

# Crewkerne Town Council

## NEWSLETTER

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### Town Clerk Recruitment

The current Town Clerk, Peter Davidson, will be retiring in the near future and so the Council has been through a campaign to recruit a replacement. This exercise is now complete and we are delighted to welcome Katharine Sheehan as the new Town Clerk.



The office team: Laura (Deputy Clerk), Katharine (new Town Clerk), Peter ("retiring soon" Town Clerk) and Paula (Finance Officer)

Katharine is currently the Clerk to three local parishes. Having grown up in the area, Katharine has returned to live locally, so she is very familiar with the challenges facing the town. She said *"I am delighted to be joining the team at the Town Council and am looking forward to a new challenge. Crewkerne is very close to my heart and I hope to be able to serve the community in my new role"*. Peter added, *"The Town Council staff are an enthusiastic and dedicated team, who work tirelessly to support the Council and the people of Crewkerne. I am incredibly proud of the whole team and know that they will support Katharine as well as they have supported me"*.

Peter and Katharine will be working closely together over the next couple of months to ensure a smooth handover.

### Boost for Local Businesses

South Somerset District Council (SSDC) has provided £14,000 of grant funding to support Crewkerne's local business community as they recover from the pandemic.

SSDC has now authorised the Town Council to work with the business community to find ways to best utilise this funding. Leighton Ballantine, a local businessman in Crewkerne and a member of Crewkerne's local business group, said *"this funding gives us an excellent opportunity to undertake initiatives to encourage more people into the town and boost local businesses, such as a campaign to market the town and holding events in the town centre"*.

### Return of Face-to-Face Council Meetings



With the lifting of covid restrictions, the Town Council has agreed to re-commence face-to-face Council meetings at the Town Hall Council Chamber, as from September. But the Council also recognises that YouTube live streaming is an excellent way to enable many more people to have visibility of ongoing Council business, so the aim will be to combine face-to-face meetings with simultaneous live streaming.

## Speed Indicator Device

You may have noticed that the Speed Indicator Device (SID) has been deployed in various locations around the town. It is already clear that the SID is being effective in acting as a deterrent to speeding motorists.



We have approval from Highways to locate the SID on the following roads: North Street, Station Road, Chard Road, Ashlands Road, East Street, Hermitage Street and Mount Pleasant, and we are working on gaining approval for a new post so that we can also deploy the SID in Broadshard.



The SID is a useful tool to help deter speeding motorists, but in the past the Community Speedwatch was also very effective. We are keen to get Community Speedwatch up and running again, but for that we need volunteers. If you would like to be part of it, please register your interest with Laura, the Deputy Clerk ([deputyclerk@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk](mailto:deputyclerk@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk))

## George Reynolds Centre Update

The GRC is now open for bookings for both rooms upstairs. The changing rooms on the ground floor are also now available for use by the sports clubs. And last but not least, the Council is working hard to re-establish a functioning bar and to have catering facilities available. Watch this space!



## Crewkerne in Bloom News Update

The Crewkerne in Bloom (CiB) volunteers have been especially busy over the last few weeks as they prepared for the visit from the South West in Bloom judges. The judges have now visited the town and there is a long wait until October until we see whether Crewkerne will once again win a prestigious award.



The Town Council would like to thank the CiB team and all of the other volunteers who put so much effort into making the town look its best this summer, not just in the town centre but also at other sites in and around the town, such as the Townsend cemetery and at our historic pill box.



## MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

The Council is re-launching its "Coffee with your Councillors" events. The first one will take place on **Tuesday 7 September at 10am at Bilby's.**



## ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVES

Cllr. Alice Samuel, one of our new Councillors, has a passion for the environment and has already put forward a number of ideas to the Council for environmental initiatives. Cllr. Samuel said *“there are many ways that the Town Council can assist in promoting and supporting a cleaner, greener, Crewkerne”*. These are some of the proposals either already underway or in the pipeline:

- **Air Quality Monitoring**



The Council has received a number of complaints about poor air quality in the town centre, perhaps not surprising when you consider the volume of traffic passing through the town. With the aid of SSDC grant funding, the Council is to install an air quality monitoring station in the town centre. This will allow us to measure air quality levels and, if it comes to seeking support from bodies like the Environment Agency, then having measured data to support our case will be key.

- **Encouraging Biodiversity**

The Council owns a number of large open spaces. Traditionally these are cut as short grass, but this summer you will have noticed that clearly defined areas at Bincombe nature reserve, Barn Street recreation ground, the unused area of the cemetery and the grassed area surrounding the tennis courts at Severalls, have been allowed to grow as meadow grass. The result has been a boon to wildlife: wildflowers, butterflies, bees and crickets have all thrived in these areas.



- **Engaging with Young People**

Cllr. Samuel said: “young people are our future, so it is vital to engage and involve young people in our efforts to improve the local environment.” Our plan is to engage with the local schools, to encourage and support young people and their environment ideas and projects.

- **Plant a Tree for Jubilee**

Next June will be a great opportunity to involve members of the public to remember this special date, as well as encouraging wildlife and improving Crewkerne’s green footprint.

- **Battery-powered horticultural tools**

Traditionally, the strimmers and hedge trimmers used by the grounds team have been petrol-powered. These machines are both noisy and environmentally unfriendly. So the Council is moving away from petrol-powered tools and switching to battery power. Our new battery-powered machines are much quieter than the old petrol-powered models and of course far more environmentally friendly.

- **Nature Trail at Bincombe**



The Council is considering how it could introduce a nature trail at the Bincombe nature reserve. The trail would certainly feature more of the wooden sculptures which have become such a feature of Bincombe, but our ideas also include adding bird and bat nesting boxes and possibly an environmentally sympathetic adventure trail.

**If you have other ideas which could improve our local environment and where the Town Council could assist, then please let us know.**

## Annual Open Day at Townsend Cemetery Sunday 12 September: 12 – 3 pm



The historic burial registers will be available for visitors who wish to undertake family history research.

At 12.30 pm, there will be a talk from Tracey Warren, a local funeral director, who will also give a guided tour of some of the notable graves in the cemetery.

## Bincombe Beeches Volunteer Dates



Regular monthly volunteer days will be resuming and are run on Bincombe Beeches by the Council's Grounds and Amenities Supervisor. Forthcoming volunteer days:-

**Thursday 23 September and 21 October**

**Unfortunately, refreshments cannot be provided.**

**Please bring your own gloves**

*Everyone welcome, just turn up from 10 am onwards, please meet at the entrance by Beechwood Drive.*

## The Annual Town Meeting of Electors will take place on Monday 6 September at 7.30pm in Victoria Hall, Market Square.

Cllr. Kathy Head, the Mayor of Crewkerne, said "we were not able to hold an Annual Town Meeting last year because of covid and this year's event had to be postponed until September. This year, I am keen to celebrate those groups who gave vital support during the pandemic."

As always, there will be tea, coffee, soft drinks and biscuits available to all.

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