

# **THORNE MOORENDS TOWN COUNCIL**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13**

### **Council**

1. The Town Council consists of 15 Councillors 9 representing Thorne Ward, and 6 representing Moorends Ward. They are elected on a 4 year cycle, with the next full election due in 2015. Any vacancies that occur during this period are filled either by election or co-option.
2. The Town Council's main responsibilities are the provision and management of a range of community buildings, sports grounds, the Park, other open spaces, and the Cemetery. The Council also has a representative and influencing role in promoting Thorne and Moorends to other agencies and organisations including on planning issues. It also helps the promotion of events and community activities. It works in partnership with other agencies to promote the town, notably the Doncaster Council Locality team.
3. The composition of the Council during 2012-13 was as follows:

Cllr Rachel Durant (13) (Mayor)

Cllr George Derx (10) (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr Mark Houlbrook (13) (Leader and Chair of Policy and Resources Committee)

Cllr Joe Blackham (11) (Deputy Leader and vice Chair of Policy and Resources Committee)

Cllr Susan Durant (13) (Chair Planning and Amenities Committee)

Cllr Annie Farrand (12) (Vice Chair Planning and Amenities Committee)

Cllr Kevin Abell (12)

Cllr Carol Blackham (9)

Cllr Tony Brookes (5)

Cllr Ron Powell (8) (from June 2013)

Cllr Karen Redmile (2)

Cllr Richard Walker (3)

Cllr Martin Williams (3)

Cllr Maurice Chowings (2) (to August 2012)

Cllr Alison Wilson (2) (to August 2012)

Cllr Annie Jones (4) (from November 2012)

Cllr Rob Porter (6) (from November 2012)

The figure in brackets shows the number of meetings attended out of a maximum of 13 but does not include working group, steering group and third party meetings, which are attended by Councillors on a weekly basis. Currently, representation on the Councils working groups is as follows:

#### **Moorends Welfare and Recreation Ground Working Group:**

Cllr Mark Houlbrook

Cllr Susan Durant

Cllr Rachel Durant

Cllr Annie Farrand

Cllr George Derx

Cllr Joe Blackham

Cllr Ron Powell

The Council is also currently working with the key users of this site to develop a vision for the future of the Welfare Ground.



Town Council Events Working Group

Cllr Mark Houlbrook

Cllr Susan Durant

Cllr Rachel Durant

Cllr Annie Farrand

Cllr George Derx

Cllr Joe Blackham

Cllr Ron Powell

This working group is also attended by interested members of the Public including representation from Community Group 'Thorne Needs You'. This Group organised the Jubilee Festival Day and the Moorends Christmas Concert.



#### Community Buildings Working Group

Cllr Mark Houlbrook  
Cllr Susan Durant  
Cllr Rachel Durant  
Cllr Annie Farrand  
Cllr George Derx  
Cllr Joe Blackham

#### Neighbourhood Planning Working Group

Cllr Mark Houlbrook  
Cllr Susan Durant  
Cllr Rachel Durant  
Cllr Annie Farrand  
Cllr George Derx  
Cllr Joe Blackham  
Cllr Ron Powell  
Cllr Rob Porter

4. The Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer is Jeremy Sherlock

#### **Key Achievements 2012-13**

5. **Management and Maintenance** – a substantial part of Council funding and activity goes towards managing the 23 sites in Council ownership which include community buildings, sports grounds, parks, cemetery, and informal open space. The Council have a small team of outdoor staff, as well as caretakers for the main buildings.
6. **Moorends Welfare Ground** – the Council has been working closely with the main users of the site, and has commenced a consultation on its future. Expenditure has been on essential repairs, and tackling health and safety issues, such as the provision of new spectator fencing for the Rugby Pitch and main football pitch. The Bowls Club have been provided with a new toilet building to partly replace the building that was burned down.
7. **Thorne Cemetery** – following the banning of general vehicle access to the Cemetery the entrance area was remodelled to make it more suitable for pedestrians, elderly and disabled. This included resurfacing, fencing, and the removal of potential trip hazards. There was also extensive safety work undertaken to trees, including the removal of a number that were damaging pathways and graves.



8. **Thorne Allotments** – with the help of some Community First grant assistance, the Council have worked with the newly formed Allotments Society to provide a new amenity building on the site. This included the removal of an old building, and the provision of a new electricity supply.
9. **Moorends Community Centre** – the Council secured a grant for major improvements to the stage to provide a better facility for concerts and performances. There are now new curtains, and a safe access to the stage area. This has been supplemented by the purchase of new sound and light systems. The facility was used for the first time for the Christmas event.



10. **Thorne Memorial Park** – some new planting was undertaken including a new tree, and the planting of rose beds. Whilst these are beginning to establish there has sadly been some vandalism that will need to be addressed.

11. **Buntings Wood** – the status of Buntings Wood has been formalised with the approval of byelaws and its formal declaration as a Local Nature Reserve. The Friends of Buntings Wood group are continuing their excellent work in developing this area as a fantastic community asset.



12. **Events** – the Town Council continued to support events including the Summer Fayre and Fireworks display. Particularly noteworthy was the very successful Jubilee event with its traditional entertainment and children's games, and the Moorends Christmas Event which raised around £500 for charity.



13. **Planning** – a number of special meetings were held to consider the Doncaster Sites and Policies Development Plan. Objections were made to a number of site allocations particularly in the Moorends area. The majority of amendments requested by the Town Council were included in the final draft Plan which will be going to Inquiry later on this year.

## Priorities and Challenges 2013-14

14. **Neighbourhood Planning** – the Council is committed in producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Thorne and Moorends to ensure that future development in the Town best meets the interests of the local community. Work has already started on the production of the Plan, with the main focus during 2013-14 being widespread and extensive community consultation so that the views of the community can be incorporated into the final document. For more information visit: [www.tmplan.org](http://www.tmplan.org)
15. **Thorne Town Centre** –the Council is keen to encourage developments and initiatives that tackle the vacant buildings and unsightly sites within the Town Centre, and promotes its economic health. This will be primarily through advocacy and partnership, working with other landowners, funders and Doncaster Council to find ways to unlock potential schemes. This includes the potential use of Council owned sites to help facilitate schemes. The Council wishes to work closely with existing businesses to understand their issues and help where possible. Recently a “Spring Clean” event was held where Councillors undertook a tidy up to promote the Neighbourhood Planning initiative.

The Council have also agreed to take over responsibility for the Public Toilets in the Town centre to prevent their closure. These will be substantially refurbished later on this year.



16. **Moorends Welfare Ground** – the Council have developed a scheme and submitted a grant application for the refurbishment of the Pavilion. Assuming this is successful the work will be undertaken in the Autumn. The other main priority will be tackling drainage issues on the site, particularly near to the Park Road entrance, and improving the pitches. This work will compliment the significant effort made by the Council in 2012 – 2013 to make the Site Health and Safety Compliant and fit for purpose in the interim until a project is finalised.
17. **Moorends Gala** – the Council is committed to holding a Sports Gala at Moorends to supplement other events in the Town. We are working closely with the main sports teams on the site to

develop an event which is not only entertaining for the community, but also promotes increased participation in sport.

18. **Thorne Memorial Park** – the Council have developed a scheme for the improvement of the walled garden area, and are currently negotiating with Doncaster MBC for S106 (planning gain) funding to deliver the scheme. It has also been agreed that the toilets on South Parade which have been closed for some years will be transferred from Doncaster MBC to the Town Council. These will be improved, and will be open during the summer, and for any events.
19. **Thorne Cemetery** – You will note that extensive improvements have been made to improve disability access at the Cemetery but the wet weather during 2012-13 created particular challenges for maintenance. To supplement the existing staff, and to carry out other improvements the Council have taken on a horticultural apprentice. The other priority will be to carry out repairs on the pathways, which have been damaged by tree roots.
20. **Canal Bridge** – the swing bridge in Hatfield Road is proving increasingly unreliable. The Council have identified a number of significant areas of work that are needed to improve it. A start will be made on this during 2013-14 which in the long term will reduce the problems that this creates

## **Finance**

21. The Annual Return statement is as follows:

	2011/12	2012/13
Balances brought forward	£135,746	£166,202
Annual Precept	£346,847	£365,746
Other receipts	£179,390	£153,142
Staff costs	(£184,675)	(£187,130)
Loan interest/ capital repayments	(£16,469)	(£16,089)
Total other payments	(£294,637)	(£370,447)
Balances carried forward	£166,202	£111,424
Total cash and investments	£355,309	£107,453
Total fixed assets	£3,082,534	£3,151,594
Total borrowings	£163,460	£153,554

22. The revenue reserve is virtually unchanged as income and expenditure closely balanced. The capital reserve has reduced due to expenditure at the Cemetery, allotments and Welfare Ground.
23. These figures have been reviewed by the Council's independent Accountants. Further details are available from the Clerk on request.

24. The 2013-14 budget is as follows:

	Income	Expenditure
Assembly Rooms	£7,000	£25,500
Administration		£145,000
Winning Post	£24,000	£45,500
Moorends CC	£8,000	£16,000
Grants and S 137		£6,800
Miscellaneous	£376,395	£28,000
Vehicles and equipment		£19,000
Loan Charges		£16,000
Cemetery	£62,500	£63,000
Market	£11,000	£13,500
Allotments	£600	£1,500
Memorial Park/ Toll Bar	£3,500	£49,000
Welfare Ground	£3,000	£35,000
Wyke Gate	£1,000	£11,000
Coulman	£8,000	£20,000
Delves	£5,500	£4,200
Buntings Wood	£600	£1,000
Election expenses		£11,095
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£511,095</b>	<b>£511,095</b>