



# BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

## Cllr Esme Butler's Speech for Mayor Making 7<sup>th</sup> May 2010

Bürgervorsteherin Cllr Renate Müller-loennies, Bürgermeister Cllr Wolfgang Schneider, Councillors and our friends from Preetz, invited guests, fellow Councillors, Youth Advisors, Ladies, Gentlemen, young people, friends and family, thank you for your support by attending today's ceremony.

I expect that many of you stayed up late last night watching the "swingometer" in action hopefully those of you who did can stay awake a little longer! Twittering and tweeting is set aside for birds only this morning.

I would like to personally thank Cllr Lynn Lindsay for all that she has undertaken for our town over the past year as Mayor and Chairman of Council. Both roles take considerable time and energy which she has given wholeheartedly in a year that saw ill health for both of her escorts Lynn continued to ensure that all Mayoral and Council business was attended too. Thank you, Lynn. It is Lynn's Birthday today so on behalf of us all Happy Birthday Lynn, enjoy your day!

As the outgoing and incoming Mayors do not compare speeches it is likely you have heard Lynn talk about some elements of my speech already, but because I have written it and it's not time to take a break yet ... Since I stood before you in 2005 change happens so the TV advert tells us! And yes I can agree with them it does - I didn't need glasses to read my speech in 2005 and no I didn't go to a well known cheap spectacle shop, and I could also do with "because I'm worth it" colour on my hair to hide the ever progressing greys!

Change happens in our Town too. I attended four schools during my childhood, two of which have been demolished another turned into housing and the third is having an extension built on to it. Two other schools, which I didn't go to, have also disappeared with yet a further one to go in the near future and two new primary schools constructed. Shops come and go too, but I consider that we are well catered for through our local shops and that on the whole where shops have ceased trading another business has filled its place. And I haven't mentioned the ever diminishing presence of local hostelrys. I can name seven – not that I had visited them all!

The new plan for North Dorset which includes 1,500 new homes for Blandford Forum and nearby parishes by 2026 has recently been published with consultations already taking place. The Town Council will comment on the proposals but I urge you as individuals to make your views known as well. Housing will be built, but we should all ensure that they are built in the right places and with the correct infrastructure. Our input is vital to ensure the best outcome for the Town but also for those who will come to live in these properties.

The Council is fully behind the fight to save the leisure centre with the backing of £50,000 every year for the next three years. This is a facility that we do not want the town to be without. We are hopeful that the centre can be saved. Different partnerships have worked successfully together in the short term securing the three years, with a long term solution being sought.

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The Town Council has agreed to the appointment of 6 youth advisors to the council who will assist the Council in its decision making and give us valuable insight on the views and needs of the young people in our town. This is an exciting new venture with both the Town Council and the young people benefiting from the experience. I am looking forward to working with them over the coming year.

We must all take pride and responsibility in our surroundings, be it with regard to development or litter on the streets, next year will see local elections for North Dorset which will include Blandford Forum Town Council, not as grand an affair as last night, no swingometer, no television until the early hours but just as important to us living in the town. I would encourage you all to consider standing for election and serving your community. Using your vote is also very important, if you are unable to go to the polling station then request a postal vote from North Dorset District Council. Oh yes, it's that easy. Take note of our youth advisors, make a difference and be part of our future.

For those of you who enjoy surfing, and not just on water, just a reminder that the Blandford Forum Town Council website has information on all council business, agendas / minutes, forthcoming events and useful contacts including a list of local organisations. It also includes the Mayor's diary in fact I am contemplating my own webpage compare the mayor's cats.com!! But I don't think they will stay still long enough to evaluate the difference between them.

Please let us know of any Blandford Forum residents who will be celebrating their golden or diamond wedding anniversary or who will be 100 years old in the coming year, giving me the opportunity to convey the Council's good wishes to them.

This week Councillors joined residents, guests and trustees to celebrate the centenary of Barnes Homes, which was founded by John Iles Barnes, who was Mayor of Blandford Forum on nine occasions. In addition to Barnes Homes he left many more legacies within the Town, money for a swimming pool, for the needy and the Recreational Ground to name a few. It is pleasing to see that many of these legacies are still going strong today, but this would not be the case without the dedication of volunteers, you, the members of the public who work behind the scenes ensuring that these and countless other charities throughout the town go from strength to strength. A big 'thank you' to you all.

The people of Blandford Forum and the Town itself are very important to me. I am very proud of my heritage and to say that I live in Blandford Forum and I undertake the role of Mayor and Chairman of Council for the coming year with the utmost commitment and dedication.

My charities for the forthcoming year are The Blandford Girl Guides & Brownies, celebrating their centenary year, and Knees Up Healthy Living.

I look forward to meeting many of you throughout the coming year and thank you for your good wishes and continued support. Thank you.

I would also like to thank members of the Blandford Guides and Knees Up for serving the refreshments today, and Dr Richard Hall & Tony Burton-Page from The Dorset Rural Music School for providing the music. Thank you.

If you haven't already done so, please sign the visitor's book located by the front door.

Please now join us for light refreshments and the opportunity to view the Town's silver displayed here today.

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