

Town Mangers Report

Syston Town Council Spotlight (with additions for Council) Christmas Event 2019

Syston celebrated Christmas in style last year with a second successful event held on Melton Road. A variety of stalls were busy selling Christmas gifts and festive food and shoppers were kept entertained by a packed itinerary of street performers.

A big thank you to everyone that helped to make it happen, including Syston Scouts and of course, Father Christmas. The event concluded with our iconic firework display from Central Park, followed by the Christmas Lights switch on.

Congratulations to 'The Mews', the winner of the Shop Window Competition as well as Mind in second place and Shaw's Upholstery coming third.





Winner of Shop Window Competition – The Mews

Councillor Vacancies

There are six vacancies at the Council in wards:

- Merton Ward
- St Peters West Ward
- New Barkby Ward

Do you have a few hours to spare each month?

How much time do you spend each month on social media? Instead of using up valuable brain power on the internet, have you considered using your time more effectively by giving something back to Syston and its community? Working as a Councillor, you will find yourself in a stimulating environment where you can stretch and challenge your abilities whilst gaining useful knowledge and skills.

When you are elected or co-opted onto Syston Town Council, you are taking up a civic office that can make a real difference to Syston and its people. Council work can be challenging, exciting and at times frustrating. As you benefit from training, gain experience and build your confidence, you will have the personal satisfaction of knowing you and your Council have made a difference. All Committee meetings and Full Council meetings are held on Tuesday evenings. The minimum commitment is one Tuesday evening meeting each month (excluding August when the Council are in recess).

Please contact me in the first instance if you are interested in becoming a Councillor, mark the subject heading Councillor Vacancy. catherine@systontc.org.uk

Syston Town Council Chairman

Cllr Tom Barkley is our current Chairman at Syston Town Council. Cllr Barkley is also Leicestershire County Councillor representing Syston and Deputy Leader of Charnwood Borough Council. Cllr John Lucas is our new Vice Chairman. Syston Town Council expresses extreme gratitude to Cllr Ken Pacey for his valuable contribution as Chairman during the last six months.



Cllr Tom Barkley



Cllr John Lucas

Farewell to our Premises Officer

In December our hardworking and dedicated Premises Officer, John Rogers retired from his post that he has held for several years. We wish John well in his retirement and will miss his energy and enthusiasm. A new position will be advertised during February/March 2020. In the meantime, John's duties are being covered by a temporary post-holder, supported by our Groundsmen.



John Rogers

Skate Park Flood Lighting until 8 pm

Subject to weather conditions, the flood lighting of the Skate Park at Central Park will start towards the end of January 2020.

Syston and District Cemetery

The cemetery on Millstone Lane is now officially open and is fully operational. Regulations and prices are available from the Council offices and for downloading from the Syston Town Council website. CCTV broadband quotation has been received from BT but is too high and I have responded to the quotation to query the price.

Friends of Barkby Road Cemetery – Barkby Road

This group concentrate on the appearance of the cemetery and buildings. Anyone interested in joining this active committee, please contact mailbox@systontc.org.uk; your contribution no matter how big or small is much needed.

Pavilion

An order has been placed with an Architect to draw up a detailed specification ready for the application to tender to be placed on the National Contractor Website. It is hoped that the Football Foundation will be partially funding this project. I have chased up the architect as he was at the Pavilion in December taking final measurements and has not yet submitted a specification.

Syston Allotments

Spotlight January 2020

Syston Allotments are now sporting a new fence which has concluded the replacement fencing project of the boundary along Upper Church Street. If you are interested in renting an allotment, please contact the Council office where your name will be added to a short waiting list. Only half plots are now being allocated, which allows more Syston people to enjoy this popular and rewarding hobby. The Allotment site will soon have a replacement water pump, the original pump now past its useful life is being replaced with a solar panelled water pump. It is now compulsory that Allotment Holders either take out the annual membership of the National Allotment Society which currently stands at £3 and includes public and personal insurance per member or provide evidence that they have taken out their own insurance policy. Any refusals will not be permitted to rent an allotment plot.

CCTV Melton Road, by the Railway Station

To complement the ANPR cameras installed by Leicestershire Police, an additional CCTV camera will soon be installed in the same area and will be monitored 24/7 by Charnwood Borough Council. The Section 50 application and £500 payment has been submitted to LCC.

St Peter & St Paul Churchyard Panel

Two notice boards in the Churchyard are being replaced during the first quarter of 2020. As part of the continued improvement of the closed Churchyard, the borders will be filled with hardy perennial plants and shrubs and potentially a new bench.

Deville Park

Following a RoSPA inspection recommendation, the fencing around the children's playground has been replaced.

A replacement seat for the zip wire will be purchased in the new financial year. We are currently sourcing a seat that cannot be damaged by dog bites and chewing, which is a persistent problem at the park.

Health and Well Being Board

Syston Community Centre now hosts a Health and Wellbeing Board in the reception area. This provides information and assistance to anyone that needs support with their mental health. Both the Town Manager and the Deputy Town Manager have attended certificated courses with St John Ambulance.

Sophie Qualifies

Congratulations to Assistant to the Town Manager, Sophie Brown on achieving the SLCC ILCA (Society of Local Council Clerks; Introduction to Local Council Administration) qualification in January. The course has to be completed over a 12 month period and has greatly enhanced Sophie's knowledge of local council procedures.

Room Bookings

Syston Community Centre rooms can be hired out at very competitive rates, we have rooms available that can accommodate meetings and functions for up to 80 people. Our ever popular birthday bouncy castle parties are held in the Brookside

Suite with a kitchen and serving hatch adjacent to the room. For more information, contact Syston Town Council office.

Precept 2020/2021

Draft budgets for 2020/2021 were approved by Full Council in December 2019 were signed off for submission to Charnwood Borough Council in January 2020.

Syston Topic

The first edition of Syston Topic was circulated in November, look out for the next edition in February. This is Syston Town Council's own newsletter, crammed with information and activities arranged by your Town Council. It is available on the Syston Town Council website, at the Community Centre, the library and local cafes in Syston.

Diary Dates

1 February 2020, Councillor Surgery, Community Centre 10 – 11 am

Please remember to join up to our Facebook page for further developments at Syston Town Council. social@systontc.org.uk

Website: www.systontc.org.uk

Twitter: @Syston_TC

Catherine Voyce
Town Manager

Deputy Town Manager's Report

Events Panel

A de-brief meeting of last year's Christmas Event was held in January and the general opinion was that it was a well organised event which the community enjoyed. The date set for this year's event is Sunday 6 December 2020.

It has been confirmed by LCC Highways that an application for a new road closure licence will cover Christmas 2020, Remembrance Parade 2020 and the Christmas Event 2021 (if before 6 December 2021).

Things to improve on this year:

Only diesel or LPG generators will be allowed for Stallholders and anyone using a petrol generator will be turned away.

Less entertainment on the stage with longer gaps between acts.

More signage at Santa's Grotto with timings.

To obtain quotes for a private medical company to cover the First Aid provision as we were let down badly last year.

To try and improve on the Street Entertainment such as walkabout characters.

To increase the price of stalls this year.

Churchyard Panel

There are two notice boards in the Churchyard which are rotten, and the PCC are looking to replace at least one of them, and will be asking for a donation from the Council towards it.

An advert was placed in the Syston Town News asking for volunteers to form a 'Friends of the Churchyard' Group but no response was received.

It is possible that the 'In Bloom' will help with the planting and maintenance of a new border running alongside the Church and STC will provide the plants. A wooden bench may be donated by STC and installed in the border depending on permission from the Archdeacon. Quotations for a bench to go to February Amenities.

The yew hedge at the back of Area Six has been tidied up by STC Groundstaff.

Three trees will be receiving routine maintenance work on them in the next few weeks.

Bloom for Syston Group

I am part of this exciting new group working towards improving our position in the East Midlands in Bloom competition. An action plan has been produced and I will be posting more bloom posts on our website with photos and announcements.

I have also taken over a project of planting and maintaining the tubs outside the Community Centre as I have a keen interest in container gardening.

Hanging Baskets summer 2020

128 Hanging baskets have been ordered for this summer in the town and we are

trying a new pastel colour theme. This is the last year of Plantscape's three- year contract.

Fencing Around the Play Area on Deville Park

A new fence has now been installed by Walkers Wood Yard.

Insurance Claims

I have been chasing since November two insurance claims for Christmas lights on the Brookside and the Green. We have received payment for the Brookside but are still waiting for monies for the Green which have been promised to be paid in the next few days.

Electricity Contracts

Electricity contracts will come to an end with E-on early this year and have been transferred to Corona Energy in order to save money on our electrical consumption.

Rodent Control

There has been an increase in rodent activity recently; according to the rodent control at CBC this is probably because there is a limited food source as well as wet weather bringing the rodents out of the watercourses and sewers. Rodenticide has currently been placed at all four baiting stations.

Re-enrolment and re-declaration for The Pension Regulator

Every three years we have a legal duty as an employer to put certain staff back into the Pension Scheme and submit a re-declaration of compliance. STC's staging date was 1 April 2017 and I will be re-submitting shortly.

Senior Administrator

Allotments

Rental payments are still coming in for the 2020 plot fees, I am in the process of banking the receipts and entering these on the accounts system.

At the January Amenities Committee meeting it was resolved to make membership of the National Allotment Society compulsory from January 2021, this was to ensure that allotment holders will be covered by insurance. Twelve months' notice was needed to be given to allotment holder. I have posted out letters to plot holders and emails have been sent to those that wish to be contacted electronically. A copy of the amended allotment rules was included with the letters and emails.

Mobile Phones

I have been liaising with the new mobile provider, Spitfire, to begin the process of changing over from Vodafone. I have obtained the PAC codes, so the existing mobile contact numbers can be retained.

Bedding Plants

The order for the VE Day commemorative bedding has been sent to Kernock Plants. The bedding will be delivered at the beginning of June, to avoid any frosts.

The summer bedding has been ordered from R C Smiths, also to be delivered at the beginning of June.

Assistant to the Town Manager Report

Syston Topic

I have been working on articles for the Second issue of the Syston Topic as well as redesigning the page layout to make it more eye-catching for readers.

Civic Invites

The invitations for the civic reception have been done and are ready to be posted out.

Minutes – EMIB & Cemetery

I have been attending the Cemetery Panel meetings and taking the minutes. As well as the newly formed Bloom for Syston Panel where I have been typing up an action plan for things to be done before the East Midlands in Bloom 2020 competition.

ILCA Course

I have completed and passed the SLCC ILCA qualification and have gained 8 CPD points.

Social Media

I have started to post more on the Syston Town Council Facebook and Twitter pages to inform residents of news and other things related to Syston.