Balderton Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on April 17th, 2024, at 6.30pm at Balderton Village Centre

PRESENT

Residents of Balderton: 23
Attendees not from Balderton:3
Councillors: Bright, Bracegirdle, Buxton (Chair), Callingham, Cox, Elson, Moore, Sellars
Representatives from British Gypsum Formula and Urban and Civic
Staff: Jim Brown (Head Groundsman), Marion Fox Goddard (Parish Clerk)

1. **Welcome**
Councillor Buxton opened the meeting.

2. **Meeting recording**
The Clerk recorded the meeting.

3. **Apologies received**
Residents: Mr and Mrs Clipsham, Des Kay
Councillors: Fairbairn, Hall, Mallard, Marshall.

4. **Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on April 12th, 2023**
Cllr Buxton asked if everyone was happy with the minutes. They were approved as an accurate record. (Proposed: Cllr Callingham, Seconded: Cllr Elson). The minutes were signed by Cllr Buxton.

Cllr Buxton detailed that a query had been raised on whether the minutes from the 2022 Annual Parish Meeting had been approved correctly. The 2023 minutes show that these were not approved at the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting, therefore the 2022 minutes will be taken to the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting for approval.

Action: Chair to add to the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting agenda.

5. **Annual Report from the Chair – Cllr Buxton**

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen, fellow Councillors, and staff. Thank you all for coming. I really appreciate so many of you taking the time to join us here tonight.

I would like to introduce the parish councillors (*Cllrs Karen Callingham, Debbie Moore, Mandie Elson, Martyn Cox, Vanessa Bracegirdle, Joy Sellars and Ronalie Bright stood up and introduced themselves*).

I welcome Urban and Civic and Saint Gobain Formula, who are here to answer any queries you may have about their work and how it may impact on our parish.

I wish to thank all the staff for their hard work and support, during this sometimes turbulent and transitional year and for sticking with us and reigning us in when needed! I believe at times we have tended to be over-enthusiastic and wanting everything at once.

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A few highlights:

1. To mark the King's Coronation, Balderton Parish Council offered funding to all schools in Balderton. Newark Academy, John Hunt and Chuter Ede schools have bought planters or trees with this funding. A free photo of King Charles[1] has recently been delivered will be displayed in the Village Centre

2. A clock was purchased for the front of the Village Centre, as per the wishes of the previous Council, but no suitable/safe location could be found on this building so the clock was returned, and all monies refunded. The replacement of clock at Lidl is also pending further investigation and is still on our list to do.

3. There have been significant changes in the make up of the Council since May's election, with new councillors and a new clerk. We welcomed Marion in October and have taken opportunity to look at the Councils software packages and office systems required bringing up date and are now more effective and efficient. Councillor email addresses were introduced in June – they are all available on our new website. We are looking a software packages for managing, HR, Finance, Burials and Allotments.

4. We reviewed the way we communicate with the public, with a new website. We now have a Facebook page and we have published our first newsletter which the councillors delivered. Thank you so much for delivering 5000 of them to save on cost.

5. Thanks to all our local litter pickers, who go out come rain or shine to make Balderton a better place.... please let us know if you do litter pick a particular area, so that we do not duplicate efforts. You can register on our website if you would like to get involved with litter picks. We recently teamed up with the Boys brigade, Sustrans and Urban and Civic to do a big pick.

6. Thank all the other volunteers in the village: The Boys Brigade, Guides, Scouts, Dementia groups, U3A, Methodist and St Giles Church - you are all the life blood of this community.

7. The big news of the year was the Safer Street 5 (SS5) funding, that we were awarded, because of all the 101 calls received by the police. The data on these calls gave the evidence to government to support the bid.

   I know there has been a lot on local social media about wildlife crime at Balderton Lake. Cllr Callingham and one of the other councillors went to meet Operation Swift officers at Newark Police Station last week. The police can put drones up and we are trying to get them address such issues in the background.

   Please call 101 if you see any antisocial behaviour or wildlife crime. The data from these calls enabled us to get the £150,000 to try tackle such antisocial behaviour.

   The funding was awarded following the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner, Newark and Sherwood District Council and Balderton Parish Council jointly working to submit a bid. It was awarded to the Balderton North area including Balderton Lake, Lakeside shopping centre and Balderton Village Centre.

   The criteria were very restrictive on what the money could be spent on. It could not be spent on youth clubs and skateparks; it had to be things that would prevent antisocial behaviour; so, we spent it on:

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[1] This was donated to the council.

- the youth pod that has been installed on the playing field and CCTV in the area
- CCTV in and around Balderton Village Centre
- Benches and litter bins around Balderton Village Centre and Balderton Lake.
- Signage and Safety equipment at Balderton Lake.

CCTV at Heron Way car park is also planned and likely to be delivered in the Autumn due to planning and procurement lead times. There will also be a graffiti project (there has already been one on the Sustrans Track).

There will be a water safety day at the Lake for young people, linking into schools and hopefully delivering a clear message to stop wildlife crime. We are hoping we can have another day around the lake.

A member of the fishing club is starting up a junior club and on the back of the SS5[2] funding he has secured more funding to start this initiative.

We also plan to help start Neighbourhood Watch with our community this year. **Volunteers are needed.**

We hope more funding will come on the back of these projects. We are looking at how we can use the resources we have got to deliver smaller projects.

8. On your seats there is a note about a project at the end of Lansbury Avenue with community planters, this Saturday. This is also being considered for Stafford Avenue Park. This is a Newark and Sherwood District Council initiative that we have encouraged to come to Balderton which could lead to cookery classes for young people.

9. We also listened to residents' concerns and overturned the decision to allow kayaking on Balderton Lake, by invoking clause 5.1c of the licence and serving 12-month notice on the YMCA.

   To finish, if we have not got the answers, we will try to signpost you to where help is available. What we are trying to achieve, is to put down good foundations to build on the fabulous community that we have here. With the openness and transparency and improved methods of communication with residents (new website, newsletter, Facebook, and face to face contact, it is hoped we will continue to improve. It is your community, please get in touch or chat with any of us tonight.

6. Annual Reports from Committee Chairs

a. Councillor Elson delivered a report on behalf of the Amenities Committee:

   Since we were elected to the council in May last year, the Amenities Committee has overseen several improvements. We have listened and continue to listen to our residents.

   We have begun improving facilities at Balderton Lake:

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[2] Safer Street 5 (SS5)

- New bins
- New life rings and throwlines
- 4 new benches

And we are due to install new signage this month and reduce the signage clutter.

This has been mainly funded by Safer Streets 5 funding which our chair, Jane, helped to secure working with N&SDC and Nottinghamshire Police.

This funding was also used to deliver a new youth pod and CCTV at Coronation Street Playing Field and replace the CCTV in and around Balderton Village Centre.

The council have also committed to replacing worn out dog bins around the parish and we will do this on a rolling basis year by year to spread the cost. We have installed one new dog bin on Staple Lane. We have had requests for a few other ones, but we are mindful of the cost of these (£6500 per year). It is a balancing act.

We have also planted more bulbs on Coronation Street Playing field and we will be leaving more areas for no mow May next month to encourage wildflowers.

Some may not know that we maintain St Giles churchyard. We have commissioned a survey on the church wall and will look to tackle any findings that need attention. We also look after Balderton Cemetery.

When we became members, we recognised the cost of hire of Balderton Village Centre was prohibitive to residents, so we have reviewed this and brought down our prices. Bouncy castles are now permitted too. Our bookings have started to increase, and we welcome enquiries. We can host weddings, christenings, children's parties, businesses, clubs and much more. We have a licensed bar.

Thank you to our office and grounds staff for their work delivering these improvements.

The Amenities Committee meet regularly, and we have a public forum at the beginning of each meeting. We continue to welcome suggestions and are working to improve and enhance our wonderful village that is Balderton.

b. Councillor Sellars delivered a report on behalf of the Allotment Sub Committee:

Cllr Fairbairn who chairs the allotment committee sends his apologies for tonight.

Over the last few months, we have made significant progress with our allotments at Glebe Park in Balderton.

We have joined the allotment society and have adopted their allotment agreement to ensure best practise.

We have relet 11 allotment plots which were tidied up and prepared for reletting by our grounds team. Thank you to Jim and he team for doing this. We have reduced allotment sizes to increase the number of residents we can offer allotments to. We have tidied up the site removing the large pile of waste in the car park, and we have built bays so we can recycle our green waste more efficiently going forward.

We have a waiting list for allotments and as they become available we offer them to Balderton residents. If you would like to join the waiting list, you can apply on our website or call or email our office between 10am-noon, Monday to Friday. Job

c. Councillor Callingham delivered Cllr Hall's report on behalf of the Planning Committee:
The introduction of recent significant changes by Newark and Sherwood District Council, to their Constitution within the Scheme of Delegation and Planning Protocol, now states....
From Monday (8th April) planning offices will no longer be sending 5-day referrals to respective Ward Members should the officer recommendation be different to that of the host Town/Parish Council or Meeting. As a result, it means that for applications where you have previously made a response, but the case officer recommendation is different, these will no longer be referred.

All referrals must be through ward members at N&SDC, for Balderton North these are Cllr's Oldham and Lee and for Balderton South properties, Cllr Simon Forde, and myself.
As this is a relatively new initiative, further discussions are currently ongoing surrounding this process and how we expect the communications to work - hopefully at next week's BPC full council meeting, which all District Councillors are invited to attend, discussions can take place.
All details can be found on N&SDC website and individuals will need to register if they wish to speak.

During the last year, I wish to highlight the following noteworthy sites, have ALL been objected to by Balderton Parish Council Planning Committee.

Highfields school 22/01726/FULM, again objection, 14th June 2023

Chestnut Lodge 23/00963/FULM -objection submitted by BPC 28th June 2023, but subsequently passed at N&SDC.

Flowserve site has been objected to 3 times in the last year.
23/00621/RMA Spine Rd, objected 14th June 2023
23/01755/RMAM – 309 dwellings, objected 26th Oct 2023 and more recently 12th March 2024.

Lowfield site 22/02375/FULM objected March 2023.
Quote from Balderton Parish Council objection:
Members considered that this is genuinely one of the last open green spaces left in the village, with a wealth of flora and fauna, providing a valuable feeding and nesting site for wildlife. There are also indications of a Medieval field system being on the site. Coupled with the agreed residential development on the former Flowserve site this additional development would mean an almost continuous residential sprawl from Balderton, Middlebeck, through to the south of Newark. An in-depth ecological impact survey at the very least should be undertaken to fully assess the considerable potential impact of this proposal.
Finally, I wish to share with you the following advice from Erin McDaid of the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust:

Local voices for nature and climate can be heard — but only if people speak up.
I have spent much of the past working to protect fragile wildlife habitats and precious species from disturbance and destruction linked to poorly located or inappropriate development with a system stacked against nature ..
There's been a steady erosion of planning safeguards, not least by the 'Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development' ...with developers and their lawyers seemingly able to argue that almost any type of development is 'sustainable' in some way or other, the presumption in favour has sadly become more like a 'silver bullet' — capable of killing off much legitimate and balanced opposition to developments that threaten wildlife habitats or impact key species.

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Once you factor in pressures on planning authorities to boost economic growth, massive reductions in capacity and resources within local authority planning teams and increasingly restrictive laws relating to demonstration and protest, the prospects of success in any fight to protect nature from damaging development have become vanishingly rare.

However, successful campaigners speak of the value of partnership, solidarity, and the need shout from the rooftops that local voices can make a difference.

All too often, people step back from challenging damaging developments in their area believing that they have no chance of success, or that their voice will not be heard. If I have learned anything from working alongside these wonderful campaigners down the years, it is that local voices can be heard — and can make a massive difference — as long as people speak up and keep speaking up.

Local voices for nature and climate can be heard — but only if people speak up'.

Highfields, Lowfields, Flowserve ALL need your voice please.

Before item 6c a resident addressed the meeting regarding his concerns regarding antisocial behaviour and wildlife crime around Balderton Lake. The resident left before item 6c and before a response could be given. Councillor Buxton told the attendees that the parish council is liaising with the police and work is under way through the Safer Street 5 project to try to address the issues.

7. Items received from Balderton Parishioners/Electors prior to the meeting
None received.

8. Open Forum for Balderton Residents/Electors
A resident raised concerns regarding what a young person had said to his wife whilst in the youth shelter and raised concerns that the police will not come if there are issues. Councillors urged the resident to report issues to the police by calling 101 and said the police and Newark and Sherwood District Council[3] had hosted an event at Balderton Village Centre the week before so parishioners could raise concerns. This led to further comments regarding what the police do about crime.

Another resident raised concerns regarding the police not using CCTV at Lidl. Cllr Buxton detailed that there is a difference now a barrier has been installed there; the installation being a result of one of the parish councillors contacting Lidl about the issue; parish councillors are trying to build up relationships with Lidl. The resident agreed things have got better. The resident raised an issue regarding young people commenting about his dog and worry over what some young people may do and a lack of respect, it being related to a national issue. Cllr Buxton detailed that the councillors have liaised with the crime commissioner and now the council have funding we are letting the Office for the Police Crime Commissioner know of the issues and raised the profile of issues in Balderton with the police. Cllr Callingham had met with Nottinghamshire Police's Operation Swift officers, suggested ways to help and gave examples of where the police have helped residents so encouraged everyone to use 101 to register crimes and get Balderton on the map and hopefully get further funding and hopefully more police presence.

A resident gave a recent example of when they had an issue; the call handler and police that came and were helpful and resolved the issue. It did take some time, but he believed that this is to do with police resources rather than at this level.

Jab 1/9/13

[3] Antisocial behaviour officer

Cllr Buxton detailed that we have asked what we can do as residents adding we are planning the Neighbourhood Watch, encouraging people to call 101, Water Safety Day at the lake in the summer and possibly more events in the summer.

A resident raised an issue opposite Brisbane Court where there are double yellow lines, people park on the curb outside the scope of the double yellow lines, and this is extremely dangerous. He requested if double yellow lines there. The Clerk detailed that this is the remit of Nottinghamshire County Council, there is MyNotts app for logging such requests and that we could put the resident in touch with the local county councillor[4] detailing that residents are encouraged to report such issues directly. Cllr Buxton detailed that councillors from Nottinghamshire County Council and Newark and Sherwood District Council are invited to Balderton Parish Council's full council meetings so issues such as flooding could be raised. These meetings are open to anyone so such issues can be raised with the councillors.

Action: Chair to let County Councillors who attend the April 24th Full Council meeting know about the resident's concerns regarding parking opposite Brisbane Court.

A resident asked if we had anything back about flooding. Cllr Buxton detailed that Councillor Lee's full reports are available in the agenda packs[5] and a summary of each County/district Councillor feedback is available in the Parish Council meeting minutes which is on Balderton Parish Council's website.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm with Cllr Buxton thanking everyone for coming and inviting everyone to stay and talk to councillors and view St Gobain's and Urban and Civic representation boards.

[4] Email addresses available on the Nottinghamshire County Council website

[5] If received before the agenda is published.

J A Buxton
19/3/25