

Annual Report



May 2014
Version 1

This report has been compiled by Abbots Bromley Parish Council using input from a number of different sources. Any views expressed are those of the original authors and do not necessarily coincide with those of the Parish Council.

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Introduction

The annual report

The purpose of this annual report is to make freely available information about the work of the parish council and other community organisations. The council hopes that you will find the information useful and understandable.

This report aims to bring together in one place key details about the activities of the parish council.

Summary to all homes

A summary of this annual report from the parish council is to be included in the July 2014 ***Bromley Bulletin*** distributed to all households in the parish.

Also available on-line

An electronic copy of this report is available on the village website where you can view it or print your own copy – www.abbotsbromley.com.

Council Members and Officer – 2013/14

Council Members

Ray Bell	841090	
Debbie Burrows	840058	
Philip Charles	840251	
Clive Cook	840928	
Roger Jarman	840687	Chairman
Karen Johns	840381	
Michelle Moore	840280	Vice Chairman
Eric Roy	840153	
Phil Ryan	840019	

Officer:-

Mrs Sarah Meads 01283 840891
Clerk to the Parish Council
Marsh Farm, Uttoxeter Road, Abbots Bromley, Staffs, WS15 3EJ
Email: parish.council@abbotsbromley.com

WORKING GROUPS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Working Groups

The chairman and vice chairman are entitled to serve ex officio, on all groups

Working Group	Member(s)
Competitions	Mrs D Burrows, The Clerk
Finance/Grants	Cllrs Mrs Burrows; P Charles; E Roy
Newsletter	Cllr R Bell (Editor) Cllr Mrs Johns (Editor) Cllr P Charles (Distribution)
Planning	All Councillors
Recreation	Cllrs Charles, Mrs Burrows and Mrs Johns
Traffic & Parking	Cllrs Charles, Mrs Johns, Cook, Roy
Village Property/Public Toilets	Cllrs Charles, Cook, Roy

Representatives

Almhouses	Cllr Jarman
Crime & Social Issues	Cllrs Charles and Mrs Johns
Fairtrade	Cllr Charles
Finance Officer	Cllr Mrs Burrows
Richard Clarke First School	Cllr Mrs Burrows
School Governor	None
United Charities	Cllrs Charles and Cook
Village Hall	Cllr Mrs Johns

Reports to the Annual Parish Assembly Wednesday, 14th May 2014 6.30 pm At the Village Hall, Abbots Bromley

Introduction: Again this year for the Parish Assembly the various verbal reports are replaced with written statements. This document contains the reports submitted in advance of the assembly, and question on the contents may be asked during the open forum. Additional reports will be added after the meeting.

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Parish Council Report	Cllr Roger Jarman
Parish Council Finance	Sarah Meads
Village Hall Report	Keith Johns
Community First Responders	Colin Palmer
Community Transport	David Thompson
Richard Clarke First School	John Hough
Youth Initiative	Phil Ryan
Staffordshire County Councillor's Report	Cllr Philip Atkins
East Staffordshire Borough Councillor's Report	Cllr Greg Hall – to be added
Parish Council Financial Statement	To be added
Minutes of the Parish Assembly 2013	

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

New Councillor

In July we were very pleased to welcome Phil Ryan to the council. From the work he has already done in the village, particularly the village hall and the new playing field project, we are sure he will make a valuable contribution.

Planning – The substantive or controversial applications this year have been:

Wood Processing at Bromley Park Farm. This is a County Council issue rather than one for the Borough Council, but in keeping with a lot of local planning issues the views of the local residents have been subjugated to those of the applicant.

Refurbishment of the Almshouses. This major project has now been completed, with the residents returning before Christmas. There are now 4 single occupancy and 2 double occupancy dwellings (previously 7 single occupancy), all now to a high standard. The 2 single storey dwellings remain.

Still rumbling on is:

Ivy House, High Street. Planning permission has been granted to convert Ivy House into 3 three terraced dwellings, but, contrary to Walton Homes requests, not to demolish Ivy House and start again. As we have seen, the developer has decided to remove most of the roof and windows, thus making the property very vulnerable and making total demolition a real possibility. ESBC cannot tell us what they will do to enforce the original planning conditions..

The Village Plan. ESBC are preparing a new Local Plan, which required us to come up with sites suitable for an additional 40 houses. This does not include sites that already have planning permission, such as Ivy House. From the options given to us, and following discussions at Parish Council meetings in June and July, our recommendations were submitted to ESBC. These were options which would cause the minimum disruption to existing residents, and continue the linear development of the village on both the Uttoxeter and Lichfield Roads. As publicised in our November Bulletin, this Local Plan has subsequently been available for comment.

Planning Appeal. Just over a year ago Hart's Farm, Radmore Lane, applied for planning permission for a 50 metre high wind turbine. We supported local concerns by making a personal submission to an ESBC planning meeting against this proposal. This in turn was supported by ESBC who turned the application down. Unfortunately this decision has been reversed at appeal. Also permitted on appeal is a similar sized turbine at just over the parish boundary at Dun's Field Farm – 1 ½ km N.E. of Hart's Farm. To gauge the visual impact, there has been a 50 metre turbine erected, again after appeal, at Purleyhill, just S.E. of the village. Obviously where renewable energy is concerned, local objections, even from Planning Authorities, are treated with contempt.

Best Kept Village – Unfortunately we did not win. We came second to Yoxall, but managed to beat Tutbury who came third. Keep our fingers crossed for this year. Once again we have a wonderful display of posters from Richard Clark.

Bromley Bulletin – This year we published in July, November, and March.

Christmas Tree – Once again our thanks to the Brandrick family for donating an excellent tree. As we have said before, our own tree on the Green is getting bigger, but it will probably be a couple of years yet before it can “fly solo”.

Parish Council Surgeries. As with previous years, these bi-monthly surgeries have continued. Although the public attendance is not great, we hope that those that have needed to discuss a problem have found them useful.

Traffic, Parking, and Highways Traffic. Following our request the “20 is Plenty” signs in Bagot Street and High Street have been extended to include Abbots Bromley School for Girls.

Parking & Road Safety. We now have the “double yellows” at the junctions of Goose Lane, Church Lane, and Hall Hill Lane. It was considered that we did not need them on the Goat corner, as the single white line appears to be doing its job. These lines do seem to be helping to reduce dangerous parking although some people are still parking in the bus stop. The Parish Council has also worked closely with the police and last year saw regular visits from the police with tickets being issued for speeding, use of mobile telephones, lack of appropriate documents and unsafe vehicles.

Highways. Two years ago I reported that it was hoped that, after much chasing and onsite meetings with Highways, long outstanding pothole and pavement repairs will be undertaken “this summer”, I also said do not hold your breath! Further to our March Bulletin only Bagot View has been talked. Seedcroft/Goose Lane remains a nightmare and we are aware of many other potholes still requiring repair.

Bus Services it has come as a surprise to us that, in SCC’s rearrangement of bus services, we no longer have a bus service to Lichfield. Although a consultation seems to have taken place the Parish Council did not receive notification of this.

Youth Project. – As previously reported, the Youth Club continues to be a great success. But the cut back on funds from the County Council for support workers could provide new challenges in the future. But well done to all the volunteers involved.

Other Projects. The Abbots Bromley Sports Association is making good progress on their fundraising for the Lichfield Road site. The progress on “Gallimores Field” appears to have momentarily slowed.

Jubilee Cup 2012/13. Last year’s worthy recipient was Jeff Bradbury, in recognition of all he has done for the village over the years, not least as a Firemen and Horn Dancer (but not at the same time!)

**Cllr Roger Jarman
Parish Council Chairman**

PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES

The parish council has its own Financial Regulations, which set down the rules by which the finances of the council are managed. The council employs an independent internal auditor who reviews the financial records. At the end of the year an audit return is completed and submitted to the Audit Commission for the purposes of external audit. The council’s financial regulations can be viewed on the website or via arrangements with the clerk.

The approved financial statements for the council for the year to 31st March, 2013 will be tabled at the Parish Assembly.

**Sarah Meads
Parish Clerk**

ABBOTS BROMLEY VILLAGE HALL

In the last year the Village Hall has again enjoyed a stable year as income from both regular users and function events continues. The new pricing structure has made the hall an attractive option to all who plan an event. As always the hall has to build up financial reserves to protect it from inevitable expenditure in the future particularly the lift. This year’s major expenditure includes the re-varnishing of the hall floor and replacing all of the hall lighting as many bulbs no longer work.

Work continues to improve the Green room enabling better access to the hall for the Tennis Club and other users.

The process which will give the Village Hall Trust title to Gallimores Field continues and I would like to thank the Villagers who have again given financial and other support to the project. The Village Hall Trustees would also wish to thank our local Councillor Greg Hall for all the support and hard work he has contributed to the project, this has taken much of his valuable time.

We have benefited throughout the year from a hard working team of volunteers, especially the bar volunteers who have given up many of their weekend evenings and early Sundays mornings to serve drinks, clear away and tidy up, may I thank everyone who has supported us in our efforts, in particular our hard working Custodian Rose Maidstone. May I also thank all those volunteers who have decided to stay on for another year as trustees.

We look forward to a successful year.

Keith Johns
Chairman of the Management Committee

Abbots Bromley Community First Responders

Abbots Bromley Community First Responder Group continues to operate within the village and surrounding areas. The group is in its tenth year. We undertake to provide cover most of the time and hope to continue this service for the foreseeable future.

Colin Palmer
Co-ordinator

Abbots Bromley Community Transport

Last year the community transport clocked up a mileage of 742 miles, we now have 2 drivers. The Staffordshire County Council gave us a grant of £489.00 last year and this year the grant has been frozen. Out of this I have to pay the insurance which has now gone up to £213.87 and also my drivers what they have earned.

Most popular journeys include The Queens Hospital, Lichfield Station, Rugeley, and the Doctor Surgery, Shopping in Uttoxeter. The scheme is still working very well.

David Thompson
Co-ordinator, Abbots Bromley Community Transport

Richard Clarke First School Report

Here is a brief summary of some key elements of the past 12 months.

Financial: We have just agreed our budget for 2014/15 and we are hopeful that it will not place too onerous demand upon us. We carried over a small surplus from the previous year and this has been absorbed into our planned spending, generally on training and classroom assistants. Our major income is driven by the pupil headcount plus an additional amount for 'deprived' pupils. As you may suppose, in our case, the latter is very small. The total funds allocated to the school are approximately £446,000. Staffing costs, in all categories, represent over 80% of the total cost.

Key financial points for 2013/14 include:-

- This is the second year of the implementation of the government's funding reforms. Following a consultation with all Staffordshire schools, the LA decided to implement the new funding from April 2014.
- Staffordshire have guaranteed that no school will lose more than 1.5% from last year's budget. However, a new funding formula, proposed by the Government, will be implemented from April 2015 and it is not yet known what impact this will have.
- The pupil premium, designed to support disadvantaged children, has been significantly increased this year. However, since RCFS only receives the premium for a tiny number of children receiving free school meals and nothing else, it will not have much effect on us.

We are very fortunate to have a very active and successful PTFA who raise funds for the school. (e.g. Halloween Disco, Christmas Market) This has a major impact on our ability to purchase additional resources to enhance both the curriculum and the learning environment. It has also sponsored children on school visits during the year. I must also propose a vote of thanks to the eponymous Richard Clarke whose generosity in setting up the endowment fund continues to reward and delight us several hundred years later.

Number of Pupils: The number of pupils on our roll, which directly determines our funding, varies substantially from year to year. In 1998 our number on roll was 145; we will finish this year with 117 pupils on the roll, including 30 children in Reception Class. We are expecting 27 new pupils in September 2013, with 16 leaving for Middle School. This arithmetic results in a roll of 128 pupils next year, with, I am delighted to say, the increased funding that this attracts. There is forecast to be a steady increase in demand for places over the next few years but our current intake limit has been set by the LA to 30.

It is difficult to believe that just a couple of years ago we were debating merging classes because of the falling pupil numbers.

Staffing: There has been a major staffing change from the Spring Term. We have a new head-teacher, following the early retirement of Miss Shaw. Following a rigorous and exhausting recruiting process we appointed our deputy head, Mrs Hanson, as the new head-teacher. We had an excellent response to our recruitment campaign and so co-opted two external experts from the LA and Entrust to make sure that our selection process, which involved all of our governors, was scrupulously fair.

Mrs Hanson, being an outstanding Year 4 teacher, had to be replaced by another outstanding teacher. We have now appointed an experienced teacher who we believe is outstanding. He will be joining us in September 2014, at which time we will be on a very short list of First Schools with two male teachers.

In order to give our head-teacher more time to raise the standard of teaching across the school from 'good' to 'outstanding' we have re-organised our administrative support. Premises' and HR issues will be handled by Mrs Haywood and a new Finance Assistant will administer our many financial procedures. Ultimately, however, responsibility obviously rests with the head-teacher, supported by the governors.

Premises: There have been no significant problems with the school grounds or buildings over the past year. Insofar as it is possible to predict such things, we are not planning major premises expenditure in the coming year.

We have replaced all ICT equipment in the school using the Endowment Fund where appropriate. All classrooms have a number of new desk-top computers and the latest interactive white-board and projector. We also now have an impressive display of multi-media technology in the hall.

We have conducted successful, incident-free fire drills and also had a real evacuation, when a heat sensor reacted to an electric hot-plate in Reception. All were completed flawlessly within an

impressive time. A very positive cleaning survey also confirmed that we are properly hygienic and safe.

School Performance: Our last OfSTED inspection (2012) gave us a very encouraging report. RCFS was rated *Good* (with some *Outstanding* characteristics) and so we are not expecting another inspection until 2015 at the earliest. However, OfSTED rules change quite frequently so we cannot be complacent

Although an OfSTED inspection has not taken place, we do have regular school performance data supplied by the DfE and OfSTED. This shows that RCFS performs better than the national average in almost every category. Simplified data for parents (School Data Dashboard) is also available on the OfSTED web-site.

Our core priorities are as last year:

- **Assessment for Learning:** The importance of work scrutiny and feed-back and allowing children effectively to respond. We have implemented a policy of peer review and learning partners which is proving very popular.
- **Maths across the curriculum:** Mathematical thinking has to become a natural, possibly implicit, part of all curriculum activities.
- **Challenging the more able pupils:** We need to extend the able children who may become disengaged if they are not stretched. This is a key priority. We are embedding Philosophy for Children (P4C) across the curriculum.
- **Staff development and support:** Quality of teaching is OfSTED's highest priority. Passing on the characteristics and behaviours of our outstanding teachers to all staff is a very high priority.

We are also focussing effort on **PE provision**, using funds made available by the government, and implementing a new learning platform (**Launchpad365**) which will enable all manner of information to be shared, where appropriate, across parents, staff, children and governors.

School Self-Review: Parents' Questionnaire: We have consciously delayed our annual survey of attitudes until the changes (see Staffing) have had a chance to settle down. The annual questionnaires will be sent to parents during the Summer Term. We will also involve gather the opinions of the children and the staff.

Summary: The latest OfSTED Annual Report stresses the importance of the leadership and school governance. The RCFS governing body continues to demonstrate its worth but we recognise that, although our role is voluntary, we must maintain a focus on support and challenge.

All schools in Staffordshire are facing funding difficulties, having to organise for the major change in the provision of LA services and support and having to cope with uncertainty about the changing world of education. We are collaborating with other local First Schools and Middle Schools, feeding in to Thomas Alleyne's, to improve the learning experience and, if possible, to reduce costs. Past experience and evidence leads me to believe that we are an effective, well-led and resilient school which should cope well with the current educational changes.

The latest news about The Richard Clarke First School can be found on our web-site (soon to be re-designed) (www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk) together with OfSTED reports and other performance information.

John Hough
Chair of Governors, Richard Clarke First School

Youth Initiative

A year of change

We have been without Gemma Lanchester our senior youth worker all year. Initially our Tuesday meeting coincided with a D of E evening in Uttoxeter and Gemma had the lead there then Gemma was off ill and she has still not returned to work. Richard her assistant was dismissed mid year.

Although we have always had paid youth workers assigned to us we have lacked continuity.

Staffordshire County Council, in their cost cutting quest, have had regular meetings with staff and volunteers involved in youth work across the county culminating in notice being given to withdraw youth workers from almost all youth clubs across the county by August 2014 - us included – most staff will be made redundant – we are still unclear what impact all of this will have on us.

It is likely that key staff within Staffordshire Youth Service will form private businesses and offer their services to youth centres across the county with costs likely to rise.

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We have 27 members all between 11 and 17 year of age

We have had lots of new faces attending over the last twelve months

The majority of young people are between 12 and 15 years of age

We have a regular attendance of between 11 and 15 young people - we had 16 at our Christmas dinner in Ruchi in January.

Regular attendance is roughly half and half between boys and girls.

We encourage the young people to take responsibility for their club and wherever possible we empower them - our tuck shop is run entirely by the young people and is self-funded.

Funding

We have received £1,687 (£2,389) from various sources during the year

£1,000 kindly donated by ABPC in May 2013

£687.37 (£1,088) from our 50p per week subs and Tuck which the Young people now manage

Figures in brackets are for previous year

Locally Planned Events

During the year we have worked with Staffordshire Youth and Community Service to:-

- Organise additional Youth Club meetings on Wednesday afternoons during the Summer and Easter holidays

- We teamed up again with the Spanish kids and their teachers using the girls school during August to organise 3 “cultural” evening using the facilities offered by the Village hall and its environment – a great time was had by all .This event is becoming a regular feature on our calendar.
- Planned and organised “Cooking for all” evenings on alternate Youth club evening from September onwards.

and

- Purchasing addition equipment

Wish list

The 5 a side pitch has been extremely well used since it was opened in April 2010 - it would be great if we could continue to extend the artificial turf in both goal areas during the coming year?

Once the purchase of Gallimore field is finally completed it would be great if the grass could be regularly cut then it would be a great extension to our existing facility and a great open space for all kids in our village to use.

Summary

Whatever we are doing the kids seem to be happy with our efforts.

Our volunteers of which we have 4 (7) are wonderful but it is the combined efforts of Staffordshire Youth Service and our Volunteers that gives us cohesion.

Staffordshire Youth Service are currently assigning 3 youth workers to Abbots Bromley Youth Club.

Our aim has always been to keep our funds over the magic £2,000
It costs us circa. £1,178 per annum for the Village Hall - we secured a 20% reduction in September 2011 and during the summer we try to conduct most of our activities outdoors.

We currently have £1,133 (£1,409) in the bank.

We would as always appreciate any monies from any source

Finally

We are always looking for volunteers

Volunteering need only be for as little as 2 1/2 hours per month (1 evening a month)

Anybody interested should phone me on 07787536381 for more details

P Ryan, AB 4 Youth

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR UTTOXETER RURAL DIVISION - REPORT

Uttoxeter Rural Division Annual Report April 2014

This is my first Annual Report since the County Council election last May when I was returned as your county councillor and welcome Draycott in the Clay, Marchington and Marchington Woodlands who return to Uttoxeter Rural Division. I have also been re-elected to the role of Leader of the County Council. When you have a cool dispassionate look back at the facts, the last year has been quite good. Staffordshire CC has much to be proud of about the result of our recent work and there is more to look forward to.

Lowest County Council Tax in the country

Council tax has been frozen for the 4th year in a row and is the lowest county council tax in the country with a Band D at £1027.25 while still continuing to deliver services in new and innovative ways for those who really need them. Council tax makes up 22% of the county council's revenue, the remainder coming from government direct grant, business rates and generated income.

JCB investing £150m in Staffordshire, creating an extra 2,500 Jobs by 2018

Locally JCB have announced they are to invest £150 million in extending their operations in Staffordshire, creating an extra 2,500 jobs by 2018.

The newly announced ambitious plans for expansion include two new purpose-built factories, a new in-house training facility and office accommodation. The plans are subject to planning consent from ESBC and will create 2,500 jobs most of which will be in Staffordshire plus 7,500 new jobs in the supply chain. The investment plan includes a new 350,000 square feet factory for JCB Cab Systems at Beamhurst, an additional 126,000 square feet of manufacturing space at Rocester, and a new 220,000 square feet factory at Cheadle. Besides local, this is both national and regional importance with the Chancellor George Osborne visiting JCB's headquarters a day after delivering his Autumn Statement. An application has also gone in for a golf course and new JCB Finance building.

Government Funds £50m of improvements to the A50

The government will fund £50m of improvements to the A50 as part of the updated National Infrastructure Plan. The A50 improvement work, announced in the Government's Autumn Statement to be delivered by the County Council, will start this year and will support "local growth, jobs and housing." The A50 is a key link road for several major employers and attractions in the area, including JCB, Alton Towers, and Uttoxeter Racecourse with Toyota and Rolls Royce also set to benefit.

Two phases have been out to consultation and a planning application will be lodged in April for Phase A with completion by autumn 2015.

Stramshall to Spath

The speed limit has been extended at Spath and the last part of the traffic calming is being put in place with a build out in the road. Further work will be needed with the new JCB factory to deter Lorries and cars taking a short cut. The 6 lanes planned on the A50 improvements between the 2 projects should provide a better way of getting there.

A515 and HCVs

With all this traffic pressure comes the issue of HCV traffic.

I have been in extensive discussions to find a solution to issues around HCVs using the A515 as a shortcut from the A50 to the A38. These could be average speed cameras, gateways and better

access from the A38 to Fradley. The aim is to deter HCVs from using the A515 while improving access from the A38. The A515 is a national priority route.

Pinch point funding for Highways

SCC has also secured Government pinch point funding to improve highways at Beaconside in Stafford, locally at Rocester and Denstone on the A50-Rocester corridor to JCB and Alton Towers. Work at Rocester will be completed this May with work starting on the Denstone roundabout later this year. Additional funding has been allocated by SCC to this busy route.

JCB Offers Exciting New Prospects for education in Rocester

The County Council are in talks with JCB over moving Ryecroft CE Middle School opposite their world headquarters and helping to fund a replacement building off Ashbourne Road Rocester. This would allow the Rocester based firm to consider building a University Campus on the Ryecroft site.

A new school would be created nearby along with the Dove First School on the same site. Ryecroft, which caters for nine to 13-year-olds, currently has 198 pupils and the Dove First about 90. This is an exciting opportunity for education in and around Rocester. It will mean local children get new and improved facilities in which to learn, while at the same time making a key site available for further skills expansion.

Staffordshire and Stoke secure £32.8m “Powerhouse Central” City Deal

As part of a long-term economic plan to secure Britain’s future, the Government is backing business and enterprise right across the country and helping cities and counties to grow and prosper. Staffordshire is no exception. The Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership City Deal or “Powerhouse Central” is one of the largest announced to date in terms of investment secured—£32.8 million from central government with the potential for £113m and more than 20,000 jobs created over the next 10 years. It focuses on 4 areas:

- Energy
- Enterprise and Innovation
- Sites, Infrastructure and Local Development
- Skills

This is part of our long-term economic plan that is backing business and enterprise, helping them to expand; creating new jobs, so that hardworking people in Staffordshire can enjoy a more financially secure future and building a stronger, more competitive economy that secures a better future for their families. The agreement with government will give us more funding and freedoms to accelerate the work we are already doing to drive economic growth and make Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent one of the best places in the UK to do business.” This is the first City and County Deal which will get specific help for projects designed to drive growth as well as more tools and powers to help them develop our area so local people have the opportunities they need to get on in life. In Staffordshire, Powerhouse Central is based around a pioneering world class programme to supply locally produced energy to major employers at stable prices. This will ensure that our county is an international leader in the production of advanced materials such as ceramics and advanced engineering.

Superfast Staffordshire Website Shows When New Broadband Will Arrive

Householders and businesses in East Staffordshire can now find out exactly which areas will be getting faster internet speeds—the first communities will benefit from April 2014. The announcement coincided with the launch of the new Superfast Staffordshire website to inform local people when and where the faster fibre broadband will be available. Superfast Staffordshire is vital to people and businesses – it will increase opportunities, accessibility and economic growth and is important as road or rail and means we’ll be on a level playing field with other areas.

The ambitious programme will see the laying of more than one million metres of fibre optic cable and more than 500 new superfast broadband street-side cabinets across the county. By 2016, 97% of homes and businesses (roughly 472,000 premises) will have access to superfast broadband. A further two per cent will have access to fibre-based broadband with the remainder having improved speeds using existing technology. The project is a partnership between Staffordshire County Council - which has invested nearly £8 million - and BT, which has invested £12.47 million. A further £7.4million is being invested by the Government's Broadband Delivery UK.

OFSTED Praises Staffordshire for its Support to Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children across Staffordshire are now receiving a higher standard of care, according to a new report. After a long programme of hard work by staff to reverse earlier ratings under Labour, the child protection service has won praise in the latest Ofsted inspection. It has resulted in a 'Good' rating - the second highest available. A three-week inspection rated the council as 'Good' in every category, with no areas needing urgent improvement. The inspection also found that the authority's work with its partners, through the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB), was 'good' – the first time under its new regime that an authority and its Local Safeguarding Children's Board were both rated 'good' simultaneously. This rating means children in Staffordshire are safe. Not only does it recognise good safeguarding of children in care, with good quality services where people listen and take account of the child's wishes, but good early intervention. We have moved from under-performing to being in the top 30 per cent in the country now.

Staffordshire Gets £2.1 million From Government to Fix Potholes

0300 111 8000 is the number to ring to report a pothole or any other county issue. The Government has allocated £2m to help repair potholes across the county. Any extra boost to tackle challenges like potholes is always welcome. While welcoming this additional funding, remember the county council has already invested £50m over the past 5 years to correct 28 years of previous neglect. I recognise the need for a longer term investment in our road network which will be key to the country's future economic growth during the coming months and years. The £2m is an emergency payment from the government to help with road repairs following the wettest winter on record which has caused significant additional damage particularly to the local road network.

Library Service Opens a New Chapter for the 21st Century...

The county council has started talking with groups and partners who use Staffordshire's libraries to draw up proposals to revitalise the service. The results and proposals are out for county-wide public consultation. The future library service will likely include a much larger online offer. The review will also look for innovative new ways of providing library services to make sure the county council delivers real value for money to taxpayers, and spends every penny as effectively as possible. More and more people are choosing to access Staffordshire Libraries online, with around 1,400 e-book loans per month.

Mid-Staffs NHS Trust and "Decision Day"

The decision to dissolve Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust means it is absolutely crucial that all partners involved in the NHS now pull together and deliver what is best for the health economy of Staffordshire. The trust, as it stood, was both financially and clinically unstable, and as a county council we have always recognised the difficult challenge facing the trust special administrators, and I think they have acknowledged this too. There are still significant concerns over the financial fragility of the whole Staffordshire health economy and the wider impact this decision will have, especially as Staffordshire has been identified as one of 11 financially challenged health economies.

Largest integration of health and social care in the UK

2 years ago 1000 social care staff and a budget of £153 million were transferred from Staffordshire County Council to the new Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS Trust, created the largest integrated health and social care organisation in the UK, responsible for all adult social and community healthcare within Staffordshire and all community healthcare in Stoke-on-Trent, delivering everything from physiotherapy to day opportunities.

By removing duplication and streamlining the delivery of integrated care £30m has been saved in costs of unnecessary demand on care services. This is about improving the experience of citizens while making best use of tax payers' money.

Skills and Education

With the Local Enterprise Partnership an Education Trust has been formed to ensure our children and young people get the best start in life and receive a good education. Staffordshire is a skills pilot with 5% of college funds kept back until the Local Enterprise Partnership is satisfied the skills our young people attain fit the needs of business.

It is all very well creating better paid jobs but it is vital Staffordshire people have the skills to do the work and share in the benefits which will flow.

Our local schools have a part to play in this as well and the County Council has sent special teams into the schools in Uttoxeter who are under notice to improve. All our village schools are good or outstanding according to Ofsted.

County Council Launches Plans to Remodel Youth Services

SCC is planning to remodel its youth services and save circa £2.8m a year by stopping direct provision. A greater role for volunteers with support for young people will be developed for each district based on local need and aspirations. The council will now develop an implementation plan following formal staff consultation and continue to engage with young people, partners, and stakeholders to ensure a smooth transition to the new provision. The decision comes as 3/4 of the 73,315 young people in Staffordshire failed to use youth services last year.

It is not the intention to stop helping young people. SCC is moving out of directly providing youth clubs. More than 16,000 people signed a petition to support continuing services for young people which was carefully considered by the Cabinet. However Staffordshire's young people are clear in what they want and need from their community and society. Their priorities are future careers, doing well in exams, and achieving potential at school. It is our job to adapt the way we support them to build the lives they want and meet their aspirations.

The authority's research showed only one out of every five young people in Staffordshire had used a county council-funded youth facility. More young people attended uniformed youth activities such as Scouts and faith groups funded events for young people organised by unpaid volunteers.

The authority wants to focus more on "community-based activities" rather than traditional youth clubs. This fresh approach is about improving services in the community and increasing access to schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award which really support young people's aspirations around education and jobs.

SCVYS is financed by the County Council and there to help organisations with CRB checks and all the other issues and source grants and other help.

Staffordshire is now the fastest growing part of the fastest growing economy in the world

Jaguar Land Rover, JCB, Redhill Site, City Deal are all projects that are happening here in Staffordshire. While there will be local disruption they provide opportunities as we rebalance the economy and manufacture the exports we need to enrich ourselves.

Around 8,500 new jobs have been created in the last year putting unemployment at 1.8%, compared with 7% nationally. There are more vacancies than people unemployed.

We must ensure Staffordshire people are skilled to fill these better paid jobs.

Review of Bus services and Needwood Bus service

The review has the aims of an increased frequency service between Stafford and Uttoxeter, peak service between Uttoxeter, Draycott and Abbots Bromley, an off-peak service between Uttoxeter, Draycott and Burton, and Uttoxeter, Abbots Bromley and Burton and the use of a Demand Responsive or Taxibus network within the Needwood Forest area.

The purpose of Needwood Forest Connect is to maintain a public transport service in a sparsely populated area where conventional local bus services cannot continue to be viably maintained. This service will be available to all residents of the operating area who will not be within reasonable walking distance of a bus route.

The service will also be available to visitors wishing to access a destination in the operating area not served by a local bus service. It is intended that the service should provide local journeys to other villages in the area or a connecting point on or near to the edge of the operating area for onward travel to nearby towns.

However the county council do not:

- Run or have a say about the bus services in the County, they are commercial operations licensed by a Government Commissioner, unless we want to subsidise a route normally in rural areas - 80% are commercial.
- Have any influence on rising fuel costs in the world.

However the county council are:

- Stimulating bus use by the 24/7 concessionary card and the Young Peoples card.
- Trying on a case by case basis to keep a basic service going on threatened routes whilst we look for more permanent solutions.
- **Transport** – concessionary free bus travel package 24/7 for older people and the disabled and over 34,000 young people have taken advantage of discounted travel for just £1 per journey to travel around the county.
- **Libraries** –we have kept all libraries open and all 43 libraries are community resource centres encouraging more people to use them.
- **Efficient waste management**— W2R is completed and will deliver major savings to the tax payer over the next decade, up to £250 million. Veolia operates the new Waste to Energy Plant at Four Ashes. This project, the largest ever undertaken by the council at the time will save its cost many times over its 25 year lifetime from avoiding paying Landfill Tax and from energy generation.
- **Volunteering** – VAST are there to help a genuine and comprehensive partnership making volunteering an essential part of a successful community, which is still rare nationally.
- **Winter highway maintenance** —we routinely salt over 43 per cent of the county road network compared to 25 per cent nationally.
- **Staffordshire highways network** —£50 million will have been invested in road reconstruction, £50m extra over 5 years.

- **Road safety** —we are one of the first councils in the country to introduce permanent part time 20mph zones at schools on busy A and B roads, using a special exemption from Government to protect children at peak school times.
- **Staffordshire Business Support Fund**—a £2m loans fund for small businesses has helped 100s of small businesses
- **Voluntary sector**—Adult social care is the service area where we make our major contribution around £18million per year. We have increased overall funding, targeting in particular smaller community support groups through our innovative Community Wellbeing Fund.
- **County farms**—we are not disposing of our farm estates to maximise short term receipts. Our estates business generates over £1 million a year of profit to support the council's services.
- **Freezing the rents** of over 200 business who are tenants of the county council's enterprise centres
- **Expanding SCC's apprenticeship scheme** to help over 400 young people into work and support other organisations who wish to take on apprentices.
- We have developed **Extra Care facilities** in partnership with our Housing Associations which will enable people to live independently with proper support in Burton, Leek, Stafford, and many other places are planned.
- Invested in Automatic Number Plate Recognition, Staffordshire crime levels are down
- Protected 4,000 jobs in Education Support Services with a new company Entrust with inward investment from Capita creating an additional 1,600 jobs.
- Taken a tough stance on quarrying and large scale wind turbines, to stop intrusive development in our countryside.

Locally last year's **Staffordshire Local Community Fund** went to:

Talbot First School	Funding towards winners & runners up medals & engrave of trophy for chess competitions	£134
Stanton Village Hall	Funding towards the re-pointing of the village hall	£1,000
St John the Baptist Church Kingstone	Funding towards additional pages of information for the Kingstone Local Newsletter to households within Kingstone and surrounding areas	£250
Uttoxeter Cricket Club	Funding towards a replacement second hand mower to pull gang mowers to mow the outfield	£650
Katharine House Hospice -Carers Support	Funding towards the carers support service one to one counselling to carers & bereavement support groups, therapy treatments, portable massage couch & covers	£500
Wootton Cricket Club	Funding towards a Cylinder Mower to maintain the cricket pitch	£500
Friends of Stafford Samaritans	Funding towards an upgrade to the computer system & to extend the centre's working space for the volunteers who provide their continued service to the community in their 50th year	£500
Leigh Cricket Club	Funding towards 2 new goal posts for Leigh Community Playing Fields to the new football team in Church Leigh	£500
Rocester Village Hall	Funding towards replacement chairs	£500
Kingstone Parish Council	Funding towards a Picnic Bench for the Village Play area	£400
SCC Young Peoples Service	Funding towards hire of inflatables & consumables, art equipment, craft for the Community Fun Day & coach trip to Liverpool & meals	£500
Dove Valley Amateur Swimming Club	Funding towards pool hire, lifeguards, DJ & Disco, medals, trophies, shields engraving & catering as part of the club championships & presentation night	£500
Mayfield Memorial Hall	Funding towards hire of a band as part of a fund raising event to raise funds for the refurbishment of the hall	£250
Marchington Tennis & Bowls Club	Funding towards a bowling green mower	£1,000
1st Stramshall Scout Group	Camping equipment for a Scout group to replace current equipment and accommodate new members	£500

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service	Funding towards Street Stadia & Trailer & floodlight system as a means of delivery specific education to children with an aim to reduce anti-social behaviour	£121.18
Uttoxeter Rural community	Funding towards a flagpole, Union Jack flag and Staffordshire knot flag for each Uttoxeter Rural Division's 18 districts	1,594.82
Marchington Woodlands Village Hall	Funding towards cutlery for large events held at the village hall	£300.00
Rocester Parish Council	Funding towards Christmas tree, installation of lights for tree & local shops	£300.00

If anyone wants to apply for funding from this year's £10,000 for local schemes, the forms are available from the County Website.

This is only a snap shot of the many things that I come across in a year and if anyone wishes to know more on any subject do not hesitate to contact me.

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<p>EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCILLOR BAGOTS WARD - REPORT</p>
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Not available at time of going to print.

<p>Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Wednesday, 8th May 2013 at the Village Hall, Abbots Bromley, pursuant to notice having been given</p>
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Present: Cllr R Bell (Chair), Cllr Mrs D Burrows, Cllr P Charles, Cllr C Cook, Cllr R Jarman, Cllr Mrs K Johns, Cllr Mrs M Moore, R Mills, M Mills, S Davis, H Davis, J Hough, M Shaw, Cllr G Hall, K Johns, A Blower, A Bradbury, J Bradbury, J Hayley, T Wheeldon, D Wharton, A Knipe

In attendance: Mrs Sarah Meads – Parish Clerk

Apologies: Cllr E Roy, Mr J Stevenson

1. Chairman's Welcome and Report.

Cllr Ray Bell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Cllr Bell read out some highlights from his annual report which had already been circulated.

2. Presentation of the Jubilee Cup

The Chairman presented a certificate to the previous year's winners of the Jubilee Cup, Mr Roger Mills and Mrs Mary Mills.

The Chairman presented the Jubilee Cup for 2013 to Mr Jeff Bradbury for his work over the years for the fire service and Abbots Bromley Horn Dancers.

3. Abbots Bromley United Charities

The accounts of the United Charities were presented and they were signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

4. Minutes of the Parish Assembly 2012

Were signed as a true and correct record.

5. Parish Council Accounts

A draft summary of the un-audited accounts for the parish council to 31st March, 2013 were tabled.

6. Open Forum

The Chairman invited questions from the meeting on any topics relevant to residents within Abbots Bromley:-

Borough Cllr Greg Hall provided a verbal report as he had not been able to provide a written one before the meeting.

He reported that ESBC had been able to reduce council tax and still continues to give a good level of service. He reported that he would be coming off the Planning Applications Committee.

Mr Hayley said that its three years since a tractor hit a car at Goose Lane and a meeting was held to discuss what could be done to improve road safety in the village. Yellow Lines were discussed and agreed but there is still no movement on these.

Cllr Hall said that the decision comes from the Joint Parking Committee. He said that the Abbots Bromley yellow lines have been number four on the list for some time.

Mr Hayley asked if we can take it further to the District Commissioner.

Mr Wheeldon said that we did discuss moving the '20 is Plenty' signs to incorporate more of the village.

Cllr Jarman updated everyone on why the signs were located where they were. He reported that originally the village did not qualify for the signs as the school was not located on the main road, however, the County Council had agreed to locate signs in the middle of the village because of the number of children using the roads to access the school and also the school buses. The County Council would not locate the signs out as far as the Girl's school as this is not a County Council run school.

Cllr Mrs Moore said that we can fight the fight but we won't win and it is unlikely that the signs will be moved.

Cllr Hall said that the Parish Council had worked very hard to get the signs but it doesn't really come down to the signs it comes down to enforcement and controlling the speed.

T Wheeldon said that he would like the point accurately reported in the minutes and that he wants to see some action on this matter.

Mrs Blower asked for an update on the post box and also said that the village needs some public toilets.

The clerk updated everyone and said that a volume audit on the current boxes was going to take place although she had stressed to Royal Mail that the volume isn't the issue, it is the size of the boxes as they currently won't take any post larger than A5. The Chair agreed that the issue of public toilets would be investigated.

Mr Wheeldon asked if the rule regarding Mickledale not facing on to a highway also applies to Dolphin Cottage? Cllr Hall updated on the processes taken on Dolphin Cottage. He said that planning was refused by the Planning Department but it was then taken to appeal and was approved due to the access previously being used for industrial units. Mr Wheeldon said that this issue must be taken forward otherwise there will be more incidents like there were the previous weeks and a serious accident could happen.

Cllr Mrs Moore asked if it is possible to get the double yellow lines opposite the entrance to Dolphin Lane extended further towards the war memorial.

Mrs Davis commented that if there are yellow lines everywhere where will people park that don't have off-road parking.

At the end of the meeting Mr Wheeldon offered to answer questions on the new sports playing fields on Lichfield Road.

With no more questions the Cllr Ray Bell closed the meeting at 7.30pm.

Signed _____ Date _____