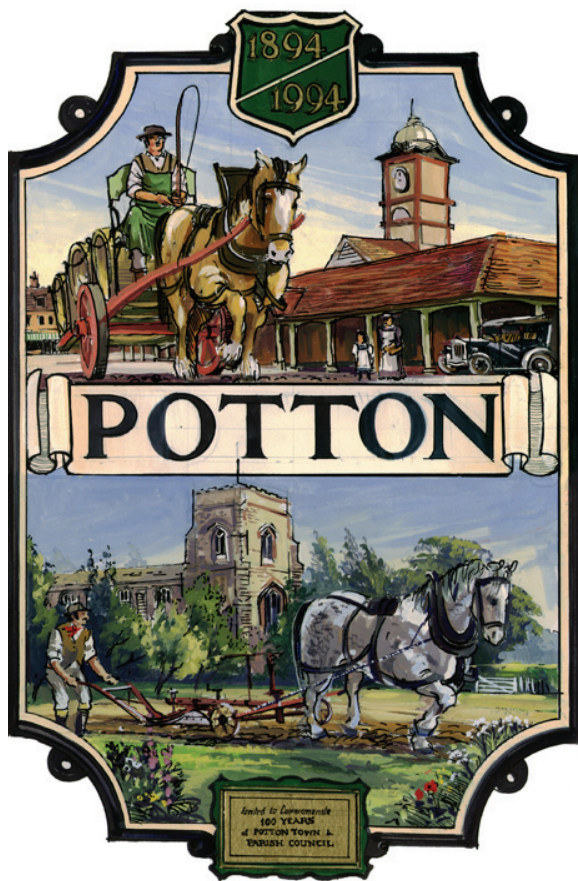


Potton Town Council



Newsletter
Summer 2009

Incorporating Annual Report
2008-2009

Chairman's Message

We have reached that time again where the town council has the opportunity to bring you up to date on the activities and projects it has embarked upon.

I was expecting to announce the completion of the town centre enhancement scheme in this edition but unfortunately it seems to be dragging on. I am sure most of you will be as disappointed as the council is over the non arrival of certain items such as the seats in the square now the fine weather has finally arrived. Complications have occurred with the implementation of the new unitary authority and the County Council winding up. Please be assured the clerk to the town council is pursuing this on a regular basis in an attempt to finish the works.

The town plan is in its final stages and looking very good. You will see a more comprehensive view of this elsewhere in the newsletter.

With the recent resignation of councillor R.G. Baker B.E.M. We will have a vacancy on the town council. Anyone who would be interested please contact the clerk for more information.

I will take this as another chance to encourage people to see how the Town Council operates by attending full council meetings which take place on the first Tuesday of every month in the room above the library. Meetings start at 7:00pm. The response to the town plan shows that the residents of our community do have an interest in how the town progresses so please do come along. If you wish to but have difficulty attending for whatever reason please contact Val our clerk on 01767 260086.

I recently had a wide ranging and long discussion with one of my sons. At the end I began to wonder at what stage my son had grown into a man with definite strong views on many subjects and when did I morph into my father with establishment views. It made me realise that we are missing a younger person on the council and their views would be most welcome.

You may be aware that the town council has agreed to fund visits by the "Rave Bus" on a regular basis for the younger residents. We are currently looking for a youth worker to be involved in this project. If you are or know a registered youth worker who is prepared to give up some more of your free time to help this worthwhile cause please contact Val our clerk.

Potton's own music festival will be with us again in August. This is an excellent opportunity for everyone to listen to and support some of the countries finest musicians from the top orchestras, in our own town. A wide variety of musical tastes will be catered for. I was originally a sceptic on the kind of music available but would now encourage all of you to attend and be pleasantly surprised. Look for further information in the local press nearer the time.

Best wishes for the holidays

Peter J. Langridge

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2008/2009

Mrs. V. Moles, Town Clerk.

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, BROOK END, POTTON, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2QS.
TELEPHONE: 01767 260086.

E-mail: pottontowncouncil@freenet.co.uk

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TOWN COUNCIL:

Mr Peter Langridge, Chairman of the Town Council gave the following report at the Annual Town Meeting on 20th April 2009:

So many things have been happening during the past year that I am not sure where to start. Firstly looking at our assets, the Council continues to provide facilities here and at the Community Centre in Brook End plus the allotments in Everton Road for which there is still a considerable waiting list, both halls are well used. The new CCTV equipment here has been updated with funds donated by the generosity of Potton Consolidated Charities. I was hoping to be able to tell you that the town council had secured the lease on the community centre for a considerable time in the future but unfortunately those negotiations fell at the final hurdle when the county council failed to complete their side before the deadline of 31st March when the county council ceased to exist, and we now have to renegotiate with the new Central Beds authority.

The playing fields at both HSPF and Mill Lane are constantly in use by people of all ages and the playground equipment continues to be popular with the younger element although we have experienced some vandalism here. Sadly even in our fine community we cannot escape the mindless morons.

Our employees have been a credit to the community throughout the year. Sarah Williamson has looked after the Community Centre for us and maintained the standard we expect, and she has increased her responsibilities helping Val our Town Clerk and undertaken extra training to assist her in this role.

Alan Litchfield has maintained the Cemetery in Sandy Road and again kept it in very good condition for us. Amanda is doing an excellent job looking after the Mill Lane facility here and is proving an asset to the Council. Peter Stonebridge our handyman who has performed excellently for us in the past has now taken on extra responsibilities for us such as the public conveniences. He has been called on at some odd hours for emergency repairs and always responded swiftly and positively. Which brings us to Val our clerk who has done a fine job over the past year, she has worked hard to ensure we maintain our quality status On behalf of the Council I would like to thank them all.

Now is the time for me to also thank those councillors who have supported and guided me in the position of Chairman of the Council. Alan the Vice Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes committee. John who has chaired the Planning committee. Jim who has chaired the buildings and facilities committee Mick who is Chairman of the Playing Fields and Environment committee, and of course Eric who chairs the Burials committee.

Our District Councillors and County Councillor have always been there to help deal with other authorities. In the coming year we will only have one higher tier of local government to deal with but I am sure whoever represents us on that authority will continue to give us the support we expect and have received in the past. We also endeavour to have regular meetings with our local beat manager.

The public sculpture has been completed in the HSPF and has proved to be a popular attraction.

The TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENT is now finally nearing completion. We still await the finishing touches such as seats in the middle of the square. This should make life so much easier for many groups in the town.

The TOWN PLAN also nears completion. There will be a report on the progress later but I must just say that this is now working well with the national Green Infrastructure plan and the recent housing needs survey. Our thanks must go to Joyce Small who has chaired this group since its inception, Geoff Emery for representing the Town Council and all the other members of the steering group who have put in so much effort to keep it moving, especially Elizabeth Belcher whose drive and enthusiasm in the initial stages really got it up and running.

PARTY ON POTTON is well into fund raising for the next event with some new ideas and we wish them well in their endeavours. Looking forward will the party 2012 be an Olympic event.

THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS in the town were again a resounding success. With the inclusion of new electrical connections in the town centre enhancement it will be improved again I am sure.

The Twinning Association has struggled and is now dormant due to lack of support from both sides of the partnership. The authorities in Langenlonsheim will be written to explaining the situation but leaving the door open to be revived at any time.

At St. Mary's church a new Priest-in-Charge has been installed, and sadly our curate David Smith is retiring after many years service to the town.

I am conscious that this can be a long and possibly boring report so I will give you a brief view over view of some things your council has done or attempted to do for the community over the past year.

- Listening to local people after Stagecoach withdrew some services we tried a round robin bus service but this proved unsuccessful
- To encourage links with the community we have held a town council meeting in the scout hut where we were quizzed by the voters of the future.

We have embarked on a youth engagement programme arranging for and funding the "Rave Bus" to visit us once a month.

- Mr Utting saw his campaign come to fruition when we finally had a seat placed half way up Sandy Road.
- New VAS installed on Gamlingay Road & Bury Hill.
- We now have a PCSO back in the town. Lisa – and she is doing a wonderful job.
- A CCTV trial was held in the town centre and was generally well received. As always the biggest problem being the cost of maintaining the service.
- An emergency plan has been formulated in the case of a major incident in our area.
- Being in the 21st century we now have a new very successful web site.

www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk

In conclusion I would just like to point out that although your council tax may have risen again this year it was not due to the town council as we have again maintained the same precept during these trying times, not wishing to put an extra burden on our community. Alas I believe this will not be the case next year.

Thank you all for attending this evening.

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2008-2009

Cumulative Fund Balance

1.4.2008		31.3.2009
310683	Balance brought forward	142073
173910	Add Total Income	153091
484593		
342520	Less Total Expenditure	160374
142073		134790

CASH RECONCILIATION AS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON 31.3.09

Premier Interest Account	105669
Current Account	29121
	134790
Less cheques drawn but not debited to bank account at close of business on 31.3.09	170
ADD DEBTORS	4515
LESS CREDITORS	6898
TRUE FUND BALANCE	132237
Additional investment fund	
COIF Fund	891

Borrowings:

At the close of business at 31st March, 2009 there were no outstanding loans to the Council.

Debts Outstanding: 2008/2009

At 31st March, 2009 there were no debts outstanding.

Capital Reserves:

The Town Council had £22849 Capital Reserves at 31st March, 2009 S137 Payments: The Limit of spending under S137 of the Local Government Act 1972 for this Council to 31st March, 2009 was £22531

Payments made were:

Biggles FM-local radio	100.00
Potton Show	100.00
St Mary's Social Committee	100.00
Royal British Legion	50.00
St Mary's Church	50.00
Potton Cricket Club	500.00
WRVS	100.00
Total	1000.00
A payment was made under S145 of LGA 1972	
Potton Music Festival	100.00

Potton Town Council Audit 2008/2009

Balance sheet as at 31st March 2009

Actual at 31.3.2008 £		Actual at 31.3.2009 £
891	OIF Fund	891
891	Long Term Debtors LONG TERM ASSETS	891
Current Assets		
4813	Debtors	4515
0	Payments in advance	0
Cash in Hand		
8017	comprises	
	Current acc	29121
134823	Deposit acc	105669
147653	Total Current Assets	139305
Current Liabilities		
5752	Creditors	6898
768	Uncleared cheques	170
(6520)	Total current liabilities	(7068)
Net Assets		132237
Represented by:		
Fund Balance		132237

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of Potton Town Council as at 31st March 2009, and reflects its income and expenditure during the Year.

Councillor Profile



Jean Way

I have lived on Potton since 1968 and taught at Potton Lower School for many years. Before moving to Potton I lived in New Zealand for three years. My first experience of Council work was in Barton-le-Cley, where with two friends, we campaigned and achieved a pedestrian crossing on the A6. I was co-opted to the Parish Council there in 1963. I became a Town Councillor in Potton in the early 1970's and have been Potton Town Council Chairman. I enjoy being a Councillor because I can work for the people of the town in a non political environment.

TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENT

The Town Council has been very disappointed that the final work has not been completed by Bedfordshire Highways. It has been particularly difficult that there has been no seating this summer. The Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Councillors are constantly chasing for the completion of the seating around the large trees and next to the library, lighting in the bus shelter and a timetable together with timers for the Christmas Lights. There will also be a small tree planted in the Autumn. The Council will continue to protest until these works are completed.

CEMETERY SAFETY

An inspection of the gravestones at the Cemetery has revealed that the majority of memorials are fine and gave no cause for concern from a safety point of view. Unfortunately a few were discovered to be loose and a safety barrier has had to be erected around several memorials considered to be in danger of falling. The Council will make every endeavour to contact the families concerned to discuss the responsibility for making them safe. As a last resort, and only if families cannot be traced, dangerous memorials may have to be laid down flat for the safety of people visiting the Cemetery



WATER IN THE BROOK

During the hot weather in late June and early July the water in the Brook fell so low that many fish were unable to survive. The Fireman did their best and The Ivel Drainage Board have looked into the matter, all to little avail.

This is a plea to any farmer or land owner up stream from our Brook in the Henry Smith Playing Field. Please, please, think twice before diverting water for irrigation of crops or for your ponds. The Brook in the park was home to many fish and we are unsure if any have survived. I have been told that there are still water voles living by the banks and of course the ducks have made it their home. All this wild life needs the water in the Brook to flow properly. Now that we have warmer summers there is little spare rain fall and the Brook will dry up and all our wildlife will die if water is not allowed to reach it.

I would like to thank you in advance for your help
Valerie Moles

NEW WEB SITE FOR HISTORY SOCIETY

www.pottonhistorysociety.com

Potton History Society has launched a web site to enable greater use of its archive material. Since its formation in the Silver Jubilee year of 1977 the Society has built up an archive of over 7000 captioned photographs, many scrapbooks and a small mountain of documents! This material is kept on private property with restricted access. The web site, designed by committee member Sean Hendy, will enable all with an interest in Potton to access archive material easily. A small team has been indexing and digitising the collection over the last couple of years. This is an ongoing project and anyone interested in helping should contact the Society. The new web site will be updated regularly with the latest index and digital files. It is also hoped that Pottonians will be able to add their own digital files to our archives and enable it to continue to grow and reflect our ever changing heritage. Please look at the site and feed back your comments to the society.

Peter Ibbett. Potton History Society.

POTTON SHOW

POTTON SHOW

Saturday 12th September
at St. Mary's Church Hall and Field.

There are over 190 different classes for exhibits including flowers and vegetables, painting, photographs and handicrafts.



Schedules are available from the Post Office, Tysoe's and the Library. If you do not want to enter exhibits, why not join us between 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. to look at other people's work. Refreshments will be available. You do not have to live in Potton to be part of this event.

A BARN DANCE will be held on the Saturday evening. Tickets cost £8.50 and include a Fish and Chip Supper. Once again we have the Ivel Valley Band playing and they are worth listening to even if you don't want to dance. Tickets are now available from Cameron's, the Post Office and Tysoe's. Last year we sold more than 160 tickets so you will need to buy your tickets early.

The CRAFT FAIR will be held in the Marquee on the Sunday from 12 noon to 5.00 p.m. Last year we had more than forty stalls with a wide variety of crafts and refreshments will be available.

The weekend will finish with a
POTTON CHURCHES TOGETHER Service
at 6.30 p.m. in the Marquee

Why not join us.



CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL REPORT

From Anita Lewis representing you the people of Potton

It would be remiss of me to start this report without a "thank you" to all of you who supported Doreen Gurney and me in the election in June. It was a very encouraging result which has given me the renewed confidence to continue my endeavours to serve you well in this new Unitary Council.

At a personal level I was delighted to have been awarded the Portfolio for Children's Services. This is an enormous responsibility but one that I undertake gladly knowing that my previous experience in Education and my 14 years as a District Councillor have equipped me with the skills to perform well in this role, aiming to achieve the very best for the children of Central Bedfordshire.

Returning to the Council in general, the committees have been formed and the work of the Council is under way. The agendas are very comprehensive as business was inevitably held up pending the elections. All the 66 councillors are extremely busy ensuring that the work of Council is proceeding with due diligence.

A more detailed report will be possible as the achievements of the Council emerge in subsequent months.

Most officer posts have now been filled and personnel allocated to their roles, one of the last being the Chief Executive. Interviews for this took place recently, Richard Carr being the successful candidate. He is currently Chief Executive at Wolverhampton City Council. This is the fourth Council Mr Carr has led as chief Executive. Once he has joined the team at Central Bedfordshire in the Autumn the final piece of the jigsaw will fall into place. It will then be full steam ahead for what we believe will be an improved period in the history of local government in Central Bedfordshire.

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

TOWN PLAN

What can be done about traffic in Potton? How can we preserve the town's character? How can the needs of young people be met? The answers to these and other issues covered by the survey in May last year have been included in an Action Plan for the town. This Plan has been drawn up by volunteer sub-groups, each dealing with a particular subject, eg Environment, Facilities, Traffic etc. and we are very grateful for all the time and thought that they have put into the process.

Some of you attended a drop-in session where you were able to comment on the draft Plan. All these comments have been noted and will be considered by the sub-groups when carrying out the actions. The Plan will be discussed by the Town Council in September and following this the full version of the Plan will be available at the Council Offices in Brook End, at the library and on the Council website www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk. A summary will be delivered to every household in Potton in the autumn.

What next?

Action! That's what it's all about!

The various sub-groups will continue to carry out the proposed actions and there will be a newly formed Steering Group to ensure a coherent approach. This Steering Group will consist of Town Councillors plus other volunteers and will report to the Town council at regular intervals.

Can you help?

More volunteers are needed to join the various sub-groups so if you have a particular interest or skill why not find out more? Contact the Clerk, Mrs Valerie Moles on 01767 260086 or at pottontowncouncil@freenet.co.uk

There will also be a need for volunteers to help to carry out some of the actions on an ad hoc basis – watch out for publicity.

BEE HIVE CONSULTATION



It is well known that bees are having a difficult time of things at the moment. The Town Council had been asked to arrange for bee hives to be allowed at the Allotments.

A consultation with allotment holders was arranged and the matter was researched. There was a very good response to the consultation and a number of allotment holders had been in favour of the proposal. Other allotment holders had expressed concern, about half and half. Thank you to those of you who took the time to contact the Council.

A local bee keeper gave advice on the pros and cons and other information had been provided which warned that bee hives might be unsuitable near an area where there were children. The Council encourages children helping on allotments and therefore reluctantly recommended non approval of the proposal to place bee hives at the allotments. It was hoped that in view of the plight of bees this article might encourage anyone with a more suitable location, perhaps with a small woodland area, to consider allowing a hive or two. The Clerk can provide contact information for local bee keepers if required.



Town Council Information

Town Council Office, The Community Centre, Brook End, Pottton SG19 2QS

Town Clerk Valerie Moles
Telephone 01767 260086
Email pottontowncouncil@freenet.co.uk
Web site www.pottontowncouncil.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	Sharon Kingham	261213
Jeremy Armond	260521	Peter Langridge	260362
Jim Burke	261275	Alan Leggatt	260001
Ruth Burmo	260712	Anita Lewis	260726
Nigel Butlin	260075	John Lewis	260726
Geoff Emery	261710	Brian Lilley	261044
Eric Jakes M.B.E.	260779	Jean Way	260456

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 Pottton

Central Bedfordshire Councillors

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

REPORTING PROBLEMS

The Town Council looks after the Cemetery, the Allotments, the Henry Smith Playground, the Mill Lane Playground, the Recreation Fields, the Public Conveniences, the Brook End Car Park, the Pavilion and the Community Centre. For problems or enquiries about these facilities please contact the Clerk at the Town Council Office, Brook End.
01767 260086 pottontowncouncil@freenet.co.uk

Many problems are currently being reported to the Clerk which the Town Council has no power to overcome, please contact Central Bedfordshire Council for:-

If your problem is about refuse collection, environmental issues, recycling, or street cleaning please contact:-

Central Bedfordshire Council
0300 300 8000
customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

If your problem is about safety on the roads, pot holes, problems with the pavements or hedge cutting please contact:-

Central Bedfordshire Council Highways
01234 363222
01234 228661
highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Hourly Charges for Use of Town Council Facilities (small increase Sept 09) Community Centre, Brook End, Potton as at 1st September 08

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
Main Hall	£6.50	£7.50	£9.00
Upper Hall	£4.00	£5.00	£6.00
Both Rooms	£9.50	£11.50	£13.50

Mill Lane Pavilion, Mill Lane, Potton

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
Pavilion	£7.00	£10.00	£14.00

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