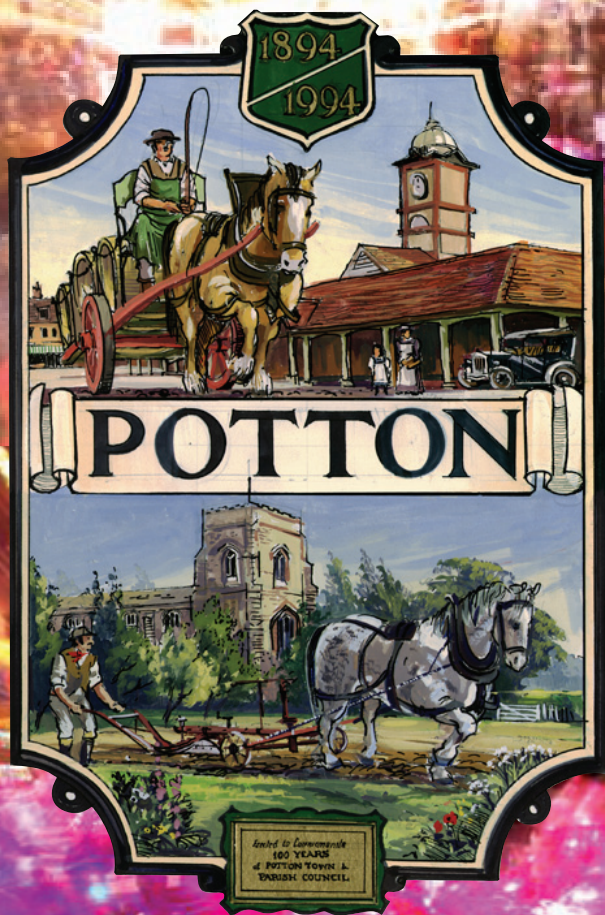


Potton Town Council



Newsletter
Winter 2011

Chairman's Report

On behalf of the Council can I wish everybody a Happy New Year.

Christmas has come and gone but despite the cold weather it was very pleasing to see so many people turn out for the big switch – on of the Christmas Lights on 3rd December. This year we erected new festoons across the Square using eco friendly LED lamps. The total power consumed by all of the new lamps equates to about ten of the old incandescent bulbs so there is a huge saving on energy costs. The Council has received many favourable comments about our display and we have now purchased sufficient additional LEDs to be able to replace all the other old lamps around the buildings for next Christmas. This has been in the planning for some while now because the incandescent lamps will be unavailable from 2012. On your behalf I would like to sincerely thank all the willing volunteers who give up their Sunday mornings throughout November and early January to erect and dismantle the lights. Without them we would have no show.

Since the last newsletter, the Council have made strong representations to the Chief Executive of Lloyds TSB, canvassed support of our local MP Alistair Burt and even appeared in the national press regarding the impending closure of the bank in February. Unfortunately it all appears to have been in vain because Lloyds TSB have refused to reconsider their decision on the grounds that the decreasing footfall over the last three years makes it non-viable as a business.

The Town Plan Committees have been in existence for about four years now. A lot of good work has been put in by all of the sub – committees during that time but the momentum is starting to ebb. It is extremely important to keep this work going particularly as more responsibility and decision making will be passed down to local authorities in the future so we need to know what the community wants. Do please consider joining one of these committees as a member or even chairman.

Finally, 2011 is an election year so the entire Town Council will be up for re-election in May. If you feel you would like to make a contribution towards the future of Potton then please consider putting your name forward as a candidate.

More information can be obtained from the Clerk or on our website.

Potton Town Council Chairman
Alan Leggatt

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL REPORT

Happy New Year to you all and there is certainly much to be optimistic about as it begins.

I would like to congratulate our champion cricketers. It was terrific that they retained the historic Ashes for the first time in 24 years.

The Royal Wedding in April is a cause for great celebration and this will contribute to economic growth, a boom in tourism and a feeling of pride and happiness as we share with William & Kate's joy.

We all understand that Central Government are having to curtail funds to put our finances back on a sound footing, even though these economies are beginning to bite at our local level. Less government grant to Central Bedfordshire Council means unenviable choices have to be made as to which services can continue to be provided.

We will all have to tighten our belts a little more, do things differently and, hopefully, as in days gone by when times were tough, do a little more to help ourselves and our community. Neighbourhood Watch schemes, Good will schemes to help our elderly, Volunteer schemes to work with our youth and many more.

2011 looks set to be a challenging and exciting year.

Anita Lewis

Central Bedfordshire Council

Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Ward member for Potton.

Tel 0300 300 8540

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS DECEMBER 2010

Thank you for contributions from Peter Langridge
and Paul Pibworth



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS DECEMBER 2010



Don't let burglars use your tools against you!

Householders in Bedford Borough are finding their tools being used against them. Burglars are taking advantage of unlocked or poorly protected garden sheds to use garden tools to break into people's homes in the areas. The autumn often sees an upsurge in burglaries as the nights draw in. Households should take heed of the simple ways to avoid a visit from a thief:

John Shields Crime Prevention Officer said: "The Police often stop and search known burglars to see if they are "going equipped" to do a burglary. So rather than take anything with them they will use whatever they can find to force entry to a house – having an unsecured shed could mean the difference between being broken into or not."

"To prevent your tools being used by burglars you should get sheducated!"

- Store your hand tools in a lockable cabinet in your shed.
- Secure power tools by chaining them to the floor or together.
- Property mark power tools.
- Check your padlocks and hasps – replace any damaged hardware.
- Fit locks or bars across any large windows.
- If you have a chest freezer in the garage or shed fit a lock.



Keep burglars out of your garden altogether by following these simple rules:

- Check your fencing and gates and repair any damage.
- Check your outdoor lighting – do the sensors and bulbs still work?
- Battery-operated drive alarms will alert you to someone coming onto your property.
- Look at where you store your wheelie bins – could someone use them as a climbing aid?
- To improve surveillance at the front of your house, keep hedges no higher than 1 metre and tree canopies no lower than 2 metres.

For more information visit www.bedfordshire.police.uk or email saferrhomes@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

POTTON COUNCIL SURGERIES

Do you wish to discuss anything with your Councillor?

The next Councillors Surgery will be held in the Library 10am to 12 noon on Saturday 12th March when it will be the turn of the Chairman of the Town Council Mr Alan Leggatt, and Councillors Mr Peter Langridge and Mrs Anita Lewis who will be in attendance.

COUNCILLOR PROFILE



In the hot seat this winter is Councillor Angus Macdonald

As the name suggests I was born and raised north of the border in Central Scotland. I finally flew the nest in 1996 and have been living in England ever since, eventually settling in Potton in 2001. We Scots do miss our home comforts from time to time; square sausage, mutton pies (a football fan's delicacy) and the tattie scone are serious must haves when I return home. However I'm pleased to say that Potton feels more like home than anywhere else now. I find the town welcoming and friendly and it is a wonderful town with a great community spirit. You only need to

look at events such as Party on Potton and the annual Christmas lights switch on to see how supportive and interactive the town and community are. This was one of my main reasons for joining the Town Council; I wanted to play my part in ensuring that this never changes so that I can proudly call Potton home.

I am married with three children having worked locally for a few years I am now based in the city, working as a Project Manager in the Banking industry. I am also a Local Authority Governor at Burgoyne Middle School and enjoy the challenges and rewards this brings. When I do find some spare time though I enjoy gardening, DIY, spending time with my young family. I also enjoy playing and watching sport. I follow the fortunes of one of the two main Glasgow football clubs as well as the England Cricket team. The latter allows me to appreciate the fine range of real ales that this country has to offer.

RECYCLING

TYPEWRITER FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Does anyone have need of an old fashioned typewriter?

Please let Val Moles 01767 260086 know and arrangements can be made to get it to you.



DOG WALKERS



Once again The Town Council has received complaints about people not clearing up after their dogs particularly on the playing fields. Please think of the children who play football matches at the Mill Lane Recreational Field and in Henry Smith Playing Field and use the dog waste bins to clear up after your dog. Thank you.

2011 Census – What do I need to do?

The next Census will take place on 27th March 2011. Every household in England and Wales needs to complete a questionnaire so that statistics about the population can be produced. Government money for health, police, councils and other public service providers is allocated according to the population of an area, so it is vital that everyone is counted. Make sure your area gets its fair share of Government money. Questionnaires will be delivered from 7th March so look out for the purple logo, and complete and return the form as soon as you can.

Who needs to be included on the form?

Everyone who lives at your address. This includes family, newborn babies, lodgers, and students who live somewhere else during term time. People who are staying in the country for 3 months or more must be included. The number of visitors staying overnight on 27th March can also be included.

Why should I take part?

All citizens have a duty to complete the census questionnaire. Businesses and local services need to know how many people live in their area, and other important information about your gender, age, ethnicity and about your housing. This ensures that the right services are available in the right place. It is also a legal requirement, and refusal to complete the questionnaire may result in prosecution and a fine.

How do I complete my questionnaire?

You can choose whether to complete the questionnaire on-line or by hand. Every questionnaire has a unique code to enable completion at www.census.gov.uk. The questionnaire pack contains a prepaid return envelope if you prefer to post it back. The questionnaire has enough room for six people. It takes only 10 minutes for each adult, and much less for each child. If you have more than 6 people in your household, request additional individual questionnaires from the website or telephone 0300 0201 101.

I don't have a computer, but I want to complete on-line

No problem. You can use the computers at public libraries, or you can visit one of the completion events that are taking place at various locations in your area. Check with your local council where and when these are happening. Some events are shown below.

I need help or someone I know needs help to complete the questionnaire?

There is lots of help available. From 4th March you can telephone 0300 0201 101 to request guidance in over 50 languages and in accessible formats such as large print, Braille and British Sign language. You can also request a personal visit from a Census Collector who will come to your home. The number for text relay for hard of hearing is 18001 0300 0201 160. Many community groups are holding events to help local people complete their questionnaires. Check the location, dates and times with your local council. The Census website contains lots of information about the Census at www.census.gov.uk

What happens if I don't return my questionnaire?

From 6th April Census Collectors will visit households that have not returned their questionnaire. They will carry identification and will offer help and assistance, or answer your questions about the census questionnaire. To avoid a Census Collector knocking on your door, just return your questionnaire promptly after 27th March.

People who refuse to complete a census questionnaire will be investigated, and this may lead to prosecution and a fine.

Continued....

Useful information

Information about the census, and census events in your area can be found on the Bedford Borough and the Central Bedfordshire websites: www.bedford.gov.uk or www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

You can also contact the Census Area Manager, Jan Esson on 07801 331386 or email G106@census.gov.uk

Census questionnaire completion events

If you need help, want to ask questions, or want to complete your census questionnaire on-line, please come along to one of the completion events. Check the local council website for the latest information. These are the events arranged so far:

Monday 28th March at Kempston Library 11am to 4pm

Wednesday 30th March at Bedford Learning Centre, 88 High Street, Bedford
10am to 2pm

Saturday 2nd April at Bedford Learning Centre 9am to 1pm

Monday 4th April at Sandy Library 10am to 3pm

Wednesday 6th April at Bedford Learning Centre 10am to 2pm

Saturday 9th April at Bedford Learning Centre 9am to 1pm

Monday 11th April at Putnoe Library 2pm to 5pm

Wednesday 20th April at Putnoe Library 2pm to 5pm

REMEMBER TO BRING ALONG YOUR CENSUS QUESTIONNAIRE

ARE YOU HAPPY WITH THE SPEED OF YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION?

In light of recent technological advances with regard to fibre-based high speed broadband internet, the Town Council would like to hear from residents who are eager for this service and the benefits it would bring to Potton. There would be a one-off installation cost for setting up such a service in the area and with this in mind we are keen to know what the demand would be in advance of any further developments. The more people who are interested, the less the cost would be. If even half of the residents of Potton were prepared to contribute to the establishment of this facility, the cost could be as low as £45 per household. Once the service had been established, the ongoing monthly costs should then be no more than the average price for broadband from any of the mainstream providers. Please contact the Clerk and let us know if you would be interested in such a service. The Council understands that there is a Facebook group **"We want fast broadband in Potton"** which may be helpful.



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

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

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

TOWN PLAN SEASONAL MARKET

The next Seasonal Market will be held in the Market Square on Saturday morning 26th March. The organisers are looking for suggestions to make improvements to this popular event. What would you like to see? Please contact Jenny Ream 01767 260304 with your ideas or you can email the Town Clerk at pottoncouncil@btconnect.com. The dates for the markets throughout the rest of the year are Saturday 25th June, Saturday 17th September and Saturday 3rd December. If you wish to talk about setting up a stall please contact Jenny.

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 Friday evening and weekend functions.

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

Town Council Information

Web site – www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk
Town Council Office, The Community Centre,
Brook End, Potton SG19 2QS

Town Clerk Valerie Moles
Clerical Assistant Sarah Williamson
Telephone 01767 260086
Email pottoncouncil@btconnect.com

Office opening hours:

Monday 9am to 12.30am
Tuesday 9am to 12.30pm
Wednesday Closed
Thursday 9am to 12.30pm - 2pm to 4pm
Friday Closed

Town Councillors

Mick Allen	260227	Peter Langridge	260362
Jeremy Armond	260521	Alan Leggatt	260001
Jim Burke	260086	Anita Lewis	260726
Ruth Burmo	260712	John Lewis	260726
Nigel Butlin	260075	Jean Way	260456
Geoff Emery	261710	Adam Zerny	261319
Eric Jakes M.B.E.	260779	Angus Macdonald	262006

Mr A. 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

TOWN COUNCIL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME	2009-2010 TOTALS TO END FINANCIAL YEAR	LAST YEAR TOTALS TO NOV 09	THIS YEAR TOTALS TO NOV 10
VAT	6418.00	4247.33	4087.04
Precept	105000.00	105000.00	115000.00
Cemetery	4349.00	2798.00	4140.00
Community Centre	9255.00	5640.52	4251.75
Pavilion	14464.00	9977.35	6131.05
Donations/grants	13203.00	203.18	50.00
Grass cutting grant	1608.00	1607.71	1623.79
Recreation Fields	375.00	150.00	720.00
Allotments	200.00	132.50	680.00
Bank Interest	64.00	44.82	39.61
Charity Interest	58.00	25.56	25.56
Town Plan	820.00	700.00	515.00
Christmas Lights	1097.00	379.00	1257.46
Insurance		0.00	0.00
Other	142.00	142.24	0.00
Total	157053.00	131048.21	138535.00
EXPENDITURE			
Public conveniences	4730.63	2458.08	2642.83
Administration**	71724.89	48001.00	46253.17
Verge cutting	2875.65	2649.79	2861.75
Community Centre	11545.46	7723.28	7116.90
Office	1280.26	910.10	1231.17
Street Lighting	579.78	623.06	750.00
Pavilion	20299.94	13903.19	10356.01
Cemetery	23140.25	15637.27	15352.39
Clock House- Market Square	3099.99	2254.48	3151.98
Allotments	383.87	336.48	537.54
Car Park	2616.05	2101.41	4435.08
Mill Lane Playing Field	7117.18	6112.46	4950.81
Henry Smith Playing Field	5602.37	4974.87	6724.40
Total	154996.32	107685.47	106364.03

** Administration includes Clerks salary, all staff NI and Tax Clerical Assistants salary Newsletter, Town Plan, Website Christmas Lights and Grants

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	£5.40	£6.40
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

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