

TALK OF THE TOWN

THE NEWSLETTER OF HONITON TOWN COUNCIL

MARCH 2012

BEEHIVE MOVES FORWARD

After nearly 30 years of waiting, Honiton's Community Complex – The Beehive – took a massive step forward at the beginning of March with the granting of planning permission and the confirmation of financial and technical support from East Devon District Council.

Why are we building it?

Honiton currently has limited facilities for meetings and training; this means that local organisations and local business are hampered in their development. In addition there is limited opportunity for performances by both local and professional organisations; this means that residents of both the town and surrounding villages have to travel further afield for entertainment. In population terms, Honiton is the second largest urban area in East Devon but is less well served in community facilities than most of the other towns and some villages.

Who is it for?

It is first and foremost for the community. The Mackarness Hall is now the largest available venue in the town and is almost fully booked for every evening as well as a number of daytime periods.

What about existing buildings?

Talks have been going on over the past two years concerning all existing buildings in the town to see whether they could be made suitable.



- a) **Magistrates Court** The site is owned by Crown Estates and it is their intention to develop the site for housing, which would bring them more income.
- b) **Red Cross Hall** The site is owned by the British Red Cross and it is their intention to develop the site for housing; as a charity it has an obligation to maximise its assets
- c) **British Legion Hall** The site is owned by the Royal British Legion and it is their intention to develop the site for housing; as a charity it has an obligation to maximise its assets and the cost of the land alone would be about £1.25m
- d) **Carlton Inn** The developer was approached to discuss the option of taking on the building on a long term lease; this was not supported by East Devon District Council
- e) **Mackarness Hall** Discussions took place with St Paul's Church, who own the Mackarness Hall. The church was not willing to sell the hall but discussions took place regarding a long lease. East Devon District Council did not believe that the layout of the site would allow significant redevelopment. It was also felt that taking on the Mackarness Hall would not overcome the current problems of lack of community space.
- f) **St Pauls Church** Discussions took place regarding the conversion of the significant space above the narthex, which could produce two halls on two floors. Outline plans were drawn up but these showed that the space would be significantly impacted by the need for disability access and also by the existing structural pillars.
- g) **Cattle Market** This site has been discussed over the years with East Devon District Council. However the site is not owned by the District Council and is subject to a covenant relating to its use as a market. East Devon District Council has therefore advised that it is not a viable option.

- h) **Pit Club** This building has been looked at but purchase and refurbishment would total about £1.1m and would only give space to house the Town Council and provide one hall for the community.
- i) **Current Town Council Premises** The current premises are owned by East Devon District Council. They are in poor structural condition and do not comply with disability legislation. There would be limited space for community use.

How much will it cost the taxpayer?

The building itself will cost £1.2m but surveys, professional fees and initial fitting out make the total approximately £2m. The Town Council is applying for a loan from the Public Works Loan Board of £975,000. This will be at a fixed rate of interest over 50 years and will be approximately £50,000 per annum (equal to £5.50 per year per elector); this amount is already affordable from the current precept and it is not intended that the precept will rise to cover building costs. The Honiton precept is significantly lower than that of some other towns and some rural parishes in East Devon.

One of the main problems with community facilities is the ongoing running costs. To overcome this problem, it is intended that the Town Council, the Registrar and the Robert Owen Communities charity will relocate to the community complex, guaranteeing an annual income. With this cushion, it will be possible to offer the facilities to local people and organisations at a reduced cost and still ensure that running costs are covered.

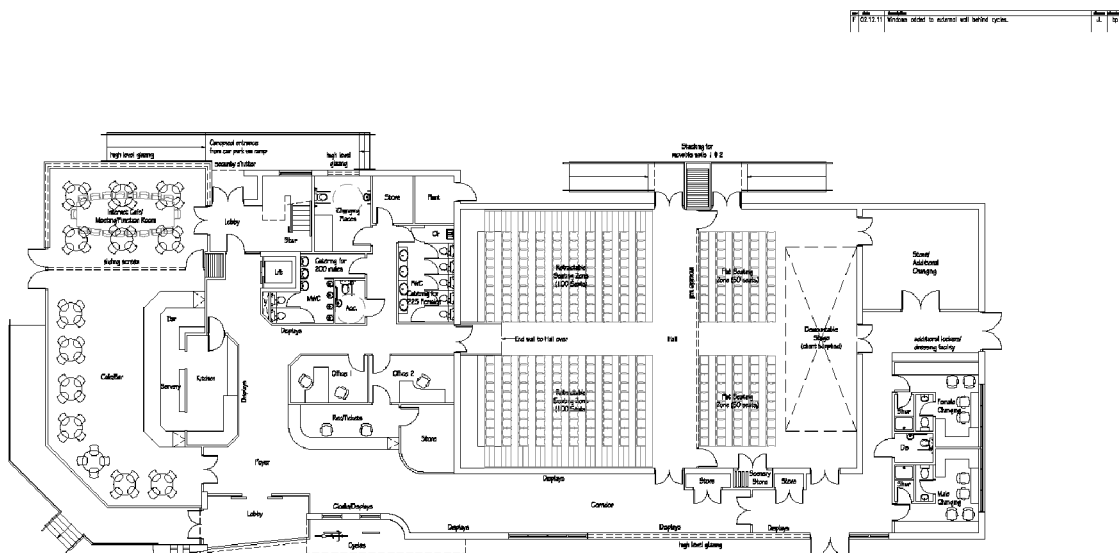
Is this just a new home for the Town Council?

The Town Council is moving into the community complex for two reasons. Firstly, its current premises are not fit for purpose, especially disabled access, and it would cost the taxpayer more to relocate the Council to alternative premises. Secondly, by transferring the current running costs of the Town Council to the community complex there is an overall saving.

The offices being provided for Town Council staff, together with the function room that will be used as a Council Chamber, have all been designed to be multi-purpose and able to be used for a wide variety of community activities.

Who will use it?

The Town Council at the end of 2011 surveyed local organisations and this has shown a minimum of 24 organisations wanting to use the facilities on a regular basis. In addition it is intended that programmes of entertainment and participation will be run for the general public; rooms will be available for hire for parties etc; a cafe and internet cafe will be available; and the Registrar will be more accessible for registration of births and deaths and will be able to re-introduce marriage ceremonies in Honiton.



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SCALE 1:100@A2
DATE: 20.11.11

THE HONITON COMMUNITY COMPLEX, DOWELL STREET HONITON
GROUND FLOOR PLAN 21157102F



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP



bailey partnership
COMMUNITY SMART PROJECTS CO-ORDINATORS

Is this a good time to be spending this sort of money?

The Town Council is very aware of the current financial situation but believes that Honiton needs to develop so that it is self-sustaining and attracts other people to the town to enhance its viability and prosperity. By building now, the Town Council is able to take advantage of very low interest rates for the loan required. There should of course be extra local work available during the construction.

Are we sure people want it?

Since the 1990s the Town Council has carried out over 30 public consultations including public meetings, leaflets and questionnaires to every household, Councillors' question times, consultations with local groups and organisations, consultations with disability groups and young people. With the exception of the Town Poll in 2010 all of these have shown the majority of residents to be in favour of the project.

When will it be built?

It is estimated that the building will be completed in 2013.

Is this just a project of the Town Council?

At all times this project has been planned in conjunction with East Devon District Council as it meets the strategies laid down for the Honiton area in their Local Plan.

Will local groups be able to afford it?

Charges for the community complex have been proposed in three bands: (a) commercial rates (b) private/registered charity rates (c) community rates. Most local groups would fall into category (c) and prices at this band have been set to be comparable with other local facilities, with the large hall being available for £60 a session, the upstairs function room being available for £30 a session and small meeting rooms being available at £20 a session.

How much do you need to fundraise?

The cost of the build, associated fees and basic fitting out is estimated at £2,000,000. Most of this is covered by developer money (that can only be used for a community facility), a grant from East Devon District Council, reserves built up by the Town Council, and the loan. This leaves just over £100,000 to find and the Town Council's fundraising group is now actively working on this.

GRANTS AWARDED TO LOCAL GROUPS -

Honiton Town Council has recently awarded their annual grants to local organisations and are so impressed by the volunteers they have agreed to increase their budget for next year to £19,250.

FUNDRAISING TAKES OFF

Fundraising for The Beehive - Honiton Community Complex started at the beginning of the year and we've raised £2,811 so far. As we have just got planning and confirmation of funding from East Devon District Council, we think it's time for the official fundraising launch and an opportunity for the town to celebrate this great opportunity to build our own community venue.

Please come and join us on Saturday, 7th April at the Mackarness Hall from 10am – 2pm for The Beehive Bazaar! We will have a delicious breakfast ready for you plus hot cross buns and cakes. There will be various stalls and local organisations present and we will be launching our fabulous 100 PRIZES DRAW. We will have entertainers and fun activities for the young and old-er. Come and experience a taste of the kinds of things we can do in The Beehive once it is built.

We are also running an Easter Competition for children with 5 prizes. The winner receives a day ticket for four to Becky Falls Animal & Woodland Park (worth £32) and four runners up win chocolate bunnies! Collect your entry form from the town council office on New Street for £1 per sheet.

We have lots more planned this year to raise £106,000 so if you are able to help in any way whatsoever please get in touch. From baking cakes to staffing stalls, washing up, playing an instrument or designing a poster – there really is something everyone can do to help raise the funds we need for our very own community centre. And if you don't have the spare time but would like to make a donation, please get in touch today, we'd love to hear from you. Email sdpavey@gmail.com call Sharon on 07740 973990 or simply pop into the town council office on New Street.

EASTER PROMOTION

This Voucher may be redeemed for

£1 off first £5 spent

At the Honiton market stall

of your choice on

Tuesday 3rd, Thursday

5th or

Saturday 7th April 2012



HONITON GETS READY FOR JUBILEE

The Jubilee planning committee has been meeting to put together an interesting and exciting programme for Honiton to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June. In addition to the Jubilee display being shown all year at Allhallows Museum, the range of Union flags flying in the town, the Jubilee tree being planted in the Millennium Green, celebration bell-ringing and the various street parties being organised, Honiton will be enjoying:-

Saturday 2nd June: Senior Citizens Tea Party in the Senior Citizens Centre including slide show of 60 years in Honiton (courtesy of Allhallows Museum)

Hospiscare Supper Evening in the Mackarness Hall

Jubilee Street Market

Family Tea Parties outside St Pauls and the Baptist Church

Sunday 3rd June: Big Lunch in Allhallows – bring your own and enjoy the fun.

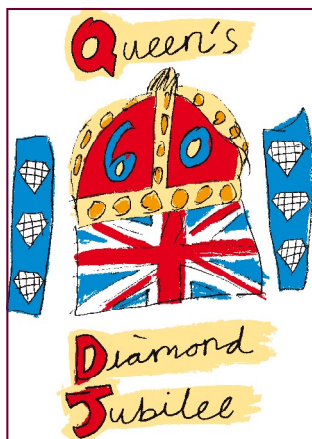
Celebratory evensong at St Pauls Church.

Monday 4th June Children's Jubilee Races in Allhallows

Tuesday 5th June Millennium Green Band Concert

Thursday 7th June Memory Cafe Tea Party

Saturday 9th June Free concert at St Paul's Church – a concert of local talent



GARY ELLIOT JOINS HONITON TOWN COUNCIL



COUNCIL MEMBERS

ST. MICHAEL'S WARD

M.R. ALLEN	50 Marker Way, Honiton, EX14 2EN	46755
N. CORNWELL	15 Woodmans Crescent, EX14 2DY	47478
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D FOSTER	17 Roundball Close EX14 2NU	45106
Mrs. S. GROVES	8 Gronau Close, EX14 2YT	47654
P. HALSE	Eddystone, Langford Road EX14 1QA	43854
Mrs. S. PAVEY	59 Hazelwood Close, EX14 2XA	07740 973990
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ST. PAUL'S WARD

Miss V. ASH	3 Hillside, Combe Raleigh, Honiton EX14 4TJ	42028
L.G. BAYLISS	69 Langford Avenue EX14 1QE	42450
R.E. COOMBS	9 Hill Crescent, EX14 2HY	47347
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Miss M.V. HARMAN	12 Mount Close, Honiton EX14 1QZ	41585
Mrs V.A. HOWARD	Hale Farm Cottage, Axminster Road Honiton, EX14 9TQ	47127
Mrs E. TIRARD	1st Floor Flat, 53 High St. EX14 1PW	47361
J.Z. ZARCZYNSKI	74 Streamers Meadow, EX14 2DL	234087

TOWN CLERK: Mrs. Lyn Hargood
 DEPUTY CLERK: Mrs. Sarah Jenkins
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