



TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

2014/15

Town Councillors

MAYOR

Councillor Jacqi Hodgson

DEPUTY MAYOR

Councillor Lionel Harper

TOTNES WARD

Councillor Rosie Adams

Councillor Pruw Boswell

Councillor Mike Craddock

Councillor Alan Gorman

Councillor Vera Harvey

Councillor David Horsburgh

Councillor Robert Vint

Councillor Carol Wellwood

Councillor Tony Whitty

BRIDGETOWN WARD

Councillor Marion Adams

Councillor Eleanor Cohen

Councillor Frankie Finn

Councillor Susie Greenway

Councillor Judy Westacott MBE

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

Town Council Staff

TOWN CLERK

Helen Nathanson

DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

Tatiana Cant

ASSETS MANAGER

Catherine Marlton

FINANCE OFFICER

Nicky Nicholson

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE MANAGER

Amanda Richards

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE ASSISTANTS

Laura Fitzmaurice

Victoria Wolf

Heather Morley

CIVIC HALL CARETAKING ASSISTANT

Chris Price

TOWN SERGEANT

Peter Bethel

MACEBEARERS

Chris Hundy and Les Hills

Mayor's Report

FROM COUNCILLOR JACQI HODGSON, MAYOR OF TOTNES

Dear Residents of Totnes,

Being mayor of our wonderful town is a fascinating experience. It is a much more hands-on experience than that of a councillor and an opportunity to spread further the many interesting and innovative ideas and projects that have put Totnes on the international map.

Many visitors come to Totnes from far and wide. Our impressive heritage buildings side by side with more recent community developments such as the community gardens and interesting shops and markets provide such a wonderful experience that many visitors want to find out how this works in a town that is also renowned as a Transition Town and a FairTrade town. As mayor I have met with many groups, individuals and delegations from other towns and cities this year to tell our story and encourage them to try out some of the projects we have pioneered.

One of the most important projects this council is currently engaged in is our Neighbourhood Plan. In terms of how we weave together the needs of our town, local people and outside housing needs towards 2030 it is a difficult job, however we are fortunate to have many creative and skilled residents to assist with this task; essentially a task to draw up a plan for our future sustainability.

Tony Bowhay, who lived in Bridgetown and was known and loved by many local people, was made an Honorary Freeman of Totnes this year for his eminent services to the town. Tony was a volunteer fireman in the Totnes Fire station for many years and served the Town Council as Town Sergeant at Council meetings and Civic events. Sadly Tony died in September, so his wife Barbara was presented with the award and citation at the formal posthumous ceremony this April.

Totnes Town Council has marked the centenary of the First World War at three events in the past year. On August 4th, the evening of the War commencing, we led a candlelit procession up through the town and held a silent vigil in the Civic Square. On November 11th we held a ceremony of blessings at the war memorial followed by reflections on peace with contributions from different faiths, those with no faith and people representing animals that were lost and suffered during the war. This extraordinary event to mark armistice included some street theatre from KEVICC students and singing from Grove School students and the Littlehempston Penguin Band.

On April 25th we marked the centenary of Gallipoli Day with a short ceremony and planted a (Turkish) fig tree in the new community garden in the Mansion; Captain Richard Willis who was awarded a Victoria Cross



TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

at Gallipoli attended KEVICC when it was at the Mansion. These interfaith and non-faith events have been very moving, inclusive and welcomed by many people in our community.



My mayoral charity this year has been the young people of Totnes. The new Youth Centre at Rushbrook has made a welcome addition to the facilities for young people and includes a sound recording room which I'm sure many of our budding musicians and singers will put to good use. There have been many discussions about additional ramps etc at the Skate Park which will hopefully be made possible. The many local authority cuts under the austerity measures have impacted on young people enormously and they need a lot of support to ensure their needs are met and that we remain a town that welcomes and respects those needs. The proceeds of my delightful gala civic event in March will be donated to Totnes Jamming Station and The Living Project, two excellent local projects that are nurturing creativity and interesting ideas to support young people with musical talent and skills, housing and enterprise.

It has been my privilege to be your mayor for this year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the local societies and organisations that do such wonderful work in our community, and for the support they and many residents of this town have given to the town council in the past year.

Yours sincerely,

Jacqi

Town Council Assets and Areas of Responsibility

THE GUILDHALL

Ramparts Walk, Totnes

THE CIVIC HALL

High Street, Totnes

THE TOTNES ELIZABETHAN MUSEUM

Fore Street, Totnes

TOTNES INFORMATION CENTRE

Coronation Road, Totnes

FOLLATON CEMETERY AND CHAPEL

Plymouth Road, Totnes

EASTGATE CLOCKHOUSE

Fore Street, Totnes

ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD AND CLOCK

High Street, Totnes

CASTLE MEADOW

Town Council Activities

Support to Community Projects – Grants from the Paige Adams Charity

Town Councillors are also trustees of the Paige Adams Trust, a charitable endowment which was given to the town in the 1920s by Sidney Paige Adams. This year we were delighted to award grants to the following local organisations: the Leechwell Garden Association; Bob the Bus; Totnes and Dartmouth Ring and Ride; Totnes Development Trust; Dangerous Dads; Rotherfold Improvement Group; Totnes Museum; Totnes Gardens; Citizens Advice Bureau; Totnes New Year's Eve celebrations; South Hams Lifestyles; Castle Meadow Bee Group; and Totnes with Bridgetown Parochial Church Council.

Civic Hall

Further refurbishments took place in the Civic Hall to upgrade and refurbish the toilets. This followed on from the extensive refurbishments in 2013 which created a new bar area and installed a professional catering-standard kitchen. We have just been awarded another grant to carry out essential noise reduction measures around the stage and rear of the building which will increase the range of events that can happen in the Hall. We have hosted a wide range of events and regular bookings this year with highlights including Transition Film Festival, the Local Entrepreneur Forum and BBC R4 Any Questions.



Jamming Station – one of our regular and livelier users of the Civic Hall!

Totnes Information Centre

This year we welcomed over 100,000 visitors to the TIC and responded to almost 10,000 telephone and email enquiries. The staff continue to provide locals and tourists with a wide range of information about the area and help with booking accommodation, attractions and transport. The Town Mill has been home to the TIC for 10 years now but we are looking into a new home for the service. Watch this space!

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

Mansion

We convened a Mansion Steering Group to look into the future possibilities of the building. Successful in our application for a grant of £10,000 to carry out a pre-feasibility study, we commissioned a Business Plan and a Structural Survey which showed just how much work is needed to bring the building back into the community as a sustainable option. But it also revealed the exciting possibilities and the work continues.

Neighbourhood Plan and Planning Matters

The Town Council has been leading on the production of the Neighbourhood Plan and this year employed a Co-ordinator, Thea Platt, and a Chairman of the Steering Group to lead the next phase.

The Planning and Place Committee has been very active, meeting every 3 weeks during the last year to consider a total of 114 planning applications. On occasion we have had site visits to inspect premises more closely. Before approving the hydropower scheme for the Totnes Weir, committee members met the construction team on site to ask questions and visited a similar installation further up the Dart to assess the likely impact on the immediate area. The committee has also considered the detailed housing plans for the Riverside site as well as the controversial development proposed at Great Court Farm, and attended the Development Management Committee meeting at Follaton House when this application was decided. Other routine committee work has included considering applications to prune or fell trees, suggesting names for new streets and contributing to statutory consultations on planning legislation, waste and public transport. The Environment Agency gave us a presentation on their plans to improve the flood defences in the town, and we have approved the installation of a rainbow crossing on the Plains to bring colour and show that all kinds of diversity are celebrated in Totnes.

Follaton Cemetery

The Grade II listed Chapel was completely refurbished inside and is now restored to its former glory, ready for funeral services and ceremonies.

Town Team

The Town Team was awarded a £10,000 grant to carry out a pre-feasibility study into the possibilities of refurbishing and improving the Market Square. The first design phase is underway and a public consultation will take place in the summer. Maps are now installed in the town's car parks and smart new information signs have been erected at the station to guide visitors.

Delivering Differently

We were successful in a joint bid with Devon County Council to take part in a Government programme which provided £100,000 of in-kind support from Locality to enable us to investigate different methods of working together as Councils. Totnes received support in the area of micro-commissioning which will help the Caring Town Totnes project to understand how services can be delivered locally.

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

Income and Expenditure for Year Ended 31st March 2014

INCOME	£
Precept	216,582
Administration	126
Civic and Democratic	855
Totnes Information Centre	84,202
Guildhall	2,536
Civic Hall	5,198
Property Maintenance	18,087
Cemetery	10,755
Open Spaces	200
Flat 5A Ramparts Walk	
Council Tax and Paige Adams Grants	92,767
Community Development	100
	431,408
EXPENDITURE	
Administration	106,097
Civic and Democratic	10,329
Totnes Information Centre	119,159
Guildhall	12,317
Civic Hall	44,832
Property Maintenance	32,876
Cemetery	15,666
Open Spaces	2,559
Grants	45
Community Development	59,536
	403,416
GENERAL FUND ANALYSIS	
Opening Balance	227,723
Plus Income for Year	431,407
Less Expenditure for Year	403,417
Transfers To/From Reserves	31,522
Closing Balance	224,191