

Buzz

Broxtowe's CCTV 'sett' to remain

TEN pupils from John Clifford Primary School were invited to Beeston police station earlier this week to see how the CCTV control centre works, and to help celebrate the 10th anniversary of CCTV in the borough.

In doing so, they were able to watch events unfold as the council's mascot, Brock the Badger, was arrested in Beeston Square for being drunk and disorderly by PCSO Mike Drury, who raced into the Square on his bike to apprehend the 'badger' under one of the CCTV cameras in what you might call a 'sett up'.

The children in the CCTV control room had been badgered into keeping a close eye on the CCTV

screens for anything unusual taking place in the Square as they listened to Paul Crompton, Head of CCTV and Security Management, explain how a total of 69 CCTV cameras work across the four town centres of the borough: Beeston, Stapleford, Kimberley and Eastwood.

A number of local dignitaries joined the youngsters to celebrate the 10th anniversary. These included the Mayor and Mayoress of Broxtowe, Cllrs Pat and Lynda Lally, Chief Superintendent John Busuttil, Divisional Commander South Notts Division and other members of the police department as well as representatives of the security company, Profile Security, that

operates the CCTV centre on behalf of the Council and South Notts Division police.

The Mayor of Broxtowe, Cllr Pat Lally, said: "It was hard work getting these cameras installed in the first place ten years ago, but they have been shown to have an impact on reducing crime and the residents want them now. I hope they're still here in another ten years."

Chief Superintendent John Busuttil agreed: "I would like to offer my personal thanks to Broxtowe Borough Council for pushing to get the cameras installed ten years ago. CCTV can be controversial but, overall, residents are reassured by having them there. People have become complacent as the cameras

have become part of the fabric of the community, but there'd be an uproar if we tried to remove them now.

"The CCTV is always checked and, if there is an incident, we have access to the true facts to support the suspect's or witnesses story.

Nine-year-old John Clifford pupil Max Curry was impressed by what he had seen and heard. He said: "I think this is a clever use of technology. It won't stop every crime but it will stop some. It's definitely a deterrent."

Snippets

Commended for Aims to reduce anti-social behaviour

SHARON Matthews, Anti Social Behaviour Officer at Broxtowe Borough Council, has received a Police Divisional Commendation for her role in the creation of AIMS, the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Intervention and Monitoring Strategy. Sharon was presented with the award at a special event.

Sharon helped to design AIMS with Inspector Richard Stapleford and PC 3095 Chris Edwards after identifying that the existing reporting framework needed updating to ensure it dealt proactively with reports of ASB across the borough. The process identifies individuals and geographical locations that are cause for concern to members of the public, and steers diversionary tactics used by the police at a borough-wide level.

As Broxtowe Borough Council's Anti-Social Behaviour officer, Sharon Matthews works closely with the police and other agencies, and works from Beeston Police Station for part of each week.

Ceilidh on the move

THE Ceilidh that has been held in the New Venture Sports and Social Club, Beeston Rylands, in recent months is moving to Hucknall for one month only.

It will be held on Saturday, May 22 at the Royal British Legion, 141 Beardall Street, Hucknall, NG15 7RA at 8pm. All are welcome.

Between you and me...

THIS space is reserved for Broxtowe's MP to keep the borough's constituents up-to-date and informed.

Whilst our new MP, Anna Soubry, deals with the administrative palaver of collecting passes and such like, our outgoing MP, Nick Palmer, would like to spend a few minutes bidding farewell to the people of Broxtowe that he has represented in Parliament for 13 years.

May we remind you that The Beeston Express has no political allegiance to any political parties.



Au revoir!

AS I hand over the MP column to Miss Soubry, I'd like to congratulate her and, as I said on election night, wish her as much intellectual satisfaction and sheer joy in representing you as I've had over the last 13 years. It's an immensely satisfying job and you are lovely people to represent – overwhelmingly nuanced, intelligent and friendly. I know of constituencies whose MPs complain that they are constantly fighting pitched battles between rival parties and rival factions within their own party. I've not experienced that and I'm conscious of how lucky I've been.

The result was, of course, very close, with both of us getting just over 20,000 votes. The Conservative majority of 389 was less than both

the Green vote (423) and the increase from 7837 to 8907 in the LibDem vote. The LibDem candidate then complained to the Evening Post that by standing I'd "split the anti-Tory vote", which is quite funny at several levels, not least in view of subsequent national developments.

Since the election, I've had over 900 letters and emails from constituents, saying things too nice to quote here and urging me to stand again. The funniest was from a rueful voter who'd believed the LibDem claim that they were poised to win:

"Nick, my father used to tell of an old Scottish Minister preaching about the wicked in Hell. 'They will look up and say, 'Laird, Laird, we didna ken' and the Laird in his infinite maircy will look down and say 'Och

weil, ye ken the noo'.

"That's how I feel, having been swept away on a tide of Lib Dem optimism, and lost a very good and honest constituency rep and gained a seat for a very doubtful set of folk."

That said, these things happen in our electoral system and, if the new government introduces the alternative vote referendum, I'll certainly be voting for it. And yes, I do hope to stand again so we can have a rematch.

A few parting suggestions:

1. Talk to your politicians

It's only in the last 10 years that it's become possible for MPs to communicate directly with huge numbers of constituents on an issue-by-issue basis, via email.

I've sent over 500 general updates to my mailing list

over the last nine years, and I estimate that I've responded to over 250,000 emails from constituents over that time, on issues ranging from the personal to the local to the national and global scene.

There is really no need to treat politicians as remote figures who are unlikely to care what you think – if you have email access, it takes just a few minutes to get in touch with people who know both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition personally.

Anna Soubry is on anna.soubry.mp@parliament.uk; I'm on nickmp1@aol.com (too many people use the address for me to change it – the "mp" now stands for "moderate person"!).

Whenever there's a controversy, why not tell us both your view and compare how we respond?

2. Expect responsiveness, not necessarily agreement

I've sometimes heard people say that MPs should always represent what constituents think. This isn't possible, since constituents don't all think the same, and it's not even desirable, since (I hate to say it, but...), sometimes constituents may be wrong.

Ultimately, I think that MPs should, like anyone else, try to do what seems right. But they need to listen to constituents first.

What I think everyone should expect from politicians is a clear response that shows we've understood the argument. If we agree, fine. If we don't agree, we owe you a clear explanation of why not. We might be wrong too, as I was on Iraq, but at least you are owed an honest, intelligent dialogue. There are MPs who simply forward a

standard party briefing. They aren't doing the job properly.

3. Consider joining a political party

This is arguably the most fascinating political period in postwar history and we are the tenth most marginal seat in the entire country. It's likely that the next election will be fought as closely as this one. If you join a party, you help to select their leader, their candidate for Parliament and every council candidate; you can also influence policy-making and, if you want to, you can help to get your preferred candidate elected. If you care about the society around us, has there ever been a better time to do it?

The bottom line: I've been honoured and delighted to represent you. Thank you for giving me the chance, please keep in touch, and *au revoir!*