

Hebden Royd Town Council

ANNUAL REPORT



May 2007 – April 2008

Town Mayor
Cllr Nader Fekri

Deputy Town Mayor
Cllr Susan Press

Chair of Allotments Committee
Cllr John Beacroft-Mitchell

Chair of Grants Committee
Cllr Mrs Joanna Beacroft-Mitchell

Chair of Environmental Renaissance/Parks & Footpaths
and Staffing Committees
Cllr David Young

Chair of Twinning Committee
Cllr Stewart Brown(Resigned)

Other Members of the Council

Cllr Rev James Allison
Cllr Robin Dixon
Cllr Catherine Groves
Cllr Jade Smith
Cllr Harry Ward(Resigned)

Cllr Christine Bampton Smith
Cllr M Foster
Cllr Lesley Jones
Cllr Dr Michael Smith

Cllr Karl Boggis
Cllr Gian Gabbi
Cllr Janet Oosthuysen
Cllr Scottt Trickett
Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Ward(Resigned)

Clerk to the Council
Mr David Dempsey

Mayor's Secretary and Clerk's Assistant
Mrs Christine Jackson

Hebden Royd Town Council

The parish of Hebden Royd lies in the Calder Valley and includes the main population centres of Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd as well as surrounding rural areas, notably, Cragg Vale. The Town Council, whose members act in a voluntary capacity and are unpaid, has to respond to legislation but is the tier of government closest to the electorate and it seeks to serve by identifying and responding to local needs.

VISION STATEMENT:

The economic, social, and environmental well-being of those who live and work in Hebden Royd will be a major factor in all our decision-making.

MISSION STATEMENT:

We are committed to a better quality of life for all the people of Hebden Royd. We plan to achieve this in association with community groups and the public, private and voluntary sectors. Hebden Royd Town Council will therefore strive to:

- *Be open and accessible in all its decision-making*
- *Be accountable in all its council activities*
- *Be responsive to the needs of the community*
- *Promote equal opportunities*

Wherever possible, individuals and groups are encouraged to work in partnership with the Council to enhance the area to the benefit of the wider community.

Mayor's Report

The Mayoral Year, 2007-08 has been a year of firsts for our council and our towns. We gained Quality Council status in recognition of the services we offer and plan to offer, which has enabled us to work on a more equal footing with other councils, bodies, and organisations.

We became a partner in Mayors for Peace to campaign against Nuclear Weapons, we became Britain's first White Ribbon Community to highlight and help end violence against women, and we became the first Plastic Bag Free town in the country after Modbury. Hebden Bridge became the first Walkers are Welcome town in the country followed swiftly by Mytholmroyd.

At the beginning of May we played host to our twin towns of St. Pol sur Ternoise and Warstein naming two squares in Hebden Bridge in honour of our friendship. It is worthy of note that next year marks the thirtieth anniversary of twinning with St Pol sur Ternoise and the fifteenth anniversary with Warstein.

The council in co-operation and collaboration with community groups has managed to raise nearly £100,000 for the complete overhaul and modernisation of the children's play area in Calder Holmes Park.

Hebden Royd Town Council has made fantastic progress supporting local community organisations in the region of £80,000. Our grants system has been overhauled dramatically to ensure that all organisations start on an equal footing and no organisation feels left out. We said farewell to three long-standing and hard-working members of council, and

welcomed two new members in by-elections, and at present have one vacancy, which we hope to fill in a forthcoming by-election.

The routine work of the Council in reacting to legislation and making comment to Calderdale MBC on more than two hundred planning applications, has been maintained as has the attention to matters in the interest of the residents of Hebden Royd where the district council has control.

This has been the first full year with the Council's expanded workforce of Project Officer which has proved more successful than anyone could have hoped. A major element of the work of the Project Officer is to seek funding for schemes that the Council wishes to undertake and in the financial year, more than £40,000 was obtained with a further £68,000 to come from the Big Lottery and £30,000 from Calderdale MBC for the re-vamped children's play area in Calder Holmes Park. The Big Lottery grant was the result of a competition for funding which we managed to win and the design of the scheme was selected through a public consultation process with Hags being awarded the contract. Completion of the project is scheduled for the start of the school holidays but there are hopes that it will be available for the children before that time.

Much activity has taken place with environmental projects, the hanging baskets last summer in particular giving rise to many complementary remarks. An elderly lady (80) wrote to the Council in appreciation, stating that she had lived in Hebden Bridge all her life but had never seen the town look so grand. Many other areas have also benefited from a little TLC which has contributed to the improved appearance of the township. The regeneration of Calder Holmes Park planned in 2001 was finally completed this year when Calderdale MBC was able to provide its share of the cost for Phase III of the works (Phase I was the access track and cycle route and Phase II the skateboard park). There is now a more interesting path through the park with the added benefit of lighting to make this a safer, as well as quieter, route from town centre to the rail station than the road.

Central Street still poses a problem and although some progress has been made, the area remains unsightly with rubbish and abandoned vehicles contributing to the appearance of neglect. There has been support from many users for regenerating the area but landlords, who would be required to finance part of the work, have largely been silent. This in turn has allowed some at Calderdale MBC to interpret the lack of response as opposition to the proposed improvement work.

There is a possibility that the Carlton Clock, which has for years misled people as to the time of day, could be set to indicate the correct time, despite the disinterest shown by the management company, following consent by the owner of the flat which provides access to the clock mechanism, to allow work to be carried out. The down-side is that it would probably fall on the Council to provide the necessary funding for a clock, albeit a public one, which does not belong to the Council.

Over the past year I have been honoured to work with and delighted to report fantastic work from our staff, the Clerk, David; the Mayor's Secretary, Christine; the Environmental Community Warden, Jason; and our Projects Officer, Naomi.

I believe that we have lived up to our vision statement of ensuring that the economic, social, and environmental well-being of those who live and work in our community has been a major factor in all our decision-making.

The Council has 18 members, two of which are also members of Calderdale Council but has had three resignations this year.

Committees

There are five committees, Allotments, Environmental Renaissance/ Parks and Footpaths, Grants, Staffing and Twinning, dealing with the main business overseen by the Full Council.

Member	Committees	Possible	Actual	%
J T Allison	Allotments, Grants, Staff, Twinning	36	21	58
C Bampton Smith*	Environmental, Staff	34	27	79
J C Beacroft-Mitchell	Allotments, Environmental, Staff	36	24	67
Mrs Beacroft-Mitchell	Environmental, Grants	30	14	47
K Boggis	Elected 6th March 2008	4	3	75
S Brown	Resigned 22nd April 2008	37	31	84
R Dixon	Allotments, Environmental	34	26	76
N Fekri*	All Committees as Mayor	41	26	63
M Foster	Grants, Staff, Twinning	33	25	76
G Gabbi	Finance Monitor	27	14	52
C Groves	Environmental	30	25	83
L Jones	Environmental	31	30	97
J Oosthuysen	Allotments, Environmental	34	25	74
S Press	Environmental, Twinning	33	29	88
J Smith	Elected 6th March 2008	4	4	100
M A Smith	Staff	30	18	60
S Trickett	Allotments, Environmental, Twinning	38	21	55
H Ward	Resigned 4th January 2008	18	16	89
E Ward	Resigned 4th January 2008	24	22	92
D Young	Environmental, Staff	39	39	100

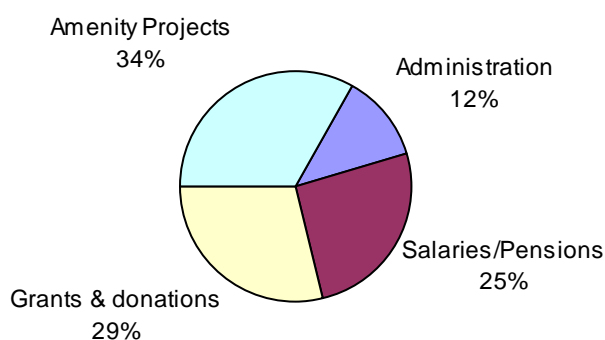
* also member of Calderdale Council

These figures do not show other meetings attended by members on behalf of Hebden Royd Town Council, casework or other tasks undertaken by ward members.

The Council will have held twenty seven meetings this year plus sixteen committee meetings as well as working parties and some community public meetings. The possible number of meetings depends on the committees to which a member is assigned and the record is summarised above.

Council Expenditure 2007/08

Total Expenditure £266,788



The precept for the year, the amount collected by Calderdale MBC on behalf of Hebden Royd Town Council, was set at £167,649 plus a grant of £8,068. This works out at £51.43 per year for a Band D household or £0.99 per week. The majority of dwellings in Hebden Royd are Band A paying £34.28 or 66p per week.