

## **Bromsgrove District Council**

### **Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Worcestershire Regulatory Services**

#### **Aligned to Help me to Keep my Place Safe and Looking Good**

I am pleased to present my report to councillors for the areas covered by my portfolio. In so doing I would like to look back over recent events and forward to emerging issues affecting our council and our residents.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES:**

##### **BEREAVEMENT SERVICES**

##### **BROMSGROVE NORTH CEMETERY, BARLEY MOW LANE, CATSHILL**

Following a period of works which commenced on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2016, the construction of the necessary infrastructure including the main access road, footpaths, fencing, surface water drainage with off-site infiltration soak away system and ancillary works is nearing completion. We will shortly be moving into the process of researching and consulting on the options that we will provide on the new site.

Consultation with regards to different memorial and burial options have started and various companies are now submitting quotations.

##### **WASTE COLLECTIONS**

- Filming of new recycling awareness sketches took place in November 16 and videos were circulated throughout December on social media and have been added to the council's You Tube profile and to be used elsewhere;
- Recycling leaflets are currently being delivered to all houses in the District using pictorial messages to aid understanding in what materials can be recycled.
- New recycling awareness tags were launched in March 17 to assist in the education of residents regarding contamination.
- In Cab units are now fitted to all RCV's working on both domestic and recycling collections. This is currently being trialled to assess coverage areas and should be live from late November to early December 16. These units allow the crews to report issues such as bins going in the backs of trucks, or bins not out, in real time and they also allow us to see where the vehicles are on their rounds.
- Trade waste is now making a small surplus as officers continue to promote the service;

- Officers have managed to retrieve around 20 customers who had previously left the Trade Waste Service, resulting in an increase in revenue and extra positive publicity;
- Trade Waste leaflets are continuing to be used in the business rates details for 17/18 financial year;
- The Business waste recycling service commenced April 1 17;
- Officers are currently exploring options to work with neighbouring authorities.

#### Garden Waste:

- Garden waste fees increased to £42.00 from February 17.

#### Sweepers:

- Route optimisation software has been recently purchased (September 16) and is currently being worked on and reviewed by officers.

### **BDC PLACE TEAMS**

Place working is now finishing its second year and has evolved with some successes, and exposed some areas where further evolution is needed to strike the right balance across the District.

The 2016/17 financial year was a successful year in the main, with good standards maintained across the majority of the district with the exception of a few known trouble spots that have additional challenges to maintain such as high speed rural roads that require traffic management to work safely, and areas where demand is simply at a high level requiring a disproportionate level of resources.

We have been working to identify where works should be carried out by partner organisations that have historically been carried out by BDC, and this has freed up resources for better use on our genuine responsibilities, and we will continue to refine this and work closer with our partners at WCC, BDHT & Parishes. Some of these may lead to additional income in the longer term, although this will likely be low level given the financial pressures our partners are also facing at the moment.

Particular highlights in 2016/17 were:

- An increasing number of Bulky Waste collections, which generate additional income for the council, with over 1600 collections carried out since April.

- Over 12,600 jobs carried out across the district ranging from litter picking and fly tip removals, through to hedge cutting and litter bin emptying.

Fly tipping was a significant impact on the district during 2016/17, with 1,829 fly tips collected during the financial year at an estimated cost to BDC of £87,000 in staff and vehicle costs. These have ranged from small single items through to significant lorry loads requiring our HIAB to remove using large skips and the hydraulic grab.

Our relationship with BDHT has continued to develop, and we are now carrying out a wide range of paid clearance jobs on their behalf whilst working to reduce the impact of fly tipping on their bin stores. Working closely with our refuse team, we have now agreed a more streamlined approach with BDHT to address the problems at the remaining trouble spots where residents are fly tipping and causing other problems, so that issues can be escalated and resolved rather than creating additional work and cost for both BDHT and BDC.

We are still working closely with WCC and have completed projects on the Bromsgrove Highway, A38, and the Oakalls estate to share resources and increase the standard of maintenance in line with our strategic purpose, but with minimal cost impact on either BDC or WCC. This has been highly successful to date and we are to repeat the full maintenance on the Bromsgrove Highway in 2017/18 at WCC's expense, with the first of these planned for early May.

Priorities for the year ahead are:

- To further improve the grass cutting service across the district
- Remove the chewing gum from Bromsgrove High Street and increase awareness of this issue alongside routine work to keep the surface up to a high standard.
- Increase the efficiency of our bulky waste collection service to continue providing a high value service, and free resources for our other services across the district.
- Work to identify opportunities to work with our existing partners to raise additional income through services across the district where we have the resources and skills to provide support.

### **BDC ENFORCEMENT HIGHLIGHTS**

- April 2016 - £300 FPN paid for breach of 'Duty of Care' for disposal of waste after local resident identified fly tipping. Covered in local press.
- April 2016 – Joint stop and search project took place with the police in the Wythall area to tackle illegal transporting of waste and fly tipping. No breaches found.

- A successful prosecution for fly tipping (Jan 2017) through the use of surveillance cameras at a known fly tipping hotspot, and evidence gathered on a number of other small commercial fly tippers (man & van) that are being followed up for this and other locations across the district.
- Joint working with Co-ordinators to gather evidence on fly tips and issue warning letters where prosecution not appropriate.
- Routine patrols in Bromsgrove Town Centre to address issues arising from local businesses and work with them to resolve them:
  - Fast food outlets in Bromsgrove now starting to carry out additional litter picking as part of their closing routine after being spoken to by our enforcement officer. Still working well 12 months on.
  - Pubs have been spoken to about smoking related litter and are continuing to support us on this in Bromsgrove Town Centre.
  - New Market organisers working with us to address market waste being disposed of in our litter bins. Issue reduced, but now involving the Town Centre Manager in this process to address few remaining issues.
- Closer working with Parish Councils regarding littering, fly tipping and dog fouling – letter dropped warning letters regarding known issues on several roads across Bromsgrove. A project is starting from Easter 2017 to address littering in Hagley through increased education and enforcement activity, which will then be reviewed and applied as a template for other areas in the district where needed as well.
- 254 Abandoned Vehicles investigated and dealt with since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.
- On-going partnership with Enforcement teams from Wychavon, Wyre Forest and Worcester City to share best practice in tackling environmental crime.

## **NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE WATER MANAGEMENT**

Major Schemes achieved or ongoing:

1. Hagley - Infrastructure Scheme working with STW Ltd, Environment Agency and Highways to reduce flood risk in Hagley through improving the capacity of watercourses, and improving conveyance through the highway drainage network and STW surface water sewers.
2. Callow Brook - Completed the flood storage pools in November 2015 and we have since undertaken earth moving to reduce ground levels following concerns of residents. Planting has now been completed, and the scheme has been shown to work well during storm events.
3. Bournheath – Flood risk modelling undertaken to identify the risks from all sources of flooding. Design work for a scheme to reduce flood risk to around 20 properties in the village, properties and highways is underway. Working in partnership with STW Ltd and WCC Highways to also reduce foul sewer flooding. Funding of £99k has been requested from the Environment Agency.
4. Bromsgrove Town Surface Water Management Plan Group - Membership includes NWWM, EA, BDC Environmental Services, Highways, STW Ltd and Highways England. The group focuses on 9 locations, and flood risk has already been reduced at a number of locations around the town. The EA are undertaking flood risk modelling at present – following this will be investigations into whether a major flood defence scheme is warranted and feasible.
5. A38 Charford - Work to investigate opportunities for funding and works with STW, Highways, Economic Development, EA. Early stages at present of understanding infrastructure and complexity of issues. A focus group has been formed and some initial safety works are programmed.

Flood investigations and minor schemes:

1. Wast Hills Lane – drainage infrastructure cleansing and improvement works.
2. Dagnell End Road - drainage infrastructure cleansing and improvement works.
3. Lea End Lane - drainage infrastructure cleansing and improvement works.
4. Bentley Pauncefoot and Stoke Prior – drainage infrastructure improvements with the Parish Lengthsman.
5. Sidemoor School – culvert removal and improved flow conveyance.
6. Houndsfield Lane - site clearance of fly-tipping to reinstate flow in the watercourse, working with Rooftop Housing and BDC Environmental Services.
7. Truemans Heath Lane - Cross Boundary working with Solihull on Highway flooding issues.
8. A448 – Working with Highways on improved drainage and reducing runoff onto the highway.

9. Blackwell Road – ditch and footpath improvement works in conjunction with WCC rights of way and Parish Council.
10. Bromsgrove Market Hall – Involvement through the planning process to have the Spadesbourne Brook naturalised through the site; work is now complete.

#### General and ongoing activities:

1. A Flooding Hotspot guide has been produced to aid the PLACE teams working in lead up to and response to flood events. Including a health and safety review for each hotspot location.
2. Recording assets (e.g. culverts, trash screens etc) onto a countywide web mapping system.
3. Revising the sandbag policy along with Emergency planners.
4. Working with Emergency Planners to replace the Multi Agency Flood Plan with a Flooding Response Framework document.
5. Part of 'Love Your River Bromsgrove' working group helping to improve water quality and wildlife.
6. Responding to Government consultations, for instance relating to planning policy changes.
7. In November 2016 flooding was reported at 18 locations, but no internal flooding was reported and flood alleviation schemes were successfully put to the test.
8. No Notices have been served during the last financial year – we have managed to resolve all cases amicably with land owners.

#### Planning work:

1. We have commented on over 150 planning applications.
2. 24 of these planning applications have been “major” (including Perryfields, Whitford Road, Foxlydiate and the Birmingham Resilience Pipeline) – each requiring in-depth involvement and more technical advice.

#### Consenting work:

1. 27 consent applications received for works in ordinary watercourses – each application comes with a £50 fee.

## **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES**

### **Environmental Health**

The service now boasts several Primary Authority agreements whereby a business enters into a contractual agreement with us on a full cost-recovery basis to receive assured advice. One of these is a major food warehouse in Stoke Prior. Further, several Bromsgrove businesses have signed up to the Healthy Eating award (which again is a paid for business support process) and work continues with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to develop a scheme aimed at helping small producers and manufacturers to access new markets.

The number of service requests in respect of food safety and hygiene for the third quarter of 2016/17 showed a spike, exceeding the peak of 2014/15 and significantly above the number received last year. This, together with the continuation of relatively high levels of nuisance work into October and November and the high number of complex legal cases under investigation (including two food premises closures in Worcestershire) meant that the number of food interventions were down on the same quarter last year. In order to address this we prioritised inspection work in the final quarter of the year and have also brought in some capacity in the form of agency staff. This is affordable due to our on-going income generation activity and will not require additional funding. The ability to respond to this situation demonstrates how flexible the income generation strategy has been in enabling WRS to quickly meet changing demands.

235 food hygiene interventions were carried out in Bromsgrove District 2016/17. Compliance in Bromsgrove remains high at 97.4% with only 12 premises currently rated level 2 or below in the Food Standards Agency's Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (which rates business from levels 0-5). These businesses which are deemed not to be "broadly compliant" are subject to further intervention to ensure that hygiene requirements are met.

Environmental Health complaints, enquiries and notifications recorded by WRS are set to exceed previous years. The service has conducted an extensive investigation relating to an alleged odour nuisance arising from animal by-product operations in the District and Environmental Health Practitioners have continued to work with Network Rail and their contractors to minimise noise impacts of on-going track upgrade and electrification works through Bromsgrove.

### **Air Quality**

The Bromsgrove Air Quality Status Report has been completed and uploaded on the WRS website together with the Air Quality Action Plan Update which is the document that details action taken to resolve air quality by all over the last 12 months. Ahead of the LTP4's publication, WRS were liaising with the County Council's Project Manager for the A38 Corridor improvements to ensure that improving the air quality

situation around Redditch Road and Lickey End are priorities and incorporated in the proposals. Since publication of the consultation document WRS have provided comments on sections where air quality is a factor of consideration.

## **Permitted Processes**

The Pollution Control regulations are there to protect human health by ensuring emissions to air, land and water are controlled. Certain industrial processes such as car resprayers and flexible packaging printers use large volumes of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) which would be emitted to atmosphere if not controlled. There are other industrial processes that are regulated also, which means firms have to apply for a permit. In granting the permit WRS work with the business so that they know what they need to do to comply by using our wealth of experience of dealing with similar companies. Our aim is to support the businesses in navigating the red tape and protecting health and in Bromsgrove we believe most are compliant.

There are those companies that seek a competitive advantage by not controlling their emissions and operating without a permit. WRS undertook a campaign across the County in 2016 to identify anyone who is operating illegally. You can check the WRS website for a list of all businesses that operate with the appropriate permit: <http://www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/media/1928600/May-2016-Public-Register-word-format.pdf> . If you suspect that a business is operating without a permit, please do not hesitate to call or check with our Permitting team on 01905 822799. A review of the findings of the campaign in early 2017 suggest compliance with the permitting regime is good.

## **Licensing**

Licensing Officers continue to monitor and respond to changes in national guidance and licensing legislation; the bi-annual data exchange for the National Fraud Initiative for taxi drivers, personal licence holders and street traders has been successfully completed across the county.

The Immigration Act 2016, parts of which came into force for taxi licensing from 1st December 2016 means that Licensing Authorities now have to check that new and renewal applicants have the right to live and work in the United Kingdom prior to the issuing of a licence; licensing authorities have to issue shorter licences if an applicant has limited leave to remain in the United Kingdom but can work while they are here so that the licence expires when the applicant's right to work expires.

Licensing has also completed this year's data exchange/match with each districts finance teams to aid reconciliation processes for those licences that each district invoices for – Premises licences/ Gambling Premises and Small Lotteries.

Licensing Officers are also participating in the "Safer Bromsgrove Licensed Sector Tasking Group" which is looking at issues in the Night Time Economy in and around the High Street/ Worcester Road Bromsgrove; and discussions are taking place with



regards to whether or not things can be improved with joint working and the multi agency approach.

Licensing Officers have presented new policies to the Licensing Committee in the areas of “Scrap Metal Licensing” and on the introduction of a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Penalty Points Scheme for taxi operators, vehicle owners and drivers – this draft policy is currently at the consultation stage.

## **LEISURE & CULTURAL SERVICES:**

### **PARKS & OPEN SPACES**

The team continue to manage the play and open space portfolio using the electronic PSS live database to maintain standards and target resources directly to need and priorities based manage risk.

During the 2016/17 the team has completed the following 106 funded schemes:

- ASDA Recreation Ground refurbishment of the play area
- Refurbishment of footpaths within the Oakalls development
- Installation of new security measures in Aston Fields Recreation Ground
- Final completion of Barnsley Hall Changing rooms and lease agreement to Santiago Colts FC
- Woodrush High School Sports provision
- Artrix football pitch refurbishment and enhancement

The team are now working towards the following projects for 2017:

- Wythall Park – Officers worked with the Wythall Park Association Trustees, the Local Cricket Club and with National Governing Body for Cricket (ECB) in an attempt to provide facility improvements for the on-site Cricket Club. After protracted negotiation with all parties the works proved beyond the financial viability of the scheme. Due to the claw-back period of the funding stream, the original proposal was adopted to create additional linked/circular footpaths in Wythall Park to provide all year round accessibility for active recreation/jogging/cycling/walking. Included as part of the scheme will be areas of outdoor fixed gym equipment which will enable teen/adults to participate in exercise free of charge. The new provision and access improvements will benefit all residents of the locality.
- Hagley Outdoor fitness – we will be working with the Parish Council to support their delivery of outdoor fitness at Hagley Recreation Ground.
- Alvechurch Teenage Risk play/skate – we will be working with the Parish Council to support their consultation and delivery of play for teens within their park at Wiggin Memorial Ground.
- Woodrush Rugby Club and Beaudessert POS – in line with the 106 funding from the Bleakhouse Farm development improvements will be made at Woodrush Rugby Club – and Beaudessert Nature Reserve.
- Sanders Park DDA Play Provision – The team have been working with contractors and local special needs schools to deliver a scheme that will fit and blend into the existing play provision in Sanders park. This new DDA equipment will provide additional inclusive play that has been supported by students at Chadsgrove.

- Sanders Park Fitness – 106 Funding will be used to provide a first phase of fitness equipment within the park to encourage more outdoor activity that is proving increasingly popular within many of our local parks.

### Sanders Park

**Removal of the Concrete Channel** - Heads of Terms has been drafted between the Council and Severn Trent for the large scale works to remove sections of the concrete channel in Sanders Park. A site meeting of all partners is being scheduled after Easter to ensure the communication of this large scale project is provided throughout the summer season in readiness for commencement in September 2017.

**Catering Contract** - James Stokes has carried out some modifications to the building and surrounding café area which has included new block paving to improve the outdoor seating area as well as replacing the canopy. Work continues with the repainting of the building/facia and the installation of new 'sail shades' to ensure high impact and shading during the summer months.

Parks Transformation Team – the parks intervention group is now nearing completion and a report will be presented to the Shared Service Board for consideration. The proposal will ensure the team objectives meet the needs and demands of the public

**Planning Negotiations** – the team continue to work with the planning and legal departments in the District on pre and live applications to achieve the highest quality of POS, Sport and Play provision throughout the District.

### **ARTS DEVELOPMENT BROMSGROVE – NEW ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS**

In partnership with the Council's Arts Development Team, Friends of St John's, Artrix and North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration an exciting Christmas Offer was delivered.

- The successful 2nd Christmas 4 day Market in conjunction with the switch on event on Saturday 19th November, the production of the Better Bromsgrove Christmas publication, the 'illuminate' Christmas lantern parade from the town centre to St John's church on Saturday 26th November and performances in the town on the 3rd, 10th and 17th December by Blackwell Concert Band and The Fidgets.
- Members of the new Children and Young People's Providers Group, formed in September, attended the bonfire and firework event and held a successful consultation event with young people to gather their views regarding the town

centre and what activities they engage in and would like. In addition to this, we developed the offer from the group to attend the St Georges Day event planned for April 2017 to have a marquee to promote the different agencies services around children and young people.

- Bromsgrove Arts and Culture Consortium met with Arts Council England (ACE) to discuss bidding for funding. The meeting with ACE indicating that a Grants for the Arts application would be their recommended route to take. The consortium also built new relationships with other stakeholders locally of relevance to their work in preparedness for their external funding bid.
- The Team supported Artrix attended Overview and Scrutiny to present their first annual report as a part of their current 3 year funding agreement, councillors found the presentation engaging, informative and positive.
- Throughout April to June the Arts Development Service worked with Sports Development to deliver the Spirit of Bromsgrove Awards at Artrix. The awards celebrated individual and organisations involved in the arts, community and sports, the event was very successful with many compliments from those who attended.
- As a part of the Teams work to support the Bromsgrove high street offer, in May, the Team successfully organised for the first Italian Market in Bromsgrove town centre. The market was very well received by the public and it's planned to bring it back later this year or early next year.
- In October, as part of the town centre new events calendar, the Team hosted the White Hart Morris, Chester Morris and Cardiff Morris Men in the events space.
- The Team worked in partnership with Bromsgrove Festival to successful deliver the Day of Dance event on the high street and the Summer Jam, for teenagers, in Sanders Park and worked in partnership with the "Court Leet" to successfully deliver their historic market alongside the normal market.

## **BROMSGROVE EVENTS TEAM PROGRAMME**

**Queen's 90th Birthday Event** - This event took place on the High street and included Blackwell Concert band and the birthday choir. The Queens beacon was lit by Mrs Britten Long Deputy Lord Lieutenant at 7.30pm in conjunction with other events throughout England St Georges Day.

**St Georges Day** - The event included working with Vintage Class 1940's and 50's performers, the YMCA running an activity and craft stall and working with the Friends of St John's to make crowns and costumes for a procession from the High street

event to St John's church to celebrate the Queens 90th birthday. The event also included circus skills, Bromsgrove Women's institute and Artrix Show Stars choirs and the Nancy Butterfly Morris Dancers.

**Street Theatre** - Six Street theatre events were delivered across the district, with two professional street theatre acts at each event. There were various activities including circus skills, craft and drumming, for the children, together with community involvement at each event.

**Bandstand Events Sanders Park** - A bandstand programme of nineteen events were enjoyed May – September. Various bands played each week, including Worcester Youth Jazz Orchestra, Malvern Hills District band and Celebration Reed and Brass band, with a number of key events provided by the events team working in partnership with the community. These included Austins in the park, Summer fun in the park and Choirs in the park.

**Bonfire Event** - The good weather helped swell the attendance numbers to approximately 8000. This year the event included a fire walk in aid of sight concern. Entertainment was provided by Tommy Wilson's Funfair and performances from local performer Jasmine Rawlings who performed with the nationally acclaimed band UFQ.

**Christmas** - The Events team organised Christmas light switch on events in Bromsgrove High Street and Rubery. The entertainment was provided by Local singers Hourglass, Joe James, Skye Hadley, Issi Young and Scott Cartwright, together with the Rock choir, and school choirs Chadsgrove, St James's and Holywell. The lights in Bromsgrove were switched on with the help of Lauren Rowles Paralympic rowing champion at the Rio 2016 Games and Bromsgrove District Council Chairman Helen Jones.

The event in then High street was complimented by the Christmas market.

## **HEALTH AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

### **Health Intervention**

Bromsgrove shows a middle-high level of excess weight which is 0.8% higher than the national average; however levels of activity across the district are middle-high. The Active People's Survey shows an increase in people exercising 3 x or more per week but a decrease in lower level activity such as 1 x week. Bromsgrove are retaining active people but not engaging as many inactive people as previous years.

Sports Development works to improve the health of the Bromsgrove Community through physical activity and mental health and wellbeing:

**Activity Referral:** A referral scheme where medical professionals (GP's, physios, nurse advisors etc) can refer suitable people into a 6 week activity scheme. This is currently run out of the Dolphin Centre (town centre) and Rush Active (Wythall). Participants who have completed the programme have experienced reduced blood pressure, improved mental health, better weight management as well as improving strength, mobility and the ability to carry out everyday tasks. The scheme has been reviewed and the participant now receives an optional 30 minute contact per week with the course leader – this helps with motivation, sustainability and confidence. 57 people were referred into the course during 16/17 at the Dolphin Centre and Rush Active. There has been a co-ordinated leaflet drop which went out with the Wythall Directory in March 2017 so there should be a marked increase in referrals at Rush Active in the near future.

**PSI (Postural Stability Intervention):** This is a national scheme which helps people who may be at risk of falling. People can self-refer into this scheme or be referred through a medical professional. This scheme is run in partnership with Public Health and the County Sports Partnership. The intervention helps to improve strength and mobility as well as improving confidence as many of the participant's lives alone so are socially isolated. Currently being run at 5 locations across Bromsgrove: Crabtree Cross, Gilbert Court, Amphlett Hall, St Chad's, Methodist Centre and the Stroke Centre. Funding has been granted for Year 3 (2017/18) and there are 3 pilots across Worcestershire that are focussing on 25 hours of instruction plus 25 hours of home exercise. The home exercise will be monitored by the instructor and signed off every week. This is to reduce number of sessions where transport is required and give the participant more ownership and confidence to exercise in their own home.

**Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Mental Health and wellbeing has become a high priority for Bromsgrove for all age groups. The significance of this has been highlighted in the Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Strategy as it is one of the top 3 priorities. We are working with New Brook, Prince of Wales Community Hospital (a mental health unit) to identify activity opportunities appropriate for their patients, breaking down barriers such as social isolation, motivation, confidence and illness.

**Couch 2 5k:** This scheme has been hugely successful in getting inactive residents engaged in physical activity. The programme encourages people to walk/run their way up to 5km over a 9 week period. It is all inclusive and the age range is vast. 33% of those taking part are inactive i.e. they do not meet the recommended weekly activity level of 1 x 30 minutes. Targeting this population will see the greatest health benefits in terms of reduction in NHS admissions/appointments, increased mental health and wellbeing and improved community cohesion. The courses are run 3 times a year and have an average attendance of 35 people. There are more sessions run over the Spring/Summer months due to the lighter nights, whereas only 1 session was run during the Winter months.

**50+ classes:** Aimed at people over the age of 50, but welcomes all ages. These sessions are targeted to improve levels of physical activity in the older age group as well as provide social opportunities to improve mental health and wellbeing. Activities provided include yoga, pilates, tai chi, aerobics. Access to facilities and transport is important and can be a barrier to exercise.

**Inactive communities:** Inactivity is more prevalent in the following community groups – disabled, ethnic minorities, women, low socio-economic groups. Targeted activities are offered through partnerships with schools (Chadsgrove and Rigby), community groups (YMCA) and charities (Age UK, Alzheimer’s Society). Street Cricket and Handball have been highlighted as popular sports for ethnic minority groups. Sessions continue to be sustainable and are run weekly for children and young people in partnership with a local deliverer (Jon Newton Development School). This promotes interaction and acts as a diversionary activity to reduce anti social behaviour and improve community cohesion.

**Children and Young People:** BDC provides Primary Sports Project sessions as a coaching service delivered to the schools as part of their provision for curriculum and after school club physical education. As part of this we partner with the All Active Academy, delivering the Change for Life clubs, which target the inactive children in each school. Sports Development also sit on the Children and Young People Group to offer experience, knowledge and avenues for children and young people to become active. Work with the local Young Carers Association is continuing into 17/18 to provide alternative activity for those in carer roles.

**Club and Coach Development:** Club Forum (held quarterly) is run through Sports Development and invites local clubs to attend workshops and forums to discuss subjects such as funding, volunteering, managing clubs and club development. This is a useful resource and has been accessed by 14 clubs throughout 16/17. Support and guidance priorities for 2017/18 will be Woodrush Rugby Club ground improvement, Bromsgrove Cricket Club netting pitch development, Bromsgrove Tennis Club new practice wall/court development, Kings Norton Rugby Club changing room development to allow for concurrent male and female participation and Bromsgrove Indoor Bowls rink extension.

**Disability Provision:** Over the last year, more disability provision has been run across Bromsgrove schools and this is something we hope to build on into 17/18. Coaches and instructors are receiving training from Chadsgrove School to help with disability instruction. Disability sessions include Sailing, Junior Athletics, Multisports and Boccia, as well as receiving more funding to run a climbing programme in October 2017.

## **Challenges**

- **Facility availability:** Cost to hire facilities can vary and may not always be cost effective to the participant.
- **Transport:** Lack of transport links – Burt’s buses are the only community provider for older people to access and it can be restricted to location and time/day
- **Location:** Bromsgrove is a rural district with many outlying areas. Finding suitable instructors/coaches to deliver sessions to these areas can be challenging. Upskilling community members to deliver within their own area can be helpful however is reliant on finding a motivated/enthusiastic person.

- **GP Referrals:** Activity Referral is reliant on medical professionals referring participants into the scheme. A continuing issue is the low number of GP's who proactively refer onto the scheme. This is down to a number of issues: lack of time, information, poor practice communication (practice managers/GP's)
- **Distribution of information:** Due to Bromsgrove being a rural location and older demographic, newspaper advertising, noticeboards and word of mouth are the best forms of marketing. This is dependant on community groups/organisations displaying information to their users, and not all organisations do this consistently.
- **Available Funding:** Accessing funding can be difficult with services being redesigned and priorities shifting.

## **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

### **Facilities**

The BDC Facility Management team are now exercising more control over the Parkside building with it now being over 12 months into operation. We continue to negotiate with the original contractors in completing a list of snagging and defects which are slowly being actioned. This is presented challenges in getting simple repairs completed being hamstrung by the snagging process. Contracts have been taken out to ensure the building is compliant and servicing schedules are in place which have been procured to ensure best value.

A recent consultation exercise with all partners using the building identified the biggest concern as the inconsistency of the heating. As a result we have persisted with the heating control engineers and a solution has been sought that keeps the building at adequate temperature throughout the day. Works have been undertaken in the Parkside hall to install additional heating to ensure there is sufficient heat going into that room. The installation has been successful and has subtly been integrated into the existing building fabric.

Partners have been happy with the service the facilities team have been providing, which has exceeded their expectations in many cases. The challenge we now face is to introduce a service review that will make efficiencies and also increase the quality of service that is provided.

### **Toilet Cleansing Operations**

The toilet cleansing operatives have continued to provide the cleaning function to the public toilets in the town centre, Sanders Park, Rubery High Street and Alvechurch 7



days a week in addition to cleaning changing rooms across the district. Through a series of commercialism workshops we are looking on how we can reduce costs in providing the service and increase income, exploring opportunities to grow the business.

### **Sponsorship**

We continue to achieve sponsorship for the 4 main roundabout sites along the A38 as well as the Fairfield roundabout, however it has been difficult to continuously sell the 4 sites located near Alvechurch. We will now look at promoting these for shorter terms or at discounted rates in order to achieve income and give opportunities to smaller businesses.

### **Christmas Lights – Bromsgrove and Rubery**

The new 3 year contract started in December 2016 and a new look/scheme was implemented. Another successful year and great compliments received with the switch on event giving both Bromsgrove and Rubery a lift throughout the festive period. A few additional lighting columns along the Stratford road has been included to give a greater impact when entering the town.