

# Crewkerne Town Council

## ANNUAL REPORT

Report No. 17  
May 2018



Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7LN

Tel: 01460 74001 Email: [towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk](mailto:towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk) Website: [www.crewkerne-tc.gov.uk](http://www.crewkerne-tc.gov.uk)

### The Mayor's Report



Welcome to the 2017/2018 edition of the Council's Annual Report, which aims to keep you informed about the work that the Council is doing on your behalf. There are reports from each of the Council Committees, as well as a financial report and the Council's list of achievements within the year. These are challenging times for local councils as central government funding continues to shrink. Nevertheless, as you will see in these reports, the Council has been very active this year and has made substantial progress on a number of projects and continues to work hard to maintain the council-owned buildings and play and recreation areas.

In recognition of his outstanding contribution for the benefit of the town and its citizens, Tony Cooper has been elected Honoured Citizen of Crewkerne this year. Tony's award represents a "first", in that he is the first recipient to be following in the footsteps of his family. Back in 1997, Tony's father became the first resident to receive the Honoured Citizen award. The award itself, which is assessed by a Committee consisting of current and past Mayors, was presented to Tony at the Annual Town Meeting on 16 April 2018.

This is my first year as Mayor of Crewkerne and it has been an honour to serve the community in this role.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors who do an excellent 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 large number of volunteers who help out with various groups and organisations in the town. I would also like to thank them all for their continuing effort on behalf of the community.

Cllr. Ben Hodgson, Mayor

### Planning & Highways Committee

The Planning and Highways Committee meetings take place on the second Monday of each month. Personal representations from all parties are welcomed when applications are discussed. The Town Council is only able to make observations and recommendations on planning applications which are taken into account when they are considered by South Somerset District Council (SSDC).

The Committee has considered 41 applications this year. There were 31 applications recommended for approval with 3 applications recommended for refusal by this Council, and 7 being noted or referred to the conservation officer.

A significant planning application was the proposed residential development at the North Street Trading Estate. This Council recommended refusal on the grounds of unsafe access and the application was subsequently refused by SSDC. The Council understands that the developer has submitted an appeal against SSDC's decision.

Disappointingly, the CLR site has not moved forward in any sense. We continue to press the developer for information.

Cllr. Robin Pailthorpe  
Chairman of Planning & Highways Committee

## Amenities Committee

The Amenities Committee meets every other month and is attended by all councillors. Members of the public are also welcome to attend. The Committee is responsible for the care and maintenance of all the Town Council's buildings, play areas and open spaces as well as any projects being developed from the Council's Vision Action Plan.

### Town Hall and Victoria Hall



This building houses the Council's administrative office, Council Chamber (for public meetings), the Victoria Hall and the Community Office, which hosts the South Somerset District Council local staff and the Local Information Centre. The first phase of the planned renovation of the exterior of the building was completed earlier this year and focussed on the front elevation, with the stonework being cleaned and repaired, the woodwork repainted and new stone pinnacles installed. New seats, litter bin and noticeboard have also been installed. Work on the next phase has now commenced and involves renovation of the west and north faces of the building.

A working group has also been set up to consider possible improvements to the Council Chamber particularly for the benefit of the public.

### George Reynolds Centre and Crewkerne Aqua Centre

These two buildings are owned by the Town Council and are leased to Crewkerne Sports and Youth Activities Ltd. and Crewkerne Leisure Management Ltd. respectively. Both buildings continue to be well used by the public and the Council works closely with the two management companies to support their work in continuing to provide these important amenities to the residents of Crewkerne.

The Aqua Centre recently celebrated 20 years of successful service to the community.

### Bincombe Beeches Nature Reserve

The creation of wood carving sculptures has proved very popular with visitors and the Bincombe fayre event held in the summer was a great success.

The Council's grounds staff have worked hard through the year to improve the pathways through the reserve and this work will continue in the coming months.

### Happy Valley

The skate park continues to be well used. The Teen Shelter adjacent to the park has been painted and the lines on the Multi Use Games Area have been repainted.

The upper path in the Valley, which was overgrown and becoming undermined by badgers, has now been refurbished and the adjacent shrubs and trees extensively cut back. Further work to improve the paths in Happy Valley is planned in this forthcoming year.

### Allotments

The Council maintains allotments at the War Memorial Grounds, Severalls Park Avenue and at Bincombe Lane. In the past there has been a significant waiting list for allotments but the current waiting list is minimal. At the War Memorial Grounds, the old and rusty wire mesh fencing around the allotments has been removed and has improved the area as a result.

### Tennis Courts at Severalls War Memorial Grounds

A working group has been set up to consider refurbishing the tennis courts following consultation with the public. The group is currently exploring options for grant funding.

### Barn Street Recreation Ground

A new tree has been planted as a future substitute for the fire damaged tree which is in gradual decline.

### Henhayes Recreation Ground

The new children's play area was officially opened this year following the completion of the new equipment on the central 'island'. The incessant rain over the winter months has highlighted some problems with drainage in the playground. The Council is addressing this issue as a priority.

The entrance to the recreation ground from Henhayes Lane has been improved and new railings have been installed along the path running past the Aqua Centre "pods".

The Council worked closely with Crewkerne rugby club during the year with the project to install floodlighting on the Henhayes field, all funded through a combination of grant funding and direct support from the club.

The Council have addressed the issue during heavy rain of surface water running from the Henhayes car park across the field to cause flooding in the industrial estate, with the installation of a drain to divert the water.

Cllr. Mrs Rusty Jackson  
Chairman of Amenities Committee

## Financial Report

The accounts for the current year, which ends 31 March 2018, will not be audited until later in the year. The final accounts will be approved at the May meeting of the Town Council. Members of the public will have the opportunity to examine the full accounts on request.

Income and expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2018 is as follows:

	Income £
Allotments	294
Aqua Centre	8,564
Bank Interest	458
George Reynolds Centre	297
Wayleaves	23
Henhayes Car Park	7,961
Henhayes Pitch Leases	180
Grounds Maintenance	3,849
Insurance Claim Refund	840
Projects	22,800
Events	266
Miscellaneous	250
Precept	430,805
Central Govt Grant Allocation	8,380
Victoria Hall Bookings	7,464
Salaries recharged	30,631
Market fees	1,738
Town Hall	5,224
War Memorial Grounds Contribution	2,927
Cemetery Admin and Maintenance	13,781
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>546,731</b>

	Expenditure £
Aqua Centre Loan and Maintenance	23,123
General Admin inc. Insurance	40,440
Salaries and Wages	200,491
George Reynolds Centre	8,146
Grants	6,012
Grounds Maintenance	41,941
Projects	56,766
Events	940
Joint Burial Committee Precept	39,581
Victoria Hall	8,526
Town Hall Maintenance	61,121
War Memorial Grounds	3,277
Youth Service Provision	19,660
Public Toilets	15,031
Wednesday Market	550
Cemetery Admin and Maintenance	14,185
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>539,790</b>

## Statement of Accounts for year ending 31 March 2017

	31 March 2016	31 March 2017
	£	£
Balances b/fwd	318,587	317,596
Annual Precept	298,105	316,523
Total other Receipts	143,972	191,260
Staff Costs	164,790	190,126
Loan Interest/Capital Repay't.	4,973	4,956
Total other Payments	273,305	391,082
Balances c/fwd	317,596	239,215
Total Cash and Investments	310,477	224,172
Total Fixed Assets	5,787,762	5,860,287
Total Borrowings	16,815	13,156

The External Auditor raised no matters of concern.

## Crewkerne & West Crewkerne Joint Burial Committee

The Committee meets 4 times a year, including an Annual Meeting in June, where there is a walk around the cemetery grounds and chapel to allow Councillors to review completed work and also discuss future maintenance requirements.

A major focus this year has been the remedial work on the chapel walls and interior plasterwork, which were suffering because of damp issues. The first phase of work, which addressed the exterior and interior walls of the chapel's southern transept, is now complete. The interior of the chapel has also benefitted from the installation of modern heaters and lighting.

In setting the annual budget, the Committee has taken into consideration the fact that the remedial work to the chapel needs to be continued and also that the cemetery lodge requires repairs to the roof. A further forthcoming expenditure is the need to tarmac the main cemetery driveway, which all visitors will know is in a poor state. With these significant expenditures in mind, the Committee has regrettably had to increase the cemetery fees for interments etc, although it is important to bear in mind that the fees remain comparable with those of neighbouring cemeteries.

In September there was once again an open day at the cemetery, which included a talk and guided tour. Both talk and tour were very well received by visitors.

During the year there have been 40 interments which include both full and ashes burials. 22 grave plots have also been purchased.

I should like to thank all those involved with the cemetery for the care and attention given to this integral part of our community. It is a pleasure to be a part of a committee which strives to ensure the ongoing day to day management of the cemetery.

Cllr. Mrs Julia Borland, Chairman

## Council Aims and Achievements

### To support and provide cultural, social and sporting activities

- The Council held the first Somerset Day Craft Fair. Crewkerne's traders joined in by flying Somerset flags and the craft fair was a great success with all stalls held by people living and working in the County.
- The big event in the summer was Bincombe Fayre, another first for the Council. The aim was to highlight the nature reserve at Bincombe Beeches and encourage people to enjoy this beautiful area that is on Crewkerne town centre's doorstep. The Council received very positive feedback on the event and plan to hold another fayre in 2019.
- Lighting Up Night, always held on the last Friday in November was another successful evening. Although organised by the Christmas Committee, two Councillors and one officer sit on the Committee which the Town Council then supports in any way that it can. The Town Council also organises the Christmas Tree in Market Square and the installation of the Christmas lights in the town.
- The annual Christmas Market took place on Saturday 9 December and was well attended by traders and shoppers.

- As the list below shows, the Council provided grant funding support to a number of local cultural, social and sporting community groups.
- The Town Council, working with Crewkerne's Museum and Heritage Centre, made an application to Historic England to have the World War 2 Pill Box on Yeovil Road listed as a building of Special Architectural and Historic Interest. This application has now been approved. As a result, the pillbox is now protected as a Grade 2 listed building.
- The Council continues to support the weekly Youth Club during at the GRC.

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

Crewkerne Town Council works closely with the Police and Fire Service via the Community Safety Group and the Community Safety event held in September once again proved popular.

### No Attendance Allowances to Councillors

Councillors continue to be voluntary, giving their time without payment. Only the Mayor receives a £500 civic allowance, in addition both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor receive limited sums for attendance at local civic events.

### To liaise with and support voluntary groups – Community Grants Awards for 2018/19

Organisation/Community Group	Grant Awarded	Description
Crewkerne & District Museum & Heritage Centre	£1,500	Support to running costs
Crewkerne Cricket Club	£250	Weed killing of cricket outfield
Crewkerne Local Information Centre	£654	Support to running costs
Crewkerne Tea Dance Group	£210	Support to running costs
CUDOS	£300	Contribution towards replacing scenery flats
Henhayes Community Centre	£1,000	Support to provision of meal services
Rebel Runners	£160	Funding towards run leader courses
Rotary Club of Crewkerne District	£1,000	Support towards St. Bartholomew's Fair
Severalls Jubilee Bowls Club	£300	Contribution to an automatic irrigation system
The Speedwell Club	£1,000	Contribution towards hall renovation
Twinning Association	£200	Support to exchange visits

### Additional Town Council Information

If you have any comments or concerns about issues which affect Crewkerne, please contact:

Crewkerne Town Council, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7LN  
Tel: 01460 74001 Email: [towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk](mailto:towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk) Website: [www.crewkerne-tc.gov.uk](http://www.crewkerne-tc.gov.uk)

- **Council Offices:** Open to the public during the following hours: Monday to Friday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm
- **Council Surgeries:** Held every third Saturday of the month (except August) in the Community Office at the Town Hall.
- **Council Meetings:** All meetings start at 6.45 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall.