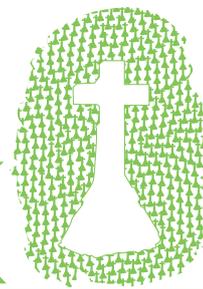




CROSStalk



Princes Risborough Town Council Newsletter

Issue No. 56

December 2014



Welcome to the latest issue of Crosstalk

During the last edition of Crosstalk we were looking forward to welcoming the **Tour of Britain cycle race through our town, on its way from Bath to Hemel Hempstead.**

It was certainly an event that the town welcomed with open arms and allowed us the opportunity to see some of the world's best cyclists close up. Hundreds of spectators lined our streets to cheer on these cycling greats. With speeds of over 40kph, the likes of Sir Bradley Wiggins and Mark Cavendish showed us just why they are Olympic and Tour de France champions.

We hope that some of the above images will remind you of what an amazing event this was for Princes Risborough.

In this issue, along with regular contributions from our council members regarding town matters, planning updates and our Chairman's Report, you will read about the tremendous news relating to the Day Care Centre (page 5) and on an extremely sad note, the passing of Mr Peter Robinson, BEM, who was a well known and very popular resident of our Town (tribute on page 3).

All the council members and staff at Princes Risborough Town Council would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2015.



Images courtesy of Iain McLauchlan

CHRISTMAS

LIGHTS

SWITCH

ON

Friday 5th December 5.30pm Market Square with former Hear'Say star Suzanne Shaw.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Let's start with an update.

Outline planning permission has finally been granted on the Picts Lane development and work should commence in the Spring, at last!

The Town Council has now agreed terms (on a one year trial basis) with the County Council to take on devolved grass cutting services within the Town from March/April next year. Hopefully we will be able to provide a better standard than the grass cutting we have seen in recent years; however, the costs will be closely monitored before deciding on any long term agreement.

It was with huge disappointment that we learned of the closure of the Wycombe District Council (WDC) Information Centre, due to cost reduction. It is to be relocated to a small counter in the library offering very limited services. The Town Council wasn't consulted about the closure and we have written to WDC expressing our dissatisfaction. The Information Centre has been a valued facility within the community and the staff have always drawn praise for their helpfulness; they and the Centre will be sorely missed.

By the time you read this Town Councillors will have held a meeting with Chiltern Railways and Network Rail in Westminster (courtesy of our MP John Bercow) to discuss the medium to long-term rail strategy for the town.

This is of real importance for the Town given the possibility of large scale housing growth being investigated within the Local Plan and the "East West Rail" project which will connect Princes Risborough to Milton Keynes and Bedford. We would also like to see short term improvements to the current commuter services.

Still on the subject of railways, at the time of writing this article we are still waiting to be called before the HS2 Select Committee in Parliament to present our petition against the construction traffic from this project being scheduled to pass through the town day and night, seven days a week for several years. More about this in the next edition.

It does seem at times that the Town is coming under increasing, relentless pressure from all sides and this is perhaps aptly illustrated by the recent introduction of the hugely unpopular new car park payment system about which we have complained to WDC but so far with little success.

As if that wasn't enough we are now informed that the County Council are considering installing parking meters in the Town Centre to gain extra revenue! Needless to say, the Town Council will strongly oppose such a proposal.

Would you support the Town Council organising a petition?

Let us have your thoughts please.

Moving on from all the doom and gloom, Christmas is upon us, a time for families and thoughtfulness, so on behalf of the Town Council I wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

Cllr Alan Turner

Mayor & Chairman

Princes Risborough Town Council



THE LOCAL PLAN

AND PROPOSED MILL LANE DEVELOPMENTS

There is little to report on the evolving Local Plan at the moment, other than the infrastructure feasibility study for Princes Risborough is ongoing and further consultation events are planned for the New Year. We are all anxious to know what WDC will recommend for Princes Risborough, but it is paramount that the impact of any potential large scale housing growth for the Town is considered in depth before any decision is made.

In relation to the two unpopular planning applications in Mill Lane, the site adjacent to Kingsmead is due to be determined in December and the Molins Sports Ground application in the New Year. Any updates will be posted on our website and Twitter.

CITIZEN AWARD

Earlier in the year, the Town Council awarded a Citizen Award to Mr Dennis Green.

Dennis' outstanding commitment to the Town during his 32 years as a local councillor included

reviving the Charter Market, establishing Risborough Springs and initiating the air crew memorials outside the library. Dennis also served the community as a special constable for 14 years and in the Fire Authority for 12 years.



JOIN US ON TWITTER

: @Princesris

TRIBUTE TO PETER ROBINSON



**Sqn Ldr
Peter Bryan Robinson
RAF (Ret'd) BEM**

It is with deep sadness that we inform you of the passing of Peter Robinson BEM. Peter was not only one of the founding trustees of the Social Enterprise which saved the Day Care Centre (now Princes Centre) from closure, but he also helped establish Risborough Cares Charity – which in turn had been set up to fight the original closure threat of the Centre some 15 years ago - and indeed chaired that organisation. In fact Peter's dedication over many years to the continuation of a facility that serves some of the most vulnerable people within our community was truly second to none. Until the latter stages of his illness, rarely a day passed without Peter popping in to the Centre to check everything was OK and taking the time to stop and chat with many of the clients, all of whom thought the world of him. He was also a tireless fundraiser for the Centre, (and

who could refuse Peter's charm and sincerity!). Everyone connected with the Princes Centre, fellow trustees, staff and clients will miss Peter tremendously.

However, Peter had many strings to his "community bow"! Before retiring he ran a small shop in the town centre, (probably one of the most popular shopkeepers in living memory), and there are many people in the Town who once worked for Peter as shop assistants or paper boys who still have fond memories of his kindness and generosity. He was also a founding member and leading light of the Rotary Club of Princes Risborough and was given the rare distinction of being awarded, not one, but two "Paul Harris" Awards for outstanding service. Then there was the youth club; once again Peter was at the fore, working tirelessly as a committee member and trustee to keep it open when it was threatened with closure. Every year Peter stood for hours in the freezing cold collecting money for the Poppy Appeal. He offered help and advice wherever it was needed. The list goes on and on, Peter really was a champion of our community and it was only fitting that he recently received the British Empire Medal in recognition of his services. His memory will live on with a road named after him, as well as the main hall in his beloved Princes Centre now proudly carrying his name.

God bless you Peter, we will all miss you.

Devolved Services Update

As you will remember the subject of grass cutting of the verges was one of the major topics across Risborough during the summer. As sunshine and thoughts of grass cutting become a distant memory rest assured that here at the Town Council we are busy planning our schedules ready for when the sun returns.

Buckinghamshire County Council has offered Parish and Town councils the opportunity to take responsibility for grass cutting and other minor maintenance in their areas.

Princes Risborough in partnership with Bledlow cum Saunderton, Bradenham, Lacey Green and Longwick have formed a new cluster to manage these services and starting in the spring we will begin our programme of grass cutting which we are confident will bring an enhanced service to the communities that we serve.

In order for us to undertake these new services we carried out a trial grass cut during October. Led by our capable in house maintenance team, we trialled new equipment and mowers and will be reporting

our findings to our partners shortly. We will be combining our park grass cutting with our verge cutting in Risborough and by sharing equipment, we will be able to save money, and we will use these savings to begin cutting the grass earlier. Weather permitting, we are aiming to start in late March, so we hope you will be able to notice a real difference.

We are undertaking these services on a one year trial but if things materialise as we believe we hope that we can bring further devolved services in house over the next few years. We have been approached by Wycombe District Council already about work from 2016 so watch this space.

Pressure on Local Government finances will continue and by pro-actively seeking income generating work, we will help maintain a strict control on local taxation and if the grass verges stay nice and short that is a real advantage too!

Cllr. Matthew Walsh

Chair – Devolved Services Working Group



TOWN REPORT

As was reported in our last newsletter, during this year's grass cutting season the Town Council Maintenance Team provided each and every cut. This project has been a great success, with the parks and open spaces looking as good if not better than when previously undertaken by contractors and it has enabled the council to look towards providing grass maintenance services to other parishes, which is further reported upon in this edition of CrossTalk.

The summer planting looked so good that when we were advised that the Tour of Britain was coming through the town we decided to leave it in place for a much longer period and it helped to show the town off well to the many hundreds of people who turned out on the day, and it looked good on the TV as well.

The council is indebted to the Maintenance Team for their work over the summer to keep these beds looking so good.

The winter planting is done and plans are in progress to identify the plants for the next summer season.

The Market House project continues apace and we have now secured a project plan and are seeking costings for the work identified by a conservation specialist.

This work will be funded, mostly, by outside agencies but is important as the Market House is a listed building and therefore we have a duty to maintain it.

There has been a suggestion from members of the public that Wades Park be made into a 'dog free zone' to limit the amount of fouling that occurs. This would

be difficult to achieve as it would mean a change to our bye laws, which is a costly business, and also would be difficult to police. Again it is actions of the few that make it a concern for the many.

There have been a number of complaints regarding the designated Public Footpath that runs at the rear of Berryfield Road from New Road to the rear of the Woodfield Road shops. This footpath is now in a terrible state, both of repair and in relation to dangerous articles that have been 'dumped'.

This is not the first time that this footpath has come to the notice of the Town Council and in the past it was suggested that the footpath be re-routed along Woodfield Road. Unfortunately this would necessitate an Act of Parliament which would incur a large cost, with no certainty of a successful outcome.

This footpath, along with many others in the town, is the responsibility of the Bucks County Council Rights of Way and as such the Town Council have written to the department to advise that there is fly tipping and that trees are overgrowing the path and asking them to take the necessary steps to clear the route.

If you have any comments to make in relation to any of these matters, then do not hesitate to contact the Council. Full contact details can be found on the back page.

Cllr John Coombs

Chairman of Town Committee



COSPER MEMORIAL

Hopefully you would have noticed the recent refurbishment of the memorial to Clyde "Sparky" Cospers outside



the library. The bad winters together with dog owners allowing them to "mark" the memorial had taken its toll on the brick work, leaving it damaged. We decided to take some action to prevent it deteriorating further. You may or may not know the symbolism of the memorial. The seats are arranged to represent the crew of "Sparky's" bomber. The eight seats to the right of the stone represent the eight crew members that escaped from the crippled aircraft. The seat to the right of the stone represents Clyde "Sparky" Cospers. The memorial stone is shaped to represent the tail-plane of the aircraft which is why we chose to paint the stone the same colour as the aircraft would have been painted.

ARE YOU WOMAN ENOUGH?

If so, Risborough Rugby Club now has a ladies side.

The team started in the summer and offers a really friendly atmosphere.



With full time coaching and physio support, why not come along and have some fun. It doesn't matter if you're a complete novice or have previous experience, Risborough RFC is open to all standards. Even if you're just looking to get fit and have a good time, then perhaps rugby is the thing for you.

For details call either Dan Bartlett (Coach) on 07971 321882, or Hannah (player) on 07858 150151. Both will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

The ladies side trains on a Tuesday and Thursday night from 7pm at Princes Risborough Top School, off Merton Road. More details can be found on the website, just search for Risborough RFC.

UPDATE!



THE PRINCES CENTRE
"community working together."

GOOD NEWS!

Thanks to the tremendous support from individuals, local organisations and the community as a whole, in October the social enterprise that saved our day care centre from closure was able to purchase the Princes Centre from the County Council for the sum of £200,000.



This is a truly remarkable amount of money for the community to have raised and the trustees, staff and clients would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed.

The Princes Centre offers day care provision for some of the most vulnerable people in our community and in a short space of time the numbers of those attending has risen to around 100 per week. With an increased offering of quality activities for clients, (such as swimming and horse riding), it really is becoming a centre of excellence and going from strength to strength.

Due to sound fiscal management and thanks to fellow trustee Matt Walsh, the Centre is now trading at a small profit, which enables us to start building up essential financial reserves.

Now you know there is always a "but", and here it is - we now need to raise another £250,000 to carry out essential repairs, maintenance and improvements to the fabric of the building. A lot of work has been done on identifying the works required and a programme put in place. At a recent fundraising evening an impressive £15,000 of pledges were received towards a range of small, medium and large projects. Importantly, now that we own the building we can apply for a number of grants from public bodies to help us reach our target. However, we still need your help and any assistance you can give us, either financially or in any practical way, will be gratefully received.

All in all this really has been a wonderful achievement by our community.

THANK YOU!

Cllr Alan Turner,

Town Council representative on the Board of Trustees.



ST MARY'S REACHES OUT

The Town Church has unanimously voted to provide financial support to four local charities for the next three years including the Princes Centre, Saunderton Lodge and Helen & Douglas House. The fourth charity to be helped is the One Can Trust based in High Wycombe.

David Williams, rector at the church said; "I find it incredible to believe that 12,000 children in Bucks live in income poverty, meaning 1 in 5 children in Wycombe go to bed hungry increasing to 1 in 3 in some parts of the town."

The One Can Trust provides short-term free emergency food parcels of non-perishable items such as meat, vegetables and puddings to those deemed 'in crisis' by partner organisations and they work throughout High Wycombe and the surrounding areas.

David Williams added; "St Mary's has already donated over twenty wheelie bins full of food to the charity but for the next three years we have pledged financial support not just to the One Can Trust, but to all our chosen charities to help support the essential work they do in our local community. This work will become even more important as our area continues to change and evolve over the coming years and as a church, we will remain ready to best serve the needs of the Risborough Community.

I believe St Mary's is a Church in the heart of the community and for the community, so if you have any ideas of other ways in which it can serve the people of this town do let me know and as we approach the festive season, may I wish you a peaceful and joyful Christmas."

Rev David Williams

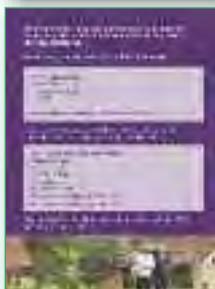


PLANNING MATTERS

The Planning Committee recently met the planners for the development of the Ker Maria site off the Aylesbury Road and The Retreat. They have also held a public consultation over their plans to redevelop this site with sheltered and independent living accommodation.

We expect the planning application to be submitted shortly once feedback from the consultation has been included. Issues about parking allocation and access were certainly a theme of the consultation as was the 'conservative' appearance of the buildings and its intended use. Whilst there is always a need for this type of housing some feel the town is well served with accommodation for the elderly and would prefer some other use to be considered.

The national planning system is however complicated and convoluted and, although local communities are supposed to have more influence, it is fundamentally led by profit driven developers. Please keep an eye on the Town Council website for this application to be submitted as all comments WDC receive, as in all planning cases, will help inform their decision.



Aside from the above, the Planning Committee has been fairly quiet of late. We have received the usual increase in applications for tree work as expected for this time of the year and we rely greatly on the expertise of WDC's arboriculturalist to help determine their appropriateness.

We have many fine and established trees within the town that residents are very proud of, but unfortunately we have few younger ones growing to keep our tree stock replenished.

The Town Council and WDC have planted new trees in the last few years but these will take many years to grow to the splendour of some of our older specimens.

Having been demolished back in the spring it is good to see that building of a Morrisons store and flats on the site of the former Post office has now begun. This is a major and visible site within the town and one that deserves an iconic building. The design for this building may have been 'watered down by committee' and may not be the statement that the town deserves. Current building techniques and new and sustainable materials should be an opportunity for clever, intuitive and appropriate design in all buildings. We can only hope that whatever is planned for the future, and especially in such public places such as the site of the Black Prince for example, allows for this.

Cllr Will Streule
Chairman of Planning Committee

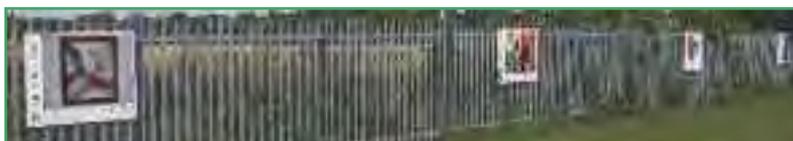


FREE CHRISTMAS PARKING 6th, 13th, 20th December

Free parking will be available for shoppers in both The Mount and Horns Lane car parks. All charges will be waived on the above Saturdays only.

Art In The Park

At the end of August this year six artworks were installed along the fence line between Wades Park and the railway line. These artworks showcased works by six local artists.



With the success of this project we are now looking towards next year and looking at making Art In The Park 2015 bigger and better. We are exploring the possibilities of expanding on this year's successful exhibition to 10 artists. We are looking for local artists to get involved in next year's exhibition. Art in any media will be considered, so if you are interested in getting involved in next year's Art In The Park or if you know someone who might be interested please get them to contact the office.

Town Parking



After many false starts an agreement has been obtained for a town wide review of our parking issues to be undertaken. Funding has been obtained and Transport for Bucks has confirmed that they will be commencing this review early in the New Year. The review will include an evaluation by external assessors which will include public consultations before any agreement is reached on an implementation plan. So please do be prepared to come and have your say to help develop this plan. Meetings will be well publicised on our website and in the local and social media.

Wycombe District Council has recently rolled out a new Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) scheme across all of its car parks which means that there is no longer a 'pay and display' policy but a 'pay on exit' policy. There has been a lot of confusion over this roll-out with many people being confused by the touch screen technology and, in addition, a small percentage of car number plates have not been recognised by the entry cameras. This latter situation requires the driver to enter their car details into the pay station and provide an estimated time of entry. If they do not do so their car details are likely to be picked up by the

cameras at the exit point of the car park. WDC are working on solutions to address this problem.

In recognition of the need for some motorists to visit the recycling points within the car parks there is a grace period of ten minutes in all the ANPR car parks. If a motorist is recycling and enters and exits within this period, there is no charge for parking and they **should not visit the pay station**. If the activity should take longer than ten minutes, however, payment will be required for the parking time used.

The grace period is also provided to allow a vehicle to drive in, search for a space and leave if they are unable to find one. During this time, goods or passengers may be dropped off or collected and the motorist may drive out without incurring a charge. However, once the vehicle has been parked a charge will be due. Equally, once the motorist uses the pay station, their parking session is considered to have commenced and a charge will be due. Payment may be made at the pay station in the car park while the car is present, or at www.wdc.veripark.co.uk until midnight on the following day.

Cllr Bill Bendyshe-Brown

Town, District and County Councillor



PRACTICAL PARTNERSHIP

The Chiltern Society is working closely with local councils as they seek new ways of delivering cost effective services to their communities. Last year the Society took over the management of Brush Hill Local Nature Reserve from Wycombe District Council, and recently reached agreement on the transfer of Whiteleaf Hill Local Nature Reserve from Buckinghamshire County Council.

Two recent initiatives reflect the Society's continuing commitment to our local environment.

Cut out of the chalk hillside above the town, the Whiteleaf Cross has dominated the local landscape for several centuries. It was first officially noted by Francis Wise in 1742, but its full history is unknown and is the subject of much local speculation and folklore. In recent years the white chalk that defines the cross has become overgrown and green with vegetation, leading to this wonderful landmark suffering a loss of definition.

The Chiltern Society, along with specialists from Buckinghamshire County Council and with assistance from a group of RAF Cadets from RAF Halton, started work in September on cleaning up the famous Chiltern landmark. Together, they cleared the surface vegetation from the cross and re-defined its edges. Working on the steep slopes had to be managed carefully to avoid erosion, and debris was removed from the cross, bucket by bucket, along a human chain to the top of the hillside, from where it was disposed.

In another project with Princes Risborough Town Council and the Parish Councils of Longwick-cum-Ilmer and Lacey Green, the Society cleared over 9 kilometers of overgrown footpaths and bridleways during the summer. Small teams of volunteers with brush cutters, hedge trimmers, rakes, loppers and forks tackled 22 paths across the area as part of a trial Paths Clearance Initiative agreed with Buckinghamshire County Council. As local authority resources for such work continue to be under pressure, opportunities for such volunteer-supported projects are likely to increase.

For more information about the Chiltern Society, volunteering, supporting their work and becoming a member, visit their website www.chilternsociety.org.uk or call 01494 771250.



RISBOROUGH 1st RESPONDERS - NEED YOUR HELP!

The first two volunteer R1 responders (R1r) to cover Princes Risborough and the surrounding villages started training in 2010 and were operational early in 2011. In the more than three years since the outset R1r has grown to four responders and three responders kits; the kits have been paid for by very generous financial support from individuals and organisation right across the Risborough community including Princes Risborough Town Council.



We have reached a point where we need two or more additional responders to exploit our three kits to the full and to increase our continuous capability. Any help that anyone can provide to that end would increase our combined effectiveness and would be very gratefully received by R1r and the wider South Central Ambulance Service covering our area. Our primary function is to attend a cardiac arrest with airways, defibrillator and the means of administering oxygen during CPR. The average reduction of survival for a patient in cardiac arrest is 14% per minute; hence the clear and present need for someone local to respond within minutes to patients in the Risborough area. We are also tasked by South Central Ambulance to attend other emergencies when appropriate such as heart attacks, chest pain, breathing difficulties, diabetic and epileptic episodes and falls among many others. Please note that whenever we volunteers are deployed we are always backed up by paid professionals and additional equipment as soon as possible.

If you: Are over 18; Have a car with Satnav; Are a well behaved driver; Are happy to be submitted to a DBS check; And would be able to offer, say, an average of 20+hours a month, then please follow:

<http://www.southcentralambulance.nhs.uk/get-involved/howdoivolunteer.ashx>

Additionally, please contact:

Local Training Officer: Marc.Lister@scas.nhs.uk and gclark552@btinternet.com

Please note that full and regular training will be given; no previously acquired emergency skills are needed to join!

Princes Risborough Town Council

The Princes Centre, Clifford Road, Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 0DP

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Please visit our website: www.princesrisborough.com : @Princesris

Mayor & Chairman of the Council:	Cllr. Alan Turner
Vice Chairman:	Cllr. Wally Woolf
Chairman of Finance Cttee:	Cllr. Iain McLauchlan
Chairman of Admin & HR:	Cllr. Matthew Walsh
Chairman of Town Cttee:	Cllr. John Coombs
Chairman of Planning Cttee:	Cllr. Will Streule
Chairman of Public Relations Cttee:	Cllr. John Coombs

Councillors

Cllr. Bill Bendyshe-Brown	Cllr. Gary Hall	Cllr. Adrian Rolfe
Cllr. Pam Summerbell	Cllr. Spencer Swanson	Cllr. Mags West
Clerk to the Council:	Mrs. Susanne Griffiths	
Deputy Clerk:	Mrs. Kirsty Pope	
Clerical Assistants:	Mrs. Caroline Page and Mrs Jayne Mylchreest	
Maintenance Team Operatives	Mr Lee Fortnam, Mr Kevin Locke & Mr Reece Harwood	

Office Hours

Monday – Friday 10.00am – 3.00pm

The full Town Council meets at 7.00pm bi-monthly at The Princes Centre, Clifford Road. There is a 10-minute slot at the beginning of each meeting when the public can express a view or concern relating to Town matters. Please check the website to confirm time and venue. The next meetings are:

Tuesday 27th January

Tuesday 31st March

Tuesday 19th May

The Town Council aims to be as accessible as possible, and welcomes the views, comments and concerns of the Princes Risborough electorate. Although the views of the whole Council are given wherever possible, for constitutional and legal reasons we must state that the views expressed here in Crosstalk, and in any personal correspondence received from individual Councillors, are those of the author concerned and do not necessarily express the opinions or policy of PRTC unless explicitly stated.

FREE CHRISTMAS PARKING
6th, 13th, 20th December - see page 6