



# Atherstone **Town Council**

## Town Councillor Report

16/10/2024 – Cllr Jacky Chambers

### Introduction

This month I would like to draw the Town Council's attention to the following matters:

#### 1 St Marys Road Recreation area – second attempt at graffiti removal and signage

In response to concerns about graffiti at this play area, on 20<sup>th</sup> September Cllors M and G Short and I tried the 2 new graffiti removing products - spray and wipes - which were recommended to us as being superior to the previous ones tried which had been held in stock and stored upstairs in the ARCADE.

As before there was a little success with a small amount of graffiti becoming soluble and which could then be wiped away. However the more longstanding and obscene graffiti remained as before with almost nothing removed or lightened in colour.

We feel that the only way to “start afresh “ and give this play equipment a decent makeover[ given that the underlying structures are sound ] is to either paint the panels or remove / attach fresh "graffiti resistant" panels to replace those panels which are the worst and most offensive. We felt the TC :-

- a) should approach the original suppliers of this play equipment for their suggestions on what might be done eg replacement or type of paints [ if they exist ] which can be used to paint over these panels
- b) ask families using the park whether this level and content of graffiti is putting them off using the park viz do they really care enough for us to do something more about it [ but as part of a wider consultation about improving the park overall ]
- c) promote wider awareness that there is CCTV in the park [ see photo ] by putting up more notices around the park , having larger notices about CCTV and promoting on FB re catching graffiti / ASB I playgrounds as part of the CCTV awareness campaign [ it was clear from comments on FB about the Community Forum that people are not aware that there are cameras
- d) take down redundant plaques /notices which do nothing to enhance the appearance or information about the play area [ see attached photo ]



## 2 Cemetery visit to consider location of trees and work programme for Community Pay Back Team

Cllor C Jones, our Deputy Clerk and I spent around an hour looking at aspects of grounds maintenance work which might be undertaken as part of the programme undertaken by the Community Pay Back Team . We also talked to and thanked the regular supervisor and members of this team on the day

We were very impressed with the work they undertake at the Cemetery the preparations they are making to get it ready for Remembrance Day, their willingness and ability to respond to additional requests and suggestions.

It is clear this team contributes greatly to maintaining the tidiness and appearance of the cemetery and that they would be happy to work with the TC on planning and delivering a structured programme for grounds maintainance.

### BeFORE AND AFTER PATH EDGING BY COMMUNITY PAY BACK TEAM





### 3 CCTV survey - Initial findings from an [ incomplete] quota sample.

Last Saturday I talked to 15 people about the towns CCTV service using a semi structured questionnaire.

The quota sample was drawn from people in pub gardens, cafes , bus station , shops , households and 2 shops in Long Street .

People under 40 + were underrepresented [ see table 1 ] compared with the profile required for a quota sample of 30 according to Census information for Atherstone . 13 out of 15 of those who answered the survey lived in Atherstone –

Quota specified vs quota sampled so far – ATHERSTONE POPULATION

Age group	QUOTA Female	QUOTA Male	QUOTA Total	QUOTA obtained so far [ October 4 <sup>th</sup> ]
18 – 30	3	2	5	1
30 – 40	2	3	5	1
40 – 60	5	5	10	5
60+	5	5	10	8
TOTAL	15	15	30	15
TOTAL F:M	9	6		

## FINDINGS

The key message which came across from many of the respondents was that “ *we know CCTV is there , but is it effective / worth it* ”and that we need to show / convince people that the CCTV system is effective in deterring and detecting crime and value for money .

Awareness of presence of CCTV in town appears to be reasonably high mostly due to noticing cameras up on poles /word of mouth

- Awareness that cameras are staffed is very low

The majority of people I spoke to feel that

- having a CCTV system is very or quite important as a deterrent, response catching and prosecuting criminals AND
- more should be done to promote the towns CCTV and way it connects with the local or special police teams and the Town Radio system

However, from the comments we also: -

- Need to show that CCTV is effective, deters crime; that the cameras are manned ; and what the police do to work with , and respond to CCTV when there are incidents and how it is used to catch and punish criminals
- Most people would support paying more for a CCTV system providing it can be shown to be working and effective.

However, a few raised concerns about whether expenditure justified for a small town in relation to impact and benefit

[ NB These results are not a “poll”. Even when quota sample is complete, results cannot be used to extrapolate to views of general population

However, comments and patterns of responses do provide some pointers around messages, social media campaigns and budget setting and a more detailed report has been shared with members of the CCTV partnership group to inform the direction and focus of a social media / communications plan.

## 4 FLOODS, SEWAGE WATER AND THE OLD WATLING STREET

Several residents have raised concerns about the problems caused by flooding under the railway bridge and the fact that they along with visitors who arrive in the town by train, have to wade through ankle high , stinking , sewage polluted water every time there is a very heavy downfall of rain. Even after 1 week this road is still closed to traffic

These residents also point out that this problem has been going on now for more than a decade and that no single agency or tier of local government seems prepared or able to solve it

I understand from FB posts and comments that our newly elected MP Rachel Taylor may be trying to facilitate discussions with relevant parties but it would be useful for the TC o understand more about what is being done to address this problem.