



ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011 BY MAYOR, CLLR. PETER FLEMING

This year of being Mayor of Honiton has gone by so quickly; I have been looking back over the past twelve months to report to all of you what the Town Council has achieved. As elections are due to be held in May to appoint a new Town Council, I am also taking the opportunity to reflect on the achievements of this current Council since 2007.

Recreation

Honiton is not well blessed with green spaces but the Town Council works hard to ensure that the best use is made of the areas we have. Cllrs Boom and Coombs and recently Cllr Allen have been instrumental in these projects.

The Glen is currently owned by East Devon District Council but, thanks largely to Lottery funding acquired in 2007, Councillors and volunteers have worked tirelessly to transform this area – with much clearance of undergrowth, new planting and the laying and repair of paths and steps.

The management of Roundball Wood was taken on by the Town Council in 2002 under a 49-year lease from Combe Estate. Our wardens Richard Howe, David Witt and Nick Boggon have day-to-day responsibility for this unique area which has remained untouched but more accessible through their work on footpaths and gates. Thanks to funding from the East Devon AONB in 2009 and 2010 the wood now benefits from interpretation boards and the wardens have started to organise a series of walks and talks to introduce people to this wonderful resource.



Cllr Coombs leads the Town Council's work on footpaths which are maintained to a high standard, together with the Town Council's seats and trees. We are currently putting together a new leaflet to introduce people to our network of lanes and paths in and around the town.

For some years now Honiton has had no public allotments although it is the duty of the Town Council to provide them if there is a demand. The Council has maintained a waiting list of applicants. With help from the Honiton Allotment Group, potential sites have been investigated but we continue to look for suitable sites to continue to meet an ever-increasing need.

Allhallows is one of the most important green areas in Honiton and is owned by East Devon District Council. During the past year Cllrs Ash and Foster have worked with District Council members and officers to improve the facilities at Allhallows and also to plan the new nature reserve at Battishorne Way.

Following the publication of the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative Plan in 2006, the Town Council has supported the efforts of Honiton Development Trust to improve the sports site provision for the town. Our colleagues in the Development Trust are currently forging ahead with plans to develop a new site at Tower Cross and, through their hard work, we hope to see much better provision for Honiton in the near future.

During the time of this Council both the Town's flowerbeds, hanging baskets and also the bus shelters have been moved to the management of the Town Council and we are pleased to be continuing to improve these assets in Honiton.

continued ...

TOWN CLERK: Mrs. Lyn Hargood

DEPUTY CLERK: Mrs. Sarah Jenkins

Town Council Offices, New Street, Honiton EX14 1EY

Tel/Fax: 01404 42957 towncouncil@honiton.gov.uk

www.honiton.gov.uk

Traffic Issues

Honiton suffers from traffic problems but over the past four years Honiton Town Council has been very successful in bringing this to the attention of the District and County Council as well as the Highways Agency.

The A35 has long been a problem – both in terms of increasingly heavy traffic and also as it acts as a barrier, isolating residents at the eastern part of town. We continue to push and lobby for an eastern by-pass which came so close to being built a few years ago. However, in the meantime Cllr Morgan has led the campaign to improve the situation on the current road. The speed limit has been lowered, traffic calming measures have been introduced and the long-awaited pedestrian crossing has been installed in Monkton Road.

The Turks Head junction remains a concern and the Town Council has pushed hard during planning applications from Lidl and Aldi to ensure that improvements are made. These should be introduced as the new developments are finalised.

Residents of Dowell Street have quite rightly been concerned about the traffic and pollution in their part of town and the Town Council has hosted a number of meetings with Devon County Council Highways to see what could be done to address this. Cllr Farnham has been particularly proactive on this matter. The Highways Agency has installed signage on the A30 and on the M5 directing HGV traffic away from the Cullompton-Honiton road and the situation has more recently been eased by the move of the refuse lorries from Heathpark but much remains to be done in this area and we continue to work with our partners to find solutions.

We have also worked with Devon County Council Highways to address residents' concerns about on-street parking and a programme of yellow lining was completed in 2010. At the same time the taxi rank on the High Street was increased and moved to a better site, a new loading bay near Silver Street and a disabled parking bay were also introduced. We are very pleased that Devon County Council listened to the concerns of the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce regarding their plans to introduce parking meters and that this is currently on hold while County Councillors and Officers meet with us to discuss options that suit the town.



We are currently working with East Devon District Council on air quality matters and the majority of the centre of the town has been declared an Air Quality Management Area. We will continue to work with the Officers at EDDC on this important work.

Lobbying & Consultation

Honiton's traffic problems have also been uppermost in Councillors' minds when responding to East Devon District Council's Local Development Framework and to Devon County Council's Transport Plan. It is an important role of the Town Council to be able to put forward the views of the town and ensure they are taken seriously by the other authorities and we await the outcome of both these pieces of work.

The Local Development Framework aims to set out the plans for the Town for the next 25 years and the Town Council therefore felt that this was a matter that needed to be widely consulted on with the public. The Council held a number of public events and also conducted a residents' survey. All this feedback was used in the Town Council's response to the consultation and I am grateful to all Councillors involved, especially Cllr Groves, for their work on this.

Honiton Town Council has also been at the forefront of public meetings and discussions with a range of other organisations on the future of The Bungalow and on overturning the decision to reduce the service offered by the excellent Maternity Unit at Honiton Hospital. I am grateful to both Cllrs Boom and Whitlock for leading on these campaigns.

It is also, of course, within the life of this current Council that the Tesco planning application and appeal happened – in 2008. Led by our very able Chair of Planning, Cllr Teare, and by our representative at the Appeal, Cllr Coombs, the Town Council worked very closely with residents, businesses and other organisations in the town to explain the devastating effect that the building of a Tesco superstore in Ottery Moor Lane would have on the town centre.

continued

Street Market

It was with great delight that the Town Council learned in 2009 that East Devon District Council was prepared to transfer the management of Honiton Street Market. This had been an ambition of the Town Council for some time as it felt that the running of this important part of the town should belong to the town so that there could be more local input. Since that time the street market has gone from strength to strength and is now run by our Market Manager, Tony McCollum, ably supported by his assistant, Dave Smyth.

From the beginning the Town Council has run the market as a business and it has always been in profit, meaning that no funding has been invested into its running costs from the taxpayers. As well as fully covering its costs of staffing, advertising, materials and refuse disposal, profits from the market have also paid towards the town's Christmas lights, Charter Day and the entertainers that we now arrange to be in town every Saturday during the summer. I am grateful to Cllr Casson for leading on market matters so ably to ensure its success from the start.

The transformation of the market is very pleasing and we are therefore looking to build on this success during 2011 by the introduction of a monthly Thursday market specialising in local crafts and produce. This is part of our plan to market Honiton as a hub for local products and will also involve highlighting the wide range of shops in the town that also sell locally-made and locally-grown goods.

Civic Functions

This Council has seen the celebration of 750 years of the town market and the introduction of the annual Charter Day. The Town is well served with events in the town centre throughout the year, including Hot Pennies, Remembrance, Armed Forces Day and the two Carnivals. During this past year we were also involved in the March for Honour and we have celebrated the success of the launch of The Baton.

There are many people in Honiton who give a great deal of their time to make our Town a better place and this year we recognised three of them by making Alan Rowe, Steve Parsons and Colin Wright Honoured Citizens – an award that is only given every five years.

I would also like to pay tribute to the Mayor's cadets from the Air Training Corps and the Army Cadets. These young people are always reliable and have supported me at a number of functions. From this year they will be joined by a new cadet from the St John Ambulance Service.

Community Complex

The Town Council has worked hard over the past four years to finally develop a community centre for the Town that is fit for purpose and open to all. We are working to ensure that the views of all residents are taken into account. We are currently waiting for a final decision from East Devon District Council on both funding and site and this will no doubt be a major issue for the new Council when it is elected in May.

Supporting Our Residents

During the time of this Council we have endeavoured to work far more closely with local organisations and individual residents. We were pleased to support the formation of the Senior Council, with whom we have a good relationship and whom we were pleased to support in the setting up of the Memory Cafe. We have also worked closely with young people in the Town and will shortly be involving them more closely with the work of the Council through a Student Ambassador scheme. We have also developed a very good relationship with Link-Up to ensure that our young people with disabilities are included in our thinking. Our enquiry desk is open every morning and I would like to thank our Clerk's Assistants, Carolyn Bowles and Cherie Batty, for the work they do on behalf of our residents to find answers to their enquiries.

Supporting Local Organisations

I never cease to be amazed at the time and effort put in by all Town Councillors on behalf of Honiton. In addition to attendance at Town Council, committee and working group meetings most Councillors also take on representation of the Council with a number of local organisations. The Town Council's presence and input can bring significant experience and other benefits to these organisations. For example, Cllr Corke represents the Council on Honiton Festival and has ensured an ongoing and good understanding between the two organisations. At the same time Cllr Cornwell has recently taken on representation on the Thelma Hulbert Gallery Management Group, ensuring good communication with the Council. Cllr Howard continues to be the Town Council's main link with the Twinning Association. Cllr Taylor is now working closely with the Citizens Advice Service.

continued ...

In addition the Town Council awards a number of annual grants to help local organisations with their costs; this is an area that we as a Council are keen to continue at this time of cutbacks from other areas of local government. The Council financially supports the Tourist Information Centre, the Citizens Advice Service and TRIP community transport. In addition it awards funding to the Garden Club to ensure that the main town flowerbed in front of St Paul's is well maintained and planted and annually gives funding to the Library for their production of the very well regarded publication "What's On". In total, over the past four years of this Council £63,000 has been given out to help local organisations.

Marketing

As a Town Council we have striven to work ever closer with a range of organisations in Honiton and one of our major successes has been to bring together the Chamber of Commerce, Tourist Information Centre, Allhallows Museum, Thelma Hulbert Gallery, Development Trust, Community College and Library into one group looking at the development and co-ordination of marketing for the town. This group has been extremely active under the Chairmanship of Cllr Whitlock and has developed an excellent marketing plan as well as a recognised town logo and corporate colour used by a number of partners and also a range of marketing materials, adverts and banners marketing the town far and wide, ensuring significant savings on both duplication and expenditure.

Council Services

We have been fortunate in having the services of both Cllr Ash and Cllr Halse over the past four years as both Town and District Councillors. In addition we have been grateful to Cllr Olive of East Devon District Council and Cllrs Diviani and Randall Johnson of Devon County Council for their attendance at our meetings. All of these relationships ensure a good level of communication between the various councils.

I would as always like to thank our Town Clerk, Lyn Hargood, and her Deputy, Sarah Jenkins, for the work they do not only in advising and helping the Councillors but also in organising all our meetings, carrying out research for us, and being available to all residents and businesses, whatever their queries. We are fortunate as a Council to be very well informed and trained and to have both an agreed Service Plan and Budget to work to. Both our Clerk and Deputy Clerk are now qualified and the Council itself became a Quality Council during this time as well as adopting the Power of Wellbeing, allowing it to do far more for the community it serves.

Cllr Peter Fleming, Mayor of Honiton

HONITON TOWN COUNCIL Statement of Income and Expenditure for year ending 31 March 2011

	2009/10	2010/11		2009/10	2010/11
	£p	£p		£p	£p
INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
Precept	116000.00	139993.00	Council Expenses	8720.36	8216.27
East Devon District Council	2679.75	2404.00	Subscriptions	1386.50	1535.78
Devon County Council P3	400.00	485.00	Environment / Tourism	46260.98	39737.39
Street Market	32336.10	32785.95	Promotion	3606.20	3579.49
Bank Interest	1125.24	561.71	Grants	18960.00	21493.08
Fundraising, Grants	6136.53	8390.09	Democratic Services	10822.78	11780.39
Refunds	107.97	284.75	Premises	20621.90	6234.03
Insurance Claims	3931.87	0.00	Staffing Costs	61078.73	66644.82
Miscellaneous	207.98	0.00	Capital Schemes	0.00	0.00
			Doubtful Debts	0.00	0.00
TOTAL INCOME	162925.44	184904.50	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	171457.45	159221.25
Net Income/Expenditure				-8532.01	<u>25683.25</u>

COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM MAY 2011

St. Michael's Ward

M.R. ALLEN	50 Marker Way, Honiton, EX14 2EN	46755
N. J. CORNWELL	15 Woodmans Cres. EX14 2DY	47478
D FOSTER	17 Roundball Close EX14 2NU	45106
Mrs S. GROVES	8 Gronau Close, EX14 2YT	47654
P. HALSE	Eddystone, Langford Road Honiton EX14 1QA	43854
Mrs.S PAVEY	59 Hazelwood Close, EX14 2XA	07740 973990
J.B. TAYLOR	The Annexe, Beechwood, Feniton, EX14 3ED	
V.C. WHITLOCK	30 Rosemount Lane, EX14 1RJ	43959
Mrs.C. YOUNG	11 Laurel Road, Honiton EX142XN	548291

St. Paul's Ward

Miss V. ASH	3 Hillside, Combe Raleigh Honiton EX14 4TJ	42028
R.E. COOMBS	9 Hill Crescent, EX14 2HY	47347
J.P.CORKE	19 The Orchard, Otter Valley Park EX14 4PT	47437
R.A.FARNHAM	Golesworthy Cottage, 16 Dowell Street EX14 1LT	44723
Mrs V.A. HOWARD	Hale Farm Cottage, Axminster Road Honiton, EX14 9TQ	47127
Mrs E.M.TIRARD	First Floor Flat, Monkton House 53 High Street, EX14 1PW	47361