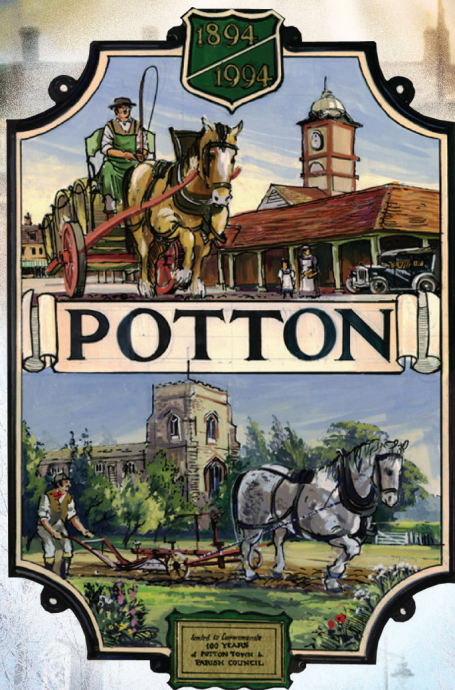


# Potton Town Council



Newsletter  
Autumn - Winter 2013

### **Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan**

Following the formal consultation period, Central Bedfordshire Council announced that it would have to completely revisit its plan for additional Gypsy and Traveller sites across the county. The presentation of the plan to the Planning Inspectorate which was scheduled for October will now not take place until early next year. The Town Council together with its independent planning consultant will be closely monitoring developments.

### **Potton to Sandy Cycleway**

Planning of this exciting new project continues and it is hoped that work on the first stage will start in the near future. Thanks go to the many agencies involved in bringing the project to fruition.

The annual Civic Service took place on 20th October at St. Mary's Church. Many local groups and organisations were represented together with a considerable number of dignitaries from other local authorities. The Church Hall Committee provided refreshments afterwards in the Church Hall.

It is pleasing to see the new play and gym equipment is still being well used in the Henry Smith playing field. The next major project will be the eventual replacement of the skate park as the existing one is becoming uneconomical in terms of maintenance costs.

A major challenge at the moment is the budget for the 2014 -15 financial year. Central Bedfordshire Council have announced it will not be passing down the Council Tax Support Grant element to town and parish councils in that year which will mean a shortfall in our annual precept if we are to avoid a large percentage increase to the ratepayers.

The Town's Christmas Lights are sparkling thanks to the work that was undertaken by a group of willing volunteers. Further improvements have been made this year including replacement of the rope lights around the Clock House.

2014 brings the bi-annual Party on Potton event. The new events committee are busy organising new themes for this ever popular August bank holiday occasion and the Town Council wishes it well and will provide support where it can.

Finally I would like to welcome two new members to the Town Council. Richard Harris and Den Ellison were co-opted following two recent resignations. I am sure they will both make a valuable contribution to the town. My personal thanks go to Cllr. Mrs. Jean Way. Jean has retired after serving many decades on this council during which she held a number of posts including Chairman. Her logical arguments and commitment to the town will be greatly missed.

### **RESPECT FOR OUR TOWN**

There have been a number of incidents of vandalism recently. Many street lights have been deliberately damaged particularly along the Causeways and around the Brook End car park. This makes life especially difficult during these dark winter evenings especially for older people. Please report any vandalism you see immediately to the Police in order to try to catch the culprits as well as to ensure Potton is patrolled more often.

The problem of litter especially in the Henry Smith Playing Field and the Mill Lane Recreation Field is resulting in additional work and more expense to everyone in the town. Please ensure that you "Keep Potton Tidy" by making sure all rubbish is placed in the litter bins after enjoying your refreshments in the parks. The Town Council has recently ordered new covered bins for the Henry Smith Playing Field which will help stop wildlife pulling out litter from the open bins which happens at the moment.



One of the services the residents of Potton said they wanted, is to have a Citizens Advice Bureau here in Potton, instead of travelling to Biggleswade or Ampthill. The Town Plan Committee has been negotiating with CAB and we are pleased to tell you that CAB have agreed to open a Citizens Advice Bureau clinic, twice a month. It will be on an appointment basis, on Wednesday mornings at the Community Centre, Brook End, starting in April.

Citizens Advice Bureau are always looking for volunteers to train as advisors, so if you think you could spare time to help please contact Jenny Hedges on 01525 841592.

The Town Plan Committee has also been working towards a Multi Use - All Weather – Games Area. We are looking at various sites but our preference is at The Hollow. We are presently having plans drawn up and we will let you know in the next newsletter how we are progressing.

The Cycle way Committee is very near to making an announcement regarding the POTTON to SANDY Cycle Path. If all goes well, and we can get the right funding, we could have the path built by October next year.

The Four Seasons Market, held in September was extremely successful with lots of stalls selling a great variety of produce. Thank you to all of you who supported this quarterly event and thanks goes to the Shopping Committee who organises it. The next Market Day was 7th December and you will soon receive a leaflet with dates for next year so please come and support your Market Days.



During half term, on 31st October, in conjunction with Gary Richardson and The Potton Tennis Club we held a Tennis Taster Coaching Session, aimed at youngsters who had not played the sport before. It was a great success with 18 children attending and all of them wanting more. We aim to repeat the experience to include boys and girls to taste sports like cricket, netball, football and hockey. Keep your eye on YOU POTTON Facebook pages for further announcements.



Our Community Safety Committee has taken on the added roll of Cold Calling Representatives. The initiative is to stop sales people and traders from calling at your house to sell or offer services uninvited. The cold calling reps will be able to advise and if necessary deal with the problem with Trading Standards. The Community Safety Committee still want to engage with all the Neighbourhood Watch organisers, so if you have not been in touch yet please contact The Town Clerk.

The Town Plan Committee has a Facebook page where you can join in the conversations about all the topics mentioned above and find out 'up to the minute' information about activities in and around Potton. **Search for YOU POTTON and be our friend.**

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL REPORT - Mrs Doreen Gurney Ward Councillor's report

### **Update on the proposed new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and changes to the Gypsy and Traveller local Plan**

In preparation for the Gypsy and Traveller local plan, the council carried out a partial assessment of need (the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment - GTAA) in January 2013. The results of the GTAA were reported to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OCOSC) on the 28th February 2013. The Council felt the partial assessment was sufficient for the purpose at that time. The Council have been advised to undertake a new full GTAA at the next appropriate opportunity extending the timescale to allow a further round of consultation. The ORS has been asked to carry out this report, the report and any potential changes to the plan will be considered at the SCOSC meeting on the 23rd January 2014. The council will be asked to submit its responses to the Secretary of State by July 2014.

**Contacts: [doreengurney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:doreengurney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)  
[jadetaylor@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jadetaylor@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**

## COLD CALLING

Potton is a no cold calling area and we would like to know if you are having problems in your street, especially from traders offering to do work on or in your home. Do not put yourself into a potentially dangerous situation but if you see a name or vehicle registration number it always helps. If you would like further information on how to deal with this problem or a leaflet with phone numbers to check on and report bogus callers, please contact the Town Clerk who will put you in touch with the local cold calling champion who has direct contact with trading standards at Central Beds and can act on your behalf. Or you can phone the bogus caller hotline 08454 04 05 06

## COMMUNITY SAFETY

At a recent meeting of the Town Council we were fortunate to have Olly Martins the Police and Crime Commissioner come to talk to us. He explained that with the cutbacks to the Police budget, major crime, such as recently happened in Luton, was now being targeted to the problem areas. You may also have read that local Police Stations such as Biggleswade are in danger of being closed in order to help meet this reduced budget. It is therefore, inevitable that we are going to see less Police or PCSO Officers on the streets in our more rural communities as they are redirected to the major trouble spots. Fortunately in Potton we have not been subjected to any major crime but thefts and criminal damage to people's homes and property which can be devastating to those on the receiving end. When these types of crimes are reported it is possible that a Police Officer will not attend and you wonder why you bothered, but it is very important that all crimes be reported as they build a pattern of crimes that may be happening in our area usually by the same person or group of people. The Police do look at these patterns and be assured they will act upon them often resulting in an arrest.

You can help this flow of information by joining or forming a Neighbourhood Watch in your street. If you would like more information about the Neighbourhood Watch or have a comment about safety in our Town please contact me on **01767 261047** or **t.woods@btinternet.com**

## 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, street lighting or problems with the pavements or hedge cutting please contact:-  
**Central Bedfordshire Council Highways - 0300 300 8000**  
**highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk**

## PREPARE FOR BAD WINTER WEATHER

What would you do if faced with natural disasters like a severe snowstorm or heavy rain? Or unnatural emergencies like a power cut or industrial accident? Helping you deal with major disasters locally is BLLRF (the Bedfordshire and Luton Local Resilience Forum) made up of the emergency services, local councils, hospitals and health agencies and a whole host of local voluntary groups working together.

BLLRF co-ordinates everyone who tackle emergencies, planning for the unthinkable to ensure they are ready to react swiftly and effectively to protect you, your family and home. Local community organisations like the Royal Voluntary Service, Midshires Search and Rescue, the 4X4 owners club and Raynet, amateur radio enthusiasts, also get involved through the Bedfordshire and Luton Emergency Volunteers Executive Committee (BLEVEC). You could also volunteer. The Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce and the local branch of the Federation of Small Businesses also help plan for emergencies and encourage local businesses to prepare for their own crisis like fire, theft or supply chain problems. See our Prepare your Business page for further information.

BLLRF's website – [www.blrf.org.uk](http://www.blrf.org.uk) – is packed with help and advice so you can prepare for being cut off in your home by bad weather, separated from your family by a major incident or left without power for an extended period. Visit now to find out what you can do to protect yourself before winter sets in.

### WIN a Home Emergency Kit!

BLLRF is now giving you the chance to win a free Home Emergency Kit that contains some essential things you'll need if there's an emergency like a power cut or severe snowfall. To enter our FREE prize draw just follow @what\_would on Twitter, like us on facebook.com/whatwouldyoudoif or enter using the website's contact page on the website. Entry closes at midnight, 2 February 2014 . So visit [www.blrf.org.uk](http://www.blrf.org.uk) today to discover how to protect your home and family this winter.



## FLY POSTING

Please note that the Town Council does not allow community groups or commercial business advertisers to place posters on the wooden flower planter on the Biggleswade Road, Station Road junction. Any posters that do appear will be removed. The Council is happy to advertise local community events on the web site and on the Notice Board in the car park. Please just contact the Clerk at the Town Council Office.

If you are a manager or secretary for a local organisation please have a look at the contacts page on the Pottton 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 which was published a long time ago. If you would like the details of your community group to be placed on the site please let me know.

There will soon be a new page on the web site with a community diary to prevent double bookings – watch this space.

Val Moles, Clerk.

### Town Council Information

Web site: [www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk)  
Town Council Office: The Community Centre, Brook End, Pottton SG19 2QS  
Town Clerk: Valerie Moles  
Clerical Assistant: Sarah Williamson  
Telephone: 01767 260086  
Email: [pottoncouncil@btconnect.com](mailto: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

### Pottton Town Councillors

Ruth Burmo	260712	John Lewis	260726
Ian Clements	262430	Angus Macdonald	262006
Mr Andy Gibb	260067	Paul Rogers	260977
Andy Hopkins	262672	Rex Whitfield	262246
Eric Jakes M.B.E.	260779	Adam Zerny	261319
Peter Langridge	260362	Richard Harris	262596
Alan Leggatt	260001	Denis Ellison	261925
Anita Lewis	260726		

Mr A. Leggatt is Chairman of the Town Council

Mr A. Hopkins is Vice Chairman of the Town Council

Mr P. Langridge is Chairman of the Finance Committee

Mr P. Rogers is Chairman of the Buildings and Facilities Committee.

Mr A. Macdonald is Chairman of the Playing Fields, Allotments and Burials Committee

Mr J. Lewis is Chairman of Planning Committee

Mr I. Clements is Chairman of the Town Plan

### Other Council Representatives for Pottton

#### Central Bedfordshire Councillors

Doreen Gurney 680395 [doreen.gurney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:doreen.gurney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)  
Adam Zerny 261319 [adamzerny@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:adamzerny@hotmail.co.uk)

The Town Council meets on the first Tuesday of every month except August. Meetings are usually held in the main hall at the **Community Centre**, Brook End, starting at 7pm.

## HALL HIRE - AVAILABILITY AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE & 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 Mrs Williamson a call during office opening hours to see if either of the halls would be suitable for your group or function. The centre is near to Pottton 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 weekend functions.

Please contact Mrs Sarah Williamson to check on availability and make a booking 01767 260086 during office opening hours.

Hourly Charges for Use of Town Council Facilities

### Community Centre, Brook End, Pottton from 1st September 13

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends / Bank Holidays
Main Hall	£7.30	£9.30	£11.40
Upper Hall	£4.70	£6.20	£7.30

### Mill Lane Pavilion, Mill Lane, Pottton

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends / Bank Holidays
Pavilion	£8.30	£11.40	£15.50

### Pottton 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 **0300 300 8063**