

Potton Town Council

Potton Town Council, Town Council Office, The Community Centre, Brook End,
Potton SG19 2QS Tel: 01767 260086

Email: pottoncouncil@btconnect.com Web: www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk

Summer Newsletter 2015

YOUR ELECTED TOWN COUNCILLORS



DENIS ELLISON



GEOFF EMERY



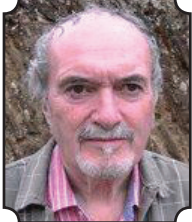
ANDREW GIBB



RICHARD HARRIS



JOHN HOBBS



LES IVALL



ROGER JORDAN



PETER LANGRIDGE



JONATHAN LEAN



ALAN LEGGATT



JOHN LEWIS



ANGUS MACDONALD



CHRIS TEMPLE



REX WHITFIELD



ADAM ZERNY

Visit <http://www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk/councillors.aspx> for more details about your fifteen Town Councillors.

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE - COUNCILLOR PETER J. LANGRIDGE

Summer has arrived and with it a new make-up of the council. I welcome our two new councillors, John Hobbs and Jonathan Lean. Cllr Hobbs has served the community previously as a town councillor so is experienced in the ways these things work. Cllr Lean is new to Potton Town Council so will be able to bring a new perspective on the way we work and see things. Their profiles are available on the Potton Town Council website.

Again we are blessed with a full programme of events around the town over the summer months.

This is the intervening year for Party on Potton but the committee is working hard during this time to raise funds to enable another great event next year.

The Marais Ensemble will be performing some concerts in the town and surrounding area. I recommend a visit to listen and learn at one of their performances if you can.

Our many and varied choirs will be performing for us, with music for all tastes, and Potton Playhouse will have a performance for us.

The cricket club has opened its grand new pavilion. A tremendous asset to the town and I wish them well for the future.

The Hall for All project is moving forward every day. Plans are now well advanced but I am sure they will welcome any new support of any kind, volunteering as well as financial. Much more information elsewhere in this newsletter

Our town is growing all the time as more and more people become aware of the lovely town with its Georgian square and its long history. Unfortunately on a sour note we also seem to be starting to suffer the same fate as many larger towns. A somewhat unruly element is appearing. There has been instances of racing cars through the town late at night, and some idiots have been out deliberately damaging properties, uprooting road signs throwing fast food packaging around the streets and other such anti-social behaviour: The zip wire in the children's play area has been out of service for some time because some idiot has let his dog chew the seat and made it unsafe for the little ones. I can see no benefit in emptying the contents of a dog bin onto the path or knocking over the shoe collection bin in Carters Lane on a regular basis. I can only ask that if you witness any of these mindless acts of vandalism please report the perpetrators to the appropriate authorities, as the longer they get away with it the more we all pay in repair and replacement costs.

This is my opportunity to once again remind people that Central Beds have not raised their portion of the council tax by withholding funds that should have been passed down to the town and parish councils. In the years to come I believe this situation will continue and the town council will be taking on more responsibilities which will inevitably mean increases in the council tax. A very unpalatable truth but it is better to have it out in the open so we are all aware of it for the future. If we want our town to grow we will have to be prepared to fund it.

The recent referendum on more money for our police force was comprehensively defeated. I am not sure whether this is a result of distrust in the local constabulary or a lack of confidence. Whatever the reason we now have to live with the resultant fallout. To ensure a better society and to maintain the values and standards that the majority of the people want and need, we must all pitch in and help our local police at every opportunity. Sgt. Garry Kidd can be contacted through the usual channels. If you have a problem then as always please contact the town clerk Jonathan on 260086 who will pass on your message.

I have recently raised the subject of declaring a "Potton Day" This would be a specific day, as yet undetermined, but possibly in August to coincide with the Party on Potton, when we can acknowledge what we all think of our town and community. We could have an award and presentation for a nominated citizen of the town who has done good deeds for the town in general or residents. A Potton flag could be produced and flown on that day. If anyone has ideas on how we can celebrate our town then please let me know through the town clerk.

So in conclusion, I hope you all have a great summer, the sun comes out and stays out because the English countryside is the best in the world when it is like that.

Best Wishes

Peter J. Langridge, Chairman, Potton Town Council

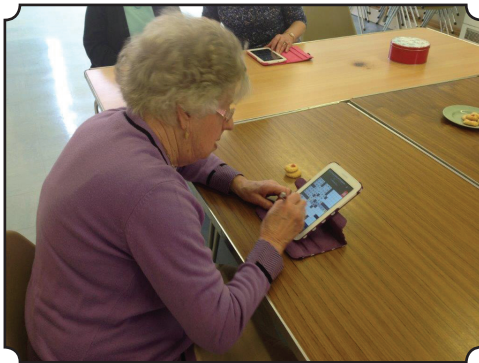
POTTON COMMUNITY AGENT NEWS - SUPPORTING THE OVER 60s IN POTTON

Potton Town Teas – a friendly new community drop-in at the Community Centre, Brook End. We open twice a month on a Thursday afternoon between 2pm and 4pm. Next dates are 25th June, 9th & 23rd July, 6th & 20th August, 3rd & 17th September. Come and join us for a game of Scrabble, Triominos or cards, or simply sit and chat over tea and homemade cakes. Anyone who would like to come but needs transport please give Andrea a call on 0300 555 5949 and we will try and arrange a lift.

Free section timers for the over 60s – Bedfordshire Police Partnership Trust have kindly donated 50 section timers to give to Potton residents who are over 60. Designed to bring on a light, radio or TV at intervals throughout the day and evening to give the appearance an empty property is occupied. Perfect if you are going on holiday or due a spell in hospital. Contact Andrea for more details.

Maximise your retirement income – Many people are still not claiming all the benefits they are entitled to. If you have an illness or disability that affects your day to day ability to care for yourself, then you could be entitled to apply for Attendance Allowance, a non-means tested benefit. Pension Credit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit are also being missed out on by thousands of pensioners. Call Andrea to find out if you are eligible.

Potton Men's Group – there are a number of gentlemen in Potton who are interested in getting together for a walk, a pub lunch and an occasional outing. The group would take place perhaps once a month to start with and would be on an informal basis. If you would like to make new friends or reacquaint with old ones, please contact Mike Horgan on 01767 261954.



Samsung Tablet Training – we are continuing to train up small groups of Potton over 60s residents to teach them how to use a computer tablet. The project is kindly funded by Potton Consolidated Charity. If you are over 60 and think that learning how to do your shopping on a computer or keeping in touch with family by email would benefit you, then give Andrea a call for more information.

Indoor Carpet Bowls – if anyone would be keen on coming to a short carpet bowls group, please contact Andrea. If there is enough interest, then a weekly group could be set up at the Community Centre.

Don't forget, if you have an issue you can't find any information on or perhaps you don't want to discuss with your relatives, the please call Andrea, Potton Community Agent, in confidence on 0300 555 5949.

Oak Tree Branch – Henry Smith Playing Fields

The Town Council has discussed on numerous occasions about the low oak tree branch (See picture) which overhangs the footpath in Henry Smith Playing Fields.

The Town Council has obtained advice about the branch and the tree. The advice was to save the tree for the future that the low oak tree branch should be removed. The Town Council is aware that many Potton residents don't want the oak tree branch to be removed.

The Town Council is delaying removal of the branch from the tree to consider ways to make use of the branch once it is removed in the locality.



ANNUAL REPORT ON 14th 2015, given by Mr Peter Langridge, Chairman of the Town Council

I took over as Chairman of the council after last year's annual meeting. As you are aware my predecessor was Councillor Alan Leggatt who had held that position for the previous 4 years and had ably steered us through some difficult times such as CBC's (Central Bedfordshire Council) Gypsy & Traveller plan which I will mention later, and the withholding of funds by CBC, can we see a common thread developing here already?

I aim to touch on the past year, where we are currently and where we are going in the future. Much has happened during the past year. I will try to cover all the points but be as brief as possible without minimising the important parts.

Within the council itself we have had some movement of people. We started the year with a new Town Clerk Jonathan, whom I think has done an excellent job with help from the ever efficient Clerk's Assistant Sarah. At this time I thank the previous Town Clerk Mrs. Moles who served the council for many years. Cllr: Mr Andy Hopkins resigned just before I took post and Cllr: Ian Clements resigned as I took on the post. We sadly lost Cllr: Mrs Anita Lewis, as you are all no doubt aware. She will be missed for her grasp of many a complicated situation and the ability to see the core of a problem and have a remedy. A strong character and personality she helped mould and shape the council for many years. You may not have agreed with her but you had to listen to her because she spoke with a true conviction she was doing the right thing. Cllr: Mrs. Ruth Burmo has this month resigned after many years' service and is moving on to pastures new. I wish her well on her journey and say I will miss her personal council. Then after over ½ a century of service Cllr: Eric Jakes M.B.E. had to resign due to ill health. A man who helped and guided me personally from my first meeting on the council. I am sure we will miss him and them all.

On the obverse of the coin we have seen the welcome return of Cllr: Geoff Emery and we have welcomed Cllrs. Denis Ellison, Roger Jordan, Les Ivall and Richard Harris. Denis has taken on the speed watch project around the town and produced excellent results as well as other roles. Roger has taken on chairmanship of the town plan and is looking at the neighbourhood plan, which is the future. With an election due in the next few weeks you may well see more changes in the makeup of your council. I believe it to be a good thing that the town has an opportunity to choose its representatives.

Other topics concerning the town council as far as the general public is concerned include mainly the council tax. I hope you are all aware that once again CBC has withheld the monies that central government expected them to pass on to the town and parish councils. CBC have once again trumpeted that they have not increased their proportion of the tax. Not difficult to work out is it? Potton Town Council have had in the main had to raise their share as a result to maintain the current level of services. It is unfortunate but I believe it will be the same next year, especially as the Town Council wants to make improvements around the town in several areas.

On a different tack in an effort to keep in touch with the people and keep them informed the TC have held regular monthly surgeries in the library, sent out seasonal newsletters to every household and are re-launching the website. We tweet regularly and have an official facebook under consideration. NOT to be confused with several others in the area.

Good news is we have recently invested in a defibrillator which is affixed to the west wall of the library and several people have undergone training in the use of the equipment. I touched on Eric earlier, what I didn't say was that he made history in this town by being the first person to be awarded the honorary title of "Freeman of the town". The High Sherriff of the county also gave him an award in recognition of his commitment to and work for the community of Potton over so many years.

A quick resume of the past year shows that the youth club continues and several sports events supported by PTC were successful. The 20mph speed limit has been introduced within the conservation area. Looking to the future the town council has supported Albert on his epic trip to Mongolia, and has agreed the plans for a memorial garden to honour those in the local area who have given their lives in the service of this country.

In conclusion I would like to thank all the councillors and staff who have helped me over the last year. It has been a privilege to serve as your Chairman and a councillor and I hope I can continue to do so after the election.

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL UNAUDITED BALANCE SHEET FOR 2014-15

Account Description	31st March 2014	31st March 2015
<i>Current Assets</i>		
Debtors	3,915	8,614
Current Account	17,002	16,401
30 Day Account	169,756	166,990
Other Monies	0	179
Total Assets	190,673	192,184
<i>Current Liabilities</i>		
Creditors	1361	0
Deposits	500	500
Total Current Liabilities	1861	500
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	188,953	191,684
Represented By:-		
Current Year Fund	0	11,425
General Reserves	125,747	125,887
EMR Community Centre	20,866	10,736
EMR Cemetery	1,500	1,500
EMR Christmas Lights	7,295	5,224
EMR Town Plan	2,580	2,414
EMR Youth Budget	6,480	8,712
EMR Grants	24,345	25,786
Total Equity	188,953	191,684
Balance at 31st March 2014	188,953	
Add total Income	194,187	
Less total Expenditure	191,456	
Balance at 31st March 2015	191,684	

Town Council Information

For enquiries regarding the following:

Cemetery, Allotments, Henry Smith Playground, Mill Lane Playground, Recreation Fields, Public Conveniences, Brook End Car Park, Pavilion and Community Centre.

Councillor contact details:

Peter Langridge	260362	Jonathan Lean	262404
Denis Ellison	261925	Alan Leggett	260001
Geoff Emery	261710	John Lewis	260726
Andrew Gibb	260067	Angus Macdonald	262006
Richard Harris	262596	Chris Temple	262535
John Hobbs	260710	Rex Whitfield	262246
Les Ivall	261559	Adam Zerny	261319
Roger Jordan	261143		

Officers:

Jonathan Whitehurst - Town Clerk Sarah Williamson - Clerical Assistant

Office opening hours:

Monday 9.30am – 12.30pm Tuesday 9.30am – 12.30pm Wednesday Closed
 Thursday 9.30am – 12.30pm Friday 9.30am – 12.30pm

Allotments

The Town Council has an allotment site with over forty plots (half and full size), if you are interested in an allotment plot at some stage in the future please contact Mrs Sarah Williamson Email: pottontowncouncilbookings@btconnect.com or Tel: 260086 about being added to the allotment waiting list.

The waiting list for an allotment is currently very small, unfortunately we are unable to advise when a plot will become available. Please don't be put off by the waiting list as people's circumstances often change and some people always leave the waiting list or no longer want a plot when they are offered one.

IVEL SPRINTER

New community bus service between Pottton and Bedford, following local suggestions we are currently running a trial involving a new service for all Pottton residents to/from Bedford. The service runs on the 3rd Monday of the month leaving Pottton Mkt. Sq. @ 09.00hrs, Newtown 09.03 arr: Bedford 09.55hrs; departing Bedford at 13.00hrs. We all hope that this initiative is supported and can continue.



On every Wednesday of the month we also run to Cambridge for shopping. The Ivel Sprinter will be taking part in this Year's Biggleswade Carnival Parade on Saturday 22 June 2015.

Volunteer Drivers Required for the Ivel Sprinter Community Bus. The Ivel Sprinter is a community minibus service providing a lifeline for many people that have no other means of public transport.

It links many out-lying villages and towns such as Tempsford, Langford, Pottton, Upper Caldecote, Everton, Barford, Blunham and Sutton with the main towns of Biggleswade and Sandy. These services run on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. Other services are also provided to Bedford, St Neots and Cambridge on other days of the week. These services not only assist our senior citizens to maintain their independence, but is a public service for all ages.

It is staffed by volunteer drivers and organised and maintained by its management committee who are similarly unpaid.

Suitable drivers require a car licence with DI to drive a minibus. We are looking for more volunteer drivers, who can give one or two mornings a month and training will be given.

Recently 20 of our drivers passed the MiDAS training (Minibus Drivers Awareness Scheme).

If you think that you are suitable and can give something back to the community, we would very much like to hear from you. We are also looking for a person with mechanical experience to help with day to day maintenance. Please contact Tel: 01462 317103 or visit our website: ivelsprinter.org.uk.

If you have not heard of us before & would simply like a timetable please go to our web site, details above, or Tel 01767 317103 & we will supply a copy.

We look forward to seeing you soon!!

Pottton Show

The Pottton Show Committee will be holding their 42nd show on Saturday September 12th at St Mary's Hall and Field from 2.00pm-5.00pm.

On Saturday evening there will be a Barn Dance in the Marquee, dancing to the Ivel Valley Band. Tickets for this will be £12.50 to include a fish and chip supper. Barn Dance tickets can be bought from the Post Office, Tysoes and Camerons Newsagents or phone Sheila Woods on 01767-261047.

Sunday September 13th the Marquee will be the venue for the Craft Fair to be held from 12pm – 5pm. There will be a wide range of stalls with refreshments available. If you would like to have a stall please contact Jane Leonard 01767-260293. This will be followed by a Pottton Churches Together service at 6.30pm.

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Doreen Gurney 680395 Adam Zerny 261319

For enquiries regarding the following:

Libraries, sports & arts, elections, education, waste & recycling, housing, planning, building control, trading standards, council tax, grants, benefits, buses, blue badges.

Central Bedfordshire Council

Tel: 0300 300 8000

Email: customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

For enquiries regarding Highway issues including roads, potholes, street lighting, pavements, hedge cutting.

Central Bedfordshire Council Highways

Tel: 0300 300 8049

Email: highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Central Bedfordshire Councillor's Report – Cllr Adam Zerny

Several years of encouragement appear to have paid off and Central Beds Council has at last agreed to consider how to make the Deepdale junction a little bit safer.

There has been strong resistance from the council, in the past, to any kind of change but it appears attitudes are softening.

In recent weeks the council has sought your opinion via a public consultation but, as ever, it hasn't been publicised well enough and I suspect more people have found out about it via my newsletters than from Central Beds!

If you haven't seen any details until now, go to:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/publicstatutorynotices> and click on the link relating to the B1042.

The website offers instructions for you to have your say.

My main concern is that their initial proposal is to cut the speed limit from Sandy to Potton to 50mph seemingly treating the whole road as if it were a blackspot whereas it is the Deepdale junction which has seen the vast majority of accidents. I have asked the council to reconsider their plans and to use this change to consider how to reduce the speed of traffic as it enters Potton.

If you're reading this after 23rd June, there is a good chance CBC's brief consultation may have ended.

Fear not, you can read about the plans on my facebook page - cllr adam zerny - or failing that you can email centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk and copy me in, and I'll do my best to make sure your views are considered.

If you'd like to find out about these consultations when they happen, please email me at adamzerny@hotmail.co.uk to go on the mailing list for my monthly newsletter. If you like my facebook page cllr adam zerny I'll be able to update you as soon as anything significant happens.

Potton Library – Library staff Debbie and Leon

Our friendly library is open to everyone and we invite non-members and our regular customers to join in with our events / activities as well as use our traditional library facilities.

We have now formed Friends of Potton Library group to assist us with promoting our services and events. If you would like to support your local library or find out more, please call in, or come along to our next meeting at the library on Monday 6th July at 10.00am.

There is a wide selection of activities planned for children during the Summer Reading Challenge. Look out for our dedicated newsletter (available towards the end of the term), and posters nearer the time. We are planning a daytime craft / knitting group, jigsaw swaps and coffee mornings.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

July

Sat 18th Councillor Surgery 10am – 12 noon – Library
(Cllrs Lean and Lewis)

August

Sat 15th Councillor Surgery 10am – 12 noon – Library
(Cllrs Ivall and Whitfield)

September

Sat 12th Potton Show 2pm-5pm
Sat 19th Councillor Surgery 10am – 12 noon – Library
(Cllrs Gibb and Jordan)
Sat 19th Seasonal Market – Potton Market Square 9am-1pm
Sun 27th Potton Apple Day - St Mary's Hall & field (time to be confirmed)

Council and Committee Meetings

All meetings are usually held in the Main Hall of the Community Centre unless otherwise stated and the first meeting of the evening starts at 7pm. Press and public welcome to attend.

July

Tue 7th Town Council Meeting.
Tue 21st Town Council Meeting.

August

No meetings.

September

Tue 1st Town Council Meeting.
Tue 15th Town Council Meeting.

Hall Hire – Availability at the Community Centre and Mill Lane Pavilion

There is a large 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 Mrs. Williamson a call during office opening hours to see if either of the halls would be suitable for your group or function. The Community Centre is near to Potton Market Square for the bus route and shopping and a free car park is very nearby.

The Pavilion at Mill Lane has a large 9 metre square hall and kitchen, there are facilities for people with disabilities and a baby changing unit. The floor may not be suitable for dance groups. We have a large free to use car park. If you are planning your child's Birthday party, the Pavilion at Mill Lane may well be the ideal location.

Please contact Mrs. Sarah Williamson to check on availability and make a booking Tel: 260086 or
Email: pottontowncouncilbookings@btconnect.com.

Newsletter Delivery

The Town Council plans to produce four Newsletters each year and these are delivered to every household in Potton.

The Town Council has asked Community Groups if they would be interested in delivering the Newsletter as a fundraiser; though none of the Groups are currently in a position to deliver the Newsletter:

The Town Council is now looking at paying 13 – 18 year olds to deliver the Newsletter: 13 – 18 year olds need a permit from Central Bedfordshire Council, see link for more information <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/pupil-support/child-employment.aspx> Any 13 – 18 year olds interested in delivering the Newsletter, please contact the Town Council Office.

Outdoor Gym at Henry Smith Playground

Do remember that Potton has an outdoor Gym, minimum user age 13 years. If you have a medical condition please consult your doctor before using.

New Swings at Mill Lane Playground

A 2 seat cradle swing and a 2 seat flat swing.

