

HONITON

TALK OF THE TOWN

THE NEWSLETTER OF HONITON TOWN COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 2009

Hot Pennies

For the first time in many years, Hot Pennies Day in July dawned grey and cloudy. Undeterred, the Town Crier and Town Mayor ventured out to ensure that this long held tradition in the town continued with all the enthusiasm and support it always generates.

Turning the corner into the High Street from the Town Council offices in New Street, the Mayor at first thought she was going to be alone in the rain as there was hardly anyone to be seen! But as soon as they saw the Town Crier carrying the distinctive garlanded pole, the children of Honiton came out in force from where they had been sheltering.



Honiton Hot Pennies Ceremony dates back to the 13th century, when Honiton was granted a Royal Charter. The ceremony remained unbroken for several hundred years, and to this day always takes place on the first Tuesday after 19 July. The Town Crier's cry of "No man may be arrested so long as this glove is up" ensured that everyone would come to Honiton for the annual fair which followed the ceremony, without fear of being arrested for their debts.

Pennies are collected throughout the year and on the day are warmed. Children stay close to the Town Crier and Mayor at all times so that they may be the first to benefit from the shower of pennies as they are thrown from local public houses.



A35

After many years, and particular pressure by the Town Council over the past two years, work is at last starting by the Highways Agency on road safety measures on the A35 in Honiton.

The scheme that has been approved will include a new signalised crossing in Monkton Road, a crossing point on Kings Road by the Copper Castle, a reduction in the speed limit to 30mph in Kings Road, improvements to the slip road from the A30, better bus stop provision and better signage.

The Town Council, while welcoming these improvements, is still pressing for the reinstatement of an eastern bypass to overcome the social isolation and dangerous conditions for residents in this eastern part of the town.



Charter Day

This year saw the third anniversary of Charter Day, held on the Saturday following Hot Pennies. Originally devised as a week-long celebration to recognise the 750th anniversary of the granting of the market charter to the town, Charter Day has quickly become a recognisable and welcome event in the Honiton calendar.

This year the High Street and surrounding area were taken over by a wealth of activity with many traders, shopkeepers and Councillors dressed up in medieval costume. The sun shone and encouraged many visitors into the town to see what was going on and they were suitably entertained by dance groups, majorettes and music while they looked around the market stalls, charity stalls and local shops.



Pictures courtesy of Archant Devon

Speaking at Council Meetings

As part of the Town Council's aim to demonstrate openness of decision making, to promote greater understanding and to ensure the Council listens to and engages with the wider community, the public now have the opportunity to speak directly to either the full Town Council or the Planning Committee at each of its meetings.

This new facility has been welcomed by members of the public and already used to great effect.

For full details of how to put public questions at Town Council and Planning Committee meetings are available in an explanatory leaflet available from the Town Council office or via its website www.honiton.gov.uk

Goodbye and Thank you to Terry

It was with great sadness that we learned that Terry Farebrother, our Market Supervisor, after a period of serious illness, had decided to retire at the end of August this year.

Many people in Honiton will know Terry through his involvement at the heart of so many organisations in the town but it is as the Market Supervisor for the past twelve years that he is best known.

As a mark of its appreciation of everything that Terry has done for the town, the Town Mayor, Cllr Vivienne Ash, made a presentation to him at a small ceremony on 8th September.



Power of Wellbeing

People are often confused about what the Town Council can and cannot do; essentially the Council can only do things for the town where it has a duty or power to do so. In the past this has been quite restrictive so Honiton Town Council was delighted to learn that from this year they could adopt “The Power of Wellbeing”. This is the informal name given to the statutory power enabling the Council to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of Honiton.

The Councillors and the Clerk have had to go through a period of training and put in place a number of strategies and policies to prove it is able to take on this responsibility and at its July meeting was able to confirm that it would adopt the Power of Wellbeing, making it one of the first Councils in Devon to do so.

At all times the Power of Wellbeing is to be used subject to full consultation with the public and so for now the Council is only using it for two established areas of work:

- The running of the street market
- The granting of funding to local organisations who fall outside its other powers but who directly benefit the people of Honiton

As the Council further develops its plans, it will be discussing these with the people of Honiton to ensure that the use of this new power truly meets the needs of the local community.

Honiton Show

The Town Council’s latest “meet the people” event took place at Honiton Show in August. Many people stopped to talk with the Councillors, including many visitors to the area who wanted to know more about the town.



The main concern of residents remains the car parking situation in Honiton and this is a matter that the Town Council is actively taking up with East Devon District Council. Other concerns expressed related to the lack of allotments in the town and a need for improvements to public transport.

Joint Working leads to Improved Marketing for Honiton

Honiton Town Council has been working closely with Honiton Chamber of Commerce and the Honiton Tourist Information Centre on a range of marketing strategies and initiatives. By working together, a marketing plan is being agreed ensuring that all partners share an identity and a brand and jointly agree on a range of marketing material to promote the town.

A new leaflet specifically promoting the town centre, the market, the restaurants and the cultural activities has now been produced and circulated widely to other TICs as well as coach companies. Copies of the leaflet are available from the TIC and the Town Council office.



Honiton Community Complex

Things are now moving ahead rapidly with the long awaited community complex for Honiton. The Town Council is working closely with a project manager from East Devon District Council to ensure that this exciting new facility for the town can become a reality at the designated site near the Thelma Hulbert Gallery.

Designs are at an early stage but it is envisaged that the centre will comprise: -
A central hall with a capacity of 300 people, which will be adaptable for subdividing. It is envisaged that the hall will be used for a number of purposes including theatre groups, cinema, concerts, business conferences, wedding receptions, local group activities etc.

Backstage facilities of storage, changing rooms, WCs and Green Room (which would also double as a small meeting room/break out room)

A bar/café area with access to the Thelma Hulbert Gallery

A booking office and Centre Manager's office

Public WCs

It has been decided that it is imperative that the Town Council staff move to the new site; the need for better facilities has become very clear during the recent refurbishment and addition of new staff. It has however also been recognised that all space needs to be dual purpose wherever possible and will comprise

Offices for Town Council staff, which can also be used to hold small meetings

A council chamber/small meeting room

An IT suite for use by councillors/general public/small businesses and organisations
Public WCs

A lift will be incorporated into the building

The next phase of the development will be to concentrate on specific areas of work

- a) Fundraising
- b) Use of the Centre
- c) Publicity and marketing

If any local resident or business would like to be considered to be included on the working groups being set up to tackle these issues, the Town Council would be delighted to hear from you.

MEMBERS

COUNCILLORS - St. Michael's Ward

M.R. ALLEN	50 Marker Way, Honiton, EX14 2EN	46755
J.J. AYRES	8 Queen Street, Honiton, EX14 1HB	07709 982580
A.B. BOOM	1 Lilley Walk, EX14 2EA	548745
Mrs S.A. CASSON	2 Bramble Lane, Exeter Road EX14 1AS	45367
P.J. FLEMING	3 Glanvill Way, EX14 2GD	43388
M. McGUIRE	208 High Street, EX14 1AJ	46266
J.B. TAYLOR	The Annexe, Beechwood, Feniton, EX14 3ED	
M.J. TEARE	18 Cypress Close, EX14 2YW	46463
V.C. WHITLOCK	30 Rosemount Lane, EX14 1RJ	43959

COUNCILLORS - 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
D FOSTER	17 Roundball Close EX14 2NU	07868 335612
Mrs S. GROVES	8 Gronau Close, EX14 2YT	47654
P. HALSE	Eddystone, Langford Road EX14 1QA	43854
Mrs V.A. HOWARD	Hale Farm Cottage Axminster Road, EX14 9TQ	47127
Mrs M.D. MORGAN	8 Kings Road, EX14 1HW	46933
Mrs L.Hargood	Town Clerk	42957
Mrs C. Bowles	Town Clerk's Assistant	42957
Mrs C. Batty	Town Clerk's Assistant	42957 07980
Mr. T. Lenton	Market Manager	922696

DATES OF FORTHCOMING

MEETINGS -

TOWN COUNCIL: 12th October
09th November
14th December

PLANNING: 6th & 20th October
3rd & 17th November
1st & 17th December

POLICY COMMITTEE 28 September
23rd November