

CCTC Annual Report 23/24

When I came to write this report I realised why I thought the year has whizzed by! Our annual town meeting last year was a month later!

Anyway welcome to this years report from me Judi Morison as Chair. And a special welcome to Caryford Hall with its beautiful new extensions. There's a massive amount of work gone into this building not just from the contractors, who have been true to their word over deadlines, but also from all the management by the Trustees and the Caryford committee. This is our community space for so many activities and we are very proud of this lovely new facility. Thank you Caryford.

You will of course realise that everything I report on is team work and not one person alone can take the credit. Teamwork with Councillors, volunteers and staff.

Our trusty team of Tourism volunteers have lots of good ideas and one this year has been to publish the local walks in a booklet. The slide show that has been running on screen recorded the visitor statistics from the tourism & information office on the slides and you will see they have been very busy again. Do pop into the information office Monday - Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm to see what they offer particularly if you are new to the area as you can have a welcome pack.

Our Council has several teams of volunteers...the Horsepond gang- have you noticed the flags flowering in it? the Cemetery Chapel team - look out for a new memorial wall, the new cross council Speedwatch team and now a telephone box team Delilah ...who knew the phone box was female? Well I'm assured by the dynamo that is Laura Leaver that she is!!

Thank you to the coffee makers, the cake makers, the sausage & bacon grillers, the cricket & football coaches for our young people all organised by volunteers and for all the fundraising events like the community picnic for Somerset day last Sunday...we had three weeks notice to do thatteam work again. And special thanks to the Scouts who have provided the refreshments for this evening.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of the Councillors who muck in to help, and the undying support of our dream team staff.

One of our events last year was Cary in Bloom when Katie made it her apprenticeship project. We have celebrated Katie's success as an apprentice several times but her achievement in pulling the Cary in Bloom event together has led her to pastures new at the end of the month to Glastonbury as Assistant Clerk. We are very sorry to see her go but thrilled at this incredible opportunity for her career development in a Council with a mega budget.

Cary in Bloom will continue with an entry next year with more volunteers across our community helping to put an exciting entry in place. I hope you have had a chance to see the stand this evening.

We are very proud of our weekly market and the ten year celebrations were appreciated by our market stall traders and residents alike. Ange and Wendy have made a massive commitment to developing the market for more than ten years and we are very grateful.

Our Councillor Tom Trouton - he of dry stone wall fame - is working on a project to include a seating area with a tree in the middle, all in a sea of wild flowers. This a Queen's jubilee tribute and he is calling it the Queen's Marmalade Meadow. After much searching for the right place - we discovered, quite by chance, that the land on the corner of Catherine's Close is owned by the Council so it will be installed soon and a triangle of wasteland will be transformed.

The Pavilion project on the Donald Pither field is at an exciting stage and we are submitting planning after having had excellent pre-app feedback. I hope you have seen the model of the building here tonight and chatted with Charles Gillespie our architect.

The cross-council Transport Working group has been researching speed limits in the town and adopted the '20 is plenty' campaign. At the same time Somerset Council asked Parish and Town councils if they wished to be part of a County wide opportunity to undertake a 20mph scheme. Our joint application was accepted and we expect it to start in the next few months. The agreed roads are on a map on display. Thank you to everyone who worked on this project.

We are delighted that there is a new well attended Commerce group in town and we have already talked with them about working together over the hanging baskets and the Christmas event and we look forward to continuing to support the wonderful independent High Street businesses.

Pek will tell us of the progress we are making on the top floor of the Market House. With Catrin's excellent marketing we have started to use the Assembly Room for activities such as yoga, reflexology, parties and recently a catered Sunday Lunch. Great fun was had by us all with the essential work from the Rotary club to put on a race night in the Assembly Room. It was a memorable evening and we thank all the business sponsors and contributors for their support. Proceeds went to the Market House project.

All of these projects have volunteers from our community helping to make our aspirations for an active, healthy, inclusive town which respects its history and culture. A safe place for our young to thrive. A place for our older residents to be happy, active, safe and fulfilled. And a place for opportunities and dreams to be realised for everyone. We are always better together.

Unfortunately and carelessly we lost two Councillors who were highly valued in Steve Evans and Rob Worth. Thankfully Rob will continue as a member of the Pavilion group whilst Steve has moved to Somerton. We welcomed three new Councillors this year, Dave Gill, Frances Alden both of whom have instantly made themselves at home and very recently Andrew Lane who is already making me nervous with his energy!

The support from our elected members has been consistently brilliant. Henry and Kevin we thank you for all your hard work. The financial emergency has been a huge challenge for Somerset council and for their Councillors but particularly for their staff, many of whom have become friends over the years. In fact, I won't name names, but I know a couple of them from youth club 37 years ago. Their futures are uncertain and we wish them the very best and hope that they will keep in touch with us.

Finally thank you to everyone who has supported Philippa and I over the past year. Our Clerk Lisa is our lynchpin and she definitely knows everything. We rely on her expertise to guide us everyday. Catrin and Katie's calm approachwell I thought they were calm

until we had a million crises this week...but seriously they make everything easier for Councillors. And our maintenance manager Mike who is on constant call out for our inevitable emergencies and to Paul, Di and Angela who keep us looking spick and span. We are a noisy bunch but we all get things done with a smile....well mostly

We have been through a lot in this last year and the challenges will continue but with our strong teams and the support from our residents we will continue to grow and learn that we are indeed better together.

Judi Morison
May 2024