

NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2018 INCLUDING THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017-18



A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Dear People of the four wards that represent Northam, allow me as your Mayor to introduce myself. My name is Kenny Davis, a local lad. Having spent my early years in Northam, I am now a retired blacksmith from the local shipyard. In 1969 I left the area to work in Cape Town. After many long years working at home and abroad, I returned to the old home town, and in 1999 I married Jasmin, a North Devon farmer's daughter with two degrees in agriculture.

I am honoured to be chosen as this year's Mayor, made all the more easy by having a good office team at my disposal. As for the

Maintenance Men, what can one say, take a look around, the grass is kept tidy both on the road side and in the parks. Also as for the border with Bideford, the grass verges are a credit to Northam. Also to take on board the lovely floral boats on display as you enter in and around the Northam area.

Since those far off days of my youth, how the Northam area has changed, though I do think at times change is not always for the best, especially where the road infrastructure is concerned, having to improvise to meet the government's housing targets. One hundred years ago, at the end of the first world war, the average speed into Bideford was at best 20mph. Today at peak times we crawl down to Heywood Roundabout dodging the potholes as we go. The situation will intensify as the frontiers move on with more and more acres given over to developers to build estates at prices first time buyers can ill afford. However, as Mayor, I shall work with and through the Northam Neighbourhood Plan for the greater good of the community in which we serve by making affordable housing more accessible to those who need it on sites that we choose.

During this year I hope to see the festoon lighting on Westward Ho! promenade as we have seen on the Quay at Appledore, thanks to the previous Mayor, Cllr Brading. Not forgetting also, the latest addition to the many bus shelters Northam has erected over the years, namely the bus shelter opposite the Durrant Hotel on the A386. No doubt by now, many parishioners will have noticed the attachments to the flag staff at Bone Hill, being the yardarm and gaff, again instigated by the previous Mayor. Working in conjunction with him, I drew on the experience of the many years in the trade by designing and making the working drawings for the manufacturing and they were fitted on site by the Maintenance team ("well done those men!"). As an added bonus, once Northam Town Council has taken over Bone Hill from Torrridge, so we can illuminate the flag staff.

The next important engagement for Northam Town Council will be my Civic Service at St Mary's Church, Appledore on August 12th. Following with the annual Twinning trip to Mondeville in September which as Mayor I will represent Northam.

TOWN MATTERS



Visitors in the Viking Encampment (L) and enjoying the weather and attractions in Fore Street (R).
Photos courtesy of Graham Hobbs.

NORTHAM MAY FAIR

Once again, the Northam May Fair was a huge success. It was held on Saturday 5th May and was opened by the Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr and Mrs Brading. The Cadets Parade was followed by children from St Georges school performing the traditional May Pole Dance and two children were crowned May King and Queen. The weather was perfect for visitors to enjoy all the attractions including fair ground and traction engine rides, Viking combat displays, local food and craft stalls, Morris Dancing, Appledore Band, vintage cars and motorcycles and the Lightning aircraft. Planning for next year's Fair is already underway and will take place on 4th May 2019. The Council are looking for volunteers to help on the day and with organisation leading up to the event, if you are interested, please contact the Town Hall or Cllr Brading.

GARDEN PARTY

During his term as Mayor, Cllr Brading was nominated by the Council to be entered into the ballot to attend the Queen's Garden Party and he was lucky enough to be chosen. He is pictured here with his wife Suzanne in the grounds of Buckingham Palace in June.



SUMMER PLANTING

The Maintenance Men have been out and about installing the summer hanging baskets and planting up the boats which were donated to the Council to be used as planters. There are four boats in total and have been placed on Kingsley Road at the entrance to the Northam Area, opposite Northam Hall, at the entrance to Westward Ho! from the A39 and at Watertown. In memory of four former Councillors who all sadly passed away this year, the boats will be named "Butch", "Alasdair", "Mic" and "Sam".



TOWN MATTERS



Guests in the Council Chamber. Cpl Sarah Williams (r) hands over to Able Cadet Ellen MacDonal (l).
Photos courtesy of Graham Hobbs.

MAYOR'S INTRODUCTION CEREMONY

At the Annual Town Council meeting held on 9th May and Cllr Kenny Davis was elected as Mayor. The Introduction Ceremony was held on 6th June, the outgoing Mayor, Cllr Brading, presented the new Mayor with the symbols of office and gave a speech about his year in Office. Cllr Brading presented his chosen charities, SS Freshspring and the Local Cats Protection, with their cheques. The total raised was £2,523.57 and was split between the two organisations. The Mayor appointed Cllr Rev Derek Arnold, who has just joined the Town Council, as his Chaplain and Able Cadet Ellen MacDonal was appointed as his Cadet. The Cadet gave a brief speech about her duties and was presented with the armband and baton by the outgoing Cadet, Cpl Sarah Williams. Cllr Barry Edwards was appointed as Deputy and a motion of thanks to Cllr Brading was proposed by Cllr Leather which was supported by all Members present.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| 6th August | Town Projects |
| 8th August | Planning |
| 20th August | Finance |
| 29th August | Planning & Full Council |
| 3rd September | Town Projects |
| 10th September | Northam Burrows Forum |
| 12th September | Planning |
| 17th September | Finance |
| 26th September | Planning and Full Council |

Agendas are published 6 days before the meeting and can be found on the agendas section of our website. They are also displayed on notice boards in all four wards. A full calendar of meetings and committee appointments can also be found on the website.

FOOTPATHS

Following the report in the Spring newsletter, path 14 now has a new bridge, the narrow section has been cut right back and the steps will be refurbished by the Maintenance Men shortly.



ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

Income

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Administration | £4,615.14 |
| Northam Hall | £15,791.83 |
| Mayor/Members | £5,793.89 |
| Allotments Windmill Lane | £482.50 |
| Precept | £263,978.00 |
| Northam Burrows | £19,016.95 |
| Burrough Farm | £600.00 |
| NTC Car Park | £3,487.50 |
| Bone Hill Car Park | £153.31 |
| Town Projects | £23,967.36 |
| Footpaths | £500.00 |
| S137 | £37.09 |
| Blue Lights Hall | £900.00 |
| Northam May Fair | £4,488.30 |
| General Council Equipment | £4,000.00 |
| Neighbourhood Plan | £6,050.00 |
| | £353,861.87 |

Expense

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Allotments Windmill Lane | £2,728.00 |
| HR | £2,565.40 |
| Twinning | £1,500.00 |
| Housing Needs Survey | £583.13 |
| Neighbourhood Plan | £3,789.53 |
| Anchor Park | £9,083.40 |
| Burrough Farm reserves | £690.99 |
| Town Hall | £2,000.00 |
| Northam May Fair | £5,538.22 |
| Grants Other | £2,860.76 |
| PWLB Various | £235.00 |
| PWLB Various | £21,378.75 |
| Administration | £160,867.38 |
| S137 | £10,405.37 |
| Northam Hall | £15,248.87 |
| Mayor/Members | £27,451.94 |
| Town Projects | £64,332.29 |
| Northam Burrows | £10,810.13 |
| General Council Equipment | £4,282.87 |
| Bone Hill Car Park | £3,001.14 |
| | £349,353.17 |

General Fund

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Balance at 01 Apr 2017 | £256,869.47 |
| ADD Total Income | £353,861.87 |
| DEDUCT Total Expense | £349,353.17 |
| Transfer to/from reserves | £0.00 |
| Balance at 31 Mar 2018 | £261,378.17 |

RETIRING MAYOR'S REPORT

The recent deaths of two very Community minded and hard working Town Councillors Richard Miller (Northam Ward) and Mike Durkin (Westward Ho! Ward) meant there have been two local elections recently. May I welcome the Reverend Derek Arnold (Northam Ward) and Nick Laws (Westward Ho! Ward) on board.

Since last May when I was very privileged to be elected Mayor several significant projects have finally been completed after years of delay. These include the provision of festoon and seasonal lighting on 15 posts along Appledore Quay, a shorter run along a section of Westward Ho! promenade and some Christmas lighting in Northam Square. Further improvements were carried out at Anchor Park, Appledore providing better swings and extending the play area. Lords Meadow playing field and Ridgeway Drive play ground were finally transferred into Northam Town Council's ownership. I have spent a considerable amount of my time, as has the Town Clerk, creating business plans for further development of all 3 parks. We also have worked for many hours establishing the best way to finance what may be a £100,000 long term investment in restoring the parks to a decent standard and to meet the results of various Surveys. There is a delay in carrying out this work as a number of Councillors have recently requested further discussions (though earlier this year a majority voted for the work to be done). Other improvements include new bus stop shelters (one will soon appear opposite the Durrant Hotel), transfer of ownership of bus shelters and benches to Northam Town Council, creation of 4 boat planters, the renewal of the Christmas trees around all of Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! and the creation of a proper sign posted Public toilet in Fore Street. The second phase of festoon lighting on Westward Ho! promenade is progressing now planning permission has been granted.

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

Myself and Suzanne with the Mayor of Mondeville
Photo courtesy of Hugh Brading



Bonehill flag pole in Northam, after 30 years has been restored to being a proper Naval ceremonial flag pole thus reflecting Northam's ancient maritime history. Recently Northam Town Councillors agreed to it being illuminated which it briefly was on April 20th and was described by the Lord Mayor of Exeter as magnificent. A permanent electrical supply is still to be installed, once ownership is transferred to Northam Town Council.

An audio system was finally purchased for the Council Chamber to enable full recordings of proceedings and to assist those hard of hearing.

Last summer a fourth person, Dean Stewardson, joined the Northam Town Council Maintenance Team; their work load just gets bigger and bigger. Recently a wood chipper and a Ford Transit pickup truck were purchased by this Council to make their job a bit easier and enable some of their work to be done much quicker.

Late last year Suzanne and I represented the Town Council at the Twinning Association's visit to Mondeville in France. We had a very enjoyable and educational visit with exceptional treatment from our hosts. It should be remembered that it is a Civic Twinning between the two Town Councils and it is not a residents Association Twinning .

This year is the second year Northam Town Council has organised the Northam Mayfair on Saturday May 5th. Last year's was good this year's was even better.

I believe I have demonstrated true commitment to the post of Mayor despite moving home to Camborne last October. On average I have spent two days a week in the Council offices; the Town Clerk and I also conferred daily by phone or email.

Cllr Hugh Brading

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Over the last twelve months, the Finance Committee has met regularly to discuss Council Finances and of course, pay the bills! It's been an important year of trying to balance services and budget as we are ever conscious the money we are spending belongs to the Council Tax Payers of this Council area. Whilst we did take the decision to increase the precept, giving a Band D property a cost of approximately £62 for the year, an increase of around £9 per household for the year, this does represent good value for the area based on all of the work the Town Council now undertake in the area. This increase in work has also resulted in a fourth Maintenance Person being employed full time by the Council increasing capacity for and not limited to grass cutting, litter picking and general maintenance. We as a Council are also looking to the future of improving the parks and acquiring control of assets such as parks from Torridge where appropriate to do so.

As always, the highlight of the Finance Committee is deciding on which grants to award to local community groups; it's always a pleasure to read what their hard working volunteer groups do in the local area and to meet the volunteers at the annual Grants Presentation Evening.

Cllr Oliver Sherborne - Chairman

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

TOWN PROJECTS AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

Looking back at the last 12 months, it is amazing the variety of topics that Town Projects has been involved in so I have listed below (in no particular order) some of the business from the agendas this past year. I would like to thank the committee for their hard work and in particular the Mayor who was responsible for many of the Business Plans we are using.

- ◆ Anchor Park - replaced trees; additional fencing; examined and replaced surface under the slide; installation of litter bins; replace chain link fencing; removed the dead cherry trees and pruned trees as required (following Maintenance Men's chainsaw training)
 - ◆ Local Footpaths - May Hilder Way; Ladies Walk; 5 walk booklet (produced by Admin Officer/ P3 Co-ordinator); footpath below Kipling Tors being added to PRoW register; repair work authorised after footpaths surveyed.
 - ◆ Trees and fencing at Windmill Lane Allotments
 - ◆ Northam Hall - electrical work/additional power points for the stage; purchase of additional tables; asbestos checks; maintenance of flooring
 - ◆ Appledore Skate Park refurbishment including local artwork
 - ◆ Northam May Fair - almost entirely the Mayor
 - ◆ Traffic calming in Jackets Lane; feasibility of employing a Community Warden
 - ◆ Bone Hill flag pole - modification and provision of steps; new flags to meet revised NTC flag policy
 - ◆ Monthly financial report in respect of Town Projects and Asset Management
 - ◆ Festoon/Festive lighting extension in Westward Ho!
 - ◆ Festoon/Festive lighting in Appledore
 - ◆ Festive Lighting for Northam
 - ◆ Adoption of shrub bed in Chichester Way
 - ◆ Adoption of grassed area in Kimberley Park
 - ◆ Replacement dog bins/dispensers
 - ◆ Purchase of shredder/chipper
 - ◆ Recommended site for Air Ambulance night landing
 - ◆ Mapping Services (Pear Technology)
 - ◆ Projects using TAP monies, new homes bonus and Devon County Council community fund
 - ◆ Renewing Christmas trees and hanging baskets plus new trees for Westbourne Terrace; safety check all lights fittings.
 - ◆ New bus shelter on Heywood Road
 - ◆ Quarterly reports from the Maintenance Men
 - ◆ Replacement slats/refurbishment of benches on Appledore Quay
 - ◆ Cleaning War Memorials
 - ◆ Seagate Car Park
 - ◆ Offer of boats for planting
 - ◆ Ridgeway Drive play area and business plan
 - ◆ Lord's Meadow - French drain; wood chippings laid in muddy areas; business plan created
- Cllr Roger Tisdale - Chairman

Bone Hill Flag Pole
Image by Cllr Brading



ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Committee has carried on its good work through the year, meeting twice a month and most of our recommendations align with the decisions of the Local Planning Authority. The year has seen an apparent increase in applications involving Juliet balconies and proper useable balconies which in some cases have raised the issue of overlooking neighbouring properties. Applications for extensions and roof lights also feature prominently in our deliberations.

More seriously, the continued weary progress of the Draft Local Plan means that developers are applying for development on sites outside areas designated for development in the current Local Plan. Apart from the current application to build 58 holiday units at Knapp, to which we have strongly objected, a site on the edge of existing housing at Raleigh comes to mind and also on the edge of Appledore in Torridge Road next to Polywell. The latter site was the subject of an application for several houses and although the application was recommended for refusal by Northam Town Council and then refused by Torridge, it was allowed on appeal. This was despite the fact the site is in open countryside and in the Coastal Preservation Area. The appeal decision conflicts with other Inspectors decisions on similar applications in the area which were turned down and this is disturbing because it makes appeals seem like a lottery and in the case of the Appledore site the decision could open the way to further development along to Northam. Further open countryside applications in the pipeline are at Wooda Road and Bloody Corner.

Regarding the Draft Local Plan, the Committee voted recently to agree to a modification which would exclude a site at Staddon Road, Appledore from development. It is hoped that the Council's current work to produce a Neighbourhood Plan will reflect local people's views about what sort of development they want and where and that these views will be incorporated into further strategic planning.

Cllr Peter Hames - Chairman

NORTHAM BURROWS COMMITTEE

Sadly this year the Council has lost both the Chairman, Cllr Richard Miller, and Vice Chairman, Cllr Mike Durkin. Also, the Chairman of the 1716 Committee and a regular Forum attendee, Alderman Barclay, passed away. These were significant losses to the Burrows Committee. At the first meeting last May, Cllr Miller and Durkin were appointed as Chairman and Vice Chairman and there were many questions for South West Water. It was also agreed that there was a need to register the Burrows with the Charity Commission. In June, a Forum meeting was held. Members agreed the new design of the leaflets and they were ordered from the printers. There were reports from Natural England, Torridge Ranger, RNDGC, the 1716 Committee, South West Water and the Graziers. The loss of one sheep through dog worrying was reported.

At the July meeting, solicitors were appointed to proceed with registering the Charity. The Town Council is the corporate trustee and Members are appointed to manage the Charity. There were further discussions on Bassetts Bridge and a drive was held on 6th July. In September, there was a Forum Meeting and the usual reports were received. The issue of sewage pollution on the Burrows was also discussed.

In January, it was agreed to write to Devon County Council in relation to erosion especially regarding the tip. Bassetts Bridge was discussed, there is a 12 month monitoring scheme in place at present. There was a discussion on the merits of registering for VAT but nothing was finalised. It was agreed that as there was only one Grazier with sheep, there would be no winter/spring drive. This was agreed with Natural England. It was also agreed that charges for Manor Passes will remain unchanged.

Town Clerk - Mrs Jane Mills

COUNCILLORS AND STAFF

CONTACT DETAILS FOR COUNCILLORS CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEBSITE

NORTHAM



Cllr Rev. Derek Arnold

Cllr David Berryman



Cllr Hugh Brading



Cllr John Himan



Cllr Richard Hancock



Cllr Mrs Jane Whittaker

APPLEDORE



Mayor Cllr Kenny Davis



Cllr Andrew Eastman



Cllr Barry Edwards



Cllr Peter Hames

WESTWARD HO!



Cllr Roger Tisdale



Cllr Nick Laws

STAFF

Town Clerk
Assistant Town Clerk
Admin Officer
Maintenance Team

Mrs M J Mills MILCM
Mrs Pat Moores
Miss Alice Kendall
Tim Martin
Ivan Heuze
Dominic Callebaut
Dean Stewardson
Gerry Montague

Town Beadle

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ORCHARD HILL



Cllr Chris Leather



Cllr Oliver Sherborne