

# Northam Town Council Summer Newsletter 2013



Mayor Cllr Barry Mason & John Nettles



## From our Mayor, Councillor Barry Mason

Since being elected as your Mayor on May 15th, I have represented Northam Town Council and its residents on several occasions, together with the Mayoress. We visited South Molton where we did the Floral Dance round the Square with all the other Mayors and Mayoresses and we have been to other Mayors' receptions at Barnstaple and Holsworthy, becoming regular members of the group affectionately known as the "Chain Gang". This picture shows me with actor John Nettles, better known as 'Bergerac', at Holsworthy.

I have also been a guest at Chivenor RMB and sat in the Pilot's cockpit of the rescue helicopter we see so often around our shores.

I still carry out my normal duties as Town Councillor for Westward Ho! representing the interests and concerns of everyone in the ward.

My Charity Evening held at Royal North Devon Golf Club on 10<sup>th</sup> August, was a great success. Guests included other Mayors, Mayoresses and Councillors from the North Devon and Torridge area and they enjoyed a buffet meal and dance, with music from my band Never Say Never. The event raised over £900 for Dr Buckland's Children's Foundation and all proceeds will go towards funding a trip to Disneyland Florida for children suffering from serious illnesses. Anyone who wishes to donate to this very worthy cause can do so by sending cheques to Northam Town Council office in Windmill Lane, made out to Northam Town Council.

### HEDGE CUTTING

As some hedges around the parish are growing over pavements may we remind you that it is the duty of householders to keep hedges cut (subject to the bird-nesting season). Allowing them to become over- grown, particularly with nettles and brambles growing out of them, is unpleasant for pedestrians, and dangerous if they are forced to walk at the edge of the pavement or on the road.

Guests Enjoy a Dance along to the Mayor's Band, Never Say Never





### Traffic Matters

Town Councillors recently attended a special meeting at the Windmill Lane Council Chamber with representatives of Devon County Highways and officers from Torrridge District Council to discuss the Northam Council's wish list of traffic improvements in the Parish. Although experiencing a drastic reduction in funding, the County officers said they were keen to listen to Northam's concerns and to incorporate them, where possible, in the revised County traffic strategy. Included in the many matters raised were the traffic situation in Northam Square and imposing 20 mph speed limits in parts of the Parish. The week following the meeting Councillors accompanied Highways officers on a tour round the Parish to discuss traffic issues further.



Congestion in Northam Square

### Town Maintenance

Northam Town Council is pleased to announce that following training through Torrridge District Council the maintenance men will shortly be authorised to issue fixed penalty notices for littering and dog fouling. It is hoped that this initiative will result in a much cleaner and tidier neighbourhood for all residents of the town Council area.

Tim and Ivan have also been given additional hours through the summer to water the fresh flower hanging baskets which have been introduced this year. They have been given further additional hours to deal with some weeding in each of the wards in order to tackle the problems created by the Devon County Council cutbacks.



Maintenance Men, Ivan and Tim

### Doggie Bags

'Dog Poo' bags are still available from the Council Office free of charge but a small contribution to defray the cost would be appreciated.



## Northam Manor Court



Northam Manor Court Bell

The Northam Manor Court Bell was found recently in the offices of Bideford and District Community Archive and this was handed over to Northam Town Council by Peter Christie a local historian at the Full Council meeting in May 2013.

Mr Christie went on to explain about Manor Courts, how they operate and the Officers that need to be appointed. He went on to mention that next year is the anniversary of the start of the First World War and handed over to the Council a plaque which had been found in the Archives recognising the contribution which Northam had made to War Savings. He mentioned that Northam had lost many men, particularly in 1918, and hoped that the Town Council would make some recognition of this next year. Much information can be obtained from the Archives. Mr Christie was thanked for his presentation and it was hoped that Northam Town Council would take the Manor Court forward at a later date.



Guns Week Plaque

## Bideford & District Community Archive

We have a treasure trove of information here covering items of local interest just waiting for you to dive in.

- ❖ Copies of Bideford Gazette have a searchable index from 1856 to the early 1920's and is an ongoing process.
- ❖ 200+ Ordnance Survey maps 1884-1934.
- ❖ 75+ maps showing historic buildings & monuments 1958-1976.
- ❖ History of Bideford, Westward Ho! and Appledore railway.
- ❖ Listing of local pubs & landlords
- ❖ Business directories 1830-1850
- ❖ Street directories 1850's
- ❖ Notes on WWI individuals, War Memorials & Roll of Honour
- ❖ Town Boxes – containing facts, photos & print outs covering local towns from Abbotsham to Woolsery
- ❖ 1000's of photographs covering various subjects – sport, weddings, architecture, ship yard, presentations, businesses and much more!
- ❖ 1841-1891 Census details all listed for Appledore, Bideford, Northam & Westward Ho!

If you have some spare time and would like to join us on our adventures in keeping the archive alive, please come and see us or phone 471714. We would be pleased to hear from you.

## Appledore Book Festival

The annual Appledore Book Festival runs from 27<sup>th</sup> September to 6<sup>th</sup> October with events at various locations around the town. You can find more information at [www.appledorebookfestival.co.uk](http://www.appledorebookfestival.co.uk)

**Have you hit a brick wall  
in your Family Tree?**

We have a complete set of Bideford Gazette newspapers back to 1856; Local births, Marriages and Deaths on a database; Census and Churchyard Records on Microfiche – and lots more.

**Bideford  
&  
District  
Gazette  
Archive**

Experienced Volunteers are ready to help you free of charge at the Council Offices, Windmill Lane, Northam. The archive is open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, 9.30 – 12.00. Telephone number: 01237471714

# Summer Newsletter 2013

## Annual Report of Northam Town Council 12-13



To include the Income and Expenditure Account to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 (set out below) and the Annual reports from the Annual Town Council Meeting in May 2013 from the then Mayor and Committee Chairmen.

### Income

|                          |                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Administration           | £1,577.00          |
| Northam Hall             | £13,033.00         |
| Mayor/Members            | £2,491.73          |
| Allotments Windmill Lane | £411.00            |
| Precept                  | £158,594.00        |
| Northam Burrows          | £14,376.03         |
| Town Projects            | £0.00              |
| Burrough Farm            | £528.25            |
| NTC Car Park             | £1,360.00          |
| Anchor Park              | £50.00             |
| Bonehill Car Park        | £38.33             |
| Loan                     | £450.00            |
|                          | <b>£192,909.34</b> |

### Expense

|                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Administration            | £74,127.29         |
| S137                      | £6,000.00          |
| Northam Hall              | £22,457.75         |
| Mayor/Members             | £4,994.49          |
| Town Projects             | £13,322.05         |
| NTC Car Park              | £7,085.81          |
| Burrough Farm             | £18,195.13         |
| Northam Burrows           | £5,892.10          |
| War Memorials             | £2,000.00          |
| Allotments Windmill Lane  | £0.00              |
| Tourism                   | £68.85             |
| Grants Other              | £0.00              |
| Elections                 | £7,492.01          |
| General Council Equipment | £8,478.07          |
| Jubilee                   | £1,562.00          |
| Loan                      | £4,500.00          |
| Anchor Park               | £225.00            |
| Bonehill Car Park         | £2,994.44          |
|                           | <b>£179,394.99</b> |

### General Fund

|                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Balance at 01 Apr 2012    | 131,146.94         |
| ADD Total Income          | £192,909.34        |
|                           | £324,056.28        |
| DEDUCT Total Expenditure  | £179,394.99        |
|                           | £144,661.29        |
| Transfer to/from Reserves | £0.00              |
| Balance at 31 March 2013  | <b>£144,661.29</b> |



## **Retiring Mayor's Report from Cllr Mrs J Whittaker**

It is a great honour to be elected to the role of Mayor and it's a role that embraces a huge kaleidoscope of roles and responsibilities. Being Chairman of the Council and ex officio member of all the Council's Committees, while attending literally dozens of engagements, ensures the Mayor's year is a really busy one.

I couldn't begin to mention every engagement that I went to, none are really more important or better than any other. So, I will just mention a few that were quite different in their own way.

The first function that Geoff and I attended was at the Appledore Shipyard. A visit which resulted in my real understanding of the importance of Babcocks, particularly in terms of our local economy, employing as it does in the region of 350 people, of the Apprentice scheme that it's able to offer to local young people and of just how amazing its reputation is internationally.

I was asked to help judge the Schools Art Exhibition that is supported by NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts) each year and is held at the Burton. I was quite amazed by the number of schools that participated, the range of exhibits and the incredible talent that was displayed by the pupils exhibiting.

I was asked to present the Town Council's, Queens Jubilee Mugs to the children of St Georges School. It was lovely to meet each child and be able to say hello, whilst presenting them with a souvenir of such a significant event.

The Mayors of all the local towns in Torridge and North Devon Districts invite each other to their ceremonies. So I have travelled from Ilfracombe to Hatherleigh to join Mayor Makings, Grants Evenings, May Fairs, Charity Events and Civic Dinners.

From a Northam Town Council perspective it has been an interesting and I think a successful year. The Council has continued to rise to local challenges and does listen to local opinion and to the concerns that our residents express. Of course it is not always possible to respond effectively to something that is a local issue, especially rapidly, but I can honestly say that we really do try. For me, it's the time that things take that often becomes very frustrating. Like replacing the Car Park sign in the square and the one indicating the way in to it on Lakenham Hill. When partnerships are involved things can often take far longer than we would wish.

Some of the successes from both a Council and personal perspective are such as ensuring that Bonehill Car Park became basically a free facility for local people.

The footpath between Appledore and Bideford has been considerably improved, using Town and Parish Funds in partnership with Bideford Town Council to achieve this.

The Council continues to support the aspirations of Appledore residents with their plans for Anchor Park.

In the near future the Lords Meadow Play Area will be refurbished and it's good to know that many local people have contributed to how it will look. This is a TDC initiative but this Council also contributed towards the improvements.

Another real triumph was successfully engineering the adoption of a local private road, one that's been of concern to those living close to it for the best part of 30 years. This was a real struggle to bring to a successful conclusion, so I am so glad that all the work required paid off.

I sit on the Burrows Committee for this Council, so I am particularly pleased that the Council appointed a Burrows Warden and I can happily endorse the success of that post.

We've had to appoint two new Maintenance Men and these two gentlemen's efforts continue to make a real difference to the appearance of the Villages.

We have made many recent improvements to Northam Hall, although it does still need some attention and this Council intends to do more in order to satisfy the requirements of its users.

All of the above provides a very small 'snapshot' of the past year. It was one which has obviously required the support of the Council's staff, especially the Assistant Town Clerk Pat Moores, who supports each Mayor during their Mayoral year. I would also like to acknowledge the help and encouragement that I've had from my fellow Councillors over the past twelve months.



### **Planning Committee – Councillor Hames**

Members of the Committee have worked well together in the past year to scrutinise planning applications. Local knowledge is vital in looking at the Plans, and this has been used to good effect in the discussions, particularly when the Committee considered the proposal for Torridge Marina Village. This was one of the biggest applications to come before the Council for some years and it was considered at a meeting which was packed to bursting with members of the public who contributed their comments on the plans.

Concern has been expressed at meetings about poor communications from some Torridge Planning Officers and also about lack of information with the Plans when forwarded by Torridge. The quality of some of the Plans in terms of what information is presented and the way in which it is presented has also been commented on, and all these are issues which still need to be addressed.

Having said that, I must say the Planning Portal on Torridge's website is generally easy to access, and very helpful, although not a complete substitute for the actual plans presented to us.

### **Town Projects – Councillor Mason**

The past 12 months have seen continued progress on behalf of the residents of Northam, Appledore, Orchard Hill and Westward Ho!.

Anchor Park, Burrough Farm, Bone Hill Car Park, Seagate and many other items have been dealt with as part of Town Projects.

Of course we saw the Asset Management also become part of the TP Committee which has brought extra challenges to us all.

We have now begun a process to update Northam Hall by looking at updating the stage area in order that the Hall can be used more and in different ways. This should generate more income for NTC and be a major asset to this Council.

I look forward to working with the next Chair of the Town Projects Committee in the future, whoever that will be.

### **Finance – Councillor Mrs Biggs**

Regular meetings are held through the year. Thank you to all the Councillors on the Finance Committee. Thank you to the Town Clerk for providing the figures required for each meeting and thank you to Pat and Alice for stepping in where needed.

One of the most enjoyable jobs for the Committee is dealing with grants to local groups needing financial help.

From a personal point of view it has been a pleasure to give support to all our projects especially Northam Hall and the car parks, with the addition of Appledore Car Park.

### **Human Resources Committee – Councillor Mrs Whittaker**

As I said when the Council approved the proposal to develop a HR Committee it will be a very useful resource for both the Councillors and for the Town Clerk. I feel that it has indeed become just that. With six members of Staff to support and new legislation

appearing from time to time it would not be wise to burden the Mayor, individual Councillors, or indeed the Town Clerk with having to be responsible for all, especially the more challenging staff related issues. The Committee has made a useful contribution during the past year and has supported myself as Mayor and Town Clerk through some interesting times. Members of the Committee have been able to consider issues as they have arisen and have been part of Interview Panels. No good Council should be without the guidance and support of a good HR Committee when it has a number of staff to care for.



### **Northam Burrows Committee Report – Councillor Miller**

Agreement was finally reached to appoint out Commons Warden on a part time temporary basis until October, Rachel Summers took up her post in August and was an instant success. She made herself known to all the Graziers and many members of the Public and has been well received by most. She immediately identified some unregistered horses and removal from the common was arranged. She submits weekly reports and Members will be aware, from these reports, of the tasks she undertakes some, the clearing of dog excrement for example, because she wishes to and she is now working with the Torridge District Council Animal Welfare Officer, to identify any stock that is in 'poor condition', and also with our local PCSO John McGovern. During the year it was also agreed that her position be made permanent and she is now undertaking training to enable her to have enforcement powers.

Our Administrative Assistant has also been made permanent and not only produces the Manor Passes but also all the records concerned with the Grazing e.g. a complete file of all the Horse pictures, passports and spreadsheets of Graziers and their allocations.

It was also agreed that we enter into a joint venture with TDC regarding an HLS agreement for the Burrows. This was signed in March and is now fully operational. The main task for this Council is the monitoring of Grazing, to that end a meeting was held with Graziers and although there was some resistance many saw the long term benefits. We have some ongoing problems with some Graziers which we are in the process of resolving.

We also have some 'Dog Bag' Dispensers which will be fixed next to each of the entrance huts along with a notice regarding Dogs and their control to reinforce the new Torridge District Council signs which are being prepared following the new Dog Control Orders now in place.

#### **Two Foals Enjoy the Sunshine on the Burrows**





### The Office

Northam Town Council  
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Tel; 01237 474976  
E-mail; [townclerk@northamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@northamtowncouncil.gov.uk)

### Staff

|                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Town Clerk           | Mrs M J Mills MILCM     |
| Assistant Town Clerk | Mrs Pat Moores          |
| Admin Assistant      | Miss Alice Kendall      |
| Maintenance Men      | Tim Martin & Ivan Heuze |
| Commons Warden       | Rachel Summers          |
| Town Beadle          | Gerry Montague          |

### Councillors

#### Appledore Ward

|                  |        |
|------------------|--------|
| Cllr Mrs A Boyle | 471199 |
| Cllr A Eastman   | 474550 |
| Cllr B Edwards   | 477441 |
| Cllr P Hames     | 421065 |

#### Northam Ward

|                      |        |
|----------------------|--------|
| Cllr C Ballard       | 477082 |
| Cllr K Davis         | 472136 |
| Cllr J Himan         | 422227 |
| Cllr R Johnson       | 475408 |
| Cllr R Miller        | 474658 |
| Cllr Mrs J Whittaker | 472315 |

#### Orchard Hill

|                  |        |
|------------------|--------|
| Cllr Mrs P Biggs | 476485 |
| Cllr J Jackson   | 470712 |

#### Westward Ho!

|                |        |
|----------------|--------|
| Cllr B Mason   | 424109 |
| Cllr R Tisdale | 474703 |

### Upcoming Meetings

#### September 2013

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup>     | Northam Burrows 10am        |
| Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> | Planning 6pm                |
| Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>   | Town Projects 10am          |
| Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>    | Finance 10am                |
| Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> | Town Council & Planning 6pm |

#### October 2013

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Monday 7 <sup>th</sup>     | Town Projects 10am          |
| Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup>    | Human Resources 6.30pm      |
| Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> | Planning 6pm                |
| Monday 21 <sup>st</sup>    | Finance 10am                |
| Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> | Town Council & Planning 6pm |



Introducing our new Town Beadle  
Gerry Montague