

Town Managers Report

Photographs at the end of the report.

A fond farewell to Cllr Eric Vardy, he has served Syston as a Borough and Town Councillor for many years and is now starting an exciting new chapter in his life. I wish him the very best for the future.

East Midlands in Bloom

Judging took place on Friday, 5 July, thankfully this year, it was a gloriously hot day which ensured that blooms were shown off to their absolute best; we felt that the Silver Award a step down from last year, was a bit harsh. Points awarded in 2018 were 152, this year they were 143. The full report will be presented to Amenities Committee.

- The Syston Station Gardening Group were awarded a Judges Award
- Queen Victoria Pub won a Silver Gilt Award for their pub garden
- The Front Garden competition resulted in the winner being granted a Silver Award
- The Allotments received particular praise – “a real credit to the community”
- The Friends of Barkby Road Cemetery were applauded for their work
- And the tidying up of St Peter and St Paul Church with the wildflower planting was also praised

The Presentation evening on Friday, 27 September from 6 pm will take place at the Syston Bowling Club clubhouse. All Councillors are invited to attend. If you would like to attend and need a disabled parking space reserving by the clubhouse, please let me know.

I met with Julie-Ann Byrne and Nicola, a manager from Ideverde in the run-up to the judging day, and they have recommended that we form a Bloom Panel to consist of Town, Borough and County Councillors, gardening staff and volunteers. Both Julie and Nicola have volunteered to sit on the Panel. Cllr Tom Barkley has also agreed to attend the meetings when he can. Any Town Councillors with an interest in keeping Syston blooming are encouraged to join the Panel. Meetings are most likely to be held in the day time.

Councillor Vacancies

There are six vacancies at the Council in wards:

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

I have received a few enquiries and one definite application (too late for this meeting); which will be brought to October Full Council. No bi-election was called, vacancies are now being advertised on the town notice boards.

Skate Park Flood Lighting until 8 pm

Planning permission date for comments/objections expired on 23 September – no adverse comments have been received. We now wait for official confirmation that planning permission has been granted before actioning the work.

CCTV Melton Road

This project is moving slowly. The MACE shop have now been removed from the project. ADT and myself are currently negotiating with LCC Highways regarding the placement of a connection box on the pavement. Development Committee are being kept informed.

CCTV Central Park

Connection has been lost on two occasions this month. The service contract has covered the engineer call out fees but I will be meeting with the Bowling Club to find out what is causing the connection to be lost.

Remembrance Parade 3 November 2019

Letters are printed and ready to circulate to residents and businesses affected by the road closure. I am just waiting for the map of the route and road closure to be confirmed by Royal British Legion (they met to discuss on 23 September).

Skip for Barkby Road Cemetery

Groundstaff, GH and CS will be filling the skip up to five times to clear the mounds of earth adjacent to Quenby Crescent. Once both are returned from annual leave, the skip will be hired.

Allotments

I attend the monthly allotment meeting – minutes will be presented to Amenities for information (after approval by Syston Allotment Committee – so will always be one month behind).

Replacement fence now very much needed – will be discussed at October Amenities.

A new sign required – will be discussed at October Amenities.

I also attend the quarterly allotment inspections with members of the allotment committee and keep on top of allotments that are becoming neglected. (this month US attended on my behalf due to my unexpected absence).

Winfield Park

Complaint received about overgrown hedge/shrubs on the boundary of home-owner. Different solutions currently being considered.

Panels

Tree Panel

Panel members currently assessing tree work requests. Next meeting on Friday, 27 September. Quotes also being obtained for necessary works. As a “control exercise”, an independent health and safety assessment of the trees in the Barkby Road Cemetery is to take place FOC by one of our regular tree surgeons. This will

hopefully agree with the recent tree survey carried out and reassure us of the reliability of the survey.

Syston and District Cemetery

The cemetery on Millstone Lane was officially opened on Friday 19 July. Ed Argar MP attended.

Prices for columbaria and ash interment vaults currently being considered by Council. A children's bench has been approved for purchase and placing in the children's area of the cemetery. Columbaria supplier will be attending the October Amenities Committee meeting.

Pedestrian gate has been ordered and delivery awaited. The supplier has been asked to look at adjusting the vehicle gates closing mechanism and to powder coat paint them.

Cemetery layout plans have now been approved by Council.

Land Transfer is being arranged by Rich and Carr (I last chased this up on 23 September).

Weed killer (selective) has been applied by Glymptons and once that has taken effect (two to three weeks), Glymptons will carry out the second and final cut (although this is subject to the land being 95% grassed – if not, Glymptons are contracted to re-seed).

Outreach contractors are currently working on the blockages for the broadband connection to the Millstone Lodge. They are working their way along Melton Road (pavement – to avoid a road closure). I am speaking with Openreach on a weekly basis for updates.

Cemetery – Barkby Road

Friends of Syston Cemetery group has now been formed and some excellent work has already been carried out including the cleaning of the Chapel and the re-painting of the cemetery gates. This excellent and much needed work has been carried out by our "Friends Group" as volunteers. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact mailbox@systontc.org.uk. Next meeting 9 October.

Pavilion

Meeting being re-arranged with myself, the FA and the football teams, meeting in September was cancelled due to my unexpected absence.

Diary Dates

27 September – In Bloom Presentation Evening – Syston Bowling Club clubhouse – Central Park – 6 pm – **ALL WELCOME**

5 October – Councillor Surgery, Community Centre 10 – 11 am

25 October – Fund Raising Fashion Show – proceeds to Leicestershire & Rutland Air Ambulance – 7 pm for a 7.30pm start – **ALL WELCOME**

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

Syston and District Cemetery – opening ceremony



Deputy Town Manager's Report

External Audit 2018-2019

We have received another clear Audit from PKF Littlejohn, and this will be displayed on the website and notice boards by 30 September.

Christmas Event

A meeting was held with Traffix Operations Manager to confirm the road closure details for the Christmas Event. Traffix will put up the advanced signage required two weeks in advance of the Event, close off Melton Road Car Park the night before and put out bollards to stop parking in the parking bays along Melton Road.

LCC Highways have confirmed that they will notify the Emergency Services. CBC have requested detailed information from the food/drink stalls and have provided a template spreadsheet for me to complete; I have been chasing stallholders for this information.

42 stalls have now been booked and the event is well under way.

A licence has been applied to erect the Christmas Lights in the town.

Churchyard Panel

Maintenance work has been carried out at St Peter & St Paul's Churchyard including strimming and new dog signage been put up. A Friends of the Churchyard group is being looked at being formed. New lighting is still being investigated.

Safety Testing of Memorials

This testing will be carried out initially at the Cemetery on Barkby Road by the Town and Deputy Manager on Friday 11 October 2019. A simple push test will be carried out to see which memorials are deemed to be unsafe. This will be recorded, and the owner of the plot contacted to rectify this.

Management of Memorials Policy

I have been working on this new policy and Council adopted it on 10 September.

Policy Reviews

The following policies have recently been reviewed and adopted:

Grant Awarding Policy

Environmental Policy

Maternity Policy

Paternity Policy

Bereavement Policy

Insurance

We are coming to the end of a three- year contract with Zurich and Council have agreed to accept the quotation from Zurich for another three years as this was the cheapest quote.

Energy Renewal

Our two- year contracts for electricity and gas are coming to an end in the next few months and the quotations will be presented at the next Resources meeting.

Allotment Inspection

I recently carried out an allotment inspection and it was pleasing to see that most of the allotments were well looked after and made good use of. There are only a small number of plot owners that need to be contacted.

New Planters for Melton Road

A licence has been obtained from LCC for the installation of three new three-tiered planters for the pavement outside Spec Savers up to the Mind Shop and the planters have been ordered.

Fashion Show

A charity SOS fashion show is being held on Friday 25 October at Syston Community Centre, School Street and I have been working hard on obtaining some raffle prizes. The proceeds will go towards this year's Chairman's charity which is the WNDLR Air Ambulance.

Christmas Shop Window Competition

Leaflets will go out this week to retailers to see if they want to enter their shop window into the competition. We usually have around 15 shops who enter and the first prize is £100.

Senior Administrator

Allotments

Three plot holders that were sent final warning letters have now been evicted and three new tenants have signed up and taken over the plots. All plots are now rented out. The allotment open day has encouraged a lot of interest from people wanting to join the waiting list, there are now 39 people on the list. An allotment inspection was carried out on 17 September, there were some plots that the Allotment Society were keeping an eye on to see if work had been carried out. As a result of the inspection, I have sent out two warning letters, a final termination letter has been sent to one person.

Christmas Event

Letters are being sent out to residents and businesses affected by the road closure as part of the communications plan for the Christmas event, approximately 200 letters will be circulated in September. I have contacted Arriva with full details about the road closure. I have ordered the leaflets, posters and the waste skip. I have assisted with logging details of certificates held by the food stalls, as required by Charnwood Borough Council.

Updated Accounts Software/Making Tax Digital

STC were required to start digital VAT submissions in October 2019. To make this possible the accounts software was updated in August.

To make sure that all was ok before October, I registered early with HMRC to make digital submissions. I have recently made the first submission (August accounts) which went through successfully, the VAT refund for August from HMRC was received into the current account on 12 September.

Memorial Application Form

The revised application form has been updated and circulated to stonemasons for use, along with a copy of the STC Memorial Policy.

Assistant to the Town Manager Report

Remembrance Parade

I have been working on the letters to businesses and residents regarding the road closures that will be taking place for the Remembrance Parade on Sunday 10th November. These will be posted to residents and businesses within the affected area before the end of the month.

Keys

The key storage box at the Office had become very overcrowded and it was proving difficult for officers and staff to locate keys when they needed them. A new box was purchased, and I have re organised all of the keys to make it much easier for staff to locate them.

Syston Town Council Newsletter

I have started to put together the first Syston Town Council Newsletter. This will be a quarterly newsletter containing updates from Syston Town Council on projects and other ongoing things around the Town to keep residents and businesses in the loop.

East Midlands in Bloom Presentation Evening

The presentation evening for East Midlands in Bloom takes place on Friday 27th September. Staff, Councillors and volunteers have been invited to the evening to celebrate Syston's achievements in this year's In Bloom competition. Entrants to the Front Garden Competition will also be presented with their awards. I have started to put together the display boards for the evening as well as printing off some of the Portfolios.