



Neston
Town Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and our Council Officers for their support and guidance. I had hoped that the start of my Mayoral year would see the end of Covid 19. Sadly, many restrictions have been in place for much of the time.

Despite the difficult situation the Council has continued to serve Neston. Our staff have kept the work of the Council going and all essential functions have been maintained.

My first engagement as Mayor was a litter pick organised by "Neston Looking Better" group. This was a good way of showing how we are committed to keeping Neston tidy and a good way of contributing to the "Green Agenda". As part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations and Green Canopy initiative I planted a tree at the Marshlands Road allotment. I also continue to be involved with several "Friends Groups". These groups do incredible work to enhance the local environment and to maintain a good community spirit.

Once again, as in June 2020, the Neston Female Society's annual parade did not take place. I attended a scaled back celebration at Churchill Court. The Little Actors Group put on a number of events during the year, including an outdoor pantomime in July. I was very pleased to represent the Council at these events.

This year the charity I chose to help was the MacMillan Cancer Research. A coffee morning was held at the Town Hall to raise money for this worthy cause. Due to Covid restrictions the usual Remembrance Parade was cancelled. I attended a brief ceremony at the Cenotaph on 11th November and the Church Service of Remembrance on Sunday 14th November. Councillor Kynaston and I consider it a great honour to represent Neston at such events. Hopefully this year we will be able to hold the traditional parade and the Council are very pleased to be able to provide funding for this event.

On Saturday 27th November I attended the Christmas Lights celebration, and I was very privileged to perform the ceremonial "Switch On". There was a large crowd and I think everyone had a wonderful time. Special thanks to "Hip and Harmony" for all their hard work.

During my year I have been able to attend several functions organised by the Mayors of Chester, Mold and Connah's Quay. The Neston Civic Service will take place on 8th May.

Cllr Steve Wastell
Mayor, Neston Town Council Chairman

NESTON TOWN COUNCIL REPORT

Lockdown did not deter our Councillors and they took to the streets to join in the 'Great British Spring Clean'. More than ten bags were collected by just two of the Councillors in order to improve community life for you. The Council is aiming to integrate environmental sustainability in all it does. Self-watering hanging baskets are being introduced and recycled materials are being chosen for any benches that need to be replaced. Back in November, the Council replaced the market square benches which had looked very tired for a long time. We hope you like them.

The Council is pleased to announce a schedule of weekly Councillor Surgeries in conjunction with the local Police at Neston Library.

Neston Market has been open throughout the year and it is good to see the visitor numbers and the number of traders continuing to increase. The 'Spooky Halloween' market took place in October and the Christmas market in December, where the Trader of the Year 2021 was presented to 'Neston's Fish Man'. The Council was very proud to hold a market in support of the people of Ukraine and flew the Ukrainian flag in front of the Town Hall.

Council has agreed from December this year to take over responsibility for all Christmas decoration in the Neston Town Council area. The 2021 light switch-on was funded by the Town Council for enjoyment of the whole community. The grants and donations programme can be found alive as ever and has now been extended to include applications from those across the town who wish to purchase or simply need to refurbish or buy replacement parts for their defibrillator. If you have a defibrillator let us know. The grants table below provides details of the grants and donations provided this year.

The Council is working with local groups to plan a great Platinum Jubilee event in June, and if you have the time pop along to the Jubilee market being held on Friday 3rd June. The variety of floral arrangements provided by the Council should be in full bloom at this time for your full enjoyment.

The Transport Sub-committee has strived to encourage active travel and support local tourism. The Sub-committee members continue to raise with transport providers the issues faced by users of the local services, and other issues raised by residents regarding highways issues. Council replaced the damaged bike pump at Parkgate.

The Council has three allotment sites and has worked to improve site security via the perimeter fencing. A communal area was created at the Marshlands site and the Council provided fruit trees and bushes which will be maintained organically by the tenants. It is hoped that this will support wildlife and encourage biodiversity. In addition, communal composting bays have been created to increase the amount of waste material that can be recycled on-site.

The Council continues to work with partners to monitor the mosquito numbers and keep 'Mozzie Watch' up-to-date. Check out the website or the AMA app.

This year will see the formation of the Council's strategic plan, commissioned by the Council. Council is looking to increase engagement with all stakeholder of the town and is planning for the future.

A Kunaj - Council Manager

RESOURCES AND POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Among its other responsibilities this committee supports the Market & Town Hall. Following the closure and then slow re-opening of these 2 well-loved features of the town this Committee has worked with our staff and led the steady move back to a thriving and popular regular Market. Regulations have meant that full re-opening of the Town Hall has been slower but we are now delighted that all restrictions are lifted and we are fully available for groups to use.

The Resources and Policy Committee is also responsible for overseeing the Council's budget and it is currently looking at how we can improve the facilities offered in the Town Hall. Unfortunately, everything is a minimum of 18 months behind where it ought to be, which is why it's critical we make some improvements to make our Hall fit for current usage.

We are re-aligning this Committee to more reflect the needs of the immediate future so, from the next Council year, we will have a dedicated Finance and Admin Committee, and a Human Resources Committee to support our staff and a Market and Town Hall Committee.

All our Councillors are looking forward to an exciting and pro-active new year.

Cllr Pat Kynaston
Chairman of Resources and Policy Committee

GRANTS AWARDED DURING 2021/22

Neston Town Council's grants scheme is open to voluntary and community groups and organisations operating within the Neston area and is intended to

- enable local people to participate in voluntary groups and activities
- help the Neston area's voluntary and community groups improve their impact on the community
- ensure the provision of services needed by the residents of the Neston area, via the voluntary sector
- support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties
- ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all Neston residents to the services it provides and funds improve or enhance the local environment.

Chapter (West Cheshire) Ltd	Mental health resilience course	£1,500.00
Little Actors Theatre Company	2021-22 season of theatre	£2,500.00
Friends of Park Fields	Biodiversity education project	£2,500.00
Neston Air Cadets	Equipment/groundwork repair	£2,000.00
Neston Players	Website/social media	£450.00
Ellesmere Port & Neston Community Transport	Neston transport	£1,130.00

TOTAL £10,080.00

DONATIONS PROVIDED DURING 2021/22

Hip & Harmony CIC	Performing arts venue	£1,000.00
Hip & Harmony CIC	Christmas in Neston	£7,600.00

TOTAL £8,600.00

This Annual Report will be formally presented at the 2022 Annual Town Meeting being held at 6pm on Tuesday 26 April at Neston Town Hall.

The Annual Meeting of Neston Town Council will take place on Tuesday 17 May at 6pm at Neston Town Hall.