

	Meeting (No)	Market & Town Hall Committee (3)
	Date	19 November 2024
	Document	Ref No
	Warm Welcome Space in Neston Town Hall	MTH3/40

The purpose of a Warm Space is to offer, in addition to actual warmth, a place where people can be social with each other over a hot drink and a sense of community. It should be more than just a place with a free hot drink facility, although this is important. There should also be a facilitator presence to support this.

The option of using the former Front Office to offer this facility was discussed at the June meeting of the Market and Town Hall Committee, at a time when the Little Actors Theatre Company were still renting the space previously occupied by the Post Office.

Samantha from Little Actors was offering a limited space facility there and the option to expand that into the Front Office was there with a presence at the front of the Town Hall.

However, the situation has changed in the last five months as Little Actors have moved out of the former post office space, leaving the front of the Town Hall closed for the majority of the week.

Research into the facilities offered by other groups within the town, found that there are plenty of welcoming warm spaces available.

- Neston Library offers a place to sit and have a hot drink in the reading room every day.
- NCYC is also open every day and has a welcome area in the foyer with hot drinks available.
- Neston Methodist Church has The Teapot open Monday and Wednesday mornings, and a Welcome Cafe every Friday, which offers social interaction.
- Little Neston Methodist Church has Open Doors coffee morning each Tuesday for an hour, and Knit and Natter sessions twice a month.
- The United Reformed Church has Warm Space sessions during the Winter months where people can go for a hot drink and chat, Mondays and Saturdays.
- The Parish Church also has facilities on various days.

The original discussion in June centred around the question *'was there an opportunity to make more use of the Warm Space in the Town Hall'?*

However, our current inability to support such a space with staff and with no facility for safely offering a hot drink, in reality, the conclusion would be that Neston Town Council is unable to make use of the space for this purpose at the present time.

Cllrs Pat Kynaston & Brenda Marple

Further Information

The warm welcome space in the reception area of the Town Hall has been advertised for some time as being open from 9.00am to 1.00pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Although we are not able to offer a hot drink we do offer other facilities:

- A Warm space to sit, with comfortable seating
- A free book swap library
- Tourist information and local information leaflets
- Free Wi-Fi
- A desk area to work or study from
- The option to contact a member of staff if needed

For this reason, I feel that the space should remain open in its current form with the option to develop further in the future should volunteer or staffing levels allow.

Nicky McMahon
Market & Town Hall Manager