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# Honiton

## TALK OF THE TOWN

THE NEWSLETTER OF HONITON TOWN COUNCIL

December 2017

### CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The festive season is once again upon us and as Town Mayor and Chairman of Honiton Town Council I would like to wish the good people of Honiton a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. 2017 has been a very challenging year for the Town Council. We have seen councillor resignations, elections and new councillors being co-opted on to the Council. However I am pleased to say this new united Council is strongly committed to deliver a service the people of Honiton justly deserve.

The Council is now looking forward to the New Year working with the Chamber of Commerce to keep our High Street attractive to visitors and to encourage new businesses into the town. The Council's appointed working group is working hard to revitalise Tourist Information after the unfortunate closure of the Tourist Information Centre in Lace Walk Car Park. The group is also looking into promoting Honiton nationwide through social media. Honiton is a vibrant town, a town we should all take pride in to call our home.



I am pleased to say Honiton will soon have a night landing site for the Air Ambulance Service at Mountbatten Park which has been identified as the most suitable location within the town's boundaries with its good road access and close proximity to the A30. Honiton is a vibrant town and we have seen it grow over the years with much new housing, major supermarket chains and the Premier Inn locating here. The Council looks forward to welcoming East Devon District Council which in 2018 will be relocating into its new headquarters currently under construction at Heathpark.

The Town Council's Planning Committee has had its work cut out over the years, never losing sight of the fact that the town's green spaces must be protected and our high street architecture is not spoilt with modernisation to businesses. Work towards extending and linking up our town's riverside walk is also ongoing.

As Mayor I would welcome more public attendance to the Council's monthly meetings so the public get first hand information concerning the workings of the Council and just how much is being done for the good of the town by dedicated councillors - work that more often than not goes unnoticed. I ask you to please make an effort in 2018 to come and have your say at the Council's public question time. We all need to work together and your views and concerns are important to the Council in shaping the future of Honiton.

Much is being done by councillors working closely with organisations involved in Dementia, Alzheimers and fighting to protect our NHS. There are also councillors appointed as Trustees on

Honiton United Charities and Allhallows Charity. There are Councillor Directors sitting on the board of a Community Interest Company (a Charity based company) which manages the Honiton 55 + Day Care Centre (formerly known as St Michaels) to provide a vital service for Honiton's senior and most vulnerable citizens. I am proud to serve as Chairman of this company. In today's economic climate of cuts in public funding Honiton has much to be proud of and look forward to.

As Town Mayor I would like to offer my thanks and appreciation to all my fellow councillors for their hard work and the support I have received throughout 2017. Above all I wish to thank the people of Honiton for your patience and understanding. The Council is now moving forward with strong determination as your public servants.

**John Zarczynski - Mayor of Honiton**

## **Honiton's Health Matters - Looking forward together**

A Working Together conference held at East Devon District Council on 29<sup>th</sup> September addressed issues surrounding community hospitals, developing resilient communities and the challenges facing voluntary groups within local communities. This, coupled with the fact that the medical beds at Honiton Hospital were closed on August Bank holiday Monday, prompted me to consider how the issue of health, wellbeing and utilizing Honiton hospital in line with identified needs, could be addressed within our communities.

To this end, Honiton Town Council resolved to co-ordinate a meeting to include all key stakeholders and voluntary groups in and around Honiton to meet, discuss and initiate action in relation to 'mapping' local needs and identifying gaps in our current services. The purpose of this meeting will be to explore solutions for collaborative working that will benefit the town and local communities. It was made clear at the Working Together conference that the New Model of Care currently envisaged will rely heavily on prevention, rather than cure. The challenges facing health systems and society require collective action across systems and local communities.

A date has been fixed for 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018 for this process to begin. Action East Devon will be inviting all key stakeholders and voluntary groups to this meeting at The Beehive, home of Honiton Town Council, from 9.30am to 1.30pm. It will be a morning of participation and challenge, and the first step on the ladder of taking our health and services seriously.

**Cllr Sheila Edwards**

## **New Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk appointed**

Honiton Town Council has been fortunate to recruit two new experienced permanent officers to take up the vacant positions of Town clerk and Deputy Town clerk. Mark Tredwin who is the new Town Clerk joined the Council on 18<sup>th</sup> December. Mark who has a background in education was previously Deputy Town Clerk at Lyme Regis Town Council. In his spare time he is a professional diving instructor and holds a pilot's license. Deputy Town Clerk Heloise Marlow, who is a qualified lawyer joins us from Sidmouth Town Council where she was the Planning Clerk. Heloise will start with Honiton Town Council on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018. We welcome Mark and Heloise and wish them every success in their new posts.

## **Grants**

Organisations contributing to the health and well being of Honiton residents and visitors may be eligible for a grant from Honiton Town Council in 2018. Application forms and details can be downloaded from the Honiton Town Council website or contact the Council on 01404 42957.



## **Honiton Neighbourhood Plan update**

### **Having your say on the future of Honiton**

Earlier this year, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group invited residents and local businesses to take part in a detailed survey to discover what they valued about Honiton, and how they would like to see it develop in the future. Consultants were commissioned to analyse the results of the paper and online surveys.

At its latest meeting, the Steering Group discussed the results and began to look at ways to take action on residents' priorities as they put together the Neighbourhood Plan. It is very important that Honiton develops its Plan as, once formally adopted, it must be used by East Devon District Council in considering whether to approve planning applications which affect the town.

The survey showed that residents particularly:

- Value the hospital and health care services in the town, and want to see them maintained
- See our excellent transport links, including its rail service, as great assets.
- Appreciate the range of shops that Honiton offers, but worry about whether this variety will be maintained in the future
- Want to see better facilities for young people in the town
- Want to see our open spaces maintained and improved further
- Want to see small, one to three-bedroom houses, aimed at young families, to be the priority when new housing is being planned and built

In addition, local businesses see a shortage of parking in the town as the biggest problem they face in encouraging people to shop, work and to visit the town.

Over the next few months, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will be talking and meeting with local residents, businesses, schools and local groups, to discuss these ideas. It will also conduct further surveys. Supported by the Town Council, the Group will work to produce proposals to meet these and other priorities that continue to emerge from consulting residents of all ages. At every stage, the Steering Group will keep residents and businesses informed and seek their views. This is truly a community-led process for guiding the future development and growth of the town.

If you would like to become actively involved in the work of the Steering Group itself, as a Community Member, please contact the Town Council Office at The Beehive.