



Sandbach Town Council Newsletter

Delivered free throughout the Sandbach Township

www.sandbach.gov.uk

Nov/Dec 2007, Issue 4

Message from the Chairman



It is with sincerity that Sandbach Town Council and I wish you a peaceful Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

As the Chairman of the Council I look forward to the New Year with relish, as we will begin to see some of our efforts coming to fruition. Through our work on the Vision for Sandbach we received many of your opinions and ideas. Your comments

are helping us to prepare various projects that will gradually start to improve the town and make us all proud of the community we live in. Importantly, we will be working closely with our partner organisations such as the Sandbach Partnership, Congleton Borough Council and the many volunteer groups which Sandbach is so fortunate to have.

There is a great deal to look back on and even more to look forward to!

Happy Christmas.

Councillor W W Scragg

THIS ISSUE.....

Councillor Surgeries

Find out more—Page 1

Sandbach Vision

We report on the issues you raised through the 2007 consultation. Page 2

Cobbles

An update from the Sandbach Partnership. Page 3.

Police

How to have a safe and happy Christmas. Page 3..

Sandbach Clean Team

How you can get involved. Page 3.

Sandbach Christmas Lights

How you can get involved. Page 3.



**Christmas to
Everyone**

*From the members
of Sandbach Town Council*

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.....

Town Council

13 December 2007
31 January 2008
27 March 2008

Finance and Personnel Committee

17 January 2008

Quality and Projects Committee

29 November 2007
21 February 2008

Planning Committee

20 December 2007
24 January 2008
14 February 2008
13 March 2008

All meetings start at 7.15pm and take place at the Sandbach Literary Institution unless otherwise advertised.

COUNCILLOR SURGERIES

From 12 January 2008 you may be able to drop into the Town Council Offices to speak to one of your ward councillors. At its meeting on 13 December, the Town Council will consider holding monthly surgeries at which representatives from the three wards will be available to talk to you about local issues. The first session is planned for Saturday 12 January between 10.30am and 11.30am - a complimentary Fair Trade hot drink will be available for those attending.

Details will be confirmed on the Town Council noticeboard in the Library.



A New Face in the Chamber



In this issue, rather than profiling three Town Council members, we have focused on introducing our

newest councillor.

Gemma-Jane Richardson (North Ward) was co-opted to the Council in September and at 29 is our youngest member. She is delighted to serve the town and the North Ward in which she was brought up. Gemma-Jane is serving on both the Planning and Quality Committees and is particularly interested in youth, heritage, environmental, arts and cultural issues, local events and listening to residents' concerns. She recently moved back to Sandbach to study for a PhD in Theatre at Manchester University, having previously studied in Dublin and London, including the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

Welcome Gemma.

Accounts

Total Income **£89,672**

Since April the Town Council has contributed £9,450 towards the work of local groups and organisations.

Looking back at 2007 - and what a year it has been

- In February Barry Moran hosted the Chairman's Ball - a great success that raised £1332 for charity. Barry's fundraising efforts totalled a fantastic £4642 which was split between his three Chairman's charities: Scouts, Guides and Leighton Hospital Prostate Fund.
- March saw the first edition of our newsletter. We hope it is now well established as a useful tool for sharing information. Editions two and three featured the Council's work in developing a Vision for Sandbach, and the projects that flow from that will aim to address many of the issues that concern you.
- In May the entire Town Council was up for its 4-yearly election. Several new faces appeared in the Council Chamber and Bill Scragg took over from Barry as Chairman.
- August saw the very sad loss of David Atkin, a highly respected Town and Borough Councillor.
- In October Town Clerk Bruce Thompson announced his plan to retire at the year-end. Bruce has been a dedicated official - his professional support, integrity and dry sense of humour will be missed by all. Also in October, Gemma-Jane Richardson was co-opted to the Council to fill the vacancy for North Ward.

.....and Forward to 2008

- The first thing to do is appoint a new Town Clerk and allow them to settle in to the post.
- Next - and continuing throughout the year - we will be driving forward the projects that you identified from the Vision document. We aim to start on delivery of incremental improvements during the year. Some will be small, others will be major, but over time, you will really start to see a difference.
- The Sandbach Partnership should complete the Market Square makeover before Summer, with improved access to the refurbished area. Some celebrations are planned.
- The Sandbach Transport Festival is being extended to a two-day event. There is even talk of a M6 crash simulation on the Common— watch this space!
- Sandbach will be entering the Civic Pride Competition. We can all do our bit to enhance our town, so everyone is urged to take a real pride in the community and show support for this initiative.

Feedback on the Vision—We must now 'Pull Our Socks Up'!

In Issue No.2 of the Newsletter, we distributed a draft of our Vision for Sandbach and asked for your feedback. We have now received over 140 replies to the 7,000 copies that went out - a fairly low return rate of about 2% but a big thank-you to everyone who sent their forms in or gave feedback to a councillor. We had lots of thoughtful and positive contributions and suggestions from you, plus a fair bit of criticism!

The topics that generated most comment were the weekly market and plans for the Market Square - as could be expected given the Square's central importance to the town. The Sandbach Partnership is project-managing the current refurbishment, and future developments will be taking your suggestions into account. There is continued frustration with Junction 17 on the M6 and the need for more sports facilities including playing fields loomed large. At a different level, car parking, litter, weeds and dog dirt on the pavements caused the most frustration. There were also some comments about policing and anti-social behaviour.

All of this is crucial to our future plans and the council is committed to maximising our effectiveness in improving the life of the community. Lots of issues, such as re-engineering Junction 17, are way beyond our scope. But that doesn't mean that we can't raise them and make absolutely sure all the powers that be are in no doubt of the needs and priorities of Sandbach. Other issues are more readily within our grasp, and we shall be using our influence and spending your money wisely in pursuing solutions.

So thanks once again for the feedback. The Vision document is being re-vamped to reflect your comments and priorities, and plans are in progress to tackle the work that your comments have identified.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Sandbach Partnership Market Square 'The Cobbles' Enhancements

The project is on track to complete by the end of next Spring. Archaeological trial trenches have been dug and the analysis report is awaited from Wardell Armstrong. Meantime, the Sandbach Partnership will be inviting tenders for the project management and construction phase.

The recent consultation generated around 300 responses which are currently being analysed. The findings of the consultation will, where applicable, be integrated into the final design which should be complete by early December.

Email: David.McGifford@sece.co.uk

Sandbach Clean Team

Sandbach Clean Team now has nearly 100 volunteer members. We work closely with Congleton Borough Council's Streetscape and have monthly litter picks – the next two are on Sat. 17th Nov and Sat. 15th Dec. All our members give their own time, tidying up in their own locality and in the town centre.

One of our priorities is to work with young people – in this we have been generously supported by Waitrose, the United Co-op and Sandbach Partnership. In addition, through Sandbach Community Pride and with support from the Town Council and Sandbach Partnership, we organised the bulb planting for Make a Difference Day 2007, when daffodil, crocus and snowdrop bulbs were planted in and around the town.

We are working with the primary schools in the town to help them build a garden in the school grounds for Cheshire's Year of the Garden 2008 (CYOG08). Sandbach Clean Team provides active support for the Hope Street Project, Friends of St. Mary's Wood, SOHAG (Save the Old Hall Action Group), Sandbach in Bloom and Sandbach Community Pride. Its members are committed to supporting all groups in Sandbach that are working towards making our town a better place to live and developing the strong community spirit that is essential for the town.

If you would like to be involved, or just want more information on Sandbach Clean Team then contact Dick Macaulay on 01270 765549 or d.macaulay@talk21.com



Sandbach Christmas Lights

Friday 30 November
at 6.00pm

With Carols from Sandbach Ladies Choir
accompanied by Sandbach School Band.
Father Christmas will also be present.



Christmas is only weeks away and as the festive season gets closer the Community Action Team would like to remind you to make sure that you don't become a victim of crime. Ensure that your purse or wallet is in a safe place, if using a bag ensure that it is fully closed at all times. Take your bank's advice and keep your PIN safe to prevent fraudulent use of your bank cards. Make sure that your Christmas shopping is out of sight when left in the car. Don't be a target.

Parties usually mean house parties and evenings in pubs and clubs, however, the problem of drunken teenagers on street corners persists even during the festive season. The misery caused to residents in areas where teenagers gather can be immense. If you are the parent of a teenager who is desperate to go out and build their own social life be sure that they are not making themselves vulnerable to being a victim of crime and possibly spending a night in police custody. We all want to trust our children and give them the freedom to grow up. However, some parental guidance is needed about sensible risk taking. Remember, your trust in them has to be earned by them. The next time they promise that they are spending the evening at a friend's house consider making a call to the friend's parents. Have the parents agreed to the evening? How long are they actually going to spend there? Hopefully the answers won't surprise you!

Lastly, we are all aware of the dangers of drink driving—the message is simple 'Don't Drink and Drive'.

Extra patrols will be in the town centre area during the run up to Christmas to make it a safer place for everyone. Please follow these simple steps for a safe and happy Christmas.

