



POTTON
TOWN COUNCIL

News

Spring Edition 2020

www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk

Your meeting. Your town.



Annual Town Meeting - Tuesday 24th March, 7pm

The Annual Town Meeting will be held by Potton Town Council on **Tuesday 24th March at 7pm** at the Community Centre. It is a chance for residents to talk to their town council about issues of concern in Potton.

Chairman, Cllr Angus Macdonald, will speak about what has been achieved in the year, what is planned for the future and answer questions.

Potton's two Central Bedfordshire Council ward councillors (Cllrs Wye and Zerny) and representatives from Potton

Federation, Potton Neighbourhood Plan and Potton Hall for All have been invited to speak.

Members of the public may address the meeting and raise any issues they feel should be considered in the future. So come along, meet the people who represent your views and tell them how well you think they are doing and what you feel should be the their next priority.

This is **your meeting** about **your town**. Please join us.





Chairman's message

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

I'm sure I am not alone in setting myself some New Year's Resolutions for 2020. If your aim is to get more involved with the community, why not consider joining a community group, or volunteering? See pages 18 and 19 for some examples of where you could be more involved in your community.



Angus Macdonald and
Deputy Lieutenant Chris Kilroy MBE

The last three months have been very busy with several events and meetings. I would like to start though by offering my thanks to Deputy Lieutenant (DL) Chris Kilroy MBE who attended and supported our Remembrance Day Service. It is wonderful to see Chris in Potton each year at our annual Remembrance Service and he's been a regular representative of Lord Lieutenant Helen Nellis during my time as Chair. Attendance at our service in 2019 was again exceptional and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who turned out. I hope that you will help support our future activities to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE day later in the year, however there will be more on that in future newsletters.

**Tommies on the Train
Station platform**



SPILMAH
— Potton —



Remembrance Day 2019



Volunteers at the Christmas lights

Following on from Remembrance Day, our volunteers were hard at work again putting on another fantastic Christmas lights display. The Christmas lights event was very well attended and the lights burned brightly across the festive period prior to their removal in January. They looked fantastic, as they do every year. My thanks again go to all the volunteers who make this possible and help us put up and take down lights along with supporting activities and preparations for the big switch on. Again, we are indebted to Deepdale Trees for contributing the wonderful Christmas trees.

To put this effort into perspective we do all the installation work with volunteers and fund our own lights through contributions (hopefully you saw the buckets in some of the town centre businesses) and through the precept. Sandy spend £14,000 on their lights, they don't own them and pay for contractors to put them up. I was also informed that the Sandy Christmas tree failed to light up on their big switch on

so there's a lot to be said for the work of keen volunteers that help Potton get everything right first time!

Finally, before I move on from the subject of Christmas lights, thank you to all the children who entered the Christmas Lights competition. Two of the designs will be made into Christmas Lights for display with all the other lights later this year.



Potton Christmas lights



In December, January and February, meetings have been held concerning planning applications. The Town Council is using the recently approved Neighbourhood

Potton's Spring litter pick - which is part of the 2020 Great British Spring Clean - is planned for Saturday 14th March 2020. Last year's Autumn litter pick was a great success and thank you to those of you who joined in to make Potton a cleaner place!

See page 8 for more details about this year's Spring litter pick and I hope to see many of you volunteering to keep our town as tidy as possible.

Plan to assess applications and assist us with our responses to the planning authority (Central Bedfordshire Council). A *Pull Out and Keep* summary document of the Neighbourhood Plan can be found in the centre 8 pages of this newsletter. Once again it seems as though the town is the focus of unrelenting planning applications.

The Town Council has also been debating funding requirements over the last few months and reached agreement in January on its annual budget for the financial year 2020/2021. If you live in a Potton Band D property, you will pay an annual charge of £138.77 to Potton Town Council. See page 8 for more details about the budget.



A well earned break after the Autumn litter pick



**palliative,
neurological
and bereavement
support**

Finally, those of you with a keen eye and who know me will have seen me running around the town in recent weeks on a more regular basis.

This is because I am supporting the Sue Ryder St John's Hospice over in Moggerhanger this year and running the London Marathon on their behalf.

St John's is a wonderful facility on our own doorstep that supports people through the most difficult times of their lives. Whether that's a terminal illness, the loss of a loved one or a neurological condition – they are there when it matters, helping people live the best life they possibly can.

If you would like to join me in supporting the St John's Hospice and ensuring the service and care it provides continues, I would appreciate any donations towards this worthy cause.

Donations can be made through the link below or via the Town Council office.
www.justgiving.com/fundraising/angus-macdonald9

Enjoy the newsletter!

Best Wishes

Angus

Cllr Angus Macdonald



Angus in Sue Ryder running gear

Four Seasons Market



POTTON
TOWN COUNCIL



Saturday 21st March
9am – 1pm



For more information visit
pottontowncouncil.co.uk/four-seasons-market

Get to know your Town Councillors

Cllr John Day



I moved to the area in 1999 when I started working for the RSPB. After living in Sandy for two years, I moved to Potton in 2001 as I seemed to keep gravitating there to socialise. I soon learned the town has a friendly community and atmosphere, with good facilities. I think it is fair to say Potton is the only place I have lived and felt part of a community. In recent years, with increasing pressure from developments, I have sought to try to influence better environmental outcomes

for the community and contributed to the environmental sections of the Potton Neighbourhood Plan.

It is privilege to support fellow councillors and the community to help Potton retain its character and natural environment and realise the community aspirations of the Neighbourhood Plan in order that Potton remains a good place to live and work.

In my spare time I enjoy watching wildlife, live bands and the occasional football match. I play guitar and sometimes paint and/or photograph wildlife.

What do Town Councillors do?

Town councillors have three main areas of work:

1. **Decision-making:** through attending meetings and committees with other elected members, councillors decide which activities to support, where money should be spent, what services should be delivered and what policies should be implemented.
2. **Monitoring:** councillors make sure that their decisions lead to efficient and effective services by keeping an eye on how well things are working.
3. **Getting involved locally:** as local representatives, councillors have responsibilities towards their constituents and local organisations. This often depends on what the councillor wants to achieve and how much time they have available.

How much time does it take?

Councillors spend on average about three hours a week on council work. Obviously, there are some town councillors who spend more time than this – and some less, but in the main, being a town councillor is an enjoyable way of contributing to your community and helping to make it a better place to live and work.

Do Potton Town Councillors get paid?

Working as a Town Councillor is a completely voluntary role.

Vacancy for a Potton Town Councillor

An opportunity to be part of your community

A candidate for the Town Council is qualified if at the time of nomination, they are:

1. a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any member state of the EU

2. are at least 18 years of age

3. **meet at least one of the following four qualifications:**

- Are on the list of electors for the town or during the last twelve months you:
- occupied land or property in Potton as owner or tenant.
- had your principle place of work here.
- lived in, or within three miles of Potton.



A Town Councillor is unpaid and gives their time for free to the community on a voluntary basis.

Any interested parties must make an application in writing to the Town Clerk, Mr Jonathan Whitehurst at Potton Town Council, The Community Centre, Brook End, Potton, Bedfordshire, SG19 2QS by 9am on **Tuesday 17th March 2020** and include the following information:

1. reason for wishing to be a Councillor;
2. previous Community/Council work;
3. other skills you can bring to the Council.

For further information please refer to the town council's Co-option procedure in the 'Our Council', 'Policies' section of the website.

Please note it is a condition of a Councillor that a means of contact by telephone and/or email will be public information.

If you require any additional information, please contact the Town Clerk either by email or phone.

Email: pottoncouncil@btconnect.com
Phone: 01767 260086

Co-option will take place at the Town Council Meeting held in the Community Centre, Brook End on **Tuesday 7th April 2020** at 7pm.

Spring Litter Pick 2020



Potton Town Council Tax

The annual budget for the following year is discussed by Councillors and receives final approval at the January council meeting. After expenditure is agreed and any expected income deducted, it leaves a balance required for the council to provide its services. The balance required is called the 'Precept'.



The 'Precept' is the part of your Council Tax bill that comes to Potton Town Council. All the Council tax is collected by Central Bedfordshire Council and is then distributed between Bedfordshire Police, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Central Bedfordshire Council and Potton Town Council.

For the financial year 2020/2021 Potton Town Council's 'Precept' is £293,637. The size of your property determines how much Council Tax you pay. Properties are put into one of eight bands, A being the lowest, and H the highest, with Band D being the average. In 2020/2021 Potton Town Council's proportion of the whole Council Tax bill for a Band D property is £138.77 (approximately £2.67 per week / £11.56 per month). This is an increase on last year of approximately 24p per week / £1.05 per month).

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PULL OUT
AND KEEP

Potton

Neighbourhood Plan 2016 - 2035



Planning for the Future

pottonneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

The Neighbourhood Plan Vision, Aims and Policies:

Background

A Neighbourhood Plan is a way of helping local communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live and work. It can be used to:

- Develop a shared vision for the neighbourhood.
- Choose where new homes, shops, offices and other development should be built.
- Identify new infrastructure needed to support any development.
- Identify and protect important local green spaces.
- Influence what new buildings should look like.

In consultation with the Community, the established vision for Potton is to ensure it remains a thriving and prosperous community that delivers a high quality of life for all residents, specifically that:

- a) Potton will retain its character as a small Georgian Market Town with a vibrant market square that has a variety of shops and services to meet the needs of the Town's residents.
- b) There will be a controlled, proportionate and uniform growth over the period of the Plan with sustainable developments that meet the needs of the town and its residents.
- c) Growth and development of small businesses in the Town to promote local employment is encouraged and supported.
- d) The Town will retain and develop an infrastructure that meets current needs of its residents and has the capacity to support future growth.
- e) Good leisure facilities to meet the needs of the whole Town are provided.
- f) There are endorsed policies that have a positive effect on the environment and provide a high quality natural environment that protects wildlife.
- g) A network of footpaths and cycleways linking major areas of the Town is provided to encourage pedestrians and cyclists with associated environmental and parking benefits.
- h) Parking congestion in the Market Square is eased and provision made for the use of alternative transportation methods.

The aims of this plan are directly related to the vision statements which have been developed in conjunction with the people of Potton. To achieve this, policies have been written, where each policy has a specific series of policy objectives that support and facilitate achievement of the Plan's overall aims and vision. Each of the visions is considered below and the aims related to the vision and the policies to achieve this are listed. The individual policies and their specific objectives are detailed in **The Policies**. The relationship between the vision, policies and objectives is shown in detail in **Potton NP - Annex G Vision, Policies and Objectives**

Vision A

Potton will retain its character as a small Georgian Market Town with a vibrant market square that has a variety of shops and services to meet the needs of the Town's residents.

Supporting policies: CI-2, HO-1, HO-5, HO-6, EV-1, EV-2

A character assessment of Potton's distinctive features was made. This combined with the aspirations and objectives of the associated policies will help developers, designers and builders produce high quality designs of new houses and other buildings in accordance with our 'vision' for the future of the town. Thus any new designs for development will build on, or reflect some of the identified character aspects of Potton that make Potton a unique market town and not just another place to build standard developer housing. The complete assessment can be found in Potton NP - Annex D Character Assessment.

Vision B

There will be a controlled, proportionate and uniform growth over the period of the Plan with sustainable developments that meet the needs of the town and its residents.

Supporting policies: HO-1, HO-2, HO-3, HO-4, HO-5, HO-6, EV-1, EV-4, EV-5, EV-6

The aim of this vision and its associated policies is regardless of development, to maintain the essential nature of Potton, as a small Georgian market town with a vibrant market square that has a variety of shops and services meeting the needs of the town and its residents. This will be achieved by development of the town's housing and other buildings so that it does not appear to be random in nature which would result in changing the appearance of the town away from its core characteristic of a small Georgian market town. This will be achieved by applying controls over house appearance, size and quality ensuring that the existing character of the town is maintained and development does not result in an identical series of buildings that could be anywhere in any modern development.

Vision C

Growth and development of small businesses in the Town to promote local employment is encouraged and supported.

Supporting policies: CI-1, CI-2, EI-1

The aim of this vision is to encourage the growth and development of a vibrant business environment in the town providing the local population with enhanced job opportunities.

Vision D

The Town retains an infrastructure that meets current needs of its residents and has the capacity to support future growth.

Supporting policies: CI-1, CI-2, EI-1, T-1, T-2

The aim of this vision and its associated policies is to ensure that, as the Town grows through natural and accepted development, the supporting infrastructure maintains pace and that it has sufficient capacity to allow for any future growth. The community engagement process highlighted certain concerns of residents related to the provision of healthcare, education and physical infrastructure such as roads paths etc.

Vision E

Good leisure facilities to meet the needs of the whole Town are provided.

Supporting policies: EV-1, EV-2, EV-3

The aim of this vision is to ensure as development takes place and the community expands that the leisure facilities and opportunities in the town meet the need of the whole community. The scoping study showed that there is a good range of groups and activities already available. However, there are areas where the community believes these could be improved. It has also been shown that there is an identified deficiency of Country Parks, Natural and Semi Natural Green Space and Amenity Green-space. It should also aid in addressing the reported 6.5 ha deficiency in Potton of Recreational Space, allotments and community gardens.

Vision F

There are endorsed policies that have a positive effect on the environment and provide a high quality natural environment that protects wildlife.

Supporting policies: CI-3, EV-1, EV-2, EV-3, EV-4, EV-5, EV-6

The aim of this vision is to ensure that as development takes place and the community expands that the green infrastructure in the town meet the needs of the whole community. The consultation engagement with the community has shown a strong communal desire to maintain the rural nature of Potton and to enhance the Green Infrastructure, in turn protecting the local wildlife, the environment and preventing the continued fragmentation of habitat. With this in mind BRCC were commissioned to provide an update to Potton's Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan that details specific aspirations for green infrastructure improvements and Local Green Space designations, and includes an action plan in order to track progress towards achieving these aspirations.

Vision G

A network of footpaths and cycle-ways linking major areas of the Town is provided to encourage pedestrians and cyclists with associated environmental and parking benefits.

Supporting policies: CI-3, T-1, T-2, T-3, EV-1, EV-2, EV-3

The aim of this vision is to put in place a Potton Green Wheel. This will provide a well surfaced circular bridleway around the perimeter of Potton, with a number of spokes leading to the centre of the town. It will also link with the planned improved cycle ways to Biggleswade, Sandy and Gamlingay. This infrastructure should result in encouraging a better use of and interaction with the natural rural environment with the associated benefits to health and leisure opportunities.

Vision H

Parking congestion in the Market Square is eased and provision made for the use of alternative transportation methods.

Supporting policies: T-1, T-3, EV-2, EV-3

The aim of this vision is to address the issue of difficulty in parking at certain times of the day as identified from consultation and engagement with the community. In addition, people indicated that they would prefer more sustainable and healthy modes of transport but are put off by poor infrastructure, difficult and dangerous roads for cycling, poor underfoot conditions for walking, infrequent and expensive bus services. Also the work undertaken as part of the town centre benchmarking process highlighted concerns by traders related to short term parking issues and the negative effect on trade as a result of this.



The Policies

Community Infrastructure

CI-1 Employment - (Visions C, D)

Proposals for commercial or mixed-use development will be particularly supported where they include facilities or premises for small, starter or local businesses.

CI-2 Town Centre Vitality - (Visions A, C, D)

As appropriate to their scale and location new residential developments should incorporate measures for local residents to have easy and safe non-vehicular means of travel between the site and Potton Town Centre.

CI-3 Foot, Cycle and Bridle Paths - (Visions F, G)

As appropriate to their scale and location new residential developments should incorporate measures for their connection to existing green infrastructure, public footpaths and bridleways.

Proposals which provide future connections to the proposed Potton Green Wheel will be particularly supported.



Housing

HO-1 Design Guide Requirements - (Visions A, B)

As appropriate to their scale and location, any proposals for new residential developments should comply with the requirements contained in the Potton Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide. This guide gives guidance on design principles for new housing developments.

See Annex E – Design Guide

HO-2 Meeting Housing Needs – (Vision B)

Proposals for new residential development which directly address the local housing requirements identified in the Potton Housing Needs Survey 2014 and in the Neighbourhood Plan survey 2017 will be supported.

Surveys are in Supporting Documents

HO-3 Housing for Retired People – (Vision B)

Applications for bungalows and 1 & 2 bedroom houses, flats or apartments to suit the needs of retired people will be supported.

HO-4 Lifetime Homes – (Vision B)

The development of dwellings and new specialist residential Care Home accommodation in appropriate locations for the elderly and people with special needs will be supported. Dwellings for these categories of elderly and those with disabilities should generally be either 1 or 2 bed properties. Care Homes and other specialist units shall also comply with the Potton Neighbourhood Plan Building Design Guide.

See Annex E – Design Guide

HO-5 Design Features – (Visions A,B)

As appropriate to their scale and location, proposals for new residential of commercial developments should:

- Be in keeping with existing nearby properties and maintain the essential character of the town in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment study. These are summarised in section Vision A of the plan and expanded in *Potton NP – Annex D Character Assessment*.
 - Apply the best practice design features in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide requirements. These are expanded in *Potton NP – Annex E Design Guide and Annex F Green Infrastructure Design Guide*.
 - Take account of vernacular building materials in the immediate locality and incorporate such materials where practicable into the construction of new buildings and boundary treatments.
-

HO-6 Potton's Heritage – (Vision A)

As appropriate to their location, proposals for new housing development should take account of the town's heritage. In particular the layout, design and massing of new residential development should take account of and respond to any designated and non-designated heritage assets in a way that is appropriate to the significance of the assets affected.

Local employment and industries

EI-1 Communication Technologies – (Visions C, D)

The implementation of advances in broadband and other communication technologies to maintain and enhance the opportunity for effective business and home communications will be actively supported

Transport

T-1 Foot, Cycle and Bridle Paths – (Visions D, G, H)

New developments, where appropriate and practical, shall provide safe pedestrian and cycle access, to link up with existing footpaths and cycle ways, ensuring that residents can walk and cycle safely throughout the parish.

T-2 Transport Links – (Vision D)

Measures will be supported that promote the improvement of:

- Transport links within the parish.
 - Access to the wider public transport network.
 - Alternative modes of transport.
-

T-3 Transport Improvements – (Visions G, H)

Proposals that improve appropriate public car parking in the Town Centre will be supported

The Policies continued

Environment

EV-1 Green Infrastructure – (Visions A, B, E, F, G)

As appropriate to their scale and location development proposals for new development will be Supported where they take account of the Potton Green Infrastructure Plan. Development which would deliver a net-positive biodiversity gain or deliver elements of the Green Infrastructure Action Plan will be particular supported.

See Annex B – Green Infrastructure.

EV-2 Building for Sustainability – (Visions A, E, F, G, H)

As appropriate to their scale and location, proposals for new developments should incorporate measures to provide mitigation, adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change by minimising the vulnerability of the development and its surroundings. Developments which incorporate energy efficient solutions beyond building regulation standards will be particularly supported.

See Annex F – Green Infrastructure Design Guide.

EV-3 Local Green Space – (Visions E, F, G, H)

The following parcels of land are designated as Local Green Space:

- LGS-1 (Henry Smith Playing Fields).
- LGS-2 (Pegnut Wood).
- LGS-6 (land east of Henry Smith Playing Fields).

Development will not be supported within local green spaces except in very special circumstances.

See Annex B – Green Infrastructure.

EV-4 Green Wheel – (Visions B, F)

Development proposals which would assist in the development of a Potton Green Wheel will be supported.

See supporting documents.

EV-5 Landscape and Habitat – (Visions B, F)

As appropriate to their scale and location development proposals for new residential and commercial development should protect and where practicable enhance existing landscape, habitat features and wildlife species as appropriate to their significance. Development which would deliver a net-positive biodiversity gain will be particular supported.

See Potton Ecological Potential Report and Potton NP-Annex-F Green Infrastructure Design Guide. (Vision B, F)

EV-6 Wildlife Management – (Visions B, F)

As appropriate to their scale and location development proposals for new residential and commercial development should incorporate a long-term green space wildlife management plan for existing landscape, habitat features and wildlife species as appropriate to their significance.

See Potton Ecological Potential Report and Potton NP-Annex-F Green Infrastructure Design Guide.

For more information about our Neighbourhood Plan:

www.pottonneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

Or via Potton Town Council:



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

Town Council Information

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:

Monday	9.30am – 12.30pm
Tuesday	9.30am – 12.30pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	9.30am – 12.30pm
Friday	9.30am – 12.30pm

If you want to be sure of seeing a specific member of the team, please ring ahead to make an appointment.

Tel: 01767 260086

E: pottoncouncil@btconnect.com

W: www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk

 [@PottonTownCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/PottonTownCouncil)  [@pottoncouncil](https://twitter.com/pottoncouncil)

Town Councillors

John Day	07986 124440
Denis Ellison	261925
Andrew Gibb	260067
Richard Harris	262596
John Hobbs	260710
Les Ivall	261559
Lindsay Kitchener	260486
Jonathan Lean	262404
Carol Leggatt	260001
Angus Macdonald	262006
Ben Massey	07581 092263
Jonathan Price Williams	07981 350359
Chris Temple	262535
Adam Zerny	261319

Town Council Meetings

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

Tuesday 3rd March

Tuesday 7th April

Tuesday 5th May Annual Meeting of the Town Council

Councillor Surgeries

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

Saturday 21st March

Cllr Gibb and Cllr Kitchener

Saturday 18th April

Cllr Harris and Cllr Ivall

Saturday 16th May

Cllr Ellison and Cllr Massey

Central Bedfordshire Councillors

Tracey Wye - Independent	261319
Adam Zerny - Independent	261319



Please recycle this newsletter when you've finished reading it by putting it in your green recycling bin.

Get your local news into the Town Council Newsletter

The next edition is planned for delivery in April 2020. If you would like information to be included, please email:

pottoncouncil@btconnect.com by midday on Monday 24th February 2020. Please be aware that the town council reserves the right not to include articles and images.

Potton Young People's Town Council

(PYPTC) Author: Cllr Carol Leggatt



I was asked by my granddaughter, Imogen 'What is a Town Council and what does it do? Are children involved? Why not?'

After this, I provided a written motion to request that the Town Council consider having a Council for Children. At the meeting it was resolved that a Committee of Cllrs Day, Ivall, Kitchener, Lean, Macdonald and I investigate a PYPTC and then provide a proposal.

The Town Council members met to talk about how we might spark the interest of our young community to have their say in what they would like in the town. We are looking for about **12 children to form a 'council', ranging in age from school Year 5 through to Year 13. Membership will be open to children resident and/or attending a school and/or organisation in Potton.**

Being an active member will give individuals the opportunity to develop key skills including communication, leadership, teamwork, professionalism and fundraising. Many of these skills, as well as making a positive contribution to the community, are both rewarding and recognised as crucial skills by employers.

Members of the PYPTC will also enjoy a range of activities and make useful contacts in the community. They will learn about future opportunities to become an elected Councillor or to develop a career within politics, local government and the voluntary and community sector.

From February, Cllr Day and I will be visiting Potton Middle School and other organisations talking to children, teachers, leaders and parents and to gauge their interest. We hope to get things up and running by May.

Following DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks, adult councillors will act as facilitators to allow the young councillors their own space to discuss and make decisions. Meetings will take place once every three months for about an hour.

Imogen said, 'It would be good to be able to help in our town.'

If you are interested in becoming a Potton Young People's Town Councillor, please contact us: pottoncouncil@btconnect.com





Party on Potton

Save the date: 28th-31st August 2020

2020 is here and that means the Big Weekend is on the way! This year it's 28th-31st August and the Party On Potton committee is planning a fantabulous weekend to celebrate 20 years of POP – amazing! We'll have old favourites returning – the donkeys, Kids' Zone, and of course human hungry hippos – as well as some new surprises. The Sunday Comedy night is confirmed as is the Friday night disco, and this year Monday night is Movie Night! Thanks to all of you who supported us last

year – at our mobile bars, the seasonal markets, Christmas light switch on and our annual carol singing. We will be at the next seasonal market in March – please come and visit us. Everything you give goes towards making each Big Weekend bigger and better. We're aiming for 2020 to be the best Big Weekend yet, so save the date!

If you want to join the fun, why not drop us an email
committee@partyonpotton.org.uk

Vacancy for School Governors

Make a positive contribution to the community

Being a Governor is a rewarding way of making a voluntary contribution to the lives of local young people. The Potton Federation (comprising Potton Lower and Potton Middle Schools) is looking for a new Governor to join our team.

We would be delighted to hear from anyone who has:

- an interest in the performance of the schools
- an open and enquiring mind and the ability to look at issues objectively
- the confidence to ask questions and join in debate
- some time to spare (4 full meetings per year plus committee meetings).

We are particularly keen to hear from anyone with:

- an understanding of SEND and disability awareness
- knowledge/experience of building/facilities/site management
- HR experience – particularly in an educational environment
- finance experience – experience including budget control.

Being a Governor is enjoyable, stimulating and rewarding and you do not have to be the parent of a child at either school. All Governors must complete safeguarding checks.

If you are interested, please contact:

Andrea Hutchison, Clerk to the Governors
ahutchison@pottonfederation.co.uk

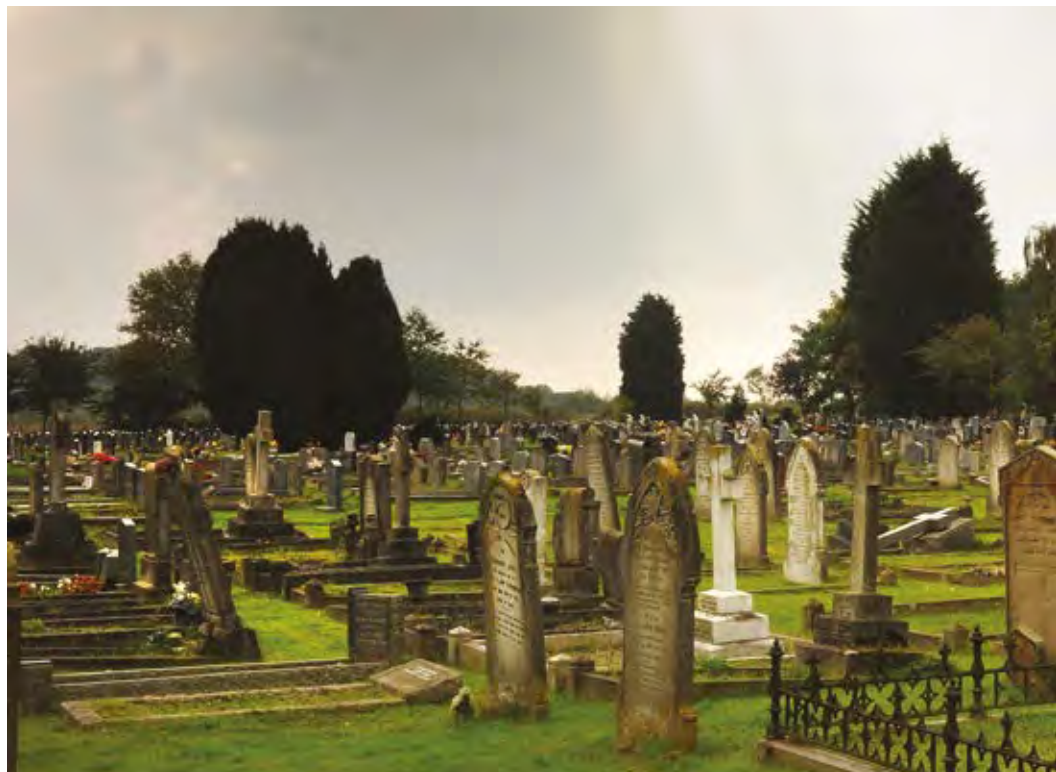


The rules of our lawn cemetery

The new sections of Potton Cemetery are designated as lawn cemetery. What does this mean you may ask? In a nutshell, it means that all graves have flat, grassed surfaces with vertical headstones only and no shrubs, trees, bushes or anything else that grows may be planted on the grave. Flowers should only be placed in receptacles, which are placed on the memorial base-stone.

We are aware that the subject of memorials and personal effects on graves is an emotive one, with people wanting more freedom to decide how they wish to remember their loved ones. However, these rules are in place for the benefit of everyone as what one person may feel is appropriate on a grave, others may not, and we do have to try to please everyone

at the same time. The rules state that any flowers that are placed on the grave, in addition to being on the base stone must also be in a container that is made of durable material which, if damaged, will not cause a health and safety hazard. Glass and china are not allowed and will be removed.



The maintenance of the cemetery is a contentious issue. Some people praise the Council for the level of maintenance carried out and others criticise and suggest either more or less should be done. This year we aim to mow and strim the grass on a fortnightly basis from Mother's Day to Remembrance Day, but unfortunately there are times when this is delayed.

Following requests recently for memorials that are outside the rules and comments that we are allowing others to break the rules, the Town Council, at its meeting at the end of last year decided that the rules do need to be adhered to. The rules state that anything that does not comply, including unauthorised headstones,

memorial plaques, flower containers, artificial grass, stone chippings, kerbstones and planted flowers, shrubs and trees can be removed without notice.

However, we are fully aware of the emotions linked to burials and the loss of loved ones, so we are giving notice that anything that does not meet the rules will start to be removed from all grave spaces from March 2020. Anything that is removed will be marked to indicate where it was removed from and stored for 28 days. If not claimed during that time the item(s) will be disposed of.

For more information on our Cemetery Regulations see: **www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk/our-facilities**



Potton Community Orchard

Author: Sally Wileman

As part of the planning conditions around building the Tall Trees housing estate Kier, the developer, will give 1.42 hectares of land to Potton Town Council.

The land is to the east of the new houses, between them and the brook. It will be kept as open green space for informal public access and recreation.

Much of the space will be sown with mixed grasses and wildflowers, managed in a way to encourage wildlife and also be welcoming to picnickers, walkers, small children or anyone wanting to just sit and watch the world go by. There will be a variety of grass lengths, with some close-mown paths winding between occasional clusters of trees and shrubs.

The Town Council decided early on that part of the site should be planted as a mixed fruit orchard. Volunteers planted the first 21 trees in the winter of 2018 and added to that in 2019. The plan is to plant a further 20 trees this winter, taking the total to 60. We have a good mixture of varieties including pears, cherries, plums, cooking, eating and cider apples, hazel, quince and mulberry. Many are local varieties, but others are the 'best in class' for instance, for making apple sauce, or whose flavour develops with keeping, until they are perfect with cheese on Boxing Day!



Volunteers planting the first cider apple tree



Volunteers sowing wildflower seeds

While the trees take some looking after (weeding and watering in the summer), most of the volunteers' time has been involved in restoring the meadow beneath the trees. Growing an abundance of wildflowers in the orchard helps attract wild pollinators such as bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies, moths and hoverflies, vital in helping pollinate the trees and without whom there would be no fruit. A really healthy orchard has a good variety and balance of wildlife. So it's important to provide all with the right conditions for them to find food, shelter and somewhere safe to breed and complete their lifecycles.

Potton Consolidated Charity have generously granted £2,250 to enable the volunteers to buy wildflower seeds and equipment. That means a great variety of wildflowers and grasses will establish in our orchard right from the start. It also means we can use the right equipment to cut and manage the meadow grass. With the Charity's help, and many hours of volunteer labour, we have also hired a scarifier to improve the germination of the seeds.

The Orchard is still in private ownership so there is no public access just yet. We hope to be able to open the 'gates' sometime in 2020. By then some of the trees will be half-way established, giving some idea of how it will look when mature. Eventually it will be possible to access from Sheepwalk Close, the cricket ground, the Tall Trees houses and, in the fullness of time, the Hall For All.

If you would like to find out more, contact **Potton Community Orchard Group** on **01767 262258**.



Mowing the meadow grass



Raking hay in the summer

**D*n't
t@ke
!t out
on our staff
or volunteers**

Our staff and volunteers have the right to work in a safe environment and are here to help you. We will NOT tolerate violence, physical aggression or verbal abuse towards our staff and volunteers.

Potton Town Council reserves the right to take further action against anyone acting inappropriately towards members of its staff and volunteers.

