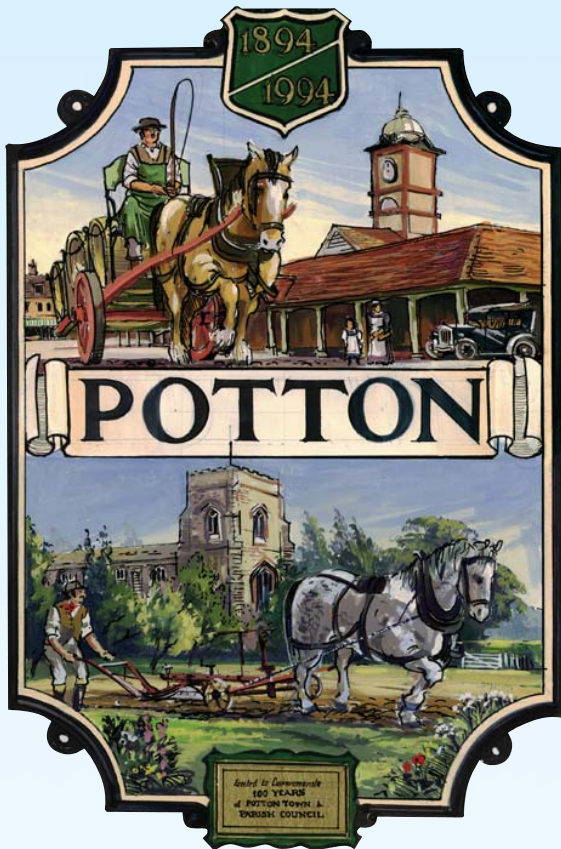


# Potton Town Council

Incorporating  
Annual Report  
2009-2010



## Newsletter Summer 2010



## Chairman's letter

In May the Town Council elected new officers for the main committees and sub-committees. It is my privilege to have been elected as Chairman and I hope to continue the good work of my predecessors.

### **Town Centre Enhancement**

Finally after a wait of two years, the seats around the trees arrived and were fitted in early July. This now completes the town centre enhancement project. Many favourable comments have been received already and the seats are being well used.

### **Annual Inspection**

During the annual inspection of the Council's buildings and amenities by councillors, a number of points were noted for remedial action. These will all be addressed in the near future. One area of concern was the number of allotments which were rented from the Council but are not being cultivated. This situation is unfair to both adjacent allotment holders and people on the waiting list and the Council will be writing to the tenants concerned.

### **Christmas Lights**

On Saturday 12th June a barbecue was held in the garden of The George and Dragon public house in glorious sunshine to raise money for the Christmas Lights fund, bringing in nearly £200. As a result of its success we will probably run another one later in the summer so look out for notices.

Many of the lights are now in need of replacement so it is essential we raise this money if we are to continue with our popular display.

### **Seasonal Market**

The summer seasonal market took place at the end of June and was well supported once more. These quarterly events are now well established and will continue for the foreseeable future.

### **Andre Allison**

Finally, after 23 years of running her ballet school, Andre Allison has decided to retire. For much of this time Andree has been a user member of the Buildings and Facilities sub-committee and I would personally like to thank her for her contribution over the years and wish her well for the future.

### **Councillor Alan Leggatt**

Chairman Potton Town Council

## Central Bedfordshire Councillor's Report

Since I wrote my article for the Spring Newsletter so much has happened in the world of politics. A general election, a record turnout, resulting in a coalition government between Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. The true nature of the state of the nation has been revealed to us bit by bit and it has made unwelcome reading. The coalition government has announced its first budget with the message loud and clear that we "must do less but do it better", whereas previously we believed we should be doing "more for less". Reality has hit home.

### ***What does it mean for Central Bedfordshire Council?***

It is early days yet for much detail, but we know it means a reduction in grants from the centre. It means a freezing of council tax (Central Bedfordshire Council has already agreed this)

It means prioritisation becomes even more crucial as budgets are squeezed. Choices will need to be made and the very services we like to deliver and you the electorate like us to deliver will have to be curtailed. The all too familiar question will have to be asked "*Is it statutory or is it discretionary?*"

Realignment is the current term - reviewing what to spend resources on (with evidence) and targeting, ceasing to provide some services.

There are, however, on a brighter note, the powers of "*Wellbeing*". Town councils can achieve these powers (80% of Town Councillors need to have undergone training). This has been achieved in Potton, so technically if Central Bedfordshire Council finds it is unable to offer a specific service that it had previously provided, Potton Town Council could take over the responsibility for delivering this service. Some Town and Parish Councils have already taken up the challenge, i.e. grass cutting, weed spraying, running markets etc.

It means, right across the board, that partnership working is of crucial importance. Resources must be used to best effect. The months ahead will be challenging but at the end of it, this country of ours that we all love, will, we hope, be restored to financial stability, debt will be dramatically reduced and as a nation we will all know we are setting the stage for the prosperity of our children and grand children.

Central Bedfordshire Council is proudly playing its part in our recovery process.

### **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](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

## Garden Party at Buckingham Palace

On Tuesday 22nd June I had the great pleasure of attending a garden party at Buckingham Palace. It was my honour and privilege to represent not only Potton Town Council but also the people of Potton on this wonderful occasion and I was very proud to do so.

Maria and I approached the palace through Green Park in absolutely glorious weather and queued up with the possible 1,000 other expectant invitees. From very early on I had decided that I was going to take full advantage and enter through the front door, no tradesman's entrance from Hyde Park for us, as we will probably never get another chance to be inside the building whose railings I had climbed on and looked through as a small boy.

We were ushered in through the gates past the Grenadier guards, on duty that day resplendent in their red tunics and bearskins, into two reception rooms and out into the gardens at the rear which cover approximately 40 acres.

Tea was served in the large tea tent for all to visit as often as they liked, whilst the diplomatic and royal tea tents were closely guarded. The selection of sandwiches, cakes and fancies was very impressive and the quality exceptional considering the amount of people catered for. Fresh tea at all times and I was especially happy with the old fashioned olde English lemonade not the modern carbonised juice. The service was very professional as you would expect but the waiters were very polite at all times even though they must have seen it many times and felt personally jaded by the whole thing.

Everybody mixed and circulated. People of all nationalities and creeds were seen, many in national dress. From my upbringing it was good to see so many service personnel invited.

There were some famous people amongst the crowd including Lord Bragg.

At approximately 3.40 the yeoman of the guard appeared and made ground, carving an avenue through the crowd, and then at 4pm a hushed expectancy spread through the crowd and you knew the arrival of her majesty was imminent. The national anthem played, everyone who was not already standing did so and suddenly there she was at the top of the terrace steps. For the ladies amongst you reading this, her majesty's outfit was a lemon yellow summer dress with a matching (obviously) hat and light coat.

Her majesty walked down the steps into the avenue of people towards the royal tea tent accompanied by HRH Prince Philip, Prince Edward and Prince and Princess Michael of Kent. I was struck by how tiny she is in the flesh. If you were in the third row of the crowd you would not be able to see her.

People were invited from the crowd to wait and be introduced. On these occasions it became clear that real conversations were had, showing real interest, not a perfunctory hello and goodbye just to say tradition had been continued. This probably accounted for the fact that it took over an hour to walk 400 yards.

Then it was time to leave for home. We made a day of it by trying a Lebanese restaurant for the first time on the way home.

As I have said it was an honour and a privilege to attend and if any one else has an invitation in the future I recommend it

**Peter J. Langridge**



# POTTON TOWN COUNCIL

# ANNUAL REPORT 2009/2010

Mrs. V. Moles, Town Clerk.  
**THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, BROOK END, POTTON, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2QS.**  
**TELEPHONE: 01767 260086.**  
E-mail: pottontowncouncil@freenet.co.uk

## Chairman's Report to the Annual Town Meeting 16th April 2010

Welcome to the Annual Town Meeting. It has been a privilege to serve as the chairman of the council for the past 12 months. Having held the post for the last 3 years I feel it is now time to pass the baton as it were to another member to carry forward the work of the council.

It has been an eventful year with ups and downs. On the down side, two of our previous councillors, Anne Barker (an ex chair) and Mary Simmonite have unfortunately died and we will miss them. On a brighter note the New CBC is now up & running, at the cost of our County Council, but all ambiguity is gone on who's responsible for what. So we have had to say goodbye to Richard Baker B.E.M. as a county and town councillor after many years but one of our CBC councillors is a portfolio holder. Due to work load Sharon had to resign and we wish her well for the future. Brian has moved from the area so he has had to resign from his place on the council. In the place of these three we welcome Adam Zermly, Sarah Fowler and Angus MacDonald as new councillors which must reduce the average age of the council considerably.

Reviewing the past 12 months activities in preparation for this meeting I saw that although the same subjects occur in the life of the town they are constantly changing in content. For instance the playing fields at HSPF and Mill Lane are still very popular. Again we have added new equipment with help from and our thanks to the Potton C.C. However we must interject an uncomfortable note here in the form of the mindless morons who take perverse pleasure in damaging and defacing the very equipment provided. To stay on the subject of town council assets and vandals I must turn to the subject of the public toilets in Brookend. These have been damaged several times making it necessary for the town council to restrict the hours these facilities are available to the public, and an expensive liability that we may have to consider closing permanently. I would urge all residents of the town to report any sightings of malicious damage and vandalism to the town clerk.

The community centre continues to be popular with hirers as does the pavilion at Mill Lane despite losing the pre school as a regular booking.

The town centre is all but finished, all that remains is the installation of the benches around the trees. At this time I should report another sad loss to the community. Joe Allen died in an unfortunate accident in February. Joe was instrumental in pushing through all the work on the enhancement in the way that we wanted it. I personally will miss his personality and enthusiasm as I am sure many others will. Our best wishes go to all his family especially his wife and two small children.

The town plan was completed and a précis was distributed to every household in the town. Many thanks to all those who worked tirelessly on this project to bring it to fruition. So many I could be here all night listing them. Volunteers are now working on putting all the various parts of the plan into action under the guidance of Geoff Emery as Chair of the town plan. It is particularly gratifying to see that the plan is being used to support the town's view in an exchange of views on housing developments on the Biggleswade road.

*Cont...*

That brings me nicely into appreciating the work put in by the chairs of the sub committees.

Alan Leggatt – F&GP. Eric Jakes M.B.E. - Burials, Mick Allen – playing fields and allotments, John Lewis – planning, and as I said earlier Geoff Emery – town plan. Without their help I would have certainly been in trouble this past year. My thanks to you all.

Our support staff have maintained their standards under the direction of Val our clerk. Sarah Williamson has looked after the community centre and increased her responsibilities as a clerical assistant. She performed excellently recently stepping into the breach whilst Val was unable to carry out her duties. Amanda has kept the Mill Lane facility in prime condition. Alan Litchfield recovered from his illness and returned to work in the cemetery catching up on those bits that suffered whilst he was off. Peter Stonebridge, although not a direct employee is part of the family and has taken on more responsibility for the public toilets and maintains them very well for us. We recently started a contract with Matthew Chappell to keep our new bus shelter clean and tidy. He has done an excellent job.

**Moving on:** The Christmas lights were their expected success. As some of you may be aware the existing lights are getting old and showing signs of wear. This in conjunction with the fear that new EU regulations may outlaw incandescent bulbs altogether in the near future has prompted the committee to focus on a replacement policy. The town council has put money aside for this purpose and we are very grateful to the charities for a donation to this cause. Other monies have been donated by businesses around the square and individuals.

This year has seen the introduction of town council surgeries which will hopefully allow people the opportunity to engage with town councillors at a time to suit the individual.

***A quick review of some of the past year shows we have :-***

- Helped the younger members of our society by supporting the RAVE BUS to which will soon attend Potton on a regular basis.
- Completed the installation of 3 Vehicle Activated Signs
- Obtained £10K through the Town & Parish Partnership which was used to tidy the triangle outside the Royal Oak, a path to the car park, and improvements to Horslow Street.
  - Had 2 new PCSOs engaged.
  - Quality status renewed for the town and engaged in well being training.
  - Finally signed the lease on the Community centre so it is ours.
  - Supported the bid to become a “Fair Trade” town.
  - Held a town council meeting in the newly re-opened scout hut.
  - Adopted the town plan as official council policy.
  - The Christmas lights were another success even after having to pay for the first time to close the south side.
  - And Party on Potton have run some excellent projects to prepare for the main event on August Bank W/E.
  - The wonderful Potton Musical Festival returned :- to the delight of many.

In conclusion I would just like to say having managed to maintain the town's proportion of the council tax at the same level for some years we have realistically had to apply an increase this year.

Charles Buxton once said ***“SILENCE IS THE SEVEREST FORM OF CRITICISM”*** I prefer if they are not complaining then we must be doing it right.

**Peter Langridge**

# POTTON TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2009-2010

## Cumulative Fund Balance

31.3.2009		31.3.2010
142073	Balance brought forward	134790.00
153091	<b>Add</b> Total Income	157053.80
160374	<b>Less</b> Total Expenditure	154996.32
134790	Balance carried forward	136847.48

## CASH RECONCILIATION AS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON 31.3.10

Premier Interest Account		108873.71
Current Account		28408.34
		137282.05
uncleared cheques as at 31.3.10		374.55
ADD	DEBTORS	792.05
LESS	CREDITORS	3108.32
TRUE FUND BALANCE		134591.23
	Additional investment fund	
COIF Fund		891

### Borrowings:

At the close of business at 31st March, 2010 there were no outstanding loans to the Council.

### Debts Outstanding

2009/2010

At 31st March, 2010 there were debts of 792.05 outstanding. (since collected)

### Capital Reserves:

The Town Council had £22849 Capital Reserves at 31st March, 2010

### Section 137 Payments:

The Limit of spending under S137 of the Local Government Act 1972 for this Council to 31st March, 2010 was £23646.75

Payments made were:

Biggles FM-local radio	100.00
Potton Fire Station	100.00
Royal British Legion	50.00
Potton Tennis Club	100.00
Link-a Ride Community Transport	100.00
East Beds Community Bus	100.00

Payments made under S145 of LGA 1972

Potton Music Festival	100.00
Potton Show	100.00

**Total** **750.00**

## POTTON SHOW

### POTTON SHOW will be held on **Saturday, 11th 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 or download from the web site [www.pottonshow.org.uk](http://www.pottonshow.org.uk). 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 entries. There will be an auction of produce after the judging about 4.30pm. 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.

The CRAFT FAIR will be held in the Marquee on the Sunday from 12 noon to 5.00 p.m.

The weekend will finish with a POTTON CHURCHES TOGETHER Service at 6.30 p.m. in the Marquee - why not join us."

## Credit Union in North Central Bedfordshire

Take control of your finances and watch your money grow by joining the Bedford Credit Union. Bedford Credit Union now operates in what was Mid Bedfordshire.

Credit Unions are financial cooperatives run by community not-for-profit organisations. Credit Unions offer easy ways to save and low cost loans to members. As Credit Unions are regulated by the Financial Services Authority you can be assured that your money is safe.

**You can join and start saving with us at the following collection points.**

- **Shefford Community Hall**, 60 High Street, SG17 5BD, Thursdays 1.00pm to 2.30 pm
- **Preen Furniture Bank**, Unit 5, Shortmead Industrial Estate, Shortmead Street, SG18 0BP, Tuesdays 10.00 to 12.30.

### How to Join

It could not be easier to join Bedford Credit Union, as all you need to do is produce two forms of identity (for example a passport or driving licence) and a recent utility bill or bank statement, plus pay a £3 joining fee and deposit at least £1 in your new account.

### Contact

Anne Slade (Bedford Credit Union Development Officer) on 07596 927 404 or email [Bedcumb@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:Bedcumb@tiscali.co.uk)

[www.bedfordcreditunion.org.uk](http://www.bedfordcreditunion.org.uk)



## COUNCILLOR PROFILE



### Mr Mick Allen

My name is Mick Allen and I have been a member of Potton Town Council for six years, where I serve as Chairman of the Playing Fields, Environment and Allotment Committee. I have lived in Potton over thirty-five years and my wife has lived here all her life. We have four children who were all educated at the local schools. I was a retained fire-fighter for Potton for nineteen years until retirement five years ago. I have been involved with helping to put up the town's Christmas Lights for many years. I have also been involved in many community activities during my time here.

## POTTON TOWN PLAN

The Town plan is progressing well. If you are interested in finding out what we are doing please come and talk to us at the Potton Show on Saturday 11th September from 2-4pm. We are always looking for more volunteers!

### Geoff Emery

Chairman Potton Town Plan

## POTTON COUNCIL SURGERIES

The Councillor Surgeries will begin again in September and will be held on some Wednesday afternoons and some Saturday mornings in the library during opening hours. Please look out for the dates and times which will be advertised on the Councils Notice board shortly.

## POTTON MARKET SQUARE ENHANCEMENT

On Thursday 8th July everyone waited expectantly in the Market Square for a lorry and a crane to arrive. Low and behold around the tight corner came our seats and they were fitted around the trees. It will be lovely to have a shady spot to rest and chat or wait for the bus. Our thanks go to Central Bedfordshire Council for finally coming up with the goods.



**Potton Town Plan Committee recommended inclusion of the following article from COBRA**

**Out of Work?  
Unemployed?  
Thinking of starting your own business?**

There are 102 people officially unemployed in Potton (claiming JSA etc). We are going to hold an informal get-together for anybody interested to discuss ways of getting back to work, networking and talk about other issues that being unemployed raises. Everybody is welcome to come along; employers, family members etc. If you are interested please call Simon Worthy on 07904 964 276 in the first instance and we will organise a place and time.

Also the library can help. Potton Library has subscribed to an application on our behalf to help start up your own business. It provides useful information for doing business research, contact numbers, articles on the legal aspects of setting up, such as health compliance, safety, tax etc. There is a lot of help and all free to use. The staff at the library are very helpful and have been given a brief overview of the product but navigating around it is simple enough. The library is ideally situated in Potton square and offers the use of three Desktop computers and the use of a laptop, all for free. With helpful staff and a friendly atmosphere we should all make the most of this excellent service. Please see back page for library opening hours.

The system for helping start your own business is called COBRA (Complete Business Reference Adviser). The application has a lot to offer. Following are some examples of what COBRA provides.

To get to COBRA click on the The Virtual Library - the library website on the Bedfordshire Library Home Page.

**Town Council Information**

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

Town Clerk Valerie Moles  
Clerical Assistant Sarah Williamson  
Telephone 01767 260086  
Email [pottoncouncil@btinternet.com](mailto:pottoncouncil@btinternet.com)  
Web site [www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk](http://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	Alan Leggatt	260001
Jeremy Armond	260521	Anita Lewis	260726
Jim Burke	261275	John Lewis	260726
Ruth Burmo	260712	Jean Way	260456
Nigel Butlin	260075	Adam Zerny	261319
Geoff Emery	261710	Sarah Fowler	260730
Eric Jakes M.B.E.	260779	Angus Macdonald	262006
Peter Langridge	260362		

## Town Councillors *Continued...*

Mr P. Leggatt is Chairman of the Town Council  
Mr J. Lewis is Vice Chairman of the Town Council  
Mr J. Lewis is Chairman of Planning Committee  
Mr P. Langridge 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

## 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 pottoncouncil@btconnect.com**

Many problems are currently being reported to the Clerk which the Town Council has no power to overcome.

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 0300 300 8000**  
**highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk**

Do you know that if you have reported anything to do with roads to Central Bedfordshire Council Highways Helpdesk then you will be given a unique reference number. If you want to track progress on your report their website has a link at <http://highwaysfaults.bedfordshire.gov.uk/> All you should have to do is input your reference number together with your postcode as a security, and a history of your report should be displayed.

# HALL HIRE -

## AVAILABILITY AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE AND THE PAVILION

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. The upper hall is suited to smaller meetings and group events.

There are a number of vacant sessions during the day time and at weekends at the Community Centre, give Sarah a call to see if either of the halls would be suitable for your group or function. The centre is near to Potton Market Square for the bus route and shopping and a car park is very nearby.

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. This hall has some space for weekend functions.

Please contact Mrs Sarah Williamson on 01767 260086 to check on availability and make a booking 01767 260086

## Hourly Charges for Use of Town Council Facilities Community Centre, Brook End, Potton as at 1st September 10

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
Main Hall	£6.90	£8.00	£10.00
Upper Hall	£4.30	£5.00	£6.00
Both Rooms	£10.00	£12.50	£14.50

### Mill Lane Pavilion, Mill Lane, Potton

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
Pavilion	£7.50	£10.60	£14.50

### 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