

Alcester Town Council



Spring Newsletter

Issue 36 Spring 2014

MAYORS MESSAGE

This will be my last submission as Mayor for this newsletter as I will be passing over the chains in May. It has been a fascinating year for both myself and Kathryn and we feel very fortunate to have been able to represent and work for our Town.

It is February already and as I have previously said where does the time go? I always look forward to the Spring with its profusion of colours and new growth. Of course it does depend on the weather. Alcester has been very fortunate this winter in comparison to the South and South West. The rivers have behaved themselves and stayed in their banks. I am looking forward to a dry and pleasant summer (no hose pipe bans!) where we can have fun at all the town events scheduled so far. And there are many. Do look out for the Town guide.

Alcester must be one of the friendliest towns around. ATC have voted to become a dementia and bee friendly town. What does this mean? Dementia is a disease that affects most people in one way or another, either directly or via a family member. We are promoting the concept of dementia friendliness by making buildings more accessible to sufferers and asking businesses and shops to understand the needs of sufferers and make suitable accommodation. I hope that this will make for a better life for those thus afflicted. The bee friendly scheme is to enhance the flowers in and around Alcester to help support the decreasing bee population. For example, efforts last year by councillors resulted in a section of the Jubilee Fields being transformed into a wild flower meadow. There are a number of factors involved in bee decline and we hope that this initiative will go some way to help.

We are as you know awaiting the detailed plans for the Allimore Lane Development. However, there are many more developments scheduled for the district, with developers keen to establish approval for their builds on sites that *they* identify which is why, it is now even more essential that we get our Neighbourhood Plan in place and approved so that we have more control with regard to the development of our Town. My colleagues on the council and I are working very hard on this and hope to have proposals submitted later this year.

One of the issues with an ageing population is of course care. Some people may need to move into a retirement home. Others may wish to remain independent. All need somewhere to go. Alcester has quite a few retirement homes already with a number in the pipeline and at this stage does not require more. We do however need extra care homes and this is where Alcester Town, the District and the County councils will be focusing in the near future.

It appears inevitable that as a result of the Localism act more and more responsibility will be passed down from Government to local councils such as ours. This is to be welcomed if the funds come with the responsibility. The days of a small council just looking after grass cutting and the street lights will soon be over. Councils are now able and even expected to make a financial contribution through initiatives such as trusts and we are looking to the future and preparing accordingly. The next few years will be interesting for us all.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your support and wish you all the very best for the coming year.

*Mark and Kathryn Cargill
Mayor and Mayoress of Alcester*

STOP PRESS – The High St will be closed from Lloyds Bank through to Gunning's Bridge on 9th & 16th March 2014 (consecutive Sundays) to facilitate the construction of Traffic Calming Measures

NEWS FROM THE RECREATION, ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

The Recreation, Environment and Open Spaces committee is looking at ways to further develop the Jubilee Fields with measured walks, exercise equipment, and walking areas for those recovering from illness to return to good health. Alongside this programme we intend to improve the environment by growing more wild flowers, enhancing the community orchard and the area around the weir. There will be appropriate seating as part of this project, and the overall intention is to link up areas of the town, thereby creating good access for residents and visitors to get to the Jubilee Fields and enjoy the facilities available.

Watch this space for more news on the progress of the proposed Programme and on how you may be able to help.

DON'T FORGET - Check any drains near to your homes regularly and report any blockages to the Town Council We can then organise the correct department to clear them.

ALCESTER MALE VOICE CHOIR - Gala Concert On Course For Sell Out



It's a big year for the Alcester Male Choir as they celebrate 40 years of singing and the highlight of their special year is the Gala Concert which takes place at the Symphony Hall in Birmingham on Saturday 5th April. With a few weeks of selling still to go ticket sales have been buoyant, with some areas of the auditorium sold out.

The choir performs under the guidance of Founder and Director of Music Judith Land, who was awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year's Honours List which added a new level of celebration to the choir's special year. Judith has put together an exciting varied programme of music which will appeal to concert goers of all ages and of all musical tastes. The 80 strong choir will be supported on stage by the talented Elliott Rooney, accompanist, The Welsh Guards Fanfare Trumpeters, Birmingham born Craig Yates from Only Men Aloud, Andrew Fletcher on the organ, & Alcester based Rutleigh/ Norris Ballet School.

Judith commented, " It is shaping up to be a remarkable year rounded off with our Gala Concert in Symphony Hall, on 5th April, ticket sales have been consistently steady and we are confident we shall have a capacity audience with over 1000 concert tickets already sold." ***Tickets are available from the choirs box office on 07860 379668 or by down loading a booking form from their web site amvcboxoffice@gmail.com. Coach transport is available for a little extra cost from seven pick up points throughout the area.***

Do you know of any loose manhole covers that clunk each time a vehicle drives over them? If so, then please inform the Town Council and we'll ensure they are reported to the correct authority for repair.

Can You Remember What You Were Doing In 1964 ?

Fifty years ago you would have been listening to Top of the Pops in its first year, The Beatles would have been singing I Wanna Hold Your Hand, and **Alcester Musical Theatre Company** was performing their first show 'Lolanthe' at the Greig Hall. This year they want to celebrate with 'Going to the Movies', a spectacular, star-studded concert that will span from the past to the present and will include well known hits from blockbusters such as Breakfast at Tiffany's, Forrest Gump and Mamma Mia. This not-to-be-missed event will be held at Alcester Town hall on Saturday 12th April and starts at 7:30pm.

Tickets are available from Cynthia Hill on 01789 763446 priced at only £10

DO YOU KNOW.....

These facts about the councillors who are representing your local community:

- » An Alcester Town Councillor receives no allowance or compensatory payment of any kind.
- » A Stratford District Councillor receives £375 per calendar month or £70 per week after basic deductions.
- » A Warwickshire County Councillor receives £748 per calendar month or £140 per week after basic deductions.

In addition, there have been no increases in any Councillor Allowances for the past five years, however;

- » Councillors have to make their own arrangements for postage, broadband, clothing and the day to day costs of representing their electorate at all public and charitable events as well as associated expenses relating to committee and panel memberships.
- » Councillors are required to represent the community and provide the day-to-day solutions demanded of them by residents and to take an active role in the corporate matters of their Authority.
- » Councillors Allowances are not living wages despite the seven day a week commitment, and all Councillors have to have an alternative income to enable them to survive and serve their community.

The Town Council endeavours to maintain Alcester as the great Town it is and appreciate all the support we are given from its residents and associated villages – Thank you.

PLEASE REMEMBER – If you are a victim of a crime or see something you believe to be suspicious please report it on **101** – for the police to effectively target offenders they need to have a true reflection of offending patterns and methods.

scan

SENIOR CITIZENS
ACTION NETWORK

A Focus on Older People

Perhaps you have heard of the group in Alcester known as **SCAN**, which stands for **Senior Citizens Action Network**, but are unsure what it is all about. If so, please read on.....

SCAN in Alcester meets six times each year on alternate months, currently on the second Thursday morning, 10.30am to 12 noon, within the town library. The meetings are informal and friendly and include time to have a chat over a cuppa with other local older people. Members range in age from 55 to 90, so it really is very inclusive, and it is **FREE** of charge too! At each meeting there will usually be one speaker, providing information on a specific topic, recent subjects have included legal advice, falls prevention and bone health, enjoying reminiscence and being 'sight savvy' and knowing how to minimise certain eye health problems. This is a great opportunity to raise specific issues that are of concern to you and other local older residents. Additionally, we also join with the other five **SCAN's** in Stratford-on-Avon district to express our views collectively, or to meet at a special **SCAN** conference.

Please do join us at the next meeting on **Thursday 13 March 2014, at 10.30am in Alcester Library- you will be most welcome.**

For more information, please contact Jan Roberts, Stratford-on-Avon District Council on 01789 260108



Alcester Town Football Club

ATFC are holding their 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil Tournament
On 21st & 22nd June 2014



As in previous years each team that enters will be drawn out of the bag to represent a team in the FIFA World Cup 2014. This year will include Brazil, Spain, Netherlands, Ivory Coast, Uruguay, England, France, Argentina, Germany, Portugal, Italy and USA. ATFC's unique Tournament has become very popular over the years so places are quickly being filled. All players can play only for **ONE** team and each squad is to have a maximum of **TEN** players.

For further information or an application form please contact Steve Mc Adam on: 01789 763820, 07795 396456 or srmcadam@sky.com



Volunteering for the Air Ambulance Service is a fun and lively experience but it's also extremely rewarding to be part of such a worthy charity – and their currently looking for volunteers – could you help?

Make more use of your spare time, don't worry about what you might not be able to do, think positively about how you can help because with dedicated support you will amaze yourself at how you can make a very real difference! – Together we can help save lives!!

Call us on 08454 130999 or email enquires@theairambulance.org.uk



Alcester Children's Activities is a new group based at the Jubilee Centre that has been set up to provide fun affordable events for parents to participate in with their children. We are a non-profit making organisation that aims to put on an exciting and affordable activity for you and your children at least once a month. We provide a broad range of activities including craft events, discos, talent shows, meet and plays that are delivered in an age appropriate manner in a safe and stimulating environment. We extend a warm welcome to all

whether new or old members of the group.

Future planned activities are a Mother's Day craft day, where your children can come along and make memorable gifts for their mothers, this is to be held on Thursday 27th March, and we also have planned a mile walk around the Jubilee Fields for Sports Relief on Friday 21st March.

Come and join us for a posh coffee and cake and make friends with other parents that have children of the same age.

All information for any of our events can be found on our Facebook page or you can call us on 07918599607 or via email: Alcester activities@hotmail.com.



Alcester British Legion are organising a visit to Bentley Priory on 15th May, the home of Fighter Command during World War II. Stand in the operations room where Winston Church stood on 6 June 1944.

Contact Vaughan Blake on 01789 764128 or e-mail vaughanblake@icloud.com to book your place.

GLOBE HOUSE IS UNDER THREAT

When a resident of Alcester or surrounding district have a public service issue to discuss, where do they head for?

Globe House

Be it a Warwickshire County matter, a District Council matter, a Town Council matter or any of the other areas of Voluntary public service, we are all drawn towards the same 'Hub'.

For years the main area of service provision in our Alcester District has been provided by Globe House, and with the debate on Unitary Authorities on the lips and agenda of all Councils, our area of service provision for both the voluntary and paid sector will continue to increase in importance. Globe House can have a future, but not in its present form. To enable Alcester to continue to provide a centre of excellence, moving forwards, the building must become financially sustainable.

Many such buildings around the country now share their space with associated partners on a commercial basis. We see Libraries with Cafes, Museums with Crèches and Markets with Art Galleries. Alcester Town Council is working with all agencies to bring about the sustainable future for this important public building. The future of Globe House will see a mixture of vitality, commercialism and public engagement as Alcester moves positively into a new era of service provision.

Cllr Mike Gittus

WHAT ARE THE SOLUTIONS FOR GLOBE HOUSE?

Currently it only has only one occupant, Alcester Town Council, who pays towards the running costs of the building, the remainder is underwritten by Stratford District Council. This cannot go on much longer. This has put our Roman Museum severely at risk.

Although Alcester is well endowed with a fairly buoyant High Street and numerous meeting places, there are still operations that Globe House offers in a discreet and secure manner which it would be difficult to place elsewhere, particularly in the present financial climate. These include Housing advice, Youth Justice Board meetings, Citizens Advice Bureau, Volunteer Drivers, Junior Doctors Forums, Local Government Training Sessions and Local Government meetings.

Alcester Library will continue to exist in the town, providing the excellent service it has always provided the community. However we live in changing times and the provision and manner of the facility the three tiers of Local Government offers has been completely reviewed. There is now a great opportunity to integrate two 'Diamonds' of Alcester, the museum and the library by working together to achieve the single aim of providing a sustainable financial future for the continuance of these essential 'Flagship Services'.

Globe House could then be the vibrant and forward looking Community Hub that it was originally destined to be and still have scope for other supporting facilities for instance: A Market in the courtyard, for people who want to start up in business and can't afford or make the jump to High Street premises. A Café, particularly for groups that need a crèche facility and both visitors and residents that need a computer or internet facility with the ability to print and send documents. A Secondhand Bookshop from donated books run by Friends of Alcester Library and Friends of Alcester Museum to build up a support fund for the future.



Alcester Town Council is now determined to ensure that certain community facilities are not lost for future generations and no stone is left unturned to achieve this, Alcester Town Council policy and determination has not changed.

There are several defining features of the current context within which the role of libraries (and museums) need to be located:

- » *the knowledge economy and the UK governments' visions for the digital future*
- » *the public service reform agenda with its emphasis on more effective cross-sectoral working*
- » *the aspiration to put citizens and communities at the heart of public services*
- » *the changing needs of citizens and communities*
- » *the importance of strong communities supported by and building on community assets.*

(Source: Carnegie Trust 2012)

Chris Wright Alcester TC

The First World War Centenary 1914 – 2014

This year there are many events planned throughout the Town in remembrance of all the brave soldiers who lost their lives defending their country in the First World War and those that are still fighting today for justice and freedom throughout the World. The Town Council will be sowing poppies in key locations to commemorate this special event – why don't you join in and plant your own poppies in your garden or window box to show you remember them.



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ALCESTER

Safer Number Plates

Motorists get your **free** set of tamper resistant number plate screws that can be used to replace your current set - no drilling required!. Alcester Library, the Police and the NHW Chairman all have a supply of request forms – why don't you fill one in today. The theft of vehicle Number Plates is increasing and being used on other vehicles to commit crimes, which may result in the real owner receiving a fixed penalty ticket or worse, causing distress and inconvenience.

Council tax Refund Scam

Residents in Alcester are being warned to be on their guard over fraudsters claiming they are entitled to council tax refunds. An Alcester resident has already been contacted by someone pretending to be from Stratford District Council who told them they would be making a personal call to their house to refund an overpayment of tax. SDC make it clear that refunds are never hand delivered. If callers should come to your house and you are in any doubt as to their identity call the Police on **101**. All SDC employees carry identity cards and they should be happy for you to call the

Council on 01789 267575 to check their authenticity.

Persistent Alarm Sales

Warwickshire Trading Standards are again warning consumers about persistent high pressure alarm sales staff selling door to door and over the phone. 'Free' alarms are often offered but consumers are then hit with expensive installation and monitoring fees that may be completely inappropriate for their needs. Seek advice on home security from your local Police Crime Prevention Officer.

The next meeting of NHW Alcester will be held on Tuesday 24 June 2014 at 7.30pm at St Nicholas Church House. Everyone is welcome.

Communicating with the Police or the NHW Team

Alcester South Safer Neighbourhood Watch Team:

101 or 444816

Alcester Police Mobile 07979704373

Emergencies dial 999

If you would like to find out more about NHW Alcester or about becoming a Street Champion please email:

nhwalcester@gmail.com or telephone:

Dorrie Manders on 01789 762999

Alcester is a beautiful Town let's keep it that way – PLEASE PICK UP AFTER YOUR DOG.

Offenders could be subject to a £1000 fine.

ALCESTER AIMING TO BECOME A 'Dementia Friendly Community'

As mentioned by the Mayor, Alcester Town Council recently voted unanimously to become a 'Dementia Friendly Town', this in effect means that we will endeavor to support and promote the understanding of Dementia, within our community reaching out to residents, businesses and schools alike. Our aim is for sufferers and their family/friends to continue to enjoy a high quality of life while being supported by their Community. We will be encouraging organisations within the Town, both big and small to join in and promote public understanding of one of the fastest growing problems within society today.

Of course we already have our very popular Alcester Café which supports people with memory problems/dementia and their families/friends, however, due to the success and expansion of the cafe additional volunteers are required. Do you have good listening skills and a few hours a month to spare?. If so why don't you come along and see how you could help. The Café is open Tuesday and Friday mornings from 10am – 1pm at the Jubilee Centre.

If you would like further information on becoming a Dementia Friend, Dementia Friendly Organisation or assisting as a volunteer with The Alcester Cafe please contact carole@highfieldltd.co.uk or mike@gittus.com

Under the SpeedAware Programme from Warwickshire County Council, we have acquired some speed guns (Thanks Cllr Mike Gittus)! We are looking for volunteers to help monitor the speed of vehicles around Alcester. If you want to help improve road safety in Alcester then contact Cllr Steve Payne or the Clerk of the Council. Training is being planned for March so get in touch as soon as you can.

Do it now! Help us improve road safety in your Town!

JUBILEE CENTRE

The Jubilee Centre is now a hive of activity with local groups and organisations using this superb facility on a daily basis. Many of these activities take place in the Hertford Community Room which is 190m², has a maximum capacity of 250 persons and can seat 100 around tables – perfect for those family gatherings.

In addition, the Centre houses the Depot, which was built for the Youth of Alcester after a need for more youth facilities, was identified in the 2008 Town Plan and is where the current Youth Clubs

are run from. More recently the Depot has been host to a number of Adult and Young people Learning Courses – Further courses are planned for the future and will be advertised within the Town and on the Town Council website.

The Town Council are working hard to raise the necessary funds required to complete a number of projects aimed to improve this building further namely; Tarmac the Car Park, Extend the Car Park, additional external lighting and a room partition in the main room.

If you are interested in supporting the centre, joining the Cinema Members Network, booking it for a function or are interested in making a donation then please call 01789 766084, or email your interest to info@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Lunch Club



Lunch Club Ladies in the Kitchen



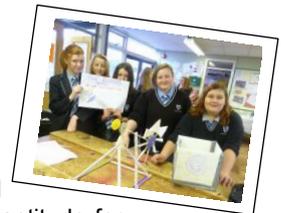
Alcester Cafe



Alcester Academy

There's a lot going on at Alcester Academy, not only has Head Teacher, Mr Paul Hyde well and truly settled in to his role, his remit that 'The Academy's aim is to provide an education that delivers both knowledge and the skills required for pupils to succeed in life' is supported by many exciting events and activities, some of which are identified below;

- > **Local Apprenticeships** - Many of our Year 11 students will be leaving this year to take up vocational courses at local colleges, however some would relish the opportunity to start working life immediately and take up an apprenticeship in the area. If your business or organisation is offering apprenticeships in the near future, we would be very keen to hear from you
- > **Smallpiece Trust** - Sixty 13-14 year old Students put their science, technology, engineering and math's skills to the test in a one-day challenge. The event was designed to enhance students' aptitude for lateral thinking, design and engineering and was especially geared to complement the National Curriculum.
- > **Youth Elections** - At the end of January, our students took part in nationwide elections which see local candidates vying to become members of VOX Warwickshire and the UK Youth Parliament. The poll is run by senior students and this year the Academy has one student, Joshua Ellis, who is seeking election to the National Youth Parliament.
- > **Next Generation Fund** – Has been launched to ensure that no child is financially disadvantaged at school. The current economic climate means that it is increasingly difficult to source sufficient funding for students who need extra support at school or for those who would benefit from additional opportunities which encourage high aspiration and achievement. If you can help in any way please contact the school office
- > **Old Boys' and Old Girls' Association** - The inaugural meeting of the Alcester Academy Old Boys' and Old Girls' Association will be held from 6.30 – 9.00pm on Thursday 10 April at the Academy. The Association is open to anyone who has ever attended the school in any of its previous incarnations. The aim of the Association will be to keep track of the educational and professional progress of former students
- > **Citizenship Foundation – Mock Trial Competition** - Training is well under way for 12 Academy students, ranging from 12 to 14 years of age, who are taking part in the Magistrates Mock Trial Competition run by the Citizenship Foundation. The competition introduces the legal system to young people in an innovative and exciting way.



Alcester Festival & Events - Calendar 2014

Please find below a list of Events due to take place in the next three months only, Pick up a Festival and Events Guide from Globe House, or alternatively check local Notice boards, Web sites and Facebook for further information.

Mar 4 th Pancake Races	May 2 nd Sing 'a' long and Supper evening
Mar 14 th Golden Oldie Cinema	May 9 th Golden Oldie Cinema
Mar 15 th Organisation & Club Open Day	May 11 th British Legion Lunch
Mar 29 th Run for your Mum	May 15 th Bentley Priory Trip
Apr 11 th Golden Oldie Cinema	May 17 th Food Festival
Apr 19 th Town Crier's Competition	May 25 th Pram Race
Apr 23 rd St George's Day	Jun 1 st Garden walkabout

Town Council Surgery - Dates For 2014

Saturdays – 5th Apr, 3rd May, 7th Jun, from 10.00am to 12 noon at Globe House.

Councillors will be in attendance to answer your questions and a Police representative will also attend. Please come along and enjoy FREE coffee/tea and biscuits.

Town Council Meetings

Full Council Meetings 2014 – Please refer to Council Notice Boards at Market Place and High Street from the Thursday before each meeting or www.alcester-tc.gov.uk

All meetings are held in the Council Chamber, Globe House, Priory Road, Alcester (Seggs Lane entrance). Members of the public are welcome to attend any of the council meetings. In addition we are trying to get information out to residents quickly by using the Town Facebook page: (www.facebook.com/alcester) Please sign up to the page by clicking "like", and get your friends to do it too. The more people we can contact on the site the better.

Councillors' Contact Details

Alcester Ward			
Mrs Alison Brown	07763 492821	Jim Kenyon	01789 763975
John Bunting	01789 766753	Mrs Yvette Morrison	01789 400460
Mark Cargill (Mayor)	07988 485050	Clive Neal-Sturgess	01789 764416
Mike Gittus	01789 488027	Eric Payne	01789 762577
Chris Gough	01789 762307		
Oversley Ward			
Mrs Susan Adams	01789 400371	Mrs Yvonne Hine (Deputy Mayor)	07771 930002
Steve Payne	07817 963265	Mrs Julie Styles	07807 894635
Lennox Cumberbatch	01789 766940	Chris Brannigan	07850 026155
Oversley Green Ward			
Mrs Nina Knapman	01789 764319		

Globe House Contact

Clerk

Chris Wright: 01789 766084

Email: clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/alcester

Website: www.alcester-tc.gov.uk

