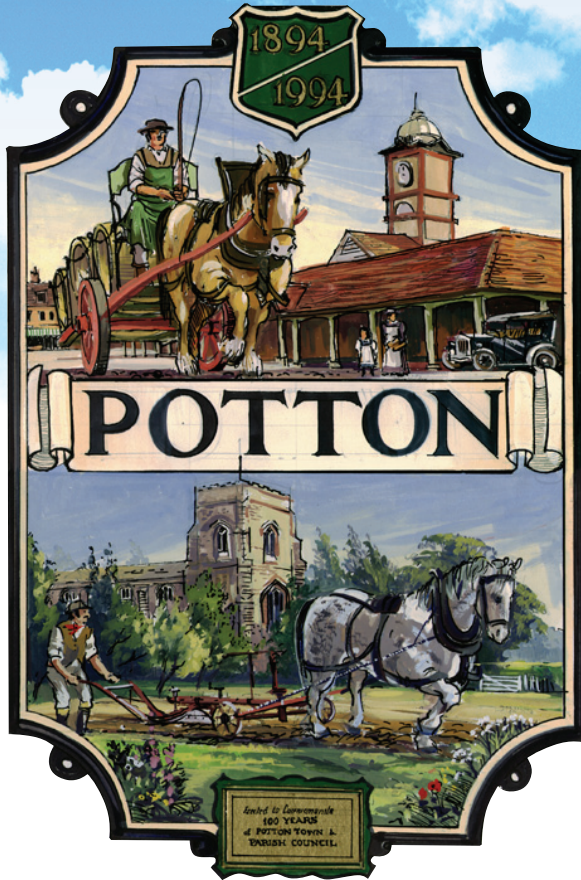


# Potton Town Council



## Newsletter Spring 2010



## Chairman's Letter

Spring is in the air & all the signs are here, birds singing in the morning, some sunshine and the Potton Town Council newsletter is dropping on your door mat. At least I hope it is as during a recent discussion with some people there was an element of doubt that we were reaching everyone in the community. If you become aware of someone who does not receive a newsletter please contact our clerk so we can rectify the situation.

You have all hopefully received your free cotton bag as a result of the actions through the town plan. More than one person has told me that the handles are too long or the people are too short as the bag hits the ground. I am reliably informed that the bags were designed with longer handles so they could be looped over the shoulder for ease of carrying and prevent strain.

Now I must turn to a particularly unpleasant subject. I have to report that the public conveniences in Brook End have again been vandalised by some moron(s). If you know who these people are please report them to the clerk or the police. Remember that every time we have to pay out to have these facilities repaired and restored it's YOUR MONEY we have to use. I wonder if the fact that we found two pregnancy test kits showing a positive result this time has any bearing on the matter?

The new administration year begins very shortly. It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve as chairman of your town council and I hope the new chairman enjoys it as much as I have and I wish him/her good luck.

**Peter J. Langridge**

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL REPORT

**From Anita Lewis representing you the people of Potton**

A year on - the first year of the unitary Council. I think a certain amount of congratulation is in order.

Two districts and just over half a County Council were "grafted" together in what appeared to the public to be a seamless operation. The schools still opened, the waste was still collected and the buses still operated. The exercise to place (or displace) hundreds of staff was enormous. The transition process is still ongoing and will be for sometime yet. The harmonisation of salaries alone was a task of monumental proportions.

The disaggregation of assets has only just been agreed on roughly a 60/40 ratio and now the urgent task is to find appropriate accommodation for our 3,000 staff in Central Bedfordshire. We still have hundreds of staff in County Hall/Borough Hall renamed. As a interim measure we have rented Technology House on the Ampthill Road in Bedford for four years to enable us to bring teams together. I know in Children's services, I have staff in Priory Park, Borough Hall, Melbourne House, Pilgrim House, Chicksands, Dunstable offices, Vernon Court, The Old Court House Dunstable, Biggleswade and I am sure I have missed some.

The Dunstable offices are being "revamped" – internal walls taken down so that another 300 staff can be accommodated there. Chicksands was a superb building for the District Council but needs to be expanded if more officers and visitors are to be accommodated there. It is the administration headquarters and the Chief Executive and Directors Of Services are sited there. Having said all that, there is a tremendous spirit of belonging to Central Bedfordshire Council. The new Chief Executive Richard Carr although only a recent arrival has already demonstrated his leadership qualities and is rapidly making his mark.

It is just bad luck that the birth of the new unitary Council has coincided with the worst recession most of us can remember.

At a time when we would want to enhance and improve services, statutory functions have to be given priority over the discretionary ones even though the latter are sometimes the ones the public appreciate most.

Hard financial choices and decisions have had to be made causing displeasure with sectors of the community- here I am thinking of my own area at the moment which is school transport where we spend £8.10 million. In order to obtain a balanced budget we need to save £1 million from this budget. The new school transport policy has been out for consultation and goes to the Executive Committee for decision March 9th. Parents who have received free transport to date are upset that they may have to pay their own bus fares should they choose to send children to schools outside their catchment area. The Council is revenue poor (only 30% comes in grants from Central Government 70% from local rates) We do not want to put up Council Tax cannot put it up or we will be capped. Other local authorities, even Bedford get much bigger grant from Central Government. Our new Chief Executive came from Wolverhampton where it is almost the exact opposite, 70% from Central Government and 30% raised locally. As I said, revenue poor but capital rich County farm lands and buildings which can be utilised when the markets improve to provide the services our inhabitants require.

It follows that we must keep capital spending down until such time as the markets improve. This is not a time to be borrowing money, the interest for which has to be paid out of the already overstretched revenue budget.

Better financial times do lie ahead and this is the message from Central Bedfordshire. For the moment the task is to provide services to the best standards possible, to avoid waste and make every penny count.

The future is bright for Central Bedfordshire and even in these times of financial constraint optimism runs high that value for money is being given and a good level of services provided for our residents.

**Anita M. Lewis**

**Portfolio Holder for Children's Services Representing the Potton Ward**

**Central Bedfordshire Council  
Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford,  
Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ  
Customer Services 0300 3008000  
[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**

**CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AT POTTON  
VOLUNTEER PAUL IS FORTUNATELY VERY  
GOOD WITH A LADDER**

*The Town Council wishes to send heartfelt thanks to all volunteers, contributors, performers and everyone who made the event such an enjoyable evening.*



# ANNUAL TOWN MEETING FRIDAY APRIL 16th 7pm at the MILL LANE PAVILION

Representatives from the Town Council  
Central Bedfordshire Council,  
the Lower School and the Police.  
Public Welcome  
*Come and have your say!*

## Credit Union in North Central Bedfordshire

Take control of your finances and watch your money grow by joining the Bedford Credit Union. Bedford Credit Union now operates in what was Mid Bedfordshire.

Credit Unions are financial cooperatives run by community not-for-profit organisations. Credit Unions offer easy ways to save and low cost loans to members. As Credit Unions are regulated by the Financial Services Authority you can be assured that your money is safe.

**You can join and start saving with us at the following collection points.**

- **Shefford Community Hall**, 60 High Street, SG17 5BD,  
Thursdays 1.00pm to 2.30 pm
- **Preen Furniture Bank**, Unit 5, Shortmead Industrial Estate, Shortmead Street, SG18 0BP,  
Tuesdays 10.00 to 12.30.

### How to Join

It could not be easier to join Bedford Credit Union, as all you need to do is produce two forms of identity (for example a passport or driving licence) and a recent utility bill or bank statement, plus pay a £3 joining fee and deposit at least £1 in your new account.

### Contact

Anne Slade (Bedford Credit Union Development Officer) on 07596 927 404 or email [Bedcumb@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:Bedcumb@tiscali.co.uk)

[www.bedfordcreditunion.org.uk](http://www.bedfordcreditunion.org.uk)

## NO DOGS ALLOWED

THE COUNCIL MUST REMIND DOG OWNERS THAT DOGS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE FENCED OFF PLAY GROUND EQUIPMENT AREAS AT THE MILL LANE RECREATION GROUND AND THE HENRY SMITH PLAYING FIELD. THIS IS IMPORTANT FOR THE SAFETY AND HEALTH OF OUR YOUNG CHILDREN.

## Councillor Profile - Adam Zerny



I have lived in Potton for four years and reside on Station Road with my wife and children. I was elected onto the council in 2009.

I am keen to see the preservation of Potton's Victorian heritage and as the owner of a three-legged cat who recently lost a limb on the roads, am eager to ensure that Potton's thoroughfares are kept safe for its two-legged residents as well as its feline denizens.

I have been particularly active in the formation of local opposition to the housing developments planned for Potton by Central Beds Council.

I am a triathlete and when not attending council meetings can often be seen running or cycling through the town's streets. I have not yet swum in the brook.

I am a company director of an office supplies firm in the city.

## POTTON SHOW



### **POTTON SHOW will be held on Saturday, 11th September at St. Mary's Church Hall and Field.**

There are over 190 different classes for exhibits including flowers and vegetables, painting, photographs and handicrafts.

Schedules are available from the Post Office, Tysoe's and the Library or down load from the web site [www.pottonshow.org.uk](http://www.pottonshow.org.uk). If you do not want to enter exhibits, why not join us between 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. to look at other people's entries. There will be an auction of produce after the judging about 4.30pm. You do not have to live in Potton to be part of this event.

**A BARN DANCE** will be held on the Saturday evening. **Tickets cost £8.50 and include a Fish and Chip Supper.** Once again we have the Ivel Valley Band playing and they are worth listening to even if you don't want to dance. Tickets are now available from Cameron's, the Post Office and Tysoe's. The **CRAFT FAIR** will be held in the Marquee on the Sunday from 12 noon to 5.00 p.m.

The weekend will finish with a **POTTON CHURCHES TOGETHER Service at 6.30 p.m. in the Marquee - Why not join us."**

## POTTON TOWN PLAN

I am sure you will have been to the Seasonal Market and seen the recent protest against the large developments in Potton. In addition to these high profile projects the teams formed to ensure that the Town Plan is fulfilled have all been working hard on your behalf. You can track their progress by looking at the quarterly reports on the Town Council Web site. We are always looking for volunteers to help and if you are interested in any of the projects please contact the Town Clerk who will be delighted to give you more information.

**Geoff Emery**  
Chairman

## POTTON COUNCIL SURGERIES

Potton Town Councillor surgeries will now be held once a month at differing days and times and occasionally different venues to allow everyone the opportunity to meet and talk to their local Councillors. The next three monthly surgeries have been arranged as follows:-

On Wednesday 14th April 10am -12 noon Councillors Mr Geoff Emery, Mrs Anita Lewis and Mrs Doreen Gurney will be holding the surgery at the Community Centre in Brook End.

On Thursday 13th May 2pm - 4pm Councillors Mrs Jean Way, Mrs Anita Lewis and Doreen Gurney will be holding the surgery at the Community Centre Brook End.

On Friday 11th June 6pm – 8pm Councillors Mr Eric Jakes MBE, Mrs Anita Lewis and Doreen Gurney will be holding the surgery at the Community Centre Brook End.

## COUNCIL TAX

For several years Potton Town Council has, by careful budgeting, not requested any increase in the precept. Now increasing costs of utilities, government legislation and new facilities mean that this year an increase of £4.62 per household for the year has had to be made to the Town Council's portion of your Council Tax. The Council will do all in its power to keep future costs to the minimum whilst continuing to provide and striving to improve services.

The Town Council provides a public office for help and advice, allotments, public conveniences, two playing fields, two playgrounds, council chambers, cemetery and St Mary's church yard, free car park, two community halls, bus shelters and market square, floral displays, notice boards, a web site, councillor surgeries, newsletter, Christmas lights, funding for local groups and support for the town plan.

## 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.

**Tel: 01767 260086 [pottoncouncil@btconnect.com](mailto:pottoncouncil@btconnect.com)**

Many problems are currently being reported to the Clerk which the Town Council has no power to overcome, please contact Central Bedfordshire Council for:-

If your problem is about refuse collection, environmental issues, recycling, or street cleaning please contact:-

**Central Bedfordshire Council**

**Tel: 0300 300 8000**

**[customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto: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**

**Tel: 0300 300 8000**

**[highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**

Do you know that if you have reported anything to do with roads to Central Bedfordshire Council Highways Helpdesk then you will be given a unique reference number. If you want to track progress on your report their website has a link at **<http://highwaysfaults.bedfordshire.gov.uk/>**

All you should have to do is input your reference number together with your postcode as a security, and a history of your report should be displayed

## Town Council Information

Web site – [www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk)  
Town Council Office, The Community Centre,  
Brook End, Potton SG19 2QS  
Town Clerk Valerie Moles  
Telephone 01767 260086  
**New...** 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

## Town Councillors

Mick Allen	260227	Peter Langridge	260362
Jeremy Armond	260521	Alan Leggatt	260001
Jim Burke	261275	Anita Lewis	260726
Ruth Burmo	260712	John Lewis	260726
Nigel Butlin	260075	Brian Lilley	261044
Geoff Emery	261710	Angue McDonald	
Sarah Fowler		Jean Way	260456
Eric Jakes M.B.E.	260779	Adam Zerny	261319

Mr P. Langridge is Chairman of Town Council  
Mr A. Leggatt is Vice Chairman of the Town Council  
Mr J. Lewis is Chairman of Planning Committee  
Mr A. Leggatt 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 07.00 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](mailto:doreen.gurney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)  
Anita Lewis 260726 [anita.lewis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:anita.lewis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

## 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. This hall is suited to smaller meetings and group events.

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.

Although evenings during the week are now full there is still some availability at both halls during the daytime and for private functions at the weekend. Please contact Mrs Sarah Williamson on 01767 260086 to check on availability

## SUMMARY OF TOWN COUNCIL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	PREVIOUS YEAR 1.4.08 - 31.3.09	CURRENT YEAR 1.4.09 – 28.2.2010
<b>INCOME</b>		
Precept	105000	105000
Bank Interest	2848	61
Charity Interest	57	39
Grants/Donations	55	13203
Grass Cutting Grant	1517	1608
Christmas Lights	2234	997
Insurance		0
VAT refunded	8446	5848
Cemetery	3441	4244
Allotments	682	192
Hire of Council Grounds	1512	375
Hire of Community Centre	9125	8616
Hire of Pavilion	14961	13848
Legal / Insurance	1084	0
Sculpture/other income	2133	962
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>153095</b>	<b>154993</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Public Conveniences	6672	4448
**Administration	68418	64059
Grass Cutting verges	2406	2875
Community Centre	11594	10638
Office Running Costs	1349	1280
Street Light Running Costs	428	579
Pavillion	15766	19224
Cemetery	26533	21152
Clock House and Bus Shelter	14391	2949
Allotments	564	387
Car Park	2444	2616
Mill Lane Recreation Area	5369	6962
Henry Smith Recreation Area	4847	5572
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>160781</b>	<b>142741</b>

\*\* Also includes Salaries for Clerk and Clerical Assistant, training for staff and Councillors, Grants, Town Plan and Christmas Lights

### Hourly Charges for Use of Town Council Facilities Community Centre, Brook End, Potton as at 1st September 09

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
<b>Main Hall</b>	£6.70	£7.80	£9.30
<b>Upper Hall</b>	£4.20	£5.20	£6.20
<b>Both Rooms</b>	£9.80	£12.00	£14.00

#### Mill Lane Pavilion, Mill Lane, Potton

	Up to 5pm Weekdays	5pm to 10.30pm Weekdays	Weekends/ Bank Holidays
<b>Pavilion</b>	£7.30	£10.30	£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