



# POTTON TOWN COUNCIL

## Newsletter Summer 2012

Incorporating Annual Report  
2011-2012

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2011/2012**

**Mr Alan Leggatt Town Council Chairman's Speech**

The year 2011/ 2012 has been another active year for your Town Council. In the current financial climate the challenge to maintain or improve services has become increasingly difficult. Nevertheless much has been achieved over the last twelve months.

The town plan committees have continued to be very active under the watchful eye of Geoff Emery. The Seasonal Markets have been successfully run on a quarterly basis and attendance levels remain high. A conservation volunteer's day was held where over 30 people attended to help cut back vegetation alongside the brook in HSPF in order to provide a better environment for wildlife. The Sports and Leisure Group in conjunction with the Council's playing fields committee are in the process of replacing play equipment in the Henry Smith playing field. As well as new equipment for younger children, an adult outside gym facility is also being installed. It is hoped this project which has been made possible by a generous grant from Potton Consolidated Charity, will be completed this summer. It will provide an excellent benefit for the whole community. The youth committee are expecting to open a youth club. This will run once a week at the Pavilion at Mill Lane.

Council meetings have been held once a month and key areas discussed have been:

Traffic and parking which has been a particular problem this year with many HGVs using streets which have weight restrictions and parking in and around the Market Square. Improvements have been seen in both these areas with the introduction of better signage and the use of a mobile camera van for parking violations.

The need for faster broadband in Potton.

Proposed development off Biggleswade Road.

Parliamentary constituency boundary review where the Council objected to the proposal to merge Potton with areas in North Herts. We are actively supporting the CBC counter proposal which would keep Potton in the NE Beds areas including Biggleswade and Sandy.

Further improvements were made to the Christmas lights in 2011 and many favourable comments were received about this year's display. Thanks must go to the willing volunteers who tirelessly give up their time every year to do this.

Members of the council attended a celebration in our twin town – Langenlonsheim – in October to celebrate the 25th anniversary of our partnership. The twinning charter was renewed and signed by the Chairman and the Ortsbürgermeister, Michael Cyfka. Mr. Cyfka is very keen to reinvigorate twinning and would particularly like to get the youth exchanges started again.

Monthly surgeries were held in the Library on Saturday mornings. Different councillors attend the surgeries where the public can come along to ask questions or seek advice.

Regular meetings of the council's sub-committees took place throughout the year. These comprise Playing Fields and Allotments committee, Planning, Burials and Buildings and Facilities. My thanks go to the respective Chairmen who have the responsibility for running these meetings. They are Angus Macdonald, John Lewis, Paul Rogers and Andy Hopkins.

Also to Peter Langridge who chairs the Finance and General Purposes Committee which alternates fortnightly with the town council meetings.

My thanks also go to Val our clerk who keeps us in order and provides us with the expertise and advice we need to function and also to her entire staff who do such an excellent job of maintaining our facilities. These include the cemetery, the Community Centre and Mill Lane Pavilion halls, the public toilets, the bus shelter the many other general maintenance activities around the town.

## COMMUNITY HALL

A number of views have been expressed by some members of the public regarding the Town Council's stance on the provision of a community hall as part of the proposed new development east of Biggleswade Road. The Council would like to clarify its position.

The Town Council very much supports the proposal for a community hall but is currently unable to support the scheme financially. This is because there are already two other halls at the Community Centre and Mill Lane Pavilion which are being subsidised by ratepayer's money. It has been suggested that a modest increase in Council Tax would enable a new hall to be self sustaining. A figure of £24 per year from each household has been mentioned but without a business plan for the scheme, this figure cannot yet be confirmed. Notwithstanding, £24 per year represents an increase in excess of 30% on the Potton precept. Although minor authorities are not subject to the same governmental rules regarding minimal or no increases to Council Tax in the present economic climate, to pass an increase of this percentage would require a referendum to be held for residents.

The Hall Committee is working hard to put together a business plan and when this is completed it should be possible to see if the scheme would be financially viable. Residents should be aware that the developers are only providing the site for a hall together with connections for services. The developers will not cover the building costs and funding for this will need to be found elsewhere. Some Section 106 monies (planning gains) are likely to be available from Central Bedfordshire Council but the amount has not been formally stated.

## ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATION

The Town Council welcomes comment and feedback and continues to strive to serve the people of the Town of Potton. The Town Council is unable to respond to any anonymous communication.

# POTTON TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2011-2012

## Cumulative Fund Balance

	31.3.2012
Balance brought forward	133618
Add Total Income	171307
Less Total Expenditure	163113
	<b>141812</b>

## CASH RECONCILIATION AS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON 31.3.12

	Premier Interest Account	109774.97
	Current Account	32307.12
		142082.09
	Less cheques drawn but not debited to bank account at close of business on 31.3.12	269.75
Add	DEBTORS	1476.17
Less	CREDITORS	3462.46
TRUE FUND BALANCE		139876.05
Additional investment fund		
COIF Fund		891

### **Borrowings:**

At the close of business at 31st March, 2012 there were no outstanding loans to the Council.

### **Debts Outstanding 2011/2012**

At 31st March, 2012 there were debts of 1476.17 outstanding.

### **Capital Reserves:**

The Town Council had 18,366 Capital Reserves at 31st March, 2012

### **S137 Payments:**

The Limit of spending under S137 of the Local Government Act 1972 for this Council to 31st March, 2012 was 24761.80

Payments made under LGA 1972 S137	
Royal British Legion	50.00
Magpus	50.00
Payments made under LGA 1972 S145	
Potton Music Festival	100.00
Potton Show	100.00
Biggles FM-local radio	100.00
Payment made under LGRA 1997	
Link-a Ride Community Transport	100.00
Payment made under LG (Misc.Prov.) Act 1976 S19	
Potton Bowls Club	300.00
Colts Children's football Club	271.48
<b>Total</b>	<b>1071.48</b>

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2012

		Actual at 31.3.12 £
COIF Fund	891	
Long Term Debtors		
<b>LONG TERM ASSETS</b>		<b>891</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors	1476.17	
Payments in advance	0	
<b>Cash in Hand</b>		
Current acc	32307.12	
Deposit acc	109774.97	
Total Current Assets		142082.09
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Creditors	3462.46	
Uncleared cheques	269.75	
Total current liabilities		3732.21
<b>Represented by:</b>		
<b>Fund Balance</b>		<b>139876.05</b>

## Councillor Profile



### In the hot seat this summer is Councillor Andy Gibb

I'm a new comer to Potton having only lived here for 10 years but was born many years ago just over the border in Pirton, Hertfordshire. My interests include cycling, allotment gardening, the natural world and climbing mountains in Scotland whenever I can get away. I have two kids at Potton schools, work for Anglian Water and live in Bull Street.

I am keen for the council to be interactive and responsive and to help Potton be as sustainable a community as possible. As a cyclist and living near the town square I am acutely aware of the traffic issues in town and will work to make Potton a safer place for us all.

Potton has a great, active community and as a councillor I will work hard to help out and take part when I can.

## The thorny issue of housing

A few months ago, I was lucky enough to be standing in a Potton garden to witness the emergence of some very rare bats. Unfortunately, the site in question was located all too close to the latest projected housing development in Potton, on Biggleswade Road, and it is likely these nocturnal fliers are going to find their lives, and habitat affected by this unwanted development.

We all recognise the importance of having a sufficient number of homes for everyone to live in, but on occasion planners do not appear to give enough consideration as to where these houses should go. Perhaps small rural market towns with already over-subscribed schools and surgeries are not the best locations?

The houses to go on the Biggleswade Road and off Sutton Mill Road were allocated to Potton on the local development plan which outlines projects to 2026, though Central Beds Council are now looking at extending their plan to 2031 to include the southern area of the county. Some northern areas are now being allocated more housing.

I know, when given the opportunity a few months ago, many of you wrote to the council to express your views. Early signs suggest the hard work may have paid off; I am told Potton ward is unlikely to be allocated any further large housing developments prior to 2031.

However, the 2031 initial plans do include a proposal for 2,000 new houses on the edges of Sandy.

As far as the Biggleswade Road development is concerned, there has been a recent exhibition of the developer's plans which I know many of you have responded to. I expressed concern that returned surveys were to be sent to the agent acting on behalf of the developer, who one can only suppose will have an interest in seeing a positive response!

It was also noted that the consultation document has much more information about the proposed new hall - which it seems is NOT to be provided by the developer - than it does about the minimum 150 dwellings to be built on the site.

I have also investigated a site by Jay's Farm, Potton, for which the Town Council has been sent literature by property developers. Central Bedfordshire Council told me that a planning application of some 300 units would be "contrary to policy" and the site is too small to be considered for their local development plan. Fingers Crossed.

I do a monthly email update in which I provide regular updates on development and a host of other local issues. Let me know if you'd like to go on the mailing list: adamzerny@hotmail.co.uk

### **Adam Zerny**

Independent Central Bedfordshire Councillor

[www.adamzerny.co.uk](http://www.adamzerny.co.uk)

[adamzerny@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:adamzerny@hotmail.co.uk)

twitter: @adamzerny

Facebook: cllr adam zerny

## POTTON TOWN PLAN

The quarterly Market was held on the 23rd June and went well. The next Market will be on Saturday 22nd September followed by the Christmas Market on Saturday 8th December. Please put these dates in your diary

### **Environment Group**

Meetings are continuing with Sustrans on the cycle route to the RSPB. We have recently made contact with Sandy Council to see if they would like to join with us to take the path on into their town.

Plans for the Swift boxes are well advanced and all the necessary monies raised. Six boxes are to be placed on the outside of the Clocktower in the Market Square. John Day from the RSPB would like to find some more sites in Shannon Place.

The group will clear the banks of the Brook again after the birds finish nesting and will be looking for volunteers

The Youth Club opened fully to the Young people of Potton on Thursday 28th June. This is to be held for 12 to 18 year olds in the Mill Lane Pavilion each Thursday from 7pm until 9pm. The club is being run by Groundwork Hertfordshire with three professional Youth Workers. This has been funded by the Potton Consolidated Charities for a 3 year period.

### **Sports Leisure and Facilities**

Plans are well advanced to erect an outdoor Adult Gym in the Henry Smith Playing Field that has been funded by the Potton Consolidated Charities. Further monies have been received to upgrade all the children's play equipment. Plans have been agreed and the order placed. All this work will be undertaken during the late summer months.

Our thanks go to the Consolidated Charities for their generous contribution to the Town

### **Land East of the Biggleswade Road Development**

On Friday 29th June leaflets were starting to be distributed to every household by Barfords asking for comments on the Development.

On the same day an advert appeared in the Biggleswade Chronicle Public Notice section plus a feature article

From 1st July until the 27th there was a display in the Vineyard Church offices. ( 4 week consultation period )

On the 17th & 18th July there was an exhibition in the Community Centre in Brook End.

The Developers hope to submit their proposals to the Executive of Central Beds in September to obtain their agreement in October.

They can then submit Outline Planning that could be considered in November. At this time the section 106 benefits and monies will be agreed

The site could then be sold on to Builders with a full planning application being submitted in December.

Building could start in 2013 with an estimated 35 houses a year.

### **Community Hall on Land east of the Biggleswade Road**

Discussions continue with the Steering Committee, the Developers, Barford's and Central Beds.

The Steering Committee were interviewing 4 firms of Architects on the evening of Monday 9th July with a view to having them help to "Assemble the Vision, Viability Analysis, Fund Raising strategy, Options Appraisal, Timetable, Budget and Operational Management Plan to complete the 1st Draft Business Case.

We already have the funds to cover the cost of this work. We will then be able to see if the Hall is viable.

### **Geoff Emery**

Chairman of the Potton Town Plan

## ALLOTMENTS

Allotment holders have always been very grateful for gifts of animal manure to use on their plots. There is a problem with this at the moment as there is now more stored than can be used. Please do not therefore dispose of manure at the allotments for the time being without first contacting the Town Clerk on 01767 260086.

*Thank you for your help.*



## POTTON SHOW

**POTTON SHOW will be held on Saturday, 8th September at St. Mary's Church Hall and Field.**

There will be around 200 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 put in any entries, 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 and different stalls, birds of prey, Morris Dancers, music and a bouncy castle for the children.



**A BARN DANCE** will be held on the Saturday evening. Tickets are available from Cameron's, Tysoe's and the Post Office. Last year we sold 130 tickets. The Ivel Valley Band will be playing and they are worth listening to even if you don't want to dance.

**The CRAFT FAIR** will be held in the Marquee on the Sunday from 12 noon to 5.00 p.m. There will be a wide variety of crafts available. Why not shop early for Christmas!

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

## CHILDRENS PLAY EQUIPMENT AT HENRY SMITH PLAYING FIELDS

The Town Council is very grateful for the help of a group of residents who consulted, researched and prepared a proposal for the design of a scheme by Kompan for new play equipment at the Henry Smith Playing Field. This was included in the submissions which had been arranged from several other suppliers by the Town Council. The Council debated during many meetings in order to make the best possible decision and the Kompan scheme was eventually chosen. There are ideas for additional recreational landscaping to be added at a later date.

The new equipment will be fitted in early September to avoid closing the park over the summer holidays and interrupting the Party on Potton Celebrations over August Bank Holiday.

## SWIFT BOXES

There was an article in the Spring newsletter about putting up swift boxes in the Market Square and around Shannon Place. The owners of the old foundry have asked me to point out that prior to the demolition of the building a survey was carried out and there were no swifts nesting in the foundry. It has also been pointed out to me that the illustration which accompanied the piece was of swallows and not swifts. I apologise for the inaccuracies. Despite my errors the good news is that thanks to several donations there are now swift boxes waiting to be installed at the Clock House ready for next year's season. **Val Moles**





BUCKINGHAM PALACE

19th April, 2012.

Dear Mr. Leggatt,

The Queen has asked me to thank you and the Members of Potton Town Council for your kind letter containing a message of congratulations to Her Majesty, sent on the occasion of the Sixtieth Anniversary of The Queen's Accession to the Throne.

Her Majesty was interested to learn that you will be holding a series of events to mark the Diamond Jubilee and sends her best wishes to all concerned.

Yours sincerely,

Christopher Sandamas  
The Chief Clerk to The Queen

Alan Leggatt, Esq.

## OUTDOOR GYM

The outdoor gym for the use of people from 8 years old upwards has now been installed in the Henry Smith Playing Field just in time to celebrate the 2012 Olympic Games. There will be an official opening ceremony later in the year after the installation of new children's playground equipment in the park is completed.

## "Pot Town"

*I wandered through a city,  
Saw many a stately pile,  
Some massive, others pretty,  
In every kind of style.  
"To yon" I was beginning,  
"Your newly built town hall?"  
"Nay", said the natives grinning,  
"That 'ere's The Ping-pong Ball"*

*"and that one there" I queried,  
"Is that the local church?"  
"Nay" said the men, unwearied,  
"That 'ere's the 'Rod and Perch'.  
And that 'ere with the turrets,  
That be the 'Cat and Cow',  
What sells the ale and spurrits;  
We'd like to be there now.*

*At last the vast horizon  
To scan did I begin,  
Whatever fell my eyes on  
Was sure to be an inn.  
I sought for explanation,  
The natives scratched their heads  
Then (after consultation),  
"Whoy, this be Potton, Beds".*



The above stanzas were taken from the London "Globe" of December 27th 1904. At the beginning of the 20th Century Potton was quite renown for its public houses. 30 for 2,041 inhabitants.

***With thanks to Mick Allen Landlord of the George and Dragon***

## 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](mailto:pottoncouncil@btconnect.com)

A large number of highways and other 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](mailto: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](mailto:highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

## Town Council Information

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

Town Clerk Valerie Moles  
Telephone 01767 260086  
Email [pottoncouncil@btconnect.com](mailto:pottoncouncil@btconnect.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

Ruth Burmo	260712	Alan Leggatt	260001	John Lewis	260726
Geoff Emery	261710	Anita Lewis	260726	Paul Rogers	260977
Eric Jakes M.B.E.	260779	Jean Way	260456	Andrew Hopkins	262672
Peter Langridge	260362	Adam Zerny	261319	Rex Whitfield	262246
Mr Andy Gibb	260067	Mr Angus Macdonald	262006		

Mr Alan Leggatt is Chairman of the Town Council

Mr Peter Langridge is Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Mr Paul Rogers is Chairman of the Burials Committee

Mr A. Hopkins is Chairman of the Buildings and Facilities Committee

Mr A. Macdonald is Chairman of the Playing Fields and Allotment Committee

Mr J. Lewis is Chairman of Planning 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. 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.

Committee Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the same venue, starting at 7.00 p.m. These meetings are not open to the public.

## Other Council Representatives for Potton

### Central Bedfordshire Councillors

Doreen Gurney 680395 doreen.gurney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk  
Adam Zerny 261319 adamzerny@hotmail.co.uk

### Council Web Site

### Contacts Information Page

If you are a manager or secretary for a local organisation please have a look at the page on the Potton Council website and let me know if there are any changes I need to make to the published details for your organisation. [www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk) The original page was produced from the Town Guide and was collated a few years ago now. If you would like the details of your community group to be placed on the site please let me know. Val Moles, Clerk.

## HALL HIRE - AVAILABILITY AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE AND THE PAVILION

There is a large 14 x 3.5 metre 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 metre 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 Friday evenings and weekend functions.

Please contact Mrs Sarah Williamson 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 2012

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
Main Hall	£7.00	£9.00	£11.00
Upper Hall	£4.50	£6.00	£7.00

#### Mill Lane Pavilion, Mill Lane, Potton

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
Pavilion	£8.00	£11.00	£15.00

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