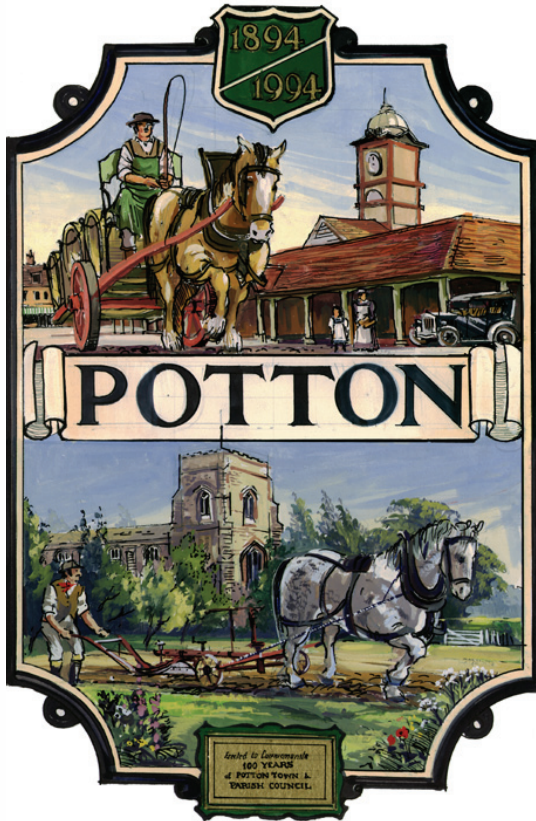


Potton Town Council



Newsletter
Summer 2011

Incorporating Annual Report
2010-2011

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2010/2011

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TOWN COUNCIL:

Mr Alan Leggatt, Chairman of the Town Council gave the following report at the Annual Town Meeting held at St. Mary's Church Hall on 4th April 2011:-

Good evening everyone and welcome to the annual town meeting.

Despite the unprecedented economic climate in which we find ourselves, I am pleased to report that your town council has been able to maintain a good service to the community over the last twelve months.

Of course there have been some disappointments along the way. These have largely been outside of the control of the council.

The town centre enhancement scheme was finally completed with the installation of the circular benches around the trees. A number of favourable comments have been received and the benches are in regular use.

The ambience of our Georgian market square has been much improved by the enhancement programme and it lends itself to other activities such as the seasonal markets. These popular events continue to be held on a quarterly basis and bring many people into the town. The Christmas lights switch-on brought another capacity crowd to the square on a very cold December evening but there were plenty of things available to keep warm. Everybody seemed pleased with the new low energy LED festoons radiating out from the Clock House which were purchased to replace the soon to be banned incandescent bulbs. As a result of the success of these lights, the council have purchased some more of the same type. These will replace the remaining old lights which are used around the shop fronts. Safety checks have to be carried out on the buildings' light fixing attachment points every three years or so and this was done in 2010.

A key building used in the display is Lloyds Bank where the Christmas tree is placed on the balcony so it was saddening to learn that Lloyds TSB was planning to close the branch. This they duly did in February this year despite representations to the outgoing Chief Executive – Eric Daniels – by the Council. The closure took place just seventeen days before the new Chief Executive announced a twelve month halt to further closures until a review had taken place. We now note that the building is up for sale so the Council has written to the new CE asking him to reconsider this decision with a view to consideration being given to its potential use as a community bank involving different banking organisations.

The HSPF and Mill Lane recreation grounds were maintained to a good standard and are well used by the public. Children's play areas continue to be improved in order to meet ongoing statutory requirements. Safety surfaces have been replaced at HSPF and essential repairs have, or are, in the process of being undertaken at the Mill Lane play area. Improvements have been made to the allotments by the installation of a water supply. A large waiting list still exists for allotments and to ease the situation a bit some half plots have now been released for those who feel unable to manage a whole plot.

The Community Centre and Mill Lane pavilion both have regular hirers and are in use most days.

The town plan sub-committees have continued to operate throughout the year and much success has been achieved in some areas. In particular the environmental group has been very active with a mass bulb planting effort around the town and currently an initiative to improve the habitat of water voles is being carried out at the brook.

The transport committee has produced a survey of the weight restriction limits on roads within Potton. The issue of heavy goods vehicles using unauthorised routes within the town has been causing considerable concern to a number of residents particularly around the Chapel Street, Bull Street and Horslow Street areas. This topic will be discussed further at future meetings of the council.

Other sub- committees are still active but some currently lack a chairperson. It is hoped this can be remedied in the near future.

At this point I would like to give my personal thanks to Cllr. Geoff Emery who has decided to retire after four years as chairman of the town plan committee. Geoff was on the original steering committee and has contributed greatly since then in setting up and progressing the way forward on the town plan.

Not all of the wishes of the people are fulfilled however. An overwhelming majority of respondents were against the Central Beds. LDF proposal for two large housing developments to be submitted for Sutton Mill Road and Biggleswade Road , favouring rather a number of smaller developments which would retain the unique characteristics of our town whilst retaining the number of new houses required. The town council was also vehemently opposed to this CBC scheme. An assessment by an independent inspectorate concluded that there was no additional merit between two large developments over a number of smaller developments. Nevertheless, the CBC executive voted unanimously to recommend the plan go forward to members thus ignoring the will of the people, the town council and the coalition government's Big Society Localism Bill.

In recent years the responsibilities on the Town Council have increased as things have been divested by the previous county and district administrations. For example it has now taken on the lease for the Community Centre including its maintenance and upkeep and also the public conveniences. Had it not done so these facilities would have been lost. This of course means extra revenue is needed in order to maintain them to a good standard. When combined with the many other improvements made in the town of which there are many examples, it was inevitable that after more than five years when there has been no increase in the town's chargeable rate, increases have had to be made to prevent further inroads into balances. The first of these was in the financial year 2010/11 and a further small increase has been applied this FY. The council considered the budget carefully and approved a modest rise in the precept which represents less than £5 per household per year or 10 pence per week.

Our clerk - Val Moles - and her support staff have continued to provide excellent service to our customers and the town. The relocation of the town council office to the Community Centre has given ready access to residents where issues can be raised and either dealt with direct or forwarded onto the council. The council run facilities viz. the cemetery, Community Centre, Mill Lane pavilion and public toilets have been maintained to a high standard by your team for which we should be proud and I give my personal thanks to all of the staff for their efforts.

I would also like to thank the Chairs of the other town council sub-committees without whose help mine would be an impossible task. They are Peter Langridge – Chairman of F&GP, Eric Jakes – Chairman of Burials, John Lewis – Chairman of planning, Mick Allen –Chairman of playing fields and allotments and Jim Burke – Chairman of buildings and facilities. Thank you all.

Finally, 2011 is an election year. A number of your councillors have decided not to seek re-election this year so a number of vacancies will exist.

The outgoing councillors are Nigel Butlin, Mick Allen, Jeremy Armond and Jim Burke who between them have put in many years of unstinting service on your behalf and I thank them for their contributions.

New eyes are always important in any organisation as well as having the steadying influence of more experienced ones. I sincerely hope that new candidates have put themselves forward for next month's vote to continue the good work of this council.

POTTON TOWN COUNCIL AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 2009-2010

Cumulative Fund Balance

1.4.2009		31.3.2010
142073	Balance brought forward	134790.00
153091	Add Total Income	157053.80
160374	Less Total Expenditure	154996.32
134790		136847.48

CASH RECONCILIATION AS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON 31.3.10

Premier Interest Account	108873.71
Current Account	28408.34
	137282.05
Less cheques drawn but not debited to bank account at close of business on 31.3.10	374.55
ADD DEBTORS	792.05
LESS CREDITORS	3108.32
TRUE FUND BALANCE	134591.23
Additional investment fund COIF Fund	891

Borrowings:

At the close of business at 31st March, 2010 there were no outstanding loans to the Council.

Debts Outstanding 2009/2010

At 31st March, 2010 there were debts of 792.05 outstanding.

Capital Reserves:

The Town Council had £22849 Capital Reserves at 31st March, 2010

Local Government Act 1972 Section137 Payments:

The Limit of spending under S137 of the Local Government Act 1972 for this Council to 31st March, 2010 was £23646.75

Payments made were:

Biggles FM-local radio	100.00
Potton Fire Station	100.00
Royal British Legion	50.00
Potton Tennis Club	100.00
Link-a Ride Community Transport	100.00
East Beds Community Bus	100.00
Payments made under S145 of LGA 1972	
Potton Music Festival	100.00
Potton Show	100.00
Total	750.00

Potton Town Council Audit 2009/2010

Balance sheet as at 31st March 2010

Actual at 31.3.2009 £		Actual at 31.3.10 £
891	COIF Fund	891
891	Long Term Debtors LONG TERM ASSETS	891
Current Assets		
4515	Debtors	792.05
0	Payments in advance	0
Cash in Hand		
29121	comprises	
	Current acc	28408.34
105669	Deposit acc	108873.71
139305	Total Current Assets	138074.10
Current Liabilities		
6898	Creditors	3108.32
170	Uncleared cheques	374.55
(7068)	Total current liabilities	(3482.87)
132237	Net Assets	134591.23
132237	Represented by: Fund Balance	134591.23

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of Potton Town Council as at 31st March 2010, and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

Councillor Profile



In the hot seat this summer is Councillor Eric Jakes MBE

I was born 8th May 1928 at 35 Horslow Street and from 1931 and now live at no 46.

I was first elected to Potton Parish Council in 1955. I am a past Chairman of that Authority also a past Chairman of Biggleswade Rural District Council and a past Chairman of the Mid Beds District Council. I have been a Governor of Burgoyne Middle School for 28 years and a past Chairman. I am a regular worshipper at St Mary's Church, a holder of many church offices and a past Church Warden of some 36 years. I am a member of the History Society and the present Chairman of the Potton

Consolidated Charities having been a trustee for 35 years.

Potton Town Council Civic Service

The Chairman of Potton Town Council, Alan Leggatt and Mrs Carol Leggatt would like to invite representatives from local community groups and members of the local business community to attend the

The Civic Service

at 3pm Sunday 10th July
at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Potton
followed by refreshments at St Mary's Church Hall.

It would be helpful if you wish to attend if you would notify the town clerk on
01767 260086 or **Pottoncouncil@btconnect.com**

Potton Town Plan - Seasonal Market



The last Seasonal Market in March was very well attended. Thank you to the Potton Town Plan Shopping Committee team who once again did a fantastic job organising the event. It is great to see the newly enhanced Market Square being enjoyed by the local community.

The next Market will be on Saturday morning 25th June.

Dates for Your Diary

Potton Music Festival will run this year on 5th, 6th and 7th August Potton Show and Sale will take place Saturday 10th September with Craft Fair on Sunday 11th September.

Potton Town Plan - Environment Group

A recent survey found evidence of water voles living in the lower brook at Henry Smith Playing Field and evidence that otters use the area was found. It was recommended that some work be done to improve conditions for these wonderful mammals who have honoured us by making Potton their home.

Early one Sunday morning in the spring Hannah Bartram and members of the Environment Committee joined the County Wildlife Recorder and his dad to clear brambles and scrub along the lower brook at Henry Smith Playing Field. The Town Council would like to thank all the volunteers and Geoff Wharton, a local gardener who turned up with machines to help, disposed of the left over vegetation and made no charge. In September more work will be needed and the group will be looking for more volunteers to help.



Please leave your name with Val Moles the Town Clerk 01767 260086 if you think you may be able to help

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 Council Information

Town Council Office, The Community Centre, Brook End, Potton SG19 2QS

Town Clerk Valerie Moles
Telephone 01767 260086
Email pottoncouncil@btconnect.com
Web site www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk

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

There have been some changes to Potton Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council after the elections in May. Eleven Town Councillors were elected unopposed and they are listed below. Adam Zerny and Doreen Gurney have been elected as Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillors for this area. Potton Town Councillors

Ruth Burmo	260712	Alan Leggatt	260001	John Lewis	260726
Geoff Emery	261710	Anita Lewis	260726	Jeremy Armond	260521
Eric Jakes M.B.E.	260779	Jean Way	260456	Richard Hurst	687845
Peter Langridge	260362	Adam Zerny	261319	Paul Rogers	260977
Mr Andy Gibb	260067	Mr Angus Macdonald	262006	Andrew Hopkins	262672

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

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. 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.

Committee Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the same venue, starting at 7.00 p.m. These meetings are not open to the public.

Other Council Representatives for Potton

Central Bedfordshire Councillors

Doreen Gurney 680395 doreen.gurney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Adam Zerny 261319 adamzerny@hotmail.co.uk

NOTICE

Town Council office opening hours are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings 9am -12.30pm and Thursday afternoon 2 – 4pm when council staff are available.

Members of staff are often in the office carrying out the many other council duties and to complete this work it is no longer possible to deal with any public enquiries other than during opening hours. When the office is closed you can leave a message on the answer phone **01767 260086** or e-mail at **pottoncouncil@btconnect.com**

The office door will not be opened other than during office hours
Thank you for your co-operation Mrs Valerie Moles-Town Clerk

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 evenings and weekend functions.

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