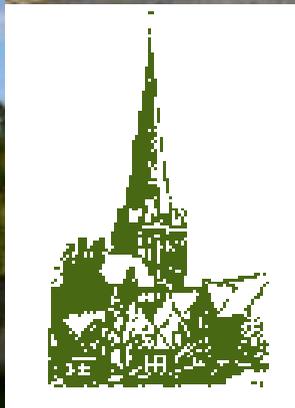


Oundle Oracle

June 2010



Annual Report



Annual Report of the Mayor, 2009-2010



My year more or less started by spearheading the Council's response to the Rural North Oundle and Thrapston plan and effectively ended with the deferment by East Northamptonshire Council of the Creed Road planning application in line with our request. One word, "infrastructure", linked these two issues and dominated the Council's strategic thinking about the pressures caused by the expansion of the town .

Planning issues large and small always feature heavily in the Council's workload. This year in particular has seen a concerted effort to influence planners, not only on specific applications but also on wider issues. Attendance at the Joint Planning Unit's Small Towns and Rural Workshops has enabled us to make our views known. There have also been various pre-application meetings with developers and other authorities. The proposed extension of Oundle's Conservation Area has also been considered.

Much time has also been spent addressing the future of our property portfolio. This year has seen the successful refurbishment and re-opening of the Queen Victoria Hall but sadly also the enforced closure of the Drill Hall. It has also seen us sell off the Cemetery Lodge and set in motion the sale of the Cemetery Chapel. These buildings were seen more as liabilities than assets and the capital receipts generated will help us with our aspirations for the provision of new and better facilities for the town.

We have also been busy looking at issues affecting tourism and trade within the town and trying to get ENC to review its decisions in relation to the funding of public conveniences and car parks and their actions in respect of the Tourist Information Centre. We have looked at the future of CCTV in the town and have monitored the policing of the town.

As a Council we have continued to support both financially and practically many local organisations, including the museum, and we shared in its delight when it won the county's Museum of the Year Award.

Let me conclude by thanking my fellow councillors and all the council staff and in particular our clerk, Debra, for all their help over the year, and you the parishioners of Oundle for your support.

Cllr. David Chapple



Looking to the Future

I am delighted to be serving as your Mayor in the coming year and I would like to take this opportunity to thank David Chapple for the hard work he did last year.

We live in uncertain and challenging times but often this also offers opportunities for us to demonstrate a renewed sense of civic direction and community energy.

Despite the economic situation, Oundle still faces considerable pressure from new housing developments. The community as a whole has been supported and listened to in relation to the Creed Road application and the pause in the process enables us to consider what infrastructure we actually do need to accommodate new housing. It is my intention that by working strongly as a Town Council and in partnership with other colleagues, stakeholders and residents, that we are able to shape a plan for Oundle by the early autumn.

It was heartening to see so many residents at the recent Town Meeting. We heard some very clear messages during the discussions regarding your concerns. The views expressed will be incorporated into our considerations for the Oundle plan.

We clearly have some work to do but we also have some very talented people to do it so I am confident that the opportunity to shape the future of our beautiful town will be positively responded to and I look forward in sharing the fruits of our labours in the autumn.

Please do contact me if you want to contribute via 270370 or paulandrewking@btinternet.com



PROPERTIES



Structural and fabric surveys of the Drill Hall and Drill Hall House have shown them to be unsuitable for public use and beyond economic repair. The roof in the Drill Hall leaks and there is extensive dry rot throughout the building. It is with great regret that the Council decided to close the building.

As for its future two options are being considered:-

- Replacement of the building with a more suitable building on the same site.
- Replacement of the building with a residential development which could include the privately owned corner site. The car park would not be reduced. This would involve building a new leisure facility at a different site.

The Council is conducting a review of other recreational facilities in the town particularly in relation to the outdated play equipment in the Recreation Ground.

The Council is very pleased by the positive comments about the Victoria Hall refurbishment and the improved state of the Council's outside spaces.



Cllr. Don Campbell

PLANNING

63 Applications were considered in the year from May 2009 to April 2010. These ranged from cropping trees, advertising signs and the erection of decking, to large scale residential development. The Council has no formal power to accept or reject applications; we act in an advisory capacity to ENC who make the final decision.

We had no objections whatever to 38 and in another 8 minor issues were raised; ENC concurred. Of the remainder concerns were expressed in 3 cases but our opinion was overruled. They related to retrospective permission for conversion of a garage to a habitable area, the erection of railings within a courtyard of the School and the construction of living accommodation at the bottom of a garden. In all other cases where objections were made, ENC took the same view.

The most notable matters were the further detail of the proposal to build an 70 bedroom hotel at the Riverside Inn including the refurbishment of the sadly dilapidated building to the entrance of our town, which we welcomed; our continued opposition to the proposal to convert the entrance to the boarded up building in West Street, where an enforcement notice has now been issued and 2 applications for infill development, considered to be overly dense.

Perhaps the most important has been the objection to the 145 houses at Creed Road which ENC Development Committee deferred pending a thorough assessment of our town infrastructure. We are committed to ensure unfettered development in the town will not exacerbate our problems of overstretched highways and parking, pressure on healthcare and education and lack of up to date leisure facilities.

Cllr. Neville Oakes

HIGHWAYS

Road congestion and parking problems continue to be a major talking-point in Oundle. After several years of nagging, negotiation and “walking the streets” of Oundle there is some light on the horizon. The County Highways Authority has made a start on mending the potholes and re-marked some of the more dangerous junctions. Some of the designated parking areas have been brought up to standard, allowing for better enforcement and thus a quicker turnover of vehicles.



We are now in a position to continue the installation of protective bollards around the market-place, in order to preserve the York Stone paved area. County Highways has firm plans in place to reconfigure the difficult junction at Herne Road.

After numerous site meetings, a lot of false starts, changes in County personnel and being seen as a low funding priority we welcome the new scheme for Milton Road. Thanks to the Safer Routes to School Funding Scheme a new pedestrian crossing and improvements to the verges are imminent.

Cllr. Val Chesser

YOUTH & LEISURE

Over the last three months the process of consultation with people and organisations in the town has been ongoing. What has emerged from the exercise is that there is no real consensus on what should be done to improve the quality of leisure facilities in the town.

On the one hand there are those who argue that the town does not need any more facilities or that people should simply travel to other destinations such as Corby and Peterborough. At the other extreme, there are those who argue in favour of a building encompassing a full range of facilities including a swimming pool, a sports hall, a café, a bar, and meeting rooms. There are all shades of opinion in between. It is fair to say that there are equally divergent views on where such a facility should be sited.

Your council has therefore been encouraged to keep all options open at this stage. No definitive decisions have been made and the intention remains to investigate the full range of alternatives.

Talks have been held with the East Northamptonshire Council to investigate where any new facility could be constructed. We have received preliminary feedback on a number of sites, but further discussion is required before we are in a position to draw any firm conclusions.

We do intend to develop cost models so that we will be in a position to assess the costs versus the benefits of each of the options when the time eventually comes to make a decision. This work is still at a very early stage.

We will keep you informed as further progress is made.

Cllr. Philip Rose

ENVIRONMENT

Visitors from near and far continue to enjoy Snipe Meadow. Recent surveys show that more active management of the reserve is needed. Regular grazing would help to control the grass for the benefit of all the wild life, particularly the snipe whose numbers are down this year.

Work was done on the board walk this year. Volunteers are still being sought to help maintain the meadow.

Cllr. Len Johnson

Statement of Accounts

At the June 3rd meeting of the Council the accounts for 2009-10 were approved. They will be submitted for External Audit by June 30th and the full detail is available for inspection at the Courthouse.

	Year ending	
	31 Mar. 2009	31Mar. 2010
	£	£
Balances brought forward	210 030	635 857
Precept (Oundle Council Tax)	192 000	225 035
Total other receipts (inc Market, Property, Cemetery)	587, 135	283 153
Staff Costs (inc Salaries, PAYE & NIC, pensions, expenses)	142 337	119 157
Loan Interest/ Capital Repayments (QVH, Courthouse, Skateboard)	9 800	27 587
Total other payments	201 171	580 023
Balances carried forward	635 857	417 278
Total Cash & short term investments	610 819	414 603
Total Fixed assets	2 283 007	2 050 097
Total borrowings (Outstanding Capital balance)	529 086	519 405

The large balance at the start of the year included the £460 000 borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board for the QVH project.

The sale of the Cemetery Lodge has reduced the value of the fixed assets. The Council is only allowed, by law, to use the net receipt from the sale for a capital project or to repay loans. We have decided to keep this sum available for the Leisure Facility replacement. This £172 179 is now in the balances carried forward. There is a further £29 000, linked to developments, in the end of year balance whose use is restricted.

Stripping out the QVH project and the Cemetery Lodge from the income and expenditure figures can give a reasonable picture of “normal” activity, shown in the charts below. However during the year the Council stopped paying the Business Rate for the St.Osyth’s Lane Car Park, but also got a rebate of nearly £30 000 from ENC. This explains the One Off receipt in income; it definitely won’t happen again.

The Council examines the management accounts monthly and the Finance Working Party undertakes a detailed review quarterly.

During the course of the year the Council made grants to the Queen Victoria Hall Charity of £419,000 for the refurbishment project; £13 000 was granted towards its running costs. In addition the Council made grants to the following organisations.

Arts	£	Community	£
Oundle International Festival	1000	Oundle Scout & Guide HQ	1000
Oundle & District Choral Society	500	Oundle Trade Association	1000
Rutland Sinfonia	250	Oundle Carnival	500
Oundle Festival of Literature	500	Chattabox Holiday Club	2000
Oundle Festival of Music & Drama	50	Oundle Museum Trust	500
Prince William School	500	Volunteer Action	960
		Oundle First Responders	250
		CHAT Youth Counselling	2000
Total	2800	Total	8210

Oundle organisations wishing to be considered for a grant this year should request an application form. The closing date for completed forms is July 1st.

Cllr. Gwen Radcliffe

Forthcoming Events



Following the hugely successful re-introduction of Carnival to Oundle last summer, another packed day of celebration is due to take place on **Saturday 19th June**.

Similar to last year, the day will be split into three parts starting with a traditional Carnival Parade through the streets of Oundle setting off at **midday**. The parade will finish at the Rugby Club where an afternoon of family entertainment awaits around the Carnival marquee and two events arenas.

There will be a large range of fairground rides, traders stalls, music and displays with the highlight of the afternoon being a daring landing in the main arena by the Sibson Parachute Display Team, who will deliver the Carnival Flag. In the evening an eclectic collection of local bands and musicians will entertain Carnival goers in an informal concert until the grand finale of a spectacular fireworks display.





“We were overwhelmed with positive responses and very proud of the support shown by the whole community to the return of the Carnival to Oundle last summer.” commented Carnival Chairman, Philip Amps. “The important points to remember are that everything is free to attend, there will be something for everyone and if we do as well as last year we will raise thousands for local charities”.

Keep an eye out for a Carnival Programme for full details of the running order of the day and Carnival information. Programmes and tickets for the Carnival Mega Raffle will be available prior to the event, at the Farmers Market, from Smiths Deli Bar and at Amps Fine Wines.

If you want to check up on the full programme or the latest Carnival news then please visit www.oundlecarnival.co.uk.

Oundle INTERNATIONAL festival

16th – 25th JULY

Oundle International Festival opens on 16th July, with almost 30 events featuring high calibre artists from the worlds of classical music, folk and world music, alongside children’s events, open-air theatre, exhibitions and organ recitals.

Join the party with over 5,000 other revellers on Saturday 17th July with headlining bands **Showaddywaddy** and **The Counterfeit Stones** plus an explosive fireworks finale.



An **English Food Market** in the Oundle Market Place on Saturday 17th July brings together specialist producers from around the country plus demonstrations and sampling opportunities.

Highlights include **Aurora Orchestra**, one of the most dynamic and innovative emerging forces on the British classical music scene and the **Orlando Consort** with a ground-breaking cross-genre programme - ‘*Mantra*, Musical Conversations across the Indian Ocean’.



Following workshops earlier in the year local singers will perform the **Faure Requiem** at St.Peter's Church on Sunday July 18th conducted by **David Hill** of the BBC Concert Singers.

Children's events include a performance of **James and the Giant Peach**, by Illyria; the Classic Buskers with **We're all going to the Zoo**, and **WOOFYT Workshops** – music and technology workshops for all ages.

The Exhibition, entitled **Harmony, Ratio and the Cosmos**, uses nature and its relationship with the Golden Ratio as its theme.

Tickets from the NEW Festival Box Office at 4 New Street, Oundle, on 01832 274734 or online at www.oundlefestival.org.uk.



Festival Round Up

Oundle Festival of Music & Drama would like to thank again all the sponsors from the local retail, business and professional community of Oundle and surrounding villages for their support for the 2010 Festival.

The Young Performer of the Year Kalya Wilson from Weldon was presented with the Oundle Town Council prize.



The 2010 Oundle Young Musician of the Year was Charlotte McAuliffe a cellist from Peterborough.

There is an opportunity to hear the 2009 Oundle Young Musician of the Year, harpist Elizabeth Bass, playing at Oundle International Festival on Monday July 19th. She will join Eleanor Turner for a Twilight Recital

Les Saisons de la Harpe.

Katy Smith, the 2008 Oundle Young Musician of the Year, recently reached the strings final of the BBC Young Musician of the Year. Good luck to them all in their future careers.

Could it be you in 2011?

2011 Festival March 30th to April 2nd www.ofmd.org.uk

OUNDL E

FESTIVAL *of* LITERATURE

Oundle Festival of Literature got off to a fine start with some magnificent ,eye-catching shopwindow display entries for our competition. We went “Poetry Potty” with poems “posted” all over the town. Community events

included a sell-out Murder Mystery evening at the newly re-furbished Victoria Hall. As usual we had a strong programme of events for children, which gave youngsters from local schools the chance to meet and be entertained by their favourite authors.

Our adult programme featured our usual mix of literary luminaries and experts covering a wide range of topics from mathematics to movies, climate change to Churchill and painters to poets. A first this year was a succesful Readers Day held in conjunction with Northamptonshire Library service.

Our other big success has been our extended programme of All Year Events which we are able to run as a result of obtaining Arts Council funding. We are indebted to our Friends and Sponsors for their enthusiastic support.



New Councillor

This year there has been a significant change in the membership of the Town Council. Following the election on May 27th the Council is now up to full strength again.

On Thursday 3rd June the Council were delighted to welcome our newly elected member Lynda Purser, a long-time resident of the town and already well known for all her work with the International Festival and Volunteer Action.

The next opportunity to stand for the council is in May 2011, when all 14 places will be up for election. The Oracle will keep you informed.



CHAT

Confidential Help Advice Time

CHAT offers free confidential youth counselling in rural East Northants, based at Oundle Town Council offices and has been in operation for over 10 years. We are managed by a voluntary Management Committee including Oundle Town Council Representatives, a County Council Representative, as well as other highly valued individuals.

Always available for a CHAT!

We provide our services directly from our office and under Service Level Agreements at Prince William and Oundle and Kings Cliffe Middle Schools. We are hoping to extend our provision to cover more of the immediate area in the future. Our service is provided by 2 part time counsellors and, at present, 1 volunteer supporting up to 25 clients a week aged from 9 to 25 years. CHAT operates on an appointment system and our contact details are below.

Funding

After development funding from Oundle and Thrapston Town Councils, Northamptonshire County Council met the majority of expenditure for some years. When this was

withdrawn we were lucky to be supported by BBC Children in Need funding which has just come to an end.

CHAT is now in the very fortunate position of being supported by the PCT (Primary Care Trust) who are offering a grant for one year. The continued support of Oundle Town Council and our Northants County Council representative will mean income is closer to current expenditure, but there is still a gap.

However now that we have attained Charitable Status we will be able to apply for further funds to help us to continue to develop and provide **Confidential Help Advice and Time** to the young people of this area. Donations can also now be gift aided and we are hopeful that, with local support, we will not have to reduce our client numbers.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to our fully qualified staff, the hours put in by the Management Committee and all those who fund our existence. Thank you all!

Denise Slater

Chair of the Management Committee

CHAT Oundle, The Courthouse, Mill Road, Oundle, PE8 4BW 274422

Oundle is extremely lucky to have many forward looking sports clubs providing a wide range of activities for the community. The junior sections are particularly strong in many. The efforts of the members, parents and volunteer coaches are recognised, not only in Northamptonshire, but also nationally.

Congratulations **Oundle Town Rowing Club** **2010 CCPR Club of the Year**



CCPR's President, HRH Prince Edward, presented first prize in its national Sports Club of the Year Competition to Oundle Town Rowing Club at a Gala dinner in London on Tuesday 4th May.



Each year, CCPR awards the prestigious Sports Club of the Year prizes to clubs which demonstrate exemplary commitment to their members, to their local communities and to their sports. John Milborne, Club Captain said, "This fabulous accolade is a tribute to the hard work of all club members, many of whom volunteer a huge amount of time and energy to support the work of the club."

The award was supported by a £6,000 prize which will be used to

develop the club's aims and objectives.

Oundle Town Rowing Club is a fully inclusive Community Sports Club and welcomes members of all abilities and ages. It has a strong competitive group of adults and juniors who take part regularly in Regattas and Head Races. In addition, there is have a large group of recreational rowers and a growing number of disabled and visually impaired rowers.

Interested in trying rowing as a sport or just want more information?

Visit www.oundletownrc.org.uk or contact the Club Secretary on 01832 275802.



Contact info@oundle.gov.uk to update your club's information on the Council website

Twinning News

In May we were delighted to welcome 26 visitors from our twin town of **Nauort**. Led by Reiner Metzen the group included the Nauort Mayor and his wife and several youngsters, from 4 years old.

Blessed with fine weather after a 12 hour coach trip overnight, the group, accompanied by their Oundle host families (many of whom had not hosted before). The varied programme enjoyed by all included a splendid evening meal with music by the visitors at Oundle Golf Club and a day out to Chatsworth House in Derbyshire.



Frank Herrmann, Paul Weetman &
David Moore ODTA Chairman

After free time to visit local towns, the visit ended with a delicious barbecue ably cooked by Paul and Jean Weetman at Anne Brown's Arabian horse stud in Elmington. The Nauort saxophone players



gave a charming and varied concert, against the backdrop of newly born foals in the field behind.

Oundle Town Council was honoured for an hour on the Thursday evening by the presence of Frank Herrmann, Nauort Mayor, at its Annual Council Meeting where the new Oundle Mayor was elected. Warm greetings were exchanged on behalf of the two towns.

Over the carnival weekend 19th-20th June, Oundle is hosting about 40 visitors from our French Twin Town of **Andrésy**. This year, the group includes many young people, including an under-9 football team and a 14yr-olds' Badminton team.

There will also be representatives from other sports and interests (rugby, painting etc) meeting their Oundle counterparts - as well as some old friends from previous exchanges.

Cllr. Chris Elliot

Council Meetings

July 1st July 15th Sept 2nd Sept 16th Oct 7th

Meetings are held at the Courthouse starting at 7.30pm.

A public participation spot is provided towards the beginning of each meeting as your attendance at all Council meetings is most welcome. This is for contributions relating to the agenda.

If you wish to speak on a planning application please advise the Clerk to the Council at least 48 hours in advance.

Additionally if you want to ask questions

or share your views on Oundle issues

join us at the Courthouse for informal discussions

from 6.45pm to 7.30pm on

Thursday July 1st and Thursday Oct 7th.

Councillor Contact Details

Don CAMPBELL	272722	Neville OAKES	275818
David CHAPPLE	273877	Sue OAKES	275818
Val CHESSER	272217	Mark ORMROD	272175
Chris COX	273485	Lynda PURSER	274414
Chris ELLIOT	275333	Gwen RADCLIFFE	273191
Len JOHNSON	272323	Philip ROSE	272520
Paul KING	270370	June ROUND	275137

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