



## **CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Annual Report**

#### **Year Ending 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

The past year for Chatteris Town Council was one of consolidation and building on recent achievements. A prime example of this was the Midsummer Festival, which was the most successful to date.

Despite very wet weather on the Friday hundreds of schoolchildren enjoyed learning about the past at the school's living history day. Over the weekend the sun came out and so did the crowds to enjoy a wide variety of entertainment which included a Party in the Park, dog show, It's a Knockout and Tug of War competitions. The Festival was a shining example of partnership working between the Town Council, Fenland District Council and volunteers from the community.

On a more serious note the Council relentlessly pursued two objectives – road safety improvements in Wenny Road and changes to the new electoral arrangements for the town due to be introduced in May 2015.

Both campaigns are on the road to success with funding secured from the Jointly Funded Highways Improvements scheme for the Wenny Road improvements and Fenland District Council undertaking a Community Governance Review into electoral arrangements.

During the year the Council also:

- a) Agreed to begin the process of drawing up a new Town Plan after considering a report by the Clerk and the Financial Officer on the merits and drawbacks of a Town Plan as opposed to a Neighbourhood Plan.
- b) Funded the materials for the refurbishment of the Town Sign with the work very kindly carried out on a voluntary basis by local artists Mr Richard Savage and Mr Kelvin Palmer.
- c) Agreed to fund the re-printing of the Town Guide after the Rotary Club kindly agreed to update the guide.
- d) Began work on re-establishing the Millennium Walk around Chatteris.
- e) Gave grants and financial aid to voluntary organisations.
- f) Organised and funded another successful series of Summer Fun shows for children during the summer holidays and a one-off Summer Fun Extra show in January.

- g) Saved two former gas lights, which were taken down in Wood Street, for use in a future scheme.
- h) Helped to ensure a commemorative slab for George Cross awardee Pte George Clare will be laid near the war memorial in Chatteris and assisted the Royal British Legion in seeking improvements to the war memorial.
- i) Hosted Neighbourhood Forum meetings.
- j) Unveiled a tree and plaque in memory of Cllr Rosemary Stimson.
- k) Opposed the building of a giant anaerobic digester near Mepal Outdoor Centre and plans to build on FDC car parks at Fenview and Westbourne Close.
- l) Helped to fund improvements to the Victoria Street/West Park Street/Huntingdon Road junction in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council.
- m) Complained about potholes and road surfaces in the town.
- n) Supported a dispersal order for Furrowfields.
- o) Visited the site of the new Tesco's store to see work on moving the river.
- p) Set up a Twitter account as part of the Leisure Group's communication strategy for the Council.
- q) Successfully administered over 130 allotments and funded a new roadway and security gate at the allotments.
- r) Supported the opening of the new community hub at the library and FDC's campaign against dog fouling.
- s) Supported a charity fun run organised by pupils of Cromwell Community College.
- t) Met with pupils of Cromwell Community College and Mr Bob Ollier, FDC's open spaces manager, to discuss plans for a new skate park at Wenny Road Recreation Ground.
- u) Met with Highways Officers to discuss a cycle route in Wood Street/Eastwood and possible bus stop improvements.
- v) Considered regular updates from Fenland District Council on their work in the town, CCTV issues, Street Scene issues and Section 106 payments.

**Speakers and guests at Town Council and working group meetings included:**

PCSOs Martin Bogunovic, Sam Dyer, Tracey Liano and Sgt Martin Monger with police updates and policing issues in the town.

Cllr Sandra Rylance on County Council issues including the TB outbreak in Chatteris.

Mrs Jenny Hodson, managing director of Roddons, and Ms Sarah Gove, FDC housing and communities manager, on house letting policies.

Miss Nicola Fenton, outreach worker for the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner, on the work of the Commissioner.

Mr John Merryweather and Ms Annabel Tighe, from FDC's environmental health team, on their work.

Mr Bob Ollier, FDC parks and open spaces manager, with updates.

Mr Steve Lucas, of the Princes Trust, on a new team programme.

Mrs Ellen Arkle, PCC secretary, on the flower festival in the Church.

## The Council

Cllr John Chambers was re-elected Mayor for a second term of office in May and represented the Council at a number of events during the year. Cllr James Carney was also re-elected, to the office of Deputy Mayor, and also attended events representing Cllr Chambers.

Shown below is the number of full meetings of the Council members attended during the year (with the total number of full meetings in brackets). Most members also attended monthly meetings of the planning working group and/or monthly and bi-monthly meetings of the leisure and general purposes working group. Councillors also represented the Council on numerous outside bodies.

L Ashley	10 (12)	J Burrow	7 (12)
J Carney	10 (12)	J Chambers	11 (12)
C Colbert	4 (12)	R Cross	8 (12)
C Howes	10 (12)	P Murphy	12 (12)
F Newell	12 (12)	M Petrou	4 (12)
T Shad	11 (12)	I Taylor	10 (12)

Contact details for the Council are as follows:

### **Birch Ward**

Cllr James Carney, Tel: 692256, 10 Church Lane, Chatteris, PE16 6JA,

Cllr Christine Colbert, Tel: 695770, 19 Pound Road, Chatteris, PE16 6RL

Cllr Mark Petrou, 29 London Road, Chatteris, PE16 6AS

### **The Mills Ward**

Cllr James Burrow, Tel: 696452, 15 Anvil Close, Chatteris, PE16 6DP

Cllr John Chambers, Tel: 696770, 3 West Street, Chatteris, PE16 6HA

Cllr Ian Taylor, Tel: 07712778997, 19 Curlew Avenue, Chatteris, PE16 6PL

### **Slade Lode Ward**

Cllr Richard Cross, Tel: 07885499824, 15 Curlew Avenue, Chatteris, PE16 6PL

Cllr Chris Howes, Tel: 695770, 19 Pound Road, Chatteris, PE16 6RL

Cllr Peter Murphy, Tel: 692582, 28 High Street, Chatteris, PE16 6BG

### **Wenneve Ward**

Cllr Linda Ashley, Tel: 692666, 133 London Road, Chatteris, PE16 6LT

Cllr Florence Newell, Tel: 651001, 7 Turnbull Road, March, PE15 9RX

Cllr Terence Shad, Tel: 760043, 2 Cricketers Way, Chatteris, PE16 6UR

**Town Clerk** – Mrs Joanna Melton and **Financial Officer** – Mr Ivan Cooper, Tel: 695166, e-mail [chatteriscouncil@btconnect.com](mailto:chatteriscouncil@btconnect.com), 14 Church Lane, Chatteris, PE16 6JA

The Town Council meets on the first Tuesday of the month and the meeting includes a 15 minute Open Forum when members of the public can raise issues. This proved to be very popular with someone speaking at every Open Forum. Two members of the public, Mrs Julie Smith and Mr Bill Haggata, attended almost every Council meeting and raised a variety of issues. Among the issues raised during this section during the year were cycle routes access, the state of boardings on derelict buildings, repairs to footpaths, planning application implications, Chatteris food bank, a request for more benches, lights in Wood Street, Section 106 agreements, opposition by residents of Westbourne Close and Fen View to FDC plans to

build on car parks, a call for more buses to Manea railway station, the removal of parts of a wall in Station Street, opposition to an anaerobic digester along the A142 , opposition to plans for the motocross track at Mepal, the need for better signage in Chatteris and a call to block off Topham's Yard due to anti-social behaviour.

The Council's planning working group met most months and made recommendations to Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council on 131 new and revised planning applications. The Leisure working group met bi-monthly to discuss plans for the town's recreation grounds and footpaths, a communication strategy for the Council (including setting up a Twitter account) and updating the Town Plan. They met monthly in the run up to the Annual Town Meeting as they planned an event which would look at the positive aspects of Chatteris and what could be improved. This followed on from the new look Annual Town Meeting in May 2013 which included a film challenging negative preconceptions of Chatteris and a buffet, in addition to the usual reports from the three tiers of local government. The new formula proved to be popular.

Three part-time members of staff are employed by the Council – the Clerk, the Financial Officer and the gardener. The Financial Officer prepared the annual return (which was passed by the Internal and External auditors), prepared the budget, advised on the precept, invested the Council's money, processed grant applications, produced a fire safety report, arranged for a fire risk assessment to be carried out and arranged actions recommended in the report including an electrical installations report. He also represented the Council on the All Weather Pitch management group. The new gardener continued his predecessor's good work in maintaining the allotments, Old Railway Line footpath and open spaces owned by the Town Council and assisting FDC in the maintenance of play areas.