

# **BRADWAY ACTION GROUP**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 11th OCTOBER 2011**

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

In many ways, 2010/11 has been a frustrating year. To begin with, all the work involved in putting together a petition calling for traffic priorities at Tinker's Corner to be clarified came to nought when, first, the City Council wouldn't treat it as a petition at all in the absence of petitioners addresses and then the highways department refused to accept that there was a problem. Needless to say, near misses continue to occur on a daily basis, and I have personally witnessed two actual collisions in recent months. Then there was the business with our local bank, where despite a strong campaign by many local residents, our local councillors and BAG, supported by our MP Nick Clegg (the Deputy Prime Minister) and the full City Council, the advertised closure went ahead regardless in July. And twelve months on, despite much prompting, there is still no real progress to report on our application to have Village Green status conferred upon the Old School Field.

Our efforts to improve our local environment have continued, however, with another 500 daffodil and 1000 crocus bulbs planted last autumn (more are awaiting our attention) and regular maintenance sessions on the Old School Field. The latter have involved litter picking, minor maintenance of the playground and strimming around the various pieces of equipment. We also planted another willow tree. Further afield, we undertook a general litter pick of the area in the spring, and restocked and maintained the planters on Bradway Road and Twentywell lane. We were pleased to note that four of the bird boxes we put up in Poynton Wood attracted tenants this year.

Several members and others contributed to keeping local footways clear of snow and ice during the appalling winter, two having received formal training as snow wardens. We also requested the City Council to extend the winter gritting route in future from Tinker's Corner down Prospect Road to the Old Mother Recap to enable the buses to keep running.

The year has seen two minor elements of the Traffic Action Plan put in place: the "speed indicator device" on Twentywell Lane and the "advance" stop sign on the approach to Tinker's Corner, but the latter, at least, seems to have made little difference to driver behaviour. There is some suggestion that the number of HGVs using Prospect Road, and possibly Twentywell Lane, has increased following the introduction of the weight limit on Bocking Lane. The situation is being monitored and will be reported to the City Council if necessary.

An appeal to TM Travel failed to save the 293 bus route in its original form, and a request to the operator of the replacement service to make minor adjustments to the timetable in order to provide a better connection to trains to and from the Hope Valley at Dore station met with no success. The latest twist to this saga will be discussed in more detail under item 6 of the agenda.

Once again, it was another quiet year so far as planning applications were concerned, with objections sent in regarding only one, the redevelopment of the site of No 25 Prospect Road, where concerns over drainage were cited. The closure of The Bradway pub prompted action to prevent the adjacent public right of way through to the Recreation Ground from being blocked off. This resulted in a new "public footpath" sign being erected.

Both our Open Meetings were well attended. The first featured a useful debate about the merits of a proposal to create a "community reserve and allotment" in part of Poynton Wood, the second included a talk by Jenny Patient entitled "Energy Saving at Home". Our annual "bounds walk" with Tony Smith attracted good numbers.

The Fun Day was our best yet in terms of net income (£660), thanks partly to a generous grant from the City Council to offset our expenses. This included a large contribution towards the cost of the climbing wall. Without this, the wall would not have been viable, so we may have to think of an alternative attraction in future.

There have been several incidents of vandalism to contend with. During the school Easter holidays, some damage was caused to the fence around the playground and a spate of fires was started on the Recreation Ground. Then in June, we were dismayed to learn that the picnic bench had been burned to the ground after a prank went wrong. However, the perpetrators of the latter owned up, and took part in the July litter pick as reparation. They subsequently helped to construct two new picnic benches as well – a pretty satisfactory outcome all round. Just a week later another group of youths was seen vandalising the older willow tree, but after being read the riot act, no further such incidents have occurred and the tree should survive, albeit minus a few small branches.

We have continued to manage the distribution of the Bradway Bugle, and have explored options for increasing our involvement in its production. Several students are now assisting with this process.

The Ward Forum for Dore and Totley continues to enjoy our support, although our role in its management has declined over the year. We attend meetings of the South West Community Assembly whenever possible, particularly when relevant items feature on the agenda, although we find it difficult to do the same with respect to the South Community Assembly which inconveniently also covers part of Bradway.

Once again, all our activities this year have been insured, thanks to a grant of £411 from the South Yorkshire Community Foundation. The high cost of insurance is a major concern. Without the grant, it would take up a large part of our income. A request for community groups to be insured free of charge under the auspices of the “Big Society” has thus far fallen upon deaf ears.

Looking to the future, our immediate plans include an imminent application to have Village Green status conferred upon the Recreation Ground, the development of a scheme to install Christmas lights outside the shops at the top of Twentywell Lane, and environmental improvements in the vicinity of the new entrance to the Annexe. Subject to funding, we also hope to be able to replace the surface of the playground with something more suitable. With potentially radical changes to the planning system in prospect via the Localism Bill and revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework, and proposals for changing parliamentary constituency boundaries, we have a challenging year in prospect. Hopefully the latter will present an opportunity to get Bradway back together again!

Once again, I should like to thank the Committee for all their efforts, and the many local people who have given us their help and support over the year. This includes all those who turned up to plant the bulbs and the new willow tree, the litter pickers, those who maintain the planters, the many people who rally round to do their bit for the Fun Day or provide raffle prizes, etc., and the management of the Old Mother Redcap, where we hold our Committee meetings. I'd particularly like to remember with gratitude our former Membership Secretary, Rachel Smith, who sadly lost her battle with leukaemia at the start of the year.

Currently, almost 150 households are members of BAG, representing over 250 individual residents. Many have provided donations in addition to their nominal membership fee, for which we are extremely grateful. I hope you will all continue your membership in 2012, and encourage others to join. The more members we have, the more we can claim to represent the local community. We plan to hold a specific membership drive in 2012.

Peter Stubbs