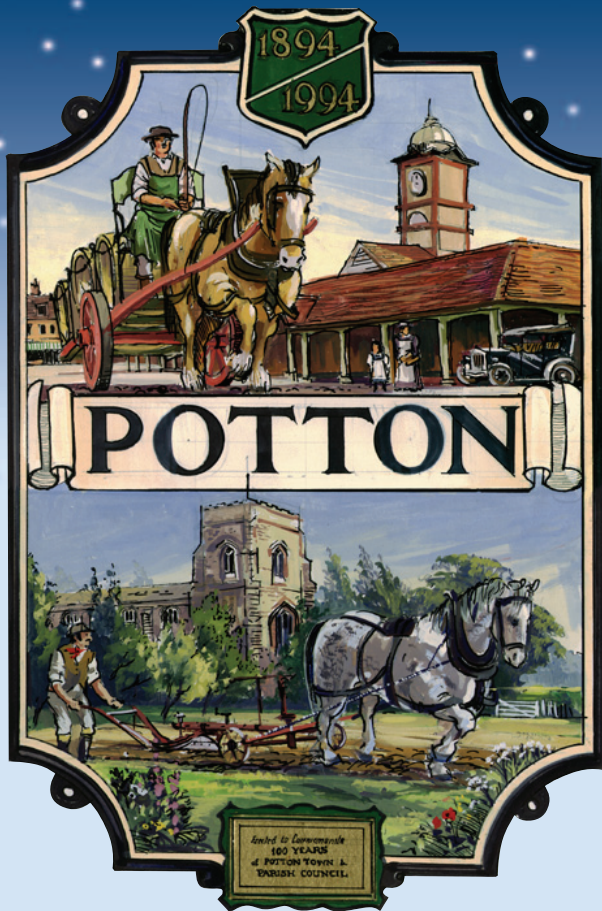


Potton Town Council



Newsletter
Christmas 2009



Chairman's Letter

Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year to you all.

For those of you who actually read this part of the newsletter you will know how I think that time moves on so quickly. Here we are again with the Christmas edition. They are like London buses you don't seem to see one then two arrive in quick succession.

I was hoping that, as we had such an Indian summer and the weather was so agreeable right into November, Central Beds Council might have given us a Christmas present of some benches around the trees in the square to enjoy it all but no luck.

The lights in the town square were a success again this year. However we are now entering a stage where problems will begin to arise for future displays. Many of the lights and cables are getting old and showing signs of wear. New legislation is being introduced regarding the use of incandescent bulbs in the higher wattage range. This does not affect our lights now but I am sure in the coming near future it will cover the lower wattage bulbs we use. The cost of replacing these cables, bulbs and bulb holders is very expensive. Funds will have to be raised for future events. If any person can help in this matter please contact our clerk on telephone no. 260086.

The first seasonal market held on the Saturday following the switch on by all reports was a great success and I hope you all used your own personal cotton bags to take home your shopping. These as a result of the town plan which you will learn more about elsewhere in the newsletter.

This edition's know your councillor is John Lewis who has been a pillar of this council for many years.

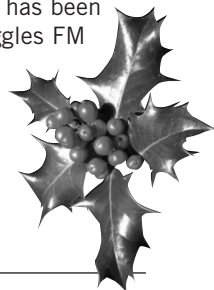
Getting to know your councillors brings me to the situation where we again have a vacancy on the town councillor brought about by the resignation of Mrs Sharon Kingham. Pressures of work and family have unfortunately left Sharon with no choice but to resign at this time. I am sure all the remaining councillors will join with me in thanking her for the work she put in on the council and wishing her well for the future

I have noticed the increase in the number of people using the disabled parking places around the square who are not entitled to park there. I would ask motorists to please leave these spaces for their intended use. I should also remind people that the disabled badge refers to the person concerned and not the vehicle. It should only be used when the disabled person is present.

On a lighter note to finish I knew Christmas was near because Noddy Holder has been seen and heard and I have been asked to give the thought for the day on Biggles FM on December 20th.

Best wishes, have a good holiday but please remember what and who it is really all about.

Peter J. Langridge



CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL REPORT

From Anita Lewis representing you the people of Potton

In the Autumn Newsletter I told you that we were waiting for our new Chief Executive Richard Carr to arrive. He is now in post and has held a series of "Road Shows" in order to meet all the staff in the many buildings and in the many towns in which the Council operates. He has made a good impression and the staff are looking forward to working with him.

The feeling is that the "jigsaw" is now complete and the real work of promoting the very best of services can begin.

One strand of work of which I wish to advise you is that of the development Strategy Task Force which has been meeting for many months now looking at possible sites for the provision for gypsies and travellers in line with Government guide lines.

I am very mindful of the fact that we have a site in Potton and have been working to ensure that that the current number of pitches is not increased. Indeed after a site visit the Task Force stated that the site is overcrowded and that its size should be increased but only to better accommodate the existing number of occupants but not to accommodate more. I believe that successful sites are small sites more easily managed and maintained.

Another development that Central Bedfordshire Council has to resolve with the Boundary Commission relates to Ward Boundaries to fit changing population figures. It has been decreed by the Commission that Central Bedfordshire Council should after the next election in 2011 consist of 59 instead of the existing 66 Councillors. This means "shuffling" the Wards to fit the current population and, at the moment of writing, many options are being proposed. It is the Boundary Commission that will make the final decision but I can assure you that I have been fighting for the best possible outcome for Potton.

The festive season is upon us and I take this opportunity to wish you one and all a very Merry Christmas and health and prosperity in 2010.

Anita M. Lewis

Portfolio Holder for Children's Services Representing the Potton Ward

Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands,
Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ
Customer Services 0300 3008000
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



***POTTON TOWN COUNCILLORS AND THE COUNCIL STAFF
WOULD LIKE TO WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR***



POTTON TOWN PLAN

Can you help?

The Town Plan is progressing well with all the 9 groups now under way. We are still looking for more volunteers to help us with the “Environment” group who have plans to clear the Brook and plant trees and bulbs around the Town.

The “Young People” group are now looking for volunteers aged between 14 and 18 to join the committee, to ensure that their voice is heard. When operational the Young Peoples group will widen its age group to include people aged 10 to 18.

Anyone who is willing to help in any of the groups should contact the Town Clerk on 01767 260086.

As Chairman of the Town Plan I have been very active in making your views on the proposed new Housing Developments known to Central Bedfordshire Council. We accept that we will have to have 250 new houses but you said you would prefer smaller developments. I have spoken to our local MP, had meetings with the Planners and the Executive and written to the Leader of the Council prior to their next meeting on 7th January. A full public consultation will commence on January 25th for a period of 6 weeks when you will be able to give your views.

Geoff Emery

Chairman of Potton Town Plan

Town Plan Environment Group

“The Environment Working Group is starting to develop ideas to improve your environment in Potton. Work has already progressed talking to partners about improving cycle links into the town and to improve the recycling facilities. We are looking for people to join our working group to focus on a number of ideas in the next year – to increase planting of bulbs and trees in the town, to clear the brook at Henry Smith Playing Fields and to do a wildlife audit of the Town. If you are interested in these or delivering other environmental initiatives then please contact me as Chair of the Group.

Sarah Fowler, 8 Bull Street



POTTON COUNCIL SURGERIES

Potton Town Councillor surgeries will now be held once a month at differing days and times and occasionally different venues to allow everyone the opportunity to meet and talk to their local Councillors. The first three monthly surgeries have been arranged as follows:-
On Wednesday 13th January 10am -12 noon Councillors Mr Geoff Emery and Mrs Anita Lewis will be holding the surgery using the Vineyard Church Office in the Market Square.
On Friday 12th February 2-4pm Councillors Mr John Lewis and Mrs Anita Lewis will be holding the surgery using the Vineyard Church Office in the Market Square.
On Thursday 11th March 6.30 – 8.30 pm Councillors Mr Peter Langridge, Councillor Alan Leggatt and Mrs Anita Lewis will be holding the surgery using the Vineyard Church Office in the Market Square.

Councillor Profile - Mr John H Lewis



Chair of Planning Committee & Town Councillor

When I moved into Sun House at the end of 1985 I fantasised how good it would be to work for the Solicitors that operated from the office that overlooked the Market Square. Just imagine my disappointment that when I did later on become a partner in that firm I found that the office by then was only used for storage and I had to continue to commute to London for a further ten years. I found that Potton was well situated as I had to travel in a wide area to sit in County Courts as a Deputy District Judge.

I first joined Potton Town Council as a representative of the Chamber of Trade some 16 years ago. I seem to recall there was a burning issue about parking in the Square (some things never change) but hopefully, although not perfect, as a result of the enhancement parking seems to be much better.

I was chosen to Chair the Enhancement Committee for the Council during this important time. I like to think that Anita and I were to a great extent responsible for ensuring the project was fulfilled after the District Council dispensed with the services of the officer who had been in charge of it.

I was proud to have been Chairman of our Town Council for a period of 5 years and to have had the opportunity to guide the Council during those years. It was particularly pleasurable to be able to wear the Town Council Chain of Office and to represent the Town at various civic functions, and in particular on twinning visits to Langenlohnshheim.

I enjoyed my time too as Chairman of the Potton and District Community Liaison Forum and felt that good relationships were forged with our neighbouring village communities.

I was elected to Mid Beds District Council in 2003 and I am now a Town and Parish member of Central Bedfordshire Council Standards Committee.

Currently I chair the Town Council Planning Committee.

I keep in touch with the young people of Potton through my duties as a governor of Sandy Upper School and as a governor at Sutton Lower School.

I have always been active in various sports playing in my younger days, soccer, cricket, tennis and rugby the latter of which I refereed until I was more than 50 years of age. I am currently a playing member of John O'Gaunt Golf Club. I am also a member of both Sandy Rotary and Probus clubs.

POTTON TOWN COUNCILLOR VACANCY

As the Chairman has mentioned there is a vacancy for a Town Councillor. If you are interested or would like more information please contact the Clerk.

It is hoped to co-opt a Councillor at the Town Council Meeting on Tuesday 5th January and it is therefore important that you get in touch before the Christmas break.

Potton Play House

"Potton Playhouse recently performed three one-act comedies with a theme of "Illicit Encounters" around eating and drinking establishments, and this was well received by the audiences at all four performances. Playhouse has a reputation for putting on high quality productions with excellent, well-known local actors, and it was particularly encouraging to welcome a large number of new members to this production – 3 students from Sandy Upper School, and several other new faces. The performing arts are alive and kicking in Potton, despite all the challenges of changing Burgoyne hall into a theatre; others have been inspired to get involved and plans are underway for some productions next year, involving young people and hopefully to perform at the Party on Potton weekend.

If you would like to be kept informed by receiving the Potton Playhouse newsletter – please ring 261431 and leave your email address, or write to judy@youunlimited.co.uk."

DATES ON WHICH THE FLAG IS HOISTED IN THE MARKET SQUARE

20th January	Birthday of the Countess of Wessex	Union Flag
6th February	Her Majesty's Accession	Union Flag
19th February	Birthday of the Duke of York	Union Flag
10th March	Birthday of the Earl of Wessex	Union Flag
12th March	Commonwealth Day (2nd Monday in March)	Union Flag
21st April	Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen	Union Flag
23rd April	St George's Day	England
9th May	Europe Day	EU Flag
2nd June	Coronation Day	Union Flag
10th June	Birthday of the Duke of Edinburgh	Union Flag
16th June	Official Celebration of Her Majesty's Birthday	Union Flag
21st June	Birthday of Prince William	Union Flag
27th June	Armed Forces Day	AFD Flag
17th July	Birthday of the Duchess of Cornwall	Union Flag
15th August	Birthday of the Princess Royal	Union Flag
3rd September	Merchant Navy Day	Red Ensign
15th September	Birthday of Prince Harry	Union Flag
21st October	Trafalgar Day	Union Flag
11th November	Remembrance Day (and 2nd Sunday)	Union Flag
14th November	Birthday of the Prince of Wales	Union Flag
20th November	Her Majesty's Wedding Day	Union Flag

Unemployed? Looking for work? Need some help?

The Library can help you with your job search by providing information about job adverts, careers advice, company information, writing a CV and more.

The Potton library is very conveniently situated in the market square and the staff are very helpful. There are three desktops, the use of a laptop and plenty of space. Once logged on to the Library home page select the Internet Explorer. The Bedford Library page will appear. Click on **The Virtual Library**. On the left hand side click on **Learn for Work and Fun** and the page below will appear.

Applying for Jobs	Job Vacancies
Career Advice	Labour Market Information
Child Care Arrangements	Starting Your Own Business
Disabled Job Seekers	Training
Government Programmes	Working Abroad
Home Working	Voluntary and Seasonal Work
Improving Basic Skills	

Town Council Information

Web site – www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk
Town Council Office, The Community Centre,
Brook End, Potton SG19 2QS
Town Clerk Valerie Moles
Telephone 01767 260086
Email pottontowncouncil@freenet.co.uk

Office opening hours:
Monday 9am to 12.30am
Tuesday 9am to 12.30pm
Wednesday Closed
Thursday 9am to 12.30pm - 2pm to 4pm
Friday Closed

Town Councillors

Mick Allen	260227	Peter Langridge	260362
Jeremy Armond	260521	Alan Leggatt	260001
Jim Burke	261275	Anita Lewis	260726
Ruth Burmo	260712	John Lewis	260726
Nigel Butlin	260075	Brian Lilley	261044
Geoff Emery	261710	Jean Way	260456
Eric Jakes M.B.E.	260779	Adam Zerny	261319

Mr P. Langridge is Chairman of Town Council
Mr A. Leggatt is Vice Chairman of the Town Council
Mr J. Lewis is Chairman of Planning Committee
Mr A. Leggatt is Chairman of Financial and General Purposes Committee
Mr F.W. Jakes MBE is Chairman of the Burials Committee
Mr M. Allen is Chairman of the Playing Fields and Allotment Committee
Mr J. Burke is Chairman of Buildings and Facilities Committee

The Town Council meets on the first Tuesday of every month except August. Meetings are usually held on the first floor of the Clock House in the Market Square and start at 7pm. Committee Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the same venue, starting at 7.00 p.m. If you wish to attend a meeting and would find access to the first floor Council Chamber difficult, please notify the Clerk as soon as possible prior to the meeting

Other Council Representatives for Potton

Central Bedfordshire Councillors

Doreen Gurney 680395 doreen.gurney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Anita Lewis 260726 anita.lewis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

HALL HIRE AVAILABILITY AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE AND THE PAVILION

The Pre School are moving from the Pavilion to a new building at the Lower School in January and the Town Council wishes them well in their new home.

Some groups have already booked to move from the Community Centre to the Pavilion during the day time from January, and this mean that there are some sessions now availability at both halls.

There is a large 14 x 3.5 meter hall at the Community Centre in Brook End with a kitchen. There is also a carpeted upstairs hall 5 meters square with kitchen facilities. This hall is suited to smaller meetings and group events.

The Pavilion at Mill Lane has a large 9 meter square hall and kitchen and there are facilities for people with disabilities. The floor may not be suitable for dance groups.

Please contact Mrs Sarah Williamson on 01767 260086 to check on availability if you would like to consider booking one of the town Council's halls either as a one off event or on a regular basis.

SUMMARY OF TOWN COUNCIL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	PREVIOUS YEAR 1.4.08 - 31.3.09	CURRENT YEAR 1.4.09 - 31.10.09
INCOME		
Precept	105000	105000
Bank Interest	2848	40
Charity Interest	57	26
Grants/Donations	55	203
Grass Cutting Grant	1517	1608
Christmas Lights	2234	299
Insurance		0
VAT refunded	8446	2248
Cemetery	3441	2541
Allotments	682	133
Hire of Council Grounds	1512	150
Hire of Community Centre	9125	4638
Hire of Pavilion	14961	8468
Legal / Insurance	1084	0
Sculpture/other income	2133	841
TOTAL INCOME	153095	126195
EXPENDITURE		
Public Conveniences	6672	2186
**Administration	68418	43110
Grass Cutting verges	2406	2227
Community Centre	11594	6820
Office Running Costs	1349	814
Street Light Running Costs	428	322
Pavillion	15766	12832
Cemetery	26533	13649
Clock House and Bus Shelter	14391	2167
Allotments	564	136
Car Park	2444	1858
Mill Lane Recreation Area	5369	5940
Henry Smith Recreation Area	4847	4797
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	160781	96858

** Also includes Salaries for Clerk and Clerical Assistant, training for staff and Councillors, Grants, Town Plan and Christmas Lights

Hourly Charges for Use of Town Council Facilities Community Centre, Brook End, Potton as at 1st September 09

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
Main Hall	£6.70	£7.80	£9.30
Upper Hall	£4.20	£5.20	£6.20
Both Rooms	£9.80	£12.00	£14.00

Mill Lane Pavilion, Mill Lane, Potton

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
Pavilion	£7.30	£10.30	£14.50

To check availability please contact Bookings Clerk Mrs S Williamson 01767 260086

Potton Library Opening Hours

Monday	2pm to 6pm	
Wednesday	2pm to 6pm	
Friday	10am to 1pm	2pm to 6pm
Saturday	10am to 1pm	

- Free Wireless Internet transmitting 24-7
- Daily and weekly newspapers are available
- The librarian, Gillian, will be happy to answer any queries on 01767 260740