



June 2013



The Charter

Beccles Town Council

Issue 29



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING—THURSDAY 18TH APRIL 2013

The Annual Town Meeting was attended by eleven members of the public, and giving Reports were Inspector Aitken, Mrs C Pinsent, Chair of Beccles Business & Tourism Association and Mr J Walmsley, Director of Beccles & District Regeneration Ltd. There were also eleven Councillors at the meeting along with the Town Clerk, Mrs Claire Boyne. *All the reports are summarised.*

MAYOR'S REPORT

In the Queen's Jubilee year Beccles enjoyed the holidays with street parties and a flotilla at the Quay. My wife and I had the honour of representing the town at the Queen's Garden Party at Sandringham. Both myself and the Mayoress accepted as many local invitations as possible. Beccles is continuing to flourish welcoming Roy's of Beccles and at last the re-opening of the King's Head in spite of this difficult economic climate. I have begun the process of bringing back under the control of the Town Council important recreational areas and also improvements to car parking facilities at the Sports Pavilion in Common Lane. Worked closely with the Beccles Business & Tourism Association in the opening of the Tourist Information Point at the Quay. A long-drawn out saga of the Charity Commission claims over status and registration of Council land should be concluded soon.

PRIDE IN BECCLES REPORT

The past year has seen further development of Kilbrack with the planting of Crabapple trees and flowering shrubs. Also an Information Board will be placed beside the pathway and

support has come from Beccles Helping Hands who provided three new seats on the river bank. PIB have funded the planting of the tiered towers in the town.

ENVIRONMENT & ESTATES

Continued general maintenance. Rabbit control on the Common was done to benefit the grassland which is being slowly destroyed by rabbit scrapings/digging. Controlled reduction in the Gorse and wooded areas creating new pathways whilst maintaining the existing by widening where possible. The track and car park need constant maintenance and is stretching the allocated budget. Ditch-work has been carried out to improve drainage and protect the allotments. Major repairs to sluices are to be carried out, and the Marsh Trail and river bank maintenance will continue to be actioned.

BECCLES FRIDAY MARKET

The Market has now been leased by Beccles Town Council to the Beccles & District Regeneration Ltd for four years growing from five to 15+ stalls in that time. After only a few months of the road being closed from 6am-4pm, local businesses felt that the closing of the road hindered their business to such an extent that they asked for a compromise. This was carried out earlier this year allowing traffic to flow from 9am-2pm with the stalls facing the shops. This seems to have pleased everyone and will continue.

FINANCE REPORT

The first meeting was held in October to set the budget and precept for 2013/14, the precept amount is the shortfall

between the Council's income and expenditure budgets which amounts to £31.01 of the annual Council Tax bill. Government's late decision regarding the Tax Base meant a rise in Council Tax of around £5 for Beccles' element of the bill. District Councils had been given grants to alleviate this, but WDC chose not to pass this on to the parishes. In spite of this the Town Council is keeping the Precept at the same level as 2012 (£107,000). A review of Standing/Financial and Risk Assessments was carried out in March 2013. The accounts are being prepared and a notice will be displayed when the draft accounts are ready.

ASSETS AND LEASES

The Council owns some property and land which are leased and the income from these contribute towards keeping the town's precept at a low level. A lease review is being carried out on Beccles Farms. Tourist Information Point lease has been agreed for 2013 from WDC. Industrial Units in George Westwood Way leases agreed. Tennis Club—new lease almost completed. Golf Club House—also nearing completion. Beccles Station adjoining land lease with Network Rail also nearing completion. 24h moorings lease has been agreed with the Broads Authority. Goose Green Nurseries lease—currently in process of being renewed. Investigations into the surfacing of the car park in Common Lane Sports Pavilion area are still on-going.

PLANNING

The Committee have viewed over 100 planning applications and several were for the re-use of Brown Field sites, ie

South of The Grove, Ingate, Sir John Leman Road, Maple Way and Ravensmere. Improvements have been made to the Baptist Church, Public Hall/Lido, Tesco and private dwellings. An exciting application came in the form of a Solar Panel Farm at Ellough. It was an anxious time waiting for the King's Head to be renovated by Wetherspoons, but it is good to have it back at last.

BECCLES ALLOTMENTS

It has been an ongoing project by the Beccles Allotment and Gardens Association Committee to bring allotment sites up to standard. They are currently considering new ways of monitoring the use of water on the sites lucky enough to have a piped supply. The Rules and Regulations have been reviewed and a 10% rent increase was implemented in January 2013. A new Constitution was adopted at the AGM in November 2012 with identification of the need for Equal Opportunities and Child Protection Policies. Advertising to attract new members has been undertaken with the Secretary producing articles for the 'Let's Talk' magazine.

Another pioneering project for young people in liaison with the Sir John Leman High School — 'Allotmentz 4 Kids'. A chosen allotment is split into 14 raised beds to enable young people to try their hand at gardening. Funding for this project has been pledged by Mark Bee and Chris Punt (from their Locality Budgets), the Co-op Community Fund, Adnam's Charity and the Bernard Matthews Trust. Thanks were given to staff at the Town Hall for their assistance during the year.

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PLASTICS—RECYCLING INFORMATION

Currently over 9,000 tons of plastic is thrown into landfill sites in Suffolk each year, costing the taxpayer over £800,000 in disposal charges.

A new campaign has been running since March giving information on recycling to stop the confusion regarding which plastics can be recycled and where. The campaign makes clear which everyday household plastics, whether used in the kitchen, bathroom, bedroom or garden, can be recycled in your bin, at home or at a Household Waste Recycling Centre.

You should have received a leaflet directing you to the campaign website for more detailed information and a video on Youtube can also be accessed, along with Twitter, Facebook and the inclusion of QR to enable instant access to this video.

<http://www.youtube.com/SuffolkRecycling>

Home recyclables:

Washing and cleaning containers

Plastic drink/shampoo bottles

Food trays (butter tubs etc)

Garden & garage containers

Waste Recycling Centres:

Hard plastics—ie dustpans, watering cans, etc

Plastic toys

Carrier bags and plastic film

ITEMS NOT TO BE RECYCLED

Polystyrene

Fruit Nets

Blister packs

Crisps, sweets and biscuit wrappers

Pet food pouches

Always check labels and dispose of hazardous waste responsibly. **Chemicals, ie weed killer or white spirit should not be put down the sink or drain.** More info? www.greensuffolk.org/recycling/how-to-recycle/local-services/hazardous-waste or ring local District or Borough Councils waste teams.



Fairtrade in Beccles

(see back page)

ROCK CHOIR—COME AND JOIN US

Rock Choir first came to Suffolk in January 2012, after Beccles musician Ian Sainsbury started the Blyburgate Hall Monday Night group. Rock Choir was the first amateur contemporary choir in the UK and in the space of just a few years has grown into a unique nationwide family of choirs with more than 16,000 members in over 200 local communities. Unlike traditional choirs, there are no auditions and no need to read music. Rock Choir's pioneering concept gives people from all walks of life, the chance to sing and perform—which for many is a life-changing experience.

"As well as helping to improve your singing voice and health, being in Rock

Choir is a great way of having fun and making new friends—plus we get to enjoy some pretty amazing experiences," says Ian. "For our Summer show this year, Beccles and Lowestoft Rock Choir are heading to London's 02 to join 11,500 fellow choir members!"

Rock Choir performances often raise money for local and National charities such as EACH, Starthrowers, Epilepsy Society, Missing People and Refuge. "Across the country last year Rock Choir members helped raise over £1 million, which is amazing," says Ian.

Rock Choir members have appeared on National TV, including Breakfast TV, The One Show and the Paul O'Grady

Show; released two top twenty albums and broken three Guinness World Records! Rock Choir has been nicknamed 'The People's Choir' by the media, and Guy Fletcher, Chairman of the Performing Rights Society has described it as "responsible for a cultural music movement."

Fancy a taster session? To book visit www.rockchoir.com or telephone 01502 714276. Meeting Mondays 8-9.30 pm Blyburgate Hall, Beccles.



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING—THURSDAY 18TH APRIL 2013 (Cont'd)

WEBSITE

The Town Council website began in 2001 and has had with reviews during that time to its look and content. A new website is currently under construction combining Tourism, Businesses and Council information still keeping our domain name www.beccles.info. The existing monthly cost will be reduced as the Town Hall staff will update the Council pages on the website themselves as necessary. The Website was visited in March 2013

by 2,577 from the Continent; Europe 2,183 and North America 544. Outside of England, the website seems to gain the most hits from the USA .

BECCLES BUSINESS & TOURISM

Beccles is still one of the fastest growing market towns in the Eastern Counties. Increases in businesses and investment at Ellough and the other Business Parks is continuing. BB&TA offer training to support new businesses and are proud that there are still many individual local retailers. The Beccles

Bag is still travelling well and success with funding and grants during 2012 has enabled activities to be held at both the Bell Tower and the TIC through audio tours and monitors showing videos with historical information for visitors and the community. The new proposed website in conjunction with the Town Council should help businesses and attract more visitors to Beccles.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SATURDAY 10TH AUGUST— HARVEST MOON MUSIC FESTIVAL FROM NOON TILL DUSK

Beccles Community Arts are holding another fantastic Music Festival at Beccles Quay - Free entry—plenty of food stalls, bar and craft stalls. Bring a picnic, chairs and/or blanket and enjoy the day. Anyone interested in taking part in the Festival can call Chris on 01508 548563. For further information call Julia on 01502 717098.



SATURDAY 8TH JUNE 2013—LIVING HISTORY WALK

www.beccleshelpinghands.co.uk

Held every second Saturday in the month. Enjoy a 'History Lesson from the Living'. You will hear the story of Beccles through the Ages coming to life in front of your eyes. Tickets on sale at 'Saxons', New Market two weeks before each walk. Adults £4 accompanied children £2. Meet at the Bear & Bells in Old Market at 7.30pm.



BECCLES ANTIQUES MARKET— SUNDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2013

Once again the Beccles Business and Tourism Association are holding one of their famous **Antiques Markets** on Sunday 1st September 2013 in Beccles town centre. This event seems to grow bigger every year, with more and more attractions for those of all ages. 'Zootastic' will be having a fabulous display of Birds of Prey and reptiles for you to view up close and personal! So don't forget to put this event in your 2013 Diary.

BECCLES BELL TOWER—open during the Summer, look out for the Notice Board outside the Tower.

A FIRST FOR THE ANTIQUES FAIR ON SUNDAY 5TH MAY 2013



Beccles Bell Tower welcomed over 200 visitors from all over the United Kingdom during the Beccles Antiques Street Market on Sunday 5th May. 'Zootastic', from Lound in Suffolk brought along Birds of Prey and Reptiles for all to see with the trained handlers giving out lots of information about the animals. For those brave enough, they

allowed the handling of the many snakes on show. A first for Beccles Bell Tower was the introduction of the Eagle Owl and Barn Owl, who reached the top via the stairs with their handler, a member of Zootastic and they all enjoyed the view. It was a great day out, helped by the lovely weather. This event is held every May Bank Holiday, so make sure if you missed it this year, that you put it in your 2014 Diary!



Along with 200 Tower Visitors, there were thousands of people arriving for the Antiques Street Market and a warm and sunny Bank Holiday Sunday made it perfect. The atmosphere was remarkable as traders and buyers mingled to enjoy the wide variety of items on sale. This year the market had expanded into the Hungate car park with an additional 25 stalls which were well supported. The local shops and restaurants also opened alongside the street food which provided a good choice and the welcome that visitors to Beccles expect.

For more information on future Antiques Markets in Beccles call Kate Lee on 01502 711174.

BECCLES TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

Beccles Town Council and the Beccles Business & Tourism Association have secured this very valuable facility for the 2013 season. Visitors use this Tourist Information Centre extensively along with enquiries via the phone and e mail, and certainly keep Claire Ross and her 'Merry Band' of volunteers extremely busy during opening hours. The Town Council are very grateful for the volunteers who give up their time every week during the Summer to man the Centre, and it is very much appreciated. Members of the community would

also be welcomed to the Tourist Information Centre and take a look at what's on offer. You can pick up leaflets and information about Beccles and the surrounding Waveney Valley along with an Audio walk, which can be hired by putting down a deposit. Taking the audio walk into the town using the map as a guide, you will hear all about the history of where you live or where you are visiting. There are a couple of familiar voices you might recognise on the audio! Claire Ross works hard to keep up-to-date information available at the Cen-

tre to help those visiting the town and has made maps and lists of various shops and chemists etc, which are invaluable to the tourist. She also helps the Harbour Master with those who are holidaying on the Broads, to make their stay unforgettable and hopefully in turn, they spread the word, returning with their friends and families for another holiday on the Broads and visit us here in lovely Beccles.

For further information please call the
Tourist Info Centre 01502 713196

Beccles Town Council

Town Hall
The Walk
BECCLES
NR34 9AJ

Tel: 01502 712109
Fax: 01502 716166
E mail: admin@beccles.info
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BECCLES' NEW STREET CLEANER AND MAINTENANCE MAN

Mr Allan Clarke has been contracted by Beccles Town Council for the past 6 months. You may have seen him with his barrow keeping the place clean and tidy.



He takes great pride in his work and has been invaluable to the Council regarding maintenance to fencing and seating. He has trained and received certificates in the Safe use of Pesticides and Hand Held Applicators, which will help keep the weeds at bay in the town.

I trust the community will say hello when they see him in his bright yellow jacket and advise him of any untidy areas in and around the town centre which he can deal with.

COUNCILLOR'S CONTACT DETAILS

COUNCILLOR	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
<u>CENTRE</u>		
HARRIS, J D	26 Hungate, Beccles NR34 9TT	01502 717237
SCOTT, C J	3 Firfield Close, Beccles NR34 9YE	01502 714831
THWAITES, A	20 South Road, Beccles NR34 9NY	01502 714161
WOODRUFF, B	13 Meadow Gardens, Beccles NR34 9PA	01502 713053
<u>COMMON</u>		
BERGIN, Mrs S	Pinetrees, Park Drive, Beccles NR34 7DQ	01502 470796
BUBB, Mrs S	Greenacres' Clarke's Lane, Barsham NR34 8HN	01502 713314
FOULGER, S P R	'Rosy Dawn', 4 Ellough Road, Beccles NR34 7AE	01502 710370
WAREHAM, E K	42 Puddingmoor, Beccles NR34 9PL	DEPUTY MAYOR 01502 719712
<u>RIGBOURNE</u>		
CATCHPOLE, G	32 Coney Hill, Beccles NR34 7AZ	01502 715819
PECK, D W	8 Waveney Road, Beccles NR34 9NW	01502 712627
TOPPING, MRS C	7 Rigbourne Hill, Beccles NR34 9JG	MAYOR 01502 717276
VACANCY		
<u>DARBY</u>		
BEE, B	46 Clerk's Piece, Beccles NR34 7BG	01502 712812
HAYNES, MRS M	63a Kemp's Lane, Beccles NR34 9XB	01502 714093
VACANCY		
TAYLOR, B	2 Fairfax Court, Beccles NR34 9XG	01502 713307

BECCLES—A FAIRTRADE TOWN

One of Beccles' GREAT achievements is its Fairtrade Town status. In 2008, after years of campaigning, it became one of seven towns in Suffolk to achieve this.

SO WHAT IS FAIR TRADE?

Fairtrade aims to help reduce poverty and promote sustainable development. Many producers in developing countries have been disadvantaged by the conventional trading system, with big global companies dominating the market and being able to pay as little as they like for their products. Fairtrade helps farmers and workers get a BETTER deal for their produce and earn a FAIR wage.

The Fairtrade Foundation awards the FAIRTRADE mark to products which meet their high stan-



dards. This mark means that producers in the developing world have been paid a FAIRER and STABLE price for their goods or crops. They also receive a Fairtrade premium, which they can use to help fund social, environmental or economic development projects, decided upon democratically by the producers.

WHAT MAKES BECCLES A FAIR-TRADE TOWN?

As well as gaining the necessary support of the Town Council, Beccles has a certain number of food retailers, cafes, businesses and organisations that sell or use Fairtrade products. We also have a steering group to ensure the campaign continues to progress and encourage others to support Fairtrade, with various events organised throughout the year.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED AND FIND OUT MORE?

Anyone with enthusiasm for Fairtrade, and who would like to get involved either with their business or as an individual, can visit our page on FACEBOOK—just type in Fairtrade Beccles and you will find us! The page is open to anyone, so even if you just want to investigate Fairtrade or see upcoming events in Beccles, please do join us.

