

**Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

held on **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012 at 7.00pm in The Institute, Yonder Street, Ottery St Mary**

**Present:** Mayor **Councillor Dobson**  
Councillors **Carter, Giles, Holmes, Lewis, Pang** (Town Ward) **Mitchell, Talbot**  
(West Hill Ward) **J Harding, L Harding** (Tipton St John Ward)  
**Bartlett, Hansford** (North Ward) together with the **Clerk, District**  
**Councillors Cox and Howard and 65 members of the public**

**Apologies:** **Councillors Abbott** (Town Ward), **Watmore and Wright** (both West Hill Ward)

**1. WELCOME BY THE MAYOR**

Councillor Glyn Dobson welcomed everyone to the meeting. He invited Revd. Tim Treanor to say a prayer.

**2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2011**

The Minutes were received and agreed then signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**3. REPORT FROM DEVON & CORNWALL POLICE**

PC Thomas gave a report for the area covering Ottery town, West Hill, Tipton St John & Alfrington. “Recorded crime for last year stood at 265 offences. This year recorded crime stands at 220 so there has been a notable reduction and less than a crime per day for the area.

We have bucked the trend because figures just received show a 6.4% increase in recorded crime for the Devon & Cornwall area. Of the 220 local crimes - 8 were house burglaries and 26 were burglaries to buildings such as garages/sheds/barns. That compares to 8 house burglaries and 24 other burglaries last year – so very similar figures. Please visualise the size of the area I am talking about. I believe 8 house burglaries is a remarkable figure for the size and relative affluence of this area. It confirms that we live in a very good area with a low incidence of crime. Thefts and violence were also slightly down on last year; criminal damage is slightly up. Of all recorded crime, just less than 30% is detected at the moment – and this will improve as the crime files continue to be submitted for the year up to 31<sup>st</sup> March.

As usual, most detection comes from recorded assaults where the victim invariably knows the assailant, or by police generated crimes including drunk & disqualified drivers, public order offences such as being drunk & disorderly, and being found in possession of drugs.

In recently published measures of how well police forces serve the public – Devon & Cornwall were in the top ten forces nationally in nine out of eleven categories. For respect & fairness we were ranked top of 42 police forces. We were ranked second of the 42 forces for people thinking ‘the force does a good or excellent job’.

The force is still on course to make £50 million pounds of savings over 4 years. By 2014 we will have shed 700 of our 3500 sworn staff (20%) and 500 civilian posts to assist in making these savings. We currently have 350 NBMs (Neighbourhood Beat Managers) in the force. Plans are underway to reduce that number to 120; so one in three of us will remain. PCSO’S will be stepping up to the plate and they will have to take on more responsibility in our absence. We are having to make ourselves leaner and more efficient, targeting things that matter the most to the public. You are telling us that crime and anti-social behaviour are the priorities.

Locally, big changes have occurred in the last year, including the new bridge, Sainsbury’s and the BMX/skate park. I’m pleased to report they have had no detrimental impact on local policing. Police plans are well underway for our local events this year which include the Queen’s Jubilee celebrations, Pixie Day and Tar Barrels.”

Mayor’s initials: .....

The Mayor informed the meeting that it would be PC Thomas's last Report to the Annual Parish Meeting as he retires in April 2013. He expressed thanks to PC Thomas and to PCSO Clapp for all their work and willing response to requests for action.

**4. "CITIZEN OF THE YEAR 2012" PRESENTATION**

The Mayor announced that over 100 votes had been received for 12 members of the public. Ann Knight had received the most votes but unfortunately as she lives just outside the Parish she is not eligible to receive the award. However, the Mayor wished to recognise the large support she had received and presented her with a bouquet of flowers. Others nominated were Cindy Channon (efficient and cheerful Post Lady), David Stevens (Boots helpful assistant), Nicki Young (outdoor Gym and Rainbows), Richard Coley (Pixie Day organiser, Community Theatre, Scouts), Peter Harris (maintaining town benches & Tumbling Weir), Alita Pace (Tipton Stores), Brian & Wendy Cammock (organisers of community Christmas Day lunch), George Anning (Feoffee Room Caretaker, helper at Hospital, Fire Service Rally), Paul Nickels (help with Flood Relief scheme).

Two people had jointly received the most votes and so were each made Citizen of the Year 2012. They were: **Hazel Abley** for her work for the Otter Vale Art Society, Ottery Heritage Society and Cats Protection League and **Keith Richardson** for his unstinting work to achieve the Skate/BMX Park.

**5. REVIEW OF THE YEAR BY THE MAYOR**

The following Report was given by the Mayor:

**MAY 2011**

At the Annual Meeting I was again honoured to be elected Mayor of Ottery St Mary with Councillor Ian Holmes as my Deputy, Councillor Paul Lewis as Councillor with special responsibility for Finance, Councillor Carter as Planning Chairman and Councillor Abbott as Vice Chairman of Planning

**JUNE 2011**

It was this month the Council welcomed Vesey Davoren as a Ward Councillor for the West Hill Ward which still left us with a vacancy on the North Ward. The Contractors for the proposed Sainsbury's Supermarket arrived in Ottery St Mary.

Also this month a Working Party was set up for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. This as many of you know from the advertising, will take place on a long weekend in June starting with the Jubilee Ball on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June. A Church Fete at Cadhay on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June then an Evening Disco at the Institute. On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June at the Land of Canaan there will be a Jubilee Street Party at 3.30pm with a prize for the best-dressed table. Songs of Praise at 6pm with the Ottery Silver Band ending with "Proms" style grand finale. On the Monday Bank Holiday 4<sup>th</sup> June is the Jubilee Finale at the Land of Canaan which is a fun packed day which includes a Barbecue by the Ottery Scouts and a licensed bar run by the Rotary Club from 6pm until 10pm, finishing with the lighting of the Beacon (Tar Barrel) at 10pm.

Also on this day is the Official Opening of the Coleridge Poetry Stones and we hope that everyone will come and join in with so many planned celebrations. Please see all the Posters for the events. The Council is also going to give all children under 11 years of age living in Ottery St Mary a Commemorative mug as a keepsake to mark the occasion.

**JULY 2011**

The July meeting opened with a presentation by Inspector Lawler informing us of the cutbacks and reduction in Police Officers. This sadly meant the closure of the Police Office here in Ottery. It was at this meeting possible sites were discussed for the Multi Gym, which as you know was opened on the Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February (and it did snow that morning!) This is a wonderful facility for all and we hope you will all enjoy using it.

Mayor's initials: .....

**AUGUST 2011**

This was a very special month and a honour for me to finally cut the ribbon on the Opening Day of the Bridge over the River Otter on Bank Holiday 29<sup>th</sup> August. This was a marvellous achievement after 10 long years and with so many meetings and many Partners all working together. This Bridge gives the children from the King's School a safe passage to school and a pleasant walk to town for the residents of Thorne Farm Way plus visitors to the Hospital. It was a lovely sunny Bank Holiday too - just right for the Duck Race! The name "Coleridge Bridge" was voted for by the public. Again, this month saw the biggest shake up of planning legislation in 50 years replacing the Town & Country Planning Act. Clearly this affected everyone so we set up a Working Party to formulate proposals which would incorporate local views. We held meetings in all the Parishes to gauge local opinions. These were well attended with the highest turnout in the District.

**SEPTEMBER 2011**

This month we held our full council meeting at the Tipton St John Community Hall which was well attended. We were pleased at this meeting to co-opt and welcome Councillor Paul Bartlett for the North Ward. Sadly at this meeting Councillor Paul Lewis resigned after 4 years due to work pressures but I am pleased to say he was elected back onto the Council this February.

**OCTOBER 2011**

I met with my Deputy and the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce Marc Perkins this month. The Chamber agreed to pay the same donation towards the Christmas Lights. I think you will agree the Town looked magnificent when the Lights were switched on. It was this month we also agreed the extra costs for the Remembrance Day expenses. On October 12<sup>th</sup> I cut the ribbon for the Opening of the Sainsbury's Supermarket which I am sure many of you have frequented. However, please support our other many interesting and friendly shops in Ottery who make our town unique, special and contribute so much to our town.

**NOVEMBER 2011**

I was very proud to announce at this meeting that Ottery St Mary Town Council had achieved Quality Council status, which is in recognition that we conduct our business to a high standard and have both Clerks qualified in Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA). Thanks to all who helped in achieving this prestigious award. It was at this meeting it was agreed to invite Cllr Allen from EDDC to speak to the council and respond as to why Ottery St Mary was not given the same consideration at the LDF Panel Meeting as other Town Councils.

**DECEMBER 2011**

At our December meeting there was a Presentation by the Chairman of the LDF following a meeting at EDDC where I and the District Councillors felt we had not been listened to when presenting Ottery St Mary Town Council's views regarding the LDF. It was agreed to reiterate that 300 houses be included for Ottery St Mary Town, and not the 450 suggested by EDDC. Eventually the number of 300 would be recommended by EDDC.

**JANUARY 2012**

After achieving Quality Status in November the Certificate was presented by the Chairman of the Accreditation Panel following our achievement of attaining Quality Council status and so now we have our Certificate proudly in our Council Chamber! This demonstrates that we have met certain minimum standards expected from an effective and active Town Council.

In January the council heard a report by South West Water as many of you had concerns regarding water quality in parts of our town which we understand will be resolved in the next 6 months. We also made a decision at this meeting that we can only legally allow 20 members of the public into the Council Chamber to conform to Health and Safety regulations. However it may be that with the purchase of CCTV we can transmit images to a screen in the adjoining meeting room. However the council makes every endeavour to hire a larger venue when we know large numbers of the public are expected

Mayor's initials: .....

**FEBRUARY 2012**

In February I was pleased to announce planning is in progress for the restoration of the Victoria Diamond Jubilee Monument at the top of Silver Street to serve as a lasting recognition of Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee.. As this is a Listed Building the Council had to submit planning application for Listed Building Consent. We are grateful for the help of Robert Neal from the Heritage Society with the Latin inscription. Mr Stuart Luxton will undertake the restoration using Mr Real as Stone Mason. We are grateful to Luxton's for donating their services.

At this meeting we decided on a directional Finger Post to point to the many facilities in our town in particular to the local shops. This will be situated near Sainsbury's and it is hoped many visitors will enjoy all the benefits Ottery St Mary has to offer and support our local businesses. We also plan to place a Bench by the Telephone Box. The opening of the Multi Gym took place this month on a very cold morning when it was snowing. All indications are that it is being well used.

**MARCH 2012**

We were sorry to lose Vesey Davoren as a councillor this month and his valuable input to the council. On-going works are still in progress for the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and I would like to thank everyone for their valuable input and time to make this a very memorable occasion for everyone. I reiterate again please come along and enjoy the celebrations.

**APRIL 2012**

This month we were pleased to co-opt a new Councillor for the West Hill Ward – Councillor Andy Watmore and we look forward to working alongside him. We now have a full complement of Councillors. There was a Presentation at this meeting (which was held at the Football Club in Butts Road) by the Minerals and Waste Planning Officer from Devon County Council regarding the future quarrying in East and Mid Devon. At this meeting we also agreed to go ahead and purchase china commemorative Jubilee Mugs for the children in Ottery and we hope these will be welcomed and be a special keepsake. I am pleased to say that the Skateboard/BMX Park was opened for use at 10am on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> April; an official opening date will be announced later. My thanks to everyone for their hard work over the long years and in particular to Keith Richardson and Councillor Elli Pang.”

**6. REPORT FROM CLLR JOHN HARDING PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP (P3) CO-ORDINATOR**

“The Parish Paths Partnership Scheme is an initiative to guarantee that the entire rights of way network is legally defined, properly maintained and well publicised. Devon County Council is working in partnership with Ottery Town Council, landowners and local voluntary groups with the main aim to improve the condition of the local rights of way and keep them open and used properly.

I opened my speech last year and the year before by saying “I was hoping that I could announce at this meeting that the saga surrounding Footpath 46 was finally resolved” but like many sagas this continues to drag on.

However, I will make one commitment to you tonight. I will do my absolute utmost to ensure that this path is not forgotten and extra endeavour is applied to work out a solution to fix this issue.

Whilst this walk has always been a popular feature it has, along with similar ones throughout this part of the county, become of much increased significance due to the recent effects of the ‘Holiday at home’ which has caused visitors to become ever more concerned with the cost of their holidays. Throughout Devon the interest in walking, cycling and other low-cost activities has increased significantly.

Mayor's initials: .....

So, one new initiative P3 is working on is to promote Ottery St Mary to become a full member of an organisation called Walkers are Welcome. We have applied and expect to hear in the next few weeks that we have full membership of this organisation. This is an organisation that promotes walking throughout the UK and should draw more people to visit the footpaths in and around Ottery alongside the benefits of more visitors to the town

Another initiative you will see in the coming months will be a major effort to replace stiles with gates. We have identified a number of stiles which could be replaced to enable enhanced access to our footpaths and these will be progressively replaced during 2012 with the first few in the next couple of weeks on FP55.

During 2011 the Coleridge Memorial Project developed a new walk which uses many of our footpaths; its start and end point is Ottery. A brochure is available from Phyllis which describes the route and again should promote our footpaths to an even wider audience. The route has just been way marked with the new Coleridge signs. I know as Chris Wakefield and I completed this task at the end of last week.

A large-scale map of all the walks in the Ottery parish is available for viewing at both the council offices and the tourist information centre. However for those technically proficient the complete map of walks in Devon is available on the Devon County website under "Public rights of way". Another initiative we are considering is whether we should have access to this map on the Ottery St Mary council and TIC web sites. There is an associated cost but we need your input as to whether this is a good use of the precept. It is of real use to visitors so I would appreciate any comments you may have.

In Ottery we have over 90 paths with a total length in excess of 55 kilometres. I have eight walkers: Janet Bird, Ian Godfrey, Carol & Gerry Hather, Eileen Perkins, Jill & Ian Pullan & Janis Thatcher who regularly walk the routes advising of any problems they see to ensure that the paths are easily walked by anyone wishing to. On behalf of the Parish Paths Partnership and this council I would like to thank them for their efforts over the last few years, they certainly have not had the recognition they deserve.

Each year they provide an assessment of the condition of the rights of way, in order to find out what work needs to be done and advise on potential improvements that could be done to make the visit more enjoyable for the general public.

Carol and Jill are also working with the TIC to set up Bluebell walks. For those interested go see Phyllis to obtain the details.

For my sins I have also taken over responsibility for looking after the footpaths in Newton Poppleford and Harpford. So along with Ted Swann who is my warden in that area all those interested in walking can now be assured of the same level of service all the way down the River Otter past Newton Poppleford.

We certainly face renewed challenges in 2012. Our budget along with many others has been reduced but having worked hard over the last few years our footpaths have never been in better shape. We will do considerably more maintenance ourselves to ensure the high standard we see today is not reduced. To that end if anyone would be interested in helping out let me know.

All we need now is to fix Footpath 46."

**7. REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR CARTER, CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Councillor Paul Carter presented his Report:

"We have certainly had a very busy year regarding Planning with many Major Planning Applications as many of you will already know coupled with the Consultation for the New Draft East Devon Local Plan 2006 – 2016. For this important consultation we have had venues in all the Wards for this important consultation with regard to housing numbers and the future development in the four Parishes.

Mayor's initials: .....

It is clear from the large turnout of residents that many of you have concerns about matters such as infrastructure, transport and building developments which may have an impact on our community. It is only natural that living in such a wonderful part of East Devon we all want the

-6-

best for where we live and the consultations were an extremely important platform for all of us to give a voice.

Our Planning Committee has met 26 times in this last year. Applications we receive and are on the agenda we usually try to attend a site visit beforehand whenever possible prior to our meetings. There has definitely been an increase at our meetings in members of the public attending which we welcome.

Obviously some applications such as Major developments in our Parish attract larger numbers and whilst we are given little notice we do try and hire a venue suitable to the application received to accommodate everyone who has an interest.

The Screen supplied to us by EDDC earlier in the year has proved successful with many of you coming to the council offices to view these plans on line. This happened last year to cut down on excess paper usage.

There have been 176 Planning Applications in this last year. Seven of these applications have been for Major Applications in our Parish. Some major applications of course come in more than once for the same application due to Amendments or Additional Information.

Planning Applications vary from Full applications to Major, Change of Use, Reserved Matters, Advertising, Listed Building Consents and many Tree Plans that we receive.

Decisions from East Devon District Council we received in this last year were 157 in total. Out of this number 17 Decisions disagreed with us, 4 were withdrawn.”

Cllr Carter thanked the Deputy Clerk for all her help and work with Planning. He also thanked Cllr Holmes for his help in showing plans on the monitor during Planning Meetings and to all the Committee for their work. He also thanked the Mayor for all of his work. In return the Mayor thanked Cllr Carter for his work as Planning Committee Chairman.

## **8. MAYOR’S CHARITY OF THE YEAR**

The Mayor expressed his wish to support a local Charity and the only such one nominated was “Ottery Community Care Transport” (formerly known as “the League of Friends Ambulance”). This will therefore be the Mayor’s Charity for 2012.

## **9. REPORT BY PHYLLIS BAXTER TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE MANAGER**

Phyllis Baxter gave the following Report:

“The local Information Centre is funded and run by the Town Council for the benefit of visitors to the town and for local residents in the community.

We promote Ottery St Mary and the many features that it has to offer. These include the world famous Tar Barrels event in November; our most famous son – the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Pixie Day and of course our magnificent Parish Church.

Visitors come from all over the world – from Australia, New Zealand, Germany, France, Italy, Spain as well as the new world of the United States and Canada. Many come from here in the British Isles, often to ask about family members and others whose names still feature within the town.

We work with the media, both local and national and maintain regular contact with BBC Radio Devon, Exeter FM, Spotlight, and Devon Life together with more local publications such as the new East Devon Coast and Country magazine, Marshwood Vale and similar publications. We submit regular reports on what is happening here in the parish and offer photographs of events large and small. We also liaise with the other tourist information outlets in Devon, West Dorset, Somerset, and of course, in Exeter. Contact is maintained with film crews, reporters, producers and journalists to offer details of Pixie Day, the Barrel Rolling and other events such as those of the forthcoming Jubilee celebrations later in the year.

Mayor’s initials: .....

Each month a What's On programme is compiled for the use of many organisations and media whilst we have daily contact with John Gaffney of The Gazette to ensure that details of our local activities are fully covered. We also offer photographs taken at local events for the use of the

-7-

various publications to support other articles and features. Facebook has also become a valuable feature in our promotion of Ottery St Mary and our pages are updated on a daily basis to maintain the interest of many respondents in the UK and elsewhere.

Coaches from both the UK and overseas are regular visitors to the town and, since the ever increasing popularity of the filmed series of the books by Rosamunde Pilcher in German, there are weekly visits by people from both Germany and Austria during the season to enjoy the sites where the series is set. Coaches from other parts of Europe and from the British Isles also call at the town on a regular basis.

Tickets are sold in the Centre for concerts and entertainments at local venues including the Parish Church as well as for the Devon County Show, Axe Vale Craft and Gardening Festival, the Fleet Air Arm Museum and for a number of other events in the area.

We are agents for National Express Coaches, Holiday Extras Hotels at Heathrow and Gatwick and for Sovereign Coaches who offer a wide range of Day Trips and extended holidays at venues across the UK. These can be boarded at the Land of Canaan thus offering a simple way to start a memorable visit to places far and wide.

Within the TIC we offer an interesting range of merchandise including Shopping Bags, Tea Towels, Mugs, Thimbles, Tar Barrel merchandise and an attractive new range of postcards now in production.

We make every effort to promote our local shops and businesses, the Farmers Market, the Community Market and, since the arrival of the new supermarket we now welcome a number of people from further afield who remark on the splendid variety of local businesses and services that the town has to offer. With two hours of free parking available they have the opportunity to explore the town and to enjoy refreshments in our many local pubs and cafes.

A 'Welcome Service' is also offered to those moving into Ottery with information on the many services and facilities available to new residents. With a wealth of clubs, entertainments and sports on offer, as well as a number of superb schools, our newcomers are anxious to make the best of all we have to enjoy. The friendly welcome that Ottery extends to newcomers is often mentioned as a reason for wanting to live in our area.

The Ottery St Mary Town Guide is produced within the Centre and we take our photographs to display the beauty and variety that the town presents as well as giving a service to illustrate the advertisements placed by local accommodation and business providers.

The Centre is well stocked with leaflets, maps and brochures for the area with special features made for Walking, Cycling, Geology, Wildlife and so much more. Bus, Rail and other timetables are carried together with information on Church Services, Medical and Dental care, Taxis and other local facilities.

Last year saw the construction of the new Coleridge Bridge when this superb piece of engineering was opened by our Mayor Dobson together with dignitaries from East Devon and the County. The day featured a celebration on the Land of Canaan with many stalls and entertainments to be enjoyed including the Rotary Duck Race.

Also new was the inauguration of the very successful Coleridge Literary Weekend that opened with a service at the Church followed by an Anniversary Lunch, a candlelit supper and poetry readings at the Library plus a beautiful Son et Lumiere display at the church.

Peter Harris, our local historian, led several guided walks around the town that were thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part.

Another new feature last year was the Christmas Tree Festival at the Parish Church. Many organisations from around the town participated including myself as the Information Centre. The town council, schools, the choral society and others all took part and this popular event will take place again this Christmas.

Mayor's initials: .....

In August there will be another Coleridge Literary Festival to take place on the last Bank Holiday weekend of the year on Friday to Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>. This will coincide with the Heritage Society Jubilee Exhibition at the Old Boys School to be held from Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> August until Monday Bank Holiday on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

-8-

Finally I have been working very closely with the Town Council and others on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. I do hope that you will all join in to make it a joyous event for the whole of Ottery St Mary.

Once again thanks are due to the Mayor and Town Council for making the funds available to continue the activities of the Information Centre for the benefit of both visitors and people of the Parish

## 10. REPORT REGARDING OTTERY IN BLOOM

Cllr Ian Holmes read the following Report from Keith Spittlehouse:

"I apologise for being unable to present this report personally since I am away from Devon for the week. I have identified the key facts below

Ottery in Bloom has survived 2011 and 2012 without a Chairman following the previous Chairman having moved away from Ottery. Keith Spittlehouse (secretary) and Roy Wright (treasurer) working with John Maybery (horticultural expert) and other volunteers have maintained the planter stands and tubs. We are seeking a new Chairman. Why not volunteer?

- The 2011 season went smoothly. We are indebted to Otter Nurseries who supply the tubs on St Saviours Bridge. It was agreed that the number of tubs on the bridge was reduced to ensure adequate watering. Regular watering by Ottery in Bloom members together with Rotary Club, Lions Club, Ottery Gazette and residents local to individual planters maintained the quality of the blooms throughout the season. Regrettably the bridge was part vandalised towards the end of July.

The position for 2012 as I write is

- Two planters removed from Tipton St John have been relocated at Butts Road (replacing the original which was corroded beyond practical use) and adjacent to McColls shop at West Hill. The West Hill Garden club has agreed to maintain the latter.
- Ottery in Bloom will plant up most of the existing tiered planters, barrels & troughs ably assisted by volunteers. Working with Town Council the planting for 2012 has been advanced to get colourful displays in good time for the Royal Diamond Jubilee celebrations in the Town. This has meant that plants have been bought in (as opposed to raising them ourselves) at a significantly higher cost than previous years.
- Three of the four planters in Canaan Way are sponsored by the Rotary Club, the Lions Club and Ottery Financial Services There is a water butt sited outside the fire station building to assist with watering. Western Power has assisted by providing general sponsorship without wishing to specify a given planter stand.
- Ottery Gazette Office barrels and adjacent Memorial troughs will be planted. Ottery Gazette and Otterhayes Trust have respectively agreed to water these.
- Butts Road and Slade Road tiered planters will be maintained by local residents and Ottery WI respectively. The Esso Service Station tubs will be planted with subsequent maintenance by Service Station staff.
- Nat West Bank planters have been sponsored by the Inner Wheel Club of Otter Valley, will be planted and maintained by that group of ladies.
- We do not anticipate entering South West in Bloom in 2012
- Apologies if I have missed thanking any individuals or groups for past efforts or offers for 2012
- Any assistance will be welcomed. Green fingers not needed. Please contact the Town Council Offices."

Mayor's initials: .....



## 11. REPORT FROM THE ALLOTMENT GARDEN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chairman Carl Richmond gave the following Report:

-9-

“ I would like to start by thanking Ottery St Mary town Council for their support dealing with Redrow and their “bid”. This was greatly appreciated by all the allotment holders. Thanks are also due to Cllr Ian Holmes for getting the new posts and numbers which the Committee has now installed, and to Cllr George Hansford for fixing the fence near the gate.

Inspections of plots have been carried out regularly during the year, letters have been sent to people where there was cause for concern and one person was evicted by the Council. The notice board has been repaired with a new acrylic sheet kindly provided by the Gardening Club.

The Bob Johnson Cup for the best allotment was won by Mr & Mrs Bull (plot 46) and the judging was done by Les Peek. We are grateful for the time and effort he put into this.

Pests: Rabbits continue to be a problem and most people have put chicken wire round their plots. Also someone with ferrets and nets caught 29 rabbits which has helped. Unfortunately they discovered rats living in the hedge.

Generally things are going well – all the plots are taken and the Waiting List stands at 3.

During the last month or so the place has been a hive of activity. Everyone seems to be enjoying themselves – so all we need now is some nice weather!”

## 12. FINANCIAL REPORT 2011-2012 INCLUDING PRESENTATION OF GRANTS

Cllr Mitchell (Chairman of Finance & General Purpose Committee) gave the Report.

The financial year has seen prudence and care in difficult times. At the same time much has been achieved e.g. Outdoor Gym and West Hill Play Park.

There have been fluctuations in income & expenditure because the Council has been holding money for various reasons – effectively becoming a short-term banker for projects such as the Skateboard Park and a contribution from Keir for the Diamond Jubilee.

The Precept of £136,931 together with additional income from e.g. Lettings, Cemetery and Allotments, S106 money and Income from Tourist Information Centre (TIC), saw a total income of around £250,000. Expenditure was around £192,000 including staff costs, property running costs, grants, administration, loan repayments and TIC.

The net income over expenditure is therefore £59,000 but this can be reduced because the Council holds Kier money for Jubilee Monument (£3,884), Skateboard/BMX Park (£10,000) and Sainsbury Christmas Lights contribution (£2,000). Therefore the net income over expenditure is around £43,000 which is about £6,000 more than the previous year. Savings have been made in staffing and administration. Staff salaries have been frozen. The Council is considering future projects such as a Sports Pavilion at its land at Strawberry Lane and there will be consultation on this.

He thanked the Clerk and Deputy Clerk for their work. He also thanked the Mayor for being a “tower of strength” for the Council and commended him for his support and even-handed approach.

Cllr Bartlett (Councillor with special responsibility for Finance or “Treasurer”) announced the following Grant awards which were presented by the Mayor:

*Sing For Your Life (South West), East Devon Citizens Advice Bureau, Ottery St Mary Men’s Forum, Ottery St Mary Scout Group, Dance Action For Youth Ottery St Mary, Tipton St John Residents’ Association, Ottery in Bloom, Ottery St Mary Twinning Association, Tipton Times, OSMVSU Carnival Club, Ottery St Mary & District Help Scheme, Tipton St John Playing Field Association, The Talatones and Pixie Day.*

Mayor’s initials: .....

**13. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

-10-

**14. MAYOR’S CLOSING REMARKS**

**Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Celebrations:** The Mayor encouraged everyone to take a full part.

**Factory:** He reported that the Developer has had meetings with East Devon District Council (EDDC). He is buying land from Tesco but a change in the Tesco leadership has delayed the acquisition. He is to make a presentation the EDDC Members Advisory Panel and there will subsequently be a public exhibition.

**Housing:** The Council favours any development on the west side of the town. The Redrow application will be determined by EDDC in May.

**Thanks:** were given to his wife Gay, the Clerk for her support and advice, the Deputy Clerk, the Deputy Mayor, to all Councillors and to everyone attending the meeting.

*The Mayor closed the meeting at 8.40pm.*

**Mayor’s signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

Mayor’s initials: .....