



Oyez!

The Town Council's newsletter brings you up to date with Council business and keeps you informed.

May 2005

Welcome to the first edition of the Axbridge Town Council's regular newsletter. We aim to produce this free sheet each month, after each full Council Meeting.

Oyez will :

- give details of some of the current issues being discussed by Councillors,
- inform you of progress where matters are ongoing
- give you an idea of future plans
- invite you to get involved

How does the Council work?

Firstly your Town Council is the *most local* level of government and has *limited powers*. Every 4 years the electorate of Axbridge parish may elect up to 13 *Town Councillors*. Axbridge is a town with a Royal Charter; so whilst other parishes have a council Chairman, Axbridge has a **Mayor, Cllr. Tony Wilson**. The Council has the same powers as a Parish Council.

The full Council meets on each third Monday of the month at 7.30 pm. in the upper Chamber of the Town Hall. Any elector of Axbridge may come along and speak on matters that concern them personally, or the town in general. A special part of the agenda is set aside for this *public participation*.

The day to day business of the Council is managed by our **Town Clerk, Mrs Vicky Brice**. Any elector, who wants information, or who has a matter to put before the Council, may contact her by telephone—07884 264033

Councillors as individuals, or as sub-group or committee members work between meetings to make recommendations to full Council on such matters as:

- Planning applications
- Town Finances
- Highways matters including public footpaths
- Allotment and cemetery management
- Social and Leisure activities
- The Parish Plan
- Somerset Showcase and Farmers Market

Our Mayor also has official duties at such town events as Remembrance Sunday, fund-raisers, Somerset Showcase and Farmers markets.

Who pays for the Council's work?

The short answer is - ***you do!***

Each year the Council sets a budget—estimates how much money will be needed to carry out its functions and programmes of work. The Clerk then informs Sedgemoor District Council that Axbridge has *set a precept* of such an amount. (for 2005/6 £27,500). Sedgemoor then collects that sum through your *Council Tax* from the 821 households currently listed and passes it on to the Town Council.

Your Town Council then carries out all of its duties and functions at an average cost of £2.80 per household per month—or 70p per week.

What's going on now?

Planning: The Town Council is **consulted** on all planning applications in the town. Sedgemoor District Council grants or withholds permissions. Your Town council offers local guidance. *The Old Butcher's Shop (9 High Street)* has been agreed in principle by Sedgemoor as a new housing development, with parking. The Town Council will try to ensure that great care is taken to build sympathetically and to respect this ancient site.

Highways: The Town Council makes requests and recommendations to Sedgemoor and Somerset Councils if major works are needed and is usually consulted on any proposed changes in the locality (e.g. A38 speed limits). At present Somerset CC and the Town Council are working to try to improve safety, parking and the movement of vehicles such as buses through the Square. A 3-year programme to improve street lighting has been accepted by the Council—starting with Old Church Road (2005/6).

Leisure activities: New sports changing rooms are now nearing completion on the Furlong. This long-awaited project is being managed by the Town Council. Funding has been obtained through Council Tax and by raising loans, together with assistance from the Saxons Football Club and the Axbridge Parochial Charities. This new facility will be named "***The Jack Todd Changing Rooms***", in honour of the main benefactor of the Axbridge Parochial Charities. The official opening, by Cllr. Jim Lukins, will be on Saturday July 2nd—Axbridge Fun Day.

Do you want to know more?

The next regular Council Meeting is on Monday June 20th. The agenda will be on the Town Hall board.

Do you think you could help run your town?

There is a vacancy for a Town Councillor, which will be filled by *co-option* (no election!). If you would like to know more about this opportunity to serve Axbridge and its residents, contact the Town Clerk—07884 264033.

Health Service Improvements. If you have views on local health issues, why not join your local Patient and Public Health Involvement Forum? Contact 01392 332100 for details.

This newsletter and other information can be found on the Town Council's website

www.axbridge-tc.gov.uk

PLEASE NOTE

Future editions of "Oyez" **WILL NOT BE DELIVERED**. Copies may be collected **FREE** from: The Post Office, The Crown, The Lamb, Local Plus, Axbridge Butchers, The Chemist or the Medical Centre. The Town Council is grateful for the co-operation of these local enterprises/services.