

# Abbots Bromley Parish Council



## Annual Report

**June 2008**  
Version 3

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

Thanks to Eric Roy for the photograph of the Buttercross used on the front cover

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unable to attend at very short notice

## 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 in a manner recommended as good practice by the government for Quality Councils.

### ***Summary to all homes***

A summary of this annual report from the parish council is to be included in the June/July 2008 ***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](http://www.abbotsbromley.com).

## Council Members and Officer – 2007/08

### **Council Members**

David Eatough      840251      Chairman  
Stanley House, Uttoxeter Road, Abbots Bromley, WS15 3EQ

Philip Charles      840251      Vice Chairman  
Poplar Farm, Bromley Hurst, Abbots Bromley, WS15 3AY

Steve Coxon      840455  
2 Walnut Grange, Schoolhouse Lane, Abbots Bromley, WS15 3BT

Alan Elkington      841011  
Fairview, Ashbrook Lane, Abbots Bromley, WS15 3DW

Linda Fox      840315  
Coleshill Lodge, Lichfield Road, Abbots Bromley, WS15 3DN

Roger Jarman      840678  
New Cottage, Goose Lane, Abbots Bromley, WS15 3DE

Roger Mills      840703  
The Crofts, Market Place, Abbots Bromley, WS15 3BP

Caroline Veitch      840361  
14 Alfred Lyons Close, Abbots Bromley, WS15 3EY

Barrie Waring      840649  
The Cottages, Ashbrook Lane, Abbots Bromley, WS15 3DW

Bob Esling served on the council until 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2008 and was replaced by Cllr Roger Mills. David Eatough resigned with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2008 and the process of filling the vacancy is currently underway.

### **Officer** – with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2008

Mrs Sue Buxton      01543 472346  
Clerk to the Parish Council  
Four Oaks Farm, Hadley End, Yoxall, Burton on Trent, DE13 8PF  
Email: [parish.council@abbotsbromley.com](mailto:parish.council@abbotsbromley.com)

## WORKING GROUPS AND REPRESENTATIVES

### ***Working Groups***

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

<b>Working Group</b>	<b>Member(s)</b>
Competitions	Cllr Elkington – temporary
Finance	Cllrs Elkington, Mrs Fox and Mrs Veitch
Newsletter	Cllr Jarman
Recreation	Cllrs Coxon and Mrs Veitch
Traffic & Parking	Cllrs Mrs Fox, Jarman and Waring
Village Property	Cllr Coxon and Jarman

### ***Representatives***

Almhouses	Chairman – ex officio
Finance Officer	Cllr Mrs Veitch
RISES	Cllr Mrs Fox
School Governor	Cllr Coxon
United Charities	Cllrs Charles and Elkington
Village Hall	Cllr Waring
Vital Villages	Cllr Elkington

**Reports to the Annual Parish Assembly  
Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2008, 8.00 pm  
In the Village Hall, Abbots Bromley**



**Introduction:** Again this year the Parish Assembly will take on a slightly different form replacing the number verbal reports with a written statement and giving some of the time to guest speakers with local relevance. This document contains the reports submitted in advance of the assembly, and question on the contents may be asked during the open forum.

**Contents:**

Parish Council Report	David Eatough
Parish Council Finance	Sue Buxton
Village Hall Report	Mike King
Community First Responders	Colin Palmer
Community Transport	David Thompson
Richard Clarke First School	John Hough
Youth Initiative	Steve Coxon
Staffordshire County Councillor's Report	Philip Atkins
East Staffordshire Borough Councillor's Report	Alex Fox
Parish Council Financial Statement	Sue Buxton
Youth Work by Staffordshire Council of Voluntary youth Services	Mark Koszak

**Omissions:**

**Issue Details:** Version 3 – 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2008

**Changes:** This is the third

**PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

The Parish Council Assembly last year again attracted a more than average attendance and this was in the main due to the guest speakers. It was decided that we would use the main hall again this year as the guest speakers are likely to have valuable contributions to make to issues that are currently affecting the village.

My report this year will generally follow the standard template of previous years, however I hope with a little more emphasis on key issues that are currently affecting or likely to affect the village in the near future.

**Membership of the Council** – At the election in May 2007, 6 candidates stood unopposed and were duly elected – Philip Charles, David Eatough, Alan Elkington, Bob Esling, Linda Fox and Roger Jarman and three new members were then co-opted – Steve Coxon, Caroline Veitch and Barrie Waring. Bob Esling resigned as a councillor due to work

commitments at the beginning of January 2008 and as there was not a request for an election from the electors, Roger Mills was subsequently co-opted onto the council. Unfortunately I have to report at the end of my tenure as Chairman I will be resigning as a Parish Councillor due to very busy work commitments. If you are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor please contact Sue Buxton our Clerk.

**Clerk** – This year saw the retirement of Eric Roy after over 5 years and the appointment of a new clerk. I wish to thank Eric on behalf of the Parish Council for his commitment and tireless effort over the last 5 years and I also wish the new clerk Sue Buxton the best of luck in her new post.

**Crime and Disorder** – I have to report that there has been a very noticeable increase in crime and disorder in the village this year. Incidents of anti social behaviour have also increased. Unfortunately many incidents go un-reported and this subsequently means the Police cannot necessarily justify an increase in resources within the community. I urge all members of the community to report any incidents to the Police to ensure we get the level of Police coverage to eradicate these problems. The Police have however reacted commendably and increased patrols when available and intend to monitor the situation for the foreseeable future.

**Planning** - During the year 2007 – 2008 we have consulted on 60 planning applications (compared to 73 and 45 in the previous two years respectively). These varied from tree removals to substantial developments.

In particular two major developments have been the subject of rather intense interest. Firstly the re-submission of a planning application to build 9 dwellings on land to the rear of Ivy House. This was recently refused consent by ESBC and is now going to the planning inspector for the second time. There is a likelihood however that a revised plan will be submitted following consultation between the developer and ESBC.

Secondly the application by Airtricity to develop a wind farm on the Bagots Park. This attracted an enormous amount of local, regional and national interest and was debated rigorously both within the community and a far. Abbots Bromley Parish Council recognised the importance of this application and subsequently made information available on the Abbots Bromley web site and also in the Newsletter. This culminated in a survey being sent to all the houses in the village asking for a response to 2 key questions. The results of this survey showed that the village was virtually evenly split on the issue. An additional Parish Council meeting was held for members of the community to attend and air their views. The application is now currently due to go to the ESBC planning committee for a decision in June or July.

**Millennium Green** – A substantial amount of work has been instigated in respect of maintaining this exceptional facility for the village. During the summer of 2007 we embarked on repainting the play equipment, which had graffiti all over it, and repairing and renewing the fencing. It is with sadness however that I have to report that within a couple of days of the new paint being applied the equipment had been defaced by further graffiti. This year we have undertaken a major renovation of the Millennium Green, this has included the removal of the temporary wire fencing, replacement of the pedestrian gate and removal of trees (unsafe) adjacent to Alfred Lyons Close, remaking of the path, planting of shrubs and tidying up of existing shrubs and the repainting of the play equipment using graffiti shield. Unfortunately yet again within days of this repainting taking place the equipment was defaced with graffiti. Fortunately this time it was easily removed.

Quite a substantial amount of work has been undertaken by the current trustees of the Millennium Green and Abbots Bromley Parish Council to transfer the area to the Parish Council who is responsible for its maintenance.

**Nuttery Under 5's play area** – This now valuable village amenity is getting plenty of use, however there were some defects reported in the wet pour. The repair work to these issues was undertaken by the supplier whose response was creditable. A small amount of vandalism was caused to the litter bin and this was repaired by Cllr Steve Coxon who has carried out an excellent unpaid caretaking job of the play area since it opened.

**Village Design Statement** – The village design statement was ratified and circulated to residents of the village. Our thanks go to the team of individuals who put in many hours of hard toil on this project.

**RISES** – RISES continues to contribute significant funds to village projects. RISES is the result of your excellent recycling effort. The recycling bins as you know are placed on the Crown car park. We have used funds towards the replacement of litter bins by the Post Office and also by the Royal Oak. These bins were slightly different to the norm but have been received well by the community. RISES funds have also been earmarked for some youth initiatives within the village. These being the Junior football club and Cricket club.

**Newsletter** – Last year the Chairman reported the introduction of a new style Village Newsletter. This format has continued, however due to the resignation of Bob Esling and Eric Roy we have had to find a new editor and the role has been taken on by Cllr Jarman.

**PCC** – The Parish Council were pleased to financially support the Church to create a new surfaced walkway alongside the vicarage wall.

**Highways** – The Community Speed Watch scheme began monitoring again last June, unfortunately they have not been able to monitor quite so regularly as they would have liked, this is in the main due to resources. If you or anyone you know may be interested in this very worthwhile project then please volunteer.

We continue to be aware that speed through the village is a major concern for many residents and we have instigated meetings with Staffordshire Highways to try and identify solutions. Unfortunately we continue to be frustrated by the lack of support by the Staffordshire Highways Department and their absence of ideas to help reduce these speed problems. Abbots Bromley Parish Council are committed to ensuring the roads within the community are safe and will therefore continue to engage Staffordshire Highways to instigate solutions as opposed to excuses.

Parking has yet again been brought to the Parish Council's attention on many occasions, although it now appears to have been accepted that vehicles will park on the roadside and generally partially on the pavement, vehicle owners should still be mindful of pedestrians and park sensibly. A great deal of concern has been expressed in relation to vehicles parked on the footpath by the Goats Head and also on the bend which generally affects vehicles travelling towards the Uttoxeter direction. The Police have been particularly interested in the issues of parking around the Church House junction.



A very noticeable increase in HGV traffic through the village has been reported. Early in the new year the Parish Council sent out over 50 letters to local companies requesting that they ask their drivers to only use the roads through Abbots Bromley when absolutely necessary. Letters were also sent to ESBC and Staffordshire Highways asking for roads in Abbots Bromley, particularly narrow lanes to be excluded by legislative means and also removed from sat nav routes. Several companies who were written to have responded and have indicated a sympathetic approach to the problems and indicated they will monitor their driver's routes. They did however express rising fuel costs as a reason as to why their vehicles are making more use of B roads.

A lighting project has now been started in Staffordshire where existing lighting will be renewed and upgraded. Abbots Bromley is one of the villages that are to be upgraded. ABB who are the contractors for Staffordshire County Council have recently contacted all residents with wall-mounted streetlights to request their permission to replace the fittings. To date most have replied agreeing to this, including the owner of Bagot's Barn. When the contractors start work the galvanised column outside the Bagots Arms will be removed. The upgrade will include the installation of four new columns on and around the Crown Bank. Staffordshire County Council has agreed to provide additional funding to allow more ornate painted columns to be used, rather than the standard galvanised columns. Work will also soon be undertaken to replace the lighting around the War Memorial. The existing lights will be replaced with low energy lighting that will be more sympathetic to the ambience of this memorial site.

An extension of the 30 mph speed limit is being negotiated in Goose Lane to cover the access in the area of the nursery.

**Parish Surgeries** – Our bi-monthly surgeries at the Church House at 10am have continued to provide regular access to the Parish Council. All Councillors now undertake attendance to at least one of the surgeries throughout their tenure as a councillor. This has proved to be a useful means of two-way communication.

**Best Kept Village** - Our entry in the Best Kept Village competition last year resulted in our village being placed third. The support of all those in the village who made an effort to keep their area tidy and well presented is much appreciated. The real benefit from this competition is that it helps to make our village a more pleasant place to live. We are entered again this year, and judging of the competition started at the beginning of May. Your help in ensuring that the village looks its best is again vital if we are to beat off the stiff competition from other villages in the area.

**Grants** – The council continues to support groups and initiatives under the Section 137 powers, these included St Giles Hospice and Victim Support. The Parish Council has also set aside £4000 towards Youth Initiatives.

**Youth Initiatives** - Two meetings have been held with interested young people, adults, Parish Councillors Coxon and Veitch and Mark Koszak from SCYVS. From these meetings the local young people have agreed to form their own action committee under the guidance of Lorraine Copeland who has kindly volunteered to assist and guide the group. As this report was being prepared a third meeting was being held.

The council is also involved in discussions with Burton College about access to the college for young people from Abbots Bromley as there is no regular service bus

**Cllr David Eatough  
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 makes two visits each year to review 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.

Attached to this report are the unapproved financial statements for the council for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2008, and this report will be completed and presented to the council for approval at the meeting to be held at the end of May 2008.

As has been the case in previous years, the council has continued to make progress in reducing its level of reserves not earmarked for particular projects to a level of approximately 20% of annual expenditure.

The budget for 2007/08 was prepared on the basis of a deficit of £5,701 and the budget for 2008/09 has been prepared with a deficit of £1,756. In 2007/08 the final figures show a deficit of £2,068, which is £3,633 short of what the council intended at the beginning of the year.

The areas where expenditure has not been at the budgeted levels include:\_  
Miscellaneous expenditure has a saving of £1,057 but this is off set by an overspend of £1,474 on other village maintenance. There has been no spending on electricity for the floodlighting resulting in a saving of £644, but increased expenditure of £500 on churchyard maintenance as the council made a donation to the new footpath within the churchyard. The one area with the major shortfall on anticipated expenditure is S137 payments – this is items paid for by the council where no power exists under any other act of parliament – the requirement for items to be charged here is that there is no other power to do it and it is for the general benefit of the residents of the parish. Of the £5,127 budget only £2,918 has been spent, which is an underspend of £2,209.

**Sue Buxton  
Parish Clerk**

## ABBOTS BROMLEY VILLAGE HALL

We are pleased to report another successful year for this valuable village asset, but regret that once again that the running of this important facility is left to so few volunteers who have worked tirelessly to achieve the objectives.

Revenue for the 2007 year increased to £16,000 while expenditure remained fairly constant at £12,600, allowing the committee to improve its bank balance for future known expenditure.

Our permanent caretaker, Rose Maidstone, must be thanked for all the hard work during the year in maintaining the high standards we all require from the Hall. All our regular and casual users throughout the year comment favourably on the cleanliness and the general appearance of the whole area.

With the very welcome help of the E.S.B.C. and the Community Council of Staffordshire we have replaced the protective fence in the play area behind the hall and we hope in the fullness of time we can further improve this area for the long-term benefit of our young people in the village.

On the negative side we regret that irresponsible dog owners and a small group of youngsters continue to annoy us all with dog fouling and minor, but expensive vandalism. Surely someone must be aware of these selfish individuals who regularly offend us and other areas of the village. Please report to our community officers when you see these offences taking place – a few prosecutions would quickly deter the offenders.

Mike King(Chairman),Peter Smith(Treasurer) and Linda Fox(Trustee), have all indicated they will be standing down at the end of this year and as yet no volunteers have come forward to replace these important roles. Through this annual report we make a plea to those in the village who would like to help, to come forward now and join our committee to enable them to learn the procedures and requirements. Without some new volunteers this essential facility in our community cannot continue to operate and would have to close its doors. Please put your name forward if you would like to help.(Mike King 01889500660).

As Chairman I thank the trustees and the committee for their very valuable service throughout the year. The village should also appreciate the very essential and valuable financial support given to it from East Staffs Borough Council, and the Community Council of Staffordshire.

**Mike King**  
**Chairman of the Management Committee**

### **Bromley Community First Responders - 2007/2008**

The first responder group has recently completed its 3<sup>rd</sup> year of operation. During the last year we have made 355 responses to emergency calls under the direction of the ambulance service. The total to date being 1240 since inception of the group.

The standard of cover we aim to achieve is 24 hrs ,7 days per week. We have met 99.8% of this target.

The deficiency being accounted for by member's holidays and vehicle maintenance. Membership of the group stands at 9, with 8 active responders.

Calls have been predominately been in Abbots Bromley, but have extended to outer areas such as Fradley, Sudbury and Little Heywood as and when required.

During the year fund raising commenced to replace our original response vehicle. This proved to be successful and a new vehicle was purchased in August. We acknowledge the help of local authorities, grant making trusts, individuals, local fund raising and Mitsubishi motors all of whom contributed to the satisfactory completion of this project.

During the period Staffordshire Ambulance Service was absorbed into the West Midlands Ambulance service.

At present WMAS are supportive of the efforts of CFR groups , we hope that this will continue in order to assure the continued operation of groups like ours.

I would like to thank everyone who has supported our group and especially the responders within our group who have given their time throughout the period .

**Colin Palmer**  
**Co-ordinator**

### **Abbots Bromley Community Transport**

Last year the community transport clocked up a mileage of 2,213 miles. We have now gone down to 6 drivers as one has left the scheme and another has emigrated.

Last year the Staffordshire County Council gave us a grant of £469.20, but in 2008/09 the grant has gone up to £479.00. Out of this we had to pay £187.18 insurance and we had to pay the drivers for what they earned.

The most used places were Queens Hospital, Burton on Trent, Lichfield Station, Rugeley, Doctors Surgery and the Blind Centre in Uttoxeter.

The scheme is working very well.

We don't have a lot of work but what we have got keeps us going. A lot of people have told me that if we did not have the scheme that they would not be able to get about, to their appointments and to go and see their friends, as the buses don't run at the times they want to go. The elderly also find it hard to get on a bus anyway.

**David P 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:** The budget for 2008/2009 has just been agreed by the governors; it is in line with previous budgets and balances revenues and expenditures of about £390,000 for the financial year.

There are a number of key issues that have to be accommodated.

- Budgets are very sensitive to changing pupil numbers. Each pupil attracts revenues of about £2700 per year.
- New JE pay proposals have been agreed and must be assimilated retrospectively from April 2008. (Prudently, Richard Clarke First School has already budgeted for this.)

- The pay proposals have also affected support service costs for 2008-09 and changed the range of the services offered, giving differential price increases across the range of in-house services provided by Stafford.
- Gas and water charges are expected to increase by 20% and between 10%-15% with effect from April; however, electricity bills should fall by around 15% in the coming year.

By far the largest contribution to costs is staff salaries. Once we have paid the salaries, rates, maintenance, insurance and mandatory professional service fees from Stafford, we have very little discretionary spend left.

The budget is balanced and we never plan to have a deficit budget or to have any unspent funds. Revenue received for children on the roll is spent while they are at school and not used to mitigate future overspends. We are, of course, fortunate to have the RCFS Endowment Fund at our disposal, and an active and successful PFA when we need to supplement the budget.

**Number of Pupils:** The number of pupils on our roll varies widely from year to year, and it is this that determines our funding. In 1998 our number on roll was 145; in 2000 this had fallen to 123; and in 2001/2002 it fell to 107.

The number on the roll for next academic year is about 100. We had a very small intake this year (12 into Early Years) but next year this intake will rise to 23. However, the cohort of 12 will be in the school for 5 years. The cohort in Year 4 for next year is 17, so briefly we will have two classes which, added together, still give a number lower than the theoretical class size of 30. We can cope with the variation in intake in our financial planning and can cope with 'thin' years, but a sequence of lean years would create difficulties.

We still take nearly 40% of our children from outside our catchment area, and without these we would have to change the structure of classes.

**Staffing:** The Staffing Committee has been very busy during the past year. We have recruited a new Head-teacher plus a new teacher for Key Stage 2 and, most recently, an Office Services Manager. We have also had to cope with the long-term illness of a key member of staff.

The number of applications, especially for the teaching roles, was very large indeed. We were not expecting to have to recruit a new Head-teacher quite so soon after our previous Head, Sharon Kelly. However, she was head-hunted for a much larger school in Staffordshire and there was little we could do except wish her well. She did an excellent job for RCFS and deserves to progress up the career ladder. The new Head-teacher, Amanda Shaw, is already known to some of the parents, having taught them in Middle School. Yet again, we are confident that we have secured an excellent professional who will take the school from being good in all categories to being uniformly outstanding.

The role of Office Services Manager requires a section all to itself.

**Office Services Manager:** This role has emerged as a significant appointment for schools of all sizes. In larger schools the role would be referred to as the Bursar and would have a sizeable staff. In RCFS, it is now Louise Haywood, but the responsibilities, though on a smaller scale, are very similar:

- Reception duties; run school shops; organise visits
- Pastoral care; administer first aid; handle any parental queries
- Administrative and organisational support for staff and governors
- Planning and development of support services, systems & procedures
- Financial administration of budgets, RCFS endowment; school fund
- Administration of payroll systems; use of SAP system to authorise and record school expenditures
- A welcoming face of RCFS encountered by any visitor or caller
- . . . . plus, dealing with anything else that might occur

This, in no way, minimises the old role of School Secretary. It simply recognises that we live in a stressful new world of governance and financial accountabilities and responsibilities, and we need all the help that we can get.

**Premises:** The new mobiles, which I ‘trailed’ in my last report, have been installed and are in constant use. There is absolutely no doubt that they represent a major increase in the quality of life for pupils and teachers. Once we have sorted out a little(?) problem with drainage, we shall have the excellent resource that we expected.

Just to keep us focused, we are now faced with the need to replace the heating boilers. The question is not ‘if’ but ‘when’. Whether we or the local authority have to pay depends on the scale and severity of the problem. My next report will end this cliffhanger.

**School Inspection:** We have not had an OFSTED inspection in the past 12 months, for which we are profoundly grateful. However, we did have a visit from the District Inspector in the period just before Easter 2008. The report recognised that we have had a very unsettling year with regard to staffing but had coped very well indeed. The report re-affirmed that we were uniformly good, with some outstanding features, and identified specific strengths:

- Strong Deputy Head who has completed a successful secondment, to a failing school, for the LEA
- Positive learning culture with strong emphasis on ‘Every Child Matters’ agenda
- Good curriculum with enrichment opportunities
- Highly regarded in the local community.

**SAFTAS:** For the third year running, pupils from Richard Clarke First School have won a clutch of SAFTAs, awarded by Staffordshire County Council, for digital movie making. The awards are presented with all of the splendour of the Hollywood Oscar ceremony, but without any of the embarrassment. This is obviously a fun event, which the children (and teachers) love, but it also rewards and inspires the excellent and creative use of ICT that takes place in school every day.

**School Self-Review: Parents’ Questionnaire:** We conducted our annual survey of parents’ views and received an excellent response.

Here is a summary of the results. Parents are asked to agree or disagree with each of 12 statements about the school.

Statement	% Agree
My child likes school	100.0%
My child is making good progress at school	100.0%
Behaviour in the school is good	100.0%
My child gets the right amount of homework	91.8%
The teaching is good	100.0%
I am kept well-informed about my child's progress	100.0%
I feel comfortable approaching the school with a question or problem	100.0%
The school expects my child to work hard to achieve his or her best	98.0%
The school works closely with parents	100.0%
The school is well led and managed	100.0%
The school is helping my child to become mature and responsible	100.0%
The school provides an interesting range of after-school activities	98.0%

Note: We had 51 responses, so each individual response is worth about 2.0%

Yet again, the subject of homework is controversial. Some parents want more; some want less. The ratings show an improvement in almost all categories (but you can't do better than 100%, of course).

We also conducted a much more informal sounding amongst pupils, and the general ratings were very high. The question which solicited the lowest favourable score was on the subject of other children's behaviour. Should we be concerned? Of course we should. There is no point in asking questions if you are not prepared to respond to the answers. We have asked the School Council to take the matter on board. I'll report back next time.

**Review of Primary Education in Staffordshire:** Nothing further has happened in this area since my last report. The study into the structure of primary education in Staffordshire suggested that the three-tier system should come to an end but, as far as we know, there are insufficient funds available to implement the change. As last year, we would expect RCFS to emerge with a stronger role in primary education in East Staffordshire.

**John Hough**  
**Chair of Governors, Richard Clarke First School**

### Youth Initiative

The Parish Council is supporting teenagers within the village to try and set up facilities for them. This is initially with a group who have directly requested help and support, but will hopefully initiate more interest through a targeted community newsletter circulated in April. The group have discussed opportunities around provision of a 'youth shelter' and the setting up of a youth club. The Parish Council has already set aside funds within the annual budget to support the initiative.

Mark Kozak (Senior Youth Worker) from the Staffordshire Council Voluntary Youth Services is providing support, guidance and also links into other bodies that can help the group.

As an initial positive output, the formation of the group has also identified a lack of public transport provision (more specifically) into Burton, preventing teenagers (and other residents) gaining access to employment and further education opportunities. Consequently, this is something now being investigated back through the Parish Council.

Cllr Steve Coxon

## STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR UTTOXETER RURAL DIVISION - REPORT

The past year has been a difficult one for the Labour administration at Staffordshire County Council with still only 2 stars and a Fair Rating. In the past year there has been the closure of Care Homes under Changing Lives, Pay Modernisation, a proposal to sell off County Farms to raise cash, the Stafford Arts Space delayed but not forgotten, 1,000s of redundancies and a lack of cash across the authority. In the next few months' schools will have to make difficult budget decisions as they in turn have to deal with Job Evaluation. The resultant losers are the Council taxpayer and residents in increased tax or reduced service and a drop in staff morale and its impact on service delivery.

Pay Modernisation has cost £56.1million in back pay and a potential £117m over all with pay protection for those who lose out. 91% of the workforce has remained the same or risen as the total pay goes from the bottom quartile to the top quartile for local government. We need to see service improvements for this massive increase in cost. This money will have to be borrowed and paid in future years by reduced service, unless innovative ideas are brought forward. We do not know the cost to school's budgets of job evaluation as yet. The cost of Changing Lives has increased with £19m invested last year in improving service and this year £19m in redundancy cost. That is why Labour proposed to sell off the County Farms to square their books.

**The Council Tax**, which forms some 85% of your bill, has risen this year by 4%. There was a debate this year on a proposal by the Conservatives to increase Council Tax by inflation or 2.5% and also invest £1.5m in our roads, £1m in youth activities and £1m in community safety. This was to be delivered by targeting efficiency savings across the organisation through halving the allowance for inflation in non-employment budgets. No job cuts, just better procurement and management. This budget was signed off by the Responsible Officer. This last year, by having staff sign responsibility for their budgets, £22m in savings was delivered. Conservatives said that more could be done. The debate was lost but a sign was laid by the Opposition that Council Tax should only go up by inflation as a measure rather than spend up to the government's capping levels.

The way Councils work is changing. The Local Area Agreement has 35 targets that all public bodies should sign up to, however the County Council administration, true to their lack of consultation form, has announced new Governance with no consultation. They have denied District Councils democratic access to the Forum. Together with closer working on Health with the Primary Care Trusts, an obscure piece of work, the Sub National Review of Economic Development brought in when Gordon Brown became Prime Minister, heralded the abolition of the Regional Assemblies. Their powers on strategic



planning will be given to the Regional Development Agency (AWM). These powers set the housing numbers in the Region, and along with economic, housing, waste and transport will have developers leading the way with no democratic representation. This is because AWM is business led, not elected members at all. Housing numbers are being driven upwards daily by government. Also in this review is the reduction of Learning Skills Council role bringing Colleges' funding through the County Council LEA. This all comes in 2010, but may be sooner as the reduction of power takes place.

The Waste to Energy Plans is progressing with 2 sites now available in the South of the County. SCC has just had permission to progress to the next stage of this £multi million PFI.

A bid, one of 15 for 5 places, has been lodged for Building Schools for the Future in Tamworth. The bid is for £100m to be spent in Tamworth. BSF as a total will cost the County £750m with a £100m shortfall.

From these figures you can see that much is changing at the County Council in its strategic role and the amount of work and funding that is needed. It is not impossible; it just needs management of the highest calibre that no amount of Public Relations will conceal if it is not up to scratch. They need to prioritise the priorities.

Locally last years my **Local Members Initiative Funds** went to:

Bramshall Kids Club	£600
St Peters Ellastone	£300
Blithfield and Admaston Village Hall	£700
Kingstone Village Hall	£750
Mayfield Youth Club	£325
Uttoxeter Mind	£1,000
Leigh Cricket Club	£850
Abbots Bromley PPC	£1250
Uttoxeter Cricket Club	£1250
East Staffs CAB	£450
Staffordshire Fire and Rescue	£750
Denstone Parish Council	£170
Uttoxeter Lions	£390.98
Denstone Pre School Play Group	£482.99
Ellastone Bowls Club	£700
Kingstone Parish Council	£270
Rocester Village Hall	£841.03

Funding for notice boards, CCTV, play equipment, software, cricket screens, cricket coach training, footpaths, roof repairs and events were among this list. The LMIS funds also helped draw in other funding streams.

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

Locally road maintenance and traffic congestion continues to be the main issues and I have had several meetings with Council officers to discuss Highway matters in many areas including Admaston, Bramshall, Stramshall, Denstone, Rocester, Mayfield and Abbots Bromley. I have also had meeting with JCB Directors about traffic in the surrounding area. New Footways are being constructed or are planned in Stramshall and Denstone.

Community Speed Watches have been set up in many of our villages and Community First Responders continue to serve their Communities.

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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**Cllr Philip Atkins**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCILLOR BAGOTS WARD - REPORT</b></p>
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Over the past twelve months I have obtained financial support from my WASP budget, the Community Development Fund and RISES. The Village Hall Trustees received £1500 contribution to redecorating the hall and a substantial amount towards replacing the chain link fence on the Longlands Place boundary. Over £3000 was donated to the First Responders to help buy the new 4x4 vehicle. Kingstone received help towards their monthly newsletter, play equipment and £20,000 towards extending the village hall. The village has taken advantage of the RISES scheme with over £1000 distributed to village organisations from cash earned through collecting plastic, paper and bottles.

In conjunction with the ESBC Cleansing Department the frequency of street cleansing has increased with the introduction of a new mechanical sweeper. This is now seen regularly in the village.

The anti-social behaviour, which has been a recent feature, has been highlighted as a serious problem. This has thrown up some disappointment with the PACT initiative. Discussions have been started with our local police commander to try to improve the efficacy of this scheme. I would like to see this given more prominence by involving local organisations in the meetings and making them responsible for better cooperation with not only the police but with other agencies that have influence on our services.

There have been three potentially controversial planning applications.

An application to build nine houses on land adjacent to Marcia Rice Court was again refused. On this occasion because the planners did not like the height of the houses proposed for the back of the site. A modified proposal is now awaited.

The applications to significantly develop Portfields, Port Lane have been looked at in some detail. Questions have been asked about the ultimate use of this property once completed. The issue here is about the future development of the reservoir for tourism. It has often been muted that increased use of this beauty spot should be encouraged. Two years ago South Staffordshire Water outlined proposals to open a visitor centre and other amenities. St Stephens Hill has converted barns to self-catering cottages and has plans to extend should they obtain planning permission. Yeatsall Farm three or four years ago was refused permission to develop a caravan park and amenity facility.

The issue is not about stopping sensible development but rather to ensure that there is a plan to ensure the area is not over developed and spoilt.

The proposed wind farm at Bagots Park is creating significant interest. The outcome is unclear at present, with both the “fors” and “against” are currently battling it out. I am led to believe by the planners that the earliest the application will be heard will be June but more likely July.

On the wider Borough front council running costs have been reduced by £1.2 million. This means more can be spent on improving services. The Uttoxeter regeneration programmes have progressed and phase 2 will be announced later this year. As a result of government plans to build more houses we have been allocated 12900 to be constructed in East Staffordshire by 2026. Most will be constructed in Burton, some in Uttoxeter and a small number allocated to the main villages. Plans will not be finalised until later this year when available sites have to be determined and submitted to the government for approval. During the year a policy was adopted for redundant farm building. This is far from perfect but at least gives some direction for regeneration of the rural areas.

**Cllr Alex Fox**

**ABBOTS BROMLEY**  
**Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly**  
**Held on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2008 at 8.00 pm**  
**In the Village Hall, Abbots Bromley, pursuant to notice having been given**

Present: Cllr D Eatough (Chairman)  
Julian Allen; Ray Bell; Geoff Catterall; Cllr Phil Charles; Cllr Steve Coxon;  
Bill Douthwaite; Sheila Douthwaite; Neil Eldred; Cllr Alan Elkington; Mrs C  
Gilchrist; Bernard Grundy; Gill Grundy; Ron Hareford; John Hough; Barry  
Joynes; Mike King; Mary Mills; Cllr Roger Mills; Colin Palmer; Liz Palmer;  
Eric Roy; Phillipa Roy; Amanda Shaw; Marilyn Shaw; Paula Stewart; Cllr Mrs  
Caroline Veitch; Cllr Barrie Waring; Ken Webb; Val Webb; Helen Wilson;  
Simon Wilson;

In attendance: PC Richard Boulter; Mrs Sue Buxton – Parish Clerk

Apologies: Enid Ferguson; Len Ferguson; Borough Cllr Alex Fox; Cllr Mrs L Fox;  
Cllr Roger Jarman; Mark Koszak (SCYVS); Jenny Simmonds

**1. Chairman's Welcome and Report**

Cllr David Eatough welcomed everyone to the meeting and presented his report which will be circulated in the final version of the Abbots Bromley Annual Report 2008.

**2. Presentation of the Jubilee Cup**

The Chairman invited Helen Wilson and Colin Palmer to receive a certificate commemorating their award of the Jubilee Cup in 2007.

The Chairman presented the Jubilee Cup for 2008 to Ron Hareford, who has been the lollipop man in Abbots Bromley for many years and whose work goes on undeterred by rain, snow, traffic or children!

Mr Hareford accepted the cup and thanked the council for the award and expressed his pride at being a part of the community of Abbots Bromley.

**3. Abbots Bromley United Charities**

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

**4. Guest Speaker – PC Richard Boulter**

PC Boulter has been a serving police officer for 14 ½ years and briefly outlined his current role as beat officer for the Bagots Ward, Crown Ward, Leigh and part of the Uttoxeter Rural Ward – a huge geographical area. During the last 6 months he has had a 6-month secondment to immigration, which took him away from his work in and around Abbots Bromley.

He gave a report on various police statistics from a county point of view for the period to April 2007. The county has seen the appointment of a new Chief Constable – Mr Sims and he has brought with him many new ideas. The British Crime Survey shows crime to be down and detections to be up, although detections within the Uttoxeter Local Policing Unit are in fact down.

Anti Social Behaviour is a major area of increased activity, but it is very difficult to define exactly what constitutes anti social behaviour. PC Boulter stressed the importance of residents notifying police of incidents, as without this information, many incidents go unrecorded.

As a beat officer, PC Boulter has no regular additional help, as the area is not recognised as requiring help. If he requires the support of a PCSO he has to borrow one from Barton.

PC Boulter introduced the PACT (Partners and Communities Together) meeting, which is to take place at the beginning of June in Abbots Bromley for the Bagots Ward. It is a meeting for residents to raise any issues in Abbots Bromley, which affect them, not just police issues. All ideas discussed at a meeting are put to a vote, and the top three ideas are chosen and someone appropriate is selected from the meeting to go from the meeting and deal with the matter.

## 5. Open Forum

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

- **Crime and ASB** – the statistics may show that there is not a major problem in Abbots Bromley, but to some residents the perception of the situation is very different and there appears to be a real problem. Surely the way forward is to try to prevent such crime in the first place rather than deal with the incidents. It is vital that residents report incidents to the police so that a complete picture of the problem is built up
- **Refuse Collection** – there seems to be a great of congestion and confusion regarding collections, which seem to take place when the village is at its busiest, i.e. first thing in a morning. There has also been an incident where the refuse operator refused to take a brown bin as it contained what appeared to be a plastic bag, even though the resident explained it was a biodegradable bag. Are residents expected to put food waste straight in their bins and if so, does this not encourage rodents. Does paper go in the black bin. There are recycling facilities behind the Crown and other issues need discussion with ESBC
- **Horses** – at the meeting two years ago a great deal of anxiety was expressed regarding horses on the streets in Abbots Bromley. Last week two horses were unsettled in Schoolhouse Lane, resulting in both riders being thrown from the saddles. One rider caught his horse whilst the other made its way back to High Ash Farm. Is there anyway that horse riders can be asked to avoid the village centre and Schoolhouse Lane, particularly when the children are about? It may be possible to discuss these issues with the owner of the stables to see if he can make his clients aware of the problems
- **AB Girls School Cycling Proficiency** – last week the girls were out in the village doing cycling proficiency training, without any warning signs as to what was going on. It would appear some signage and greater supervision is required. It may be necessary to discuss this with the Girls School
- **Village Hall** – the chairman and treasurer are both standing down at the next AGM. A request was made to the parish council to see if they can assist in finding replacements to keep this vital village asset running. The chairman expressed the thanks of everyone to Mr King for his 7 years as chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee

- **Tennis Club** – the club would like a small clubhouse to provide toilets and facilities but are being pushed to put up a £70,000 extension. It was suggested that a presentation be made during the public session of one of the forthcoming parish council meetings. The chairman of the Village Hall informed the meeting that the tennis club had been given permission to use the toilet facilities and the Marcia Rice Room at the Village Hall some two years ago.

## 6. **Chairman's Closing Remarks**

The chairman thanked all those who had provided written reports and PC Richard Boulter for attending.

He concluded with the following remarks:-

- a hope that the coming year will see the Youth Initiative moving forward in Abbots Bromley after a pleasing start through the work of Cllrs Coxon and Mrs Veitch
- the PACT meeting is a very welcome development and will provide an opportunity for people to get involved in their community
- a hope that Speedwatch can enlist volunteers to begin monitoring again
- a welcome to the new head of Richard Clarke First School, Amanda Shaw
- if anyone is interested in filling the vacancy on the council, please contact the clerk.

There being no other business, the chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.25 pm

# ABBOTS BROMLEY PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31/3/08

## ABBOTS BROMLEY PARISH COUNCIL GENERAL FUND 2007/08

	Last year actual	This year budget	This year actual	Next year budget	Notes
	£	£	£	£	
Balance brought forward					
Income	6,405.98		12,541.93	10,473.35	
Precept	18,800.00	19,500.00	19,500.00	20,100.00	
Interest	377.22	227.40	398.74	337.50	
Allotments	100.00	100.00	83.33	100.00	
Grants received	4,613.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Devolved maintenance	697.66	0.00	461.33	0.00	
Horn Dance trader licences	265.00	200.00	235.00	200.00	
Miscellaneous income	0.00	50.52	2,054.52	0.00	Note 1
Expenditure	<b>24,853.66</b>	<b>20,077.92</b>	<b>22,732.92</b>	<b>20,737.50</b>	
Clerk salary/expenses	6,218.12	6,157.82	7,189.25	6,660.00	
Insurance	1,332.96	1,596.77	1,434.06	1,600.00	
Audit fee	320.00	370.00	345.00	373.00	
SPCA/SLCC membership	483.00	498.00	416.00	491.00	
Local Council Review	40.50	45.00	0.00	47.00	
Stationery	76.84	161.29	222.74	160.00	
Travel expenses	0.00	100.81	0.00	100.00	
Training/books	38.50	101.61	87.80	150.00	
Hire of Hall	172.50	302.90	455.50	309.00	
Newsletter	1,193.88	158.05	177.67	160.00	Note 4
Miscellaneous expenditure	268.21	1,698.00	641.08	696.00	Note 2
Devolved maintenance	411.20	0.00	532.50	0.00	
Footpaths	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Speed reduction	0.00	9.68	0.00	0.00	
Grasscutting	1,552.60	1,776.00	1,776.00	1,830.00	
Other Village maintenance	1,046.47	2,318.06	3,792.81	1,500.00	
Millennium Green	40.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	
Millennium Green caretaker	0.00	197.18	0.00	200.00	
Playground inspections	0.00	-1.94	105.00	100.00	
Church floodlighting	0.00	644.84	0.00	660.00	
Floodlight repairs/maintenance	179.16	35.00	96.46	200.00	
Churchyard maintenance	775.00	800.00	1,300.00	825.00	
Church clock maintenance	120.00	260.00	260.00	150.00	
Village Hall - loan repayment	3,322.54	3,322.54	3,322.54	3,322.54	
Section 137	3,217.63	5,127.74	2,918.05	2,960.00	Note 3
Book sales for Horn Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Net VAT - Outflow/(Inflow)	-2,091.40	0.00	310.83	0.00	
TOTAL Expenditure	<b>18,717.71</b>	<b>25,779.35</b>	<b>25,383.29</b>	<b>22,493.54</b>	
<b>BALANCE</b> Surplus/(Deficit)	<b>6,135.95</b>	<b>-5,701.43</b>	<b>-2,650.37</b>	<b>-1,756.04</b>	
	<b>12,541.93</b>		<b>9,891.56</b>	<b>8,717.31</b>	

## Notes regarding the General Fund

General Fund balance held at 31st March, 2008

Lloyds TSB current account	2,783.86
Lloyds TSB deposit account	7,668.08
Less funds held for Recreation	0.00
Less funds held for RISES	-560.38
	<u>9,891.56</u>

### Note 1 - Miscellaneous Income

Advertising Code of Conduct - joint ad with other parishes	40.00	Note 4
Quality parishes grant	1,800.00	
Bedding plant grant from ESBC	64.52	
HM Revenue and Customs - incentive for on line filing	150.00	
	<u>2,054.52</u>	

### Note 2 - Miscellaneous Expenditure

Bank service charge	15.00	
Bank interest charge	1.03	
Data protection registration	35.00	
Quickbooks Regular 2006	68.06	
Election costs	71.13	
Advertising code of conduct	65.91	Note 4
Purchase of 3 litter bins	384.95	
	<u>641.08</u>	

### Note 3 - Section 137

County Air Ambulance	500.00
St Giles	520.00
AB Community First Responders	1,750.00
AB Royal British Legion	30.00
BKV Competition	18.05
Victim Support	100.00
	<u>2,918.05</u>

### Note 4 - Publicity

Section 5 of the Local Government Act 1986 requires the council to disclose payments on publicity. Payments made during the year were as follows:-

Bromley Bulletin newsletter (only consumables)	177.67
Advertising adoption of a new code of conduct(net fi	25.91
	<u>203.58</u>



## **ABBOTS BROMLEY PARISH COUNCIL - RECREATION FUND - 2007/08**

Balance brought forward	5,941.77
Receipts	
Interest	186.10
Transfer in - balance of Nuttery money	1,738.00
Payments	
Transfer out - purchase of bark	-1,480.00
	<u>6,385.87</u>

This balance is held in a Lloyds TSB savings account

## **ABBOTS BROMLEY RISES FUND - 2007/08**

Balance brought forward	423.83
Receipts	
Recycling payment - Oct - Mar	541.22
Recycling payments - Apr - Sep	560.38
Payments	
Payment towards 3 litter bins	-965.05
	<u>560.38</u>

Two cheques have been issued totalling £560.38 to the Abbots Bromley Junior Football Club and Abbots Bromley Cricket Club since the year end

# YOUTH INITIATIVE - REPORT BY STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL OF VOLUNTARY YOUTH SERVICES (SCVYS)

## Short Development & Progress Report

### SCVYS:

*Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS) is a Voluntary 3<sup>rd</sup> sector Infrastructure development organization having charitable status and works in partnership and collaboration the SCC and SCIO. Working with Independent Voluntary sector youth groups across Staffordshire.*

SCVYS has County wide responsibility for the development and support of voluntary sector youth provision through membership and association. Our developmental and support role includes voluntary sector development **GRANTS**, voluntary sector **GOVERNANCE, CURRICULUM & PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT** and **TRAINING**. Registered groups can access a range of events, activities, opportunities and training. In addition to General youth work development SCVYS are actively promoting work with 8 to 13 year olds and have designed a new junior accreditation package which is centred around a development programme focused on contributing to ECM 5 outcomes.

We aim to provide an overall package of Localized support to registered youth groups whilst recognizing good practice and promoting a model frame work for youth work delivery.

*All Youth Groups registered with SCVYS can access this support. The work is delivered through a small dedicated youth work team which includes District part time youth workers who aim to support communities and groups.*

**Developing Sustainable Youth Provision:** *SCVYS aim to develop sustainable youth provision by supporting communities to develop a SAFE environment for young people. SCVYS will assist with supporting communities to set up youth management committees and can provide policy templates etc. SCVYS also provides groups with free access to CRB's (Criminal Records Bureau) and Insurance Inc public liability etc. This is all aimed at ensuring communities and groups operate safely, legally and within the law and most importantly understand the context in which they operate and the responsibilities they hold. All groups will access continued support from SCVYS through their association and membership with programme development opportunities, training and funding opportunities.*

### Abbots Bromley Development:

Early in 2008 the Parish Council had asked for support in developing opportunities for Children and Young people within the village, I had been invited to an open meeting to see if we could provide any assistance. I was very encouraged that so many positive young people and members of the community attended this meeting and were happy to express their needs and views. Youth issues identified included (1) Lack of local youth provision either Youth Club / Youth Shelter (2) Lack of Rural Transport for Young people in the village.

I am pleased to say I am now continuing to working with this new group (Abbots Bromley 4 Youth Group) who will shortly be taking the next step to formally constitute themselves and register with SCVYS. With our support already young people from the groups have successfully applied to the East Staffs District Youth Forum 'YOUTH BANK' Fund for £2000. This money will be added to the Parish Council fund to provide a Youth Shelter and

develop youth facilities in the village. I will be taking a small group of young people to visit the next gathering of the District Forum which meet in Uttoxeter in June with a view to some young people getting involved with the forum.

Once the new group has a working committee they will continue to need the active support of the Parish Council and Community. They will then also actively be involved in developing agreed youth provision. SCVYS will continue to work with the group providing support and encouraged to develop a programme of youth activities and opportunities. A small start up grant may be available to the groups once registered.

Finally I would like to congratulate the young people and adults who have been actively involved in this process. It has been encouraging to see young people take such a positive and active involvement. These young people have been polite, well mannered and clear about expressing their needs, they are a credit to the village of Abbots Bromley and I encourage local support for their efforts.

Please Visit the SCVYS Web site for further information about the organization or contact me by e-mail or phone.

*Mark A. Koszak  
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*"A Voice for the Voluntary Youth Sector" (Registered Charity No 1104690)  
(In partnership with Staffordshire County Council - Staffordshire Youth Service,  
Staffordshire Connexions & SCIO)*

**Mark Koszak  
Senior Youth Worker**