



CARNFORTH TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

Working for our Community



ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2021 - 2022

(Subject to external audit)



www.carnforthtowncouncil.org

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT

A warm welcome to everyone in the Carnforth Community to the Annual Report of Carnforth Town Council. The aim of this report is to provide you with an overview of our business and activities in the municipal year 2021 - 2022. We hope that you find it useful and informative.

This municipal year has been another strange and challenging one for many of us but there is now light at the end of the Covid pandemic tunnel. Numerous local businesses have struggled despite Government support and many residents have been directly and indirectly affected by the disease.

It has been very gratifying to see how much the Carnforth community has worked together in so many ways. Local volunteers have worked in all weather conditions to help as marshals at Ashtrees surgery, while others have worked with the Salvation Army, foodbanks and our local Covid 19 support group. They ensured that those having to isolate received the services they needed, whether it be their shopping done, prescriptions collected, dog walked or just a friendly, and safe, chat!

Some events that the Town Council would normally hold have had to be cancelled which, as Town Mayor, is disappointing but despite a second year of challenges from Covid, the Town Council has had another very successful year!

We took on the stewardship of Crag Bank Village Hall last summer and have considerably improved the amenities available to the local community. We have invested time and money into the Village Hall, which, along with the now re-opened Carnforth Civic Hall are essential facilities for our local communities health and well-being. Through Rik Marsden, our Facilities Manager, Linda Marsden and then Julie Cox, our Cleaners, both buildings are maintained to the highest standards.

We provided financial support to the Friends of Crag Bank Play Area who, led by Councillor Steve Watson worked tirelessly on the project to rejuvenate the Play Area which was formally opened on 2nd April.

The Council was delighted to purchase a 'Rainbow' bench for the War Memorial Gardens in recognition of our NHS and keyworkers. This is also a 'Chatty Bench' where you can sit and relax and chat with anyone about anything! We also recently installed a bench on Scotland Road near Aldi's supermarket for weary shoppers to enjoy and six large planters near to Keerford View retirement homes.

Our Outdoor Maintenance officer, Terry Allum, works hard to ensure that the town looks its best, maintaining flower beds and boxes, Public Rights Of Way and amenities throughout our town.

As our High Streets began to re-open, the Council was able to host the town's first Street Festival last August. Hampered somewhat by the weather this was a highly successful event with some 40 food and craft vendors, entertainers and, we estimate, around 3,000 residents and visitors!

I was privileged to be asked by Carnforth Chamber of Trade to "switch on" the Christmas lights in early December.

The Town Council was pleased to be able to provide new litter picking equipment to the Carnforth Wombles, who as a group, do so much to keep our town and the local area clear of litter.

In February, at the request of the 1st Carnforth Scouts group, the Council hosted scouts to an evening of community problem solving and left it to the scouts to plan their priorities in setting the annual town budget! And we working with Carnforth High School to set up a pool of 'Student Advisors' so that our young people can have an input in local democracy and developing our town.

We consulted widely on the Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan which is now ready to be examined by a Government appointed Planning Inspector. This hugely important document and supporting policies, developed over four years will soon be subject to a Referendum and, if adopted, will allow our community to have a real influence on planning developments and serve as a blue print for our town's economy, environment and heritage for many years to come!

As a town we want to be closely involved with the development of the Eden Project North and supports the town's bid as the headquarters for Great British Railways given our rail heritage and location.

Your Town Council has worked hard to support, develop and promote our town - we are looking forward to hosting the Carnforth Big Weekend and celebrating the Queens Platinum Jubilee over the Bank Holiday weekend in early June.

I have enjoyed my year in office and thank our enthusiastic and professional staff and my fellow Councillors for their tremendous hard work and dedication to making our town a better place to live, work and play! **Larry Branyan RD, Town Mayor**

TOWN DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING (TD&P) COMMITTEE

The Town Development & Planning (TD&P) Committee usually meets on the first Monday of every month. This Committee considers planning applications, planning policy and infrastructure matters with input from site visits, the local community and other stakeholders before making recommendations to the Town Council. Council decisions on planning are then submitted online to Lancaster City Council for subsequent consideration and final decision by their Planning Committee.

Carnforth Town Council continues to work closely with City and County Council's to ensure that the views of our residents are taken into account when determining planning-related and highways matters.

The TD&P Committee is dedicated to developing and maintaining our town and improving the wellbeing of our community. This year we held the Carnforth Street Festival which was a huge success for our community. We also commissioned a special bench in recognition of NHS and key workers – a great place to 'sit, relax and have a chat' and purchased the large planters on Lancaster Road. We provided equipment for the Carnforth Wombles who are doing a fantastic job keeping our town clear of litter and supported other local groups. We bought new noticeboards to keep our community informed and paid tribute to our Servicemen and women, past and present, with our Remembrance, Armed Forces and Victory in Europe commemorations.

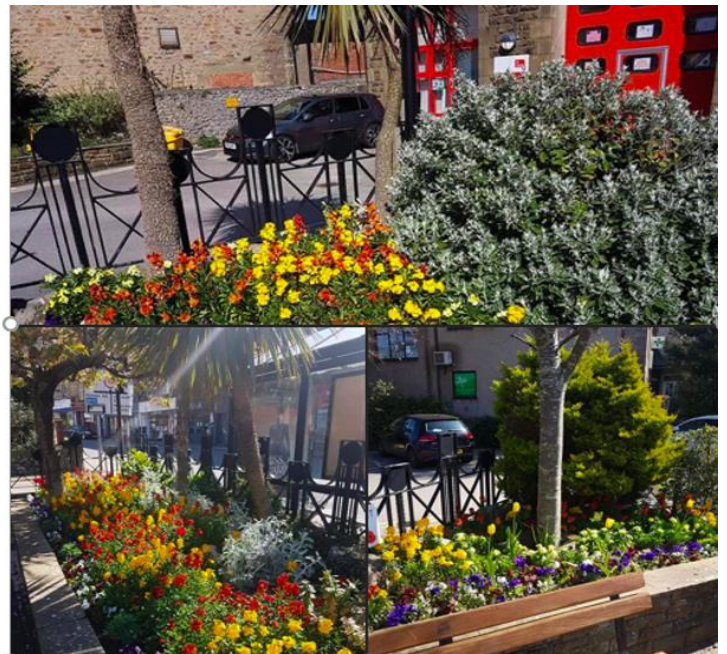


PROPERTY & ENVIRONMENT (P&E) COMMITTEE

The Property & Environment Committee is responsible for all of the Council's assets and amenities including Carnforth Civic Hall, Market Street Council Offices and the War Memorial Gardens. Following a major decision to become the custodian of Crag Bank Village Hall, this Committee has led on developing the building and its facilities to secure its long term future. Since taking over last June, the Town Council has invested in LED lighting, new front doors and an electronic access system, replacement fencing, new equipment and decorating. We have continued to maintain Carnforth Civic Hall to a high standard and this too is benefitting from new LED lights throughout.

Maintenance programs ensure that our statutory and health and safety responsibilities are met and assets are regularly reviewed to ensure they are safe and in good condition.

We maintain many of the planters and some flower beds that you will pass on a daily basis, including those at the War Memorial Gardens, on Scotland Road, Lancaster Road, Market Street and North Road, as well as several benches and footpaths around our town. We were pleased to support the Crag Bank Play Area project that recently come to fruition. The Committee usually meet on the first Tuesday of every month, receiving regular reports from our Facilities Manager and Outdoor Maintenance Officer.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022/2023

I am very much looking forward to serving as Town Mayor during 2022 - 2023, taking forward existing projects and overseeing some new initiatives.

Our Neighbourhood Plan, if adopted, will set the basis of all future Town Council considerations of development and expansion in and around our town. Produced with your input, it sets out our vision of how we wish to protect the best of Carnforth and Crag Bank, while seeking to encourage growth and investment in our community and associated infrastructure.

The environment remains at the heart of what the Town Council does and we will maintain our aspiration to become carbon neutral over time, reducing from our currently level of nearly 56 tonnes per annum!. We will explore this year how to encourage walking and cycling to, from, and around town and we will work with others to improve footpaths and cycle paths so as to make walking and cycling easier, more accessible and more pleasant.

The Eden project has the potential to bring considerable prosperity to the North West, and we will continue to seek opportunities to secure spin off benefit for Carnforth. This will involve further strengthening our already excellent working relationships with Lancaster City and Lancashire County Councils.

We now look forward to a successful Carnforth Big Jubilee Weekend, celebrating the Queen's 70 year reign and our community. I hope to meet many of you personally throughout the year, whether at formal events, or when I am out and about. Carnforth Town Council is here for you and continues to work hard for all of its residents and its business community. **Councillor Chris Smith**

COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

Each year Carnforth Town Council receives a grant from Aurora Wind Turbine funds to distribute to projects that meet the criteria for benefiting the community. In 2021/2022, we were delighted to support the following projects:

Organisation	Amount	Project Description
Carnforth Cricket Club	£ 1,000	Pavilion Cladding
Carnforth Kiddiwinks	£ 1,000	Equipment for a toddlers and community classroom
Carnforth Rangers	£ 1,000	New goals, nets and fencing
Total	£ 3,000	

CARNFORTH TOWN COUNCIL SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

SERVICES

- Bus shelters
- Street furniture
- Footpaths & Open Spaces
- War Memorial Gardens
- Planters; Flower beds and maintenance
- Litter & Dog waste bins
- Community Benefit Fund
- Planning & Traffic related matters
- Carnforth Civic Hall
- Crag Bank Village Hall
- Facebook/Twitter/Website
- Carnforth Express Newsletter
- Emergency Planning
- Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan
- Community consultation

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

- Remembrance Day
- National Days of Celebration
- Carnforth Street Festival
- Film Nights
- Hall Hire

COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS

- Carnforth Covid-19 Support Group
- Carnforth Allotment Association
- Carnforth Integrated Care Community & Ashtrees Surgery
- Carnforth Chamber of Trade
- Carnforth Rotary
- Carnforth Twinning Association
- Salvation Army – Carnforth Branch
- Lancaster City Council
- Lancashire County Council
- Local schools and churches
- Community groups

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE (F&G) COMMITTEE

The Finance & Governance Committee usually meets on the second Wednesday of the month. Its functions include the consideration of new policies, developing strategy and monitoring the actions of all committees in delivering the Council's plans. They are also responsible oversight of the Council's budgets, accounts and investments as well as its internal control, governance, risk management and staff functions.

Carnforth Town Council is open and transparent about the way it manages its finances. Information on the way the Council mitigates risk, maintains effective and efficient internal control and governance and ensures sound financial management in delivering the Council's plans and objectives can be found on the Council website at

www.carnforthtowncouncil.org

The Council's finances are monitored on a day to day basis by the Clerk & Proper Officer acting in his statutory role of Responsible Financial Officer. The Committee considers monthly bank reconciliations and financial monitoring reports and makes recommendation to the Town Council on payments. A qualified and highly competent internal auditor, annually assesses the Council's compliance with legislation and accounting practices and tests internal control procedures. An external auditor, appointed by Central Government carries out an audit, to review the Council's accounts and explanations on significant variances (+/- 15%) between current and previous financial years payments and receipts.

MONEY MATTERS

Very few people would dispute that the last two years have been the most difficult in recent living memory. In response to the remorseless surge of the Covid pandemic, thousands of schools and businesses closed and millions of people have been furloughed or made redundant. And almost two years on, the Covid mortality figure for this country now exceeds 153,000. The impact has been both tragic and devastating for so many of us.

When considering how our world has been stood on its head during this time, it may seem insensitive to begin talking about money but we must now plan for a future without restrictions and where we are all managing to live with coronavirus.

From a central and a local government perspective, planning involves money and the process has already begun to plan what services will be required in the year ahead and what the cost will be. Last month all householders will have received their Council Tax bills for 2022/23 from their local authorities. Locally our bills are sent out by Lancaster City Council and they set out not only how much we are being asked to pay but also how and where our money is allocated. The biggest slice goes to Lancashire County Council to pay for adult social care, roads, schools and libraries amongst other things. Next in line is Lancaster City Council who provide waste collection, environmental health and housing amongst their services. After the two largest local authorities come the Police and the Fire Services.

Finally, our bills show how much Carnforth Town Council, a minnow by comparison to the others, is asking for.

In cash terms, Carnforth Town Council ask householders, in Band D properties for example, for just over £1 a week.

During 2021 we built on our achievements in recent years, despite the ongoing pandemic to: deliver a highly successful Street Festival; take on the stewardship of Crag Bank Village Hall and invest in its long term future as a valuable community asset; organise a welcome return to the Remembrance Day Parade; continued to take a lead on the emerging Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan; presented the Town with a 'buddy bench' in recognition of our wonderful NHS and keyworkers; secured the efficiency and effectiveness of the Town Council in serving our local community through modern technology and kept our residents and local community up-to-date with news and official information – and there has been a lot of it - through our website and social media platforms and the pages of the popular Carnforth Express. We also gave financial support to local community groups and collaborated with, and assisted, others including the Carnforth Covid 19 local support group, Carnforth Business Network and the Friends of Crag Bank Play Area as well as continuing to promote the Town and maintain part of its public realm and environment.

Our planning for 2022/23 has considered the impact of coronavirus and the 'cost of living' on our finances; our plans to maintain/enhance current services/activities and building on our capacity to improve our resilience whilst delivering ambitious plans and aspirations for our town in the coming year and beyond – and all for around a £1 a week!



CARNFORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



The *Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan* continues to progress. After two significant statutory consultation exercises the plan and all its supporting policies and documents are now undergoing an independent examination. His/her recommendations will be considered and any necessary changes made before, the *Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan* is ready for a formal referendum. Lancaster City Council will lead on this and a simple majority in favour will result in the Plan being formally adopted. The adopted plan will shape the future of the town for generations to come and all new planning developments would have to

take into account the policies and objectives set out in the Neighbourhood Plan on sustainability and local environment, heritage, tourism and economic matters, The Town Council will implement an action plan and monitor delivery of the Plan's aspirations over the next 10 years and carry out periodic reviews to ensure that the plan continues to meet legal requirements and changing priorities. **PLEASE follow our website and social media pages and read the *Carnforth Express* for more information and details on the referendum.**

COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS 2021 - 2022

Councillors	Town Council	TD & P Committee	P&E Committee	F&G Committee
No of Meetings Held	10	12	12	
Ian Bentley (Resigned Nov 21)	3 (Out of 6)	-	4	-
Larry Branyan	8	9	10	11
Kath Bromilow	6	1	12	2
Paul Gardner	5		-	5
Jim Grisenthwaite	9	2	2	-
Elizabeth Jones	9	-	-	11
Rowland Parker	10	12	9	1
Chris Smith	9	11	-	-
Paul Turner (Elected Dec 21)	3 (out of 3)	-	1	-
John Reynolds	0 (out of 5)	-	-	1
Rebecca Stretch	9	12	-	2
Malcolm Watkins	7	9	-	-
Steve Watson	9	2	8	6

2022/23 COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR

All meetings of the Council and Committees are open to the public – see Calendar of meetings below. Each agenda includes a period when the public may address the Council. For more information please go to the Meetings pages on our website www.carnforthtowncouncil.org

2022/2023	Town Council	TD & P Committee	P&E Committee	F & G Committee
MAY	18th	9th	3rd	11th
JUNE	15th	6th	7th	8th
JULY	20th	4th	5th	13th
AUGUST	No meeting	1st	2nd	10th
SEPTEMBER	21st	5th	6th	14th
OCTOBER	19th	3rd	4th	12th
NOVEMBER	16th	7th	1st	9th
DECEMBER	21st	5th	6th	14th
JANUARY	18th	9th	3rd	11th
FEBRUARY	15th	6th	7th	8th
MARCH	15th	6th	7th	8th
APRIL	19th	2nd	3rd	12th

TOWN COUNCIL STAFF & MEMBERS: 2022/2023

Position	Name	Email	Telephone
Proper Officer & Responsible Finance Officer	Bob Bailey	clerk@carforthtowncouncil.org	07828254149
Administrative Officer	Leah Longhorn	admin@carforthtowncouncil.org	
Civic Hall Manager	Rik Marsden	rik.marsden@carforthtowncouncil.org	07858769524
Outdoor Maintenance Officer	Terry Allum	terry.allum@carforthtowncouncil.org	07725616593
Town Mayor	Chris Smith	chris.smith@carforthtowncouncil.org	07775817854
Deputy Town Mayor & Chair of F & G Committee	Jim Grisenthwaite	jim.grisenthwaite@carforthtowncouncil.org	07710864904
Members	Larry Branyan	larry.branyan@carforthtowncouncil.org	07836 685275
	Elizabeth Jones	elizabeth.jones@carforthtowncouncil.org	07738134262
	Paul Gardner	paul.gardner@carforthtowncouncil.org	01524 736020
	Rowland Parker	rowland.parker@carforthtowncouncil.org	01524733587
	Paul Turner	paul.turner@carforthtowncouncil.org	07830 537565
	Rebecca Stretch	rebecca.stretch@carforthtowncouncil.org	07961043205
	Malcolm Watkins	malcolm.watkins@carforthtowncouncil.org	01524 734722
	Steve Watson	steve.watson@carforthtowncouncil.org	07581556223
	Vacancy		

