

Atherstone Town Council



Annual Report 2020 / 2021



LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
FOUNDATION

TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE

Town Clerk Mrs Odette Ghent
Deputy Town Clerk Mrs. Sally Oldham

NWBC
The Council House
South Street
Atherstone
CV9 1DE

Opening hours

Monday to Friday 9.30am to 11am by appointment only.

Outside of these hours appointments are necessary.

Phone Number	01827 720829
Mobile	07928 974576 Town Clerk
Mobile	07541 946062 Deputy Town Clerk

Postal Address	Atherstone Town Council, P.O. Box 2000, Atherstone, CV9 1YN.
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Web Site Address	www.atherstone-tc.gov.uk
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E-mail	clerk@atherstone-tc.gov.uk
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Meetings Structure 2020/21

May to November 2020

Chairman Cllr D Clews

Vice-Chairman Cllr R Jarvis

Mayor Cllr D Clews

November 2020 to May 2021

Chairman Cllr R Jarvis

Vice – Chairman Cllr D Wright

Monthly meeting, all meetings are Full Council.

Meeting business.

All Town Council meetings have been held via Zoom since May 2020, this has worked well, and the meetings follow the same format as the face-to-face meetings.

A Public Session at the beginning of the meeting

Reports from other Councils and Police

Approval of invoices and cheques

Correspondence

Planning applications

Financial and internal reports

Memorial applications

Recent burials

Policy matters

Funding Applications

Applications to use the Market Square

Contract matters

Any other scheduled business

The Town Council are temporarily based inside the NWBC building at The Council House on South Street Atherstone CV9 1DE.

This is whilst plans are formulated to demolish and rebuild the Old Mortuary as two storey office accommodation and community space. The Town council have engaged with a project manager to oversee the project.

ATHERSTONE TOWN COUNCILLORS

As of 31st March 2021

Sara Bishop	01827 717480	Labour North
Tony Clews	01827 711340	Conservative North
Carl Gurney	01827 713976	Conservative North
Brian Henney	07931 588218	Labour North
Mejar Singh	01827 712305	Conservative North
David Wright	07711 330040	Conservative North
Vacancy		Labour South
Denise Clews	07477 607255	Conservative South
Ray Jarvis	01827 716534	Conservative South
Jacky Chambers	07966 425052	Labour Central
Vacancy		Vacancy
Vacancy		Vacancy
Mark Jordan	07775 987866	Conservative Central
Angie Spencer	07974 302910	Conservative Central
Vacancy	Vacancy	Vacancy

FAREWELLS AND WELCOMES

In October 2020 Cllr Lorna Dirveiks sadly passed away followed by Cllr Dawn Downes in February 2021 this was very sad news for both the Town Council and the residents of Atherstone as both Councillors did so much for the Town. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their families.

Cllr Gary Chamberlain was Co Opted onto the Town Council in July 2020 this was replacing Cllr Ian Driver who resigned in December 2019

Cllr Susan Allan Stubbs resigned in November 2020 followed by Cllr Gary Chamberlain in February 2021

The year ended with four vacancies one in the South Ward and three in the Central Ward

What has the Town Council done in 2020/21

This year has been a very challenging year for the Town Council and the residents of Atherstone.

In March 2020 the Country went into lockdown as the Covid 19 Pandemic took hold and immediately the Clerks got to work setting up the Atherstone Community Support Team there was a remarkable response to a call for volunteers to help their neighbours and fellow residents and support was put in place for every street and road throughout Atherstone.

Over 60 Volunteers registered to help and between them they covered over 4300 households helping with essential shopping, collecting prescriptions, walking dogs or just a friendly phone call for those who were unable to leave their homes during the Covid-19 outbreak.

There was also a dedicated team of volunteers that helped the local Chemist delivering prescriptions, and volunteers delivering food parcels from Edible Links Food Bank.

In December 2020 Town Mayor Cllr Denise Clews instigated the delivery of 200 High Teas as a welcome early Christmas present for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents in Atherstone.

The past year has been one where everyone has pulled together to support each other.

1. Allotments

The Town Council provides allotments for rent. There are two sites, Merevale and Gypsy Lane.

Both sites are almost fully occupied, anyone requiring a plot should register at the Town Council offices.

The Town Council also owns the neighbouring Atherstone Allotment Association site, in Gypsy Lane.

The Town Council works with the Associations, and tenants, at the sites for their general improvement.

Due to Covid 19 restrictions there were no allotment awards this year but will resume in 2021.

2. Cemetery

The Town Council maintains the cemetery at Sheepy Road and is also responsible for the maintenance of burial and memorial records for the cemetery.

3. Old Allotment Gardens

The Town Council has been unable to attract funding to improve the land between the Cemetery and the A5, which runs from Sheepy Road through to the brook at Abeles Way, now known as The Old Allotment Gardens.

Under consideration was provision of a wildlife conservation area and walkthrough, for the people of Atherstone. It also allows for the future extension of the cemetery and investigation works began in early 2021 looking into this.

4. CCTV

The CCTV cameras and ducting in the town centre are owned and maintained by the Town Council who also contribute to the staffing costs for monitoring the screens.

The Town Council is in partnership with North Warwickshire Borough Council and Warwickshire Police.

The system includes a direct link to Police Headquarters at Leek Wootton.

An upgrade to the CCTV system began but was temporarily put on hold due to Covid 19 this is now due to be complete by Summer 2021.

The Town Council supports the retail radio system, for the town, now known as Town watch. Subsidies are given towards the cost of the radios, for those taking part.

5. Play Areas

There are two Play Areas managed and maintained by the Town Council: St Mary's Road, which is owned outright, and Westwood Road, which is leased.

Because there have been several instances of damage, vandalism, and anti-social behaviour the St Mary's Road area, is covered by a mobile CCTV camera administered by the Police, while Westwood Road is covered by a camera on the town centre system.

6. Planning

The Town Council is a Statutory Planning Consultee, and comments on planning applications in Atherstone, and those which would affect Atherstone.

7. Christmas Lights

The Town Council owns the Christmas lights in the Long Street, Church Street and Market Street areas and outside St Mary's Church, and is totally responsible for the purchase, testing, maintenance, erection and dismantling of the lights.

Additional pole mounted displays were planned for December 2020 to compliment the new Christmas light displays installed in 2019 but due to Covid restrictions this could not happen, but they are planned for December 2021.

8. Support for Local Community Events held in the Market Square

No events could take place this year apart from the twice weekly market that was a great benefit to the Town during lockdown as people could shop safely outdoors.

9. Support for Local Community Groups

The Town Council can make small grants to assist local community groups. Details of these can be found on the website.

During 2020/21 the Town Council also supported organisations via Community Grants

Atherstone Sports Club
Atherstone Rangers under 7's
Adders Hockey
First Responders

10. Honorary Citizen and Annual Dinner.

Each year the Town Council debates the choice of Honorary Citizen, an award made to a person(s) who, in the opinion of the Town Council, has made an outstanding contribution to the life of the town.

This year there were two awards made to Karen and Katie Meads in recognition of their commendable contribution and many years' service to the Girl Guiding of Atherstone.

There is also a new award proposed by Cllr Denise Clews this year names The Ruby Chambers Sports Award.

The Annual Dinner could not take place in March 2020 as planned due to lockdown restrictions; this was very disappointing as Cllr Carl Gurney had around 100 guests due to attend. This also meant the 2019-20 Honorary Citizen Awards or Special Achievement Awards could not be presented.

The event had raised £1,135.00 for the Mayors Charity the Singing for Breathing Group at George Eliot Hospital this was due to the kindness of guests donating their Annual Dinner ticket fee and funds raised at Dickens 2019.

11. Floral Displays

The Town Council has maintained the floral displays in the town centre during the year with summer and winter plantings.

12. Website

The Town Council has its own website which is maintained by the clerks and gives up to date information of Council activities, local news, and documentation. The new website is working well.

13. Local Council Award Scheme (formerly Quality Council)

The Town Council was re-accreditation of the Foundation Level in February 2021.

14. Market Square

The Town Council has an agreement with North Warwickshire Borough Council, to manage events on the Market Square. The Town Council continued to manage the twice weekly market.

The Town Council owns pop-up stalls and a canopy which cover most of the Square. These are available for the use of community groups, and events,

Details and costs can be obtained from the Town Council office.

The use of the Market Square for events was curtailed this year but the Town Council did support the local publicans by allowing them to serve drinks outside on the Market Square as lockdown measures eased.

15. Arcade Shops

The Town Council owns and operates the Arcade Shops, in Long Street. This complex provides a mixture of retail use, and space for community groups and organisations to have office or meeting space. assess demand for the upstairs space will be considered when further plans are made.

During 2020/21 there were again some changes of tenants due to retirement.

Anyone wanting space in the Arcade should contact the clerks at the Town Council offices.

During the first lockdown the Town Council support their tenants by giving a rent-free period of three months.

16. Owen Street Community Arts Centre

The Town Council owns The Arts Centre, Owen Street, Atherstone, CV91DG.

This was purchased to retain and protect this important community asset for the people of Atherstone and the surrounding area.

All covenants restricting the future use of the building as a community resource remain in place.

The building has been leased back to the Owen Street Community Arts Centre whose Board of Directors are fully responsible for running the facility, including bookings and items such as maintenance, insurance and running costs. The Board are keen to promote wider community use of the building.

**STATEMENT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR APRIL 1ST 2020 TO
MARCH 31ST 2021**

Bank Balances at 1 April 2020

CCTV Account	£111,884.60
Precept Account	£63,985.86
Business Current Account	£32,830.36
Reserve Account	£35,368.18
TOTAL	<u>£244,069.00</u>

Bank Balances at 31 March 2021

CCTV Account	£111,942.32
Precept Account	£39,467.50
Business Current Account	£27,006.16
Reserve Account	£35,383.86
TOTAL	<u>£213,799.84</u>



ATHERSTONE TOWN COUNCIL 2020/21
Budget information

<u>2020/21</u>		<u>2021/22</u>
£268,922	Gross Expenditure	£279,127
£197,477	Net Expenditure	£198,529
£71,475	Income	£80,597
£145,447	Precept	£145,529
£52,000	Amount from reserves	£51,000

The Town Council has finalised its budget for 2021-22 and has set a Precept of **£145,529**

This has been achieved by taking funds from the general reserves to support the budget requirements.

The Parish Charge for a Band "D" property of £54.52 with an increase in the charge for a Band "D" property giving an increase of **£0.76p** for each property.