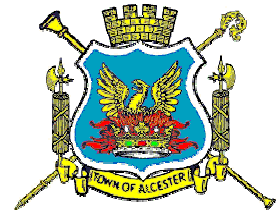


Alcester Town Council



newsletter Issue 13 Summer 2008

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Where does the money go?



Providing burial spaces in Alcester is the responsibility of Alcester Town Council (ATC). The graveyard on Birmingham Road opened in 1908 and is now approaching capacity. Furthermore, changes need to be made to bring it up to date. The path needs to be paved to meet current requirements and it would be beneficial to have water for graveside flowers available at the far end of the graveyard. Spoils that have been dumped over time along the north wall need moving and will form a landscaped bund to prevent flooding at the far end of the area. This will also increase the current capacity. The 1908 map of the plots is still used, although it is falling apart, and the layout of plots has not been strictly adhered to. This means that the

graveyard has to be surveyed, all remaining spaces identified and a new map produced. This is made even more complex as about half the graves are unmarked. Cremation was not available when the graveyard was designed and today there is a demand for both Cremation Plots and a Memorial Wall. Both of these will need to be provided for the future. To meet future demand ATC will be reintroducing the area along side School Road for burial. This new area will require landscaping and the foundations of an old Chapel removing. This work is not self financing; the annual income from burials is about £3500 and general day to day maintenance of the existing ground is about £8800. The estimated cost of the work required for the existing graveyard is £15000 and to bring the new one on stream £35-40000. Fortunately ATC is able to schedule this work over 2 or 3 years, depending on the results of the survey, to establish the remaining capacity. Whatever the results of that survey, more spaces will be needed in the future, and ATC will have to fund them.

Trees are a very important part of our Town. They make Alcester a green and pleasant place to live, rather than a concrete jungle. Recognising this, in 2005 ATC commissioned a survey of the trees for which it is responsible. The results were surprising to say the least. It shows that ATC is responsible for about 500 'major' trees. The only work that has ever been done on these has been in response to emergency needs, so there is a large backlog of maintenance work to do. There about 40 trees that are old or dead and need felling and many more that need the height reducing, low branches removing, or pruning. A ball park figure to carry out this work is £18,000. This doesn't include any replanting and in the last 2 years we have lost a dozen trees, through storms, old age, disease and vandalism. The report also recommended removing ivy from the trees, to improve their health and reduce their susceptibility to gales. You may see a team of volunteers from Alcester Court Leet doing this from time to time. The surgery that needs to be done has built up over a number of years, and catching up with it will also take a number of years. We have introduced an ongoing maintenance programme to deal with this, so over the next few years you will see that Alcester will become an even more green and pleasant place in which to live.

Drop-in Health Checks

Drop-in health checks for older people will be available on the third Wednesday of the month at The Pavilion, Vallet Avenue, between 10.30am and 12 noon. Well-being checks will include blood pressure and blood sugar levels. For more information please contact Lin Phazey, Community Nurse for Older People on 07799 408933.

Are you stuck for transport?

Community Links operates a small fleet of vehicles, each with full disability access, offering a 'door-to-door' service for people stuck for transport to get to and from their nearest town or village for shopping or visiting friends.

The service is for people who have a genuine need for local transport and cannot access public transport because of mobility problems and/or who live in a rural isolated location with no other form of transport available.

The Community Links service operates between about 9.30am and 2.30pm on weekdays in each part of the District three days a week. The fare system is a simple flat rate of £1.20 per single journey, i.e. £2.40 return 'door-to-door'.

If you need this service, or know someone who does, phone Community Links on 01789 264491 for more information

The Community Links social transport scheme works in close co-operation with the **Volunteer Centre Medical Journey Scheme** for doctor, dentist and hospital and medical related appointments. For this scheme contact Clarissa Roberts on 01789 296344.

Community Links is a partnership project between Warwickshire County Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Stratford-on-Avon Volunteer Centre and Stratford Upon Avon Town Trust.

A Word from our retiring Mayor

It has been a great pleasure and privilege to represent Alcester as its Mayor and Mayoress for the past year. We have been welcomed everywhere we have been and owe a great debt of thanks to everyone who has included us in their events. There are many fond memories which we will treasure for many years to come.

We wish Sue and Jim Adams all the very best for the forthcoming year and hope that they will not experience too many dramatic events during their term of office.

David and Jean Hancox

Introducing our new Mayor Councillor Susan Adams

Becoming Mayor of Alcester for the third time is an exciting opportunity, as the role has changed quite a bit since the last time I did it. We have to work more on our partnerships with organisations, and we are now working closely with the district council, which is to the good of residents. The 'Vision' strategy for Alcester is also really important for the town and I want to push this forward. I will be concentrating on this in the year ahead, as well as improving youth facilities. It's going to be an exciting year and I am really looking forward to it.

Susan Adams

Warwickshire Police Specials

Warwickshire Police Specials and the Alcester Safer Neighbourhood Teams are currently searching for a special kind of person to help in the policing of this local community. Today more than ever we need everyone's help. Why not give us yours in the most direct and practical way of all – by joining us as a **Volunteer Police Special**. As a special constable you have the same powers as regular officers and wear the same uniform. You will receive initial and on-going training as well as gaining experience and confidence by working closely with regular officers and other Specials. If you would like to attend one of our forthcoming recruitment seminars where you can learn more about the role as well as speak to current specials, contact a member of the recruitment team on **01926 415052** or visit **www.warwickshire.police.co.uk**

Clerk's Corner

It's nearly the longest day of the year and we are already saying 'where has the year gone', With a new Mayor and Deputy Mayor and new projects for our committees to get their teeth into, time is precious. Keeping up with everything is our first priority and at this time of year it is grass cutting on our cemetery, play areas and recreation fields. New challenges have to be addressed; we now have over 20 people on our allotment waiting list and once it goes over 6 we have to find more land. We already have most of it on our two Bleachfield Street sites; a further 13 potential allotment plots, 5 on the south site for immediate use and 8 on the north site which we are hoping to get into operation once applications to the District Council Planning Department, County Council Archaeological Department, English Heritage and English Nature have been approved. Our ambitions of getting even more land for allotments is also gaining steam.

Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch is a popular way for people of all ages and backgrounds to get involved in local crime issues and community issues. By becoming a member of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme you can help the police and your neighbours strengthen your community; you can make your area an even better place to live. A meeting has been arranged on **Tuesday 1st July 2008** at the Greig Hall starting at **7.30pm**, when we hope to re-launch the Neighbourhood Watch scheme in Alcester. As the scheme is being re-formed we will be looking for people to take on the roles of Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Secretary. For more information please contact PCSO Becky Morris or PCSO Pete Groom at Alcester Police Station, telephone 01789 762207, email alcester.snt@warwickshire.police.uk

Introducing two of our councillors



Michael John Gittus

Born 7 April 1954 in Redditch, I now live at the Old Barn, Walcote, with my beautiful wife-to-be, Di. My early years were spent in Station Road, Studley, where two special

sisters, Sara and Mary, quickly joined me. Sara lives in Rome and Mary lives just down the road in Oversley. In the early 60s our family moved to Lancashire, where my father started work for the Atomic Energy Authority. After attending two rather fine schools I opted for a career in the Lancashire Constabulary, where I specialised in Road Traffic Policing for my entire service until retirement. During this time I was married and presented with a beautiful daughter Claire, who now lives with my two grandchildren in Salford Priors.

Since retiring I have returned to my roots here in Alcester where my father was born, and where my parents Ann and John had already returned a few years earlier. My grandfather 'Harry' Gittus was well regarded in Alcester and was a very active member of the local community. In the last five years Di and I have converted a small barn in Walcote and formed a small but successful building and renovating company.

In my spare time I am a Magistrate and a School governor, as well as a very active member of Alcester Town Council. I am also a member of several other local organisations. My main hobby is talking and listening to people. I have spent my entire life working in the community, and I still find people interaction very interesting. For the future I would like to live long and healthy, thus continuing my ability to serve the people of Alcester.



Yvonne Hine

I was born in 1953 to a Yorkshire lass and an Ettington lad. I attended Kineton High School until the age of 17, then worked at Avon Insurance until I

married Clive and my daughter Louise was born in 1976. Clive was working for an Alcester company so in 1977 we moved to Avon Crescent, Alcester. I then became a part time waitress at the Cherrytrees, a large employer of part time staff in those days. We moved to St Faiths Road in 1980 and in 1981 our son Stephen was born. After a few other part time jobs I moved to the Royal Oak where I stayed very happily for nearly 10 years. After passing my driving test I worked in retail away from Alcester for several years. I now feel it is time to give something back to Alcester and the people who made me so welcome all those years ago. I am a staunch supporter of local traditions such as the Alcester Mop, the Street Market, the Christmas lights and the wonderful Alcester in Bloom. We have a great town and community that we should all be proud of and give as much support as possible to, to sustain our own individuality. We are so lucky to have St Nicholas church at the head of the high street with its illuminated clock giving a focal point to our town, and the shops giving us local traders that live in our community and who rely on us to make their living. Kind regards to all in our community.

How Much are Town Councillors paid?

Town and Parish Councils are the most local level of government in England. They are independent of other levels of local government though maintaining a close working relationship with both District and County Councils. The government recognises that "Being a town or community councillor is a very rewarding role that requires a high level of commitment." Councillors have to abide by a local government Code of Conduct and declare a personal or prejudicial interest if they have an interest in any matter under discussion at a Town Council meeting. Since the Local Government Act 2000 Town Councillors may be paid for their services. It will be reassuring for the townsfolk of Alcester that members of the Alcester Town Council receive **no such remuneration**. Their commitment and time is **given freely without reward or favour**.

Mike Gittus

Councillors Contact details

Alcester Ward

John Bunting	766753
Peter Crabtree	762660
Mike Gittus	488027
Chris Gough	762307
David Hancox	763393
Mrs Yvonne Hine	764739
Ron Leek	762574
Alan Morgan	762486
Eric Payne	762577

Oversley Ward

Mrs Susan Adams	400371
Peter Carr	766473
Nick Dearling	765070
Malcolm Graham	763925
Shahid Juned	762751
Bill Malin	763113

Oversley Green Ward

Mrs Nina Knapman	764319
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Clerk

Chris Wright	766084
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Assistant Clerk

Paula Haggerty	766084
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Planning & Forum Meeting Monday 9 June at 6.30pm

Full Council Tuesday 1 July at 7.00pm
at The Council Chamber, Globe House, Priory Road, Alcester (Seggs Lane entrance).



Walk Leaders Wanted

The Ageing Well Project is looking for Volunteers to help lead their very successful walking groups, throughout South Warwickshire

Why Walk?

- Makes you feel good
- Gives you more energy
- Reduces stress and helps you sleep better
- Keeps your heart 'strong' and can help reduce blood pressure
- Helps to manage your weight

We are encouraging men and women who are over 50 to take part in our walking for activity health groups.

If you are interested in your own health, and would like to volunteer to lead one of our walks, please contact:

Kim Skipsey on 01789 205059 for further information

Walk Leader Training provided, supervision, and any out of pocket expenses paid.



Please let us have your comments and views

Name

Address

Comments

Return to Clerk, Globe House, Priory Road, Alcester or email clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk