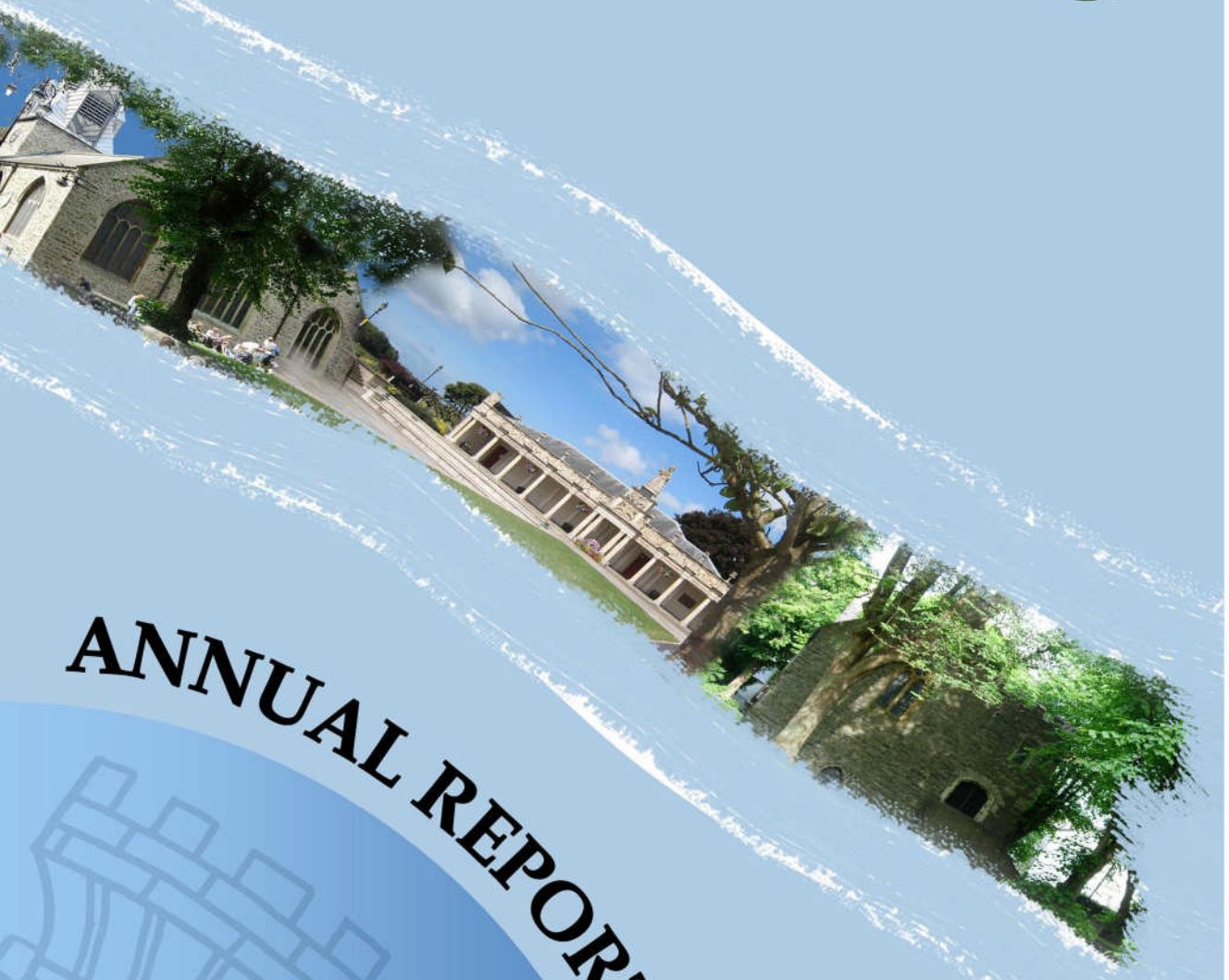


**BARNSTAPLE
TOWN COUNCIL**



ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09




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BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Barnstaple Town Councillors

MAYOR

Cllr. J Phillips

Telephone: 01271 373693

CENTRAL TOWN WARD

Cllr. Mrs J Barton

Telephone: 01271 375278

Cllr. J Green

Telephone: 07527 986562

Cllr. S Harvey

Telephone: 07817 084812

Cllr. R Hawes

Telephone: 07888 729660

Cllr. C Williamson

Telephone: 01271 370110

FORCHES & WHIDDON

VALLEY WARD

Cllr. Mrs J M Carter

Telephone: 01271 328564

Cllr. A Clark

Telephone: 01271 326651

Cllr. Mrs J L Hunt

Telephone: 01271 850423

Cllr. Mrs V A Monk

Telephone: 01271 372802

LONGBRIDGE WARD

Cllr. D Brailey

Telephone: 01271 329796

NEWPORT WARD

Cllr. F Edwards

Telephone: 01271 343009

Cllr. H M Harrison

Telephone: 01271 345372

Cllr. R A Knight

Telephone: 01271 371732

Cllr. B W Macbeth

Telephone: 01271 378850

Cllr. J Mathews

Telephone: 01271 375757

PILTON WARD

Cllr. Mrs V A Elkins

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Mayor, Cllr. J Phillips

Telephone: 01271 373693

Dept Mayor, Cllr. I Roome

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Cllr. B Vernon

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YEO VALLEY WARD

Cllr. Mrs L Brown

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Cllr. Mrs S Haywood

Telephone: 01271 375121

Cllr. Miss C Upcott

Telephone: 01271 324764

Cllr. S Upcott

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Cllr. A Windsor

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Council Contacts

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CEMETERY & ALLOTMENTS
COMMITTEE

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE

Natasha Lewis

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PLANNING COMMITTEE

Vicki Pine

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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tracey Weaver

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YOUTH COUNCIL

Vicki Pine

Telephone: 01271 373311

ADMINISTRATION

Kate Elston

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EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH WORKER

Rebecca Brocklehurst

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Julie Parker

Telephone: 01271 373003

PROPERTY SERVICES MANAGER

Ian Parker

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PROPERTY SERVICES ASSISTANT

Rob Burns

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CASTLE CENTRE MANAGER

Rosemary Newcombe

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HERITAGE CENTRE MANAGER

Denise Teague

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HERITAGE CENTRE ASSISTANT

Sue Howson

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HEAD SEXTON

Kevin Sluman

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WEBMASTER

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WEB SITE [thelocalchannel.co.uk/
barnstapletowncouncil](http://thelocalchannel.co.uk/barnstapletowncouncil)

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor's Report

The past year, as Mayor, has been one of the most enjoyable, in what already has been a rich and varied life. The role of Mayor has enabled me to explore my home town in more detail and experience all those rituals and traditions that make up this wonderful town of ours, but sometimes are hidden from view.

What has been apparent is that Barum has a community spirit second to none. The town has a rich tapestry of clubs and societies, stretching from magnificent choirs to many sports clubs. All of these organisations are open to everyone and for those who say there is nothing to do, my friends you are wrong, all you have to do is to open your eyes and go and look. The more you become involved in the life of the town, the richer the life of our town becomes.

Wherever the Mayoress and I have been, we have been welcomed with genuine affection. We have been impressed by the generosity of the people of Barnstaple, despite hard times for many. Every group we have come across tries to give something back to the community, either by raising money for charity or working with their fellow citizens and most are embarrassed when they receive public recognition for this. In my view they should not be. Why? Because I do not believe that those who take time, from often busy lives, to give something back to the community they live and work in are given enough credit, without them all of our lives would be poorer.

The Mayor attends many functions and dinners throughout the year, but the highlight of the year for me was Barnstaple Fair. This year the fair was given wider publicity than usual, when ITV presenter Seth Conway filmed the fair opening and broadcast the footage on the evening news.

Fair week was more hectic than usual, not only was there the fair and what many think was one of the best carnivals for years, but a concert was held in aid of the Mayor's charity, in Christ Church. All of the local choirs took part, as did children from Pilton Bluecoat School, but the show was stolen by our friends from Barnstaple's twin town of Susa in Italy. A troop of traditional dancers and players took part not only in the concert, but also in the carnival and added a touch of Italian style to the whole event.

The Italian visit came about following a civic visit to Susa earlier in the year and builds upon work done by the twinning association and previous Mayors. The visit to Susa was a very special event and the civic party arrived in time to attend Susa's palio, which is a traditional festival of games and parades, held in a Roman amphitheatre, it was a magnificent experience, as was the trip over the Alps into France. I would like to thank once again our kind and generous hosts, the Mayor of

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Susa and the regional President, for such generosity.

This year has been one of great joy and sadness, for me, the death of my grandmother; at 101, and of my Chaplin, the Reverend Alan Finch, has caused great pain and sorrow.

Alan had an irreverent sense of humour for a United Reformed Minister. Alan's humour was legendary and at his memorial service his fellow Ministers recounted many instances of this. He was a man it was a privilege to know and for whom I had great respect, I miss him greatly.

As Mayor I have had the opportunity to travel to other towns and parishes in Devon to take part in their festivals and fairs. On each occasion the Mayoress and I have been made welcome, we particularly enjoyed the civic service in Lynton and Lynmouth's magnificent Anglican Church and the reception held in the town hall, both accompanied by a wonderful trio. We spent a quiet Sunday afternoon in Torrington listening to a splendid variety of music and hectic times in Holsworthy, Hatherleigh and South Molton, all of which were fun and helped me to learn about other towns and parishes in Devon.

In my role as Chairman of the Council, I have attended a myriad of meetings, dealing with innumerable issues, from staff pay and conditions to chickens on allotments. Perhaps the most controversial issues to come to the Council for discussion have been the decision to move the North Devon College to a new site next to the river Taw and sell the existing site, followed by the heated debate as to whether Devon should become a unitary council, or not and what effect it will have on Barnstaple Town Council.

All of the town council committees have a varied and full programme of business and it is good to see many projects come to fruition, after a number of years work. I also look forward to taking part in the home coming parade for the Royal Marines based at RMB Chivenor.

I would like to thank the ceremonial staff for all of their help and support over the last twelve months, especially the Mayor's Beadle Mr. George Lovering for his unstinting devotion to duty, his kindness and courtesy. My thanks also go to the Town Clerk, Mrs. Anne Jenkins and the town council staff for their hard work over the last twelve months.

Cllr J Phillips, Mayor.

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Planning & Transportation Committee Report

As always, the Planning and Transportation Committee has been the busiest of the Council's standing committees, meeting usually every two weeks, even during the summer recess. This is required in order to meet the District Council's consultation deadlines on the applications they receive.

Between 15 and 25 planning applications are considered at each meeting, rarely fewer, occasionally higher. When possible the committee views the plans via a powerpoint presentation and the written application and paper plans are consulted as required for detailed information. The applications vary from small scale extensions and tree management, through to major applications for retail and manufacturing enterprises.

The Town Council forwards a recommendation to the District Council (occasionally the County Council on their own applications) where the Planning Officers take the view expressed into consideration along with those received from other consultees (e.g., County Council Highways, Environment Agency, English Heritage, local interest groups, and local residents). Over 95% of the applications are approved or refused under the District Council's delegated powers, and only a few go before the NDC Planning Committee for final determination.

As the only fully democratically elected body that sees all the plans submitted, we take our role seriously. We may recommend approval (with or without conditions), refusal, make no observations or no comment. The latter two are rarely used. Where the Town Council itself has an interest this is recorded and no comments are made. There is feedback from the District Council on the final decisions reached either by the officers or the Planning Committee, and our recommendations are in accord with the final verdict on 95% of the applications. When they are not in accord we have extracts of the decision document and are able to see why a different decision was made. This may be because an applicant amends their original application in the light of comments made by the Town Council Planning Committee, before the final approval is given. We have reviewed a range of our own planning policies during the course of the year.

In addition to Planning Applications, the Committee also regularly considers Highways matters which have peaked this year with the advent of the down stream bridge changing traffic flows, and the absence of effective enforcement of existing parking restrictions. Good relationships exist between the County Council Officers, County Councillors and members of this committee.

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An innovation this year has been a series of “walkabouts” particularly in the central core but also extending into Pilton and Newport. These sought to identify planning and maintenance issues which were followed up by contacting the appropriate authorities or land owners. A significant number have been resolved but further action is still needed on some.

I would like to record my thanks to our excellent Committee Clerk, Vicki Pine, for her practical help with the presentation of the plans and her accurate recording of the proceedings. I am also grateful for the forbearance of the members of the committee and for their very active participation in every meeting and for the assistance of John Green as Vice Chairman.

Cllr B Macbeth, Chairman.

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Community Development Committee Report

Community Development committee has had a particularly busy year with many projects coming to fruition. In addition to carrying out the usual maintenance and repair on our buildings, we were successful in obtaining Heritage Lottery Funding to restore and repair the Albert Clock, together with a programme of educational and cultural activities to promote Barnstaple's rich heritage and history. Work on the Albert Clock started at the end of March and the repairs to the stonework, bell tower and clock mechanism should be completed by the end of August.

I am particularly pleased to welcome Rebecca Brocklehurst to the team. Rebecca is responsible for delivering the educational and cultural activities and producing a new Heritage Trail booklet. She has many exciting plans and activities involving local schools and the wider community and hopes to end the year with a Victorian Fair on the Square.

We have been anxious to see a greater usage of the Guildhall which was restored and renovated three years ago. It is the home of the Town Council and all our Council and Committee meetings are held there, together with events such as Mayor Making, and the annual Fair Proclamation Ceremony. We recently applied to have the Guildhall licensed for weddings and civil partnership ceremonies and have been delighted with the number of couples who have taken up the opportunity to be married in these historic surroundings.

The Committee has worked with the Barnstaple Alliance to help deliver some of the projects identified in the Our Town survey, in particular the Neighbourhood Project which seeks to identify the issues of concern to residents at the most local level – anything from more litter bins to speed humps and gulley clearance.

My thanks go to all the members of the Committee for their dedication and commitment over the past year and to our Committee Clerk, Natasha Lewis for her support and hard work, and for being instrumental in obtaining the Lottery funding for the Albert Clock.

Cllr A Windsor, Chairman.

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Finance & General Purposes Committee Report

During the past year the committee had responded positively to the proposed Unitary Status bid and are keen to see devolved services passed down to what is one of the ancient councils in England.

We feel that we have the experience and knowledge to move this council forward and because we are closer to the community we can have a good input on how we see Barnstaple moving forward.

The committee has continued to support local community groups and we have continued to ensure that grants are given to those groups and services that require the help.

This year as part of the grants process all the councillors have been given a sum of money to help groups within Barnstaple with financial aid for various projects.

We will as a matter of course scrutinise the council finances and ensure that where ever possible we use local services and tradesmen. We were one of the first councils to introduce a Keep It Local Scheme.

It has been a successful year for Barnstaple Town Council with a successful lottery bid so that work can start on the Albert clock to bring him up to date, work is to start soon and Albert will have an overcoat on until the repairs are completed. For up to date information watch out for the notice boards on the outside highlighting how the work is progressing.

Once again it has been a good year and we continue to work closely with the other councils and outside bodies to ensure that Barnstaple is a lovely place to live.

I would like to thank all the council staff and my fellow councillors for their support.

Cllr S Upcott, Chairman.

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Cemetery & Grounds Maintenance Committee Report

Reviewing this years work I wish to report that good progress has been made both at the Cemetery and the Allotments.

None of this would have been possible without the hard work of our Committee Clerk Tracey Weaver, Head Sexton Kevin Sluman, Deputy Sexton Ben Manser, Kate Elston and members of the Committee.

I wish to say thank you to all for their support during this last year.

BARNSTAPLE CEMETERY

Progress with our 5 year plans are on track. Our main targets for the coming year will be the new roads and the tree survey.

Cemetery of the Year Award

Once again we had very positive remarks after the judging of our Cemetery. The competition has become very competitive, with many more entering.

One very rewarding remark was that we seem to be the only cemetery with such an excellent recycling and composting system. Another positive remark was the involvement of the community, and especially the Children's Summer Club who painted murals on bins and at the composting area.

Hopefully we can take on board some of the judges suggestions and improve our chances for next year.

Memorial Testing

This has been ongoing over the year with staking and some laying down of headstones. This was a sad move for many families but with Health and Safety laws it had to done. However we are pleased to say that most of the memorials have been reinstated with some normality returning to the appearance of the site.

Security

This has been a big issue in the past. This year there has been a big improvement with no major incidents being reported.

We are proud of our Cemetery, but we still want to improve! It is however still a pleasant and peaceful place for the people to visit and remember the folks they have lost.

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ALLOTMENTS

Improvements continue and the working with the Allotment Association has become stronger. We have a slot at the beginning of council meetings for them to ask questions and at the February meeting we co-opted one of their members onto our committee, Ayesha Wilkinson can now represent and speak on everyone's behalf. We see this as a very positive move forward.

Mayoral Project

This is a new project which we feel will help a lot of people. Meetings have been held with the Mayor, Clerk, myself, the Police and the Probation Service. The plan is to all work together to help improve all the allotment sites.

The probation service are willing to clear areas, build composting sites and compost toilets. The work has started with the clearing of rubbish from Fair View Allotments, and other projects should start soon.

Fair View Allotments

This year security has been improved by the erection of palisade fencing and gates. On the 28th February we held a tidy up allotment day. With the help of the Police, Probationers, Allotment Holders, Council Staff and Councillors we managed to remove most of the rubbish that had accumulated over several years. Everyone worked as a team which made it a very pleasant and worthwhile event.

Presentation Evening

The evening was held in the Mayors Parlour with the Mayor presenting awards to the winners and runner ups following the yearly judging of the allotment sites. Following the presentation the Police gave a talk on site security and other issues, followed by questions. The evening proved to be very productive, and enjoyed by all.

Town Council Open Spaces

Future of these are still being reviewed.

Cllr V Elkins, Chairman.

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Heritage Centre Committee Report

Another successful year has seen visitor numbers increase in the past year despite the slump in the economic market at the end of the year. This is due to the hard work of the staff and volunteers, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all, in particular Julie Parker and Sue Howson, who have kept the centre open during staff shortages.

We are still investigating funding possibilities for the renovations of St Anne's Chapel, and look forward to seeing work start in the near future.

Cllr C Upcott, Chairman.

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Environment Committee Report

This has been a very busy and highly successful year for the Environment Committee. We have, collectively, moved forward and shaped the way ahead for the next 5 years and taken a more proactive approach to the town and its environmental needs.

The committee's biggest success by far was the launch of "Tidy Up Our Town" week in June. This was a community based approach to improving the landscape of the town and by the end of that week over 200 people, many of them children, had taken part in 14 events. The week culminated in a clean-up of the River Taw from the Longbridge up to the Leisure Centre on the Saturday. That we were so successful in pulling so many tyres and other debris from the river was in no small part due to Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service's Red Watch and a large compliment of Police Community Support Officers. Plus the public shouting from the bridge if a tyre was missed.

The event is planned for 20th – 25th April this year and has already drawn more applicants than last year. I shall be reporting another huge success in next year's report.

Our major drive has been to put Barnstaple at the forefront and make our town the "Greenest Town in Devon". We have joined together with Town Centre Management and Envision to promote a more responsible High St and consequently the whole of the town. We want to see better commercial recycling, a reduced carbon footprint – less use of lighting and heating – and the removal of the plastic bag.

On another front we are looking to involve schools and neighbourhood groups in planning the way ahead. The key to a cleaner, tidier, better town is community involvement and this committee is keen to win people over, involve them and restore some of the pride in Barnstaple by making the town look good.

As a committee, we are also aware of the general health needs of Barnstaple and are looking at ways to promote healthier living. So, in conjunction with the Rambling Association, we are promoting "Get Barnstaple Walking"; an event is planned for May.

Overall, we as a committee are very pleased with our progress – but we have only just started the journey. Each of us is very committed to a cleaner, brighter Barnstaple. With your support we'll get there!

Cllr R Hawes, Chairman.

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Staff Committee Report

Barnstaple Town Council's Staff Committee stay totally committed to the welfare and development of all its staff members. During the past year we have been able to identify appropriate training with various staff members to develop their understanding and to equip them to carry out their job role efficiently.

I would like to welcome Rebecca Brocklehurst, Educational Outreach Worker and John Himan, Town Council Beadle, to the town council staff team. I have been informed that their work is to the utmost standard so as to be an asset to our existing staff team.

We have seen our cemetery staff acquire training in memorial testing, memorial repair and in using a chainsaw properly. Staff members have completed or continue to study for various qualifications, such as, Working With Your Council, CertHE Local Policy and DipHE Local Policy, all of which shows that our staff are totally committed to their job roles. These courses will help them deliver a better and more flexible service to the population of Barnstaple.

The Town Clerk continues to identify the specific staff members training needs mainly at staff appraisal time and reports her findings back to the committee. The Staff Committee are dedicated to supporting appropriate staff training where it shows that it will benefit an individuals job role. We are also aware and will fully support any requests for training which is deemed necessary to meet legislation requirements such as Health and Safety Law.

I am aware that the impact of the POSSIBLE future restructuring of local government in Devon will play a significant part in the administration of our council. This will pose challenging times ahead. Through the expert leadership of our Town Clerk, Anne Jenkins, it will be the Staff Committee's role to make sure that our staff have the necessary skills to make sure that we deliver an excellent service to the public of Barnstaple.

I want to thank the Town Clerk, Anne Jenkins, Cllr Sue Haywood, Cllr Val Elkins, Cllr Jeremy Phillips, Cllr Arthur Windsor and Cllr John Green for their attendance and enthusiasm to make sure that the Staff Committee continues to be such an effective committee that delivers. Once again and more importantly I would like to say MANY THANKS to all the staff of Barnstaple Town Council for their continued dedication to each of their specific job roles. It gives the committee great pleasure to know that we have a committed staff team who are truly outstanding in their work. Well done.

Cllr I Roome, Chairman.

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Youth Council Report

Barnstaple Youth Council has continued to grow throughout the last year. It has organised a Music Festival for the youth of the town, raising money from the sale of refreshments for the Children's Hospice South West, and has just published a Questionnaire to gain the thoughts and views of young people who use the town of Barnstaple. Around 3,000 questionnaires have been distributed and this will be used to inform the Youth Council's future projects.

The Youth Council has also continued to build strong links with other organisations, and has become a Change4 Life partner. It is also involved with the Devon Link. The Youth Council has taken part in an Intergenerational Spray Art project with the Devon Senior Council, and will be working closely with the Education Outreach Worker, and taking part in a Mural Project as part of the restoration of the Albert Clock.

The Youth Council is in the process of gaining a notice board specifically for young people, and is also looking at many other projects such as an Under 18's club and education videos. The Youth Council hopes the town of Barnstaple especially the youth will continue to support its efforts.

Vicki Pine, Clerk to Barnstaple Youth Council.

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Financial Statements

BALANCE SHEET

Unaudited Accounts

Fixed Assets	
Investment Properties (Non -op)	456,500.00
Operational Assets	977,500.01
Community Assets - Buildings	138,000.00
Community Assets - Other	1,538,900.00
Plant & Machinery	10,938.55
	3,121,838.56
Current Assets	
Stock	8,776.75
Debtors	5,874.49
Cash & Bank	460,760.03
VAT Control	7,054.03
	482,465.30
Current Liabilities	
Short term Creditors	126,876.35
	126,876.35
Current Assets less Current Liabilities:	355,588.95
Total Assets less Current Liabilities:	3,477,427.51
Long Term Liabilities	
Long Term Creditors	284,750.05
	284,750.05
Total Assets less Total Liabilities:	3,192,677.46
Capital & Reserves	
Reserves	3,088,999.03
P&L Account	103,808.03
	3,192,677.46

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Financial Statements

<i>PROFIT and LOSS</i>	<i>Unaudited Accounts</i>
YEAR to DATE	
Income	
Precept	496,997.00
Investment Properties	81,262.96
Open Spaces	29,219.23
Culture & Heritage	34,643.17
Interest & Investment Income	13,617.05
Cemetery	77,818.00
	733,557.41
Expenditure	
Central Services to the Public	19,265.94
Democratic Representation & Management	10,721.19
Corporate Management	22,878.48
Recreation & Sport	18,465.55
Open Spaces	37,787.76
Culture & Heritage	116,755.43
Cemetery	69,632.10
Individual Environmental Projects	5,500.00
Administration	326,848.12
Kiosk	1,959.61
	629,814.18
Net Profit/(Loss)	103,743.23

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Council Ward Budgets

WARD BUDGETS 2008-2009

Budgeted amount for year (24 councillors x £250)	6000
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Spent in year

Cllr Harvey	Ashleigh Residents - security	60
	SW Counties Allotments	60
Cllr Windsor	Yeo Valley Residents - storage container	250
Cllr Brown	Yeo Valley woodland	250
		620

Reserved for 2009/10 spend

Cllr Hunt	250
Cllr Haywood	250
Cllr Upcott	250
Cllr Carter	250
Cllr Monk	250
Cllr Clark	250
Cllr Elkins	250
Cllr Vernon	250
Cllr Phillips	250
Cllr Roome	250
Cllr Barton	250
Cllr Williamson	250
	3000

3620

Not spent

2380

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Council Assets & Areas Of Responsibility

The Guildhall	Butchers Row, Barnstaple.
St Anne's Chapel	Paternoster Row, Barnstaple.
Barum House	The Square, Barnstaple.
The Castle Centre	25, Castle Street, Barnstaple.
The Albert Clock	The Square, Barnstaple.
Bryant's Field Allotments	Bear Street, Barnstaple.
Sunnybank Allotments	Barbican Road, Barnstaple.
Higher Raleigh Allotments	Higher Raleigh Road, Barnstaple.
Fairview Allotments	Pathfield Lawn, Barnstaple.
Rock Park	Taw Vale, Barnstaple. (Partnership with NDC)
Bear Street Cemetery	Bear Street, Barnstaple. (Agency with NDC)
Heritage Centre	Queen Anne's Walk, The Strand, Barnstaple. (Leased from NDC)

