

# THE CHARTER



SEPTEMBER 2008

ISSUE 10

## MAYOR'S APPEAL 2008



Many of you will know that my Appeal this year aims to support three well-known local charities.

### Waveney Enterprises - Workshop open Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm

Having been in business for 20 years producing a wide variety of good quality, handmade craft items, such as toys, jigsaws, badges, shop signs, rugs and much, much more, they are still using the original donated furniture and equipment. This is now in dire need of replacement.

*You can, if you wish, visit to discuss individual orders. For further information phone 01502 716065*



### NEW CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR FOR RIGBOURNE WARD—Graham Catchpole

On Tuesday 5th August 2008 Beccles Town Council co-opted Mr Graham Catchpole as one of the four Councillors for Rigbourne Ward. Mr Catchpole has lived in Beccles from the age of 18 months and has lived in Rigbourne Hill, Merrylees, Duke

### The May Centre - The Sports Pavilion, Common Lane - this centre caters for the disabled.

Additional funds are needed here for the running expenses of their bus, which is such a vital lifeline for the members attending.

### New Thresholds Trust - A registered charity set up with the aim to help those recovering from mental illness and other disabilities.

Renowned for their successful training of people in computer literacy, etc, I am undertaking to support a new venture, The Barsham Wood project. This project aims to teach carpentry skills enabling members to produce all types of woodware such as garden benches and furniture, bookcases, bird tables, bird boxes and feeders etc. This has received grants in the past, but now these have

stopped and funds will be needed to assist this innovative project to enable it to continue.

*For further information phone Barsham Wood 01502 470877 or New Thresholds 01502 713355*

I am aware that in these times money, (or lack of it!), is foremost in many minds and I am sure that the three charities are well known to you all, but they rely on us greatly to continue to support the people who are less fortunate than ourselves. If anyone wishes to help the Appeal then I, and the organisations, would be sincerely grateful.

*If you feel you are able to help please send your donations or cheque (made out to The Mayor's Appeal 2008/09), c/o Beccles Town Council, The Walk, Beccles NR34 9AJ*

Thank you.

Councillor David Smith  
Mayor of Beccles

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### HAVE YOUR SAY— IF NOT THEY GET THEIR WAY

All Beccles residents should have received a questionnaire from the Mayor regarding the proposed Local Government changes. It is vitally important that you direct the Council regarding this matter. It affects YOU as well as your local authority. **MAKE SURE YOUR VIEWS ARE HEARD!**

More inside on page 3 .....

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Mayor's Appeal for 2008-2009—please support*
- *Don't forget to fill in the questionnaires from SCC, WDC and BTC regarding the proposals from the Boundary Committee*
- *Support your unique outdoor swimming pool*
- *Get Active—with the support of St Elizabeth Hospice and help them with their fundraising*

Street and now for the past 33 years, Coney Hill. Upon leaving school he was employed by Wm Clowes for 35 years; Beccles Printers Ltd for 7 years and Keely Print Ltd for the past 3 years. He and his wife Jenny have one son and now, looking towards re-

tirement, he feels that he is ready to put something back by serving the community as a Beccles Town Councillor.

*Beccles Town Council, and staff welcome Graham onto the Council and trust that he has a busy and enjoyable three years.*

## THROUGH THE PLANNING PORTAL - A NEW CONCEPT

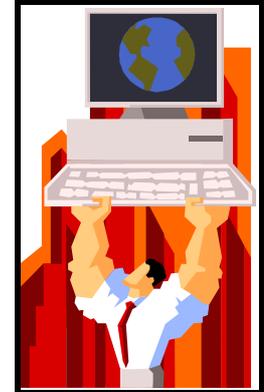
The Government has put in place an online resource called the Planning Portal, supplying information and guidance on planning and building regulations. You will be able to find out about the complicated world of planning just by a click of the mouse! A web-based solution to simplifying the planning application consultation process will be standardised electronically and this is being offered to all local authorities from both ends of the Country down to parish and town councils. This is called the 'e-Consultation Hub'. Each council will have an e-Consultation Hub account set up so that the clerk and council can preview applications and drawings on line; keep track of meetings, closure dates and decisions. Responses to ap-

plications can also be made on line.

Overall it has been developed to cut down on paperwork, which planning applications by their very nature, seem to generate.

You will be able to access more than plans—there is a virtual house where you can click on any room, wall, loft, or garden area to find out how to apply for planning permission, who to contact and much, much more. This will revolutionise this tricky subject and will be such a help to those of us who find getting information from the increasingly busy Local Planning Authority hard going.

Log onto [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk) where all your questions are answered—immediately.



*The World of Planning is at your fingertips*

## FRIENDS OF BECCLES OPEN-AIR SWIMMING POOL

The aim of The Friends is to ensure the long-term future of Beccles Open-Air Swimming Pool. We see the Pool as a popular summer attraction and we want to help in any way we can to turn it from its present state into something Beccles can be really proud of, with a range of activities to suit all ages and tastes. This can be achieved if we all pull together, working with Waveney District Council to put the Beccles Open-Air Swimming Pool on the map as a "must-visit" facility.

Recognising the public benefit of an open-air pool, The Friends have applied to the Charity Commissioner for charitable status. As a registered charity The Friends become eligible to look for funding from other charitable bodies to help revitalise the pool and the surrounding area. Along with

other fundraising efforts, grants will help The Friends achieve their fundraising goals.

*"if we all pull together we can put the Beccles Open-Air Swimming Pool on the map"*

No-one can deny the attractions of an open-air pool which is heated, has a fantastic location next to the River Waveney, fresh air, grassy areas in which to relax and sunbathe amid the sounds of laughter and chat with no pressured time limit for one's stay. If, as they say, global warming is coming, can you imagine hot, sunny days without the open-air pool?

Waveney District Council are currently pursuing the idea of an indoor pool as part of a gym and sports complex to be built off George Westwood Way. No doubt this would be an asset to the town, but Beccles and its surrounding villages have the capacity of keeping both an indoor and outdoor pool going and therefore have the best of both worlds.

If you would like to join The Friends to offer help or just want further information, please contact -

E mail :

[publicity@becclesopenairpool.org.uk](mailto:publicity@becclesopenairpool.org.uk)

Website:

[www.becclesopenairpool.org.uk](http://www.becclesopenairpool.org.uk)

### TIME ON YOUR HANDS?

Want a Change? Like to help out?

### WHY NOT GIVE VOLUNTEERING A TRY?

The Lowestoft Volunteer Centre operates from Beccles Town Hall, The Walk, on Wednesdays between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm. We have information on a variety of opportunities in the Beccles area such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Charity Shops, Elderly Peoples' Clubs, Community Transport and much, much more.

The centre keeps in touch with all volunteers whilst they are with placement organisations to ensure that the volunteering experience is enjoyable and to 'iron out' any concerns that may arise. The ongoing support also helps to build confidence and foster a sense of

self worth. Why not have a look at our website to find out more?

[www.volunteercentrelowestoft.org.uk](http://www.volunteercentrelowestoft.org.uk)

01502 562299 or (Wednesdays only)  
07504224525

If anyone has been thinking of volunteering, but has not yet taken that step, please come and visit us for a friendly, informal chat.



- Sense of achievement
- Value and purpose
- Confidence
- Friendship
- Work experience
- The opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills

**PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHANGES—HAVE YOUR SAY**  
**(continued from front page)**

Your objections, or support, on the Boundary changes are to be made, on your behalf, through the Mayor’s questionnaire, by Beccles Town Council by 26th September 2008 to the Boundary Committee and then to the Secretary of State in December. After this date all information will be collated and processed and a decision made. This would be implemented by 2010. Seems a long way off, but time goes by quickly and it will certainly change the way our local authorities are run. Some may say, “better the devil you know”, but others may feel that a shake-up would be refreshing and good for Suffolk. Whatever the outcome, things are going to change and some powers could be directed downwards to a more local level. It might mean that your town or parish council takes on more duties previously carried out by Waveney District Council. This is already happening as Beccles Town Council have, since June, taken over the Beccles Market from Waveney.

The Mayor’s Questionnaire wants you to decide on the following:-

The proposals set by the Boundary Committee for consideration:-

1. Two Councils covering Suffolk—a unitary Ipswich/Felixstowe and a ‘rural’ Suffolk unitary authority OR
2. One Council for the whole of Suffolk

In both cases, it is proposed that Lowestoft moves into Norfolk.

The case for ‘one council’ would mean a cut in duplication of services as departments would be based in one location. Obviously two councils would have duplication. At present there is a two-tier system where services are provided by the county council and district council.

Some of the issues raised in the Mayor’s questionnaire were:

*Do you think that changing to a larger local authority, (such as Bury St Edmunds) would benefit Beccles and surrounding villages and would it be less costly?*

*Do you think there would be changes to Council tax levels?*

*Do you think services to the community would be run more efficiently and be more responsive to your needs?*

*Do you believe that your town/parish would, if given more control, be able to deliver?*

SCC have their own questionnaire and for more information call 08456066067 or [www.suffolk.gov.uk/yourcouncil](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/yourcouncil)

WDC also have sent out their own questionnaire which you send yourself or email your views to [phil.harris@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:phil.harris@waveney.gov.uk) or direct to

[reviews@boundarycommittee.org](mailto:reviews@boundarycommittee.org)

*Before you decide, read as much as you can about the proposals and their effects on your local community.*

**BECCLES TOWN COUNCIL  
 COMMONS WORKING PARTY REPORT  
 Councillor C Punt, Chairman**

Welcome to the August update of what we have been up to on the Beccles Town Council’s Beccles Common & Estates Working Party. I am happy to report that, since we started, we have had 121 action items of which 10 are outstanding and 4 have works currently being tendered for and ordered. If you feel that any works need doing in and around the town’s estates ie The Common or Marsh Trail, please contact the Town Hall on 01502 712109.

One of the larger scope of works that we are now considering is the drainage of the land at the back of Boney’s Island. This area is prone to flooding and makes the walking here impossible during wet peri-

ods, which is about every other day this Summer!

**Highlights:** Willows on the Marsh Trail needed maintenance with hanging and dangerous branches and trees in the dykes—this work was carried out by Beccles Farms and an inspection of the works identified that this had been carried out successfully.

A much needed new Byelaw sign has been erected on the car park at the Common. Please take time to read them and any transgression of these you may come across, please contact the Town Hall.

40 tonnes of road planings have been delivered and are to be used to fill the holes on the tracks and car park on the Common by those doing Community Service. It

amazes me how 40 tonnes of planings seem to just disappear after laying year after year!

This year has been a good year for nettles and additional cut backs have been necessary in the Avenue around the bridge and skateboard park where young folk play.

**Lowlights:** The Ragwort, as expected, is back with a vengeance and through the Suffolk Probation Service, those doing Community Payback have been digging it up for disposal at every available opportunity. I have discovered an interesting research article on the management of this old enemy and maybe digging it up is not the answer!

(Continued on back page)

**GET ACTIVE and support St Elizabeth Hospice**

Why not team up with St Elizabeth Hospice and **GET ACTIVE** with our annual sports appeal?

If you are running, or organising a sporting event, why not do it in aid of St Elizabeth Hospice. This is a great opportunity to help raise vital funds for the Hospice and **GET ACTIVE** at the same time.

You can hold any kind of sporting event, whatever your interests and levels of fitness. How about organising a sponsored walk, holding an aerobics marathon or arranging a bowls competition? The Hospice’s community

fundraising team will support you by providing posters tailored to the event, ie invitations, balloons, sponsorship forms or any help and advise you might need.

St Elizabeth Hospice continually needs the support of the local community to enable us to care and support our patients and their families, friends and carers. The Hospice is an independent charity and all of the wide ranging services provided are free of charge. It costs £10 per minute to run the Hospice, with annual running costs of £5.2 million. Your support will enable us to continue to provide care for the peo-

ple of East Suffolk.

For more information, please contact the fund raising team on

01473 723600 or

e mail

[fundraising@stelizabethhospice.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@stelizabethhospice.org.uk).



### USEFUL NUMBERS

Beccles & District Hospital	01502 719800
Beccles Harbour Master	01502 712225
Beccles Health Centre ( <i>Appointments</i> )	01502 712662
Beccles Library	01502 714073
Beccles Police Station	01986 835271
Beccles Swimming Pool	01502 713297
Beccles Town Council	01502 712109
C A B	01502 717715
Environmental Health	01502 523110
Environmental Waste ( <i>refuse tip</i> )	01473 583250
Suffolk County Council	01728 403090
Tourist Information (Quay)	01502 713196
WDC Beccles Local Office	01502 713113
WDC Lowestoft	01502 562111
Registrar, Marriages, Births & Deaths	01502 405096

Beccles Town Council have a new website—[www.beccles.info](http://www.beccles.info) - please contact us with any memories you have of growing up in Beccles. Look at the Gallery page—we hope to make a pictorial record of the life and times in Beccles

### BECCLES TOWN COUNCILLORS—CONTACT DETAILS

WARD	NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE
CENTRE	Peck, D W	8 Waveney Road BECCLES NR34 9NW	01502 712627
	Richardson, C	12 South Road BECCLES NR34 9PB	01502 719744
	Scott, C J	3 Firfield Close BECCLES NR34 9YE	01502 714831
	Woodruff, B	13 Meadow Gardens BECCLES NR34 9PA	01502 713053
COMMON	Bubb, Mrs S	'Greenacres' Clarke's Lane, Barsham BECCLES NR34 8HN	01502 713314
	Doherty, M	4 Kilbrack BECCLES NR34 9SH	01502 716324
	Featherstone, Miss J	6 Old Farm Road BECCLES NR34 9RW	01502 715606
	Smith, D M	14 Station Road BECCLES NR34 9QJ	01502 718018
RIGBOURNE	Catchpole, G	32 Coney Hill BECCLES NR34 7AZ	01502 715819
	Sutch, A	2 Grange Road BECCLES NR34 9NR	01502 713179
	Thwaites, A P	20 South Road BECCLES NR34 9NY	01502 714161
	Topping, Mrs C	7 Rigbourne Hill BECCLES NR34 9JG	01502 717276
DARBY	Harris, J D	26 Hungate BECCLES NR34 9TT	01502 717237
	Sigsworth, J	14 Janet Hadenham Close Worlingham BECCLES NR34 7SL	01502 711473
	Taylor, B	2 Fairfax Court BECCLES NR34 9XG	01502 713307
	Walmsley, J	37 Kemp's Lane BECCLES NR34 9XB	01502 717853

#### Commons Working Party Report cont'd from page 3.

"Research by Silwood has shown that most of the commonly-adopted means of Ragwort control have exactly the opposite effect to that intended. For example, pulling up Ragwort by the roots leaves behind a ring of 4 or 5 broken fragments, each of which is capable of producing a new rosette in the following year. So, instead of reducing the pest, hand-pulling increases Ragwort number 4/5 fold. Another method beloved by farmers is to mow down the Ragwort when it is in flower, in order to prevent it from setting seed. A worthy aim you might believe, but what actually

kills Ragwort is 'setting seed', not mowing. If you prevent the plant from filling its seeds, then it retains the reserves in its root stock and, instead of dying, the plant survives to grow and flower again. Herbicides are effective, but they kill all other grassland herbs as well (the herbicides are selective only in the sense that they do not kill pasture grasses); legumes, orchids and other attractive pasture species are lost under this regime. The Silwood research demonstrates that the best way to control Ragwort is to fence against rabbits and then let the plants go to seed. Going to seed will kill the established Ragwort plants, and in the absence of

soil disturbance and gap-creation by rabbits, the seeds will not produce Ragwort plants. The strategy works, because in a well-managed grassland, recruitment by Ragwort is not seed-limited. Recruitment from seed requires competition-free microsites of the kind that are produced by cultivation or by heavy grazing from rabbits (or by over-grazing with domestic stock like sheep or horses)."

(Interesting—looks like we could be purchasing quite a few metres of fencing).

See you next quarter.

**Councillor Christopher Punt  
Chairman, Commons & Estates  
Working Party**