

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

Spring Newsletter 2016

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 90th Birthday Beacon

Throughout history, signal beacons have been lit to commemorate and celebrate historical occasions. Beacons have been erected and lit to warn of the approach of the Spanish armada and for Queen Victoria's 60 year reign (at that time the longest reign of any British monarch.)

Since then, they have been used to mark the end of World War II on VE day 1945, the 70th anniversary of the event in 2015 and the bicentennial of the battle of Trafalgar also last year.

For our current Queen, beacons have been used to mark her silver, golden and diamond jubilees. Plans are now in hand to celebrate Her Majesty's 90th birthday on Thursday 21st April 2016 in the same manner.

The town council has resolved to have a beacon erected and lit in Potton to join in the national campaign. More information will be made available on our twitter account and our website.

If anyone has suggestions where the beacon could be sited please contact the council office in Brook End or telephone 260086.

Dates for the Diary

- | | |
|-------|--|
| March | Tues 8th Annual Town Meeting - Mill Lane Pavilion 7pm |
| | Sat 19th Councillor Surgery 10am – 12 noon – Library (Cllrs Gibb and Jordan) |
| | Sat 19th Seasonal Market – Potton Market Square 9am - 1pm |
| April | Sat 9th Councillor Surgery 10am – 12 noon – Library (Cllrs Harris and Ivall) |
| | Thu 21st Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 90th Birthday Beacon (Location and time to be confirmed) |
| May | Thu 5th Police and Crime Commissioner Elections |
| | Sat 14th Councillor Surgery 10am – 12 noon – Library (Cllrs Ellison and Leggatt) |
| | Sat 14th Potton Show plant stall – Potton Market Square |

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE - CLLR PETER J. LANGRIDGE



This is the latest letter from me in this council year.

It has been an interesting year with some new problems arising to be solved, such as late night noise nuisance and the perennial dog fouling of open spaces. The council has worked with the residents to successfully resolve these issues and more.

An early warning that unfortunately, this year, the council will have to raise their portion of the council tax to ensure we meet all our obligations. Some projects such as a memorial garden, to commemorate all those who have fallen in the service of our country, has had to be shelved due to the cost. Central Bedfordshire Council will probably withhold the funding that the government expect them to pass down to town and parish councils, in addition to not paying their full share of certain items, such as mowing the road verges.

The Christmas period has been and gone and Easter is coming. Another year over and we can look forward to another exciting one full of challenges for us.

New building developments are starting and planned showing how popular our community still is. With the expansion comes new ideas to improve our town and move us forward.

This is a Party on Potton year and I understand that great plans are already in hand. Look out for information as the time goes on. I wish them luck and look forward to a great weekend for all ages in the town.

Cllr Peter J. Langridge, Chairman, Potton Town Council

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

TOWN COUNCIL INFORMATION

Town Council Office, The Community Centre, Brook End, Pottton SG19 2QS.
Tel: 01767 260086 Email: potttoncouncil@btconnect.com
Web: www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk

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

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.

Officers:

Jonathan Whitehurst - Town Clerk Sarah Williamson - Clerical Assistant

Town Council Meetings

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

March

Tue 1st Town Council Meeting

April

Tue 5th Town Council Meeting

May

Tue 3rd Town Council Meeting

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

Email: customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 300 8000

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

Central Bedfordshire Council Highways

Email: highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 8049

DOGS ON PATROL - BY COUNCILLOR DENIS ELLISON

At the council offices, surgeries and meetings we as councillors are often challenged regarding the problems of dog fouling on our roads, pavements and parks. Dog issues and problems fall under the remit of our friends at Central Bedfordshire Council and they have a dog warden responsible for patrolling our roads, parks and pavements.

Unfortunately they only fund one and half people for all such activities across the entire area from Pottton to Maldon, Berkhamstead to Woburn and from Shillington to Stotfold. Considering this, it's not surprising this person only appears infrequently and as a result of significant pressure from the town council.

Following up from recent escalation of tensions between dog walkers and park users at Mill Lane, an informal group was formed calling themselves Pottton Responsible Dog Owners. This group has actively sought to influence the minority of irresponsible dog owners and even gone as far as clearing up the mess created by others, something they should be applauded for.

Over the Christmas holidays our daughter came to stay with her one year old Black Labrador Seren. Using the excuse of giving my daughter a break, I undertook dog walking duties early mornings and evenings. This new activity for me highlighted a friendly community of regular dog walkers who all seem to know each other and their respective pets, they almost all seemed extremely caring with their poobags and scoopers and were aware of the problems and indeed reputations which can so easily be spoiled by the uncaring few. They are also the eyes and ears of Pottton, out and about our roads and paths and should be encouraged to see and report all issues, not just dog mess, but failed street lamps, potholes, fly tipping and many more.

Unfortunate the few will always be the focus of our attention and can easily create problems which will spill out across all dog users. Let's applaud those doing the right thing as much as we criticise those in the wrong.

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET 2016-17



Again this has been a particularly difficult year for budget setting.

Potton Town Council on Tuesday 5th January 2016 decided to increase the charge for a band D property from £90.05 in 2015-16 to £95.99 in 2016-17, an increase of £5.94 a year; equivalent to 6.6%.

The charge is still less than £2.00 per week per band D household for all the functions, projects and services that Potton Town Council provides.

£5.37 (5.9%) of the increase in Council Tax is for work to start on a Neighbourhood Plan for Potton. Potton Town Council has been advised by various sources and for various reasons that Potton needs a Neighbourhood Plan. Once a Neighbourhood Plan is in place the town can get more funding when new developments are built and have more say in future planning.



Potton Christmas Lights

A large crowd gathered even though it rained for another successful turning on of Potton Christmas lights that took place on Friday 27th November 2015.

The Christmas Lights were eventually switched on by Father Christmas.

MILL LANE PLAYING FIELDS



Two metal bollards have been installed at Mill Lane to stop unauthorised vehicles driving on the playing fields.

Many thanks to Potton Consolidated Charity for kindly funding the following recent improvements to the facilities at Mill Lane Playing Fields.

New concrete kerbing installed around roundabout and new wet pour for the roundabout.



Missing goal net replaced with metal surrounds.

Henry Smith Playing Fields

Following a recent playground inspection it was identified that two cradle swings needed to be replaced.



Two replacement cradle swing seats have now been installed.

Allotments

Do you have the desire to grow your own fruit and vegetables? Would you like to have a more active lifestyle and eat more healthily? Would you like to make new friends and learn from their expertise?

Then why not think about renting a Town Council Allotment?

**For more information about an allotment contact Mrs. Sarah Williamson
Email: pottontowncouncilbookings@btconnect.com or Tel: 260086.**

MUNKMAN CLOSE

circa 1929

Frank Munkman and Arthur Boness, standing outside the hut used by people who swam in the brook.



Another Potton family has been recognised in the naming of a new development off Mill Lane.

Henry Munkman from Boston in Lincolnshire came to Potton in 1871 to take up an appointment with T.B. Kitchener, the agricultural engineer and contractor. He quickly became prominently involved in civic affairs and, recognising the growing importance of the local market gardening activity, established a successful produce agency, which was continued after his death by his son Harry. Another son, John, who followed in his father's calling as an engineer, became responsible for the operations of the town's sewage plant. Harry's son, Frank ran his own market gardening business as well as the produce agency and was for many years a member of the volunteer fire service brigade and, later, its Fire Officer.

His daughter Ann, was the most recent member to serve the community. Returning to live in Potton after teaching mathematics in the West Midlands, she was quickly elected to the Town Council, later becoming its Chairman, served as a Trustee of the Potton Consolidated Charity until forced by illness to retire and was Chairman of Governors of the Lower School. She died in 2009 after 20 years devoted service to the town of her birth she dearly loved.



Winners of the Rose Bowl

T. Webb, A. Aldridge, D. Compton, D. Saville, J. Hart, J. Inskip, F. Croft, F. Lenton.

P. Standen, D. Barrows, E. Jakes, C. Webb, A. Munkman, K. Lenton.

Unfortunately, as far as we know there is now no-one of Munkman blood living in Potton.

Photos kindly supplied by Potton History Society.

TOWN COUNCIL HALL HIRE – AVAILABILITY

Halls can be hired by private individuals, community groups and commercial hirers.

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

Community Centre – Main Hall

Approximately 14 x 5 metres. Separate Kitchen equipped with crockery, fridge, cooker, urn and kettle.

Piano.

Portable tables.

60 Chairs.

Recently decorated.

Suitable for private parties, meetings and exhibitions.

Parking facilities at the nearby Brook End car park.

Currently used for yoga, choir groups and meetings.



TOWN COUNCIL HALL HIRE – AVAILABILITY

Mill Lane Pavilion

Approximately 9 x 9 metres.

Large car park (floodlit at night).

Separate Kitchen with serving hatch equipped with crockery, fridge, cooker and kettle.

Portable table.

75 chairs.

Recently decorated.

Currently used for yoga, youth club and Birthday parties.



If you are planning your child's Birthday party, the Pavilion in Mill Lane or the Community Centre in Brook End may well be the ideal location.

There are a number of vacant sessions during the day time, evening and at weekends at the Community Centre and Mill Lane Pavilion.

POTTON COMMUNITY AGENT NEWS

- Supporting the over 60s in Potton

Tel Andrea on 0300 555 5949

Mobile 07590 359 630

In December, we held a very successful Christmas party which was attended by over 60 people. Many thanks to Shirley, Lynda, Maggie and Bustles & Beaus and all the volunteers who made it possible.



Following on from this, we will be holding an Easter Tea Party on Thursday 17th March at the Community Centre from 1pm till 4pm. Join us for afternoon high tea, a fancy hat competition, raffle, and a quiz. Tickets are limited to a maximum of 65 and cost £2 each available from Andrea on 0300 555 5949.

Volunteer drivers needed – can you spare an hour a week to give someone a lift to the doctor, hairdresser or hospital? Potton Good Neighbour Scheme provides an invaluable service to the residents of Potton and are looking for new volunteers to help out. Call Andrea for more information or call Potton Vineyard Church on 01767 261764.

Information Morning – on Tuesday 22nd March, an information morning will be held at the Community Centre from 10am until 1pm. Pop in for a cup of tea and to find out more about what support services are available to you. Agencies will include Carers in Bedfordshire, the Fire Service, the Bobbyvan Scheme, the Purple Trust and your Community Agent. Watch out for the posters for more details.

POTTON COMMUNITY AGENT NEWS

Neighbourhood Watch – are you interested in helping to keep your neighbourhood a safe place to live? Then why not set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in your street? Contact Terry Woods on 01767 261047 for an informal chat.

Potton Indoor Carpet Bowls & Town Teas – taking place every Thursday morning, between 10am and 12 noon, at the Community Centre, Brook End. Have a game of carpet bowls, Scrabble or cards or simply sit and chat over tea and homemade cakes. All are very welcome. £1.50 entry.

Samsung Tablet Training – all of the tablets have now been allocated. Training drop-in sessions continue at the Community Centre every Tuesday and Wednesday from 10-12. Many thanks to Potton Consolidated Charity for kindly funding a very successful project.

The Silverline Helpline – everyone can feel lonely from time to time, but for many older people, loneliness is an ongoing issue. The Silverline provides a wonderful service where a volunteer phones an older person once a week for a friendship phone call. Silverline also offers a letter writing service, where regular correspondence is exchanged between a volunteer and an older person. If you would benefit from a weekly chat or know someone who would, or would like to volunteer for Silverline then phone Andrea in confidence for more details.

Don't forget, if you have an issue you can't find any information on or need some help filling in any benefits forms, then please call Andrea, Potton Community Agent, in confidence on 0300 555 5949.

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POTTON FIRE STATION



A life-saving defibrillator has been installed at Potton library as part a countywide initiative by Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to assist people who suffer from cardiac arrest in the town. The defibrillator has been supplied in partnership with Potton Town Council and is available for members of the public to use in the event of a heart attack prior to the arrival of the emergency services.

The defibrillator is stored in secured cabinet that is keycode-locked for security, with access given by the East of England Ambulance Service, when they receive a 999 call. Ambulance crews will also be dispatched to the scene. Training for local people on how to access and use the defibrillator is being organised by Potton on-call Firefighter Neville Mooney.

The defibrillator works by delivering an electrical current through the patient's chest which shocks their heart back into a normal rhythm allowing it to pump again.

You don't have to be medically trained to use the units as they come fitted with on-screen graphic illustrations and voice commands that guide the user step-by-step through the process, telling the user what to do and when. Also, its intelligent technology will only allow you to shock a heart if a rhythm cannot be detected.

Every year, many people suffer from cardiac arrest, and some will sadly die because they could not be treated quickly enough. Statistics show that, whilst CPR can be effective, swift access to defibrillators is a significant factor in helping more people to survive a heart attack.

Bedfordshire's Chief Fire Officer Paul Fuller said: "Whilst this initiative may seem to be outside of the usual remit of Fire and Rescue Service, I believe that more lives can be saved because of this joint project to install defibrillators where they are most needed. In the same way that you don't need to be a fire fighter to use a fire extinguisher, you don't need to be a paramedic to use a defibrillator. The important thing is that they help to save lives."

POTTON YOUTH CLUB 'BOUNCE' TRIP



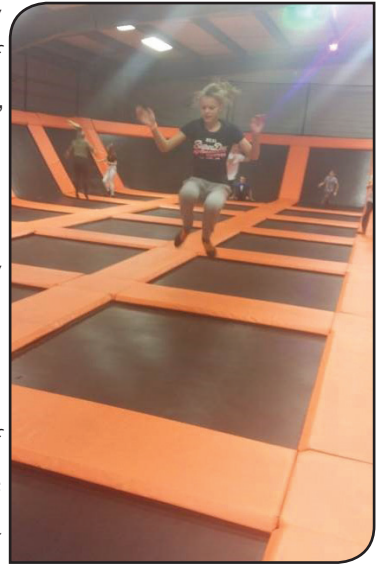
October half term brought extra excitement at Potton youth club with a trip to Bounce. Bounce is a new indoor trampoline centre in Milton Keynes and the young people asked to go there following a successful summer programme. The trip was a success with ten young people bouncing their way round for an hour session. A couple of quotes from the young people include: 'It was great fun', 'it was good because we went on a trip we wanted to do' 'I had lots of fun, and got to learn new tricks such as a side 360' and 'It was a great trip, I can't wait for the next one'.

Potton youth club is open to 12 – 18 year olds every Thursday 5-7pm at Potton Pavilion, Mill Lane, Potton. If you would like any more information about the youth club, contact the Lead Youth Worker, Lisa Steeples on 07702941440 or lisa.steeples@groundwork.org.uk

Many thanks to Potton Consolidated Charity for kindly funding Potton Youth Club.

Potton Show

We will be in the Market Square on the morning of Saturday 14th May 2016 from 8am – 1pm, where we will also be selling homemade cakes and holding a raffle.



All the profits go towards running the show on Saturday 10th September 2016.

Look forward to seeing you at both events.

REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR DOREEN GURNEY

Homelessness in Central Bedfordshire 2015

- Demand for housing options advice and assistance increased by 16% over four years with a peak of 2,373 cases.
- Housing register applications increased by 8% over 3 years 1,337 applications were made up to 2014-2015 over 2,000 applications since new policy (all in housing needs)
- The cost of B&B accommodation more than doubled from £31,000 in 2011-12 to £71,000 in 2013-2014, significantly more 2014-2014/15 and increasing during 2016.
- The average length of stay B&B 14 days in 2013-2014, increased to 17 days to date (with independents)
- The largest priority group for homeless were lone females with dependent children at 40%

Independent Living Policy applies to schemes where the Council provides a care/ Support team on site such as Residential homes for / the disabled of any age / the elderly / & Learning difficulties of any age.

What is an allocation Policy

- Legal requirements - Known as the Councils Allocations Scheme
- Fair and Transparent means to determine
 - a) Eligibility to join the Housing Register
 - b) who shall have priority for a property (letting & sales)
 - c) The process that shall be followed to 'make an offer'
- Means to ration a scarce resource
- Communication to manage customer expectations

Central Bedfordshire Council priorities to 2020

- Develop an integrated partnership approach to tackling homelessness
- Develop a clearer vision
- Multi agency assurance group
- Homelessness forum
- Improved access to information and advice

CONTACT C.B.C. DOREEN GURNEY doreen.gurney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Tel 0300 300 8528

POTTON LIBRARY

Library Staff - Debbie, Leon and Emma.

Opening Times –

Mon 2-6pm,

Wed 2-6pm,

Friday 10-1pm & 2-6pm,

Sat 10-1pm.

Tel 03003008063 www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/libraries, or search for 'Bedfordshire Virtual Library'.

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

Photocopying is available, and also internet access via our PCs, or our free WIFI connection – for this a library card number & PIN is required.

Our craft group for those who enjoy knitting, patchwork and similar crafts runs on the 1st & 3rd Mondays of the month between 2.00 – 3.30pm. Come along, meet others & bring your craft project along too. Other regular events include Lego Club on Fridays between 3.45 -5pm, and monthly jigsaw-puzzle swap & borrow events. We are also continuing to have tea & coffee available for our visitors on Friday mornings, and we plan children's activities during the school holidays and occasional Saturdays.

We are looking to include storytime events for children at the library, and are looking for volunteers to help us run these events. Please call in if you are interested in helping us.

For those who use our online services, Bedfordshire Libraries have recently launched a new App. This is available through the Android & Apple stores by searching for 'Bedfordshire Libraries' and is free to download. The App allows you quick access to your library account to renew, includes an ISBN barcode scanner to search for titles, and also gives access to our E-Resources. We are running help sessions to assist anybody who has difficulties accessing our online services, or who would like a demonstration. Please ask for details.

PARTY ON POTTON

Well this is it! 2016 is finally here....the year of the next Party On Potton Big Weekend which takes place over the August bank holiday weekend. We hope you are looking forward to it as much as we are on the committee.

The main structure of the weekend has been decided and most of the evening events have been booked, so just the day time events to plan and firm up on now. Then we can start to put the programme together and nearer the time, deliver to each and every home in Potton, so you can start to decide which of all the free daytime and ticketed evening events you would like to attend, from the Friday night right through to the bank holiday Monday.



Thanks to everyone who visited our BBQ at the Winter seasonal market and Christmas light switch on, and to those who put up with our carol singing around the local watering holes!

We are still busy fund-raising in 2016 with our free mobile bar hire service and hope to host another quiz night, car treasure hunt and a further car boot sale, amongst other events, in 2016 (if time allows).

Keep an eye on our new website, like our Facebook page and read these newsletters (and other local publications such as The Villager) to find out more about our fund-raising events and exciting plans, as the Big Weekend draws closer.