



Crewkerne Town Council

Report No. 12

ANNUAL REPORT

March 2013

THE MAYOR'S REPORT

I would like to welcome you all to this, the Mayor's annual report 2012/13, to let people know of the work carried out by the council and changes made within the last year and also remind us of some of the major events that have taken place.

The 2nd May 2012 was the visit of Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to celebrate Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee. Coming into the town centre early in the morning and seeing so many people from the community already waiting for the visit was a wonderful sight. It was a very special day for many townspeople and one to remember. This was followed later in the month by the Jubilee celebrations on Henhayes and throughout the town.

This last year has been a very busy one for many of us, not least the Town Council. The long awaited George Reynolds Centre has been built, though not without its problems, and by now should be fully open to all user groups. We faced difficulties on this project, largely via our main contractor, but we have prevailed and the centre is wonderful, with views over the playing fields that are unrivalled throughout the county. The West One Centre has been sold and is being redeveloped as a new doctor's surgery, and the old pavilion and sports clubs are to be demolished.

County and District Councils are faced with more cuts this year and as a consequence we are forced to consider taking on more services. Youth funding has been removed from the County Council budgets, however importantly using a new power brought in by the Localism Act 2011, we have allocated funds to maintain the service, and I hope we can improve the service for our young people over time. Also, thanks to County Cllr Dyke for his hard work in helping to obtain a grant of £50,000 towards our youth services. This is a huge unexpected bonus for which we are truly grateful.

As always traffic is an issue within our town, what with the gas main being re-laid on Market St and East St to the re-surfacing of South St and others it's been a bad year for traffic flow, one way system or traffic lights being the norm! This has made life tougher for traders in town but let's hope this sort of disruption isn't repeated too soon!

Consultation over the traffic issues on the CLR development, Ashlands Road and whether to make North St one way, have been put forward by the highways agency to public consultation and the results should be available shortly.

I would like to take this opportunity to draw attention to the Henhayes redevelopment project. The plans are to improve the whole of the Henhayes playing fields, providing new areas to spend time, walk, play or just to enjoy the lovely heart of our town. We are asking for the public opinion as to what should be done, so please take a look at the plans and consultation leaflets and let us know your views. After all this is your town, so what you want matters!

In recognition of her outstanding contribution for the benefit of the town and its citizens Diane Butler has been elected Honoured Citizen of Crewkerne this year. Presentation of the award took place at the Annual Meeting of Electors on 15th April.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors, who do a wonderful job on your behalf in ensuring that Crewkerne remains a vibrant town. However they could not do this without the Town Council staff and a huge number of volunteers that help out with various groups and organisations in the town and I would also like to thank them for all their continuing effort on behalf of the community.

Cllr Robin Pailthorpe, Mayor

PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

The Planning and Highways Committee sits on the second Monday of each month and is a public meeting open to anyone wishing to attend. Personal representations from applicants, objectors and others are welcomed when applications are discussed.

This year 42 different applications have been considered at Planning meetings, with 19 at Town Council meetings due to time constraints in which to respond to the District Council. 2012/13 has seen several controversial plans submitted to which the Planning Committee has endeavoured to put forward the views of the town in a positive and informed way.

Parking in the town centre is problematic and because of this the Council consulted whether residents wished the temporary car park on Henhayes to remain. The Committee took into account the variety of views expressed over the car park and planning permission has been sought to make this permanent. In January a working party was formed to consider the benefits of making Article 4 Directions to the Permitted development order 1995.

There has also been a working party to consider how the Town Council workforce can improve the provision of kerb side weed control, work that is no longer being undertaken by the County and District Council due to budget cutbacks.

The promised public consultation of the North Street one way system has taken place with many comments and questions received by the County Council. At the time of going to press a report is being collated by the Local Transport Plan Implementation Team in County Hall for consideration by the Town Council on 22nd April 2013.

Cllr Jo Dawson, Chair

COUNCIL AIMS & ACHIEVEMENTS 2012/13

To support and provide cultural, social and sporting activities.

Achievements:

- Completed the new George Reynolds Centre on Henhayes. Received grants towards the construction costs of £32,000 from the RFU and £50,000 from South Somerset District Council, a contribution of £108,000 from Crewkerne Sports Club and £242,000 from Section 106 Planning Gain monies in respect of the Maiden Beech Housing Development. The funds from the sale of the West One Community Centre on 9th November for £203,550 also contributed towards the construction costs.
- Received a £50,000 one-off grant from the County Council Enablement Fund and also up to £10,000 from Yarlington Housing Group to support the young people of Crewkerne to help sustain youth provision for 8+ onwards.
- Organised the arrangements for the Queens Visit to the Town Hall and the food fair in the Victoria Hall in May, the Diamond Jubilee Fete on Henhayes on 2nd June and the Towns Criers event on 9th June. The Council worked with several community groups to make the celebrations memorable and free.
- Achieved successful grant awards of £14,629 from the Market Towns Investment Group, £6,000 from SSDC and £4,000 from the County Councillor Community Fund towards a new project to enhance the play and visual value of the Henhayes Recreation Grounds (see Amenities Report).
- In May 2012 awarded community grants to West One Community Centre £6,500 (£5,250 of this was for the annual rent to the Town Council), ABCD £580, Henhayes Centre £1,500, Heritage Centre £1,500, CUDOS £500, Crewkerne Local Information Centre £144, Filmcrew £100 and Twinning Association £150 to help improve or aid leisure pursuits.
- Paid for the installation of the Town's very attractive Christmas lighting again and provided administrative support for the popular annual Lighting Up event on 25th November.

To liaise with and support voluntary groups to achieve our objectives

Achievements:

- Awarded South Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau a £2,000 grant to continue to provide its beneficial services in the town for a year as well as making rooms available free of charge in the Town Hall.
- Awarded £1,782 to A Better Crewkerne & District (ABCD) specifically towards Crewkerne Showcase Event in May 2012.
- Supported Youth Music event held at Henhayes Centre.

To co-operate with and support the Police and District Council to reduce crime and disorder in the town.

Achievements:

- Continued to work closely with the Police in the Community Safety Group.
- Organised another highly successful annual Community Safety Event on 14th September in Falkland Square. There were stalls with info on home safety, environmental safety, flooding issues, together with representatives from the Police, Road Safety Unit, Yarlington Housing Group and SCC Civil Contingencies Unit.

GEORGE REYNOLDS CENTRE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee consisted of all 12 Town Councillors and 2 non-voting members (Graham James representing the Sports Clubs and Kay Chant representing West One Youth and Community Centre users).

The Committee received reports on the progress of the building from the Project Group which met formally each month with the builders to discuss any variations on the contract along with a full update on the budget.

The Committee also received regular reports on the formation and progress of the new company which now manages the building Crewkerne Sports and Youth Activities Ltd (CSYAL).

The building schedule went well until early October when it became clear that the handover date of 9th November would not be achieved. There then followed a series of difficulties over the finish of the building especially the wood floors upstairs and the overall decoration. The reason for this became clear in the New Year when the builders went into liquidation.

The liquidation of the building company inevitably caused problems for CSYAL who took over the building but were unable to open it fully to the users.

The flooring has been replaced upstairs and is now fit for purpose. Ongoing work is being undertaken to bring the building finishes up to a high standard and the defects not completed by the building company are also being addressed.

The Committee has fulfilled its purpose and has ceased to function. All matters for discussion by the Council are now conducted at the Amenities Committee.

The Centre will be open fully for use from April and the following are the necessary contact details for membership hire information or general use.

Centre Manager Sarah Wills

Centre Tel. No. 01460 73972

Email: contact@thegeorgereynoldscentre.org.uk
grcbookingenquiry@gmail.com

Website: www.thegeorgereynoldscentre.org.uk

Cllr Rusty Jackson, Chair

AMENITIES COMMITTEE

In September 2012 I took over as Chairman of the Town Council's Amenities Committee following the resignation of Cllr Sue White for personal reasons. A difficult decision for Sue and a difficult act for me to follow and I thank my fellow Councillors and the Council Staff for their help and support. The Amenities Committee meets in January, March, May, July, September and November on the second Monday and as with all Council meetings any members of the public are welcome to attend.

The routine care and maintenance of the Town's public buildings, play areas and open spaces which are the responsibility of the Amenities Committee has continued during the year:-

The Town Hall and the Victoria Hall, including the Town Council and Community Offices The Royal visit in May last year was an opportunity for some redecoration and carpeting of these public spaces and our staff worked very hard to make sure everything was spick and span on the day. The hamstone plaque commemorating this momentous occasion for the town has now been installed on the front of the building. To assist with presentations to Councillors and the public a projector has been installed in the Town Council Chamber.

War Memorial Recreation Grounds at Severalls Park Avenue have been well used during the year. The Bowls Club has encouraged pupils from Maiden Beech School to try their hand at this challenging game. Phoenix Brass Band regularly practice in the small community hall here. We are investigating ways to encourage more use of the tennis courts.

Allotments The Council has a total of 21 Allotments, 12 at the War Memorial Grounds in Severalls Park Avenue and 9 at the Bincombe Amenity Land. All are let and we have a waiting list.

Bincombe Beeches Nature Reserve Huge thanks go to the many volunteers who have assisted in a variety of tree planting and other routine tasks which keep this much loved nature reserve in such pristine condition.

Southmead Crescent Play Area has been brightened up with the installation of new coloured safety surfacing.

Happy Valley This is a large area which is used by a variety of people in many ways especially after the major improvements in 2011. It is closely monitored on a daily basis by our grounds maintenance staff as is **Barn Street recreation field**.

West One Youth and Community Centre is no longer in the ownership of the Town Council and it is pleasing to see that work is well advanced to convert the building into a much needed doctors' surgery.

Henhayes Recreation Ground The completion of **the George Reynolds Centre (GRC)**, which is the subject of a separate report, has been one of the major achievements of the Town Council this year, the separate Committee which was set up to deal with this major project has now been disbanded and the responsibility for the new Centre now rests with the Amenities Committee. Plans for the continued improvement of Henhayes Recreation Ground continue. Now the GRC is completed the old changing rooms and pavilion will soon be demolished and decisions are needed on planned improvements to the play area and beyond to open up this much loved open space for use by as many people as possible. These plans are now going out for public consultation. Work has started on the installation of a covered cycle store adjacent to the Aqua Centre for use by any member of the public.

The Crewkerne Aqua Centre which includes the **Active Lifestyle Centre** is owned by the Council and maintained by Crewkerne Leisure Management, our 'tenants'. A similar Lease is in place for the **George Reynolds Centre** which is managed and will be maintained by Crewkerne Sports & Youth Activities Ltd. once the building has been completed satisfactorily.

Grounds Staff training has continued during the year in order that our staff can undertake some of the tasks, for example weed killing, which County and District Council are having to reduce because of budgetary constraints. To assist in their tasks new protective clothing and a new trailer has been purchased and a policy for replacing and providing future clothing has been agreed.

Finally I must thank the many volunteers who have assisted in the planting of over 2,000 daffodil bulbs around the town, and those who took part in the litter picking event.

Cllr Angie Singleton, Chair

ADDITIONAL TOWN COUNCIL INFORMATION

Town Clerk: Mrs J Warner **Deputy Clerk : Mrs A Roffey** **Property & Projects Officer: Mr J Dunn**
Finance Officer: Mrs A Hooper **Secretary: Mrs J Cowie** **Cemetery Superintendent: Mr N Peters**
Grounds & Amenities Worker: Mr J Fontana **Junior Groundsman : Mr L Warren**
Grounds & Amenities Apprentice: Mr A Roberts

Tel: 01460 74001 Fax: 01460 78790

E-mail: towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk

www.crewkernetown.org/TownCouncil

The Council Offices are open to the public during the following hours: Monday to Friday: 9 am – 1pm

Council Surgeries are held every 3rd Saturday of the month (except August) in the Community Office at the Town Hall.

Council Meetings in April, May & June 2013: **All meetings start at 6.45 pm in the Council Chamber**

April: 8 th Planning		22 nd - Town Council
May: 13 th – Planning	13 th - Amenities	20 th - Town Council (Annual Meeting)
June: 10 th - Planning	10 th - Policy & Resources	24 th - Town Council

FINANCIAL REPORT

The accounts for the current year, which ends 31st March 2013, will not be audited until later in the year. The final accounts will be presented to the May meeting of the Town Council and a summary published on the notice board outside the Town Hall prior to audit. Members of the public will have the opportunity to examine the full accounts on request.

Estimated income and expenditure for the 2012/13 financial year is as follows:

Income	
Allotments	260
Aqua Centre Rent	1,000
Bank Interest	3,156
Diamond Jubilee Celebrations	1,720
Grounds Maintenance	1,141
Capital Projects - GRC	510,300
Other Projects	4,360
Miscellaneous	245
Precept	303,093
West One Centre Sale Proceeds	203,550
Victoria Hall Bookings	6,375
Salaries	27,383
Grants re Youth Service	61,000
Town Hall	7,227
War Mem Grounds Contribution	3,118
West One mainly Rent	5,265
Cemetery Admin & Maintenance	10,812
Total	1,150,005

Expenditure	
Aqua Centre Loan & Maintenance	8,289
General Admin inc Insurance	40,974
Salaries & Wages	151,378
Diamond Jubilee Celebrations	9,326
Short Term Loan Repayment	150,000
George Reynolds Centre	12,290
Grants	16,274
Grounds Maintenance	27,785
Capital Projects - GRC	*838,943
Other Projects	8,089
Joint Burial Committee Precept	30,000
Victoria Hall	11,536
Town Hall Maintenance	32,373
War Mem Grounds	1,667
West One Maintenance	616
Youth Service Provision	8,700
Cemetery Admin & Maintenance	10,766
Total	1,359,006

The Statement of Accounts for the last audited year 2011/2012

	31 st March 2011	31 st March 2012
Balances b/fwd	595,474	579,837
Annual Precept	303,096	303,096
Total other Receipts	134,869	112,353
Staff Costs	116,143	129,677
Loan Interest	4,883	5,014
Total other Payments	332,576	258,072
Balances c/fwd	579,837	602,523
Total Cash & Investments	523,214	559,361
Total Fixed Assets	5,390,008	5,454,677
Total Borrowings	30,925	28,583

At 31st March 2013 the following estimated debt is outstanding to the Public Works Loan Board:

Aqua Centre £26,022

It is anticipated that the usual income and expenditure for the current financial year will be within budget. *However, the excess of expenditure over income is due to spending on the George Reynolds Centre project, funded by Capital Reserves which the Council had set aside for this major construction.

Staffing news

The Town Council believes its most important resource is its staff and is committed to keeping skills up to date so that the needs of Crewkerne can be met. The Grounds and Amenities Apprentice was taken on as a Junior Groundsman after he had gained his Level 2 in WBL Horticulture with Bridgwater College, and the Council has recruited another Apprentice who is also studying for his qualification in Horticulture.

No expenses to councillors

With the concentration elsewhere on expenses for politicians, it is reassuring for everyone to know that our Councillors continue to be voluntary giving their time without any payment. Only the Mayor receives a £300 allowance to contribute towards the civic duties.

Councillor	Address	Tel No.
Sylvia Allman	4 Ashland Court, Crewkerne TA18 7AP	72875
Mike Best	186 Park View, Crewkerne TA18 8JH	74245
Jo Dawson	52 Hermitage Street, Crewkerne TA18 8ET	76797
Kathy Head	16 Church Street, Crewkerne TA18 7HU	07704 197469
Alys Hennessy	14 Station Road, Crewkerne TA18 8AJ	76592
Ben Hodgson	3a Church Street, Crewkerne TA18 7HR	279829
Rusty Jackson	2 Thomson Drive, Crewkerne TA18 8AQ	75400
Robin Pailthorpe	51 West Street, Crewkerne TA18 8AZ	07835 711073
Roger Rousell	West Wing Merefield House, East St, Crewkerne TA18 7AG	73222
Angie Singleton	Kincora, Church Street, Crewkerne TA18 7HR	74846
Andrea Stuart	Summerhill, 5 Mount Pleasant, Crewkerne TA18 7AH	07776414267
Neil Sturtivant	9 Birch Way, Crewkerne TA18 7DT	78602