

TownTalk



News and views from Bury St Edmunds Town Council

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BURY ST EDMUNDS
TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk's introduction



I am pleased to be able to introduce this edition of TownTalk. I was appointed as Town Clerk in October 2009 and have been slowly getting to grips with the intricacies of the new job and the joys and frustrations of local government regulations, of which there are many (regulations, that is!).

I moved to Bury St Edmunds when I was appointed, and though I have lived in Suffolk and Norfolk for the past 20 years and so am familiar with the town, it is lovely to be living in such an historic and beautiful town and I am enjoying exploring both the town centre and further afield. I am a keen walker and so looking forward to getting out and about once the Spring is here!

My background is very much based in community work; previous jobs include setting up a community transport scheme, running a community partnership, organising a day centre for the elderly and managing a lodgings scheme for single homeless people. I am looking forward to meeting more community groups and partner organisations in the town and seeing

how we can work together on issues that affect you.

We have moved!



In 2003 the Town Council was based in the Manor House Museum on Honey Hill and in 2006 it moved to Guildhall Street. As you will see from the address at the top of this edition, it has now moved again, this time to part of the former Borough Offices on Angel Hill. This is a really lovely building and it's good to see it being used again by local government. As yet it is not known who will occupy the remainder of the building. We would very much welcome anyone who wants to drop in and see us in our new surroundings. As with any move, especially to somewhere refurbished, there have – and continue to be – hitches and glitches but once the smell of paint has disappeared I am sure we will have sorted those out, settled and unpacked!

Allotment update

People have an increasing wish to grow their own vegetables. This is for many reasons including health, cost and taste. All over the country the demand for allotments is growing, and councils are struggling to meet that

need. The situation is no different in Bury St Edmunds, with 175 people currently on a waiting list for a plot. Town Council staff make regular visits to the allotment sites to ensure that plot holders are sticking to their tenancy agreements. Whilst appreciating that there is a wide variety of styles of gardening we do look for maximum productive use of the land available and follow up any obvious signs of neglect or under cultivation. Where there is an allotment association (e.g at Cotton Lane) we encourage plot owners to join to be able to make use of the advice and support of fellow gardeners.

The negotiations with St Edmundsbury



Borough Council mentioned in the last edition of TownTalk have moved on Council has agreed to lease additional land at Cotton Lane and the terms of the lease are being finalised. If anyone has expertise in setting up new allotment land (including measuring and marking out plots, planning locations of taps, parking areas etc) and would like to join in a working group to help us in this task, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

The land offered at Sicklesmere Road was, after lengthy consideration, declined due to fear of potential contamination of the land, and the cost of surveying, clearing and developing it.

Ice say

By the end of 2009 Tayfen House volunteers had placed 9 new grit bins at locations across the town to help meet the needs of many residents and drivers. We appreciate that in the recent (and current, as I write!) cold and icy weather, these were but a drop in the ocean of slippery pavements and roads around Bury St Edmunds. We now have a further list of requests and will be consulting the landowner and residents in those areas to see if they are happy to have a grit bin in the locality. Where there is majority agreement, bins will be positioned in places provided that they fall within the following criteria suggested by Suffolk County Council:

- To treat local trouble spots on minor roads, which otherwise would not be treated;
- Be at generally hazardous areas, hills, junctions on minor roads which are lower priority routes for gritting;
- Requests to replenish Town Council bins must be made by email, telephone or in writing to the Town Council

If you would like us to consider a grit/salt bin for your area, please let us know, preferably with an appropriate location. Anyone can use this grit on the public paths and highways, but for named volunteers, insurance can be provided so do let us know. If your existing bin needs refilling please contact the Town Council offices.



So what is the role of the Town Council?

The Town Council undertakes various duties. It considers planning applications that affect the town; it has responsibility for the war memorials on Angel Hill and Cornhill; it manages 225 allotments on five sites in the town. Councillors are always keen to hear from people in their wards regarding any problems in the area. Recently these have focussed on the enforcement of the parking regulations around the war memorials on Angel Hill, the multiplicity of bus services covering the same route, the danger to pedestrians of traffic on St Andrews Street South, unsightly wheelie bins, and concerns about extended licensing hours for various nightclubs.

Councillors continue to be active in their wards and on the various bodies and at events where they represent Council. It is sometimes overlooked that the work they undertake is in their own time and unpaid.

Precept

The precept is the amount that you pay the Town Council as part of your overall council tax bill each year. This has been the same amount since the Town Council was formed 6 years ago.

At the end of last year a consultation with every household was undertaken to see what the preferred option for the precept was. The result was an overwhelming demand (76%) for it not to rise (option 1). (16% voted for option 2, ie raising the precept to £21/year, with 8% voting for an increase to £28/year). Council listened to the voice of its residents and as a result the precept has not increased, and has indeed been reduced.

So for the year 2010-11 the amount you will pay in your council tax for the work of the Town Council will be

approximately £13.50 a year per Band D equivalent property.

Quality Town Status

In March 2006 the Town Council achieved the award of Quality Town Status. The purpose of the Scheme is to provide councils with benchmark minimum standards. It is designed to allow councils to test themselves against good practice standards. Accreditation shows that councils meet these criteria and demonstrates to the local community and partners that they are able to deliver efficient services.

The award lasts for four years and so we are just in the process of reapplying for reaccreditation.

Keeping you informed

Our website at www.burystedmunds.suffolk.gov.uk should tell you all you need to know about the Town Council. But we also appreciate that not everyone has access to, or wants to use, the internet. Everything that we provide online can be provided on request in hard copy. We welcome suggestions, feedback and comments.

How to make contact

All Town Councillors can be contacted via the telephone numbers below (all numbers have 01284 as their dialling code unless specified otherwise), or by e-mail. Some have mobile or business telephone numbers as shown on www.burystedmunds.suffolk.gov.uk.

- ¹ Roy Bebbington 706981
- ² Keith Bird 763689
- ³ Hung Chow Chung 761120
(known as Patrick Chung)
- ⁴ Robert (Bob) Cockle 756249
- ⁵ James Dinsdale* 07940 536269
- ⁶ Paul Farmer 768777
- ⁷ Allan Jones 756415
- ⁸ Allen Lloyd* 07904 209419
- ⁹ Edward Lockwood 711698[#]
- ¹⁰ Michele Lockwood 711698[#]

¹¹ Stefan Oliver	706172
¹² David Nettleton	702212
¹³ Richard Rout	767494
¹⁴ Paul Simner	768202
¹⁵ Clive Springett	753120
¹⁶ Patricia Warby	704138
¹⁷ Kevin Waterson	764804

1, 15 and 16:	Moreton Hall ward
2 and 5:	Westgate ward
3 and 17:	Minden ward
4 and 10:	St Olaves ward
6 and 13:	Abbeygate ward
7 and 8:	Southgate ward
9:	Northgate ward
11:	Eastgate ward
12 and 14:	Risbygate ward

dial 01638 before this number
* no code required

The members of staff are:

Town Clerk and Proper Officer:
Jen Larner
Tel: 01284 757139

Email:
jen.larner@burystedmunds.suffolk.gov.uk

Assistant Town Clerk and
Responsible Finance Officer:
Sue Hindry
Tel: 01284 725111

Email:
susan.hindry@burystedmunds.suffolk.gov.uk

Administrative Assistant:
Paula Gladwell
Tel: 01284 725111

Email:
paula.gladwell@burystedmunds.suffolk.gov.uk

Schedule of Meetings

All meetings are open to the public and are held at the Town Council offices on Angel Hill. Notices and agendas are displayed on the notice boards at Cornhill, in the office, the library and at St Edmundsbury Borough Council offices a few days before the meeting.

The remaining meetings for the current year are:

10 February
6.30 Planning and Licensing
7.00 Finance, Policy & Resources

24 February
6.30 Planning and Licensing
7.00 Full Council

10 March
6.30 Planning and Licensing
7.00 Finance, Policy & Resources
8.00 Staffing and Employment

24 March
6.30 Planning and Licensing
7.00 Full Council

14 April
6.30 Planning and Licensing
7.00 Finance, Policy & Resources

28 April
6.30 Planning and Licensing

12 May
6.30 Planning and Licensing
7.00 Finance, Policy & Resources

19 May
6.00 Annual Town Meeting
7.00 Annual Meeting of the Council

Bury St Edmunds Youth Council

The Bury St Edmunds Youth Council is a group of young people who want to make a difference to life in and around Bury St Edmunds. We are an entirely voluntary body led by young people for young people.

Our members come from a variety of the upper schools in the area, and a wide selection of backgrounds. We all have varying amounts of past experience in this kind of organisation, and many of us sit on other nationally recognised boards. Membership is open to anyone and anyone with the essential requirement that they respect other people in the community and within the group.

Our main aims are to improve transport facilities in the local area, and to provide more things for young people to do. We achieve this by conducting research and through organising regular local band gigs.

We also want to promote the views and rights of young people, and to provide a voice for young people in Bury St Edmunds. To achieve this we regularly consult young people about what they want to see changed, and work to network local youth organisations. We follow the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the government papers for Every Child Matters.

Our recent projects include running focus groups to evaluate the Explore card; organising local band gigs UV Bury and Bury Live Lounge; attending conferences about mentoring and children's rights; and working to name a new local venue.



If you want to become a member, join our mailing list, or just for more information about who we are and what we do then please visit our website – www.bseyouthcouncil.co.uk, or email info@bseyouthcouncil.co.uk.

