



# Billericay Town Council Annual Report

**Q**  
QUALITY  
TOWN  
COUNCIL

## IT'S YOUR TOWN COUNCIL

**W**elcome to the "Billericay Annual Report" which gives details of the workings of Billericay Town Council during the Municipal financial year from 1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008 and brief details of the current plans for 2008/9.

With the forthcoming Town Council Elections taking place in May we are under certain constraints which will not allow the publication of anything that may be construed as giving advantage to any councillor or groups of councillors and as such this Report is being published slightly earlier than last year to be ahead of the March 17th deadline when notices of a forthcoming election will be issued.

I urge residents of Billericay to vote in these forthcoming elections whenever there is a contested seat. It is your opportunity to have your say and elect the candidates you feel will serve the Billericay Town community well.

Better still, stand for election yourself, it's easy and you CAN make a difference. There will be a leaflet delivered to every household in Billericay giving the "why's and how's" of local elections and standing for councillor, or you can contact us by phone, fax, letter or e-mail.

Highlights for the past year:

- ▶ 1.6% increase in the Precept, well below inflation
- ▶ Reviewed 300 planning applications
- ▶ Progressed the additional CCTV cameras at Lake Meadows and Railway Station.
- ▶ Public Toilet in the High Street ("Woolworth's") Car Park
- ▶ 10th Anniversary Billericay-in-Bloom Competition
- ▶ 5th Town Guide published.
- ▶ Two "Plant-a-shrub" events at Festival

Gardens.

- ▶ New "Plant-a-shrub" event dedicated to children at the "Child-in-the-Park" Garden in Lake Meadows
- ▶ Two "Big Litter Picks"
- ▶ New Billericay ceremonial flag
- ▶ New extension to the Lake Meadows skatepark
- ▶ Third Christmas Lights Switching-On Ceremony

The precept for 2007/8 was the smallest increase since the year 2000 for Billericay Town Council. This has again been achieved by prudent budgeting, careful management and the use whenever possible of grant funding. Full information is inside, but this year's projects have not been compromised, reserves remain untouched and the incoming Council will have ample funds for next year's planned projects. Our new Public Convenience is within the Woolworths' Car Park. Thanks to our Contractors "Healthmatic", Basildon District Council for the provision of a site and a grant of £1000 and Essex County Council Community Initiatives Fund for a grant of £12,000.

The 10th Anniversary of the "Billericay in Bloom" Competition brought forth spectacular entries which were difficult to judge and our annual sponsorship of the High Street hanging baskets and Police Station flower beds added vibrancy to the ever busy High Street; many thanks to all the sponsors. In conjunction with Basildon District Council the "Sponsor-a-shrub" events continued in Festival Gardens and a new event dedicated to the commemoration of children took place in Lake Meadows appropriately in the "Child-in-the-Park" Garden.

The "Big Litter Picks" continue and my thanks go

to the Town, District and County Councillors, the variety of local organisations and those members of the public who volunteered to help rid Billericay of unwanted litter.

Again the Town Council sponsored the Christmas lights and I would like to thank everyone who donated towards them. The switching-on ceremony attracts more and more people and has become an established event amongst all age groups. The best-dressed Christmas shop window event this year saw the donated cheque going to local charity "Hamelin House" and we look forward to more entrants next year vying for their favourite charity.

We have continued to support the efforts of the Billericay Design Statement Association who are pressing on and remain on track to produce a meaningful document.

Notwithstanding several setbacks it has been another year of steady achievement and I wish to thank Councillors for their hard work and dedication to Billericay Town Council and all that it stands for.

Special thanks go to the Town Clerk, Mrs Helen Philpott, and our Administrative Assistant, Mrs Madeline Gapes, for their dedication, professionalism and sheer hard work. Their efforts have ensured a smooth running Council.



It is my last year as Chairman and I would like to wish the incoming chair and the new Town Council every success in their period of office.

*Cllr Mr. Beverley Beale  
Chairman, BTC*

### YOUR TOWN NEEDS YOU

Did you know that Billericay Town Council elections will be taking place on 1 May 2008. Are you interested in serving the community? As a councillor you can become a voice for your community and affect real change. Parish and town councils are the most local part of the democratic system and are closest to the public. Billericay Town Council comprises twenty Councillors and you could qualify if you are 18 years or older or a British citizen, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or European Union.

If you require further information contact the Town Clerk or Mrs H Chapman, Basildon District Council.

### DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR TOWN COUNCIL DOES FOR BILLERICAY?

The Annual Town Meeting is to take place on Thursday 22 May 2008 at The Coach House, Crown Yard commencing at 7.00 p.m. This is an opportunity to meet the newly elected Councillors to find out proposals for the forthcoming year and raise any issues with regard to the town. Although open to all residents of the Billericay Wards, only those registered as local government electors for Billericay are entitled to speak and vote.

For further information and general enquiries contact:

Town Clerk • Billericay Town Council • The Loft • Crown Yard • High Street • Billericay CM12 9BX  
www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk

T: 01277 625732 F: 01277 634784 E: townclerk@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk

# FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

**Chairman:**  
*Cllr. Edgar Guest*

## FINANCIAL REPORT

The Finance & General Purposes Committee's task is to look after Billericay taxpayers' money and to manage the Town Council's finances. The precept [Billericay Town Council Tax] for 2007/2008 was set at £17.34 for a Band D property, a below-inflation increase of 1.6% on the previous year and the lowest increase since the year 2000. We ensured that expenses remained within budgeted limits. Our reviews of the Council's banking arrangements have resulted in our interest income reaching £18,000, a 39% increase on the previous year. Improved relationships with the local business community and other donors more than doubled our income from local sponsorship and, due to a large extent to the efforts of our Town Clerk, we received over £42,000 outside funding towards the cost of our projects. *Income and Expenditure figures were as follows:*

INCOME			
06/07 £'000	SOURCE	07/08 £'000	%
209	Precept	212	75.9
13	Interest earned	18	6.5
3	Local sponsorship	6	2.2
1	Outside funding	42	15.0
1	Other income	1	0.4
<b>227</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100.0</b>

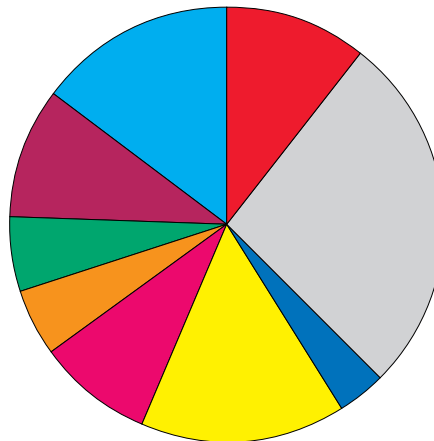
EXPENDITURE AND RESERVES			
06/07 £'000	DESCRIPTION	07/08 £'000	%
30	Premises	30	10.8
64	Establishment	75	26.8
40	Crime Preven/CCTV	10	3.6
0	Public Toilet	43	15.4
24	Christmas lights	24	8.6
10	Other projects	14	5.0
6	Publications, etc.	15	5.4
8	Youth Town Council	27	9.7
45	Reserves	41	14.7
<b>227</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Note:** Due to the early publication of this year's Annual Report some of the 2007/08 expenditure figures shown are year-end estimates.

## PLANS FOR 2008/2009

The present Town Council has secured ample funds for the new Council for their first year in office without imposing any extra financial burden on Billericay's taxpayers. There will be a ZERO INCREASE in the Town Council precept in 2008/2009.

The F&GPC has supervisory responsibilities for a number of Working Parties, Project Groups and the Billericay Youth Town Council. The **Notice Board Working Party** chaired by Cllr. Peter Bowditch has purchased a new noticeboard for the junction of High Street and



- Premises
- Establishment
- Crime Prevention/CCTV
- Public Toilet
- Christmas Lights
- Other Projects
- Publications etc
- Youth Town Council
- Reserves

Western Road. It will contain a new map of Billericay Town clearly showing the footpath walks available. We thank our sponsors Bennetts Funeral Directors, the Billericay Society and Essex County Council for their assistance.

The **Town Crier Working Party** chaired by Cllr. Marion Wilson ensures that our newsletter continues to be delivered free to all homes in the Billericay Town area every quarter. This year the Billericay Town Crier was judged to be the best town or parish council newsletter in the whole of Essex.

The **Town Guide Working Party** chaired by Cllr. Marion Wilson was responsible for the fifth edition published in the autumn of 2007; this was a departure from previous issues in that it contained no advertising material, only articles from local clubs and societies. A local company of printers, Bedwells, were of great assistance in creating an attractive final product.

The **Website and I.T. Working Party** chaired by Cllr. David Knight launched our new website [www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk] during June 2007 maintained by our own staff. The site was reviewed recently and updates to content and layout made. Our operational IT environment has been stringently reviewed and updates made to improve security and efficiency in our software, hardware and network.

The **Youth Town Council Working Party** chaired by Cllr. Colin Dyer, has the task of mentoring the Billericay Youth Town Council and they undertook a revision of the Youth Council Standing Orders and commenced a register of Youth Organisations in the town.

# PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Chairman:** *Cllr. Jim Devlin*

The Town Council is a statutory consultee for the purposes of The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 which is the legislation governing all development in England and Wales. The Committee meets every two weeks on Tuesdays at 7.00pm in the Town Council Offices and members of the public are always welcome to attend our meetings.

During the year we have reviewed nearly 300 planning applications ranging from small extensions and conservatories to developments of a number of houses. It has become noticeable that there are an increasing number of applications for extensions as well as an increase in the number of applications for small estates of 5 or 6 houses to be built on large sites which may have only contained one house. This is inevitable given the government guidance in document PPG3 which promotes denser housing particularly close to town centres. As a consequence of this we are now facing many applications for flats to be built close to the town centre.

The Committee also receives and comments upon wider planning issues. This year we have spent considerable time evaluating drafts of the Local Development Framework produced by Basildon District Council. This document, when published, will replace the current Local Plan. It is important because this document will shape the future of the whole district and has great implications for our Green Belt.

Another issue which has been looked at in detail is the parking situation in the town. Essex County Council has proposed a number of parking restrictions in the areas surrounding the town centre and the railway station. The Planning Committee has made a number of recommendations for improving the scheme and we await the outcome from the County Council. During the year the Billericay Design Statement Association was set up as an independent group to produce a Design Statement for the town by consulting with as wide a group of residents as possible. When completed the Planning Committee will use this statement as guidance when evaluating planning applications and it is anticipated that Basildon District Council will incorporate it into their Supplementary Planning Guidance.

## **Pedestrian and Cycle Routes Working Party, chaired by Cllr. John Buchanan**

Billericay Fitness/Nature Walks – To encourage walking within the town, the Council has identified walking routes from the outskirts to the town centre. The first of these, from Greens Farm Lane to Sun Corner, through Mill Meadows will have the necessary signs erected very soon. The second, from Queens Park Country Park to the Railway Station will have signs in a few months time.



## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE *Chairman: Cllr. Peter Bowditch*

The plan for the 2007-8 municipal year saw a full programme. I am pleased to report that either these have been delivered according to plan or are now close to completion.

The Playground and Lake Meadows Facilities Working Parties were combined to assume responsibility for new play equipment and other recreational improvements for both the current and following year within Lake Meadows.

The securing of the new public toilet, sited in Woolworth's car park, as well as the extension of the play equipment in Lake Meadows for 11 – 16 year olds, could only have been achieved with continued co-operation and support from Basildon District Council and Essex County Council.

Two 'litter picks' focused on cleaning-up specific areas in Billericay and the high levels of support from Billericay residents and groups is much appreciated. These efforts have been complemented by additional focus on areas where litter tends to accumulate, such as the railway station. Progress continues to be made.

Regular meetings with the local police continue where issues of general concern are discussed. These include youth problems and law and order. It is believed that the new Neighbourhood Policing Programme will help address these concerns.

A new ceremonial flag was purchased by the Council and was used for the first time at the Remembrance Sunday parade where the Billericay Guides proudly carried the flag. It is available for use by any organisation in the town particularly by uniformed groups at parades and other suitable events.

Highlights of the year have been:

- ▶ The tenth annual Billericay in Bloom competition which continues to be popular and well supported.
- ▶ Two "Litter Picks" maintained good support from many organisations in the town.
- ▶ The third switching-on of Christmas Lights was well supported; the second Christmas Best-Decorated Shop Window competition also took place.
- ▶ The acquisition and initial use of the new Billericay Ceremonial Flag.
- ▶ The new Public Toilet in Woolworth's car park.
- ▶ Additional CCTV cameras at Lake Meadows and at the Railway Station.

- ▶ Securing grant funds for play equipment from the Community Initiatives Fund and 'Awards for All' schemes.

The Environment Committee has supervisory responsibilities for a number of Working Parties and Project Groups.

### *Billericay in Bloom Working Party chaired by Cllr Marion Wilson*

This was the tenth year and appropriately, with the addition of the vegetable plot, the total number of categories increased to ten. The judges also awarded a 'Best in Competition' cup for the first time. To mark this special year, Ken Crowther of BBC Essex presented the prizes to the winners as an expectant

audience eagerly awaited the results.

Our thanks go to all sponsors and to our judges, John Wild and John Burrows, who have been with us since the start.

### *Recreation Facilities Working Party chaired by Cllr Peter Bowditch*

Good working relationships with the councillors and managers of Basildon District Council have developed to enable us to complement their efforts in improving our recreational and park facilities. Lake Meadows is regarded as our priority and already we have plans to improve the park by including natural wild flower areas, improvements to the lake and surrounds, additional planting within the 'Child in the Park' area and the labelling of its interesting trees. BDC seeks 'centres of excellence' within each of its towns prompting us to agree new play equipment, to the value of £66,000, into Lake Meadows for 11 – 16 years olds adjacent to the recently extended skateboard area. This should be finalised by Spring 2008. After this, a review of the public toilets in Lake Meadows will be conducted to ascertain how improvements can be made.

### *Christmas Lights Working Party chaired by Cllr David Knight*

We again provided the High Street's Christmas Lights. This year represented the final year of the three year contract with Piggotts. During 2008, we need to establish satisfactory and cost-effective means of storing, enhancing, erecting and maintaining them for use during future years. Billericay was again fortunate that Santa Claus accepted our invitation to switch on our Christmas

Lights. This was held on 24th November outside the Chequers Public House on the High Street. Over 400 people of all ages attended. To these people and to all those who provided help we send our appreciation. For the second year, a Christmas "best decorated" shop window competition was held. This year's winner was 'Presence' and their prize of £100 was presented by them to Hamelin Trust on 17th December.

### *Litter Working Party chaired by Cllr Jonathan Garlick*

As well as undertaking two Billericay Big Litter Picks this year, the Town Council has been working in partnership with Basildon District Council 'Street Care' department to install eleven new litter bins. The Town Council also works closely with the District Council regarding litter collection and enforcement.

### *CCTV/Crime Prevention Working Party chaired by Cllr Colin Dyer*

After some teething problems the CCTV surveillance system is now fully operational in Billericay. An extra camera has now been sited at the Railway Station, and is operational and two extra cameras sited near the play areas in Lake Meadows.

The Working Party continues to liaise with local Police and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes to address problems affecting local residents.

### *War Memorial Working Party chaired by Cllr Jonathan Garlick*

The Town Council maintains the War Memorial and annually, prior to the Remembrance Day Parade, members of the Town Council along with local residents and representatives of the Royal British Legion and Billericay Society cleaned the two War Memorials and surrounding area. We are looking at ways of enhancing the inscriptions on the World War II memorial without causing a detrimental affect to the structure. Trials are being undertaken using three cleaning products to see which one should be used to clean and enhance the War Memorial.

### For the Forthcoming Year

- ▶ A NEW TOWN COUNCIL
- ▶ Bus Shelters
- ▶ Christmas Lights
- ▶ Billericay in Bloom and Hanging Baskets
- ▶ Litter Control
- ▶ Installation of Litter Bins
- ▶ Enhancement to Lake Meadows





**Chairman: Vikram Footring**

The Billericay Youth Town Council has had another very busy and successful year with the following being achieved:

- ▶ The annual Battle of the Bands, was held at the Canon Roche Social Centre and was sponsored by Creative Music Studios of Brentwood and Waitrose. Again it was a sell out and everyone had a good time.
- ▶ A group of pupils from the Twin Town of Fishers, Indiana attended one of our Youth Town Council meetings during their twinning visit to Billericay.
- ▶ During May the Awards evening for the Anti-Litter Campaign Art Competition took place. Students from local schools were in attendance to see who had won the prizes for the Photography competition (for Secondary School pupils) and the Collage Competition for Junior school pupils.
- ▶ Members of the YTC also took part in the litter picks organised by the Town Council.

▶ At the beginning of November, having been nominated for a YOPEY (Young People of the Year) Award, representatives of the Youth Council attended the Awards Ceremony at the Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford. Although not being selected as the winners we were presented with a cheque for £100, £50 of which they donated to the local charity BOSP (Brighter Opportunities for Supported Play).



▶ Having raised funding of £25,000 from Veolia Cleanaway Pitsea Marshes Trust and Essex County Council a new half-pipe and fun box were added to the Skatepark, Lake Meadows. An official opening took place during November when I officially cut the ribbon, watched by skateboarders waiting to get on the new equipment, Town Councillors, District Councillors, Essex County

Councillors and grant funders. King Ramps Ltd. had been engaged for the day to provide demonstrations and workshops for those in attendance and, although the weather was not great, a number of keen skaters turned up to learn new tricks and take part in a competition. During the course of the day a consultation exercise was also undertaken regarding the provision of additional playground equipment for 11-16 year olds within the park.

- ▶ Great fun was had by all when members of the YTC headed off to Barleylands to select our fancy dress costumes to be worn at the switch on of the Christmas Lights on 24 November.
- ▶ I laid a wreath at the Remembrance Day Service and also accompanied Town Councillors in judging the Christmas "Best Shop Window" competition.

The YTC have also been asked by Basildon District Council to suggest possible uses for the disused tennis court within Lake Meadows and this has involved consultation with the local youth and nearby residents. If the suggestion of a ball park area being installed is accepted by Basildon District Council, the Youth Council will set out to seek more grant funding.

**Facts**

The Town Council represents YOU and has a consultative role in relation to Basildon District Council, Essex County Council and other authorities responsible for police, water and health.

**Did You Know**

The Town Council's Coach House meeting room in Crown Yard is available to hire at reasonable cost; a comfortably furnished room which can accommodate up to 40 people seated. For details of hire contact the Town Clerk.

The Annual Report can be made available in large print. To obtain a copy in alternative format please contact the Town Council.

The Town Council has supplies of the Pink recycling sacks, free of charge, and White Garden waste sacks, £1.40. Bus Pass application forms can also be obtained from the Offices.

Members of the Public are welcome to attend Council and Committee meetings and are given the opportunity to ask questions – dates of meetings and agendas are available on the Council's website. View the Town Council website to find out what is going on [www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk)

**Attendance at meetings municipal year 2007/08  
May 2007 to 20 Feb 2008**

	Council 7	Planning 19	F & G Purposes 7	Env 7
<b>Councillor</b>				
B. Beale	6	1	6	6
P. Bowditch	5	9	7	5
J. Buchanan	7	18	6	6
R. Crew	2			
G. Dann	5			4
J. Devlin	6	16		
M.Dunn	6	15		
C. Dyer	6		6	2
T. Gandy	7			
J. Garlick	3	12		
E. Guest	7		6	4
D. Knight	6		7	5
M. Moore	6	13	5	5
D. Pugh	1	6		
R. Rapley	6	14	4	
D. Spencer	5	15		
T. Stansfield	1		3	2
G.Thurman	5		2	3
P. Went	7			
M. Wilson	4		4	3

F & G Purposes = Finance & General Purposes • Env = Environment

**BILLERICAY TOWN COUNCILLORS**

Councillor	Address	Telephone	Ward
Beverley Beale	8 The Mount, Billericay, CM11 1HD	01277 651354	E
Peter Bowditch	18, Cranmer Close, Billericay CM12 0YQ	01277 659530	SW
John Buchanan	72, Meadow Rise, Billericay CM11 2EF	01277 656715	E
Roberta Crew	43, Greens Farm Lane, Billericay CM11 2HZ	01277 625732	E
Gerald Dann	10, Cranmer Close, Billericay CM12 0YQ	01277 626147	W
Jim Devlin	231, Perry Street, Billericay CM12 0NZ	01277 656937	W
Jack Dunn	78, Perry Street, Billericay CM12 0ND	01277 654539	W
Colin Dyer	6, Montpelier Close, Billericay CM12 0UH	01277 625732	E
Terence Gandy	Mille Fleurs, 32 Norsey View Drive, CM12 0QR	01277 624309	W
Jonathan Garlick	Poppy Cottage, 4, Norsey Road, CM11 2AA	01277 625732	E
Edgar Guest	c/o Billericay Town Council	01277 625732	SW
David Knight	15 Larch Close, Steeple View, SS15 4DY	01268 545945	E
Moira Moore	47, Landon Road, Billericay CM12 9LG	01277 627266	W
Dave Pugh	17, Summerdale, Billericay CM12 9EL	01277 623345	SW
Rod Rapley	43, Crescent Road, Billericay CM12 0JQ	01277 622125	W
Daphne Spencer	Fir Tree Lodge, 16, Back Lane, Stock CM4 9DG	01277 829750	E
Trevor Stansfield	174, Perry Street, Billericay CM12 0NX	01277 623519	W
Gillian Thurman	8, Summerdale, Billericay CM12 9EL	01277 626618	W
Pamela Went	4, The Mullions, Billericay CM12 9XG	01277 658961	W
Marion Wilson	25, Parklands, Billericay CM11 1AS	01277 626321	E