



# Credition Town Council

# Annual Report

2016-2017

## Chairman's Report

*Frank Letch MBE*

*Town Mayor and Chairman of Credition Town Council*

This municipal year has been a great success crowned by the award of Quality Council, which is a wonderful achievement. It is the result of realistic ambition, hard work from our office staff and a commitment to engage with the community by Councillors.

The Town Council has a strong strategic action plan with clear focus on its aims and objectives. These are based on the needs of the community and supplying the services which District and County are no longer providing such as keeping the public toilets open, weed control on the High Street, highway grass verge cutting, youth provision and taking on three new play areas.

The Town Council has an updated and up-to-the-minute website with many useful links. We also have an office which is open every day between the hours of 10.00 am and 2.00 pm.

The Council has started a Keep Credition Clean Campaign which has led to greater community involvement, with litter picking from groups such as Cubs, Scouts and Brownies. We also have delegated powers from Devon County Council to manage flyposting and signage. We now have

a large stock of free dog poo bags which are freely available at the Council Offices and distributed when I hold my Mayor's Surgeries on the Town Square.

We continue to support the youth work in Credition, which was so hard-hit by the decision of Devon County Council to close the youth centre. We fund a new detached youth work project and also contribute towards the Youth Café.

The Town's Neighbourhood Plan is still progressing, although I would be the first to admit that it is a large challenge which is taking a long time to realise.

There have been several community events in the town with the whole community working together and enjoying such things as our Christmas in Credition parade and lights switch-on, the beacon lighting ceremony, St Boniface's day, the Food Festival, the Boules Tournament on the Square and Shakespeare in the Square.

Floral Credition was, again, a great success with increased entries to the garden competition and the It's Your Neighbourhood competition organised by Britain in Bloom. Here the Town gained a Silver Gilt Award and Best New Entry Award. Peoples Park also received a Pride in Park award.

With a view to helping the community towards a more healthy lifestyle we have launched the Redvers Ramble, which encourages people to walk along the town's footpaths.

We are also working with community groups and organisations to improve and look after the town. Community Payback has been carrying out work around the town including the station car park, the steps and footpath leading to Barnfield and the footpaths on the Industrial Estate.

**Chairman's Report continued on page 2...**



## Chairman's Report continued ...

The Town Council has also concentrated on the Wildlife Area in Peoples Park and it is pleasing to report that Sunflowers Day Nursery is looking after the bird feeders, Pippins Pre-School helped with planting and volunteers are helping to plant and keep the area clean and tidy. The Council has also produced a wildlife hunt to encourage youngsters to get out in the park and explore this wonderful natural environment.

It has been a busy year for us and our town crier, whose role is important in celebrating and rejoicing in the traditions within the modern-day world. I feel privileged to be the Mayor of Crediton and Chairman of the Town Council.

## Committee Reports 2016-2017



*Cllr Joyce Harris*

### Administration & Personnel

With the removal of Mid Devon District Council's (MDDC) services in Crediton last year, the Committee has had to deal with some unexpected changes including the Town Council's relocation to the downstairs offices.

The impact of this was eased through the recruitment of a new Receptionist, Mrs Sandie Blake, which was partly funded by MDDC. Amongst these changes, the Council now has an Assistant Clerk, with Emma successfully completing her Certificate in Local Council Administration last summer. To top it off, the Town Council has recently been awarded the status of Quality Council, through the Local Council Award Scheme, reflecting the hard work and commitment within the Council.

### Policy & Forward Planning

*Cllr Andi Wyer*

We have had a busy and productive year working on a number of projects. The Committee has been working with DCC to create a safe crossing point near the Leisure Centre, as well as widening Marsh Lane without worsening the problem! We have recommended to Council that we should continue to support youth work projects in the town, following the closure of the Youth Centre and should expand the service by funding a Detached Youth Worker program. We have also started providing free dog poo bags and are exploring ways of increasing the number of dog poo bins in the town to help keep our pavements clear and safe. The Neighbourhood Plan continues to be developed, but its progress is linked to development of the MDDC Local Plan which has been slower than expected.

### Property & Allotments

*Cllr Joyce Harris*

The Property & Allotments Committee continues to manage in excess of 100 allotments within the Town and is currently considering the possibilities of making the allotment sites more accessible to those with mobility difficulties. The Committee is working hard to ensure the maintenance of the Council's assets, such as the St Boniface Statue, Bandstand and War Memorial, through regular property inspections. Recommendations from these inspections are followed up and actioned, for example a new security light has recently been installed at the Bandstand.

The Committee has also continued to engage with the local community, with commemorative trees being planted in Peoples Park by both Crediton & District Lions Club and 1<sup>st</sup> Crediton Scout Group.



### Grants

*Cllr Joyce Harris*

The Town Council has continued to support local community groups and organisations by offering grants to support the valuable work they carry out within the community. This year, a total of £16,857.50 was allocated, with 25 organisations receiving a grant. The Committee continues to receive applications exceeding the grants budget available and is developing a strategy to consider each application based on how it fits within the Council's Grant Aid Policy, Strategic Action Plan, the budget available and the level of funding requested.

## Christmas in Crediton

*Cllr Frank Letch*

The committee met monthly with Town Councillors and several members of other outside bodies. As far as the end product is concerned, the event was a public success. The Exmouth Train proved to be a hit and its expense justified.

The Fancy Dress Competition, judged by the Bishop of Crediton, demonstrated how inventive parents and children can be. The light switch-on was a sparkling success topped with an amazing firework display. On the down side, the parade needing the road closure and a small army of stewards and marshals was a headache and took a lot of time and effort on the part of the office staff. Some street acts pulled out rather late which again caused concern. The whole event needs re-evaluating for 2017.



## Floral Crediton

*Cllr Mike Szabo*



Once again, the Town Council provided an array of floral displays during 2016 and for the first time there was even winter planting on the Town Square. This has been made possible since the Council purchased four three-tier flower towers. Wooden edging has also been placed around some of the tree bases on the Square, creating beds for more planting and this will be rolled out to more trees in due course.

The four flower beds outside Redvers House have been planted with shrubs, providing year round colour, and six hanging baskets have been added to the building. The large pot on the pavement on Mill Street, across from ATS, has been planted out and, for the second consecutive year, the weeds on the pavements and streets around the Town have been sprayed.

The Floral Crediton Competition attracted several dozen entries, from both local residents and businesses, who showcased their gardens.

For the fourth consecutive year, the town has entered into the South West In Bloom (SWIB) It's Your Neighbourhood Award programme. Fourteen volunteer led community groups entered the campaign with seven winning the highest level: "Outstanding". In addition, Peoples Park and Newcombes Meadow Park were both awarded a Four Star rating for the "Pride In Parks" Award.

For the first time, the town entered into the SWIB Pennant Award and the judges toured the town in July awarding the level of Silver Gilt and the prestigious Discretionary Award for Best New Entry!

Volunteer residents litter-picked around Crediton several times before the judges arrived, demonstrating their dedication and enthusiasm in these community events and showing the pride that the local community have in our town.



*Cllr Frank Letch*

## Crediton Open Space

The efforts of this group have focused on the wildlife area in Peoples Park. Here we have seen planters introduced, as well as bird feeders. The feeders are being maintained by Sunflowers, a local day nursery. The office staff have produced a superb leaflet where children can tick off various animals, birds and insects they find in the wildlife area. The area needs an occasional tidy up but remains an attractive and popular location as does the whole of the park.

## Parish Paths

*Cllr Frank Letch*

Cllr Heather Sansom, our inveterate hiker, has walked and reported on all our pathways and continues to promote the Redvers Ramble with appropriate signage. As dog fouling is a pathways issue, the Town Council has purchased 50,000 dog poo bags which are given out free at the Council Offices and Mayor's Surgery (donations are naturally very welcome).

Devon County Council's (DCC) local path coordinator, Sam Jeffcoat, has drawn up a list of 27 actionable points that were brought to the attention of the Committee by Ros Davies, DCC Public Rights of Way Officer. Our Parish Paths budget will be used to action work arising from the 27 points of concern.



# Finances

The majority of the Town Council's funds come from the precept, which is added to the Council Tax levy set by Mid Devon District Council. In 2016-17 the precept was £193,234 with a support grant of £6,236 provided by Mid Devon District Council. To the right is a summary of income and expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2017.

Council funds are spent providing services and representing the people of Crediton. Listed below are a few of the ways in which the Council spends the precept:

- Maintaining and improving Town assets such as the St Boniface Statue, War Memorial, Bandstand, Upper Deck, Millenium Cross, Peoples Park and the allotments.
- Providing grant funding to local community groups and organisations.
- Maintaining the public toilets at Newcombes Meadow and Market Street.
- Youth Work.
- Highway grass verge cutting and weed killing.
- Community events and initiatives such as Christmas in Crediton, Floral Crediton and the Keep Crediton Clean Campaign.

## Crediton Town Council Income & Expenditure Account 01/04/2016 to 31/03/2017

(Last) Year Ended 31 Mar 2016		(Current) Year Ended 31 Mar 2017
	<b>Income</b>	
78.74	Administration	863.74
3,978.36	Property & Parks	4,931.43
6,435.14	Amenities	4,539.74
161,897.48	Precept	199,470.00
150.00	Ear Marked Reserves	550.00
1,000.00	TAP Fund	0.00
3,750.00	Neighbourhood Plan	0.00
3,000.00	Parish Paths (P3)	250.00
	Salaries	7,000.00
	Grants	2,200.00
<b>£180,289.72</b>		<b>£219,804.91</b>
	<b>Expense</b>	
33.47	Parish Paths (P3)	215.45
9,000.00	Localism Projects	17,230.31
1,132.32	General Fund	6,352.24
5,499.80	Neighbourhood Plan	0.00
7,975.71	Administration	10,952.00
5,128.64	Council & Councillors	6,764.20
15,607.96	Property & Parks	15,074.99
1,712.54	Insurance	1,948.98
15,000.00	Grants	16,757.50
14,471.67	Amenities	16,840.80
13,239.14	Ear Marked Reserves	15,820.72
54,371.53	Salaries	66,971.30
1,000.00	TAP Fund	0.00
-5.82	Provision for Doubtful Debts	0.00
<b>£144,166.96</b>		<b>£174,928.49</b>
	<b>General Fund</b>	
<b>80,449.52</b>	Balance at 01 Apr 2016	<b>97,116.63</b>
<b>180,289.72</b>	ADD Total Income	<b>219,804.91</b>
<b>260,739.24</b>		<b>316,921.54</b>
<b>144,166.96</b>	DEDUCT Total Expenditure	<b>174,928.49</b>
<b>116,572.28</b>		<b>141,993.05</b>
<b>19,455.65</b>	Transfer to/from Reserves	<b>18,691.00</b>
<b>£97,116.63</b>	Balance at 31 Mar 2017	<b>£123,302.05</b>
	Transfers:	
	General Fund to Earmarked Reserve	£18,691.00

### Crediton Town Councillors - Boniface Ward

Frank Letch (Mayor & Chairman)	2 Butt Parks, Crediton, EX17 3HE	01363 775739
Joyce Harris (Deputy Mayor)	5 Charlotte Street, Crediton EX17 3BB	01363 775221
John Downes	Blagdon House, Blagdon, EX17 1EH	01363 774267
John Ross	3 Victoria Place, Pounds Hill, EX17 1DS	01363 775146
Nick Way	Westwood House, Westwood, EX17 3PE	01363 777903
Andi Wyer	3 Glen Creedy Court, Crediton, EX17 1GD	01363 777160

### Crediton Town Councillors - Lawrence Ward

Liz Brookes-Hocking	Oliver House, 7 North Street, Crediton, EX17 2BT	01363 774562
Heather Sansom	20 Redvers House, Crediton, EX17 3AW	01363 775455
Mike Szabo	9 Alexandra Way, Crediton, EX17 2EA	01363 775255
Jade Walters	Ground Floor Flat 1, 7 Union Road, Crediton, EX17 3AW	01363 774317
Bob Wright	3 Okefield Ridge, Crediton, EX17 2EG	01363 773566
Hannah Zorlu	Hilary, Barnfield, Crediton, EX17 3HY	01363 530037
Clare Dalley (Town Clerk)	Council Offices, Market Street, Crediton, EX17 2BN E-mail: townclerk@crediton.gov.uk	01363 773717

### Useful Contacts

Mid Devon District Council	01884 255255	www.middevon.gov.uk
Devon County Council	0845 155 1015	www.devon.gov.uk
Crediton Library	01363 772578	
Citizens Advice	01363 776210	
Crediton Hospital	01363 775588	
Social Services	0845 155 1015	

### District & County Councillors

John Downes (District)	01363 774267
Bob Wright (District)	01363 773566
Frank Letch (District)	01363 775739
Nick Way (District & County)	01363 777903

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