



BOYEZ!



MEADOW STREET CAR-PARK

The possible sale of the Meadow Street car-park remains at the top of the Town Council's agenda. An Extraordinary Meeting of the Council was well-attended by concerned residents. The Mayor, Cllr. Mike Taylor, has put the case for the retention of the car-park, in person, at a District Council meeting in Bridgwater, as did several local residents. District Councillors Mrs. Scott and Mrs. Hill have put the town's case forcibly to Sedgemoor officers and fellow councillors. Cllr. Mrs. Hill has kept the Town Council up-to-date on moves at Sedgemoor, where she is on the Executive Committee, which will eventually make the decision about the car-park's future.

The Council is grateful for the positive support from the Axbridge Action Group, the Chamber of Commerce, The Town Trust, Axbridge First School, Axbridge Museum Trust, the Parish Church, other local councils, and the many individuals, who have either signed a petition or written personally to Sedgemoor District Council.

So what is the present situation?

No decision has been made to sell the land. Sedgemoor is trying to gain a better understanding of its possible value, and that of other Sedgemoor assets, for which expressions of interest have been sought on the open market. This exercise is part of a legal requirement for Sedgemoor to have an accurate Asset Management Plan and for it to be making best use of its assets. Unfortunately, the bald statistics of usage for the Meadow Street car-park, during the daytime, do not suggest that this asset is "value-for-money". The District Council is continuing to monitor the numbers of cars to confirm,

or disprove its earlier assessment of just 12% use during the daytime.

What next? The Town Council and others in the community are clear that this is an Axbridge problem, brought about in part by the lack of enforcement of parking limits in the Square (a Somerset County Highways and Police responsibility) and in part by a refusal to adopt a local pricing policy for Meadow Street (a Sedgemoor District responsibility). Town Councillors have taken the view that the car-park would best be under the management and control of the Town Council, perhaps by a transfer of ownership or a long-term lease. An urgent meeting has been arranged with officers and members of the District Council to explore this approach. Such local control would transfer any financial loss and responsibility for monitoring and upkeep from Sedgemoor to Axbridge, but would ensure the community is not faced with this situation on a regular basis.

Your Town Council is committed to keeping residents informed and involved.

SEDGEMOOR RATES: The Sedgemoor District Council proportion of your Council Tax bill will rise by 4.5% for the next financial year. To keep costs down, the number of council employees has been reduced.

AXBRIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP:

The Chamber of Commerce is to hold an **open meeting on Saturday March 1st.** in the Old Red Lion (High Street) to initiate an Environmental Group.

TOWN HALL NOTICE BOARDS: The Town Trust has agreed in principle to new boards being affixed to the front of the Town Hall, but their exact positioning, design and cost has yet to be agreed.

YOUTH: The costs of the proposed Youth Shelter have risen and a further £1400 must now be found from other sources - grants or donations.

PLANNING MATTERS: The Town Council has recommended to Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) that the proposed access for a new dwelling beside **20, Chestnut Avenue** should be constructed so as to avoid damage to the nearby trees. Council has suggested that the new development to the rear of the Manor House be named "**Chards' Garden**", to recognise the association of this long-standing Axbridge family with the area.

There will be a further meeting with SDC to discuss the possibility of **Affordable Housing** development within the town.

PARISH BOUNDARY MARKERS: The Council has agreed to guarantee the cost of producing four parish boundary marker stones, to be placed at Shute Shelve, Callow Hill Quarry, Stubbington Drove and Prowse's Lane. The dressing and carving of the stones, which have been donated by Bardon Aggregates, will cost £560.

This is a plea for individuals or groups within the community to donate towards this cost - to become involved in replacing traditional and permanent markers - hopefully in time for Rogation Sunday! Please make any cheques payable to "Axbridge Town Council" and send to the Clerk at 2, Woodview Close, Cheddar. BS27 3NF..

TOWN ARCHIVIST: Mrs. Maggie Tur, the Council's Archivist, is undertaking a photographic record of Axbridge as it is in 2008. This will provide information for future historians and researchers and show how the townscape changes over time. This exercise has nothing to do with future planning needs. If any residents are unhappy about their property being put on record in this way, please inform the Town Clerk, giving the address of their property.

DOGS!: Sedgemoor's Dog Warden will visit the town to try to better enforce the dog-fouling regulations. Particular concern was expressed about the mess in Back Lane and about the fact that the dog-bins are often over-full.

BUS STOPS: A new set of proposals for re-siting and improving bus stops in town are expected shortly. This would involve work at Townsend and along Cheddar Road.

SHUTE SHELVE JUNCTION: Somerset Highways is to look at ways of improving night-time reflective markings at the A38-A371 junction on Shute Shelve. This would involve both improved "cats' eyes" and more reflective posts on the verge.

LENGTHSMAN: The newly-appointed Lengthsman is expected to start work at the beginning of March. Cllr. Lukins will organise his workload.

SOMERSET SHOWCASE: With, or without a grant from Sedgemoor, it is planned to hold the Somerset Showcase in town on the first Saturday in September.

FARMERS' MARKET: The Council agreed to buy a permanent banner, primarily for use at the Council's Community Stall at the Farmers' Market, but also for other Council events.

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY: Please note that the Annual Assembly is on **Monday March 3rd**. Residents may question the work of the Council over the past 12 months and make suggestions for the future. There will be the chance to hear about, and to volunteer to help with, a "Town Design Statement." This will act as a guide for future development in and around the town.

COME ALONG AND HAVE YOUR SAY!

Issues for the Town Council?

Come to Council Meetings (3rd. Monday each month 19.30) or contact Mrs. Vicky Brice, the Town Clerk on 07884 264033 or email vbrice@axbridge-tc.gov.uk