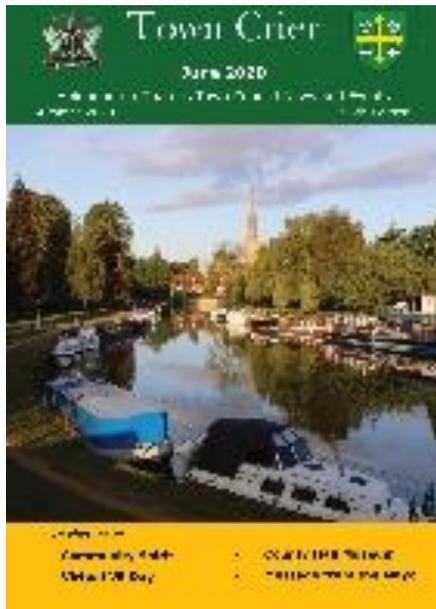


Annual Town (Parish) Meeting – Wednesday 10th March 2021 Report from the Chair of Community Services Committee

The Community Services Committee is responsible for community grants, communications, markets, Summer events, and other services.

Communications

We have continued to receive very positive feedback on the Town Crier magazine which is a regular publication once again. The Town Crier is delivered to 16,000 households four times a year.



We have increased our presence on social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) to continue to provide an information service to residents. We recognise that not all our residents have access to the internet, and we have installed two new noticeboards (Bridge Street and Bath Street) as another way to provide information.

We have commissioned a new website which will be live very, very soon. This will be cheaper, simpler to use and maintain and will have a fresh look. More importantly, the new website will be compliant with the new accessibility guidelines, providing a better service for those with special needs, and will be fully responsive across all devices.

Community Grants

We spend more time on these than anything else in our meetings. We have awarded fewer than usual during the last year as a lot of town activities have not gone ahead due to the pandemic.

A number of the grants we have awarded have been to help local organisations continue to support residents during the lockdowns. Our grants go to a range of organisations supporting young people, music, sport, older people, and other community activities.

We are revising our scoring system we use to determine grant awards to better reflect the Council's agreed priorities.

Fun & Music in the Park

We were very sad that we had to cancel the planned 2020 event and have had to do the same for 2021. We plan to come back big in 2022!

Markets

We have done our best to keep markets going, within the Covid regulations. We have provided security to help keep the markets safe. We also took the decision to reduce market tolls to provide financial support to the market traders and allow the stalls to continue to trade (when Covid regulations allowed) and provide a service to the town.

Future Plans

Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022

The Committee has discussed a range of ideas for activities to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee next June. This will, of course, include a bun throwing.

Our aim is to run and support a wide range of events, involving as many of the town's community groups as possible, with something for everyone. We have set up a working group to coordinate the programme.

One major project will be to raise funds for a Town Bandstand as a permanent Platinum Jubilee memorial. We will be launching a fund-raising campaign to finance it and setting up a steering group of interested residents.

Cllr Neil Fawcett

Chair of the Community Services Committee 2020-2021