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Chairman's message

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

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Town Council Newsletter.

The Summer is behind us, the children have returned to school, and the nights are drawing in. In this message, we reflect on events which took place recently, and look forward to what's coming this Autumn.

Sandy Road development

Firstly though, I must mention that the Planning Inspectorate unfortunately ruled in favour of the developer with regard to the proposed 125 new homes North of Sandy Road following the Public Inquiry held on 19th August. However, I would like to commend the efforts of those councillors on the Planning Committee in representing our community, in particular Cllr Charles Craig who spoke at the inquiry on behalf of the Town Council.

The Potton Show

Potton Show once again held another successful event on 6th and 7th September in St Mary's Church field with the popular Barn Dance in the evening.

Read more about the Show on page 22.

Potton Apple Day

Potton Apple Day took place on Sunday 28th September, the annual celebration of apples and orchards with the volunteers from Potton Community Orchard. **See page 23 for more details about the event.**

Cemetery improvements



During the Summer, work arranged by the town council was undertaken by a local contractor to improve the Cemetery footpaths and refurbish the War Memorial. You can read more on this project on page 16.

Potton Neighbourhood Plan

The Potton Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has been working on a revision to Potton's Neighbourhood Plan in recent months, which has now been accepted by Central Bedfordshire Council. **Find more details on pages 11 to 13.**

Funding

The town council has been awarded funding by Central Bedfordshire Council through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund. This will allow the town council to deliver various projects in the town, and this includes a mosaic trail. **See pages 6** and **7** for more information.

Potton Youth Council



Potton Youth Council were pleased to officially open the Basketball Hoop in Henry Smith Playing Fields on 15th September, which was installed with a mix of fundraising and charitable donations. Read more about the Youth Council and their fundraising efforts on pages 18 and 19.

Community Police Officer



Our Community Police
Officer PC David Lace has
moved on to another role
in Bedfordshire Police. We
would like to say a huge
thank you to David for his

time and effort in supporting the residents of Potton. He will be much missed and we wish him well in his new role.

Community payback team

Community Payback is a court-ordered community sentence in England and Wales where offenders complete a specified number of unpaid work hours to benefit the community, such as removing graffiti or clearing wasteland. Delivered by the Probation Service, the scheme aims to hold offenders accountable for their actions, repay society, and provide them with opportunities for skill development and rehabilitation.

The collaboration between Potton Town Council and the Community Payback Team in Bedfordshire commenced around three years again and has led to several visits in the late Summer and early Autumn to carry out further maintenance to our town's footpaths.



Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday falls on 9th November and the town will meet as usual on the Market Square at 10.10am for the Service led by the United Churches of Potton, before forming a parade to march to the Cemetery and War Memorial along Sandy Road where the two minutes' silence will be held at 11am followed by the reading of the Roll of Honour.







Christmas events



We have our regular Christmas events coming up; the Christmas Lights Switch on and Father Christmas touring the town. On **Sunday 2nd November** Santa's Magic Helpers will be in the Market Square putting up our wonderful display of Christmas lights. New volunteers are always welcome! The community has answered an appeal for a new place to site the Father Christmas decoration - keep your eyes peeled for him! **See pages 8 and 9** for more information about Christmas events.

Best wishes

Vicki

Cllr Vicki Gwilliam

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 **enquiries@pottontowncouncil.gov.uk** or call **01767 260086** and leave a message.

You can find lots of information on the Town Council website: www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk or ¶@PottonTownCouncil or ☑@pottoncouncil

Town Council Meetings

Dates of Town Council meetings starting at 7pm: **Tuesday 11th November 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





UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund

Potton Town Council has been awarded £27,500 from Central Bedfordshire Council through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund. The funding will provide an opportunity to support both new initiatives and ongoing improvements. The town council has been given from September 2025 to March 2026 to deliver the projects.

Several projects have already been delivered in September and October 2025 and these are:

 Making the Henry Smith Playing Field car park safer for pedestrians, especially disabled, elderly and children by additional marking for a walkway and crossings and remarking of car park spaces.

- The purchase of 24,000 dog bags, which is approximately the number used by dog owners in a twelve month period from the four dog bag dispensers (Henry Smith Playing Fields car park, Henry Smith Playing Fields by Church Causeway, Mill Lane Recreation Ground and outside the Community Centre).
- Replacing of tables and chairs in the Community Centre and Mill Lane Pavilion.
- Additional pages in the October edition of the town council newsletter.



Further projects

Further projects will be delivered before March 2026, which includes a mosaic trail. The objective of the mosaic trail is to enhance public spaces, celebrating local heritage, culture and community identity. The mosaic will be designed and handcrafted by Claire Costello, a professional mosaic artist, in collaboration with local organisations and the wider community. Using high-quality, weather-resistant materials, the mosaics will be a long-lasting feature, bringing vibrancy and artistic value to the area for years to come.

Community Workshops will take place on Friday 21st and Saturday 22nd November from 11am to 3pm at the Community Centre, Brook End, Potton SG19 2QS.

If you would like to participate and make a contribution to making part of the mosaic, please ring the Town Council office on **01767 260086** or email **enquiries@ pottontowncouncil.gov.uk** to book a one hour time slot*:

- 11am to 12pm
- 12pm to 1pm
- 1pm to 2pm
- 2pm to 3pm

*Please note: a maximum of 12 people are allowed per time slot.

Everyone attending will need to wear closed in shoes. Eye protection will be supplied if you do not wear glasses. Children attending will need to be accompanied by an adult at all times.



Christmas Events

Several Christmas events are planned for this year's festive season. Please see the town council website and social media for the latest information. Father Christmas looks forwards to seeing you on his visits to Potton!

Christmas Lights -The Big Switch-On!

The 2025 Christmas Lights Big Switch-On event will be on **Saturday 29th November** with a Christmas Craft Fair in Brook End, the Community Centre and the Market Square, which will include the usual stalls from Potton groups and organisations, together with Henry Harris' fairground rides and other entertainment on the stage in the Market Square.

The Big Switch-On is at 5pm

Father Christmas Visit

Father Christmas will be visiting Potton on **Sunday 14th December** and his journey will terminate in the Market Square at approximately 6pm. Father Christmas has advised that he will try to visit as many roads as possible, although he can't promise to visit every road. Please listen out and look out for Father Christmas and his elves. To keep everyone safe, Father Christmas has requested that all vehicles kindly pass his sleigh and elves at no more than 5mph.



Christmas Lights Installation 2025

Potton's Christmas lights installation will commence on **Sunday 2nd November at 10am** and will continue on **Sunday 16th November at 10am** if required.

Christmas Lights Dismantling 2026

Potton's Christmas lights dismantling will commence on **Sunday 11th January at 10am.**

Special Thanks

The town council gives its heartfelt thanks and appreciation to **Deepdale Trees** for donating the Christmas tree again for the 2025 season!



Christmas Light Design Competition

We are getting to that time of year again when we are planning for our Christmas lights. We had a competition earlier in the year for two new lights. From the entries two were selected by the Christmas Lights Sub-Committee. The lights are now on order and will be seen for the first time when we switch on the lights on for this festive season. The two winning designs are below:



POTION

Winning entry by Ronan, age 9.



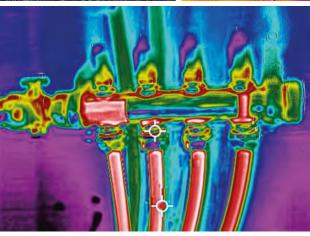
Winning entry by Cassie, age 5.

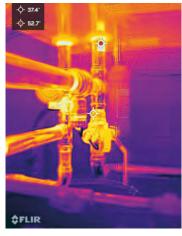


Thermal Image Cameras









With Winter approaching, do you want to find out where your home is leaking heat?

Potton Town Council has two thermal image cameras (one iOS and one Android with lightning adaptors) which can plug into your smartphone for loan to Potton residents. There is no charge to borrow a camera; you just need to pay a £200 deposit, which is refundable after the camera has been returned, and you might consider making a donation to allow for maintenance of the cameras. and/or additional cameras to be purchased. Suggested donation of £5.

You can find out more information and download the loan agreement from the town council website https://www. pottontowncouncil.co.uk/ thermal-image-cameras/

Funding kindly received by the Ward Councillor Grant Scheme.

Potton's Neighbourhood Plan

2025 revision Author: Cllr Andrew Inkersole

Our Plan was published in 2019, following a favourable local referendum, and has, along with **Central Bedfordshire Council's Local** Plan, been used to inform where development should take place and the type and quality of that development.

6 years on it was time to review the effectiveness and content of the plan.

Effectiveness:

Whilst it is true that some developments have been built on sites which were not supported by the Neighbourhood Plan a number of other unsupported planning applications have been rejected. Often the reasons for rejection make reference to statements within the Neighbourhood Plan and so on balance it has probably been beneficial to have the plan in place in order to steer any development in a direction which could be supported by local people.

has been published and can be found on the CBC website or Town Council website here:

www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk/nplantown-plan

Next steps:

You may have seen Cllr Zerny's article in the last Potton Town newsletter. showing the results of CBC's "call for sites". The Neighbourhood Plan team have set a date in October to review this data and to propose how our plan should respond.

Any suggestions you have would be gratefully received. Please send to any Potton Town Councillor.

We will report back our proposals and depending on the nature of any changes to the plan, we might need to conduct a formal consultation activity.

Content:

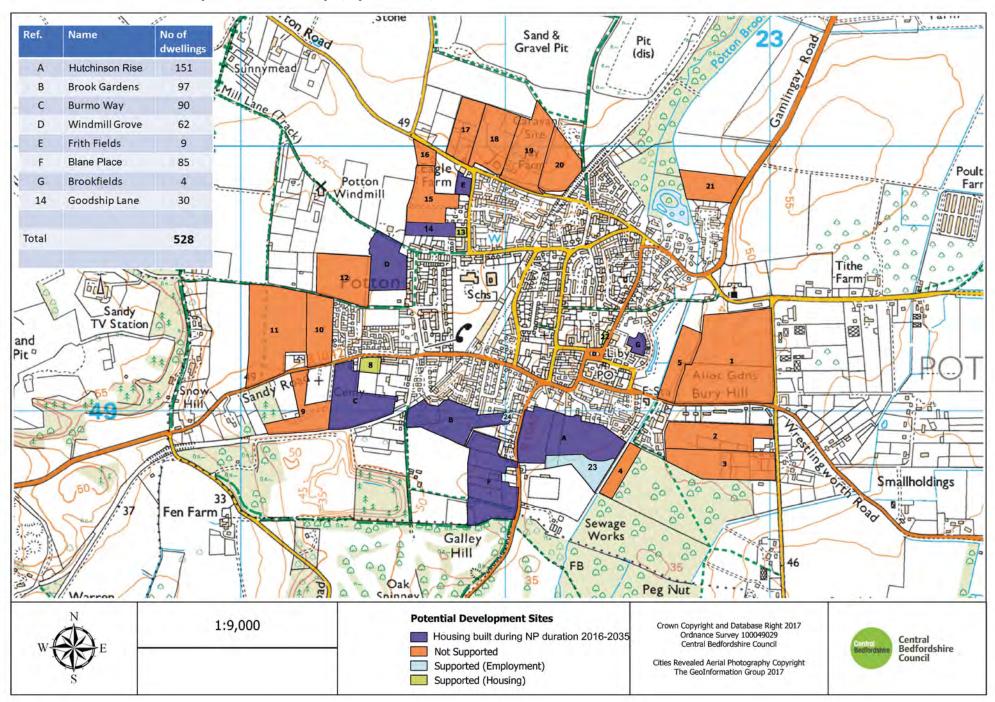
Changes were made to bring the plan up to date with revisions to the National Policy Planning Framework (December 2024) and other reference documents.

Development since the creation of the plan has been captured and the sites map updated to show the impact of this development (see map overleaf).

Since no changes were made to its Vision. Aims or Policies, the revised plan



Potton Potential Development Sites Map (April 2025)



Community in Action: Volunteering

Author: Cllr Charles Craig

Potton is growing—and that means more ideas, more energy and more opportunities to get involved! The council runs and supports lots of events and projects, but the real magic happens when residents step



We already have a brilliant group of regular volunteers, and we're so grateful for everything they do. But there's always room for more helping hands whether vou've got an hour here and there or want to dive in regularly. Every bit of support makes a difference.

Right now, we've got a few key opportunities:

- A (paid) Market Superintendent role to keep our much-loved seasonal market thriving.
- Places on the Youth Council—a. great way for young people to shape local life.
- Support for upcoming events like Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Lights Big Switch-On.

Local groups such as the Hall for All, Party on Potton, Potton Show and

Craft Fair, the Community Orchard and the Community Garden would all love some extra energy and ideas. On the safety side, we're looking to launch a Street Watch group to work alongside Neighbourhood Watch, and our SpeedWatch team is always glad of more support.

You're also welcome at our council and working group meetings—drop in. share your thoughts and see where you'd like to get involved.

Get Involved. It's easy to join in: **Email:** enquiries@

Volunteering is a great way to meet people, try something new and give back to our town. Let's keep building something special-together!

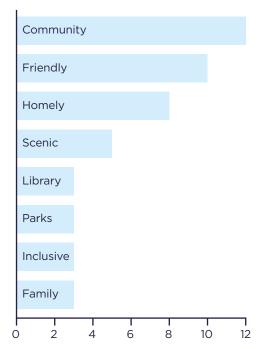
Why Do You Love Potton?

A competition held at PottonFest on Saturday 21st June 2025 by Potton Poetry Group.

Competition results

We thought you might like to see the results of our competition as so many lovely things were said about Potton.

Results of adult entries:



Other words - two mentions:

Welcoming, Pubs. Wholesome, Faithful. scenic, nature, exuberant, jolly, diverse, enlightening.

Other words - single mention:

Calm, happy, fun, fire station, safe, wholesome, amazing, serendipity, cosmopolitan, unique, lovely, pretty, gorgeous, beautiful, sociable, scenic.

Poem by Anna Wingfield

Potton is a town that cannot be ignored. With lots to see and do, There is no chance to be bored, There are shops and pubs galore, Cafes for tea and cake, And you can't forget the park, where you can

play and skate, People are so friendly and the library is a gem, It's such a lovely place,

You'll have to come again!



Potton Primary School - a selection

- I like Potton because everybody is friendly and welcoming and it is just a lovely place to live.
- I like Potton because it's a good place to be in and it's a good place to live.
- I like Potton because of Party On Potton.
- I like Potton because it's a very fun and friendly place and I am very lucky to be here.
- I like Potton because of the thoughtful nice community and the Coach House.
- I love Potton because I have lived here all my life every person I have met is so welcoming and friendly. Potton is so nice!!! It's a good place to be.
- I like Potton because it has a great fantastic', fun skate park, I really like Tesco's. Llove Potton it's the best place ever!

Walk Buddy Scheme

Do you know someone who could benefit from the support of a Walk Buddy to get out and complete a short walk to enable them to be more mobile, confident walking outside and more independent?

- Do they have a health condition that would benefit from going out for a short walk e.g. a cancer diagnosis, recently out of hospital or waiting for an operation, excess weight?
- Are they housebound or isolated?
- Are they not able to access any group exercise do they have low confidence, lack motivation or are frail?

The Scheme can link the resident with a local person who will meet with them to go for a short walk, following their care plan to build confidence and help improve their health and wellbeing.

Referral through health professionals, Social Prescribers and directly to Debra Aitken.

For more information, contact debra.aitken1@nhs.net, 07951 175241 (or visit: https://yourwellbeingbedfordshire.org.uk/improve-your-quality-of-life/ walk-buddies/)

Walk Buddy Volunteers Needed!

- Do you enjoy meeting people and supporting those in your local community?
- · Do you enjoy being outside in your local area and can share this enthusiasm with local residents who need someone to support them become more active and confident walking?
- Could you spare an hour or two each week to support a local resident with a walking activity either in their home or in the local area?

Benefits for volunteers:

▼ Help to make a difference to residents in your community

Company and a chat!

Exercise and fresh air

Boost your mental health

Full support from your Walk Buddy Coordinator with training and information sessions and opportunities to meet other volunteers.

For more information, visit:

yourwellbeingbedfordshire.org.uk

If you would like to volunteer as a Walk Buddy, please contact Debra:

debra.aitken@bedsrcc.org.uk Tel: 07951 175241





Potton Cemetery

Last year phase 1 of the cemetery footpath works were undertaken. Further improvements have been carried out at the Cemetery this year.

- The War Memorial at Potton Cemetery was steam cleaned and the letters have been repainted black.
- Phase 2 of Cemetery Footpath works were completed.
- Replacement paving has been added to the base of the War Memorial.

We want to ensure that our Cemeterv provides a fitting and appropriate place for people to visit their loved ones. which is why we continue to make improvements.





Photo credit: Matthew Ayres

What's it like being a **New Youth** Councillor?

Oscar joined Potton Youth Council in March 2025 and says...

"I moved to Potton in March, earlier on this year. I wanted to get involved in my new community and make a positive difference. I think that joining the youth council is a great way to meet new people and share ideas to support the local area. I enjoy cycling and spending time outside, meaning I am particularly passionate about maintaining and improving Potton and the surrounding local outdoor spaces."



Potton Youth Council Coffee Morning!

Saturday 13th December from 9.30am to 1pm in the Community Centre.

Coffee, Tea, Cake Gluten free options available

We are fundraising for East Anglian Air Ambulance.

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 quardian.
- 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: enquiries@pottontowncouncil.gov.uk We look forward to hearing from you!

Youth Council fund Basketball Hoop

The youth council has been fundraising in the last year for a Basketball hoop for Henry Smith Playing Fields. The youth council were successful in obtaining part funding for the Basketball hoop from Potton Consolidated Charity.

The town council agreed to fund the cost of installation and tarmacking for the basketball hoop.







At the Youth Council's September meeting, they agreed that all fundraising in the next year would be donated to East Anglian Air Ambulance eaaa.org.uk



St Mary's has had a busy Summer and Autumn! We have supported PottonFest, the Potton Flower & Vegetable Show and September's Four Seasons Market. blessed our VE Day and Mothers' Union Banners and held a Unity Service with the Salvation Army. The highlight of our Summer was welcoming seven candidates for confirmation by the Bishop of Bedford in July and witnessing Dawn Kerridge's installation as a Lay Reader in St Albans Abbey in September. Our Open The Book team were also pleased to be welcomed by the Primary School where they performed the story of Zacchaeus.

Our Special Services in Autumn

• 26th October, 6pm: All Souls Service

• 9th November, 10.10am: Remembrance Sunday Parade Service

The Build Up to Christmas!

• 30th November, 10.30am: Holy Communion (First Sunday of Advent)

• 6th December, 4.00pm: New Voices of Potton Concert

7th December. 10.30am: Friends and Family (Second Sunday of Advent)

• 7th December, 4,30pm: Christingle Service

• 14th December, 10:30am: Holy Communion (Third Sunday of Advent)

• 14th December, 7.30pm: **Night Light Service**

21st December, 10:30am: Shorter Communion (Fourth Sunday of Advent)

• 21st December, 6.30pm; Carol Service • 24th December, 4.00pm: Crib Service 25th December, 10.30am: Family Service • 28th December, 10.30am: Holy Communion

January, 10.30am: Holy Communion for Epiphany (The Coming of the Wise Men)

We continue holding our monthly **Link Cafe** on the last Saturday of each month in the Community Centre, but please note NOT in December. There will be two on 3rd and 31st January. Also in January we will be running our START programme. This is a group for anyone who is curious to learn more about the Christian faith. It will begin on 7th January in Sutton. Any questions or observations to alex.wheatley.rector@ qmail.com or 01767 764062. We look forward to seeing you and meanwhile ask you to keep the troubled regions of the world in your prayers.

Refugee Response Potton

A Community Effort to Support Displaced Families

Author: Lindsay Kitchener

It began as a combined communitydriven and Potton Town Council initiative launched in expectation of Ukrainian guests arriving in our town. An action group was formed to explore the best ways to provide a warm welcome and practical support.

Volunteers helped families settle into the community. Friendly gatherings over tea and conversation helped guests feel part of the Potton community. The support of the Central Beds Hub also proved invaluable during this time.

A Rohingya family, refugees from Myanmar, moved to Potton and a new need emerged. The group extended its welcome and support to any displaced refugees settling in our town. This

change brought new opportunities to learn and adapt, as volunteers worked to understand and meet different cultural needs. The family have since moved to Bradford - they left with fond memories of the time volunteers spent with them and the kindness shown here.

Support is ongoing with different families - a family from Syria has recently arrived in Potton. It makes all the difference to their experience of living in a new country to have a warm welcome from our community.

New volunteers are always welcome and needed - for further information see the Potton Town Council website under Our Community and please contact lindsaykitchener@gmail.com if you are interested in offering support in the future.



The 53rd Annual Potton Show

Author: Jan May

It was our 53rd Annual Show on Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th September. We had a fabulous weekend and the weather was just right.

This year we were unable to have Morris Dancers so were entertained by local musicians going by the name of Five Go Mad in Potton, as well as some story telling sessions by Theatre of Widdershins.

We had well over 800 entries on display in the marquee and hall, and the list of winners has been uploaded to our

website www.pottonshow.org.uk. We welcomed several hundred visitors to the show on Saturday and there was a great attendance at the craft fair on Sunday. We have had many positive comments both on social media and in person.

We would like to thank everyone who supported or took part in the show in any way.



Potton Community Orchard

Author: Sally Wileman

Many people have supported Potton Community Orchard along the way, and we are hugely grateful to all of them. Since our tractor and other mowers were stolen last year, we've taken advice from the police and others about enhanced security. Having at last replaced the mowers, we didn't want them to go walkabout again. Step forward #Mechanic Ltd; Ryan has gone above and beyond to help us with advanced security measures and we couldn't be more grateful. In addition, volunteers have etched and painted the mower extensively.



So, if you do see it wandering the streets, please report it. Thanks also go to Bell Groundworks for transporting our mower to and from #Mechanic Ltd, to Paul Pibworth for his welding services, and to Dutton Engineering, for manufacturing and donating the security equipment. You are all community angels.

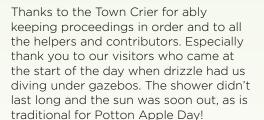
Potton Apple Day

Author: Sally Wileman

There was such a heavy crop of apples in our community orchard this year that we were able to offer lots of truly local grown varieties. Visitors to Potton Apple Day on 28th September enjoyed tasting a wide range of apples not available in the shops.

There was lots of fresh juice flowing too, thanks to all the young helpers on the chopping and pressing. Getting voung hands sticky has always been a popular part of the event.

Our live band Drunk and Disorderly kept everyone rocking and were joined this year by acapella group Jack in the Barrel. The trophy for Best Cider in show was won by Cromwell Cider for 'Oliver's Session'. The very select, hand-picked judges agreed, after some deliberation, it was their favourite.





Potton Community Agent News

Supporting the over 60s in Potton

Brook End Community Café Open Morning

Our wonderful team of volunteers are hosting an Open Morning on **Thursday 20th November from 10am until 12 noon**, hoping to get know more residents. If you are new to the community or a long term resident, we would love to meet you. Come and have a warm bacon butty or veggie sausage butty, cup of tea or coffee for **just £3** and chat to the team and your Community Agent, Andrea. There will be several information stalls that will provide advice and various games and activities on offer, so please do drop in. We open at 10am at the Community Centre, Brook End. Parking is available in the public car park on Brook End.

Community Christmas Party!

We are hosting a Christmas Party on Thursday 18th December from 12 noon until 2.30pm at the Community Centre, Brook End.

A buffet lunch, raffle, quiz, musical entertainment and magician will be on offer. Tickets are £4 per person. Please contact Andrea to book your place and for further information.

If you need any support with benefits advice, applications for Attendance Allowance or Blue Parking badges please contact Andrea.



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.

