



**POTTON**  
TOWN COUNCIL

**News**

Autumn Edition 2017

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



## Christmas Lights

The big switch-on will take place on **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December** with many stalls and organisations participating, a funfair and shops staying open late.

**Activities start at 6.00pm with Father Christmas switching on the lights at 7.00pm.**

Put the date in your diary and come and join us together with the hundreds of people from Potton and beyond who look forward to this annual event.

## Potton Town Council Town Guide

Your free copy of the new Potton Town Council Town Guide has been delivered with this Newsletter!



The Town Council would like to take this opportunity to thank all those community groups and businesses who responded to our questionnaire and included their details for a free listing or placed an advertisement in the new Town Guide.



## Chairman's Message



Hello and welcome to the autumn edition of the Town Council quarterly newsletter.

Summer has passed in the blink of an eye and we are almost at the end of autumn. However we've had a busy quarter since the last newsletter as you can see below.

### July

I was pleased to assist Charles Belcher, Chairman of Potton Consolidated Charity, in opening the new Skate Park. It's fantastic to see the

amount of use this facility gets on a daily basis and feedback from our users has been great. We were also very pleased to be retrospectively awarded a grant of £50,000 in August from Sport England towards the cost of this new facility.

The Town Council recently sought a Judicial Review into the approval of new housing off Mill Lane. This was not supported by the High Court and as a result we were told to pay Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBC) legal costs of £2,600 as well as our own legal costs of £9,000. The Town Council still feel that this application should not have been approved despite the High Court decision.

Other events in July included Party on Potton's "A little bit of P.O.P in the Park" in Henry Smith Playing Fields and the unveiling of the first Potton mosaic in the Story in Stone project.

### August

August didn't bring much sunshine, but it did bring another speculative approach from a developer to build more houses on Sandy Road (south). The proposed site is not on the Town Council's draft Neighbourhood plan, nor CBC's Local Plan.

### September

September is always a busy month in the town and once again residents had the opportunity to take in the Potton Show (see page 12), Potton Apple Day (see page 13) and enjoy another Seasonal Market in the town square.

### October

Hop-scotches were installed at both playing fields in the town for use by our younger children. Our bi-annual



P.O.P in the Park



Story in Stone



Seasonal Market

Potton Litter Pick, organised by Carol Leggatt, was held again and the annual Civic Service took place in the Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin. The Queen's representative, Deputy Lieutenant of Bedfordshire Chris Kilroy M.B.E., and his wife attended the service. Also in attendance were other dignitaries from Bedfordshire and representatives from local organisations. Potton Lower School choir attended, singing five songs. They were fabulous and are a credit to both their school and their parents.

## November

November saw our annual Remembrance Day parade, attended again by Chris Kilroy M.B.E. and his wife, and the launch of a new Town Guide. Unfortunately, we also received another speculative application to build more houses in the town.

Looking forward to December, our Christmas Lights switch on is on 1<sup>st</sup> December (see page 1) and we hold our last Seasonal Market of the year on the 9<sup>th</sup> December (see page 16). Also, a reminder that the Town council office will close from 12.30pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> December for Christmas and New Year until 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

Enjoy the newsletter!

Best Wishes

*Angus*

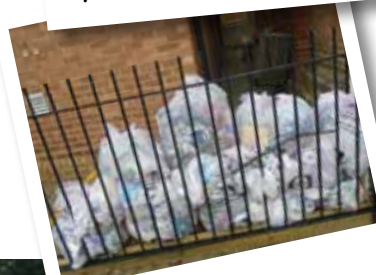
**ClIr Angus Macdonald**



Hop - scotch



Remembrance Sunday



Litter Pick



## Town Council Information and Office Opening Times

For enquiries regarding the following: Cemetery, Allotments, Henry Smith Playground, Mill Lane Playground, Recreation Fields, Public Conveniences, Brook End Car Park, Mill Lane Pavilion and Community Centre. The Town Council office is open for drop-in visitors as follows:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>9.30am – 12.30pm</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>9.30am – 12.30pm</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>9.30am – 12.30pm</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>9.30am – 12.30pm</b>

If you want to see a specific member of the team please ring ahead to make an appointment.

**Tel: 01767 260086**

**E: [pottoncouncil@btconnect.com](mailto:pottoncouncil@btconnect.com)**

**W: [www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk)**

## Councillor Contact details

Chairman Angus Macdonald	262006
Vice Chairman Denis Ellison	261625
Adrian Bell	260641
Geoff Emery	261710
Andrew Gibb	260067
Richard Harris	262596
John Hobbs	260710
Les Ivall	261559

Jonathan Lean	262404
Alan Leggatt	260001
John Lewis	260726
Jonathan Price Williams	07981 350359
Chris Temple	262535
Rex Whitfield	262246
Adam Zerny	261319

## Town Council Meetings

**Held in the Main Hall of the Community Centre starting at 7pm.**

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2018

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018

## Councillor Surgeries

**Held in the library starting at 10am until 12 noon.**

<b>Sat 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 2017</b>	Chairman Cllr Macdonald and Cllr Price Williams
<b>Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Jan 2018</b>	Cllr Lewis and Cllr Leggatt
<b>Sat 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2018</b>	Cllr Lean and Cllr Whitfield
<b>Sat 17<sup>th</sup> Mar 2018</b>	Chairman Cllr Macdonald and Vice Chairman Cllr Ellison

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# High Street Improvement Scheme

Potton Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council worked in partnership to give the opportunity for eligible businesses to apply for a capital improvement grant of up to £20,000 (and in exceptional cases up to £50,000).

The High Street Improvement Scheme aim is to revitalise town centres through replacing or renovating high street shop fronts and tackling vacant retail units, which in turn will assist with the long-term economic success of the market town.

Planning permission has been applied for three businesses in Potton Market Square. Shown here are the proposed designs for Cameron's Newsagents, Clayton's Butchers and Potton Food Store.

Please email:  
**[market.towns@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:market.towns@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**  
if you have any questions about the scheme.



Cameron's Newsagents proposal



Clayton's Butchers proposal



Potton Food Store proposal



Central Bedfordshire Council and Potton Town Council  
Working in partnership to improve your town





## Potton to Sandy Cycleway

In the 2009 – 2019 Town Plan the residents of Potton asked if more provision could be made for traffic free routes around the town and to local services. One of these routes is the Potton to Sandy Cycleway. Potton Town Council formed a group to work with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), Sustrans and the RSPB. Thank you must go to Potton Consolidated Charity who provided initial funding.

From the options possible for the route Old Bedford Road to Deepdale and then the existing bridleway the Long Riding to the RSPB entrance was chosen. From there a permissive route through the RSPB reserve down towards Sandy train station would bring the route to the existing National Cycle Network.

Two large elements had to be in place to make this off-road route viable. Firstly, a safe, light controlled crossing point on the Sandy Road and the RSPB entrance was chosen. Secondly the pavement alongside Sandy Cemetery needed to be wider to accommodate cycles and this

is being undertaken currently. These two elements have been put in place by CBC through their improvements budgets.

The Cycleway Group has been awarded money under the Green Infrastructure Fund to make the improvements needed to the surface for safety and smoothness for the section on the RSPB land and it is planned work will commence in this financial year.

With additional funding from Potton Consolidated Charity it is planned work will begin in the next financial year on the section from Old Bedford Road to Deepdale to create a smoother more year-round surface.

Discussions are underway on improvements to the Long Riding that both blend in with the countryside and provide a useable surface.

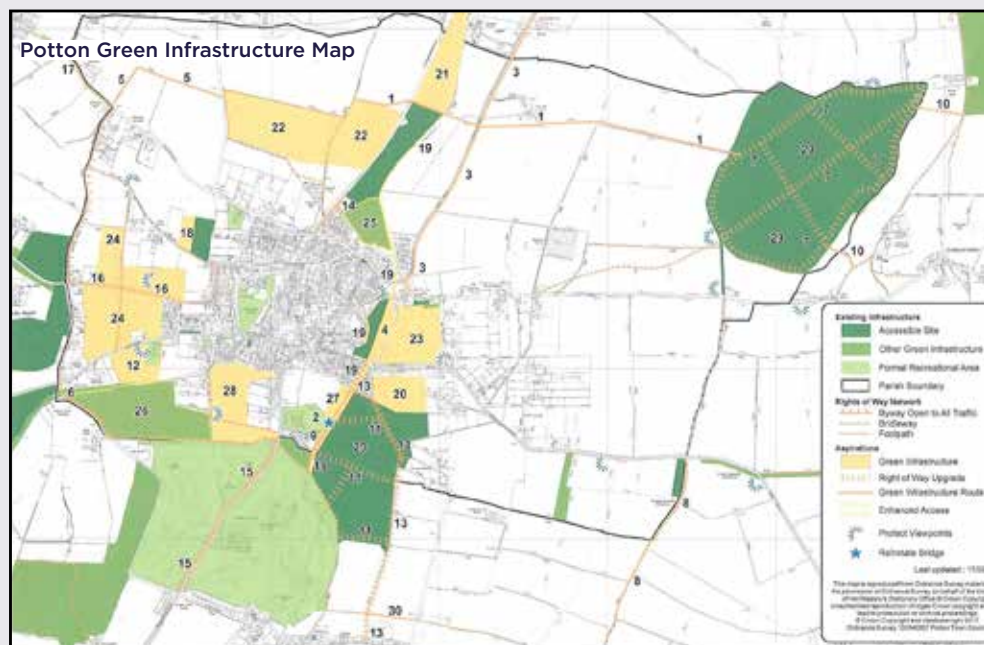
The route will be brought into the Market Square in Potton to ensure businesses in town benefit from potential visitors.



# Potton Neighbourhood Plan - Update

**Questionnaire** - We would like to thank everyone who completed the survey in May 2017. 727 questionnaires were received and the information will be used to inform the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, which we hope to complete and present back to you at a referendum in early 2018.

**Green Infrastructure Plan (GI Plan)** - Following two successful community workshops a revised GI Plan has been written by Bedfordshire Rural Community Charity (BRCC) and will hopefully be published by the end of 2017. The GI Plan comprises 30 aspirations for maintaining and improving the green spaces in the Potton parish and will form an important part of the Neighbourhood Plan. Unfortunately, not all of the aspirations identified will be delivered, because there are many other influencing factors, such as landowners, existing planning permissions and allocations, potential future land use allocations and the cost of implementation. The GI Plan can help inform planning decisions and be used as a mechanism to identify where financial benefits from development should be directed.



The aspirations and the GI Plan are available [www.pottonneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/surveys-and-plans](http://www.pottonneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/surveys-and-plans)

**Potton Green Wheel (PGW)** - Potton Town Council and the Neighbourhood Plan are working with BRCC and Central Bedfordshire Council to create a PGW within the Potton parish. It is hoped to link the existing footpaths and bridleways to provide a circular walking, cycling and riding route around Potton and to provide various 'spokes' for this wheel enabling good access from various points within the town. Using aspirations from the GI Plan, the planning group have produced a draft plan for the Green Wheel.

# Findings from the Town Benchmarking Report



We would like to thank everyone who participated in the Town Benchmarking surveys during April and May 2017. We had a great response from both town centre users and local retailers, which means we have a robust amount of data to provide a baseline for comparing future years against.

The findings presented by People & Places, the survey company are as follows;

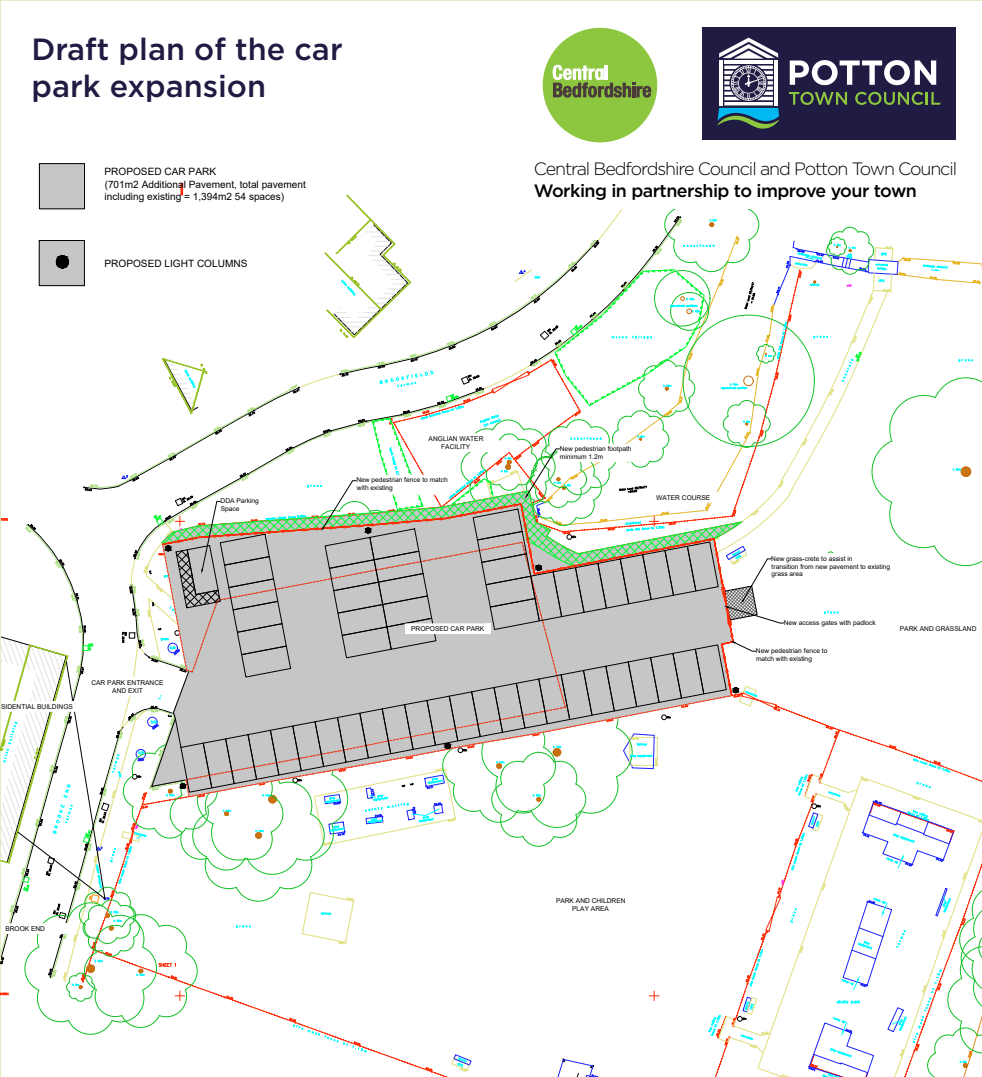
- 43% of town centre users spent £5.01-£10.00 on a normal visit to Potton.
- Nearly three quarters of town centre users visited Potton for 'Convenience Shopping'.
- 94% of town centre users visited Potton at least once a week. 54% travelled into the town centre 'On Foot'.
- 67% of town centre users stayed in Potton for less than an hour.
- 91% of town centre users would recommend a visit to Potton.
- No vacant ground-floor units in the defined town centre area. The National Small Towns average is 9%.
- Physical appearance (80%) and Cleanliness (63%) were classed as positive by town centre users.
- Physical appearance (53%) and Geographical Location (60%) were classed as positive by businesses.
- 67% of businesses rated 'Potential local customers' as a positive aspect of operating a business in the town centre. Three quarters of customer post codes gathered, were from residents.
- 'Ease of walking around the town centre' (64%) was classed as a positive aspect of Potton by town centre users.
- 54% of town centre users rated 'Access to Services' as a positive aspect of Potton.
- The footfall figures in Potton are lower than the National and Regional averages.
- 83% of businesses and 62% of town centre users felt that 'Car Parking' was a negative aspect of operating a business in Potton. Qualitative comments centred on the need to increase car parking provision in the town centre.
- A key theme to emerge from qualitative comments was the need to 'Reduce/ Ban HGV Traffic' and introduce 'Pedestrian Crossings' in the town centre.



# Car Parking

Potton Town Council owns and manages the free public car park in Brook End. The town council has been successful in applying for match funding from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) to increase the size of the car park.

Plans for the car park expansion are soon to be submitted to CBC and subject to planning approval it is hoped that the expanded car park will be opened during Spring 2018. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused whilst work is undertaken.



# Potton Speedwatch Results for 2016



The Potton Speedwatch team were out and about on the streets of the town **19 times during 2016**. With typically teams of 3 volunteers we stood at the side of the road for an hour or so per session, making a visible deterrent to speeding motorists. During this time recorded and **reported to the police details of some 653 vehicles which were driving significantly over the speed limit.**

Each road has its own problems with speeding motorists, be it inconsiderate individuals or just a high percentage of drivers ignoring the legal limits. Some roads are worse than others and indeed Gamlingay Road is the town's worst speeding blackspot.

Every month the town council receives complaints from residents regarding speeding cars, lorries and motorcycles.

Unfortunately, Bedfordshire police do not have the resources to routinely cover Potton with only two visits from the Police speed camera van in 2015 (2016 data not available). The single vehicle allocated to this work has to cover the whole county and unfortunately, we are a low priority town based upon accident statistics.

Anyone can join the Speedwatch team, as long as your eyesight is good enough to pass the driving test, you are happy to spend a couple of hours on a police training session and you can offer an hour or so of your time a few times a year. If you would like to volunteer or find out more about Potton Speedwatch please contact Potton Town Council on 01767 260086 or speak direct to the Speedwatch Co-ordinator Denis Ellison on 01767 261925.

# Potton Community Agent News

Supporting the over 60s in Potton

Tel: Andrea on 0300 555 5949 mobile: 07590 359 630 (working, Weds, Thurs only)

If you're looking to make new friends, or reacquaint with old ones, then why not come along to the Potton Friendship Group – every Thursday morning 10-12 at The Community Centre, Brook End. Play Triominoes, carpet bowls, Scrabble or cards or simply sit and chat over tea and homemade cakes. £2.50 entry.

**A coach load** of people who attend Potton Friendship Group went on a fantastic trip to Brick Lane Music Hall this October, where we were treated to an amazing afternoon's entertainment and afternoon tea.

**Plug-in lamp timers** – Andrea has a few of the plug-in lamp timers to give out to the over 60s. Contact Andrea for details.

**Smoke alarms save lives** – if you don't already have a smoke alarm, then you should seriously consider getting one. People over 65 with a disability or illness and unable to fit their own alarm can get one supplied and fitted free of charge. Contact Andrea for details.

**Maximize your income** – many energy suppliers are offering a Warm Home Discount of £140 off your electricity bill. If you are on certain benefits and have a gross annual household income of less than £16,190, Andrea can check if your supplier is part of the scheme and if you qualify.

If you have any forms that you need help completing such as Attendance Allowance, Blue Badges or Council Tax Reduction/Housing Benefit or any other issue, then contact Andrea.



Potton Community Agent is funded by Potton Consolidated Charity with a generous contribution from Potton Town Council.

# The Potton Show

The 44<sup>th</sup> Potton Show was as usual well supported and an excellent weekend. The rain held off till 3 pm – then it poured. Fortunately, the Letchworth Morris Men were able to complete their display in the marquee and the visitors were able to shelter there. The rain stopped and the crowds were able to enjoy the rest of the afternoon on St Mary’s field being entertained by circus skills, balloon



modelling, coconut shy and many more side shows. The History Society produced an interesting display for locals.

This year we had 153 exhibitors with many exhibits. Three sisters won the 6-8 year the 9-11 year and the 12-16 year trophies. The awards were presented by Mr Alan Waring of Biggles FM.

Thank you to all the traders, exhibitors and friends for supporting the show and making it such a success every year.



## Household Garden Waste Collection Suspended

Kerbside collection of household garden waste will be suspended across Central Bedfordshire over the winter months. The collections will be suspended from Monday, 4 December 2017 until Friday, 2 March 2018 inclusive. The last garden waste collection date for Potton Residents will be Friday 1 December 2017.





Potton’s refuse and recycling collections over Christmas and New Year		
	Scheduled collection	Revised collection
Recycling (green) bin	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> December 2017	Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> December 2017
Refuse (black) bin	Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2018	Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2018





## Potton Apple Day

After such a dull summer, visitors to this year's Potton Apple Day basked in sunshine and made the absolute most of a brilliant day. As well as stalls, real cider and live music, there were heritage varieties of apples to taste. Visitors could have their apples turned into delicious fresh juice by all the children enjoying getting their hands dirty.

Highlight of the day as ever, was the keenly contested best cider in show competition. Judges, including stalwarts Rev Gill Smith and Cllr Adam Zerny, sampled four of the excellent real ciders available from the CAMR bar. This year's winner was the single varietal Cox Cider made by local John Weekes of 'Potton Press Cider'. The trophy (a beautifully decorated platter made by potter Eve Carroll) was once again kindly sponsored by Potton Hall for All. It was awarded to John by Vice Chairman Phill Banks who had nobly stepped up to the plate to help judge the cider.



More people than ever had their own apples identified by the East of England Apple & Orchard Project and there were some interesting finds. Volunteers and local conservation groups were on hand with advice and trees to buy. If you'd like to find out about the new Potton Community Orchard or future Apple Days, contact the Town Council or like the Potton Apple Day Facebook page.



Thanks very much to all the helpers on the day and in advance, your assistance was very much appreciated. Look out for last year's winner, Apple Dayze cider (made from the juice of Potton Apple Day) at local venues, all profits go to running the event.







## Potton Library

### Opening Times:

<b>Mon</b>	<b>closed</b>
<b>Tues</b>	<b>9am-1pm</b>
<b>Wed</b>	<b>2-6pm</b>
<b>Thurs</b>	<b>9am-1pm</b>
<b>Fri</b>	<b>9am-1pm and 2-6pm</b>
<b>Sat</b>	<b>9am-4pm</b>

**Tel: 0300 300 8063**

**[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/libraries)**



Our regular events include the seasonal market, book sales, crafts and activities in the school holidays, jigsaws to swap or borrow and a crime readers group.

For children, there is a weekly changing activity in the library which is quick to do during a visit, and Lego club is held on Fridays 3.45-5pm. We offer our 'Bear Reading Adventure' sticker storybook

for the under 5s, with a series of stickers to collect. Storytime is on Tuesdays 9.30-10.00am (within term time), and we offer a monthly story and craft on Wednesdays 1.30-2.15pm for preschool children.

We are wanting to start up a K'nex building club - we have a small amount of K'nex, but need extra to enable a group to play together. If you have any K'nex and/or instructions needing a new home, please let us know.

The library will be open on Christmas Lights Switch on night until 7.15pm and we will have an activity for children.

Our computers are available to the public for 2 hours free per day, with facilities to print onto A4. Our free WIFI is available in and around the library by logging into 'CBC\_PUBLIC' via your device settings. We offer IT help for beginners - please call in to find out more.



# The Potton Hall for All Support Committee

The members of the Potton Hall for All Steering Committee are pleased to report that since the Summer edition of the Potton Newsletter, there has been considerable progress in taking this project forward. In particular Reserved Matters Planning Permission has been submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council and an answer is anticipated in the next few weeks. If successful, we can look forward with confidence to cutting the first sod and laying the first bricks of this vital and much needed community resource.

All that said, much work still needs to be done and we will almost certainly need more hands-on support. In particular, we are looking to replace our excellent Treasurer who is moving away. If you have any experience, skill or interest in financial management please contact our Secretary, David Tall, on 261713, who will be pleased to explain more.

In addition, we are always looking for wider experienced individuals to help plan, organise and run the various activities we support as a group. We are naturally always grateful to receive financial support, but what we want most of all, please, is your time, energy and ideas. So if you feel able to give any of these please e-mail [hall4allpotton@btinternet.com](mailto:hall4allpotton@btinternet.com).

The PHfA team were involved in supporting the Potton Show and Apple Day and will be



jointly running the Murder Mystery Evening in the Scout Hut, as well as attending the Christmas Lights switch on and the Christmas Seasonal Market.

Meanwhile we will keep you informed of all our activities, through our website [www.pottonhallforall.co.uk](http://www.pottonhallforall.co.uk) and other social media.

Please remember The Hall for All is exactly what it says on the tin and will provide a variety of excellent facilities for our delightful town. It will belong to everybody and will be an asset for the whole community.



## Caretaker / Groundkeeper / Maintenance Vacancy

We are looking to appoint an enthusiastic and reliable General Assistant to carry out caretaking, maintenance and groundkeeping activities.

This is an ideal opportunity for a responsible person, who takes pride in their work, a conscientious attitude towards work duties, is able to maintain a high standard of work and would like to work for the local community.

**Initially for 15 hours per week, with a possibility of additional hours.**

For further details about either of these position's visit  
[www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk/vacancies](http://www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk/vacancies)  
or contact

## Office Position

We are seeking a person to work part-time in the town council office.

To work as part of a team providing a professional public interface. To provide full administrative support to the Town Clerk, Councillors and staff.

The role requires excellent communication and organisational skills, along with a high level of accuracy and attention to detail.

**15 hours per week in the afternoon.**

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

## Four Seasons Market

The final founding member of the Four Seasons Market group Jenny Ream has decided that the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2017 market will be her last and the town is now looking for someone to volunteer to join the remaining market members.

The voluntary role includes being the point of contact for stallholders in advance of the market and on the day. If you are interested in volunteering please contact [pottoncouncil@btconnect.com](mailto:pottoncouncil@btconnect.com) or call **01767 260086**.

**Thank you** to Jenny Ream and the other members of the Four Seasons Market.

The market takes place in the square in the centre of Potton, surrounded by indispensable shops. The stalls are a mixture of old favourites and we also ring the changes with variety to suit everyone. The market will include a good selection of the very best local produce, typically; local meat, beer, vegetables, artisan bread, cheese and preserves.