

Crediton Town Council – June Update

Welcoming your new Chairman & Mayor!

At this year's Annual Full Council meeting, Cllr Liz Brookes-Hocking was elected as Crediton Town Council's new Chairman and Mayor for 2021-2022.

At the meeting held on Tuesday 18 May 2021, Cllr Frank Letch wished Cllr Brookes-Hocking a wonderful time ahead. "You will have my support as a councillor and I know you will have the rock hard support of Joyce, your vice chairman. Thank you all and I do hope we have a wonderful year to come."

Cllr Brookes-Hocking thanked everybody for showing the confidence they had in her within this role. Cllr Brookes-Hocking stated "It is a hard act to follow. Frank has given a great deal to this town: lots of time, lots of commitment, lots of enthusiasm and leadership. I am very delighted to be following in his footsteps".

The end of an era

I do not know if 13 years as Mayor and Chairman is a record but it is a very long time and I think with my new commitments at District Council and County Council, it is time for me to hand over to somebody with the time it takes to do the job properly. I have enjoyed my time as Mayor and Chairman. There have been a few downturns such as the loss of the council building, but most of my memories are happy ones. I have worked with three Town Clerks and seen the coming and going of 15 or so Town Councillors. Of all the Town Councillors the one who has supported me most is Joyce Harris, my vice-chairman. I cannot forget the help and support I have received from Natalia who greatly enjoyed her role as Town Mayoress.

As Mayor it has been my delight to visit the local schools on many occasions, to improve our relationship with our twin town in France, Avranches, to represent the town at the Mid Devon show, the police awards ceremonies, various CODS' productions and the most moving time of the year is our wonderful commemoration held on 11 November at the War Memorial. As Chairman I have seen the creation of Christmas in Crediton, which has been such an outstanding success. I have re-introduced the garden competition, which has included my favourite category, namely the Mayor's favourite and I instigated the surgeries held on the Town Square.

Although I'm standing down as Chairman I shall remain on the Town Council because it is something that is dear to my heart. I shall continue to work for the town at all the levels at which I represent it. I wish my successor a very happy and fulfilling time ahead.

A Partnership Success Story!

The Town Council recently teamed up with The Turning Tides Project to work together on an exciting new collaboration to tackle some of the maintenance issues around the town. Following increasing complaints of litter and general maintenance issues, the Town Council became aware of the need to take action and establish a sustainable maintenance plan.

It has only been 3 months since The Turning Tides Project agreed to take on this challenge and their enthusiasm has not gone unnoticed! Whether it's cleaning the toilet at Newcombes Meadow, litter picking the parks and open spaces or weeding the Town Square, the team are quickly on hand no matter what the job.

The Town Council is delighted to work with such a wonderful team of individuals who take a huge amount of pride in helping to keep the town looking its best. Already, we are very proud of this collaboration and look forward to continuing and growing such an invaluable partnership.

Share in the Square

We have been amazed by the increased usage on the Town Square and are proud of the community asset that we can all share. Crediton Arts Centre, the Town Team and Crediton Town Council have worked collaboratively to offer another summer Share in the Square schedule, which started in May. We hope that the sun starts to shine so that we can all enjoy the company of friends and family, music and food as restrictions ease.

We have The Turning Tides Project undertaking regular litter picking and maintenance in the Town Square but the tables will not be continually sanitised. As we head into June with further reduced restrictions, we are asking everyone to stay vigilant, use the many bins to dispose of litter and cigarette ends and leave the tables how you would wish to find them.

We also expect remedial works to be undertaken by Mid Devon District Council's approved contractors to regrade the surface of the Town Square. We are yet to receive a date, but keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for further updates.

Community Consultations – have your say!

With the lockdown restrictions set to ease over the summer months, we are looking forward to holding community consultation events.

You may have seen that we have a consultation running on the renovation of the toilets at Newcombes Meadow. To date, we have received almost 200 responses. The closing date is Friday 28 May, and we look forward to considering the responses as part of a development plan.

We hope that further consultations can take place on the community usage of Old Landscore School, which we want to be a well-used building serving the west end of town. Dates for these events will be advertised, and we look forward to discussing the issues that matter to you.

Crediton Town Council raised its precept for the 2021/22 financial year in order to increase existing services and to fund services no longer provided by the district and county councils.

Global warming, and concerns for our local environment

The Climate Change & Sustainability Committee (CCSC) has been reconstituted recently

following earlier meetings of a sub-committee during 2019/20. Established in response to direct appeals by environmental campaigners and local schoolchildren, the committee's six councillor members are concerned to develop appropriate policies for the town council, and to engage the local community in adopting more sustainable lifestyles.

Its Chairman, Councillor Paul Vincent, says: "It is not at all straightforward to know how to translate the urgent issues around climate change into sensible local government action. But while Crediton's contribution in addressing the global crisis may be infinitesimally small, it remains up to all of us to play our part in improving the condition of our natural environment and reducing carbon emissions.

I have invited our committee to develop a programme of sustainable-focused activities under the following headings: 'Living more locally', 'Supporting local food producers', and 'Improving our parks, gardens and community spaces'. However let's all be involved. Everyone is invited to contribute ideas and make suggestions to help develop the council's policies. These headings are broad, but they may focus attention on some areas to which the town council can usefully direct its energy and resources.

CCSC holds monthly meetings which anyone can attend, and its members meet more often to brainstorm ideas for activities and new projects.

Ideas are one thing, but it is the behaviour of the community as a whole that matters. None of us can achieve much by acting alone, but households, organisations and businesses may feel their efforts are more worthwhile when part of a shared community endeavour. Important too are the volunteer organisations and individuals who generously help look after our community spaces and who make such a valuable contribution to Crediton's social and cultural scene. There is scope for many more to be involved!"

Floral Crediton Competition

We are pleased to confirm the Town Council's annual Floral Crediton Competition is set to go ahead as usual this summer! The categories for entry are as follows:

Small formal garden (with or without veg)

Large formal garden (with or without veg)

Small managed natural garden

Large managed natural garden

Family garden

Patio or hanging baskets & other outdoor planted containers

Entry forms are available from the Council Offices as well as Crediton Library, Tuckers & Homeleigh Garden Centre. The closing date for entries is Thursday 24 June and judging will take place on 8 July 2021. Entry forms are also available on the town council website and Facebook page.

Look out for Floral Displays

As we start to see a glimpse of the summer weather ahead of us, you will soon be able to enjoy the bright and inviting floral displays painting the town. In the first week of June, over 50 hanging baskets will be put up around the town, bringing a much-appreciated splash of colour!

In addition, the Town Square flower towers will be blooming as always and the flower beds at St Lawrence Green and Newcombes Meadow are scheduled to be planted up any day now.

With covid restrictions slowly lifting, we hope you will be able to enjoy these displays and the town's wonderful open spaces whilst still keeping the community safe.

Things to look out for!

Following the equipment demos on the Town Square in April, the installation of the town centre CCTV system is set to commence on 1st June!

On Saturday 19 June members of the town council's Parish Paths Sub-Committee will be on the Town Square handing out leaflets relating to open spaces in the town and all things walking! So if you would like to learn more about what the town and it's countryside has to offer, please come and say hello!

Dates for your Diary

5 and 19 June - Farmers' Market Crediton Town Square

5 June - St Boniface Day

3 and 17 July - Farmers' Market Crediton Town Square

20 July - Crediton Town Council meeting 7.00 pm held at Old Landscore School, Greenway

Covid 19 update – meetings & office opening

We have now resumed face-to-face meetings, however you can still follow these via livestream on our Facebook feed. To ensure we adhere to Covid-19 regulations, members of the public are requested to submit questions to the Town Clerk prior to meetings and watch via Facebook.

Currently, the Council Office is closed to visitors. We will continue to review the government's guidance on this and will update our website and social media pages when we know more. For now, Office staff will continue to answer calls/respond to emails from Monday to Friday between 10 am to 2 pm, so please call/email if you'd like to get in touch. Council Offices, 8A North Street, Crediton, EX17 2BT

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