



Credition Town Council

Annual Report

2017-2018

Chairman's Report

Frank Letch MBE

Town Mayor and Chairman of Credition Town Council

I am quite amazed that I'm already looking at writing my 10th chairman's report. It just shows you that time goes quickly when you're enjoying yourself. This year I'm going to concentrate more on my role as the Mayor of Credition. This is a civic role, which means that I represent the town at a host of different events, both in the town and in the district.

In early May I was honoured to attend the 50th anniversary of the Townswomen's Guild. It was a great pleasure to join them in celebrating this important anniversary. I don't know if they can exist in this world of equal opportunities by calling themselves a "Women's Guild"! But I can report that they do a lot of good work in the town.



June was a busy month as I opened Credfest on the third and attended a concert given by the St Boniface Concert Society later in the month. There is no doubt in my mind that Credfest is a wonderful event and the result of a lot of hard work. It showcases so much that goes on in the town.

In July I was a member of the not very successful Town Council boules team. This is a competition



organised by the Twinning Association of which I am a member, representing the town council. This fits in very well with my love of France, ability to speak French and inability to play boules!

July was also the month in which I attended my favourite event of the year as Mayor (apart from my Mayor's Reception that is!) namely the Mid Devon Show. Having spent 25 years in the country in Wales, I am always pleased to be able to look over good quality animals. This show is one of the few one-day shows in the country and so those attending can see all the exhibits.

This was a year of anniversaries as in September I was invited to attend Devonshire Homes' 25th anniversary. This again is a group that does much in the district and in our town

In October, I attended a workshop for the parish path partnership, which was of great interest as I am the chairman of the town council's P3 committee. Many people probably do not know that there is a wide network of footpaths around town.

In July we inaugurated the Redvers Ramble, which was the brainchild of Heather Sansom. I am reliably informed that there will be another ramble this July!

Chairman's Report continued on page 2...

Chairman's Report continued ...



On November 12, I attended one of the poignant meetings of my mayoral year namely the Service of Remembrance. As usual I read the first lesson, headed a very large parade to the War Memorial where my army cadet, Lewis Cook, laid the wreath on behalf of me and the council. The attending crowd was the biggest I can ever remember.

On 27 November I was in Exeter for the annual police awards. It is always very illuminating to listen to the commendations of the various officers and members of the public who received these awards. I was delighted that three of the recipients were from the Cridton area. I think they too were pleased that the mayor of their town was there to see them receive their awards.

This year we tried a new approach to Christmas in Cridton. We did away with the High Street Parade which caused so many headaches because we needed such a large number of marshals and it was also very costly to close the High Street. Last year the event centred around the town square and I was pleased to open the event, thank the various sponsors and join in the celebrations.



In January I represented the Town Council at an arts centre event, a wonderful play called The Tinderbox. I have never heard of it before but it was enchanting and the singing was delightful. This is one of the perks of being the mayor! Also in January I attended a meeting arranged by CPRE, which looked at the challenges of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan. I do not know to what extent this level of cooperation will help Cridton but it was good to be there to see what the vision is.



Apart from all these events that I attended, I try to get to as many market days as possible for my Mayor's Surgery. I probably attend 20 and miss one or two each year. This is something that I do because I think it is incumbent upon me as Mayor and as a town councillor to give people of the town the opportunity to engage. They can ask questions, pose problems, complain or even congratulate me on the way things are going in the town! Yes this really does happen! It is a big commitment and most of the time I am the only member of the Council on the square, but I think it is important and has given me and the Council some very useful feedback.

Over the past months the big issues raised by people have been potholes, parking and the fate of the Council Office building. All I can tell them is that I am doing my best to make sure it stays within the control of Cridton Town Council!

I would like to close by thanking our wonderful staff Clare, Emma, Sandie and her replacement Emily. I would also like to thank my wife Natalia for her constant help and support and for carrying out her role as Town Mayoress with such enthusiasm and dignity.

Committee Reports 2017-2018

The following reports give an overview of the activities of each Crediton Town Council Committee for the past year. Each report has been written by the Committee Chair.

For information on all Crediton Town Councillors, the 2017-2018 Committees and which Councillors served on them, please see the back page.

Administration & Personnel

Cllr Joyce Harris



It has been a quieter year for this Committee, which was welcomed following the unexpected office move during 2016. The focus of last year involved a recruitment process following the retirement of Sandie Blake. After working within the Council Office Building for over 30 years, Sandie became a fountain of knowledge for many Crediton residents.



This made it a difficult role to fill, however, at the start of the year, Mrs Emily Armitage joined the Town Council team as the new Administrative Assistant.

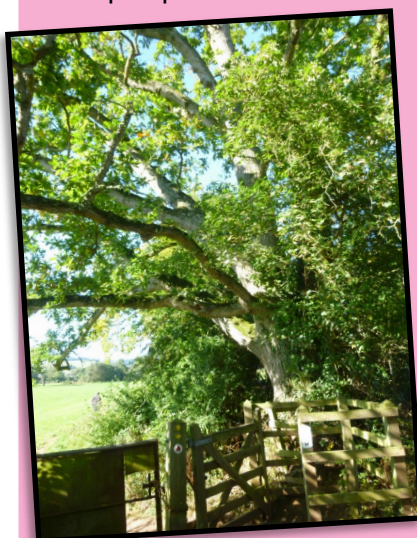
She will soon become a familiar face to you all.

From the left: Mrs Emily Armitage, the Council's new Administrative Assistant, Mrs Clare Dalley, Town Clerk, & Mrs Emma Anderson, Assistant Clerk.

Parish Paths

Cllr Frank Letch

The committee has met several times during the year and it is pleasing to note that our intrepid path walker, Graham Chudley, has given us a series of very positive reports.



We have had good support and input from Ros Davies, Public Rights of Way (PROW) Officer, and we still have a healthy budget remaining for future projects.

Graham reported no real problems on the pathways around the town but the committee has been concentrating over the last few months on the condition of Tin Pot. We even did one slightly muddy walk around the whole network at that end of the town.

Unfortunately with the recent very bad weather in March/April, the path became much more muddy and difficult to walk.

When we were there the main problem seemed to be the leaves that had fallen onto the tarmac and were becoming slippery and therefore a hazard. The committee has worked with Crediton's PROW warden, Sam Jeffcoat, to arrange for the leaves to be swept off the path into the grassed area each side with the hope that they will compost down.

Did you know?

You can report any issues relating to public footpaths on Devon County Council's website.

Please use this link:

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/> and select "Public Rights of Way"



Property & Allotments

Cllr Joyce Harris

Once again, we have been kept busy maintaining and improving Council owned sites. The highlight of this year has been the installation of the access path and dropped kerb at the Exhibition Road allotments. This was a big project, helped by the Big Lottery Funding secured by the Council, which has meant we now have five allotments accessible by people with limited mobility.

The Committee has also been looking into the possibility of improving water accessibility on all its allotment sites and this project will be carried forward into 2018/19.

As always, we have continued to maintain all Council property which has proved difficult with the increase in vandalism throughout the last year, so we would ask all members of the community to continue to report any issues they see.

The three play areas that were taken on by the Town Council have also been added to the maintenance schedule, with initial clear ups and works being carried out to make the sites safe and welcoming open spaces suitable for everyone to enjoy.



Cllr Liz Brookes-Hocking

The Magical Christmas in Crediton Switch-on event in November 2017 was mainly concentrated on the Town Square, with surrounding roads closed but not the High Street. More children than ever entered the fancy dress competition, and along with the scouts presenting Harry Potter and the guides carrying lighted and decorated arches, they made a lively parade which made its way down Market Street and into the packed Town Square.



The land train gave rides up and down the High Street and local choirs and dancers performed in the square, making a full programme of entertainment before Father Christmas and the switch-on, culminating with the local group, the Beatnx playing to the end of the event.

The High Street was decorated with 80 Christmas trees with help from local volunteers and businesses, and St Lawrence Green was lit with stars and tree lights. Already we're planning for more street lighting next year.

Christmas in Crediton



/christmasincrediton



Pick up a copy of the April Newsletter for details on this year's Christmas in Crediton Parade & Lights Switch-on.

Also keep an eye on the Christmas in Crediton Facebook page and our webpage for details throughout the year.



Grants

Cllr Joyce Harris

The Town Council continues to offer funding support to local groups and organisations, allowing it to contribute to the continuing provision of services as well as specific projects that benefit the community. This year, a total of £23,080 was allocated with 28 organisations receiving a grant. Once again, the number of applications received increased which led to the 2018-19 grants budget being increased to £25,000.



Grant cheques are handed out at the annual Mayor's Reception. This year's will be held in April.

"It will make all the difference to these projects." (Brown Paper Bag Co. & Busk it!)

"This is a fitting tribute to the work our members do, not just for our disability group, but for all people with access issues, young and old." (Crediton & District Access Group)

"Very much appreciated by our charity and we do appreciate your regular support of our counselling service." (Journey Therapeutic Counselling Service)

"We are truly grateful for the ongoing support that we receive" (Crediton Children's Centre)

Each application is considered against how it fits with the Council's Grant Aid Policy and Strategic Action Plan and the Committee aims to provide unsuccessful applicants with advice regarding alternative funding sources, if an appropriate source is known.

Policy & Forward Planning

Cllr Liz Brookes-Hocking

During the last year, this committee has focused principally on planning issues and Highways matters. We have worked on developing the framework of a 5-year strategic plan, to which all committees have contributed. We have continued to look at traffic management and pedestrian issues, particularly on improving connectivity and convenience for pedestrians.

With the district council ceasing some of its services and assets becoming redundant, we have considered how to continue and ensure the future of such facilities as play spaces and toilets. In particular, we have considered the future of the council offices as an information and advice centre, meetings venue and social organisations hub.

The committee has continued to oversee the progress of the Crediton Neighbourhood Plan and has commented on other strategic development plans covering Devon and the Exeter area.

Town centre vision statement

Make the High Street a desirable destination

- Reduce noise, traffic speed and air pollution
- Put pedestrians first
- Develop planting



From May 2018, the Crediton Neighbourhood Plan will come under the Town Strategy Committee.

The plan includes policies for the town centre.

Floral CREDITON

Cllr Mike Szabo

The purpose of this committee is to co-ordinate town floral displays, organise the Floral Crediton competition, and enter into the Britain in Bloom (BIB) competition.

We do this with 2 meetings per year, although this year we had an extra meeting to find a new contractor for our floral displays as the District Council has raised its prices considerably. The parks and gardens remit of the District Council is non-statutory, so we are looking for other contractors to supply and water our floral displays.



Our other services to the town include:

- Keeping the town free of weeds
- Maintaining a clean and tidy High Street by eliminating fly posting, littering, and dog fouling
- Promoting the Floral Crediton competition to residents which attracted over 20 entries last year
- Increasing the number of Floral displays in the town (two three-tier flower towers have been donated to the town and will be displayed and planted this year)

- Continuing to achieve a high standard entry into the BIB competition. A Silver Gilt level was awarded to the town last year.
- Increasing the number of Its Your Neighbourhood entries into the competition which last year attracted 14 voluntary community groups,
- Building a mutually beneficial working relationship with the Chamber of Commerce.

Last July, the BIB judges visited Crediton and said "The pride taken in the town is evidenced by a lack of litter, dog fouling, and generally well-maintained street furniture."



Don't forget you can pick up FREE dog poo bags from the Council offices!

CREDITON Open Space

Cllr Liz Brookes-Hocking

This year the committee has concentrated on developing the wildlife area of Peoples Park. Last autumn the laurel hedge was removed giving more space for planting and for continuation of the native species hedge.



The planting is designed for low maintenance but there's always a bit of light pruning and dead heading to be done in the autumn together with clearing the steps of fallen leaves. Volunteers have come to help in both spring and autumn. The Amber project is scheduled to help with fence painting when better spring weather arrives.

The committee also looks out for unloved open spaces around the town that are either an eyesore now or soon will be. By contacting and liaising with the landowner, the brambles at the bottom of Queen Elizabeth drive have been cut back, much improving first impressions of the town at the west end.



Finances

by Clare Dalley, Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

The Town Council is required by law (I won't bore you with which one) to appoint a Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to take care of its financial affairs. Some larger Councils employ a separate officer to do this, however many, including Cridton, give this duty to the Clerk, which is me.

Whilst some may regard this as a daunting task, I have to admit I actually enjoy it. This may be because, prior to becoming a Town Clerk, I was a Building Society Manager for 8 years. The knowledge and experience I gained during this time has significantly helped my role as RFO.

Cridton Town Council Income & Expenditure Account 01/04/2017 to 31/03/2018

(Last) Year Ended
31 Mar 2017

(Current) Year Ended
31 Mar 2018

Income

863.74	Administration	1,590.50
4,931.43	Property & Parks	5,570.08
4,539.74	Amenities	4,289.02
199,470.00	Precept	221,981.06
550.00	Ear Marked Reserves	6,732.03
7,000.00	Salaries	0.00
2,200.00	Grants	3,840.44
	Council & Councillors	152.00
	Localism Projects	326.06
250.00	Parish Paths (P3)	0.00
£219,804.91		£244,481.19

Expense

215.45	Parish Paths (P3)	25.00
17,230.31	Localism Projects	14,794.79
6,352.24	General Fund	5,070.56
10,952.00	Administration	7,237.37
6,764.20	Council & Councillors	6,938.88
15,074.99	Property & Parks	21,354.22
1,948.98	Insurance	1,718.62
16,757.50	Grants	20,000.00
16,840.80	Amenities	15,580.39
15,820.72	Ear Marked Reserves	10,850.78
66,971.30	Salaries	73,604.13
£174,928.49		£177,174.74

General Fund

97,116.63	Balance at 01 Apr 2017	123,302.05
219,804.91	ADD Total Income	244,481.19
316,921.54		367,783.24
174,928.49	DEDUCT Total Expenditure	177,174.74
141,993.05		190,608.50
18,691.00	Transfer to/from Reserves	50,572.00
£123,302.05	Balance at 31 Mar 2018	£140,036.50

Transfers:

General Fund to Earmarked Reserve £50,572.00












So, what do I do? Well, put simply I provide financial advice and support to the Council. This includes such things as:

- making sure all payments received are logged on to the Council's accounting system, authorised and approved by the Council before being paid;
- drawing up the Council's financial regulations for its considerations and approval;
- helping the Council to assess and manage the financial risks it faces;
- preparing the annual accounts such as the ones found on this page and
- helping to arrange internal and external audit

If you would like to see further information regarding the Council's finances, please go to www.cridton.gov.uk and click on the finances tab.

The Council's payments and receipts can be found here along with the annual accounts, external audit reports, budgets and precept information.

Your Councillors

Frank Letch	Joyce Harris	John Downes	Kay Piercy	John Ross	Nick Way
					
Liz Brookes-Hocking	Anne Hughes	Mike Szabo	Bob Wright	Hannah Zorlu	VACANCY
					

Committees

Admin & Personnel	Property & Allotments	Floral Crediton	Christmas in Crediton	Crediton Open Space	Policy & Forward Planning	Grants	Parish Paths
Joyce Liz Anne Frank Hannah	Joyce Anne John R Mike	Mike Joyce Frank Kay	Liz Anne Frank	Liz Frank Bob Anne	Liz John Joyce Anne Frank John R	Joyce Liz Frank John R Jade	Frank Liz Mike Bob

*The Chair of each Committee is highlighted in bold.

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
Kay Piercy	21 Dean Street, Crediton, EX17 3EN	01363 777531
John Ross	3 Victoria Place, Pounds Hill, EX17 1DS	01363 775146
Nick Way	Westwood House, Westwood, EX17 3PE	01363 777903

Crediton Town Councillors - Lawrence Ward

Liz Brookes-Hocking	Oliver House, 7 North Street, Crediton, EX17 2BT	01363 774562
Anne Hughes	3 The Old Print Works, Crediton, EX17 3LG	01363 773131
Mike Szabo	9 Alexandra Way, Crediton, EX17 2EA	01363 775255
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
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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

Non-Urgent Police Enquiries/Reports 101

Report a power cut 105

