



# OYEZ!

November 2017

*News from your Town Council*

## Axbridge Museum

The museum closed for the winter on 31st October, and will re-open on 30th March 2018.

## Co-option to the Council

Sedgemoor Council has not received any request for an election to be held, so the vacancy on the Town Council created by the resignation of Ian Laken will be filled by co-option. Notice of this has been displayed on the Council notice board, with application packs available from the Post Office and the Council's website. Applications, due by the 4th December, will be considered by Council at the meeting on 11th December.

## Houlgate Way planning application

Axbridge Town Council has further objected to amended plans for a proposed development on land to the south of Houlgate Way (which is outside of the development boundary). The latest Design and Access Statement suggests that the number of proposed properties has been reduced from 80 to 53 (35% affordable), however, it also shows these properties to be the first phase of development, with an opportunity on the remaining site area to create a second phase.

The application, which was initially submitted in September 2016, has yet to be determined. The application form still refers to 80 houses and it remains outline with only illustrative information on the proposed design and height of the properties and no detail as to how it would meet the actual affordable housing needs in Axbridge.

The Town Council has reiterated its earlier objections, including the way in which this application has been handled, together with further objections and concerns. This response, together with the application documents and responses from consultees and interested parties, can be found on Sedgemoor District Council's planning online website (application number 02/16/00030). The consultation period ends on 4th December 2017.

## Axbridge Handbells

There used to be a handbell ringing group in Axbridge which played at events in the town. The set of 13 bells has been looked after following the closure of the group, and the council has funded their repair.

Anyone interested in starting a new handbell group to put this civic asset back into use is asked to contact the Town Clerk (*contact details overleaf*).

## Draft budget & precept

The Council agreed its budget for 2018/19 which will result in a Council Tax precept for Axbridge of £81,500 (a 6.5% increase).

## Council tax relief

Council's attention was drawn to the fact that some Council Tax relief may be available to individuals living with a person suffering from dementia. Anyone in this situation can check eligibility by contacting the Council Tax department at Sedgemoor District Council.

## Broadband in Axbridge

Following an item in last month's Oyez several responses have been received from residents not able to receive, or not satisfied with the superfast broadband. It would help the council in pursuing this matter if any others similarly dissatisfied with broadband provision would let the Town Clerk know, preferably by e-mail (*details overleaf*) giving their exact address.

## Damage to the public conveniences

Members were disappointed to note that the mens' toilet in Moorland Street had been vandalised on Halloween on 31st October 2017. This criminal incident was reported to the Police and a crime number obtained. The Council is taking this matter very seriously and would be pleased if anyone with any information about the incident would contact the Town Clerk (*contact details overleaf*).

## Town Maintenance Contractor

The contractor worked 19 hours in October 2017, and carried out work including:

- Clearing litter, hedge trimming & gully clearing in the car park
- Removing litter, trimming the hedge and repairing the chicken springy toy on the Furlong
- Initial clearance of Wood Lane & Back Lane
- Fixing the notice board at the allotments
- Emptying the compost bin at the cemetery

The contractor was also asked to inspect the cycle racks after removing them for the siting of the Christmas Tree.

## Allotments

Anyone interested in renting an allotment should contact the Town Clerk (*contact details below*)

An additional water trough is needed at the allotments - any donation of a trough would be greatly appreciated.

## The by-pass layby

Council considered the picnic area to be an amenity, which was often used and could be seen as the “gateway” to Axbridge, and consequently agreed to continue with the upkeep of the picnic area.

## Civic service and awards

The annual Civic Service will take place on Sunday 25th February 2018. Nominations are requested for two awards - the Civic Award, as in previous years, and a new Axbridge Young Person’s Award to recognise those young people (under the age of 25) who have made outstanding achievements in sport or academically, or who deserve recognition for service to the local community.

Nominations should be submitted by 31st December - see the instructions on the nomination forms included with this edition of Oyez.

## Axbridge plaques

Councillor Wells put forward a suggestion that heritage funding be sought for a project to enable the purchase and display of plaques on properties describing their history. There would be a town trail map available to encourage visitors to explore Axbridge.

Members expressed support for this project, which would be of interest to residents and visitors and would help promote tourism in the area.

## Bristol Water pipeline project

The pipe has now been laid along the Strawberry Line, and Bristol Water are making final preparations for pressure testing. They will test the sections at the treatment works end first and progress towards Cross. They will need to reopen the excavation at Townsend for testing purposes but can’t yet give an exact date.

Upon satisfactory completion of the testing they will begin the permanent re-instatement of the cycleway by the reservoir, but this work will be weather dependent and they do not expect the cycleway to re-open until the new year.

## Aubeterre-sur-Dronne

The Town Clerk has received a suggestion from outside Axbridge that a new twinning arrangement might be made with this village which is in south-west France not far from Bordeaux. Axbridge Town Council has decided not to get involved directly with this proposal, but anyone who might be interested in forming a group to take the idea forward should contact the Town Clerk (*contact details below*).

## Other matters . . .

Other matters raised or discussed at Council in November included:

- Membership of Somerset Playing Fields Association
- Potholes in High Street
- Dog fouling and the costs of clearing up
- Car park enforcement
- Large vehicle parking problems
- Faulty street lights
- State of the cycle way & sign near Racurium Lodge
- Bollards in The Square
- Problems with trees in the school grounds
- Standard of work on recycling collections (litter left behind, bins left untidily)
- Review of allotment rents
- Review of cemetery fees

**Residents are invited to attend Town Council meetings to raise issues or just to listen. Matters may be brought to the Council’s attention via the Town Clerk.**

***Meetings are normally held in the Town Hall on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7.30 pm but the December meeting will be on Monday 11th December at 7.30pm***

**The agenda is displayed in advance outside the Town Hall and on the website**

**The Town Clerk, Vicky Brice, can be contacted by phone or e-mail:**

**07884 264033 vicky.brice@axbridge-tc.gov.uk**

**or by post to PO Box 1184, Axbridge, BS26 2WJ**

**The Town Council’s website is at: [www.axbridge-tc.gov.uk](http://www.axbridge-tc.gov.uk)**

**If you would like to respond to anything published in Oyez! you can do this by letter or e-mail to the Town Clerk or by going to the Council website and clicking on the ‘Contact us’ button in the left-hand menu**