



# Billericay Town Council Annual Report 2010/2011

YOUR QUALITY COUNCIL

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Another year has passed by and I am proud to introduce the Billericay Town Council Annual Report for the Municipal financial year 2010/2011. It contains details of our workings in the current year and our plans for 2011/12.

For my part I am very pleased with what has been achieved by the Town Council; this has been a year of good progress, together with consolidation of certain longer term goals which I will refer to later.

During the year we received first place in the Essex Association of Local Councils' Communications Award in recognition of the Council's Town Crier Newsletter plus the town's Design Statement produced by the Design Statement Association. We also received third place in the Local Democracy & Citizenship category for the work undertaken with the Youth Council and on the Greening Campaign.

We have sustained a strong and effective Council and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those members of our Council who have worked tirelessly to make this another successful year. We have covered many areas making improvements in our town for the benefit of our residents. I would like to thank all those people and groups who have helped us continue to serve you, our residents, during the past year and those co-opted onto the various Working Parties that have made a significant contribution in supporting the Council's activities. We continue to outreach into the community, developing relationships and partnerships which can help us all to serve the Billericay residents in the most comprehensive way.



My special thanks go to our Town Clerk, Helen Philpott and our Administrative Assistant, Madeline Gapes for the dedication, professionalism, and hard work in enabling this Council to run as smoothly as it does and to keep us on the straight and narrow. The residents are our customers and we must never forget this important fact. Cllr Mik Dunn stood down in June and was replaced by Cllr Ian Davie who was co-opted to the Town Council representing the West Ward and Cllr Paul Arnold left the Council in February. They made a significant contribution to our work.

I am pleased to report that our ongoing partnership negotiations with Basildon Borough Council have progressed this year and recently much has come to fruition and will be developed in the next Municipal Year. These include an invitation for the Town Council to consider working with them in areas of the town. We will have to consider carefully how this new initiative will directly benefit our residents and give value for money.

We are currently negotiating a lease to take over responsibility for the maintenance of Festival Gardens from Basildon Borough Council and also a

lease for Sun Corner with Essex County Council.

I am pleased to report that the Town Council is in a good financial position.

The new Billericay Youth Town Council, who were elected in October, appointed Cllr Beth Deacon as their Chairwoman and she is actively continuing the progress made in previous years with the newly formed Council. The Billericay Design Statement Association has completed its work and the document it produced was finally adopted by Basildon Borough Council in July as Material Consideration in planning matters and was presented by Cllr Ian Davie to Cllr Ball, Leader of Basildon Borough Council, in the presence of our MP, John Baron, at a well attended ceremony in the St Mary Magdalen Church.

I have enjoyed my third year as Chairman which has allowed me on behalf of the Town Council to attend well over fifty business functions both in and outside the town, looking after the interests of our town and promoting it wherever possible.

**Cllr Peter Bowditch**  
Chairman Billericay Town Council



## SOPHIE'S REPORT: Chairperson until October 2010

The 2010-2011 term of BYTC has been an exciting year. At the beginning of the year, we unveiled our latest installation in Lake Meadows of the Multi-Use Sports Area. This is widely used and a brilliant new addition to the park for young people. Also we held a very successful Billericay's Got Talent competition for the 2nd time running, further proving that young people in the area have an abundance of talent through all ages as our winners, 10.2, were of an average age of 12. Furthermore, the BYTC had a re-election in October where we saw Beth Deacon become Chairperson, Sophie Harrison became vice, Gareth Rogers retaining Treasurer and Thomas Proudfoot becoming Secretary. I must say the new council is the best ever with such an array of enthusiasm.

Also released in the latter part of last year, was the East England Association of Parish & Town Council's video which featured the youth work of the council.



This was a great achievement and the BYTC's work was widely recognised. 2011 started a brilliant new year for the council and their first major project was attending the National Youth Event of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. This was a great day full of learning on the Holocaust & subsequent genocides as well as practical sessions in the afternoon from a variety of organisations such as British Youth Council, Liberty and Speakers Trust. Everyone had an excellent day despite travelling for 41/2 hours there and back to York.

decided that having an Events Sub-Committee, as previously, would be a good idea and the following Councillors were appointed: Tayler Cronly-Dillon, Bethan Cousins, Alexandra Braby and Jack Davie. One of the first things the Youth Town Council got involved in was the yearly High Street Christmas light switch on. The Councillors dressed up as various characters to mingle among the public to help create a fun atmosphere and hand out balloons to young

## BETH'S REPORT: Chairperson from October 2010

– A beginning of a new term of office arrived and in November, at the Annual General Meeting, we elected officers and discussed future projects which the Youth Town Council would be interested in taking up. It was

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Official Office Opening times 9.30am-2.30pm Mon-Fri  
Outside these hours please ring as there may well be office staff present



# FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

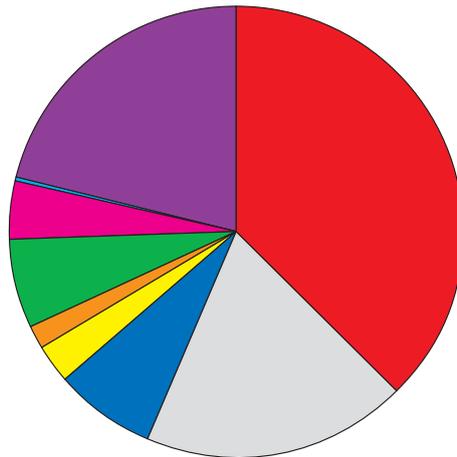
Chaired by Cllr. Jim Devlin

The Finance & General Purposes Committee has a role similar to that of a Financial Director in a company. It is the Committee's responsibility to scrutinize the financial performance of the Council and to ensure that the Council remains within budgetary constraints.

Each year the Committee receives the financial estimates from the other Committees and pulls these together into a draft budget for the next financial year. This budget is then put to Council together with a number of options for amendment and the consequences of these alternative budgets. Council then decides the budget to be adopted. This expenditure budget is what results in the required precept which is collected on our behalf by Basildon Borough Council.

The last financial year, 2010/2011, has seen us being able to invest in the town for the future particularly in providing better resources for the youngsters. We believe this is money well invested as providing facilities for the younger members of our community reaps dividends in reducing what has become known as anti-social behaviour. You will recall that our plan starting this year was to introduce stability into the precept charge and we can report that after our first year things are on track and we foresee this as a strategy we can maintain.

You will have read about cuts in all forms of local services; however Billericay Town Council will not be reducing any services or investment that we make. In common with all Councils at the town and parish level we do not receive any block grant from Central



- Administration & Council Members
- Recreational Facilities
- Other Projects
- Public Toilets
- Publications
- Christmas Lights
- Youth Town Council
- Design Statement
- Earmarked Reserves

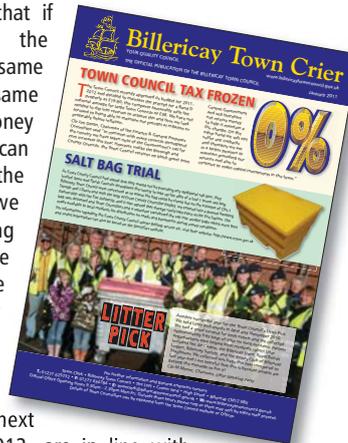
Government. However, unlike many town and parish Councils we do not receive any block grant from either the Borough or County Council. Therefore the only money we receive is the precept paid by you. This means that if we keep the precept the same we have the same amount of money to spend. We can only spend the money we raise, meaning that we always live within our means. To that end our spending plans for next year, 2011/2012, are in line with this year and so we were pleased to be able to announce that our precept will be the same as last year at £19.80 for a Band D property which compares favourably with the national average Town & Parish Council precept for a Band D property in 2010/2011 of £44.55.

\*Earmarked Reserves are for Christmas Lights £5,000, Allotments £10,000, Planning £10,000, Building Fund £30,000.

**Note:** Due to the early production of the Annual Report some of the 2010/2011 expenditure figures are year-end estimates.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE		
2009/10	INCOME	2010/11
£'000	SOURCE	£'000
201	Precept	245
5	Interest earned	3
8	Local sponsorship	8
20	Outside funding	0
1	Other income	1
8	Insurance Claim	0
18	From General Reserve	6
<b>261</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>

EXPENDITURE AND RESERVES		
2009/10	EXPENDITURE	2010/11
£'000	DESCRIPTION	£'000
109	Admin & Council Members	99
62	Recreational Facilities	50
19	Public Toilets	19
12	Christmas Lights	7
0	Design Statement	4
15	Other Projects	17
20	Publications	11
4	Youth Town Council	1
20	Earmarked Reserves*	55
<b>261</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>



# PLANNING COMMITTEE

Chairman:  
Cllr. John  
Buchanan

**Planning** – The Planning Committee meets every two weeks and considers every Planning Application in the town, and all types of highways related matters. As Billericay is a fully developed town, most of the applications are for extensions on existing houses, or to demolish a house and build one or two on the site. The Committee is greatly concerned about the lack of respect for our High Street Conservation Area as several premises have erected signs or shop-fronts without permission, and then, having applied retrospectively for permission and been refused, are very slow to come into line. We welcomed Basildon Council's Conservation Area Appraisal and their adoption of the Billericay Design Statement during the past year. Regarding highways, we are in regular contact with Essex County Council, and try hard to ensure Billericay gets the service it needs. We have made representations about on-street parking, and responded to the consultation about the Local Transport Plan. We participated in the Salt Bag Trial for salt for minor roads, and arranged for some redundant road signs to be removed.



**Sun Corner Working Party – Chairman: Cllr John Buchanan** – The Working Group is still aiming to protect this valuable public open space for the benefit of the people of Billericay. The process of registering Sun Corner as a town green has been put on hold as Essex County Council have offered us control of the area by means of a lease, which would achieve our goal for another generation.

**Pedestrian & Cycle Routes Working Party – Chairman: Cllr John Buchanan** – In conjunction with the Billericay Society, we have worked with the ECC Parish Paths Partnership to identify essential improvements needed on public footpaths across fields etc. around the town. A new bridge and new kissing gates have been installed on footpath 11 (towards Cowbridge Grange). Together with Essex Roads Cycling Club we have identified a 15 mile circular leisure cycling route, and will publish details of this later in 2011. There has been great demand for our "Circular Walks" and "Healthy Shortcuts" leaflets which have been reprinted and are available from the Council office in Crown Yard and from the Library. Town Trail leaflets identifying the historic buildings in the town centre are also available.



# ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE Chairman: Cllr. David Knight

## REPORT OF THE YEAR APRIL 2010 TO MARCH 2011

The Environment Committee has once again had an exceptionally successful year in the delivery of its projects, all achieved within budget and with minimal disappointments. These, I believe, will benefit all our residents and add to our quality of life here in Billericay. The support of my fellow Councillors and members of the public again provided considerable expertise and enthusiasm for which I give my thanks. The highlights of the year include:

- ▶ Cleaning the pavements along the High Street;
- ▶ Official opening of the Multi-Use Sports Area in Lake Meadows in May;
- ▶ The thirteenth annual Billericay in Bloom competition;
- ▶ Two further 'Big Litter Picks' were well supported by the public;
- ▶ Organised a series of Town Trail Walks which were well received and supported;
- ▶ Testing and replacement of some lamp columns in the town centre to meet strength testing requirements and enable the continued use of our CCTV, hanging baskets and Christmas lights;
- ▶ Continued partnership with Basildon Borough Council in the enhancement of Lake Meadows. This has included replacement of footpaths to ensure Disabled Access as well as advanced planning in upgrading the children's playground and public toilets;
- ▶ Successful 'Green Day' in June in Emmanuel Church as part of our Greening campaign - unfortunately the display of 'green commitment cards' was disappointing so we are not proceeding with Phase II;
- ▶ Advanced negotiations with Basildon Borough Council in taking over the maintenance of Festival Gardens;
- ▶ This was the sixth year we provided Christmas Lights within the High Street and the ever popular 'Celebration of Christmas Lights';
- ▶ The fifth Christmas Shop Window competition;
- ▶ Agreement to replace much of the Lake Meadows skateboard park during Spring / Summer 2011 with design input from the skateboarders themselves;
- ▶ Two further Plant-a-Shrub sessions at the Child in the Park and Festival Gardens;
- ▶ Bus Shelter at The Vale and new railings around the War Memorials installed by Essex County Council after advice from Billericay Town Council;
- ▶ Continued provision of hanging baskets, planters and flower beds;
- ▶ Automated Public Convenience facility in the Car Park behind Iceland, continues to be provided;
- ▶ Allotments – after much work by Councillors, officers of Basildon Borough Council and the national allotment organisation, we reluctantly

came to the conclusion that no suitable site was available.

The details of many of these projects are described below.

### Recreation Facilities Working Party – Chairman: Cllr Peter Bowditch

Work continues on the paths in Lake Meadows and funding is now in place for the young children's play area, both for new equipment and the refurbishment of the existing equipment. Work will start on these improvements shortly. Plans are also in place for the complete renovation of the existing toilet facilities both internally and externally. This work will be undertaken during the next financial year. These improvements will have a tremendous impact on Lake Meadows and I am very satisfied to see that the sustained dialogue between the Town Council and Basildon Borough Council has achieved this high level of co-operation.



### Billericay in Bloom – Chairman: Cllr Moira Moore

The annual competition was launched during May, 2010 with a talk, at the Reading Rooms, by a representative of the Royal Horticultural Society, Hyde Hall entitled 'Hyde Hall Through the Seasons' and was enjoyed by all those who attended.

We were very pleased to have had a large number of entries in the Billericay in Bloom competition and our judges had a difficult time choosing the winners.

Over one hundred residents attended our popular



prizegiving event held at the Canon Roche Centre in Laindon Road. Once again we were delighted that Ken Crowther from BBC Essex Radio presented the prizes to our winners. We were

also pleased that our local MP, John Baron, and the Chairman of Basildon Council, Cllr. Mo Larkin, were able to attend this prestigious event.

Our thanks go to all our sponsors and to our professional RHS judges who continued to be impressed with the quality of the entries from the Billericay community.

### Litter Working Party –

### Chairman: Cllr Moira Moore

Once again we had another successful year for the 'Big Litter Pick'. We held events in April and November 2010. We collected some 50 bags of litter on each occasion. We were helped by a number of local residents and the Air Cadets, the Billericay Lions, Rotary Club of Billericay Mayflower, Royal British Legion, Billericay Society, and a number of District and County Councillors also participated. During the summer the pavements within the High Street were cleaned of all chewing gum after a successful contract for water washing; these still continue to look clean.

### The Christmas Lights Working Party – Chairman: Cllr Tina Arnold

In our 6th year of providing Christmas Lights to the town we encountered a few problems as a number of the lamp columns previously used could not be utilised because they had failed structural tests. However, as a result of the installation of a few new lamp columns and by extending the scheme it was possible to have the same number of columns illuminated as in previous years.

The Celebration of the Christmas Lights event was held on Saturday November 27th, when balloons in the town's colours of blue and yellow sporting the Mayflower ship were given out to the children by Youth Town Council members in fancy dress. The Salvation Army led the Carol singing supported by the Billericay School Choir and Father Christmas was in attendance to switch on the Lights.

The shop window competition this year was won by "The Olive Branch", who had a wonderful display and donated their £100 winnings to St. Luke's Hospice.

Despite the recession lots of businesses sponsored the Christmas Lights as well as Jarvis Print who provided the programme.

Many thanks to everybody who helped make this a very colourful and enjoyable event.



To view the Annual Report and further details of Town Council activities look on the Town Council's website:

[www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk)





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children. This was received very well and the Councillors made a great effort in entertaining the small children.

Two Youth Town Councillors were also asked to judge the Best Shop Window Christmas display. Beth Deacon and Michael Ingall took part and it was decided that the winner should be The Olive Branch as it truly was beautiful. The Olive Branch gave the prize money to St. Luke's Hospice.

The skatepark was one of the first projects that the Youth Town Council got involved in when it first began twelve years ago. In this financial year, 2010/2011, the Town Council have made funds available to enable the Youth Town Council to improve the skatepark further. A Sub-Committee was formed, and along with the skaters who use the park and a representative of the Essex County Council Youth Service, plans were drawn up on suggested improvements to the skatepark. Companies were asked to submit tenders and it was then decided which company should be appointed to install the new equipment.

Currently the Youth Town Council is working on

three more projects. These include a Battle of the Bands style competition at which it is hoped to display the musical talent of Billericay; this should take place in the summer. Also the Events Sub-Committee is working on organising a festival for next summer in Lake Meadows and Tayler Cronly-Dillion has already been in contact with Billericay Round Table to start the ball rolling in the right direction. Lastly it has been decided to create a DVD to portray the Billericay Youth and what Billericay is all about as a town. This idea came up after receiving a DVD from Billericay's twin town Billerica in the USA. It is hoped that this DVD will be filmed using equipment supplied by Billericay School and will include footage on things like sporting teams in Billerica and what the Youth Town Council does for the youth of the town. A sub-committee has been organised to undertake this project comprising of: Beth Deacon, Sophie Harrison, Lewis Jones, Michael Ingall, Gareth Rogers and Niamh Brown.

As a Youth Town Council we are all looking forward to the rest of this term of office as we shall be hoping to achieve a lot and stride forward a great deal with the amount of projects we hope to undertake for the Youth of our town, Billericay. And as Chairwoman I know that we will get all we hope to do achieved.

## FACTS DID YOU KNOW

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

- ▶ 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, White Garden waste sacks – £1.40 per roll and Food waste sacks – £3.00 per roll. 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.
- ▶ as well as the Town Guide and 'Healthy Shortcuts' leaflets, copies of the Town Council's Town Trail and Circular Walks leaflets can be obtained from the Town Council office.
- ▶ copies of the Billericay Design Statement are also available from the Town Council office.

### COUNCILLORS ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS 20 MAY 2010 – 17 MARCH 2011

NO. OF MEETINGS	22	7	7	9
COUNCILLOR	PLAN	F&GP	ENV	COUNCIL
P Arnold until 14/2/11				1
T Arnold			2	1
P Bowditch	15	7	4	7
J Buchanan	16	7	4	8
J Devlin	14	6		8
I Davie from 10/7/10	14			7
C Dyer		4	4	5
T Gandy				9
E Guest		6		4
D Knight		6	7	8
S McCaffery			7	8
K Mesnard				5
M Moore		3	6	7
R Rapley		4		5
J Shrubbs	22			8
D Spencer	16		5	9
T Stansfield		3		7
H Ud-Din				5
P Went			6	9
M Wilson		3	1	8

PLAN = Planning  
F&GP = Finance & General Purposes  
ENV = Environment

### BILLERICAY TOWN COUNCILLORS

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Ian Davie	51 Tye Common Road, Billericay CM12 9NR	01277 656139	i.davie@talktalk.net	W
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Terence Gandy	Mille Fleurs, 32 Norsey View Drive, CM12 0QR	01277 624309		W
Edgar Guest	c/o Billericay Town Council	01277 625732		SW
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Pamela Went	4 The Mullions, Billericay CM12 9XG	01277 658961		W
Marion Wilson	25 Parklands, Billericay CM11 1AS	01277 626321		E
CHAIRMAN:	Clr Peter Bowditch			
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