



POTTON
TOWN COUNCIL

News

July 2025 Edition

www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk



Photo credit: Matthew Ayres

Potton Town Council Chairman and Vice-Chairman



Vicki Gwilliam



Charles Craig

At the annual meeting of the town council on Tuesday 6th May 2025, council members duly elected Councillor Vicki Gwilliam as Chairman and Councillor Charles Craig as Vice-Chairman for the municipal year.





Chairman's message

Hello and welcome to the July 2025 edition of the Town Council quarterly newsletter.

Message from the new Chairman - Cllr Vicki Gwilliam

Welcome to this edition of the Town Council Newsletter. Having served four years on the council, this is my first message as Chairman, and it is an honour to represent our community. The Town Council continues to work hard on behalf of the community, and I am delighted to say that we have filled all councillor vacancies. **Read about the new Councillors on pages 8 and 9.**



I would like to congratulate **Danni and James Watson** who undertook a **24-hour charity bike/run/walk** around town in aid of Petals Charity in May. They set themselves a fundraising target of £5,000 in memory of their daughter Bethan. Petals Charity supports families who have suffered baby loss, and I am delighted that they smashed their target, raising more than £6,000!

The Town Council continues to make **improvements to the footpaths** in Potton Cemetery on Sandy Road, and at St Mary's Church. The second phase of works at the Cemetery include the driveway from the road and the path around the Chapel. There will be a feature on this in the October newsletter.



Following **Potton Youth Council's** fundraising efforts, they have raised the money to buy a **basketball hoop for Henry Smith Playing Fields**. This has been installed in time for the school Summer holidays.

In the April newsletter, **the Youth Council** asked for your opinion on installing a **new assault course at Mill Lane Recreation Ground's play area**. Thanks to those of you who responded. The Youth Council now plans to consult Potton's school children to find out what they would like to see replace the play equipment that is approaching the end of its life. We will bring news of this in a forthcoming edition of the newsletter.

Late Spring Events

We have much to celebrate in our wonderful community. Firstly, outgoing Chairman Councillor Jonathan Price Williams held **the annual Community Celebration** at the Potton Hall for All at the end of April. It was a great opportunity to show the new community building in action and we were pleased to host Deputy Lieutenant (DL) Chris Kilroy MBE, and Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire, John Tizard. During this event, the **'Honorary Freeman/Freewoman of Potton'** was presented to Mr Alan Leggatt, Mrs Carol

Leggatt and Mrs Jean Way, individuals who have made significant contributions to the community.

Youth Cllr Sam was also recognised for making a considerable contribution since joining Potton Youth Council in May 2024, giving his time willingly and showing great commitment in attending youth council meetings, youth council fundraising coffee mornings and the many community events that take place around the town. Sam thoroughly deserved this **Outstanding Contribution Award**.



L-R: Jean Way, Town Crier Carlton Avison, Carol Leggatt, Cllr Jonathan Price Williams, Chris Kilroy DL MBE, Alan Leggatt and Youth Cllr Sam.

Late Spring Events cont'd

Potton Town Council hosted a day of moving and memorable events on Thursday 8th May 2025, to mark **80 years since Victory in Europe**. This included the Town Crier reading the VE Day 80 Proclamation and the Beacon being lit by Major Simon Sadler TD VR DL.

Revd. Alex Wheatley also mentioned that the 80th Anniversary of the Victory Over Japan Day (VJ Day) will be commemorated on Friday 15th August 2025 to mark those who fell during the campaign. If you would like to get involved in any local events, visit <https://ve-vjday80.gov.uk/>



Denis Ellison and the Town Crier reading the VE Day 80 Proclamation



L-R: Sarah Chapman, Denis Ellison and Major Simon Sadler TD VR DL

Early Summer Events



The inaugural **PottonFest** was held on Saturday 21st June and was blessed with wonderful weather and our community came out in droves. It was fantastic to see Henry Smith Playing Fields full of families and friends enjoying themselves - we hope you had a great time! Thank you to the supporters and volunteers, without whom the event would not have happened.

Four Seasons Market

Saturday 20th Sept
9am - 1pm

For more information visit:
[pottontowncouncil.co.uk/
four-seasons-market](http://pottontowncouncil.co.uk/four-seasons-market)



Potton Community First Responders

Potton Community First Responders (CFR) volunteer for the East of England Ambulance Service (EEAST) in Biggleswade, Potton, Sandy and surrounding areas.

By way of brief explanation, CFRs respond to Category 1 and 2 emergencies, mobilised by EEAST via dedicated mobile phones. Category 1 calls are time critical; CFRs are more often than not first on scene and are trained to administer lifesaving care to our community until the ambulance crew arrive.

The Biggleswade, Potton, Sandy CFRs have only two kits and have been funding raising for a third, which costs around £3,500 for all the different pieces of equipment. Potton's involvement in fundraising for a third kit in May and June has seen donations of over £3,000 (Breedon Group plc £500, Potton Consolidated Charity £500, Potton Town Council £1,000 and PottonFest donations and raffle raised £1,300).

Looking forward to late Summer and early Autumn events...

The Potton Fire Station Open Day will be held from 12pm to 4pm on Saturday 2nd August. **See page 12 for details.**

The Potton Flower & Vegetable Show returns on Saturday 6th September at St Mary's Church Field. **See page 13 for details.**

The next **Four Seasons Market** will be held from 9am to 1pm on Saturday 20th September at the Market Square.

This year's **Potton Apple Day** is planned for Sunday 28th September at St Mary's Church Field and Hall from 12pm to 3pm. **See page 15 for details.**

That's it from me for this edition of the newsletter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us and I wish you all a wonderful Summer!

Best wishes

Vicki

Cllr Vicki Gwilliam

Community Safety Traffic Issues in Potton

Author: **Greg Dean and Stuart Blaney**



Residents of Chapel, Bull and Horslow Streets have long been concerned about heavy goods vehicles using their very narrow streets as an alternative for the B1040. But in February this year, a road closure on Blackbird Street led to exceptionally large volumes of inappropriate traffic (HGVs, lorries, buses etc.) using those streets. Damage to cars, and houses ensued, and in one case a pedestrian was hit by a vehicle driving on the pavement.

Residents from these three streets, with the support of Potton Town Council, set up a meeting with Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBC's) Highways Department to discuss their concerns for these three streets, and Potton in general.

The meeting highlighted that, even at the best of times, Potton's old streets are not well suited for the HGV traffic that regularly uses them. This is exacerbated when road closures occur. Speeding and inconsiderate driving further add to the safety issues.



Officers from CBC's Highways Department walked with residents to see some of the issues first hand and agreed to undertake automated traffic surveys at the entrances to Chapel and Horslow Streets to get better data before considering any further action.

CBC's Highways Department encourage all Potton residents to report any inappropriate or illegal traffic behaviour to the police so that the scale of these issues is better understood, and they can make a case for improvements. So, we ask you please to report any speeding, collisions with vehicles/buildings, and even vehicles mounting pavements. **This can be done online: <https://tinyurl.com/PottonTraffic> or by phone: 101.** Then we can request the changes we need to improve safety in our town.

Your local environment

Grass cutting in Potton

Author: **Cllr John Day**



The areas Potton Town Council are directly responsible for are the Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) highway verges, Everton Road Allotments, Henry Smith Playing Fields (HSPF), Mill Lane Recreation Ground, Sandy Road Cemetery, and St Mary's Churchyard. CBC Highways Department pay the Town Council to maintain its verges, but the sum does not cover the costs.

The frequency of cutting for most areas is fortnightly. In addition to weather, which as explained in the April 2025 edition, affects rate of growth, another key factor is soil fertility. Much of Potton is on the Greensand Ridge which as the name suggests, much of the parent soil

is sandy and free draining. This helps wash nutrients through the soil which inhibits grass growth. These conditions are ideal for growing wildflowers and importantly reducing the number of times the grass requires mowing. Although quite subtle, this difference can be seen on several of our verges.

The Town Council has managed to adopt cut and collect mowing in some areas, such as parts of St Mary's Church, HSPF and the triangle island at the junction of King Street and Gamlingay Road. The Town Council has considered a wider cut and collect policy but as with elsewhere, disposal of clippings is problematic in the current climate.



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when you've finished reading it by putting it in your green recycling bin.

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Your newly co-opted Town Councillors

Cllrs John Dollin, Val Leggatt-Mead and Abdul Rauf were co-opted on to the town council at a meeting on Tuesday 6th May 2025.

Cllr John Dollin

I was born in Northern Ireland and have lived across the UK, from Cornwall to Scotland, before settling in Potton in 2020. With a career spanning over three decades in digital transformation, product innovation, and media technology, I hope to bring my wealth of experience and leadership to the community. As a family man with four grown-up children, I now mentor young people aged 16 and 17, sharing my expertise and passion to help guide the next generation.



I value Potton's strong village feel and appreciate the close-knit community spirit that makes the town special. I enjoy walking my Whippet through the tranquil Deepdale Woods and enjoy an occasional pint at one of the town's fine hosteleries. I also love the Market Square, especially Potton Library, which fondly reminds me of the iconic Clock Tower from Back to the Future.

Cllr Val Leggatt-Mead

I have lived in Potton since 1976 so I've seen the changes and challenges to Potton over the years, and we are still a town to be proud of, always with the community at the centre of decisions. I really want to give back to my community after years of experiencing the benefits.



I love living in Potton. I recently lost my husband to cancer, and I can't express my thanks for all the kindness and support shown to me by the Potton Community.

I have recently retired after more than 40 years in Social Care as a Practitioner, Manager and Senior Manager, working in areas of adults and children with learning difficulties, physical disabilities, mental health and children's services over the years.

I have supported people with issues and concerns ensuring that they received the correct services, often advocating for vulnerable adults, children and their families, sometimes through the courts. I feel passionate that we listen to our community.

My interests are in the arts, working as a volunteer for The National Trust, and previously invigilating at Kettles Yard Art Museum for Cambridge University. I am hoping to join front of house at a local theatre.

I love the sense of fun we share here in Potton... I am sure I saw Llamas walking through Potton Market Square in August 2024?!

I am a horse owner and looking for a second horse!

Cllr Abdul Rauf

I've lived in the UK since 1968, attending school in Leeds and later studying in Birmingham and at the University of Bedfordshire, where I studied management. I've worked as an entrepreneur and ran numerous restaurants in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and beyond. Alongside my work, I've been active in charity, including fundraising for the British Heart Foundation and £10,000 for AIDS for Africa in 1985.



My family and I have lived in the area since 1984, in a property formerly known as the Stetson Night Club. My wife and I raised three sons and four daughters here, all of whom went to local schools. Most have graduated and moved away but have very fond memories of Potton and remember it as a small town that's always had a strong sense of community.

After my wife passed away in 2015 from cancer and following my own health challenges, I experienced first-hand the kindness and support of our local church, St. Mary's. That support meant a great deal to me. I'm now semi-retired and looking for ways to give back and stay involved in the community that has given us so much.

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, or if you wish to contact a member of staff please email pottontowncouncil@btconnect.com or call **01767 260086** and leave a message.

You can find lots of information on the Town Council website: www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk or [f @PottonTownCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/PottonTownCouncil) or [t @pottoncouncil](https://www.twitter.com/pottoncouncil)

Town Council Meetings

Dates of Town Council meetings starting at 7pm: **Tuesday 2nd September 2025**
Visit: www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk/agendaminutes for more information.

Town Councillors

Charles Craig	260047	Carol Leggatt	260001
John Day	07986 124440	Val Leggatt-Mead	07907 845467
John Dollin	07798 674864	Angus Macdonald	262006
Vicki Gwilliam	07958 981602	Dan Norman	260643
John Hobbs	260710	Jonathan Price Williams	07981 350359
Emma Horsfall	07957 534688	Abdul Rauf	07467 074741
Guy Horsfall	07957 319520	Adam Zerny	0300 300 8540
Andrew Inkersole	261966		

For more details on each of the councillors, please visit www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk/who-we-are



Update from Central Bedfordshire Councillor Adam Zerny

Potton Ward Councillor and Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council



Local plan longlist announced - what does it mean for potton?

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) has announced a list of 494 potential housing sites across the region, from which, in a couple of years, a shortlist will be proposed for development in the next Local Plan.

This Local Plan will show where all future housing development will go, in our area. Without a Local Plan, developers can just apply to build wherever they want to, knowing even if the council turns it down, this may get overturned at appeal, as the local authority won't be able to demonstrate they have a plan.

No one would disagree we need homes for the next generation. But what we don't want, is to see is our countryside and wildlife destroyed by ugly new housing developments. When new housing is planned, it's vital residents' views are valued and that we get the right infrastructure.

At the end of last year, the council conducted a legal process known as a 'Call for sites' where people could forward land for the next Local Plan. 626 sites were proposed.

Council officers have since evaluated the list, removing any which are obvious candidates for refusal e.g.

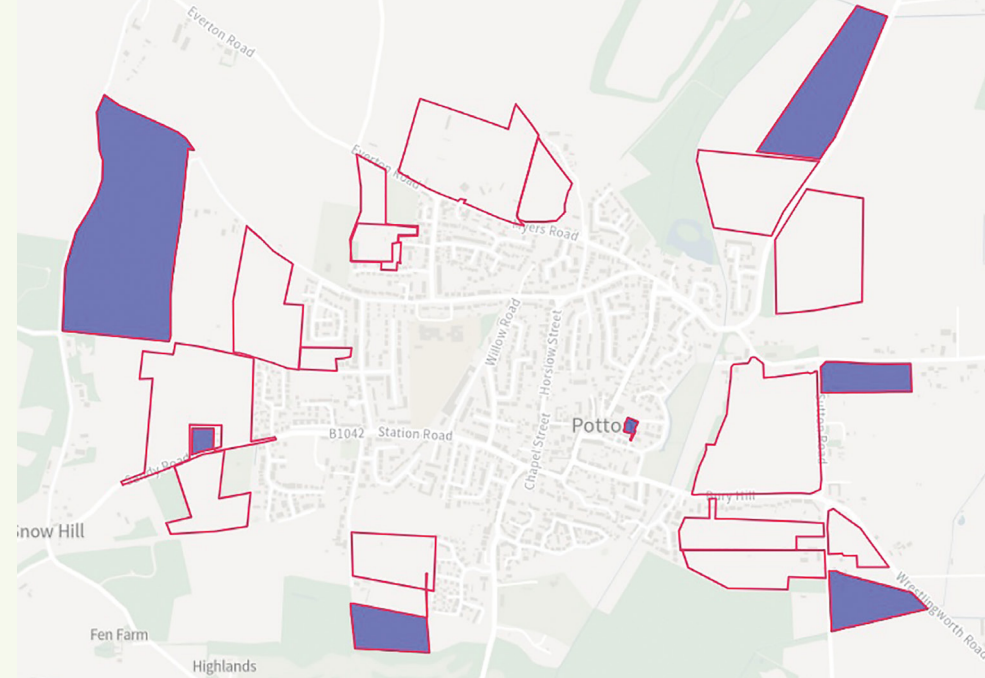
- Not big enough for at least 10 new homes
- Land in SSSIs, or the highest flood risk areas
- Land where there is a legal impediment to development e.g. submitted without owner's permission
- Sites not adjacent to a town/village and not big enough to form a new settlement on their own

132 sites have been removed for these reasons (marked in blue on the map - top right).

The council has now put together a website where you can see exactly where the remaining 494 sites are located. The map also shows Green Belt. It is perhaps not surprising that many areas in the west and south of Central Beds have fewer plots of land put forward, as this is where there are large areas of Green Belt.

Of course, the question everyone will want to ask is how many of these sites will eventually be needed?

The council has agreed to provide an extra 25,500 houses by 2050. And it has received proposals of land amounting to about 10,900 hectares.



Site unlikely to go ahead Site for further consideration

This would be likely be enough for 380,000 houses. Which means based upon my reckoning, only about 7% of this land would be required. However, this is NOT a guarantee. On some land a developer may want to build mansions with huge gardens, on another they might want to build tower blocks. Plus, Green Belt rules are stricter, which means areas without Green Belt will be more likely to be allocated housing.

See the sites here: <https://consultations.central-bedfordshire.urbanintelligence.co.uk/public-web-map?eventId=85>

In our area there are many around Potton and surrounding villages. As mentioned above, it is VERY unlikely all of this land will end up on the shortlist.

There are also huge swathes between Everton and Tempsford, much of which could find its way into the government's rumoured new town

No one has made any decisions on which sites will be needed, and there will be public consultations on this in 2026 and 2027. It will depend to some extent on the land put forward, but we are arguing it should be about the right homes in the right places, not just the first sites put forward by developers. Council officers will be proactively undertaking work to try to ensure the most suitable sites are selected.

Adam Zerny

Independent Central Bedfordshire councillor for Potton

Tel: **0300 300 8540**

adam.zerny@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Tracey Wye

Independent Central Bedfordshire councillor for Potton

Tel: **0300 300 8528**

tracey.wye@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Bedfordshire
Fire & Rescue Service

POTTON FIRE STATION OPEN DAY

**Saturday 2nd August 2025, 12pm to 4pm
at Bury Hill, Potton SG19 2RS**

what3words ///anchorman.curve.diamond



The event is
FREE TO ENTER
and features:

- Tours & demos
- Food & Refreshments
- Meet the firefighters
- Fire Safety Advice

*In support of The
Fire Fighters Charity.*



THE POTTON SHOW

St Mary's Field, Potton SG19 2RP on Sat 6th Sept 2025



ANNUAL FLOWER & VEG 'VILLAGE' SHOW

**Show schedules can be obtained in stores locally, or viewed online at:
www.pottonshow.org.uk**

This is an open show – entrants from Potton and surroundings are encouraged and welcomed - why not have a go? Or come down and view the wonderful entries from talented cooks, growers, artists, model makers, photographers, brewers and crafters of all ages.

We also have a **Scarecrow competition** – something for all the family to enter to win our **£10 cash prize**. There is a theme of **"A Celebrity"** this year as class 700 in the show schedule. We would love to see your entries.

NEW THIS YEAR - we are pleased to welcome along the **Theatre of Widdershins**, who will be running story telling sessions during show afternoon; with "Old Nanny Nibblebeard" and "Seven Kids and the Big Bad Wolf".

During show afternoon we will also have **live music from the talented Pot'Noodle**, many side stalls as well as a **beer tent, barbecue, model boats, bee keeping display, face painting, teas cakes** and a **fun auction** rounds off the event.

Gate entry for the show is just £2 (accompanied children free).

Our ever-popular **BARN DANCE** is on Saturday evening, and **CRAFT FAIR** on Sunday 7th September (12pm – 5pm). Please check our website for details and tickets.

We look forward to meeting competitors and friends old and new for a great show weekend!

Potton Community Agent News

Supporting the over 60s in Potton

Are you new to the community? – if you are looking for groups and activities to get involved in but not sure what's available then contact Andrea who can help you find something you may be interested in.

Benefits guidance – you may be entitled to Pension Credit if your weekly income is below £218.15 if you are single or £332.95 if you are a couple. You must both be over State Pension age if you live as a couple.

Blue Disabled Badges – if you have a disability or illness which limits your walking ability then you may be entitled to apply for a Blue Badge to enable you to park in a disabled bay. You don't need to be a car owner; the badge is valid in any vehicle as long as you are a passenger.

Tablet Training Group – if you would like to learn how to use emails and the internet and can commit to attending drop in sessions on Wednesday mornings between 10am and midday at the Community Centre (Brook End, SG19 2QS) then we can provide you with a Samsung tablet and teach you how to do it. We can also help you learn how to use your new smart phone. Please get in touch for further details.

Thursday Friendship Group – is held at the Community Centre from 10am until 12 noon every Thursday. The Friendship Group welcomes all for tea/coffee/soup, cake, a game of cards or dominoes and a chat. Entry is £3. Bingo every fourth Thursday of the month, £1 a game.

If you have any issues you need advice or help with, please contact Andrea in confidence. Kindly funded by Potton Consolidated Charity and Potton Town Council.



Supporting the over 60's in Potton
Tel Andrea 07590 359630 (working Weds & Thurs only)
Email andream@bedsrcc.org.uk

Tablet Training on Wednesdays 10am to 12pm and
Friendship Group on Thursdays 10am to 12pm both in the
Community Centre, Brook End, Potton.

For more information on what Andrea can help you
with visit <https://bedsrcc.org.uk/what-we-do/health-wellbeing/village-community-agents/>

Kindly funded by Potton Consolidated Charity with
support from Potton Town Council.

Potton Apple Day



Our annual celebration of apples and orchards is on **Sunday 28th September from 12pm to 3pm on St Mary's Church Field**, which is a fun, informative family day out. Bring your mystery samples to have them identified. Please do bring any spare apples (or let us know and we'll collect them the week before if we can) as these are the backbone of our Potton Apple Juice.

There will be apple juice and real cider for sale, along with food and live music, displays of Bedfordshire apples and an apple identification service. As it looks like it's going to be a good harvest, we also expect to have unusual varieties of apples for sale.

Watch out for details locally and on social media. 'Like' Potton Apple Day Facebook page for event details, as they're confirmed.



Potton Hall for All - taking bookings



Potton Hall for All is busily taking bookings. We are very encouraged by the number of community groups, organisations and Potton residents who are finding the hall a really useful space to hire, just what they needed, as we always knew they would!

So far we've welcomed groups for mothers and babies, pilates and fitness groups, the Tibbs Dementia Foundation (Music 4 Memory), Ivel Valley School, Bedfordshire NHS Diabetic Eye Clinic and Potton Dance Academy. We've also had local residents holding children's parties. There is plenty of space for a bouncy castle or even indoor football!

What would you like make happen in Potton Hall for All? Please get in touch to discuss your requirements by email at hall4allpotton@gmail.com. Or visit www.pottonhallforall.org.uk or our Facebook page for more information. We are located at Potton Hall for All, Hutchinson Rise, Potton SG19 2DZ.

Registered Charity number 1158751

What's it like being a New Youth Councillor?

Wilfie joined Potton Youth Council last November and says... 'I joined the youth council as I would like to give the people of Potton a chance to become more active and healthier as a community. I enjoy sports such as Taekwondo, Cricket and F1 and urge people in the community to become more active together. I also believe that we should make Potton an even happier and safer place for people of all ages to enjoy together.'



Potton Youth Council
Coffee Morning!
Saturday 20th September
from 9.30am to 1pm in the
Community Centre.
Coffee, Tea, Cake
Gluten free options available
We are fundraising for
Youth Council projects.
Pop in for a chat and a
drink. We look forward to
seeing you!

Vacancies for Potton Youth Councillors

We believe that young people are the future of our communities and we feel it is important that we as a town council invest in them. Potton Town Council supports Potton Youth Council in achieving the following objectives:

- To develop a culture of participation in the democratic process and to develop an awareness of citizenship.
- Be empowered to take decisions and actions to improve the community they live in.
- Form partnerships with local and national organisations.
- Promote respect for each other and the community.
- Encourage all young people to have a voice and believe their views are valued.

If you would like to be a part of this exciting adventure you must fulfil the following criteria:

- Potton resident and/or attend a school and/or organisation in Potton.
- School Year 5-13.
- Have consent from a parent or guardian.
- Commit to attending meetings.

If you can satisfy all of the criteria and are interested, please complete the application form along with the parent/guardian consent form, which you can download from: www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk/vacancies/

Please send the completed form to:

Mrs Claire Massey, Clerical Assistant, Potton Town Council, The Community Centre, Brook End, Potton, Bedfordshire SG19 2QS

or email to: pottoncounciladmin@btconnect.com

We look forward to hearing from you!