

Chairman's Annual Report 2016-2017

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 Crediton 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 Crediton 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 Crediton 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 Crediton 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.

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.