



Stratton Parish News

Published by Stratton St Margaret Parish Council

SUMMER BECKONS!

Welcome to the Stratton St Margaret Parish Newsletter

May saw the beginning of a new civic year for Stratton St Margaret Parish Council following the local elections. There are some very exciting times ahead with both local and national changes in the offing as well as the Council's proactive action plan for the Parish including the new Street Snooker installation just completed at the Greenbridge Playing Fields.

Street Snooker is a new kick-wall game combining features of snooker and football. Players kick the ball against a green wall resembling a snooker table, and can build breaks in the usual scoring fashion by hitting the red triangle followed by a colour. A grand opening ceremony is planned in the near future so look out for details.

Stratton St Margaret Parish Council's Annual Report outlines the work undertaken by the Council during the past year and highlights some of the projects to be pursued during 2011/12.

Locally the Swindon Borough Core Strategy has undergone intensive public consultation and the Local Government Boundary Commission published its draft recommendations which will have some significant implications on the parish.

Nationally the Localism Bill, which is expected to become law towards the end of the year, may also have some potentially significant effects locally.

So we hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and if you have any feedback please do not hesitate to contact us.

Stratton in Bloom



It's that time of year once again. Gardeners have been busily planting away, hanging baskets are being readied, garden sheds are once again hives of activity and your Parish Council is organising this year's Stratton in Bloom competition.

So if you would like to become involved and brighten up our wonderful parish why not complete the entry form? There are Prizes to be won!

Fill in the entry form to get involved

Please fill in this form and return to:
Council Offices, Addison Crescent, Upper Stratton, Swindon SN2 7JX

Name of Entrant:

.....

Entry Category: Please tick box

Address:

Front Garden without lawn

.....

Hanging baskets &/or troughs

.....

Front Garden with lawn

.....

Council Offices: Addison Crescent, Upper Stratton, Swindon SN2 7JX

Tel: 01793 823761 Fax 01793 820188 - More Info at - www.strattonstmargaret.gov.uk Email - admin@strattonstmargaret.gov.uk

Core Strategy

The Draft Swindon Borough Core Strategy has been undergoing a public consultation exercise which will close on 16th June 2011.

The Core Strategy is the principal Local Development Document for the Borough. It sets out the long term vision for development, infrastructure, hierarchy of settlements, transport, green spaces, employment and housing.

Stratton St Margaret Parish Council broadly welcomes the Core Strategy but has urged Swindon Borough Council to consider altering certain aspects of the document to ensure it is more inclusive, based on need, contains more detail regarding both the future infrastructure needs and how those will be funded as well as the proposals being fully evidenced.

Stratton St Margaret Parish Council's main concern is that the potential role of 'urban' parish councils, and community councils has been underplayed and the

opportunity to develop a Supplementary Planning Document for Stratton must be maintained especially since this is very much in the spirit of the new Localism Bill.

Other concerns relate to the level of infrastructure required to service the additional 19,000 dwellings being proposed in Swindon, 7,500 of which will be sited to the east of the Parish in the proposed Eastern Villages Development. Potential future traffic congestion, especially at the White Hart junction, possible local flooding issues that may be created from the development and future local education needs are also of real concern.

Traffic and flooding issues remain top of the list of concerns with Ermin Street, Oxford Road, Highworth Road, Grange

Drive and Swindon Road being the areas most likely to be affected by the proposals within the Core Strategy.

Areas the Parish Council would like to be protected as part of the Core Strategy include:

- Land at the former Headlands School site as an important open space
- Land at Merton Fields as an important open space
- Land at Catsbain Farm as an important open space with some options to create an extension to the community forest, allotments, cemetery (green burials) and the District heating network
- Land at Greenbridge as an important open space

Annual Parish Assembly

Stratton St Margaret Parish Council welcomed forty members of the public to the Annual Parish Assembly which is held every year during the third week of April in the Meadowcroft Community Centre.

The past year has seen a challenging economic climate emerge. Stratton St Margaret Parish Council has been working hard to identify a range of efficiency savings as well as offering to work with Swindon Borough Council to help try to save some services which the community would like to retain but are under threat due to Central Government cutbacks.

The meeting offered an opportunity for Stratton St Margaret Parish Council to tell residents about some of the work the

Council has undertaken over the previous year and some of its plans for the future.

However, the highlight of the evening was the Participatory Budgeting event. Local groups and organisations were invited to bid for a grant of £250. The meeting received presentations from the local organisation below:

- Beechcroft Thursday Club
- Kidz Club – Upper Stratton Baptist Church
- FAB (wildflowers and butterflies)
- Northern Light Football Club

There were four grants up for grabs and as only four organisations submitted a bid they were all successful. A full report of the evening is available on the Council's website.



Cllr Peter Owen presents a cheque for £250 to Anne Wang of the Upper Stratton Baptist Church Kidz Club.



PC Frank Key updates the meeting on local neighbourhood policing.

Ward Boundries

The New Electoral Arrangements For Swindon Borough Council

A review of current Borough Council Ward Boundaries has been undertaken recently by the Boundary Commission. Following the consultation period Stratton St Margaret Parish Council has submitted a number of concerns regarding the draft proposals.

It has urged the Boundary Commission to reconsider reducing the number of members and give due consideration to creating a 20th ward of 3 members, so increasing the members of Swindon Borough Council from 59 to 60. It is hoped this will ensure that the review avoids breaking up existing communities within ward boundaries and maintain historic parish boundaries whilst meeting the needs of the future development of Swindon.

The draft recommendations appeared to give little consideration to community cohesion which was of concern to Stratton St Margaret Parish Council. This is especially reflected in the areas covered by the Parish Council. The recommendations appear to have struggled to reflect community identity and reduce member numbers resulting in an unfortunate compromise that may well be damaging to some of the most needy areas within the Borough.

Of major concern is the proposed loss of the two members in the current wards of Gorsehill & Pinehurst and Penhill. Both areas are areas of high deprivation and have significant social issues. To propose a reduction of two elected representatives in two of the most deprived communities within the Borough is both concerning and unacceptable.

Although the Commission acknowledged that the reality of achieving absolute fairness was unlikely, the proposals are a significant distance

away from achieving a level of fairness that is acceptable, especially to those communities where ward councillors play an important role in helping to address the needs of the local residents, many of whom have never voted. Those communities which have a high level of deprivation should have a lower councillor/electorate ratio than in those areas less affected.

Of major concern is the effect the proposed Ward Boundary changes may have on the current Swindon Borough Council "clusters", part of the Connecting People, Connecting Places initiative. The clusters also form an integral part of the Swindon Core Strategy document. Therefore, prior to any formal adoption of boundary changes Stratton St Margaret Parish Council urges the Commission to satisfy itself that the electorate within the new Ward Boundaries will not be adversely affected by the adopted proposals.

Finally, although the Commission asserts that it has achieved fairness in the numbers within its proposals, Stratton St Margaret Parish Council maintains that this will not be the case as the proposed boundaries have neglected to recognise existing communities.

Stratton St Margaret Parish Council has suggested that the Boundary Commission considers making the following changes to the proposed boundaries:

St Margaret & South Marston

- South Marston be amalgamated with the proposed Blunsdon and Highworth Ward and not with the St Margaret Ward
- St Margaret Ward boundary be retained to the west as recommended but to be amended to the East as per Stratton St Margaret Parish Council's

original proposal and to include the entire Honda UK manufacturing site within the Borough Ward and the Parish Boundary

Upper Stratton

- The Ward boundary should be amended to exclude the area of Gorsehill and redrawn along Cirencester Way as originally proposed by Stratton St Margaret Parish Council.

Long standing servant of the parish leaves

Philip Steele has stood down as a councillor after 34 years. He was first elected in a bye election for St Philips ward in 1976. In those days, the parish office was a temporary school classroom at Meadowcroft. Philip served under five different chairs and four different clerks. He recalls one rather solemn meeting which considered a "groundsman's boot allowance" at great length. His election coincided with the opening of the Stratton Leisure Centre.

He was chairman of the allotments committee and also vice chair of two other committees. He especially enjoyed chairing the millennium working party that produced the "Stratton Remembered" booklet and the millennium mugs. He also represented the parish on the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils for ten years.

Philip served on Swindon Borough Council for six years and was also a governor of Kingsdown and Sevenfields schools.

Stratton St Margaret Parish Council

Meet the councillors



Councillor Brenda Archer
*15 Bourton Avenue, Stratton St Margaret,
Swindon, SN3 4LY*
Representing: Stratton St Margaret Ward
Committees: Recreation / Community Centre /
Planning & Highways / Allotments & Cemeteries
Telephone no: (01793) 822263



Councillor Eileen Foley
7 Dockle Way, Upper Stratton, Swindon, SN2 7LQ
Representing: St Philip Ward
Committees: Recreation / Community Centre
Vice Chairman: Recreation Committee
Telephone no: (01793) 822110



Councillor Pratap Mane
8 Lansbury Drive, Upper Stratton, Swindon, SN2 7LF
Representing: Lower Coleview & Nythe Ward
Committees: Finance / Community Centre
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Councillor Nigel Chalk
*5 Days Close, Stratton St Margaret,
Swindon, SN3 4PQ*
Representing: Stratton St Margaret Ward
Committees: Finance / Recreation & Highways /
Community Centre / Planning & Highways /
Allotments & Cemeteries
Vice Chairman: Finance Committee
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Councillor John Foley
7 Dockle Way, Upper Stratton, Swindon, SN2 7LQ
Representing: St Philip Ward
Committees: Finance / Recreation / Community
Centre / Allotments & Cemeteries / Personnel
Chairman: Finance Committee
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Councillor Andree Murphy
2 Orchard Close, Upper Stratton, Swindon, SN2 7QR
Representing: St Philip Ward
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Planning & Highways / Allotments & Cemeteries
Vice Chairman: Planning Committee
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Councillor Anne Chalk
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Councillor John C Foley
120 Ermin Street, Stratton St Margaret, SN3 4NQ
Representing: Coleview Ward
Committees: Recreation / Community Centre
/ Allotments & Cemeteries
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Councillor Patrick Murphy
2 Orchard Close, Upper Stratton, Swindon, SN2 7QR
Representing: St Philip Ward
Committees: Finance / Recreation
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Councillor Carol Ennis
Seagulls, 6 Crispin Cl, Swindon, SN3 4XH
Representing: Stratton St Margaret Ward
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Centre / Allotments & Cemeteries
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Councillor Gerry Lawson
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Councillor Peter Owen, BEM
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Representing: St Philip Ward
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Councillor Teresa Page
 13 Haig Close, Upper Stratton, Swindon, SN2 7QN
Representing: St Philip Ward
Committees: Finance / Recreation / Planning & Highways / Allotment & Cemeteries / Personnel
Chairman of Council
Chairman: Planning & Recreation
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Councillor Tara Page
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Vice Chairman: Community Centre
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Councillor David Roberts
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Chairman: Recreation
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Councillor Roger Smith
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Councillor Pat Spry
 1 Mayfield Close, Nythe, Swindon, SN3 3NH
Representing: Stratton St Margaret Ward
Committees: Finance / Recreation / Community Centre / Personnel
Chairman: Allotments & Cemeteries and Personnel Committees
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Councillor Mike Spry
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Councillor Rosa Tran
 44 Burden Close, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon, SN3 4HE
Representing: Coleview Ward
Committees: Finance / Community Centre / Allotments & Cemeteries / Recreation
Vice Chairman: Allotments & Cemeteries
Telephone no: (01793) 826283



Councillor Joe Tray
 3 Cairndow Way, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon
Representing: St Philip Ward
Committees: Allotments & Cemeteries
Swindon Borough Council Member
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Councillor Peter Watts
 19 Chalford Avenue, Nythe, SN3 3NT
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Committees: Planning
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Telephone no: 01793 529163

Vacancy -Lower Coleview & Nythe

Ward Key: C - Coleview, SM - Stratton St Margaret, SP - St Philips, LCN - Lower Coleview & Nythe

Swindon Borough Council Ward Members

Joe Tray: SP - 07813170202
 j.tray@ntlworld.com

Sinead Darker: SP - 01793 337591
 sdarker@swindon.gov.uk

Janet Heenan: SP - 01793 705244
 jheenan@swindon.gov.uk

Russell Holland: SM - 07999566623
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Mark Edwards: SM - 01793 709834
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Ray Fisher: SM - 07791500164
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Emma Famarzi: CN - 07415 911830
 emma@covinghamandnytheintouch.com

Dale Heenan: CN
 dale@covinghamandnytheintouch.com

Richard Hurley: CN - 07966533997
 rhurley@swindon.gov.uk

Local Member of Parliament
Justin Tomlinson MP
 justin@swindonconservatives.com
 01793 522123

Clerk of the Council
Mr Paul A Russell
 clerk@strattonstmargaret.gov.uk
 01793 823761
 Council Offices, Addison Crescent,
 SWINDON, Wiltshire, SN2 7JX

Stratton Leisure Centre

Committed to the community

01793 825525



12 MONTH GYM MEMBERSHIP FOR THE PRICE OF 10 £195.00 for the year That's £3.75 per week And £0.53p per day
membership can be paid via Direct Debit

So What Are You Waiting For?

Zumba Classes

Are you ready to party yourself into shape? That's exactly what the ZUMBA programme is all about. It's an exhilarating, effective, easy-to-follow, Latin-inspired, calorie-burning dance fitness-party that's moving millions of people toward joy and health.

DITCH THE WORKOUT AND JOIN THE PARTY

Classes are held here on **Wednesdays 9.30am - 10.30am and Saturdays 10.00am - 11.00**

Little Snappers Crèche 0-5yrs

Available During School Term Times
Members: £2.50 Non-Members: 3.50
Free to Gym Members (one child only)

Creche Drop & Shop

Available During School Term Times
Members: £3.50 Non-Members:£4.50
Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri - 9.30am-11.30am
Ask at reception for more details.

Crazy Crocs

The next Crazy Croc sessions are:
25th July - 31st August
Members £15 - Non members £16

Thursday lunch

Every month Tuesday and Thursday
Specials Menu on offer
Plus a great choice of 'lite snacks'
available in the Grange Bar during lunchtimes everyday except Sundays

Spinning Classes

A great all round cardiovascular exercise to aid weight loss and improve muscle tone. This class is for everyone!!!
Nobody gets left behind. **Members = £4.20, Non-Members = £5.20, Gym Pass holders = FREE, 11-15yr olds = £2.80 members, £3.80 non members.**

Pilates

Using only your body weight and gravity, the mat work will tone, strengthen and lengthen your entire body. You will also achieve better alignment & re-teach your body to work more efficiently.
Classes held here on Wednesdays 8.30pm - 9.15pm

Class timetable - Prices on application or as part of your Gym Membership

Monday	Aerobics	10am - 11am
Monday	Circuits	1.45pm - 2.30pm
Monday	Teen Gym	5pm - 6pm
Monday	Body Tone	6pm - 7pm
Monday	Spinning	6pm - 7pm / 7pm - 8pm
Tuesday	Young @ Heart	9.30am - 12.00pm
Tuesday	Body Conditioning	6pm - 6.45pm
Wednesday	Spinning	10am - 11am / 6pm-7pm / 7.15pm-8.15pm
Wednesday	Walking Club	11.45am - 1.30pm
Wednesday	Teen Gym	5pm - 6pm
Wednesday	Stretch and Flex	6.15pm - 7.15pm
Wednesday	Pilates	8.30pm - 9.15pm
Wednesday	Zumba	9.30am-10.30am
Thursday	Legs, Tums & Bums	6.15pm - 7.15pm
Friday	Tai Chi	9.30am - 10.30am
Friday	Spinning	10am - 11am
Saturday	Spinning	9.30am - 10.30am
Saturday	Zumba	10.00am - 11.00am
Saturday	Teen Gym	10.30am - 11.30am

Become a member of **Stratton Community Leisure Centre: Prices from £9 a year.**
Ring **01793 825525** - or email leisureinfo@strattonstmargaret.gov.uk

Hall space for hire.

Holding a function or event and wondering where to hold it. Look no further. Our Stratton Suite and Main Hall are available for hire with catering for Weddings, Birthdays and other celebrations. **Contact the Centre Manager on 01793 825525 for the latest special offers.**

Forthcoming entertainment

Saturday 30th July 2011

Quiz Night, Grange Bar.

Saturday 22nd October 2011

Majestic Dance Night. Book Early.

Street Snooker in Stratton



New to Stratton "Street Snooker" recently installed at Greenbridge Recreation Ground.

Meadowcroft Community Centre

Don't forget the Meadowcroft Community Centre for all your meeting needs. Fully equipped kitchen and good access and parking. An ideal venue for all types of events

Council Meeting Dates

All Parish Council meetings will commence at 7.00pm from October to March and at 7.30pm from April to September. Back to back meetings will commence at 6.30pm unless the agenda is large in which case they will commence at 6.00pm.

Council	17 May	28 Jun#	26 July	27 Sept	29 Nov	31 Jan	27 Mar
Finance	28 June	6 Sept	25 Oct	20 Dec	28 Feb	24 Apr	
Community Centre	31 May	19 July	20 Sept	22 Nov	24 Jan	20 Mar	
Recreation & Highways	14 June	13 Sept	11 Oct	13 Dec	14 Feb	10 Apr	
Allotments & Cemeteries	21 Jun	8 Nov	21 Feb				
Planning	7 June	5 July	2 Aug	30 Aug	4 Oct	1 Nov	6 Dec
	10 Jan	7 Feb	6 Mar	3 Apr			
Planning if required	21 June	19 July	20 Sep	18 Oct	15 Nov	20 Dec	24 Jan
	21 Feb	20 Mar	24 Apr				
Personnel	16 Jun	15 Sept	19 Jan				
Audit & Governance	12 July	18 Oct	15 Nov	17 Jan	13 Mar		

End of Year Accounts sign off meeting. Single item agenda followed by Finance Committee. The meeting will commence at 7.00pm

The Localism Bill

The much vaunted Localism Bill is expected to receive Royal Assent in November this year. The Bill covers a number of proposals to encourage local participation in local affairs including the future of planning. It has abolished the Regional Strategies and Structure Plans and has introduced Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Parish councils will be allowed to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans which will aim to help manage future development in the local area. They will be part of the development plan for the Borough and must fit in with the Core Strategy. They will be subject to an independent examination and following that process will be put to a local referendum and potentially approved if more than 50% of those who vote support it. Neighbourhood Development Orders are also part of the proposals and can be initiated by bodies such as parish councils for certain forms of development that will not require an express planning permission. Once again these will be subject to referendums.

In order to help fund new infrastructure that may be required to enable development to take place the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is to be continued. Swindon Borough Council is currently developing a local Levy pricing structure.

Other parts of the Bill include the power for local residents to instigate, via a petition, local referendums on any local issue as well as the community right to buy which will enable communities to save local assets threatened with closure. Communities will be able to bid for the ownership and management of community assets.

Another element will be the community "right to challenge" which will enable voluntary and community groups, parish councils and certain public sector employees to request to take over the running of any service the local authority currently delivers. This will enable local communities to be able to become more involved in the delivery of local services and shape them to fit their own communities.

Stratton Minibus

One of the many services provided by Stratton St Margaret Parish Council is the community minibus. The minibus came into service in 1987 and is managed on behalf of Stratton St Margaret Parish Council by Swindon Dial-a-Ride and they look after the management, maintenance and hiring of the bus. Drivers are required to be trained to the MiDAS driving standard. Stratton groups receive a 35% discount when using the Stratton community minibus so if you need to hire transport why not consider using this option first. Details of hire charges and availability can be obtained from Swindon Dial-a-Ride on 01793 617828.

SOS: Volunteer drivers needed to transport local residents every Monday to and from the Crocodile Lunch Club. Free lunch is on offer! If you can help please contact either Dial-a-Ride or the Parish Clerk.

The Annual Report

For 2010/2011 the Council's accounts will be prepared under the lighter touch audit regime.

For 2010/2011 the Council's accounts will be prepared under the lighter touch audit regime. They had previously been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (FRSSE) regulations.

The Council's principal activities are the provision of the following services;

- Stratton Leisure Centre
- Meadowcroft Community Centre
- St Margaret's Cemetery
- Green Road Cemetery
- St Philips Allotments
- White Hart Allotments
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Sports pitches

This is not an exhaustive list of services provided by the Council and there are a

variety of services delivered on behalf of the community through each of these main service delivery points.

The Council generates income through Stratton Leisure centre, Meadowcroft Community Centre, allotment fees, burial fees, hiring of recreational facilities throughout the Parish and from the Precept.

Income from services is offset against the cost of providing services and the balance is funded from the Precept. In 2010/2011 the precept required by Stratton St Margaret Parish Council was £852,730. The Precept is collected from residents and funds the services and facilities provided by the Council. It is collected by Swindon Borough Council as part of the Council Tax.

In 2010/11 Council continued to invest in

its services, buildings, equipment and workforce. Projects included the refurbishment of the toilets at the Stratton Leisure Centre, a replacement vehicle for the Recreation Ground Inspector, upgrading of the Delamere Drive Play Area and a range of formal plantings. However, the Council also embarked on a cost saving exercise to cut its overheads and achieved a saving of £109,285 during the year.

In 2011/12 the Council aims to:

- Continue to investigate and identify suitable land with the aim of providing additional allotments for local residents.
- Continue to seek additional land to extend the cemetery.
- Investigate and identify suitable land to provide additional publicly accessible open space.
- Negotiate to achieve delegated responsibility of all play areas within the Parish from the Borough with relevant funding attached
- Help develop a Neighbourhood Development Plan as part of the Core Strategy
- Continue to improve its parks, recreation areas and open spaces
- Focus on enhancing play facilities at Meadowcroft
- Improving and enhancing Merton Fields
- Improve and develop a range of partnerships with local organisations and Swindon Borough Council

In addition to these key targets, the Council has set a number of additional targets and objectives. For details of these and additional information on the targets for 2011/12 please see the Council's Corporate Plan. Both these documents are available from the Council Offices and are on the Council's website.

Financial Summary 2010/11

The following Statement of Accounts is not subject to audit but provides an overview of how your money was spent during 2010/11:

	£ Gross Expenditure	£ Income	£ Net Expenditure
DIRECT SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC			
Outside Services	(176,819)		(176,819)
Recreation Grounds	(19,482)	3,225	(16,257)
Meadowcroft Community Centre	(22,175)	16,066	(6,109)
Allotments	(857)	2,082	1,225
Cemetery	(4,678)	20,787	16,109
Grange Community Centre	(678,376)	470,697	(207,679)
Capital Projects	(113,072)	1,500	(111,572)
DEMOCRATIC, CIVIC AND CENTRAL COSTS			
Central Services	(196,380)		(196,380)
Corporate Management	(2,612)	7,246	4,634
Democratic Representation & Management	(27,630)		(27,630)
Civic Activities	(886)		(886)
Grants	(17,848)		(17,848)
	(1,260,815)	521,603	(739,212)
Annual Precept			852,730
Contribution to Earmarked Reserves			(4,233)
Net Surplus for the year			109,285
RESERVE MOVEMENTS			
	Balance April 2010	Movement for year	Balance march 2011
General Fund	282,453	109,285	391,738
Earmarked Reserves	676,597	4,233	680,830
	959,050	113,518	1,072,568