



**Minutes of Crediton Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019,  
at 7.00 pm, in the Boniface Centre, Church Lane, Crediton**

**Present:** Crediton Town Mayor and Chairman, Councillor Mr F Letch  
19 Members of the Parish and 6 Members of the Public

**In Attendance:** Mrs C Dalley, Town Clerk  
Mrs L Blake, Assistant Clerk

**1. Welcomes and Introductions**

The Mayor and Chairman of Crediton Town Council, Councillor Frank Letch, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**2. Minutes of Annual Town Meeting**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018, were confirmed as a correct record and were duly signed by Councillor Letch.

CLlr Letch then handed over the hosting of the event to Rosemary Stephenson and Kate Lock from Crediton Town Team.

**3. To receive the following presentations:**

Kate and Rosemary explained that each group/organisation had been asked to give a brief explanation about what it does, as well as one key proposal for Crediton in the future.

- **Crediton Town Team**

The Town Team has been in existence since 2014. Its aim is to keep Crediton as a vibrant exciting and great place to live. It currently has seven different projects on the go, these include Credfest 2019, the Boniface Heritage Trail, for which they have just received £16,000 LEADER grant funding, Crediton flag project, Wellbeing Crediton, which is a new social prescribing scheme and 'The Heart Project' which is a new community hub which will work towards keeping the heart and vibrancy in the town.

Key proposal/idea: Keeping the heart and vibrancy in the town.

- **Crediton Library**

Crediton Library is run by Libraries Unlimited, a charitable mutual, since April 2016. There were 45,000 visits to Crediton Library last year to access books, audiobooks, DVDs, computers, events, clubs, exhibitions, etc. The Library provides resources and events for all ages. To increase the offer to the community Crediton Library works in partnership with and provides facilities for, a wide range of organisations: from Learn Devon for maths skills and Elite training for IT skills to Upstream and U3A for poetry, craft, French and Spanish groups. The library, with the involvement of the community and local organisations, put on new large events such as a Local History Day and a Fun Palace of arts and sport cultural activities.

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This year the Library wants to utilise its outdoor space, which has fantastic views of Newcombes Meadow by installing decking for level access and an awning. This will enable the space to be fully utilised.

Key proposal/idea: To create outdoor space at the Library.

- **Crediton Arts Centre**

There is something happening at Crediton Arts Centre every day, life drawing, performances, martial arts etc. The Centre also appears all over Crediton and in surprising places. There may be musicians playing in shops and businesses, the Centre contributes to Christmas in Crediton, it helps people to display their artwork, it's even provided street theatre in Princesshay Square in Exeter. The Arts Centre wants to continue to explore what it is doing for and with the people of the town and surrounding areas. A supply of the Arts Centre's current brochure had been brought along and everyone present was invited to take a copy.

Key proposal/idea: To support the Town Team's cultural hub, it would be great.

- **Turning Tides**

Unfortunately, a representative of Turning Tides was unable to attend.

- **Crediton International Social and Cultural Organisation (CISCO)**

Unfortunately, a representative of CISCO was unable to attend.

- **Crediton Age Concern**

Unfortunately, a representative of Crediton Age Concern unable to attend.

- **Crediton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

After 5 years of consultation, research and planning, the draft Neighbourhood Plan will soon be online for everyone to read. Hard copies will also be available and you will be able to read about it in the press.

Key proposal/idea: More affordable housing and a proper bus linking the whole of the town.

- **Sustainable Crediton**

Sustainable Crediton is a group of local people that share common concerns about the environment, the natural world and its finite resources. Its mission is to help people in Crediton and the local area to lead more sustainable lifestyles and work towards a carbon neutral future.

It has a transition town approach by focusing on changing minds, changing expectations and changing what people do in their day to day lives to help the community become truly self-supporting and resilient in the face of the coming challenges of climate change, peak oil and food insecurity.

They held a street stall in March to meet the public and to advertise forthcoming talks and the Seed Share. They have regular get-togethers called Chatterbox where people can meet and talk informally about the environment and sustainability.

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There is also a Waste Group, Food Group and Woodland and Hedgerow Group. In the last year, Sustainable Crediton has, amongst other things, set up the town's water refill scheme, organised a clothes swap and assisted with recycling at the Food Festival.

Its latest project is B-Lines. B-Lines are a series of 'insect pathways' running through the countryside and towns to help support pollinators such as bees, butterflies and hoverflies. They would like to put Crediton on the map of the B-Line Project and make Crediton the bee capital of Devon.

Key proposal/idea: For Crediton and the local area to live more sustainable lifestyles and a carbon neutral future.

- **Crediton Area History & Museum Society (CAHMS)**

The Society is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year. It works to help people appreciate and promote Crediton's great history, which not a lot of people know about it. Each year it holds one or two exhibitions, last year's was called 'Young at Heart' and was about childhood history. This year's exhibition will be 'A Brief Encounter at Crediton Railway Station' which will cover the coming of the railway and feature who used it.

The Museum is open from April to October and houses the Family Research Corner, where they help people trace their ancestors. During the winter, when the Museum is closed it holds regular talks at the Boniface Centre and it still continues to collect, catalogue and maintain historical artefacts.

It has a dedicated team of volunteers but could always do with more.

Key proposal/idea: To expand the museum and take it out into the community more.

- **Crediton & District Access Group**

The group was set up in 1992 to raise awareness and improve access for all. Since then its remit has widened. Over the past year group representatives have attended and contributed to many local meetings/consultations, always trying to have constructive input, these have included Crediton Community Emergency Plan, Parish Paths, the new Exeter Bus Station, the Health and Wellbeing Forum, the proposed new Crediton Garden Centre, Crediton Traffic & Urban Realm Study and the proposed new Crediton GP Hub. Representatives have also met with various planning applicants to discuss ways of improving access for all and they have increased their involvement with the Turning Tides project plus much more.


- **Crediton Operatic & Dramatic Society (CODS)**

The current production is the musical Carousel, which 23 children are involved in. The Society relies on its sponsors. This year there will be a summer production for Credfest. Members of CODS do it for pleasure and hope that the people of Crediton enjoy what they do.

Key proposal/idea: To support the Town Team's 'Heart Project' so there is a performing space in Crediton which everyone can use.

#### 4. Refreshment Break

The meeting was paused whilst everyone grabbed a cup of tea, or coffee, and a biscuit!

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## 5. Discussion Session

Kate and Rosemary explained that this part of the meeting was an opportunity for anyone present to:

- ask more about other groups' work and role
- ask questions about the council's work and role
- discuss any of the future proposals that have been presented
- raise anything else about the town
- to ask questions of any of the groups and organisations that have attended the meeting.

The big question was "how are we going to achieve the things that we want for Crediton?" Many people felt that one of the biggest problems is volunteers and how to get people involved. Everyone agreed that they struggle to get volunteers and positive thoughts were required on how to combat this. It was noted that Crediton has a lot of groups and organisations so the volunteer pool is spread quite thinly and we already have a lot of people volunteering.

Rosemary advised that as part of the Town teams 'Heart Project' they wanted to set up a website that would connect all the community groups and venues. It is important to try and get everyone communicating, sharing knowledge expertise and volunteers.

It was suggested that some people don't know how to get involved. The Library advised that they get people regularly asking about volunteering opportunities however, they can only signpost people to the opportunities they know about.

It was questioned whether Crediton is actively working to bring people in from the wider community. Crediton has a huge catchment, is it spreading the net wide enough and is it outward looking?

It was felt that Crediton could be vulnerable to becoming a dormitory town in the future due to the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP), which covers a huge area. More housing will come but it is not known how much will come to Crediton due to its topography. The GESP details major investment and development on the M5 corridor and down the A38. With development at Bridgwater, Hinckley C, Yeovil, junctions 27 & 28, Exeter, and down to Plymouth with its maritime studies. The hinterland, West Devon and North Devon are being missed out of the economic opportunities. To keep the heart in Crediton a mix of housing and employment is needed. The Neighbourhood Plan looks at what Crediton needs such as hanging on to employment, encouraging start-up businesses and allowing expansion, whilst making it work for the town. Everyone in Crediton needs to work together to make things happen.

We also need to be mindful of youth. Mid Devon has an ageing population but we need to consider the opportunities for young people in the town.

Concern was expressed regarding access to shops and businesses in Crediton. The purple pound is worth £249 billion to the UK economy and its disabled people who contribute to it. Whatever is done in Crediton, we must make sure we are factoring in people with disabilities. People can find it difficult just to go out and have a cup of tea.

A member of the public sighted the Belmont Park project in Exeter. Where a community association is in the process of replacing a fairly modest two-room hut that is used for all kinds of community

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activities. He suggested that as Newcombes Meadow has no such thing, perhaps this could be a possible town project for Crediton.

Another suggestion was to think about how new residents could be welcomed to the town. Could someone visit them and provide them with information about what's happening in the town and help them to make new connections.

The final question was regarding what, if anything, is being done to draw all the organisations together. The Town Team confirmed this is in the pipeline. Firstly, they want to promote venues in the town with details of the space available and how it can be booked. Rosemary then advised that the 'Heart Project' is holding a stakeholder consultation on Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2019. They would like as many people as possible to go along so they can find out what everyone wants and start a debate. This will be followed up with a public consultation at a later date.

**6. To note reports attached to the minutes from Crediton community groups and organisations.**

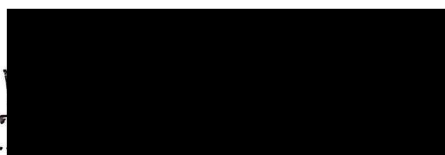
The Town Clerk, Clare Dalley, advised that she had received detailed reports from the following community groups and organisations and these would be attached to the minutes, and publicly accessible for people to read.

- Crediton Area History & Museum Society (CAHMS)
- Crediton and District Swimming Club (CDSC)
- Crediton and District Access Group
- Crediton Church Corporation
- Crediton Library
- Crediton Trefoil Guild
- Girlguiding Crediton
- 1<sup>st</sup> Crediton Scouts
- Sustainable Crediton
- Crediton Twinning Association
- QE Academy
- Crediton Town Team
- Crediton Arts Centre

**7. Close**

Rosemary and Kate thanked everyone for attending and participating. The meeting closed at 8.11 pm

Signed: ..



(Councillor F Letch)

Date: ..

22/6/2021

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