Centre plans move forward

Many of you visited the caravan at the bottom of Churchill Way to register your views about how Burton's town centre should develop. The consensus view was that we wanted a more vibrant centre with better shopping, public facilities and public open space. Since then the planning policies for the main shopping area have been changed to protect the High Street as a shopping area and work on detailed plans and budgets to spruce the town centre has begun.



There were two main options for the development hinging on the location of the 'civic hub'. The conclusion of the work so far is that the civic facilities should be concentrated around the present library and fire station. The police and borough council already have their access points there and the cost of moving the Town Council and Heritage Room to be adjacent to the library is much lower than the cost of moving the library to new premises at the bottom of Churchill Way. The plan is to demolish the old Health Centre and develop the new civic facilities as part of the library complex, with some supporting commercial and housing development.

Following public consultation the plans for the bottom of Churchill Way will not affect the location of the children's play area (who says you can't influence what happens!). The current plan is to demolish the old undistinguished council office building to open up a bigger Town Square, with the town's shopping and leisure strengthened by high quality development around it. There is still some more work to be done on the design and funding of the Town Square before a definitive proposal can be put out for public scrutiny.

Burton Latimer Patient Participation Group

Due to patients concerns when the Medical Centre moved from the centre of the town, a Patients' Forum was set up to facilitate dialog with the practice. Since then, the majority of the concerns have been addressed with varying degrees of success. The outcome of the Practice Patient Satisfaction Survey has shown an improvement from the previous years.

Key achievements:

- Changes to the telephone system
- Telephones moved away from reception to ensure privacy
- Introduction of background music in the waiting room
- Patients' noticeboard for informing patients of the work of the forum
- Information to patients on proper use of the services available including information on missed appointments
- Staff training - customer service
- New bus stop outside of the surgery
- Changes to the appointment system - removal of 'ring on the day' system, phone lines now open from 8am

Many other issues were discussed and implemented in addition to those listed above. The practice and the forum work closely together to improve services for patients. If you feel you could become a valuable member of this forum please contact us by email at BLMCPG@fsmail.net or speak to any town councillor or the Practice Director on 01536 723566.



Precept

For the next financial year Burton Latimer are proposing the precept should be £5200.00. This money will be used for:

- Sport and leisure
- Local organisation grants
- Newsletters and public consultation events
- A new bench up Higham Hill
- Two picnic benches and tables for the Pocket Park
- A community service award
- More planters
- New town signage

If anyone has any ideas for the precept please let any town councillor know. The money is used for improving the environment and facilities for Burton Latimer residents and has been used over the last few years to fund many beneficial projects.

BLAST (Burton Latimer Anti-social Behaviour Team)

This group was set up as a result of many concerns from residents in Burton Latimer at the extent of anti-social behaviour and the problems it was causing. The group has been very active over past few years including:

- Identifying trouble 'hot spots'
- Arranging activities for young people
- Surveying all footpaths and alleyways to make them safer and more pleasant
- Mystery shopping at off licenses to combat the sale of alcohol to underage drinkers
- Liaising with the pubs and off licences
- Liaising with Neighbourhood Watch

It must be remembered that anti-social behaviour is not just a young persons 'thing'. Included in this are con artists who prey on older and vulnerable people, litter, dog fouling, noisy neighbours etc.

The group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm in the Town Council Chamber. Any members of the public would be very welcome to attend.

Customer Services

You are our number one priority. Our aim is to provide services of the highest quality to meet your needs.

At any one of our customer service centres you can speak to an adviser on any of the following:-

- Planning and building control
- Housing services - including aid and advice, repairs, rents, payments
- Benefits
- Council tax
- Environmental health
- Refuse and recycling
- Community services
- Electoral registration
- Bus/leisure passes
- Social Services referrals
- Police - report and advice
- Fire safety checks

Our aim is to resolve 90% of all Customer Services enquiries.

Working with the Police, County Council and Fire Service we are able to deliver more streamlined services.

Our advisers are available at Burton Latimer library on the following days:-

Monday: 2pm to 5pm
Tuesday: 10am to 1pm & 2pm to 5pm
Wednesday - Closed
Thursday: 10am to 1pm & 2pm to 5pm
Friday: 10am to 1pm & 2pm to 5pm
Sat: 10am to 1pm

Alternatively, the customer service centre in Bowling Green Road is open:-

Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 5.30pm
Saturdays - 9am to 1pm

Town and Borough Councillors: Working for you to make Burton Latimer a wonderful place to live

Peter Bettles	724218	
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Dave Gunn	07039 73442	
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Jan Smith	721261	Dolphin246@btinternet.com
Sheila Walden	724181	Isebrook60@aol.com
Derek Zanger	505240	Derek.zanger@ntlworld.com

Pocket Park

All the work to keep the Pocket Park looking so good, clean and accessible for all is done by a team of dedicated volunteers.

The only income the Pocket Park is from the annual Duck Race (this year's is on Sunday June 22nd) which is organised in partnership with Burton Scouts. The Pocket Park group spend this money on petrol for mowing the paths, renewing Pocket Park noticeboards and protecting the environment.

We are always on the look out for new ideas for the Pocket Park and more volunteers. The work is not all physical, for example co-ordinating activities, helping with the Duck Race, organising bird and hedgehog boxes, picking up litter etc. If you are interested in helping in any way or have any ideas please contact any town councillor.

